

Communicative Language Teaching in Vocabulary Teaching and Learning in a Swedish Comprehensive Class

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1. Introduction

A long period of time grammar was viewed as the main task in second language teaching. Mastery of grammatical structures was the main goal in second language acquisition. The Grammar--Translation Method dominated second language teaching. On the contrary, vocabulary teaching and acquisition were of relatively minor importance. Vocabulary development was approached as some kind of auxiliary activity and, often through memorizing decontextualised word lists. The relatively minor importance attached to lexical knowledge and context was visible in the scant attention paid to it by second language researchers and teachers in the last decade.

Vocabulary, which is the basic material of the language, is, of course, of crucial importance in expressing ideas and thoughts when communicating. The following statement about the relationship between grammar and vocabulary demonstrated by the British linguist Wilkins in 1976 argues that “[w]ithout grammar, there are few things we can express; while without vocabulary, there is nothing we can express.” Wilkins verifies the importance of vocabulary in communication. Insufficient vocabulary or vocabulary difficulties will result in communicational barriers or failures. Without the mediation of vocabulary, no amount of grammatical or other types of linguistic knowledge can be employed in second language communication or discourse.

Since the 1960s, many new ideas and approaches to the study of vocabulary acquisition in a second language have emerged through many English linguists' efforts and research. Among them, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) pedagogy which originated from the changes in the British Situational Language Teaching approach dating from the late 1960s deserves to be mentioned. Stemming from the socio-cognitive perspective of the socio-linguistic theory, with an emphasis on meaning and communication, and a goal to develop learners' communicative competence, CLT evolved as a prominent language teaching method and gradually

replaced the previous Grammar-Translation Method.

In the last twenty years, Communicative Language Teaching was introduced in China. English teachers in eastern and southern areas are recommended by the Ministry of Education to use this kind of approach in English teaching. Practice has showed that CLT, which has many advantages compared with the Grammar--Translation Method, has been a remarkable success and made great contributions to English teaching and learning in eastern and southern areas. Nowadays CLT is very popular in English language fields in that area.

1.1 Aim

This study aims to investigate and evaluate the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching in vocabulary teaching and learning by means of observing an English lesson in a comprehensive class in Kristianstad in southern Sweden. The essay will offer a detailed analysis and discussion of the English lesson from various aspects. The evaluation of the lesson will be presented on the basis of the class observation, results of the dictation exercise and an interview with the pupils' English teacher.

1.2 Material

The participants in the present study consist of twenty Grade—7 pupils (6 girls, 14 boys) in a nine-year comprehensive school in Kristianstad in southern Sweden and an English teacher from China. Besides having acquired their first language-Swedish, these pupils aged from year 12 to 14, who should have reached intermediate cognitive maturity and metalinguistic awareness, have studied their second language--English for seven years. They have English lessons twice each week.

The teacher who had an English lesson for these pupils is a Chinese. She has a strong

passion for English education and a good command of educational theories and student psychology. Holding a bachelor's degree, majoring in English Education and having teaching experience of over five years, she is capable of using Communicative Language Teaching to teach vocabulary.

The pupils' English teacher---a fifty-year-old Swedish lady is also invited to observe the English lesson and to be interviewed after the lesson.

1.3 Method

In order to investigate and evaluate the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching in vocabulary teaching, observations on one English lesson, a dictation exercise after the lesson and an interview with the pupils' English teacher are applied as the research methods.

1.3.1 Discussing with the Chinese Teacher before the Lesson

Before the lesson, the writer exchanged ideas about the teaching purpose and aim with the Chinese teacher. The teacher told the writer that the main aim of the lesson was to memorize seventeen new words by applying Communicative Teaching Method and develop the pupils' communicative competence. The lesson was *Cross my palm with silver!* in Unit Seven on P.72 of their textbooks which was considered suitable to use CLT. This unit was easy to design authentic communicative activities which would reflect and embody the features and principles of CLT. The seventeen new words of this unit were divided into the following categories: four concrete nouns, five abstract nouns, one verb and five adjectives describing people's hand shapes and two adjectives describing people's personality. She used different skills to teach them different contexts. The teacher also mentioned before the lesson that it seemed easier in Sweden to practise CLT due to smaller numbers compared with in China.

1.3.2 Teaching Program

Teaching Aim: Investigation on how well Communicative Language Teaching is in English vocabulary teaching and leaning

Teaching Content: Mastery of seventeen new words in Unit 7: *palm, inkpad, thumb, nail, conic, elementary, active, philosophic, psychic, bad-tempered, impulsive, trade, rule, fate, regulation, tool, analyse* and the development of communicative ability

Time: From 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. on 5th of May, 2010

Location: Teaching Building on the first floor

Teaching Material: Unit 7

Lift off Textbook 4

Wendy Bradbrook Kurt Soderlund

Level of Pupils: 20 pupils in Grade--7

The Teacher: A young Chinese lady

Observers: The writer and the pupils' English teacher

Observation of Main Steps in the Lesson:

1) Introduction

Firstly, the English teacher from China made a brief introduction about herself to the pupils, their English teacher and the writer. Then she greeted several pupils with a smile in order to relax the atmosphere in the classroom because the pupils saw her for the first time and were unfamiliar with her. Some of pupils' facial expressions were a bit nervous. It only took about two minutes.

2) Presentation 1

Then the lesson began by presenting the class with Unit Seven in which four new words appear, ranging from *palm* to *nail*. She used some basic skills to impart new knowledge by showing the concrete objects and demonstrating her own body parts. She clearly pronounced each word. She offered comprehension checks to make sure

whether these young learners had understood or not. She also made requests to clarify something that had not been understood in the process of teaching. When some pupils had the wrong pronunciation sometimes, the teacher made corrective feedback patiently to help them master these words. It took about seven minutes.

3) Pair work

At this stage, the teacher created an authentic communicative activity for the pupils—they should describe their own hand shapes to their partners. The purpose of designing the authentic communicative activity was to master five adjectives: *philosophic, psychic, active, elementary* and *conic*. All of them were used to describe the shapes of hands. She gave the pupils appropriate explanations as to how these new words were actually used in communicative situations. Then the pupils were divided into several groups to perform this authentic communicative activity for fifteen minutes or so. After the pupils had finished the pair-work, three groups were invited to do the performance in front of the whole class. When they performed, the teacher did not correct the mistakes in order to make communication so smoothly. After the pair-work the classroom atmosphere was a bit relaxed compared with the beginning of the class. The pupils were not so nervous than before. It took about seventeen minutes.

4) Presentation 2

Teaching content temporarily went back to imparting six new abstract words: *regulation, analyse, fate, trade, rule* and *tool*. This time the teacher adopted another skill to teach the new words. She asked the pupils to look up the new words in the dictionary. Most pupils took part in the activity according to the teacher's instructions. A boy did nothing. The teacher asked him if he brought the dictionary or not, but he kept silent. The observation showed that many pupils were willing to participate in the activity. When they understood the meanings of the words, they had pleased looks on

their faces. The teacher also offered comprehension checks and made requests to the pupils. But in terms of *regulation*, although there is an example phrase—law or custom which guides or controls behaviours or action; decision made by an organization, etc. about what must or must not be done -- some of pupils' facial expressions showed that they were still puzzled with the meaning of it. But the teacher did not explain any further but turned to next step. It took about thirteen minutes.

5) Role-play

The subsequent stage was role-play. The teacher designed a communicative activity for the pupils in order to learn two adjectives—*impulsive*, *bad-tempered*, to consolidate what they had learned in Presentation 1, pair-work, Presentation 2 and develop their communicative abilities. She offered the pupils appropriate explanations of these two words which were used to describe people's personality. Before assigning the task, she told the pupils the instructions that the situation was to predict the partner's fate: one acted as a fortune teller, the other a customer; the pupils choose their own partners freely; the fortune teller predicts future events for the customer; some words in the role-play should concern the words what they had learned in the lesson. Then most pupils participated in the role-play actively. After they had finished performing the role-play, many pairs volunteered to demonstrate their performance before the whole class. The teacher assessed their advantages and disadvantages roughly. After the role-play, the pupils' anxiety and tension were relieved greatly from their facial expressions and behaviours. The teacher and the pupils were familiar with each other now. But classroom discipline was a bit mess. A few boys even chatted with their deskmates. It took twenty minutes.

6) Homework

It was the last stage of the lesson. The teacher assigned homework for the pupils. It

consisted of four exercises on pp 67--70 in Lift off Workbook 4 so as to consolidate what they had learned in the class and review the past tense. It took about one minute.

1.3.3 An Interview with the Pupils' English Teacher

In order to know something about her personal view of CLT and evaluate the English lesson carried out by the Chinese teacher, the writer made an interview with the Swedish pupils' English teacher who has twenty years of teaching experience in her office after the lesson. The involved questions for the interview are shown below:

1. Have you ever heard of Communicative Language Teaching?
2. Are you interested in CLT?
3. What's your opinion about the role of vocabulary in English teaching?
4. How is vocabulary normally taught in your class?
5. Is your teaching method different from CLT?
6. What's your personal view of the English lesson carried out by the Chinese teacher in your class? Please make comments about the advantages and disadvantages about the lesson.

2. Theoretical Background

In this section, the theories that are relevant to the study are presented one after another. Firstly the contemporary studies on second language acquisition are reviewed, then the theory of vocabulary teaching and learning is discussed, finally the theory of Communicative Language Teaching is introduced.

2.1 Two Perspectives in Second Language Acquisition Research

Second Language Acquisition can be defined as the way in which people learn a language other than their mother tongue, inside or outside of a classroom. The task of SLA is the acquisition of semantic, transformational and syntactic and phonological competence for the realization of language-independent deep-structure conceptual system. Two perspectives in second language acquisition in relation to the study are Krashen's Input Hypothesis and the Interaction Hypothesis.

2.1.1 Krashen's Input Hypothesis

One of the major schools of thought influencing second language acquisition is Krashen's input hypothesis. As Krashen's theory goes in 1987, L2 learners can naturally acquire the forms of the L2 as long as they are provided with sufficient comprehensible input. With sufficient input at the right level, Learners will naturally acquire certain grammatical morphemes in a pre-determined order. "Acquisition arises as the result of processes of creative construction by which the learner internalizes the rules of the second language subconsciously; it takes place naturally and is not amenable to instruction. In contrast, learning is a conscious process that results from formal study and which can be influenced." (Krashen, 1987:56) .

2.1.2 The Interaction Hypothesis

Evelyn Hatch (1978), Michael Long (1983,1996) Teresa Pica (1994) and Susan Gass

(1997) argue that conversational interaction is the essential condition for second language acquisition. These researchers have studied the methods of in which speakers modify their speech and their interaction patterns so as to help learners participate in a conversation or understand some information. Long (1983) also mentions that modified interaction is the necessary mechanism for making language understandable. That is to say, language learners need not only the linguistic forms but also an opportunity to communicate with other speakers, working together, to reach mutual understanding. Through these interactions, interlocutors figure out what they need to do to keep the conversation going and make the input comprehensible (Lightbown and Spada, 2002: 43).

In the original (1983) formulation of the Interaction Hypothesis, Long inferred that modified interaction is necessary for language acquisition (Lightbown and Spada, 2002: 44). Apart from linguistic simplification, modified interaction may also include elaboration, slower speech rate, gesture, or the provision of additional contextual clues. Some examples of the means of modified interaction consist of comprehension checks, clarification requests, self-repetition, paraphrase and feedback:

- 1 Comprehension checks—efforts by the native speakers to ensure that the learner has understood (for example, “The bus leaves at 6:30. Do you understand?)
- 2 Clarification requests—efforts by the learner to get the native speaker to clarify something that has not been understood (for example, could you repeat please?) These requests from the learner lead to further modifications by the native speaker.
- 3 Self-repetition or paraphrase—the native speaker repeats his or her sentence either partially or in its entirety (for example, ‘She got lost on her way from school. She was walking home from school. She got lost.)

(Lightbown and Spada, 2002: 44)

Research has shown that conversational adjustments can aid comprehension. Modification that takes place during interaction leads to better understanding than linguistic simplification or modification that is planned in advance. Some recent research has shown that specific kinds of interaction behaviours aid learning in terms

of immediate production.

In Long's (1996) revised version of the Interaction Hypothesis, more emphasis is placed on the importance of corrective feedback during interaction. Merrill Swan (1985) extended this thinking when she proposed the 'comprehensible output hypothesis'. She observed that it is when they are most likely to see the limits of their second language ability and the need to find better ways to express their meaning. The demands of producing comprehensible input, she hypothesized, 'push' learners ahead in their development in (Lightbown and Spada, 2002: 44).

Interactionists emphasize the role of modification in conversational interactions. This perspective provides insights into the ways in which second language learners can gain access to new knowledge about the second language when they have support from an interlocutor (Lightbown and Spada, 2002: 49).

2.2 The Theory of Vocabulary Teaching and Learning

Vocabulary is of great significance in expressing thoughts and ideas in interaction activities. Vocabulary acquisition is the main task of second language acquisition. This section will present vocabulary teaching and learning theory in connection with the study.

2.2.1 Vocabulary Knowledge

There are various theoretical studies on exploring the types of vocabulary knowledge related to the familiarity with a word (Richards (1976); Nation (1990); Carter (1992), etc.) Richards (1976) made the first attempt to list the different types of knowledge that are necessary to fully know a word. He was more concerned with applicability to pedagogical practice than attempting to provide a systematic framework for describing or accounting the word knowledge (Meara, 1996). In the word knowledge

list, there is no attempt to distinguish productive vocabulary from receptive vocabulary. Elaborating on Richards' list, Nation developed a list of various types of vocabulary knowledge that one must possess both receptively and productively in order to have complete command of a word:

1. the spoken form of a word (R (receptive): What does the word sound like?/ P 15 (productive): How is the word pronounced?)
2. the written form of a word (R: What does the word look like?/P: How is the word written and spelled?)
3. the grammatical patterns of the word (R: In what patterns does the word occur?/ P: In what patterns must we use the word?)
4. the collocational behavior of the word (R: what words or types of words can be expected before or after the word?/P: What words or types of words must we use with this word?)
5. how frequent the word is (R: How common is the word?/P: How often should the word be used?)
6. the appropriateness of a word (R: Where should we expect to meet this word/ P: Where can this word be used?)
7. the conceptual meaning of a word (R: What does the word mean?/ P: what word should be used to express this meaning?)
8. the associations a word has with other related words (R: What other words does this word make us think of? P: What other words could we use instead of this one?)

(Nation,1990:31)

Nation (2001) also states that knowledge of a word can be divided into knowledge concerning its form (spoken/written), its position (grammatical patterns/collocations), its function (frequency/appropriateness), and its meaning (concept/associations). Thus it is not the case that a word is either known or unknown. A word can be known in all sorts of degrees: from knowing that given form of an existing word to knowledge including all four aspects mentioned above. These degrees of word knowledge apply to native speakers as well as to second language acquisition learners.

In addition to Richards and Nation, researchers have put forward their own way of categorizing word knowledge. Carter (1992) has defined the similar vocabulary knowledge categories such as pronunciation, spelling, grammatical properties,

syntactical features, collocations, associations and senses, etc. Laufer (1997) categorizes word knowledge as the form, the word structure, the syntactic pattern of the word in a phrase or a sentence, meaning, common collocations, and the lexical relations of the word with other words, such as synonym, antonym, and hyponym, and finally common collocations.

Although many researchers have classified vocabulary knowledge in different ways, there is a consensus among them that vocabulary knowledge is a complex system which consists of several types of vocabulary knowledge besides meaning and form. Any research that tends to explore vocabulary acquisition should regard it as its task to study the different types of word knowledge, and most importantly, to explore the links and interrelationships between the different types of word knowledge (Schmitt and Meara, 1997:17-36).

2.2.2 The Importance of Vocabulary Teaching and Learning

Vocabulary plays an essential role in expressing ideas and thoughts. The well-known British linguist, Wilkins (1976) says people could describe few things without grammar, but they could express nothing without vocabulary. Widdowson(1987) thinks that native English speakers can understand language material with correct vocabulary but not so proper in grammar rules rather than those with correct grammar rules but not so proper in vocabulary use. Lord mentions that ‘vocabulary is by far the most sizable and unmanageable component in the learning of any language, whether for a foreign or one’s mother tongue because of thousands of different meanings’ (Lord, 1993:83). Lewis(1992) holds the idea that vocabulary acquisition is the main task of second language acquisition and the language skills as listening, speaking, reading, writing and translating all can not go without vocabulary.

Vocabulary teaching has been developing greatly since 1980s. Several experts and linguists began to pay attention to vocabulary teaching during that period. For

example, in the 1980s Terrel proposed the Natural Approach which emphasizes comprehensible and meaning input rather than grammatically correct production. In 1983, Allen mentions the presentation and exemplification of practical techniques in the teaching of vocabulary. Later, in 1985, Ruth Gairns and Stuart Redman state the principles of vocabulary teaching. In 1997 Sokmen discusses the current trends in teaching second language vocabulary. He points out that current research would suggest that it is worthwhile to add explicit vocabulary to the usual inferring activities in the for language classroom.

2.2.3 Strategies in Vocabulary Teaching

There are a growing number of studies researching what second language teachers do about vocabulary in second language classrooms. Among them, some strategies relevant to the study are listed as follows:

2.2.3.1 Basic Skills

Repetition is essential for vocabulary learning because there is so much to know about each word that one meeting with it is not sufficient to gain this information, and because vocabulary items must not only be known, they must be known well so that they can be fluently accessed (Nation, 2001:74).

There are several ways to show the meanings of an English word, through such aids as : (1) objects that can easily be brought to class(umbrellas, scissors, tools, buttons of many colors and sizes, etc); (2) drawings by the teacher and drawings by the students; (3) demonstrations to show actions(Allen, 1983:41). Allen recommends teachers using the real object whenever possible when showing the meaning of an English noun. Real objects are better than pictures.

Body language is another useful way in vocabulary teaching. It is easy to demonstrate

in class. The meanings of words can be shown through simple dramatic presentations. Even teachers can mime certain actions and gestures well enough to know the meanings of words (Allen, 1983:38).

Defining words by means of other words is a technique needed by the teacher. The students' dictionary is a good source helper. An example sentence for *drown* might be, "the dead boy's mother was very sad after her son drowned in the river." (Allen, 1983:46). Often an example sentence can help the student more than a definition. Well-known dictionaries, such as the *Oxford Student's Dictionary of American English*, the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, give helpful example sentences in addition to definitions (Allen, 1983:46).

2.2.3.2 Contextualization

Every word has its own usage context. It is ineffective for students to master words from the concrete situation if the teacher explains them monotonously and abstractly. Lack of context makes vocabulary learning difficult. Words taught in isolation are generally not remembered. Therefore the background knowledge of words is very important in vocabulary teaching. Coady (1987) suggests that background knowledge may serve as compensation for certain syntactic deficiencies. Students pay attention to the content and show much interest in background knowledge. Some related words are remembered effectively and firmly. While reading, the communicative approach needs to inform and guide classroom practice. As for the communicative tasks, David Nunan (1989:10) describes it as "a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on standing alone as a communicative act in its own right".

2.2.3.3 Role-Play

There are varieties of activities in a classroom to help students learn target language effectively, such as games, music, dramatic stories, amusing anecdotes etc. Role-play is one of them. Role-play helps students learn effectively and use target language as freely and communicatively as they can. Role-play aims at fostering the ability of students and is characterized as mutual teaching and learning. It can realize the teaching model of “students play a principle role and the teacher plays a leading role” (Littlewood, 1981:56).

According to De Neve and Heppner (1997), the main steps of designing role-play are summarized as follows: (1) Firstly, teachers should choose a situation for a role play, keeping in mind students' needs and interests. Teachers should select role-plays that will give the students an opportunity to practice what they have learned. (2) The next step is to come up with ideas on how this situation may develop. Students' level of language proficiency should be taken into consideration. (3) After finishing selecting a suitable role play, teachers should predict the language needed for it. It is recommended to introduce any new vocabulary before the role play. (4) This step implies providing students with concrete information and clear role descriptions so that they could play their roles with confidence. Teachers should describe each role in a manner that will let the students identify with the characters. (5) Teachers ask for some volunteers to act out role-play in front of the class in this step. It is recommended that teachers avoid intervening in a role play with error corrections not to discourage the students. (6) Once the role play is finished, teachers should give feedback to students. This means pointing out students' advantages and disadvantages.

2.3 The Theory of Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching based on many modern linguistic theories is considered a good approach by many second language teachers around the world. It reflects a communicative view of second language teaching and learning.

2.3.1 A Brief Introduction of CLT

The origins of CLT are to be found in the changes in the British language teaching tradition dating from the late 1960s. With the founding of the European Community in 1957, research was encouraged and sponsored by the Council of Europe in the 1960s on the ways in which members of Europe could best learn to communicate with each other in common languages. It was an attempt to specify the most important communicative needs that are likely to arise in everyday situations and suitable language forms that could be learnt for coping with those needs. In the early 1970s, *The Threshold Level* edited by Van Ek came out. This brings people on to another aspect of language use that was being studied at the time: it was not just important to know the forms of the language, but it was also important to know which forms you use, when and with whom. Some materials and syllabuses appeared at that time, for example, John Munby's *Communicative Syllabus Design* in 1978, D. Wilkins' *Notional Syllabus* in 1976 and L. Widdowson's *Teaching Language as Communication* in 1978. It was not until 1979, when the *Communicative Approach to Language Teaching* by C.J. Brumfit and Johnson was published that the term "communicative approach" became popular formally as an independent approach.

Many British applied linguists have made great contributions to CLT. For example, Berns, an expert in the field of CLT, writes in explaining Firth's view in 1984:

"[I]language is interaction; it is interpersonal activity and has a clear relationship with society. In this light, language study has to look at the use function of language in context, both its linguistic context (what is uttered before and after a given piece of discourse) and its social, or situational, context (who is speaking, what their social roles are, why they have come together to speak)"(Berns, 1984: 5).

According to CLT, the learners must develop skills and strategies for using language to communicate meanings as effectively as possible in concrete situations. The learner must become aware of the social meaning of language forms. For many learners, this may not entail the ability to vary their own speech to suit different social

circumstances, but rather the ability to use generally acceptable forms and avoid potentially offensive ones (Littlewood, 1981:75).

CLT makes use of real-life situations that necessitate communication. The teacher sets up a situation that students are likely to encounter in real life. Unlike the audio lingual method of language teaching, which relies on repetition and drills, the communicative approach can leave students in suspense as to the outcome of a class exercise, which will vary according to their reactions and responses. The real-life simulations change from day to day. Students' motivation to learn comes from their desire to communicate in meaningful ways about meaningful topics.

CLT lays emphasis on developing the communicative competence. This view of second language acquisition has influenced language pedagogy in encouraging learner-centered teaching. Learner centeredness, combined with the shift to a focus on communicative competence, has helped to transform the language-teaching field dramatically in the past twenty years. Instead of an explicit focus on language itself, there has been an emphasis on learners' expressing their own meanings through language. The learner must distinguish between the forms which he has mastered as part of his linguistic competence, and the communicative functions that they perform.

2.3.2 The Foundation of CLT

There are two kinds of foundation of CLT, namely, Canale and Swain's communicative competence and Rogers's humanistic psychology.

2.3.2.1 Canale and Swain's Communicative Competence

Canale and Swain (1983) propose communicative competence, which can be used to interpret and guide second language teaching. Canale and Swain (1980) state communicative competence is the ability to use the language correctly and appropriately to accomplish communication goals. The desired outcome of the

language learning process is the ability to communicate competently, not the ability to use the language exactly as a native speaker does. Communicative competence is made up of four competence areas: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic:

1. *Linguistic competence* means knowing how to use the grammar, syntax, and vocabulary of a language. Linguistic competence asks: What words do I use? How do I put them into phrases and sentences?
2. *Sociolinguistic competence* means knowing how to use and respond to language appropriately, given the setting, the topic, and the relationships among the people communicating. Sociolinguistic competence asks: Which words and phrases fit this setting and this topic? How can I express a specific attitude (courtesy, authority, friendliness, respect)? When I need to? How do I know what attitude another person is expressing?
3. *Discourse competence* means knowing how to interpret the larger context and how to construct longer stretches of language so that the parts make up a coherent whole. Discourse competence asks: How are words, phrases and sentences put together to create conversations, speeches, email messages, newspaper articles.
4. *Strategic competence* means knowing how to recognize and repair communication breakdowns, how to work around gaps in one's knowledge of the language, and how to learn more about the language and in the context. Strategic competence asks: How do I know when I've misunderstood or when someone has misunderstood me? What do I say then? How can I express my ideas if I don't know the name of something or the right verb form to use?

(Canale and Swain, 1980:20)

2.3.2.2 Rogers's Humanistic Psychology

Carl Rogers, an influential American psychologist, whose unique humanistic psychology of understanding personality and human relationships is the psychological basis of CLT, advocates learner-centered teaching. In his famous book, *Freedom to Learn*, Rogers (1969) points out that humanistic educational thought is based on humanistic psychology, which aims to cultivate the whole person, emphasizes the person-centered, values the development of individual potential and realization of self-value. He further argues that the ultimate goal of education is to promote the development of personality of students. The key of teaching is learner-centered, but

not teacher-centered or method-centered. The strength of Rogers' approach lies in part in his focus on relationship. In 1983 Rogers wrote: 'The facilitation of significant learning rests upon certain attitudinal qualities that exist in the personal relationship between facilitator and learner'. However, Rogers had already begun to explore the notion of 'student-centered teaching' in *Client-Centred Therapy*(1951). In 1983 he offers several hypothesized general principles, namely, (1) We cannot teach another person directly. (2) We can only facilitate his learning. The structure and organization of the self appears to become more rigid under threat.

2.3.3 Main Features of CLT

Finocchiaro and Brumfit present clear and detailed explanations of the features of CLT. According to them, in the communicative approach, language learning is seen primarily as 'learning to communicate', and the goal of the approach is the acquisition of communicative competence, which enables second language learners to use the target language for communication effectively and appropriately. This approach also argues that 'the target linguistic system will be learned best through the process of struggling to communicate' and learners are expected to learn the target language through interaction with other people (Finocchiaro and Brumfit 1983:91-93).

CLT stresses the need to allow students opportunities for authentic and creative use of the language. It focuses on meaning rather than form; it suggests that learning should be relevant to the needs of the students; it advocates task-based language teaching. Students should be given tasks to perform or problems to solve in the classroom. What's more, CLT emphasizes a functional approach to language learning (i.e. what people do with language, such as inviting, apologizing, greeting and introducing, etc.). Also, to be competent in the target language, learners should acquire not only linguistic knowledge, but also the cultural background of that language.

2.3.4 Major Principles of CLT

Richards and Rogers (1986) address the issue, saying that in practice there are some elements to be taken into account: the communicational principle (i.e. activities that involve real communication promote learning), the task principle (i.e. activities in which language is used for carrying out meaningful tasks promote learning) and the meaningfulness principle (i.e. language that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process). Finocchiaro & Brumfit summarize the principles as follows:

- (1) Teaching is learner-centered and responsive to the students' need and interests.
 - (2) The target language is acquired through interactive communicative use that encourages the negotiations of meaning.
 - (3) Genuinely meaningful language use is emphasized, along with unpredictability, risk-taking, and choice-making.
 - (4) The formal properties of language are never treated in isolation from use. language forms are always addressed within a communicative context.
 - (5) There is exposure to examples of authentic language from the target language community.
 - (6) The students are encouraged to discover the forms and structures of language for themselves.
 - (7) There is a whole-language approach in which the four traditional language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) are integrated.
- (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983:127)

2.3.5 Teacher Roles in CLT

In CLT, the teacher has two main roles: the first is to facilitate the communication process between all participants in the classroom and between these participants and the various activities and texts. The second role is to act as an independent participant within the learning-teaching group. The latter role is closely related to the objectives of the first role and arises from it. These roles imply a set of secondary roles for the teacher: first, as an organizer of resources and as a resource himself, second, as a guide within the classroom procedures and activities. A third role for the teacher is that of researcher and learner, with much to contribute in terms of the nature of learning and organizational capacities (Breen and Candlin, 1980: 99) The role of the teacher is not only that of a resource and lecturer but also a facilitator, an organizer, a guider and more important a creator of environment in which learners learn how to

learn.

It is quite obvious that teachers' roles in? more than just the role of instructors. There are many other roles teachers should play. In CLT classrooms, teachers have multiple roles such as director, organizer, host, coordinator and so on. A number of writers in methodology and teacher training have proposed various ways of labeling the second language teacher's potential roles in class. The following is adapted from Harmer:

- A. The teacher as controller of everything that goes on in the classroom. He controls not only what the students do, but when they speak and what language they use.
- B. The teacher as manager, organizing the activities.
- C. The teacher as assessor, giving feedback and advice, as well as correction and grading.
- D. The teacher as participant (co-communicator) in an organized activity such as debate or role play.
- E. The teacher as prompter to encourage students to participate or make suggestions about how to proceed in an activity.
- F. The teacher as a source of language and knowledge.
- G. The teacher as instructor, actually teaching the new language points and training students in language skills

(Harmer, 1987:109).

2.3.6 Learner Roles in CLT

In the traditional Grammar-Translation Method teachers are dictators in class. Teachers deliver the contents of a textbook to students and students just copy the information into their notebooks. They passively receive the knowledge in the class. On the contrary, in CLT, learners play a central role in communication and interaction. They are advocated to participate in classroom activities actively. Learners have

greater autonomy in communicative activities; autonomy is where students take responsibility for their learning and undertakes all of the management tasks concerned with it. Learners come up with a mutual solution by exchanging ideas and opinions with each other. They help each other and learn from each other. In 1980 Breen and Candlin describe the learner's role within CLT in the following terms:

The role of learner as negotiator – between the self, the learning process, and the object of learning – emerges from and interacts with the role of joint negotiator within the group and within the classroom procedures and activities which the group undertakes. The implication for the learner is that he should contribute as much as he gains, and thereby learn in an interdependent way (Breen and Candlin, 1980:110).

3. Analysis and Discussion

In this section, the English lesson carried out by the Chinese teacher by means of applying CLT in English vocabulary teaching and learning in a comprehensive class in southern Sweden was observed from various aspects. Then the lesson as well as the effectiveness of CLT in English vocabulary teaching and learning was evaluated on the basis of class observation, results of dictation and an interview with the pupils' English teacher.

3.1 Strategies in Vocabulary Teaching

In this section, some strategies in vocabulary teaching used in the English lesson were set forth in light of the presentation order.

3.1.1 Basic Skills

In Presentation 1 and 2, the teacher taught ten new words instructed by the relevant second language acquisition research and the theory of vocabulary teaching and learning.

(1) Presentation 1

At the beginning of Presentation 1, she introduced one concrete noun—*inkpad*, by showing the concrete object. She pronounced the word in a clear way. Her intonation was standard. The pupils took turns pronouncing the word. The following example was the teaching process of the word—*inkpad*.

Example 1 T: What's this, S 1, do you know (showing *inkpad* to pupils)?

S1: Um, it's *inkpad*.

T: Good! It's an inkpad. Now please read after me the word—*inkpad*.

All Ss: *Inkpad*, *inkpad*(loudly).

T: I-n-k-p-a-d. Please repeat it.

All Ss: I-n-k-p-a-d (loudly).

Boy A: *Inkpad*(clear pronunciation).

Boy B: *Inkpad*(clear pronunciation).

All Girls: *Inkpad*(clear pronunciation).

All Boys: *Inkpad*(clear pronunciation).

While teaching the word, she wrote down the spelling of the word on the blackboard. Thus, various aspects of the word knowledge, including its spoken form, its written form and its conceptual meaning, were presented to the pupils.

She offered comprehension checks so as to make sure whether the pupils had understood it or not. For example, when she found the boy who emigrated from the Middle East two years ago and had studied English in the comprehensive class for only two years uttered the wrong pronunciation of the new word, she made corrective feedback patiently to help him pronounce it.

Example 2 T: The boy, please pronounce this word—*inkpad*.

A boy: Sorry, I don't know.

T: Ok, take it easy. Look at my mouth and read after me—*inkpad* (slowly but clearly).

A boy: *Inkpad* (better than the first time, but still not clear).

T: Uh, good, read after me again. You'll be better next time.

A boy: *Inkpad* (quite clear).

T: Very good(thumbs up)!

Obviously, this kind of modified interaction---comprehension checks, slower speech rate and gesture of thumbing up, was quite necessary and useful for the boy to learn the new word.

Secondly, *palm*, *thumb* and *nail* were presented. This time she taught them by means of demonstrating her own body parts. The following dialogue between the teacher and the pupils was the process of teaching the word---*nail*.

Example 3 T: What's this, boys and girls (showing her ten red nails to pupils).

Girl A: *Nail*. My mum has red *nails*.

All Ss: (laugh)

T: Yes, you're right. It's *nail*(laugh too). Read after me.

Girl A: *Nail*, n-a-i-l, nail.

All Ss: *Nail*, n-a-i-l.

T: Who had colorful nails?

Girl B: Me(stand up and laugh). I have pink nails.

T: Oh, good. Do you have colorful nails, Boy A?

All Ss: (laugh)

Boy A: No, no, only girls have colorful nails(laugh and shake his head).

This simple strategy--- showing her red nails, was very effective. Every pupil knew the meaning of the word quite clearly without the teacher's explanation. She made requests to clarify something that had not been understood in the process of teaching. When the pupils pronounced vague pronunciation, she corrected it immediately. When they did a good job, she immediately nodded and gave them compliment.

Example 4 T: What's this(raising a pupil's thumb)?

S1: Um, it's *thumb*(vague pronunciation).

T: *Thumb*(clear pronunciation). Please repeat it.

S1: *Thumb*(clear pronunciation).

T: Ok, good job.

Example 5 T: Could you pronounce the word---*thumb*, this boy?

Boy 1: *Thumb*(clear pronunciation).

T: Very good.

Through the modified interactions with the pupils, the teacher figured out how well they had learned the word.

(2) Presentation 2

With regard to the words—*analyse, regulation, fate, trade, tool* and *rule*, the teacher used another skill—looking up the words in the dictionary. These abstract English words can not be demonstrated through simple body language or shown through pictures. But it is impossible for the teacher to explain the words in Swedish. Luckily, these Swedish pupils' English standard is intermediate. They have learned a large number of English words and basic sentence structures, which offered the possibility for the teacher to use the dictionary for defining new words by means of other familiar words or putting them into English explanations where other words in the sentences are already shown.

The teacher also knew explanations of meanings should be simple and brief when a word was first met. It meant that words should be explained in a clear way without confusion. Or else, the pupils would be confused with the various meanings of the word. Therefore, when she asked the pupils to look up the words in the dictionary, the pupils were only required to tell her the basic meaning of the word.

Example 6 T: Now please open your dictionaries and look up the word—*tool*, boys and girls. I'll give you about five minutes. Then please tell me the basic definition of the word.

About five minutes later, many pupils found the definition of the word—*tool* in their dictionaries. The following was the dialogue between the teacher and the pupils:

Example 7 T: Could you explain the meaning of the word—*tool*, S 1?

S1: Yes, I can. It means that something held in the hands and used by workmen, for example: gardeners and carpenters.

T: Now do you understand the meaning of the word, boys and girls?

Many Ss: Yes(nod).

T: Then what're tools? Who could give me an example?

S 2: Machine (hands up).

T: Good example. Anything else?

S 3: Scissors(hands up).

S 4: Knife, brush.

S 5: Saw.

T: Good, very good, you're right. Tools mean that something is used by workmen.

The dialogue above showed that many pupils had understood the meaning of the word—*tool* with the help of the dictionary. The following word was *fate*. This time, she taught the new word by putting it into English explanations where other words in the sentences are already shown. The pupils were required to offer an example sentence of the word--*fate* as well as the basic definition of it. The dialogue between the teacher and the pupils was as follows:

Example 8 T: Boy A, now could you tell me the basic definition and an example sentence or phrase of the word—*fate*?

Boy A: Ok, um.....(pause) its definition is events that will happen in the future. Er, example sentence,he dreamed of becoming a musician, but *fate* decided in an other way.

(The teacher wrote down the definition and the example sentence on the board.)

T: Very good. Boy B, you understand what Boy A said?

Boy B: Yeah.

T: And you, Girl A?

Girl A: En(nod).

T: Ok, so this is another new word—*fate* we want to learn today.

She also used a traditional but still effective way—repetition in Presentation 2 because each word that one meeting with it is insufficient to memorize it.

Example 9 T: Please read after me—*analyse*(clearly and loudly).

All Ss: *Analyse*(loudly).

T: Now, boys, *rule*

Boys: *Analyse*(loudly).

T: Girls, this time, *rule*.

Girls: *Analyse*(a bit vague).

T: Aha, boys are better than girls.

In a word, in Presentation 1 and 2, by using three basic skills---showing concrete objects, demonstrating her own body parts and looking up words in the dictionary, the teacher taught the pupils ten new words and created a good beginning for the following communicative activities.

3.1.2 Contextualization

Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) states that learning words is not learning the linguistic forms only. More important, second language learners should know how to use the word in communication. That is to say, a situational context must be taken into consideration in the second language acquisition because it gives hints to meanings of the new words beyond a linguistic system, thus helping students to learn words appropriate to specific contexts.

Guided by the main features of CLT, the teacher designed an authentic communicative activity for the pupils--describing the pupils' own hand shapes to their

partner. Before she declared pair-work, she offered clear and brief explanations about the four new words. Then the pupils were allowed to talk about their own hand shapes to their partners. Many pupils were highly motivated since it was in a real situation which aroused their communicative desire greatly. Their attention was centered on the situational use of words of what was being said or written. They dealt with a variety of languages, rather than just spelling forms or grammatical use. They were very active in talking about each other's hand shapes. Two pairs selected from pair-work were analyzed and discussed as follows:

Pair 1: Boy A: Hello, B(shaking hands with B).

Boy B: Hi, show me your right hand.

Boy A: Um, your right hand is *conic*(clear pronunciation).

Boy B: No,.....(pause) I don't think so. It's *elementary*(clear pronunciation).

Boy B: Oh, maybe I made a mistake.

The two boys talked about their respective hand shapes fluently and their pronunciation was correct. It meant that they had not only mastered the linguistic forms of the two words, but also had the ability of using the target language appropriately in a given context. That is to say, their communicative competence was developed by means of the authentic communicative activity. They were not learning intentionally for the form of the words. Instead, they were integrated in this situation and naturally acquired the target language. The teacher praised them for their good performance in time after their performance was over.

Pair 2: Girl A: B, could you tell me my hand shape?

Girl B: Er, which one?

Girl A: The right one.

Girl B: Um, it's*philosophic*(vague pronunciation).

Girl A Yes, I think so, *philosophic*(clear pronunciation). What about yours?

Let me have a look.

Girl B: Well, it's *conic*, oh, no, no,.....sorry, square, square. It's square(vague pronunciation).

Girl A: You're right.

This pair was different from the former one. Girl B pronounced the two words—*philosophic* and square in an unclear way. It meant that she had not mastered the linguistic forms of the two words well. But Girl A and Girl B knew how to use the new words in an authentic activity. That is to say, they had the ability of using the target language appropriately like Pair 1. The teacher did not correct Girl B's pronunciation until their performance was over in order not to affect the normal communicative process, harmonious classroom atmosphere and the two girls' motivation.

3.1.3 Role-play

According to Littlewood (1980), role-play is the simulation of real-life situations in which pupils act as different roles in the communicative classroom. It gives pupils an opportunity to practice communicatively in different social contexts and in different social roles. Role-play is an excellent technique for communicative practice. It creates a relaxed atmosphere in the class, in which pupils' learning interest and confidence are motivated greatly.

In order to master two new adjectives—*impulsive* and *bad-tempered*, to consolidate what they had learned in Presentation 1, 2 and pair-work, the teacher designed the role-play. Before the teacher assigned the task, she explained the meanings of two adjectives in a clear and brief way. Then she stepped back, talked less, just observed the pupils' performance. On the contrary, the pupils became the centre of the classroom and played a leading role in the communicative activity. They participated actively in the role-play. The teacher walked among the groups during their preparations, sometimes offered them advice and assistance.

About twelve minutes later, many pairs put up their hands and volunteered to demonstrate their performances before the whole class. Here, two pairs selected from them were analyzed and discussed as follows:

Pair 3 B 1: Hi, are you interested in your future events?

B 2: Of course. Could you tell me my future events?

B 1: Uh, yes, it's free. Please show your right *palm* to me.

B 2: Ok (laugh and show the right hand to S 1).

B1: Aha, your hand shape is *elementary*, Er, you're *impulsive*,.....*bad-tempered*. You'll have three marriages. And you'll die till seventy years (laugh).

B 2: Oh, my God, it's impossible. You cheat me (laugh).

The whole process was consistent. The four new words—*palm*, *active*, *impulsive*, *bad-tempered* were used in the role-play. The communicative competence of using target language for communication appropriately is naturally acquired in the communication. As well as mastering target language knowledge and practising their communicative ability, the two boys developed their imagination. In addition, when the two boys performed it in front of the class, they gestured and made faces sometimes. Twenty pupils, the Chinese teacher, pupils' English teacher and the writer, all laughed. An atmosphere of relaxation, harmony and pleasure prevailed in the classroom. The teacher and all the pupils felt close and were not unfamiliar with each other like in Presentation 1 and 2. They did a good job. The teacher's gentle smile, nodding, and clapping her hands showed that she was quite satisfied with their good performance.

Pair 4 G 1: Come here, the fortune-teller.

B 1: Ok, little girl, you want to know your future events?

G 1: Yes (nod).

B1: Um, show me your right hand.

B1: You have long fingers,.....(pause) so you're quick-thinking, a bit nervous. Er, and you'll have eight children. Let me look at your life line. Um,.....you'll become a boss in the future.

G 1: Oh, I'll have a lot of money. Oh, thank you, bye!

In Pair 4's role-play, no new words were concerned with what they had learned in the lesson although the process was also consistent like Pair 3. Maybe they did not comprehend the teacher's instruction clearly. However, the teacher did not notice it and praised them like Pair 3. If the teacher figured out their weak points and told them to improve it next time, it would be better.

3.1.4 Summary of Strategies in Vocabulary Teaching

In the lesson the teacher used three kinds of strategies in vocabulary teaching: basic skills, contextualization and role-play. They affected each other and provided the pupils with opportunities to meet new words in different contexts so as to stretch their knowledge of the words--in a range of linguistic contexts, in association with discussion and negotiation and in vocabulary learning.

Observation on time distribution of these different strategies in the lesson showed that Presentation 1 and 2 took about twenty minutes, contextualization and the role-play took about thirty-seven minutes. Therefore, contextualization and the role-play were highlighted by the teacher, which exactly embodied the main features and principles of CLT.

3.2 Interaction in the Classroom

In the lesson, the teacher and the pupils communicated with each other in English most of the time. There were two kinds of interaction in the classroom, namely, teacher-learner interaction and learner-learner interaction.

3.2.1 Teacher-Learner Interaction

The teacher and the pupils communicated with each other mainly through a lot of conversation between them. Her attitudes towards the pupils' errors and mistakes are worth mentioning. While presenting new knowledge, she corrected the pupils' errors and mistakes in time.

Example 10 T: Please spell the word—*elementary*.

S 1: Ok, e-l-e-m-a-n-t-a-r-y.

T: Are you sure?

S 1: Oh, sorry, e-l-e-m-e-n-t-a-r-y.

Example 11 T: What shape is your right hand?

S2: It's *conic* (obscure pronunciation).

T: Pardon?

S2: *Conic*(clear pronunciation).

These two examples of modified interaction consisted of comprehension checks and feedback from the teacher. This kind of comprehension and corrective feedback was necessary and useful when the pupils put in new knowledge and reflects Long's (1996) thoughts about second language acquisition. He (1996) states that more emphasis should be placed on modified interaction during interaction in second language classrooms. Thus, students can gain access to new knowledge about the second language through support from the teacher. Furthermore, the demands of producing comprehensible input pushed pupils to go ahead in their development.

In the role-play, the teacher took a different attitude. This time she was very careful about how she should respond to the pupils, especially in feedback and correction. For example, when she gave feedback, the two pupils made the following mistakes. (1) *Your right hand is conic.* (2) *Oh, you are bad-temper.* Here, in (1) one pupil

pronounced the word “*conic*” wrongly; in (2) the other pupil omitted “ed” after ‘*bad-temper*’. These errors showed that the two pupils were learning new words, trying out ideas, attempting to communicate, making progress. They are developmental errors, representing a developmental stage when the pupils went through while learning new words. In fact, the teacher had some degree of tolerance as regards their errors, and did not interrupt their dialogue immediately. She told them how to do it correctly with a smile after the role-play was over, avoiding affecting students’ motivation. She knew that only in this way could the pupils confidently express what they wanted and not be afraid of losing face.

3.2.2 Learner-Learner Interaction

In Presentation 1 and 2, the pupils seldom interacted with each other. However, in pair-work and the role-play, they had a lot of time and opportunities to communicate with each other. They received lots of target language input by listening and speaking with their partners. They had much collaborative interaction. The following was an example of conversational interaction between three pupils in the role-play.

Example 12 S1: S 2, I act as fortune-teller, you customer, OK?

S2: Ok (nod).

S3: Could I join your group?

S1: No problem, you’re welcome. You and S2 are customers. I’m fortune-teller.

S1 and S2: (nod).

S1: Then what do we do next step?

S3: Er, let me think,.....we should use some of new words we learned just now in our role-play. The teacher mentioned it.

S1 and S2: Um, good idea.

In this example, the three pupils discussed heatedly and negotiated with each other in

the harmonious atmosphere. They came up with mutual solution by exchanging ideas and opinions with each other. Their spirit of team cooperation was developed through collaborative interaction with them. The following dialogue was another kind of conversational interaction between two pupils in the role-play.

Example 13 S1: Do you think what personality people with long fingers are?

S2: Um,*impulsive*, and they don't like *rules*, I think.

S1: No, I don't think so. I think they're *bad-tempered*, a bit nervous and sometimes worry about things too much.

S2: Um,really? I don't agree.

In this dialogue the two pupils consolidated target language knowledge and developed the communicative ability. Furthermore, they expressed their different views freely and exchanged different thoughts and ideas with each other without any restraint. Their individuality and personality was cultivated and developed by means of conversational interactions between them, which is in accordance with the humanistic educational view of CLT.

In brief, a majority of pupils actively participated in the communicative activities and communicated with each other, except that two pupils were unwilling to cooperate with others due to their introverted personality and lack of confidence. However, it did not affect the whole classroom atmosphere.

3.3 Teacher's Roles

Several roles are assumed by teachers in CLT; these are determined by the view of CLT adopted. In support of Harmer's principle (1987) and Breen and Candlin's theory (1980) about CLT teacher's potential role, the teacher's roles in the lesson were accessed from the following four aspects:

(1) Initiator

In Presentation 1, the teacher taught four new words. In Presentation 2, she imparted six abstract nouns. In pair-work five adjectives were introduced. In the role-play, the two adjectives describing people's personality were presented. All in all, in the lesson she taught the pupils seventeen new words, passing on new knowledge of target language to them. She carried out the basic function of CLT teacher well on the whole.

(2) Organizer

One of CLT teacher's important responsibilities is to organize the communicative activity. CLT teacher plays a vital role in classroom communicative activities although he or she talks less. In fact, the success of a classroom activity, to a great extent, depends upon the teacher's organizing capability.

Before the lesson, the teacher made an elaborate layout and a considerate amount of organization about the lesson in advance. She had a clear understanding of each step in the lesson, ranging from Presentation 1 to Homework. During the lesson, she combined each step together naturally. The whole lesson proceeded smoothly.

It was worthwhile to mention that she made great efforts to create authentic and vivid communicative environment and activities relating the language form to language learning. These classroom activities, such as describing the pupils' own hand shapes and predicting their partners' fates, were based on the pupils' needs and interests, which to a great extent, motivated the pupils' interest in what they were learning.

(3) Director

Directing students' performance and classroom practice is also CLT teacher's fundamental task. Guidelines for classroom practice (Littlewood 1981; Finocchiaro

and Brumfit 1983) suggest that during a classroom activity the teacher monitors and encourages the inclination to supply gaps in lexis, grammar and strategy but notes such gaps for later commentary and communicative practice.

Sometimes the teacher assumed the responsibility of a director well in the lesson. When the pupils prepared for the role-play, she offered them some advice and assistance when necessary.

However, observation showed that she did not give enough explanations to the pupils when introducing the abstract word--*regulation* in Presentation 2. The pupils still felt confused about the meaning of an abstract word even if dictionaries offered its basic definition and helpful example sentences. In addition, in the role-play the teacher gave them the instructions only once, which maybe resulted in a few pupils' misunderstanding.

(4) Facilitator

Teachers in communicative classrooms will find themselves talking less and listening more, becoming active facilitators of their students' learning. Facilitator means facilitating the process of learning, to make learning easier for students, to help them clear away roadblocks, to find shortcuts, to negotiate rough terrain.

In the lesson the teacher sometimes fulfilled a responsibility of being an active facilitator well. She stimulated the pupils' intrinsic motivation by setting up the vivid communicative activity –role-play rather than telling them about the meanings of the words.

Example 14 T: Well, boys and girls, are you interested in your fate? Now let's perform a role-play. One acts as a fortune teller, the other customer. The fortune teller predicts future events for the customer. You can choose

your partner freely.

However, she did not encourage a few timid and introverted pupils to participate in the role-play actively. She even showed a bit indifference to them. To some extent, they were neglected. The two pupils kept silent in the lesson. On the contrary, she preferred the active and extrovert pupils and often asked them questions with a smile.

3.4 Learners' Roles

Based on Breen and Candlin's theory (1980) about learners' roles in CLT classroom and the humanistic educational thought of CLT which focuses on cultivating the character of a person, taking the person-centered into account and valuing the development of individual potential and realization of self-value, the writer observed the pupils' roles in the lesson from different stages as follows:

In pair-work and the role-play the pupils played a central role. They were not regarded as passive receivers of target language knowledge any more like the traditional Grammar-Translation Method. On the contrary, they did most of the speaking. They were encouraged to participate in the communicative activities actively by the teacher. While preparing for pair-work and the role-play, they interacted with each other and discussed heatedly. They made their own decisions and choices about their partners, the content of pair-work and the role-play. They took the responsibility of their own learning. They were also actively engaged in negotiating meanings. They not only exchanged their different views and opinions with their partners freely, but also cooperated together in a harmonious atmosphere. They learned from each other. Therefore, in the interactive and collaborative learning activity, the pupils were communicators, negotiators and cooperators.

In Presentation 1 and 2, when the teacher presented the new words, she asked the pupils many questions although they did not communicate with each other. It was

eighteen pupils who had the opportunity of being asked by the teacher. Some of them even were asked twice. In pair-work and the role-play, it was thirteen pupils who demonstrated their performance in front of the whole class. In a word, the lesson was learner-centered and the pupils' roles were highlighted.

3.5 Feedback of Dictation

In order to assess how well the pupils had mastered the seventeen new words in the lesson, a dictation was arranged in the Teaching Building in the first floor after the lesson on 5th of May. All of the pupils participated in the dictation and were required to write down the seventeen new words one by one in twenty-five minutes, including the English spellings and the Swedish meanings. The sequence of dictation was as follows: *palm, inkpad, thumb, nail, active, philosophic, psychic, elementary, conic, regulation, analyse, fate, trade, rule, tool, impulsive, bad-tempered*.

When checking the results of the dictation, the pupils' English teacher, took the responsibility of checking the Swedish meanings since the teacher did not understand Swedish language.

Table 1 Accuracy of 17 new words

Words	Pupils Number	Words	Pupils Number
Palm	20	regulation	14
Inkpad	17	analyse	16
Thumb	20	fate	18
Nail	20	trade	18
Active	16	rule	19
Philosophic	15	tool	20
Psychic	16	impulsive	18
Elementary	14	bad-tempered	18
Conic	17		

Table 1 manifested the pupils' mastery numbers in light of each word. The data showed that all of the pupils had mastered the four words—*palm, thumb, nail* and *tool*. It meant that all of the pupils can write out the four words' spellings and meanings correctly. Nineteen had mastered *rule*. Eighteen of them had grasped *impulsive, fate, trade* and *bad-tempered*. Seventeen pupils had known *inkpad, conic*. Therefore, data analysis showed that a vast majority of pupils had mastered twelve new words in the lesson.

As for the left five words: *elementary, regulation, philosophic, psychic* and *analyse*, a few pupils had not mastered them quite well. Four pupils had written *analyse, psychic* and *active* wrongly. Five had not mastered *philosophic*. Six pupils had written down *elementary* and *regulation* in an incorrect way. Actually, among them, these words--*elementary, philosophic, psychic* appeared many times in the communicative activities. Does it mean that CLT is a failure in the lesson? The writer's interest was awakened. A detailed investigation and analysis was made with the help of the Swedish teacher. The result showed that those who did not master the correct spellings of these words wrote down the correct Swedish meanings of the words. It meant that they understood the meanings of the words through using them appropriately in a given context. But they did not master the right spellings of the words due to the long syllables. Therefore, the results of dictation exercise showed that CLT had some advantages in developing the pupils' communicative competence. However, the results can not be generalized because dictation exercise was only once.

3.6 Evaluation of the Lesson

Based on the observation of the writer from various aspects, the data analysis of the dictation exercise and the evaluation of the pupils' English teacher, the lesson carried out by the Chinese teacher was evaluated below:

The teacher had several advantages in the lesson. She integrated the views of CLT

into vocabulary teaching in the lesson. The lesson was in conformity with CLT features and principles on the whole. The teaching process was learner-centered. Genuinely meaningful language use was emphasized. A majority of pupils were given opportunities to perform communicative activities and practiced the communicative competence in the classroom. Language forms were addressed within a communicative context. Learning was related to the pupils' daily lives, which advocated the pupils' motivation. Techniques in vocabulary teaching in the lesson were various and effective. Feedback of dictation also showed that most pupils had mastered the seventeen new words.

Despite these obvious advantages, the lesson still possessed some potential disadvantages. For instance, when some groups demonstrated the performance in front of the class, the teacher focused on them so much that others were neglected. Therefore, a few boys were absent-minded, even chatted with their partners. Classroom discipline was a bit messy sometimes. When evaluating the performance of the pupils, the teacher's comments were over precise and vague. If she pointed out their advantages and disadvantages precisely, it would be better.

4. Conclusion

Vocabulary teaching and acquisition has assumed an important role since 1980s in second language teaching. Communicative Language Teaching, as an eminent second language teaching approach, lays emphasis on learning target language through communicative activities. The study which aims to evaluate the effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching in English vocabulary teaching and learning in a comprehensive class in southern Sweden is a new trial to the writer indeed.

Guided by the relevant theoretical background, the study which is composed of an English lesson's observation, a dictation and an interview demonstrates that compared with the traditional Grammar—Translation Method, Communicative Language Teaching based on many modern humanistic and communicative theories is effective in English vocabulary teaching and learning in many aspects:

- 1) In the CLT classroom much vocabulary is not taught in the form of wordlist of isolated words any more, but taught in authentic contexts. Vocabulary teaching focuses on developing communicative proficiency rather than commanding the forms of the target language.
- 2) CLT makes learners acquire vocabulary knowledge naturally, rather than learning intentionally. Apart from it, the modified target language input which is gotten from conversational interactions between the teacher and learners enables them to get better understanding of vocabulary knowledge.
- 3) CLT promotes learners' communicative competence and stimulates their inner motivation since the communicative activities are close and relevant to their daily life.

- 4) CLT makes learners adopt the responsibility to their own learning and encourages them to discover the forms and structures of target language for themselves.
- 5) CLT prompts the development of learners' spirit of team cooperation by means of the communicative activities and cultivates learners' individuality by expressing their different views and ideas freely in the conversational interactions between them.

Additionally, through the observation of the English lesson, the writer thinks that CLT makes great demands upon the professional skills and competence of teachers. CLT teachers need to have other abilities as well as the proficiency of target language, such as organizing ability, insight into learners. Therefore, it is recommended that second language teachers should enhance their standard in order to improve the effects in practical teaching.

However, there are some limitations to the study. Firstly, only one English lesson was observed. Secondly, dictation was only once. Therefore, there is still a large amount of study to be further conducted.

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Appendix: Summary of the Interview with the pupils' English Teacher

Question 1:

She heard of Communicative Language Teaching. It lays emphasis on communication with teachers and students in teaching process.

Question 2:

Her answer is "yes". She thinks that communication and interaction in the classroom will stimulate students' interests in learning.

Question 3:

She thinks that vocabulary plays an important role in English teaching. Vocabulary learning is the main task in second language acquisition..

Question 4:

Normally, she teaches vocabulary not isolated, but by putting vocabulary into sentences or in reading materials. In addition she mentioned that she offered incidental learning opportunities to enlarge the pupils' vocabulary, such as interesting American movies.

Question 5:

Her teaching style is a bit different from CLT. She does not often design many authentic or communicative activities in practical teaching.

Question 6:

She evaluated the lesson in a positive way on the whole. She praised the Chinese teacher's elaborate preparations in advance and amount of organizations in the lesson. She mentioned that the role-play which was related to their daily life gave her deep impression. She observed that many pupils showed great interest in the role-play. The atmosphere in role-play was relaxed and pleasant. She thought that the role-play was a

useful teaching technique. She will use it in the future teaching. Feedback of dictation showed most pupils had mastered the seventeen words. But she also mentioned the disadvantages of the lesson. Sometimes classroom discipline was a bit mess, especially in role-play. In Presentation 2 the teacher did not give enough explanations to the pupils when introducing some abstract words to them.