

ÇUKUROVA UNIVERSITY
THE INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING
(CLT) IN TURKISH EFL SETTING THEORY VS. PRACTICES**

Serdar Mehmet BAL

MASTER OF ARTS

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ÖZET**İNGİLİZCE’NİN YABANCI DİL OLARAK ÖĞRETİLDİĞİ TÜRKİYE’DE
ÖĞRETMENLERİN İLETİŞİMCİ DİL ÖĞRETİMİNİ ALGILAMALARI:
TEORİ VE UYGULAMA ARASINDAKİ KARŞITLIK****Serdar Mehmet BAL****Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi ABD****Danışman: Doçent Dr. Erdoğan BADA****Ağustos 2006, 67 sayfa**

Son otuz yıldan fazla bir süredir iletişimci dil öğretimi, ikinci dil öğretiminde ve yabancı dil öğretiminde en etkili dil öğretim metodlarının başında gelmektedir . Bu olgudan yola çıkarak, bu çalışma İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak öğretildiği Türkiye’de öğretmenlerin iletişimci dil öğretimi hakkındaki algılarını ve uygulamalarını değerlendirmek amacıyla yapılmıştır. Çalışma, Adana ilinde bulunan beş ilköğretim okulunda görev yapan yirmi İngilizce öğretmeni ile yürütülmüştür. Çalışmanın sonunda, çoklu veri toplama kaynaklarıyla öğretmenlerin teorisel bazda iletişimci dil öğretiminden haberdar olmalarına karşın, algı ve uygulamaları arasında bir zıtlık olduğu bulgusuna ulaşılmıştır. Ayrıca, araştırmanın sonunda, öğretmenlerin iletişimci dil öğretimini etkin bir şekilde uygulamalarını engelleyen benzer zorlukların olduğu ortaya çıkarılmıştır.

Bu çalışma, aynı alanda yapılan önceki çalışmaların bulgularıyla bütünlük gösterir. Bu bağlamda, literatürdeki çalışmaların çoğunluğu uygulamadaki bilgi eksiklikleri, yetersiz otantik materyal kullanımı, kalabalık sınıf mevcutları ve yoğun dilbilgisi içerikli öğretim programları gibi kısıtlayıcı etmenlerden dolayı öğretmenlerin iletişimci dil öğretimini etkili bir şekilde uygulayamadığını işaret etmiştir.

Bu araştırma, daha önceki araştırmalar gibi öğretmenlerin üniversitede öğrendikleri teorik bilgileri daha iyi özümseyerek pratiğe dökmeleri gerektiğini, ayrıca öz eleştiride bulunup kendi hatalarını ortaya çıkarabilmek için iletişimci dil öğretiminin etkin bir şekilde uygulandığı sınıfları gözlemlemeleri gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İletişimci Dil Öğretimi, İletişim Yetkinliği, Öğretmen Algıları, İngilizcenin İkinci Dil Olarak Öğretimi, İngilizcenin Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğretimi.

ABSTRACT**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE
TEACHING (CLT) IN TURKISH EFL SETTING: THEORY VS. PRACTICES****Serdar Mehmet BAL****Master of Arts, English Language Teaching****Advisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Erdoğan BADA****July 2006, 67 pages**

Over the past three decades, The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has been one of the most dominant methods in ESL and EFL communities. Based on this phenomenon, the purpose of this study was to evaluate teachers' perceptions and practices of CLT in Turkish EFL setting. The study was conducted at five different Public Primary Schools in the province of Adana with twenty English teachers. Via the multiple data collection sources it was found that even though the teachers are aware of CLT in terms of theoretical aspects, there is a discrepancy between their perceptions of CLT and their in-class practices. Furthermore it was figured out that there are common constraints among teachers which prevent them implementing the CLT activities effectively.

This significant research is consistent with existing research findings in the same topic. In this context, most of the studies in the literature pointed out that the constraints with teachers' lacking practical knowledge, in sufficient authentic material uses, large classroom sizes and grammar-based national syllabuses prevent the effective implementation of CLT activities in classrooms. In addition, this research, like previous studies in the literature, also reveals that English teachers in Turkey should require in-depth understanding for how to put practices into theories they learn at the ELT departments.

Moreover, English teachers in Turkey ought to observe classes in which CLT is implemented properly so that they can monitor themselves and figure out their failures.

Key Words: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Communicative Competence (CC), Teachers' Perceptions, English as a Second Language (ESL), English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

In English Language Teaching (ELT) methodology, “Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)” has been one of the most dominant and implemented methods in many EFL and ESL settings in Turkey as well as in other countries in the world. As Thompson (1996) stated, “whatever the situation may be as regards actual teaching practices, communicative language teaching (CLT) is well established as the dominant theoretical model in ELT”(p.9). However, until today, very few studies have been carried out in the field in order to interpret the CLT applications in EFL and ESL environments. In other words, CLT and teacher education were neglected (Savignon, 2003).

Within the same perspective, according to Karavas and Doukas (1996) despite the increasing popularity of the communicative approach, very few small-scale classroom studies have been carried out (p.187). Furthermore, Sato (2002) proposed that although CLT is widely supported through pre-service and in-service programs, workshops, and university courses, there is little evidence about what teachers understand from ‘CLT’ and how they apply it in the classroom (p.44). Furthermore, Mangubhai, Marland, Dashwood and Son, (2004) also emphasized that the little evidence that is available points to teachers having incomplete and imprecise notions of what CLT entails and to substantial differences within teachers’ understandings of CLT and between teachers and researchers (p.293).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Research carried out on teachers' perception of CLT practices in EFL and ESL environments generally points out that there is a discrepancy between teachers' theoretical perception of CLT and their in-class practices due to different challenges like teachers' misconceptions about CLT, their inadequacy in communicative competence, explicit grammar teaching, large classrooms and the educational system.

In this context, Sato (2002) stated that although CLT is versatile in terms of theory, most of the teachers are in dilemma in the application process.

Furthermore, Hird (in Lewis and Mc Cook, 2002, p.147) also stated that there is a contradiction between what teachers believe CLT to be and the way it has evolved.

In his study, Thompson (1996) discovered four misconceptions to be general among the teachers concerning the meaning of CLT:

- 1) CLT means not teaching grammar
- 2) CLT means teaching only speaking
- 3) CLT means pair work, which means role play
- 4) CLT means expecting too much from the teacher

According to Thompson (1996), although CLT is recognized as the the most effective approach by many applied linguists and teachers, there are still a number of misconceptions about what it entails (p.9). Furthermore, Sato and Kleinsasser's research (1999) showed that there is a contradiction between teachers' perceptions of communicative language teaching and their actual in-class practices in Australia because of the different challenges like deductive explanations of grammar points, large classrooms, education system, and teachers' fragmented knowledge of CLT.

Moreover, a study conducted by Sakui (2004) in Japan showed that although CLT is heavily supported by the ministry of education in Japan, the general outflow of the English lessons in this country are mainly based on teaching grammar and far more

foregrounded than CLT. Furthermore, in-class instructions and classroom management were all in Japanese. In addition, most of the time, teachers focus on grammar explanations, chorus reading, and vocabulary definitions.

In terms of teachers' inadequate communicative competence, Savignon (2003) figured out that although some teachers provide their learners with rich communicative tasks, most of the teachers still in hesitation about discussion of communicative ability.

Similarly, Sato (2002, p.45) states that "Nunan (1987), for example, investigated CLT as manifested in the classroom. He contented that although teachers were highly qualified, with graduate diplomas in TESOL, and had goals for communicative classes, there were few opportunities for genuine communicative language use".

In consequence, teachers' understanding and beliefs about crucial characteristics of CLT differed from those appearing in the literature on CLT (Mangubhai et al. 2004, p.292).

1.3. The Aim and Scope of the Study

CLT has been one of the most widely used language teaching methods in Turkey as well as in the world. As Doman (2005) stated, today CLT is the forerunner in the TESL/TEFL community (p.24).

However, the idea of CLT and teacher development has been mostly disregarded except in very few studies in the field. And this was reasserted by Savignon, (2003, p.61) when she stated that "in the literature, CLT and teacher education have not recieved adequate attention." The scarcity of such studies in literature, surely, did not escape the Turkish setting. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate teachers' perceptions and practices of CLT in Turkey. The data for this significant research was collected through questionnaires, in-class observations and interviews. The study was limited with 20 English teachers teaching English at different public schools in the province of Adana.

Based on the general scope of this research, Chapter 1 has presented a general introduction to the study. Chapter 2 provides the review of the literature including essential information on CLT and CC, a detailed description of EFL and ESL settings, and a review of related studies on the topic of CLT implementations in EFL environments. In Chapter 3, methodological issues are mentioned in detail. In Chapter 4 the findings and discussions are presented. Consequently, Chapter 5 presents the conclusion including the limitations and the implications of the study as well as the suggestions for future studies in the area of CLT in EFL setting.

1.4. Operational Definitions

The terms used in this research are as follows:

English as a Second Language (ESL): The teaching of English to speakers of other languages who live in a country where English is used as a first language.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL): The teaching of English to speakers whose first language is not English:

Communicative Competence (CC): Interrelated linguistic abilities which involve grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competences.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): A language teaching method which aims at focusing on communicative proficiency by replicating contextual and purposive features of genuine communication in the classroom.

1.5. Research Questions

The study seeks to find answers to the following questions:

1-How do teachers perceive CLT?

2-What are the significant constraints that teachers encounter in CLT

implementation?

3-Is there any discrepancy between what teachers theoretically know about CLT and how they really practice it in class?

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

Existing studies about the application of CLT in EFL and ESL settings mostly focus on the challenges that teachers encounter during in-class activities. The results of such studies mostly point out that there is a discrepancy between teachers' theoretical perception of CLT and their in-class practices. Furthermore, these contradictions mainly arise from the teachers' misconceptions about CLT, their inadequacy in communicative competence, explicit grammar teaching, large classrooms and educational system (Sato and Kleinsasser, 1999; Li, 1998; Thompson, 1996; Sakui, 2004; Burnaby and Sun, 1989; Sato, 2002).

This chapter will discuss CLT from different perspectives in the light of linguistics and language teaching methodology. Firstly, "communicative competence" and its role in CLT will be presented. Then, a theoretical framework of CLT will be drawn. Finally, CLT applications in ESL and EFL environments will be argued.

2.2. Communicative Competence in CLT Framework

Since the 1970s psychologists and linguists have placed emphasis on interpersonal relationships, the nature of communication and the interactive process of language. As a result, the language teaching profession has responded with methods that emphasize communicative competence, and that stress group work, interaction and cooperative learning. Teachers find themselves trying to move away from the teaching of rules, patterns and definitions "about the language" (linguistic competence) towards teaching students how to communicate genuinely, spontaneously and meaningfully in

the second or foreign language (communicative competence).

In essence, “communicative language teaching (CLT) refers to both processes and goals in classroom learning. The central theoretical concept in communicative language teaching is ‘communicative competence’, a term introduced into discussions of language use and second or foreign language learning in the early 1970s” (Savignon, 2002, p.1).

According to Richards and Rodgers (1986) “the primary units of a language are not merely its grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning as exemplified in discourse” (p.71).

CLT methodologies thus focus on developing learners’ communicative competence via communicative activities rather than solely providing explicit grammar teaching. According to Pica (2000) communicative methodology based on the notion that L2 competence cannot be defined by merely grammatical knowledge. It involves communicative uses as well (p.4). Furthermore, as Gibbons (2002) stated CC entails not only knowledge about language but the ability to use language, appropriately, in real life situations. Therefore, CC comprises much more than the traditionally taught areas of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation (Gibbons, 2002, p.1).

Prior to the mid-1960's linguistic competence was associated primarily with grammatical knowledge. However, from the 1960's onwards, the second language learner was thought to not only require a target language grammar capable of producing target language sentences but as requiring knowledge of the complex system of interdependent social and linguistic conventions which underpin the language (Richards and Rodgers, 1986).

In the same vein, the term “competence” was firstly proposed by Noam Chomsky in the 1960s under the influence of “transformational generative linguistics” tradition. As Chomsky (1965) stated that, “competence” emphasizes the linguistic knowledge that an ideal native speaker of a given language has.

According to Chomsky (1965);

Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interests and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance (p.3).

However, since Chomsky merely focused on the linguistic dimension and disregarded contextual aspect of the language, he was criticized by many linguists especially by Hymes in the beginning of the 1970s who proposed the term “communicative competence” or “sociolinguistic competence”.

According to Hymes, the speaking ability not merely comprises knowing the grammar of a language, but also knowing what to say to whom, when, and in what situations (Scarcella and Rebecca, 1992, p.68).

In this sense, Spolsky (1989) stated that since the development of communicative competence (CC) theory was a reaction to Chomsky's limited linguistics definition of the term “competence”, Hyme’s proposal of CC was much more appropriate to language methodologists.

According to Hymes:

Within the social matrix in which [a child] acquires a system of grammar, a child acquires also a system of its use, regarding persons, places, purposes, other modes of communication, etc.—all the components of communicative events, together with attitudes and beliefs regarding them. There also develop patterns of the sequential use of language in conversation, address, standard routines, and the like. In such acquisition resides the child’s sociolinguistic competence (or, more broadly, communicative competence), its ability to participate in its society as not only a speaking, but also a communicating member (in Chambers, 2002, p.10)

In this context, Canale and Swain (1980) formulated four discrete types of interrelated linguistic knowledge related to communicative competence (See Figure 1 below). According to Canale and Swain (1980), CC comprises:

- a) Grammatical competence
- b) Sociolinguistic competence
- c) Discourse competence
- d) Strategic competence

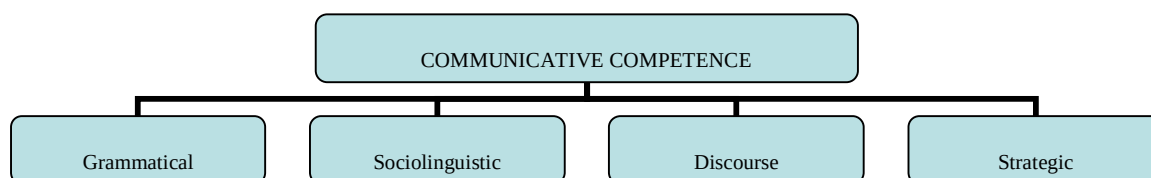


Figure 1: Components of Communicative Competence by Canale and Swain (1980-1983)

Later, Canale (1983) redefined these terms and made a clear distinction between CC which involves the knowledge of communication rules and actual communication which involves using these rules within real life situations. According to Canale (1983), grammatical competence implies the direct linguistic knowledge which enables us to comprehend and produce the literal meaning of utterances. Furthermore, sociolinguistic competence represents the ability to use the language properly in social contexts whereas the discourse competence is to bind the grammatical structures and the meaning for interpreting any kind of written texts. Besides, the strategic competence serves as the ability to manage verbal and non-verbal communications (p.7-8).

In his framework, Bachman (1990) took a broader view of the role of strategic competence than Canale and Swain. Bachman draws a line between strategic competence and what he calls “language competence”. According to Bachman (1990), communicative language ability comprises knowledge of structures, strategic competence, psychophysical mechanisms, context of situation, and language competence. Language competence is also sub-divided into organizational competence (grammatical and textual competences) and pragmatic competence (illocutionary and sociolinguistic competences).

Within the same framework, according to Alptekin (2002) grammatical competence refers to native speaker’s syntactic, phonologic and morphologic knowledge and using this linguistic knowledge to produce well-formed words and sentences. Furthermore, sociolinguistic competence deals with social interactions of the individuals within a social context. Besides, discourse competence is the ability to deal with the extended language use in context (p.57–58).

In the same perspective, Savignon (2002) defined grammatical competence as to represent the ability to recognize the lexical, morphological, syntactic and phonological features of a language, and manage to use these features to interpret and form words and sentences. Furthermore, she described discourse competence as a linguistic ability to analyze a series of utterances or written words or phrases within a text. Moreover, according to Savignon, sociocultural (sociolinguistic) competence represents comprehending social context in which language is used, i.e. the roles of the participants, the information they share, and the function of the interaction (p.9-10). Savignon's (2002, p. 8) model of components of communicative competence is presented below:

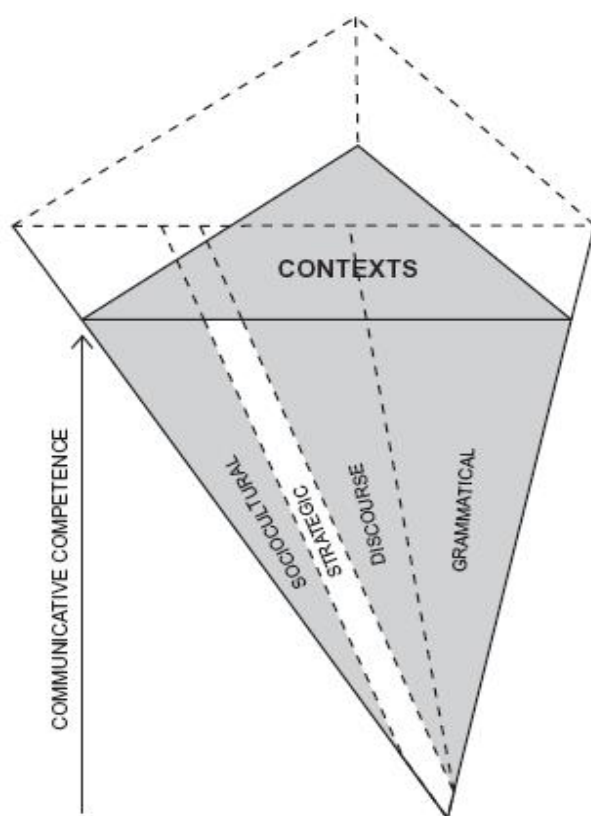


Figure 2: Components of Communicative Competence by Savignon's (2002)

It is very crucial that, in addition to Canale and Swain (1980) and Bachman (1990), Savignon (2002) extended the idea of “strategic competence”. According to Savignon (2002) “the coping strategies that we use in unfamiliar contexts, with constraints arising from imperfect knowledge of rules, or such impediments to their application as fatigue or distraction, are represented as strategic competence” (p.10).

2.3. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Over the past four decades, contemporary approaches to foreign language teaching were mainly influenced by a general approach widely known as the ‘Communicative Language Teaching’ (CLT) (Meskill and Anthony, 2005). The origins of CLT are to be found in the mid-1960s, when British applied linguists began to question the theoretical assumptions of traditional approaches (Richards and Rodgers, 1986, p.64).

The studies of the European Council and the contributions of many British applied linguists to the communicative approach to language teaching, and the speed with which it gained space among British language teaching instructors, gave the movement prominence nationally and internationally. Thus, this new language teaching method became known as the CLT (Richards and Rodgers, 1986, p.65).

From a theoretical perspective, it is very important that “the learning theory underlying CLT is humanistic in nature” (Hu 2002, p.95). In other words, it is originated from a multidisciplinary perspective that comprises linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology, and educational research (Savignon, 2002; Hu, 2002).

From a methodological perspective, in contrast to traditional or grammar based approaches, CLT highlights communicative events rather than grammatical forms via learners’ social interactions. In that sense, according to Segolawitz and Lightbown (1999), “CLT methodologies emphasize genuine communication, that is, communication based on a real desire by the learner to understand and communicate meanings” (p.54). Therefore, according to Savignon (2004) the main objective of CLT has been the elaboration and application of programs and methodologies that promote the development of functional language ability through learners’ participation in communicative event (p.4).

Furthermore, in CLT methodologies, language techniques are formulated to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, productive and purposeful use of language. In this context, Lightbown and Spada (2004) stated that the main tenet of CLT is to achieve communicative proficiency by replicating contextual and purposive features of

real communication. Furthermore, Rodgers (2001) pointed out that “the most salient feature of the CLT classroom is its realistic use of the English language; both the activities employed and the materials used aim to be as authentic as possible” (p.3). In addition, Hu (2002) also figured out that “communicative language teaching puts the emphasis on a more authentic use of language for meaning and communication” (p.95). Moreover, Meskill and Anthony (2005) also stated that within the CLT framework language is best learned through the active negotiation of meaning (p.90).

In this context, Brown’s (2001: 43) following interconnected characteristics of CLT provide a useful overview:

- 1- Classroom goals are focused on all of the components (grammatical, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic) of communicative competence. Goals therefore must intertwine the organizational aspects of language with the pragmatic.
- 2- Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus, but rather aspects of language that enable the learner to accomplish those purposes.
- 3- Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.
- 4- Students in a communicative class ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts outside the classroom. Classroom tasks must therefore equip students with the skills necessary for communication in those contexts.
- 5- Students are given opportunities to focus on their own learning process through an understanding of their own styles of learning and through the development of appropriate strategies for autonomous learning.

6- The role of the teacher is that of facilitator and guide, not an all-knowing bestower of knowledge. Students are therefore encouraged to construct meaning through genuine linguistic interaction with others.

In the same vein, according to Nunan (1991) there are five common characteristics of CLT classrooms:

1- An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language;

2- The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation;

3- The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language but also on the learning process itself;

4- An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning;

5- An attempt to link classroom language learning to language activation outside the classroom (p. 279).

Furthermore, according to Yang and Cheung (2003), CLT methodologies advocate:

1- Emphasis on purposeful and meaningful activities

2- The use of authentic elements

3- The use of the extra materials besides textbook activities

4- Avoiding from mechanical drills in pair or group work activities

5- Diversity of activities (p.17-18)

According to Rodgers (2001), CLT classrooms aim at a broad set of principles such as:

- 1- Learners learn a language via communication.
- 2- Authentic and purposeful communication should be the goal of classroom activities.
- 3- Fluency should be the important side of communication.
- 4- Communication comprises the integration of different language skills.
- 5- Learning is creative, constructive and procedural, and comprises trial and error (p.1).

2.4. Teachers' and Students' Roles in Communicative Language Teaching

As it was mentioned before, CLT is an extension of CC. In essence, CC allows the individual to participate in various roles, various situations and deal with various topics appropriately. It relates to the speaker's knowledge of socio-linguistic rules for the appropriate use of the language. The emphasis placed on CC in the classroom clearly depends on the students' reason for learning the language, but if they are looking to work and function in the target culture, CC is going to be vital to their progress. It is therefore, CLT is viewed as learner-centered and experience-based approach.

In this context, according to Gray (2001), "the specific modern languages focus center upon classroom use of target language and the development of communication with and between pupils" (p.73). Therefore, from a theoretical perspective, the CLT is based on innatist and interactionist theories of language learning and emphasizes the communication of meaning both between teacher and students and among the students themselves (Lightbown and Spada, 2000, p.40). In other words, CLT proposes that students should be negotiators, communicators, discoverers, and contributors of knowledge and information (Hu, 2002, p.95-96). According to Mangubhi et al. (2004), in CLT teachers serve more as facilitators and participants rather than being in a traditional didactic position; and students are actively involved in interpretation, expression and negotiation of meaning (p. 292). In that sense, teacher is a need analyst

and task designer whereas the students are improvisers and negotiators (Rodgers, 2001, p. 2). Thus, “the students learn how to learn, and as a result, they take responsibility for their own learning (Rodgers, 2001, p.4).

It is very crucial that in any CLT activities, students are supposed to interact with each other through the “group work activities”. Thus, the students are exposed to purposeful and authentic language use rather than mechanical practice of language drills (Larsen-Freeman, 1986. p.13).

In the same vein according to Thompson (1986), during the CLT activities, teachers usually try to use practical tasks such as pair work and role play. It is really helpful for learners in language learning to make sure certain meaning of knowledge in a text and to improve understanding certain message from the text and to confirm certain idea which is not used to learner previously. As learners practice various pair work with their partner they will use a language in more natural way in the end. To make a communicative classroom effectively, teachers should provide not only pair work but also various tasks such as to do a grammatical exercise, solve a problem, analyze the new language structures in a text, prepare a questionnaire for other member of the class or agree on the opinion they want to present to the class. In this stage, teacher should be careful to provide and design certain classroom activities to their learners due to the fact that communicative activities seem like games, not real learning.

According to Deckert (2004), based on student centeredness, the CLT requires low profile teacher roles, constant pair work or small group problem solving, students responding to authentic texts, extended exchanges on versatile topics, and the implementation of the four basic skills, namely speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The CLT discourages teacher centeredness, quizzing of memorized material, and detailed commentary on forms of English (p.13).

In consequence, CLT implementations often demand teachers to use less teacher-centered classroom management skills. Furthermore, teachers are responsible for organizing the classroom as a setting for communication and communicative

activities (Richards and Rodgers, 1986,p.78).

In addition, CLT activities have shifted language classrooms' focus from form to function and from teacher to learner (Pica, 2002, p.4).

From that point of view, unlike traditional and teacher-centered approaches, CLT is against the teacher dominance in the classroom and supports a more equal relationship among the teachers and the students (Hu, 2002, p.95-96).

In the literature term traditional and teacher-centered approaches are generally used to refer various language teaching methods, comprising the Grammar translation method, Direct method and Audio Lingual method .Table 1 gives a brief explanation of the three traditional approaches:

TRADITIONAL APPROACHES	MAIN FEATURES	LANGUAGE LEARNING

Grammar-translation method	Translation	-Memorization -Emphasis on writing and reading
Direct method	Oral practice	-No translation -Memorization -Emphasis on speaking and listening
Audio-lingual method	Repetition	-Grammatical structures -Emphasis on listening, speaking and writing

Table 1: Overview of the Three Traditional Approaches (Richards,Rodgers, 1986)

The oldest traditional approach being referred to is the Grammar-translation method (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). The Grammar-translation method represents the tradition of language teaching adopted in western society and developed over centuries of teaching not only the classical languages such as Latin and Greek, but also foreign languages. The focus was on studying grammatical rules and morphology, study, doing written exercises, memorizing vocabulary, translating texts from and prose passages into the language.

According to Ellis, (1990) The main characteristics of the Grammar –translation method are:

- 1-Classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little active use of the target language;
- 2-Much vocabulary is taught in the form of lists of isolated words;
- 3-Long, elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given;
- 4-Grammar provides the rules for putting words together, and instruction often focuses on the form and inflection of words;
- 5-Reading of difficult classical texts is begun early;
- 6-Little attention is paid to the context of texts, which are treated as exercises in grammatical analysis;
- 7-Often the only drills are exercises in translating disconnected sentences from the target language into the mother tongue;
- 8-Little or no attention is given to pronunciation.

To sum up, in the Grammar-translation method the emphasis is on writing and reading, and speaking and listening skills are generally disregarded. The restricted view taken by the Grammar-translation method is probably the reason why it was placed by methods that emphasized all four skills. In addition, the Grammar translation method does nothing to promote the students' communicative skills (Richards and Rodgers, 1986; Ellis,1990).

While Henri Gouin's *The Art of Learning and Studying Foreign Languages*, published in 1880, can be seen as the bases of modern language teaching methods with its 'naturalistic' approach, the credit for popularising the Direct Method usually goes to Charles Berlitz, although he introduced it as the Berlitz Method.

The basic premise of the Direct Method was that one should attempt to learn a

second language in much the same way as children learn their first language. The method emphasised oral interaction, spontaneous use of language, no translation between first and second languages, and little or no analysis of grammar rules (Richards and Rodgers, 1986).

Richards and Rodgers summarized the principles of the Direct method as follows (2001, p.12)

- 1-Classroom instruction was conducted exclusively in the target language;
- 2-Only everyday vocabulary and sentences were taught;
- 3-Oral communication skills were built up in a carefully graded progression organized around questions-and-answer exchanges between teachers and students in small intensive classes;
- 4-Grammar was taught inductively;
- 5-New teaching points were taught through modelling and practice;
- 6-Concrete vocabulary was taught through demonstration, objects, pictures; Abstract vocabulary was taught through association of ideas;
- 7-Both speech and listening comprehension were taught;
- 8-Correct pronunciation and grammar were emphasized.

To sum up, Instead, the importance of conversation or oral practice is highlighted. The emphasis is thus no longer on reading and writing, but on speaking and listening. Usually oral communication comprises a short talk or speech about a certain topic and therefore it entails very little, or no interaction or communication. The Direct method also relies on memory, as well as on association between form and meaning (Richards and Rodgers, 1986).

The Audiolingual method is derived from "The Army Method," so called because it was developed through a U.S. Army programme devised after World War II

to produce speakers proficient in the languages of friend and foes.

In this method, grounded in the habit formation model of behaviourist psychology and on a Structural Linguistics theory of language, the emphasis was on memorisation through pattern drills and conversation practices rather than promoting communicative ability.

The basic principles of the Audiolingual method are :

- 1-New material is presented in dialogue form;
- 2-There is dependence on mimicry, memorization of set phrases, and overlearning
- 3-Structures are sequenced by means of contrastive analysis taught one at a time;
- 4-Structural patterns are taught using repetitive drills;
- 5-There is little or no grammatical explanation. Grammar is taught by inductive analogy rather than by deductive explanation;
- 6-Vocabulary is strictly limited and learned in context;
- 7-There is much use of tapes, language labs, and visual aids;
- 8-Great importance is attached to pronunciation;
- 9-Very little use of the mother tongue by teachers is permitted;
- 10-Successful responses are immediately reinforced;
- 11-There is a great effort to get students to produce error-free utterances;
- 12-There is a tendency to manipulate language and disregard content. (Ellis, 1990)

Consequently, the Audio-lingual method is “linked to behaviorist psychology” in its orientation and a prominent technical feature is the use of repetition. Drilling grammatical structures forms the backbone of the Audio-lingual method. Language is viewed as a habit, and language learning is thus seen as the learning of a set of habits.

Repetition is necessary as reinforcement and to assist in forming habits (Richards and Rodgers, 1986, p.50). Over time, the popularity of the Audio-lingual method has declined, as, among other things, practitioners found that learners are unable to use the skills taught in the real world outside the classroom. Furthermore, many learners found Audio-lingual study method boring and unsatisfying (Richards and Rodgers, 1986, p.59).

2.5. Communicative Language Teaching in EFL and ESL Settings

A study conducted by Yang and Cheung (2003) in Hong Kong secondary school EFL setting showed that many constraints have deterred secondary school English teachers from using CLT in their classes. These include large classroom size, lack of training in communicative techniques, and mistaking any group work for communicative teaching.

Another crucial study was carried out by Li (1998) in order to investigate South Korean teachers' perception of CLT in EFL environments. The study was conducted in Canadian university with 18 South Korean secondary English teachers, who were at a training program in Canada. The participants were given a questionnaire. Furthermore, 10 participants were also interviewed by Li (1998). As a result of the study, he pointed out that there was a contradiction between what CLT demanded and what the EFL conditions in many countries, such as South Korea, allowed. He defined that these contradictions arose from:

- (a) educational values and attitudes
- (b) students' attitudes
- (c) teachers' attitudes
- (d) pre-service teacher education
- (e) local educational growth

Furthermore, he also figured out that difficulties caused by teachers, students,

educational system and CLT itself prevented teachers from implementing CLT successfully during in-class activities in South Korea. He subtitled these difficulties as follows:

1. Difficulties caused by teachers:

- (a) Deficiency in spoken English
- (b) Deficiency in strategic and sociolinguistic competence
- (c) Lack of training in CLT
- (d) Few opportunities for retraining in CLT
- (e) Misconceptions about CLT
- (f) Little time for and expertise in material development

2- Difficulties caused by students:

- (a) Low English proficiency
- (b) Little motivation for communicative competence
- (c) Resistance to class participation

3. Difficulties caused by the educational system:

- (a) Large classes
- (b) Grammar-based examinations
- (c) Insufficient funding
- (d) Lack of support

4. Difficulties caused by CLT itself:

- (a) CLT's inadequate account of EFL teaching

(b) Lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments

In addition, he also emphasized that crowded classrooms caused many problems in terms of teachers' authority and classroom management. Therefore, it significantly prevented teachers from implementing CLT in a successful way in South Korean secondary schools. Moreover, Li (1998) also expressed that all 18 participants of the study revealed that although they had the theoretical notion of CLT, they had no practical experiences in terms of methodological issues of CLT.

A two-phase project was conducted by Mangubhai, Dashwood, Berthold, Flores, and Dale (1998) with 39 participants in Australia in order to evaluate teachers' understanding and beliefs about CLT. In the first phase of the study, teachers were asked to complete a questionnaire. In the second phase, follow-up interviews were conducted. The findings showed that teachers' understanding and beliefs about some crucial characteristics of CLT differed from those appearing in the literature on CLT (Mangubhai et al. 2004, p.292).

Choi (1999) investigates the communicative language teaching of English as a foreign language from teachers' perspectives in Korea middle school classrooms. The purpose of the descriptive survey research is to explore Korean teachers' perceptions about the main objectives of English teaching as well as teachers' practices of CLT in classroom instruction. The result shows that Korean EFL teachers have positive perceptions about the concepts of CLT. However, the teachers reported that there were some discrepancies between teachers' perceptions about CLT and their teaching practices.

Sato and Kleinsasser's (1999) research showed us that there is a contradiction between teachers' perceptions of communicative language teaching and their actual in-class practices in Australia. They figured out that the teachers mostly practiced grammar-based approaches rather than communicative ones. Furthermore, they emphasized that teacher' perception of CLT could be charactericized under four main headings:

- 1) CLT is about learning to communicate in the second language.

- 2) CLT uses mainly speaking and listening.
- 3) CLT involves little grammar instruction.
- 4) CLT uses activities that are time consuming.

Consequently, teachers had fragmented knowledge of CLT, and their beliefs about language teaching and learning were based on their own second language learning and teaching experiences as opposed to formal knowledge.

Furthermore, observations explained that few classes were genuinely communicative. Most of the classes were teacher-centered with few interactions among pupils. Grammatical structures were explained deductively and mechanically. Interview data revealed the constraints these teachers faced in their efforts to apply CLT. These constraints were divided into two main types:

CLT challenges and organizational challenges. The CLT constraints included the teacher's role in context, integrating language skills, and evaluating them. The organizational constraints comprised lack of school support, preparation time, materials, or in-service programmes, as well as difficulty with classroom management (Sato, 2002).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the methodological structure of the study is presented. The chapter outlines the research design, followed by a description of the participants, the description of the schools, the instruments used, procedure for data collection, and lastly a description of how the data were analyzed.

3.1. Research Design

Recently the field of ESL/EFL has begun to recognize the importance of exploring the cognitive dimensions of how language teachers' thoughts, judgments, and perceptions influence the nature of language instruction (Richards and Rodgers, 1986; Nunan, 1990). In this context, this significant study mainly focused on teachers' feelings and personal experiences about the application of CLT in Turkish classrooms. Thus, a qualitative research design was preferred by the researcher.

According to Fossey, Harvey, McDermott and Davidson, (2002, p. 723) "qualitative research methods have origins within diverse disciplines, including anthropology, sociology and psychology." In that sense, qualitative research paradigm provides the researcher with an insightful evaluation of the natural phenomenon like individual perspectives and experiences. In other words, "Qualitative research aims to address questions concerned with developing an understanding of the meaning and experience dimensions of humans' lives and social worlds" (Fossey et al., 2002, p.717). Within the same perspective, according to Nunan (1992) qualitative research is "concerned with understanding human behavior from the actor's own frame of reference" (p.5). Furthermore, qualitative research design collects the data through semi structured questionnaires, observations and in-depth interviews. Moreover, it is very crucial that it concerns the impact of context and setting on participants' perceptions. In addition, the multiple data sources allow for triangulation of data to reduce bias and at

the same time to develop a deeper understanding of the issues under study (Creswell, 1998).

Hoepfl (1997) defined the five main characteristics of a qualitative research:

- 1- Qualitative research uses the natural setting as the source of data. The researcher attempts to observe, describe and interpret settings as they are, maintaining empathic neutrality
- 2- The researcher acts as the human instrument of data collection.
- 3- Qualitative researchers predominantly use inductive data analysis.
- 4- Qualitative research reports are descriptive, incorporating expressive language and the presence of voice in the text.
- 5- Qualitative research has an interpretive character, aimed at discovering the meaning events have for the individuals who experience them, and the interpretations of those meanings by the researcher.

Consequently, throughout the study the data was collected via questionnaires, lesson observations, interviews in order to answer the following research questions:

- 1) How do teachers perceive CLT?
- 2) What are the significant constraints that teachers encounter in CLT implementation?
- 3) Is there any discrepancy between what teachers theoretically know about CLT and how they really practice it in class?

3.2. Participants

The study was conducted with twenty English teachers. The participants were selected equally from five different public primary schools located in Seyhan and Yüreğir districts of Adana. The participants' credential data is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Participants' Credentials

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15	P16	P17	P18	P19	P20
Gender	M	F	F	M	M	F	F	F	F	M	F	M	F	F	M	M	M	F	F	M
Age	Over33	Over 33	25-32	25-32	22-24	25-32	Over 33	22-24	Over33	25-32	Over33	Over33	Over33	25-32	22-24	25-32	25-32	Over33	Over33	22-24
Years of Experience	15	20	5	8	2	9	17	3	8	5	10	19	22	7	1	10	6	14	12	2
Educational Background	BA	BA	BA	BA	BA	BA	BA	BA	BA	BA	BA	BA	MA	BA	BA	BA	BA	MA	BA	BA

*In table 2 above, “M” stands for “Male”, “F” for “Female”, and “BA” for “Bachelor of Arts”, and “MA” for “Master of Arts”.

3.3. Setting

The study was carried out at five different public primary schools which were selected through a clustered sampling method in different parts of the Seyhan and Yüreğir districts of Adana, Turkey. The demographic data about the selected schools is presented in Table 3:

Table 3: The Demographic Data About The Selected Schools

School	District	Population of the students	Population of the English teachers	Classroom sizes
School 1	Seyhan	1700	5	45 or more
School 2	Seyhan	1200	4	35-45
School 3	Yüreğir	1500	4	35-45
School 4	Yüreğir	1200	3	45 or more
School 5	Yüreğir	1500	4	45 or more

3.4. Instruments

This study used naturalistic inquiry to elicit data related to teachers' perceptions of CLT and their in-class practices in Turkish EFL setting. The purpose of this study is thus well suited for qualitative research methods. The study adapted instruments from Aleixo's (2003) research related to the teachers' perceptions of CLT use in Brazil.

The adapted instruments were questionnaire, observation checklist and an interview form. The instruments were adapted in order to make them relevant to the purpose of the study. This combination of several data collection strategies or methods is called triangulation which involves corroborating evidence from different sources to shed light on a particular theme or issue. In addition, triangulation in qualitative research is important to validity issues such as checking the truthfulness of the information collected (Creswell, 1998).

3.5. Procedures

The first phase of the study consisted of the process of obtaining permission from the Ministry of Education through the District Offices. At the second phase, the researcher met the 20 participants at five different public primary schools, where the participants were working as English teachers. The participants were given details of the research, and then were asked to fill out the questionnaire.

It is very important that, during these mutual meetings, the participation was voluntary, and no imposition was made on the participants. Eventually, the participants were also given the opportunity to ask questions about the study. Afterwards, each participant was interviewed mutually at the school to arrange for class observation times.

Throughout the second phase of the study the researcher observed each participant in his or her class. Each participant was observed within a period of 45 minute lesson. The in-class observations took nearly eight weeks. At the same time, the researcher organized the notes taken from the in-class observations to shape extra questions for the post-observation interviews.

Consequently, at the final phase of the study each of the participants was interviewed by the researcher. The interviews were scheduled with each participant after in-class observations, and were applied informally. During interviews, the participants gave information regarding their different teaching experiences, their perceptions of CLT, their specific observed situations in class, and different materials prepared for the lessons.

3.6. Questionnaire

The main purpose of the questionnaire (illustrated in Appendix A) was to give the researcher necessary information about the participants as well as their general understanding of CLT. The questionnaire included specific questions about the participants' age, their academic backgrounds and teaching practices. There were also

open-ended items in the questionnaire, which aimed to define the participants' perceptions of CLT as well as their ELT practices and language proficiency in English. According to Merriam (1998) open format questions are those that ask for unprompted opinions. In other words, there are no predetermined set of responses, and the participants are free to answer whatever they chooses. Open format questions are necessary for soliciting subjective data or when the range of responses is not tightly defined. An obvious advantage is that the variety of responses should be wider and more truly reflect the opinions of the respondents.

A total of 20 randomly selected English teachers from five different public primary schools were given the questionnaire, which was prepared and responded to in English. Another reason for applying this questionnaire was to understand more about the participants' training background, their ELT experiences in various methods, and reasons that influence their perceptions of CLT in Turkish EFL setting.

3.7. In-Class Observation

The in-class observation is necessary for the data gathering process. Primary characteristic of observation is that it involves the direct study of behaviors by simply watching the subjects of the study without intruding upon them and recording certain critical natural responses to their environment (Rea and Parker, 1997; p. 3). Creswell (1998) suggests that a researcher could gather field notes by conducting an observation as a participant observer Merriam (2001) suggests that observation becomes a research tool if it serves a formulated research purpose.

It is very important that observer bias may occur when the observer's own perceptions and beliefs influence observations and interpretations, while observer effects occur when the people being observed behave differently just because they are being observed (Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh, 2002).

In the study, after the participants were selected, in-class observation started. A total of eight weeks of observation was done in March and May 2006 with. Each participant was observed within a 45 minute lesson period. Via the observation sessions, the researcher was able to see the authentic teaching activities and teachers' behaviors as well as the teacher-student interaction. Moreover, the observation also worked as an

instrument to check responses from questionnaires with the actual events of the classroom.

During all observation sessions, observation checklist was utilized. This checklist included specific items about teachers' observable behavior, and activities in the classroom. In consequence, the application of the checklist (illustrated in Appendix B) also served to focus on the CLT characteristics and the organization of the data observed. The checklist was applied together with note taking of in-class attitudes and behaviors.

3.8. Interviews

Apart from observation, interviews were also used to collect information that would have been difficult retrieve in another. Interviewing is necessary when the required information about feelings, beliefs, perceptions and opinions cannot be observed (Merriam, 2001). In this study the interview was designed to elicit information that revealed the interviewees' perceptions of CLT.

According to Merriam (2001), interviewing is the best technique to use when conducting a qualitative research. Therefore, this study used semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured formats assume that individual respondents define the issues in unique ways. On the other hand, unstructured interviews take a skilled researcher to handle the great flexibility demanded by the unstructured interview. Furthermore, the problem with using a structured interview in qualitative research is that rigidly adhering to predetermined questions may not allow the researcher to access participants' perspectives and understandings of the issue .Instead the researcher gets reactions to the investigator's preconceived notions of the ideas (Merriam, 2001).

During the study a total of twenty participants were interviewed. The interviews lasted nearly one hour and were carried out in each participant's school. The purpose of the interviews was to provide the researcher with an in-depth understanding of teachers' perceptions of CLT in Turkish EFL setting. Moreover, the interviews also worked as an instrument to triangulate the data during observations. During the interview phase,

eleven open-ended items (illustrated in Appendix C) were asked. The participants were able to review those questions before the interview was carried out. Furthermore, without any limitation, they freely explained their views. Most of the items focused on teachers' perceptions of their experiences using CLT in EFL environments.

Consequently, with the aim of gathering accurate data, all interviews were recorded with the participants' permission, and later transcribed by the researcher for content analysis.

3.9. Data Analysis

The purpose of the data analysis is to bring meaning, structure, and order to the data. Interpretation requires acute awareness of the data, concentration, and openness to subtle undercurrents of social life (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

Qualitative research methods involve the systematic collection, organization, and interpretation of textual material derived from different data sources. One way of doing this is by content analysis: drawing up a list of coded categories and each segment of transcribed data into one of these categories (Malterud, 2001; Greenhalgh and Taylor, 1997). In this context, Content analysis has been defined as a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding. Content analysis enables researchers to shift through large volumes of data with relative ease in a systematic fashion. It can be a useful technique for allowing us to discover and describe the focus of individual, group, institutional, or social attention. It also allows inferences to be made which can then be corroborated using other methods of data collection (Creswell, 1998; Merriam, 2001)

According to Patton (1990), the main purpose of content analysis is to examine what is there and label it. The designation of these categories provided the investigator with a manageable way of describing the empirical complexities of summarizing hundreds of pages of questionnaire, interview or observation transcriptions.

In the same vein, this study analyzed the data via content analysis technique in order to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within texts or sets of texts.

Thus, the researcher quantified and analyzed the presence, meanings and relationships of such words and concepts, then made inferences about the messages within the texts.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Introduction

The data reveals that the English teachers participated in the study generally did not apply CLT activities in their EFL classrooms. Furthermore, they consumed much time on explicit grammar teaching and reading activities rather than CLT practices. In other words, teachers in Turkish EFL settings are generally unfamiliar and inadequate with CLT practices. In addition, the discrepancy between teachers' theoretical perceptions of CLT and their ineffective in-class practices may prevent them from implementing CLT principles in their classrooms.

However, CLT is based on the theory of language learning that comprehensible input, i.e. language that students can understand, and negotiation of meaning, i.e. interaction between speakers who change their speech and use other techniques in order to ease communication, is necessary for L2 acquisition. CLT emphasizes the communication of meaning between teacher and students and among the students themselves in group or pair work (Lightbown and Spada, 1999, p.92). Grammatical forms are focused on to clarify meaning. The ultimate goals of the CLT curriculum are to develop students' communicative competence and prepare them to use the L2 in the outside world (Savignon, 2002). The contrast between grammar based or traditional approaches and CLT is shown in Table 4 in relation to a number of key variables in the curriculum:

Table 4: Traditionalism and CLT (Nunan and Lamb, 2003, p.31)

Teaching	Traditionalism	CLT
Theory of language	Language is a system of rule-governed –structures hierarchically arranged.	Language is a system for the expression of meaning; primary function-interaction
Theory of learning	Habit formation; skills are learned more effectively if oral precedes written; analogy not analysis	Activities involving real communication; carrying out meaningful tasks and using language that is meaningful to the learner promote learning.
Objectives	Control of the structures of sound, form and order, mastery over symbols of the language; goal-native speaker mastery.	Objectives will reflect the needs of the learner; they will include functional skills as well as linguistics objectives.
Syllabus	Graded syllabus of phonology, morphology, syntax. Contrastive analysis.	Will include some or all of the following: structures, functions, notions, themes and tasks. Ordering will be guided by learner needs
Activities	Dialogues and drills; repetition and memorization; pattern practice.	Engage learners in communication; involve processes such as information sharing, negotiation of meaning and interaction
Role of learner	Organisms that can be directed by skilled training techniques to produce correct responses.	Learner as negotiator, interactor, giving as well as taking.
Role of teacher	Central and active; teacher dominated method. Provides model; controls direction and pace.	Facilitator of the communication process, needs analyst, counselor, process manager.
Role of materials	Primarily teacher oriented. Tapes and visuals; language lab often used.	Primary role of promoting communicative language use; task based, authentic materials

To sum up, as Richards and Rodgers (2001) stated, CLT should constantly reflect a communicative side of language. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), CLT emphasizes:

- a- Learners learn a language through using it to communicate.
- b- Authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities.
- c- Fluency is an important dimension of communication
- d- Communication involves the integration of different language skills.
- e- Learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and error. (p. 172)

4.2. Teachers' Perceptions of CLT Principles

CLT emphasizes a communicative language and language acquisition. Thus, it proposes ways for learners to internalize a second language and to experiment in a classroom context. Therefore, the classroom context is used to create activities to teach students how to react in a real world situation.

Richards and Rodgers (1986) synthesized all characteristics of CLT and state that the characteristics common to all versions of CLT is a theory of language teaching that “starts from a communicative model of language and language use, and that seeks to translate this into a design for an instructional system, for materials, for teacher, and learner roles and behaviors, and for classroom activities and techniques” (p. 69).

The most common characteristics of CLT are as follows: First, in CLT, meaning is the most important function for communication. Second, contextualization is the basic premise of CLT.

According to Larsen-Freeman (1986), the most obvious characteristic of CLT is that “almost everything is done with a communicative intent” (p.132). Students use language a great deal through communicative activities (e.g. games, role playing, and

problem -solving tasks).

Another characteristic of CLT is the introduction of authentic materials (Larsen-Freeman, 1986; Nunan, 1991). In CLT, it is considered “desirable to give learners the opportunity to respond to genuine communicative needs in realistic situations so that they develop strategies for understanding language as actually used by native speakers” (Larsen-Freeman, 1986, p. 132). Also, activities in the communicative approach are often carried out by students in small groups as Larsen-Freeman (1986, p.132) states. Students are expected to interact with one another, either through group work or in their writings. CLT favors interaction among small numbers of students in order to maximize the time each student has to learn through meaning negotiation. Thus, based on the above characteristics, teachers are to select learning activities according to how well they engage the students in meaningful and authentic language use rather than in the merely mechanical practice of language patterns. Last, a “learner-centered and experience -based view of second language teaching” is also a crucial criterion (Richard and Rodgers, 1986, p.69).

In short, the CLT is to teach English for the purpose of communication, that is, to give students the ability to use the language rather than simply to know its structure, grammar, and vocabulary. Active student learning is the main learning style advocated by CLT (Larsen-Freeman, 1986; Nunan, 1991; Richards and Rodgers, 1986). This is achieved through participation in communicative activities such as dialogues, games, role-plays, discussions, interviews, questions and answers, personal anecdotes, and self-introductions, among others. Teachers are to be facilitators of communication where their role is to create a classroom environment that purposely encourages students to interact by speaking to one another in pairs or in small groups. Their main job is to design and introduce activities to get the students communicating. Rote and rigid teaching from a prescribed textbook is discouraged, though use of a textbook and grammar study are not eliminated altogether.

However, in the study, none of the EFL classes came up with any CLT practices. In this context, as can be observed from Table 5 below; majority of the participants had preferred traditional approaches i.e. Translation and Choral repetition rather than CLT activities.

Table 5: Preference of Teaching Methods

Preference of teaching methods	Number of Participants (f)	%
Translating from Turkish to English and English to Turkish	17	85
Memorization of dialogues and choral repetition	6	30
Group activities	-	
Interactive activities	-	
Problem Solving activities	-	

*In Table 5 above “f” stands for “frequency” and “%” for “percentage”.

Data drawn from the questionnaire implied that , 85 % of the participants had applied Translation method (from L1 to L2 / L2 to L1) rather than CLT based activities i.e. group activities, interactive activities and problem solving activities in their classes. In addition, 30 % of the participant had implemented dialogue memorization and choral repetition methods.

Furthermore, as can be seen from Table 6 most of the participants had not experienced CLT during their teaching profession.

Table 6: Experience of CLT

Experience of CLT	Number of Participants (f)	%
Yes	9	45
No	11	55

*In Table 6 above “f” stands for the “frequency” and “%” for “percentage”.

Based on the questionnaire merely 45 % of the participants had experienced CLT before.

In addition, as can be observed from Table 7, majority of the participants had experienced Grammar based methods rather than Cognitive approaches which accept the CLT activities as the main medium of instruction.

Table 7: The Experience of Other Teaching Methods

The Experience of other teaching methods	Number of Participants (f)	%
Audio Lingual Method	9	45
Grammar Translation	20	100
Cognitive Approaches	-	

*In Table 7 above “f” stands for the “frequency” and “%” for “percentage”

Related to Table 7 above, all of the teachers (100%) had experienced Grammar-translation method rather than Cognitive approaches. Besides, 45% of them had applied Audio lingual method in addition to Grammar-translation method.

Furthermore, throughout the observation sessions the classes were far too away from places where CLT activities were conducted. As can be observed in Table 8, all of the classrooms were teacher-centered and the students were guided by the teacher to study on mechanical drills via native language rather than target language:

Table 8: Observation of In-Class Instructions

Observation of In-class Instructions	Number of Classes (f)	%
Student centered environment	-	-
Teacher acts as negotiator	-	-
Small group discussion	-	-
Role-play activities	-	-
Choral repetition and drills	20	100
Teacher lectures to class (Atlas teaching)	20	100
Target language is used during all class time	-	-
Minimal use of native language during the class	2	10
Directions for exercises and activities are given in TL	-	-
Oral expression of opinions by students	-	-
Student participation is evident during class	-	-

*In Table 8 above “f” stands for the “frequency” and “%” for percentage

Based on the results of in-class observations, all of the classes (100 %) reflected Choral repetition and drills rather than CLT activities i.e. Role play activities and Small group discussions. Moreover, all of the classrooms reflected the teacher dominance rather than student centered environment which provide the students with active participation and oral expression of opinions. In this context all of the classrooms (100 %) were mainly dependent upon teacher centeredness and Atlas teaching. Furthermore, majority of the classrooms (except 10 %) were dependent upon L1 rather than L2 in terms of directions and in-class activities

However, according to Table 8, it is very important that most of the teachers seemed to be familiar with CLT principles in terms of theoretical framework, although they may not have been implementing them in their classes:

Table 9: Personal Reflection about CLT Implementations

Personal reflection about CLT implementations	Number of the Participants (f)	%
The best method for EFL setting	17	85
Not proper fro EFL setting	3	15

*In Table 9 above “f” stands for the “frequency” and “%” for “percentage”

Related to the Table 9 above, majority of the participants (85 %) perceived CLT as the best method for EFL setting whereas minority of the participants (15 %) saw it not proper for EFL setting. In addition, as observed in Table 10, teachers in Turkish EFL settings were generally unfamiliar and inadequate with CLT practices:

Table 10: Perceptions Of CLT In Turkish EFL Setting

Perceptions of CLT in Turkish EFL setting	Number of Participants (f)	%
Awareness of CLT principles	16	80
Insufficient practical knowledge	20	100

*In Table 10 above “f” stands for the “frequency” and “%” for “percentage”

Based on the Table 10 above, it is very significant that although 44 % of the participants were aware of the CLT principles, 55% of them were insufficient in terms of practical knowledge.

In addition, during the interviews, participants' personal opinions related to topics about CLT principles asserted this contradiction. This can be observed in Table 11

Table 11: Personal Reflections About CLT Principles

Themes	Number of the participants (f)	%
experience of CLT	9	45
theoretical knowledge	16	80
lack of practical knowledge	20	100

*In Table 11 above “f” stands for the “frequency” and “%” for “percentage

Data drawn from interview implied that, even though all of the participants (100 %) were insufficient in terms of practical aspects, majority of them (80 %) were competent in terms of theoretical framework. Besides, only 45 % of the participants had practiced CLT before.

Consequently, all these results showed that teachers in Turkish EFL settings are generally unfamiliar and inadequate with CLT practices. In other words, the discrepancy between teachers' theoretical perceptions of CLT and their ineffective in-class practices may prevent them from implementing CLT principles in their classrooms.

These results were parallel to Li's (1998) research. In his study, Li found out that although the teachers had learned about CLT from different sources, “they all agreed that they had not practiced it much” (Li 1998, p. 688).

4.3. Teachers' Perceptions of CC

According to Rao (2002), teachers may help their students understand the nature of language, the features of CLT, the function of the class, the role of the student and

the teacher. CLT does not mean only speaking (Thompson, 1996) and does involve grammar instruction. However, students need to know that grammar is only a tool not the end while learning English. Teachers might help students keep the balance between linguistic competence and CC.

Rao (2002) summarizes that linguistic competence is one step for helping learners to improve their CC and it does not automatically result in CC. Students have to take part in communicative practice actively in order to achieve the latter, e.g. role play, pair work, group discussion and then they would be able to build up both linguistic and CC. It is important to integrate them both, not to neglect either.

However, as can be observed from Table 12, nearly all of the participants reported that they were ineffective in terms of L2 competence.

Table 12: Perceived Difficulties about CC

Themes	Number of Participants (f)	%
lack of L2 culture	20	100
lack of L2 customs	20	100
lack of native speaker fluency	18	90

*In Table 12 above “f” stands for the “frequency” and “%” for “percentage”

Based on Table 12, all of the participants (100 %) emphasized that due to the lack of target language culture and customs, they were inadequate in terms of CC. In addition, 90 % of the participants reported that they were incompetent in terms of native speaker fluency.

Similarly, as can be seen in Table 13, nearly all of the participants were not competent in terms of CC.

Table 13: The Difficulties That The Teachers Encountered in Terms Of CC

The difficulties that the teachers encountered in terms of CC	Number of Participants (f)	%
Deficiency in spoken English	18	90
Deficiency in target language culture	20	100

*In Table 13 above “f” stands for the “frequency” and “%” for “percentage”

Data drawn from questionnaire showed that 90 % of the participants were deficient in spoken English. Furthermore, 100 % of the participants were deficient in target language culture.

To sum up, as Medgyes (in Thompson, 1996) stated that CLT puts greater demands on the teacher than traditional teacher-dominated approach. For instance, teachers should take into account their beliefs about certain tasks first, and then they need to improve their skills and develop new materials and activities. Even though these demands may be big pressure to the teachers, they can consider other alternative ways in which put few demands on the teacher such as using new textbooks which offer practical guidelines and activities.

4.4. Teachers’ Perceptions of Authentic Material Use In CLT

As mentioned previously, the main premise of CLT is communicative activities that promote communication skills in the target language through role play, collaborative activities and authentic materials. As Nunan (1991,p.279) points out, CLT is an emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language, the introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation and the provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language, but also the learning process itself. In addition, it is an enhancement of the learner's owns personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning. Also, CLT is an attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom. To sum up, CLT emphasizes meaning and the ability of communication.

According to Savignon (2002), CLT focuses on the usage of authentic materials to foster an L2 learner's grammatical, discourse, strategic, and social-cultural competence with little if any mention of L1 skills. Therefore, the authentic materials are the basic elements of CLT activities. Furthermore, the authentic materials may comprise realias, maps, pictures, charts, and graphics. In short they can be any real life elements that promote communication ability in the target language (Larsen-Freeman, 1986; Nunan, 1991; Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

However, as can be seen in Table 14 , minority of the teachers were observed to provide their students with adequate and rich authentic materials Furthermore, all of the teachers limited themselves to just textbooks use instead of enriched authentic materials gathered from different sources.

Table 14: Observation of Material Use

Observation of Material Use	Number of Participants (f)	%
Use of authentic material from the target language	2	10
Textbooks used in the classroom are grammar-based	20	100

*In Table 14 above “f” stands for the “frequency” and “%” for “percentage”

Data drawn from observations suggested that the textbooks used in the classrooms were all (100 %) grammar-based .Besides; very few classes (10 %) provided their students with authentic material from target language.

Related to questionnaire, as can be observed in Table 15, most of the participants were inadequate in terms of reaching the authentic materials. In this context, majority of the participants limited themselves to use internet and personal library as a source for authentic material rather than other sources.

Table 15: Source for Authentic Materials

Source for Authentic Materials	Number of Participants (f)	%
School Library	-	-
Friends	4	20
Magazines	-	-
Public Library	-	-
Personal Library	10	50
Conferences	-	-
Internet	19	95
Newspapers	3	15
Seminars	-	-
Other	-	-

*In Table 15 above “f” stands for the “frequency” and “%” for “percentage”

According to Table 15, 95 % of the participants used Internet as the main source for authentic materials. Furthermore, 50 % of the participants benefited from their personal library as a source for authentic materials. Besides, 20 % of the participants provided the authentic materials via their colleagues. In addition, only 15 % of the participants used newspapers as a source for authentic materials. Besides, none of the participants reached other sources i.e. school library, seminars, conferences and magazines.

Consequently, most of the teachers in the study were ineffective to create the authentic environment for their students during the lessons. Besides they were inadequate in terms of reaching the authentic materials.

While it may be important for English learners to practice in an authentic context, teachers could create environment for students to practice the language which gives them some insights into real-life situations. Teachers may help students to access authentic English language materials from rich sources in order to provide students with authentic reading materials.

Such materials offer students insight into other nations, peoples, cultures and everything relevant to language.

4.5 The Similar Constraints That the Teachers Encounter in CLT Implementations.

As can be observed from Table 16, one of the important perceived constraints common for all teachers was related to class preparation time. Throughout the interviews, participants generally complained that they teach at least five or more classes through each semester and had nearly 30 hour lesson per week. Therefore, they mostly stated that they cannot sufficiently prepare themselves to the well-organized CLT activities. Next, most of the teachers emphasized that CLT expects too much from teachers.

Table 16: Teachers' Reflections Related to CLT Implementations

Themes	Number of Participants (f)	%
no time to prepare CLT activities	17	85
CLT demands many things from teachers	14	70
loaded schedules	20	100
insufficient office equipment at the schools	15	75

*In Table 16 above “f” stands for the “frequency” and “%” for “percentage”

Based on Table 16, all of the participants (100 %) complained about the loaded schedules. Furthermore, 85 % of the participants reported that due to the loaded schedules they had no time to prepare well-organized CLT activities. Moreover, 70 % of the participants emphasized that CLT demands many things from teachers. In addition, 75 % of the participants complained that the office equipment at the public primary schools were insufficient for preparing well-organized CLT activities.

In the same vein, as can be observed in Table 16, majority of the participants have excessive lesson burden through each semester.

Table 17: Classes Taught Per Semester

Classes taught per semester	Number of Participants (f)	%
1	-	-
2	-	-
3	-	-
4	3	15
5	6	30
6 or more	11	55

*In Table 17 above “f” stands for the “frequency” and “%” for “percentage”.

Data drawn from the questionnaire showed that, 55% of the participants teach 6 or more classes and 30 % of the participants teach 5 classes per semester. In addition, minority of them (15 %) have 4 classes through each semester. Besides, none of the participants had 4 classes below.

Similarly Li (1998) found out that CLT demands too much time from the teachers. Furthermore, “most of the teachers were already overloaded, any additional work was a burden for them” (p. 689). In addition, “lack of time for and lack of expertise in developing communicative materials had been constraints for them” (p.689).

Another important constraint common for the participants was that the text books and curriculums do not support CLT and CLT activities. According to Nunan (1998), from theoretical perspective, CLT is different from the grammatical approaches, which proposes that language consists of a finite set of rules and that these rules can be grasped one by one, in an additive way.

The main premise of language teaching in a grammatical curriculum is to help learners accumulate the parts until the whole structure of language has been built up.

Furthermore, Nunan (1988) also distinguishes a syllabus that highlights a simple additive way of learning, namely a synthetic syllabus, from an analytic syllabus, which is organized to promote language learning in a natural way.

For Richards, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) stands opposed to the systems of teaching where grammatical competence is the main aim with "a focus on communication as the organizing principle for teaching". Richards described the emergence of Communicative Language Teaching as a historical movement challenging syllabuses based on the division of language into grammatical units.

As can be observed in Table 17, during the interviews, majority of the participants stated that generally the text books and the syllabus compel them to focus on explicit grammar teaching, writing and reading activities rather than CLT implementations:

Table 18: Teachers' Reflections Related To Syllabus and Text Books

Themes	Number of Participants (f)	%
grammar based national syllabuses	18	90
grammar based text books	17	85

*In Table 18 above "f" stands for the "frequency" and "%" for "percentage".

Related to Table 18, 90 % of the participants reported that grammar based national syllabuses forced them to apply explicit grammar teaching in respect to CLT. Moreover 85 % of the participants emphasized that due to the grammar based text books, they were not able to implement CLT in their EFL classes.

Consequently, in order to implement CLT in a successful way, syllabus designers may regard the essential sides of communication rather than simply replacing grammar with functions in syllabus design.

As can be observed in Table 19, another crucial constraint among teachers is that large classroom sizes. During the interview most of the participants pointed out that since the classrooms are excessively crowded, it is impossible to apply CLT activities. In addition, the application of CLT creates a chaos in large classrooms and causes discipline problems for teachers.

Table 19: Teachers Reflections About Large Classroom Sizes

Themes	Number of Participants (f)	%
crowded classrooms	20	100
discipline problems and ineffective classroom management	16	80
ineffective CLT implementations	20	100

*In Table 19 above “f” stands for the “frequency” and “%” for “percentage”.

Based on Table 19, all of the participants (100 %) complained about the crowded classrooms. Furthermore, 80 % of the participants reported that crowded classrooms created discipline problems as well as ineffective classroom management. In addition all of the participants (100 %) emphasized that large classroom sizes caused ineffective CLT implementations.

In the same vein, as can be observed from Table 20, majority of the participants had to teach in excessively crowded classrooms.

Table 20: Classroom Sizes

Classroom sizes	Number of Participants (f)	%
15 – 25	-	-
25 – 35	-	-
35 - 45	8	40
45 or more	12	60

*In Table 20 above “f” stands for the “frequency” and “%” for “percentage”

Data drawn from the questionnaire implied that 60 % of the participants had 45 or more students in their EFL classes whereas only 40 % of them have 35-45 pupils in their EFL classes.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

Although many teachers today claim to implement (CLT), in general, communicative classrooms still seem to be in the minority. This is clear from studies of CLT practices from the world (Bumaby and Sun, 1989; Karavas and Doukas, 1996; D. Li, 1998; X. Li, 1984; Sato and Kleinsasser, 1999). In this chapter, based on the findings from this research, it is argued that many teachers' claims of knowing CLT are often unsupported by actual classroom events.

5.2. Teachers' Perceptions of CLT in Turkish EFL Setting

The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers' perceptions of CLT in Turkish EFL setting. The results showed that there is a discrepancy between what teachers theoretically know about CLT and how they really practice it in their classes. Furthermore, there are significant constraints that teachers encounter while attempting to implement CLT activities. Moreover, the results also revealed that although most of the teachers know CLT well in theory, they cannot put this knowledge into practices to create well-formed CLT activities. In this context, most of the teachers stated that their training in CLT merely focuses on theoretical sides of CLT rather than practical aspects. Therefore, they could not know how to apply such theories in practice in an effective and useful way. Furthermore, they emphasized that they are inadequate in terms of CC. In addition, generally, the teachers could not provide their classrooms with rich authentic materials due to excessive lesson burden.

Consequently, even though most of the teachers replied that they had various

opportunities for training in CLT and many opportunities to reach authentic materials, they could not organize any communicative activities in their classrooms. Besides, they were in a dilemma about how and when to use CLT practices. In addition, it can be concluded that teachers in Turkey had various problems while trying to apply CLT due to the setting in which their teaching practices take place.

Firstly, at public primary schools, teachers had to apply predetermined national syllabus prepared by the Ministry of Education. This national syllabus generally comprises explicit grammar teaching, reading and writing activities in respect to CLT. Therefore, they had no opportunity to provide their classes with CLT implementations. Secondly, another important dilemma for the teachers was big populations in the classrooms. Due to large class sizes, instead of teacher-student interaction, teachers had to spend much time because of disciplinary problems which mostly disturb their teaching practices.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

The main limitation for this study is that the students' behaviors generally observed during the in-class observation sessions were not directly questioned through questionnaires or mutually interviewed. It is therefore, a more detailed analysis of students might have benefited from the results of this research. Consequently, in addition to teachers, also students' perceptions and reactions to in-class activities might have been effective in the general understanding of teachers' perceptions.

5.4 Implications of the Study

This significant research is consistent with existing research findings in the same literature. In their studies, Sato (2002), Thompson (1996), Sakui (2004), Li (1998), Yang and Cheung (2003), Sato and Kleinsasser's (1999), Mangubhai et al. (2004) Burnaby and Sun (1997), reached the similar dilemmas and discrepancies in terms of teachers' practices of CLT implementations. Most of the studies pointed out that the constraints

with teachers' lacking practical knowledge, in sufficient authentic material uses, large classroom sizes and grammar-based national syllabuses prevent the effective implementation of CLT activities in classrooms. In addition, this research, like previous studies in the literature, also reveals that English teachers in Turkey should require in-depth understanding for how to put practices into theories they learn at the ELT departments. Moreover, English teachers in Turkey, ought to observe classes in which CLT is implemented properly so that they can monitor themselves and figure out their failures.

5.5 Further Research

During the study I figured out that there were two crucial questions left unanswered, which may contribute to further studies in the field. These are:

1) What are the students' perceptions of CLT in Turkish EFL setting? This question may enlighten teachers in terms of deeply understanding their students' need for effective in class implementations.

2) What are the instructors' and students' perceptions of CLT at the ELT departments? This question may provide researchers with insightful understanding of CLT in terms of academic and institutional base.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire

Please complete the following questions as appropriate. Your name will only be used to prepare the follow-up interview.

1. Name: _____

2. Date: (M/D/Y) _____

3. Female () Male ()

4. Age: 22-24 () 25 – 32 () 33 or more ()

5. How many years have you been teaching English?

6. What level of education do you have, mark all that apply:

BA ()

MA ()

PhD ()

Other:

7. What age group do you teach?

Children under 10 ()

Children between 11 – 15 ()

8. What is the average number of students in your classroom?

15 – 25 () 25 – 35 ()

35 - 45 () 45 or more ()

9. How many classes do you normally teach each semester (or quarter)?

1 ()

2 ()

3 ()

4 ()

5 ()

6 or more ()

10. Do you have access to authentic material from the target language?

Yes ()

No ()

Mark sources of authentic materials you use, all that apply:

School Library ()

Public Library ()

Internet ()

Friends ()

Personal Library ()

Newspapers ()

Magazines ()

Conferences ()

Seminars ()

Other ()

11. How many hours do you spend weekly preparing classes (average)?

Less than 5 ()

5 – 10 ()

10 – 15 ()

15 – 20 ()

20 or more ()

12. Mark the types of activities you use in your classroom:

	Always	Never	Rarely	Sometimes
Fill-in the blank				
Silent Reading				
Role Play				
Paragraph Translation				
Action Sequences (TPR)				
Drills				
Problem Solving				
Modeling				

13. Which best describes the teaching method you use in your classes today?

Translating from Turkish to English ()

Translating from English to Turkish ()

Memorization of dialogues and choral repetition ()

Group activities () Interactive activities ()

Problem Solving activities ()

14. Have you tried Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)?

Yes ()

No ()

15. How did you like using CLT in your classroom?

16. Why did you or why didn't you try CLT?

17. Please mark some of the difficulties you, as a teacher, have faced when teaching EFL?

Deficiency in spoken English ()

Deficiency in target language culture ()

Little time to prepare material ()

Students English proficiency ()

Students learning styles ()

Grammar-based needs of students ()

Large classes ()

Access to authentic materials ()

No difficulties ()

18. Have you used other Second Language Teaching Methods? Yes () No ()

Marks the ones used:

Silent Way ()

Audio Lingual Method ()

Natural Approach ()

Grammar Translation ()

Total Physical Response ()

Direct Method ()

Reading Method ()

Cognitive Approach ()

Affective – Humanistic ()

Natural Approach ()

Communicative Language Teaching ()

19. What methods have you experienced as a language student?

20. Please define in your own words Communicative Language Teaching?

21. What is your perception of CLT in EFL environments, such as Turkey

Appendix B Checklist

Checklist of CLT observable behavior, and activities in the classroom:

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
Student centered environment		
Student participation is evident during class		
Student participation _____		
Teacher participation _____		
Teacher acts as negotiator		
Small group discussion		
Role-play activities		
Use of authentic material from the target language		
Textbooks used in the classroom are grammar-based		
Target language is used during all class time		
Minimal use of native language during the class		
Directions for exercises and activities are given in TL		
Choral repetition and drills		
Oral expression of opinions by students		
Students give each other feedback		
Focus of activities is content		

Correction is minimal from teacher

Teacher lectures to class (Atlas teaching)

Note: _____

Appendix C

Teacher Interview Questions

The interview is composed of open-ended questions addressing the use of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in English as Foreign Language (EFL) environments. Other questions may be added based on subjects answers to the questionnaire. It will be made clear to all participants that they do not have to answer any questions that they prefer not to answer.

1. How do you feel about using CLT in the classroom?
2. Do you feel that CLT fails to address issues specific to EFL environments?
3. Do you think it's possible to adapt the theories and methodology of CLT into an EFL classroom? How would you accomplish that?
4. In your opinion how do students like CLT activities?

5. Do you feel that teachers in Turkey are encouraged to use CLT?
6. What are some of the difficulties you have faced personally when attempting CLT in your classroom? Were you able to overcome those difficulties? How?
7. Do you feel that students in Turkey would benefit from CLT?
8. When and where were you trained as an English teacher?
9. How do you define communicative competence?

In addition, generally they described CLT in the questionnaire:

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