

T. C.

UNIVERSITY OF GAZIANTEP
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

**TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS COMMUNICATIVE
LANGUAGE TEACHING: A CASE OF SORAN DISTRICT EFL
CLASSROOMS**

MASTER'S OF ART THESIS

SERWAN HUSEIN TAHA SHERWANI

Gaziantep
June 2017

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GAZIANTEP
June, 2017

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to:

My beloved parents

Prof. Nimat Shahab

Hajar Shukrollah



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Though only my name appears on the cover of this dissertation, a great many people have contributed to its production. Foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Asst. Prof. Dr. Mehmet KILIÇ for the continuous support, patience and advice during the writing of this thesis.

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ÖZET

İLETİŞİMSEL DİL ÖĞRETİMİNE YÖNELİK OLARAK ÖĞRETMENLERİN TUTUMLARI: BİR SORAN EFL(İngilizce Yabancı Dil) SINIFLARI İNCELEMESİ

Sherwani, Serwan

Master Tezi, İngilizce Dili Öğretimi Bölümü

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İletişimsel Dil Öğretimi, yapıya dayanan sınıfların daha iletişimsel sınıflara dönüşmesini teşvik etmektedir. Çok sayıda EFL sınıfı İletişimsel Dil Öğretimini kendi bünyesinde geliştirmiştir. Bununla birlikte, İDÖ'nin uygulanması son on yıllık süre içinde İngilizcenin yabancı dil olarak düzenlenmesi konusunda pek çok zorlukla karşı karşıya kalmıştır. Her ne kadar öğretmenlerin tutumları İDÖ'nin uygulanmasında büyük bir rol oynasa da henüz Irak bağlamında konuya odaklanan çalışmalar bulunmamaktadır. Bu karışık yöntemler çalışması Iraklı EFL öğretmenlerinin İletişimsel Dil Öğretimine yönelik tutumlarını ortaya çıkartmayı amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma Irak'ın kuzey bölgesinde bulunan Soran şehrinde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmaya katılanlar orta ve lise sınıflarından 58 EFL öğretmendir. İlk aşamada, beş puanlı Likert skalası anketi EFL öğretmenlerinin İDÖ prensiplerine yönelik tutumlarını incelemek üzere yapılmıştır (Karavas-Doukas, 1996); dil bilgisinin yeri/önemi, grup/ikili çalışma, hata düzeltmenin niceliği ve niteliği, öğretmenin sınıftaki rolü, öğrenme sürecinde öğrenenlerin rolü ve katılımı. Araştırmanın ikinci aşaması, Irak EFL ortamında İletişimsel Dil Öğretiminin uygulanmasını engelleyen veya destekleyen faktörler bağlamında İletişimsel Dil Öğretiminin (İDÖ) uygulanmasının arka planındaki sebepleri incelemek için kullanılan yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerdir. Kantitatif aşamanın sonuçları, öğretmenlerin genel yaklaşıma ve İDÖ'nin beş alt ölçeğine yönelik olarak pozitif bir tutum sergilediklerini ortaya çıkartmıştır: genel yaklaşımlar (maksimum= 91.00; minimum 63.65; ortalama= 76.29), dilbilgisinin yeri ve önemi (O = 2.96), grup/ikili çalışmalar (O= 3.33) ve hata düzeltmenin niteliği ve niceliği (O= 2.96), öğretmenin sınıftaki rolü (O= 3.25) ve öğrenme sürecinde öğrenenlerin rolü ve katılımı (O= 3.31). Görüşmeler aşamasının bulguları, Irak'taki İDÖ sınıflarının başarısızlığına ve başarısına neden olan dört ana faktör olduğu sonucuna varmıştır; eğitimsel faktörler, öğretmen faktörleri, öğrenci faktörleri ve İDÖ faktörleri. Araştırmanın sonuçları, İDÖ sınıflarının gelişmesi için eğitim sisteminin ve öğretmenlerin iletişimsel yeterliliklerinin **esas** olduklarını belirtmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Irak EFL sınıfları, İDÖ, öğretmenlerin tutumları, iletişimsel yeterlilik.

ABSTRACT

TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING: A CASE OF SORAN EFL CLASSROOMS

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Communicative Language Teaching urges the shift from structure-based classrooms into more communicative ones. Numerous EFL classrooms have developed CLT into their contexts. Nevertheless, the practice of CLT encounters many challenges in English as a foreign language setting in the last decade. Even though the teachers' attitudes play a major role in the implementation of CLT, no studies have focused on the matter in Iraqi context yet. This mixed methods study aims at exploring Iraqi EFL teachers' attitudes towards Communicative Language Teaching. The study was conducted in Soran town, the northern part of Iraq. The participants of the study were 58 EFL teachers from secondary and high school classrooms. In the first phase, a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire was administered (Karavas-Doukas, 1996) to examine EFL teachers' attitudes towards CLT principles; "Place/importance of grammar, group/pair work, quality and quantity of error correction, the role of the teacher in the classroom, the role and contribution of learners in the learning process." The second phase of the study was semi-structured interviews to examine the reasons behind the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in terms of the factors that hinder and encourage the CLT implementation in Iraqi EFL setting. The results of the quantitative phase revealed that the teachers held a positive attitude towards overall attitude and five subscale of CLT: overall attitudes ($Max=91.00$; $Min=63.65$; $Mean=76.29$), place/importance of grammar ($M=2.96$), group/pair works ($M=3.33$), Quality and quantity of error correction ($M=2.96$), the role of the teacher in the classroom ($M=3.25$) and the role and contribution of learners in the learning process ($M=3.31$). The findings of interviews phase concluded that there are four main factors that cause the failure and success of CLT classroom in Iraq; Educational factors, teacher factors, student factors, and CLT factors. The results of the study suggest that educational system and teachers' communicative competence are essential to promote CLT classrooms.

Keywords: Iraqi EFL classrooms, CLT, teachers' attitudes, communicative competence.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

ELT: English Language Teaching

ESL: English as a Second Language

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

MHE: Ministry of Higher Education

MOE: Ministry of Education

SLA: Second Language Acquisition



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.0 PRESENTATION

This chapter presents background information concerning this study, followed by a statement of the main research problem and clarification of the study's overall purpose. The research questions guiding this study are also presented. Finally, the perceived significance, limitations, and assumptions underlying this study are elaborated. Attached to this section is a list of acronyms employed in this paper alongside their meanings.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Due to increased globalization over the past few decades and the centralization of English as a common language internationally, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has become a popular field of study (Littlewood, 2007). Accordingly, more attention has been given toward the methods of teaching English to non-native students. One method which has become common over the past thirty years is termed Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Despite its popularity among EFL educators, several scholars have criticized this method, claiming that its effectiveness in an educational setting depends upon context (Bax, 2003; Harvey, 1984; Inceciy & Inceciy, 2009). For example, some claim that it is nearly impossible to employ CLT in all Asian countries (Li, 1984; Liao, 2004; Maley, 1984). These experts further cite particular barriers preventing CLT from being implemented in an Asian context (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Chick, 1996; Ellis, 1996; Hiep, 2007; Hu, 2002; Li, 1998; Rao, 2002; White, 1989).

A central problem underlying the above arguments either in favor of or in opposition to CLT is the fact that the concept of CLT itself may not signify the same for all teachers in all contexts. Moreover, just as the meaning of CLT may vary from one context to another, CLT practices may vary, as well, especially within an EFL

context. Teaching objectives, approaches and beliefs about teaching also differ as circumstances change. Dubin and Olshtain (1986) state that the nature of learners and teachers, the context of programs, the place in which programs are implemented, and how they are implemented determine how which teaching approach is more effective. Interactions between teachers and students also vary depending on cultural background. By exploring Iraqi EFL teachers' attitudes and classroom practices, this study investigates how CLT has been implemented within an Iraqi EFL context.

In short, Williams and Burden (1997) found that beliefs are influential "in determining how individuals organize and define tasks and problems, and [. . .] how teachers behave in the classroom" (p.56). Thus, teachers' attitudes about language teaching are one of the most influential factors of student success in acquiring a second language. This study explores how this notion manifests itself in an Iraqi EFL classroom.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As mentioned previously, CLT has been a popularly employed method since the 1990s and continuing into the present. This method is largely regarded as essential to second-language learning and communicative competence. Thus, how CLT becomes utilized in practice is vital and deems necessary an investigation of the attitudes of those educators employing it.

Brown (1994) maintains that the nature of CLT depends largely upon the perceptions or attitudes of educators regarding the teaching and acquisition of the particular language of study (in this case, English). Attitude is described as "the interplay of feelings, beliefs, and thoughts about actions" (Rusch & Perry, 1999, p. 291). Generally, teachers' attitudes are significant in developing an educational system and progressing the learning process. Nevertheless, attitude alone is not sufficient for examining the effectiveness of an ELT method, for socio-organizational context must also be considered.

The primary goal of CLT is to reinforce writing, reading, speaking and listening skills in various contexts via interdependent communication and learning (Larsen-Freeman, 2008; Richards et al., 2001). As a result, this approach has shifted classroom models from being teacher-centered toward being more learner-focused, meaning that the role of teachers has transformed from being a conveyor of

information to being an engager of interaction with students as well as a practical guide (Larsen-Freeman, 2008; Richards et al., 2001). The overall aim of CLT in an EFL classroom is to provide learners with opportunities for interaction and communication in the English language, with teachers playing various roles including that of a mediator, guide, and facilitator. In order for a teacher to fulfill these roles, he/she not only must guide communication and interaction within the classroom but also must incorporate non-traditional materials supporting these processes (Breen and Candlin, 1980). The teacher should guide students only when dealing with the use of materials and participation in the chosen activities such as role-play, pair/group work, and games. However, students should play the dominant role in appropriating these activities to meet their individual needs.

To conclude, many scholars have emphasized that teacher attitudes should be examined closely rather than marginalized when considering the effectiveness of a language-teaching approach (Breen and Candlin, 1980). These attitudes are essential to student success, especially within CLT, in which teachers relinquish the role of controller or conveyor in order to adopt a more facilitative role. Moreover, since CLT principles were designed for a Western educational context, it is necessary to investigate factors that either hinder or promote its effectiveness in additional cultural contexts (in this case, an Iraqi one).

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study examines teachers' attitudes towards implementing CLT in classroom practice at the secondary education level in the Soran district of northern Iraq. The key goal is to probe Iraqi EFL teachers' attitudes towards CLT as well as to determine the obstacles and encouraging factors they encounter in utilizing this approach. To support the results of this study, the researcher describes the educational environment particular to the study's location. Accordingly, the results may have direct implications for teacher development and the development of teaching methods in Iraq's secondary English education classrooms.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.4.1 Research questions

This study addresses the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What are Iraqi EFL teachers' attitudes towards the principles of CLT?

Research question 2A: What kinds of problems do Iraqi EFL teachers encounter when implementing CLT in their language classrooms?

2B: What essential reasons encourage the selection of CLT in Iraqi EFL classrooms?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

CLT has been widely examined by ELT scholars (Ellis, 1996; Li, 1998; Gorsuch, 2000; Rao, 2002; Sun & Cheng, 2002; Incecay & Incecay, 2009). However, no studies have specifically dealt with perceptions of CLT as well as its implementation in an Iraqi educational system. Thus, this study gains its significance not only from the fact that it contributes to a broader understanding of CLT as an EFL approach but also from the fact that it may offer direct guidance for Iraqi EFL educators in adopting CLT in their classrooms. It is hoped that this study will enable these teachers to develop interpersonal classroom interactions while providing their students the chance to gain independence in their language learning. Additionally, the results of this study might play a role in transforming the relatively passive role of Iraqi EFL learners into a more active one.

Last but not least, the stakeholders in this study are also the main beneficiaries as they will gain insight regarding how to design and review curricula according to the needs of both teachers and learners.

1.6 ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

Background information related to this study's participants was obtained in order to learn more about their teaching experience. Furthermore, a questionnaire (adapted from Karavas-Doukas, 1996) was administered to investigate teachers' attitudes towards CLT. It consisted of 24 statements on a five-point Likert scale. Next to each statement was a box comprised of the following five levels: "strongly disagree," "disagree," "neither agree nor disagree," "agree," and "strongly agree." All levels had a certain value ranging from 1 to 5, consecutively.

The second phase of data collection involved semi-structured interviews conducted by the researcher with six participants who had already participated in the

questionnaire. The goal of these interviews was to investigate the problems and encouraging factors encountered by the participants when implementing CLT in their classrooms as well as their underlying motivations for utilizing CLT. It has been verified that the data collection means met the criteria of reliability and validity. In addition, it is anticipated that the teachers were familiar with the principles of CLT. Lastly, it is assumed that the level of acceptance obtained from the questionnaire items represents teachers' actual views.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study explored teachers' attitudes towards the principles of CLT in Soran District, Iraq. Since the current study is only an attempt to explore the teachers' attitudes and their in-depth views related to factors which hinder and encourage the implementation of CLT in a particular area, it is difficult to generalize the results to all teachers in the entire region, especially owing to the various views of problems they encounter while implementing CLT in their classrooms. Since this study involved a face-to-face interview, the participants who participated in this phase were distorted because they considered it as a test-based interview even though the researcher created a friendly environment.

1.8 DEFINITIONS OF THE TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS:

1.8.1 Definitions

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) refers to an "approach that aims to (a) make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and (b) develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication" (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 66).

Communicative competence: Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) defined communicative competence as "a synthesis of an underlying system of knowledge and skill needed for communication". Furthermore, according to Bagari and Mihaljevi (2007), it deals with the unconscious or conscious understanding of a person on a language and different aspects of language use.

Approach is defined as "a set of beliefs and principles that can be used as the basis for teaching a language" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 244).

Method is seen as “a specific instructional design or system based on a particular theory of language and of language learning” (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 245).

Attitude refers to “relatively constant personal characteristics influencing and determining language learning progress” (Sanchez & Rodriguez, 1997).

1.8.2 Abbreviations

ELT: English Language Teaching.

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

ESL: English as a second language

SL: Second Language

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 PRESENTATION

In this chapter, the focused literature review is presented as follows: first, Communicative competence. Next, the history of English language teaching and a brief illustration of overall Iraqi education system and the significance of Communicative Language Teaching in Iraqi context are explained. Then, Historical Background of CLT and are identified which follows by Definition of Communicative Language Teaching, the definition of CLT and principles and characteristics of CLT, after that, advantages and disadvantages of CLT, teachers' attitudes, characteristics of attitudes, teachers' attitudes towards CLT and Teachers' favourable and unfavourable attitudes towards CLT are shown. Finally, the underlying factors of the CLT implementation are clearly unfolded.

2.1 COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

It is argued that the nature of language learning could be found in Communicative Language Teaching which can be categorized as an approach in the broad field of second language acquisition, SLA, (Brown, 1994). Communicative Language Teaching is an approach rather than a method (Brown, 2007; Richards & Rodgers, 1986). "It is a unified but broadly based theoretical position about the nature of language and of language learning and teaching" (Brown, 2007, p. 241). Communicative Language Teaching was developed due to prior incomplete methods of teaching which foundered to meet the needs of students in terms of using language for communication. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) was a revolutionary step forward to change language teaching from grammatical rules to the need of learners to communicate. Nonetheless, Communicative Language Teaching is not some kind of procedures to be followed, but rather, it shows some sets of various teaching notions. Omaggio, (2001) maintains that it is difficult to find a precise

definition for communicative competence. To understand better, it is necessary to know the principles and the development setting of Communicative Language Teaching as well as the theoretical base of communicative competence in order to provide a crystal-clear image of it.

Previously, back in the fifties, scholars of language teaching focused on grammatical rules of language. Chomsky, (1965) argues that linguistic teaching should be the core concern which forces the students to produce correct grammatical sentences. Though, it is a fact that the criticism to this view of structure priority occurred which by some sociolinguistics was defined as very narrow. They maintain that language should be seen as a way for communication rather than just a tool to produce some sets of grammatical sentences. Further, grammatical rules alone are not sufficient to communicate. As a result of that, Hymes in the last four decades proposes the theory of communicative competence in order to develop the idea of Chomsky's competence (Richards & Rodgers, 1986).

Chomsky (1965) differs competence from performance. According to him, competence can be defined as "the speaker hearer's knowledge of his language" (p. 4) whereas performance can be defined as "the actual use of language in concrete situations" (p. 4). Chomsky (1965) argues that performance displays a defect reflection of competence, in this way, performance has to be viewed as having slight importance to the theory of linguistic.

Nonetheless, in his paper entitled "On Communicative competence" published in 1971, Hymes (1972) maintains that the theory of Chomsky's "takes structure as a primary end in itself, and tends to depreciate use" (p. 4). He reports that situational aspects, which Chomsky ascribed with performance, is supposed to be considered in the theory. According to him, competence is a more broad term than the view of Chomsky towards competence. 'Communicative competence's definition is seen as what a speaker wishes to be acquainted with so as to communicate in a community where speaking is the primary concern (Hymes, 1972). He maintains that it is essential for a learner to consider placing him/her in a social atmosphere. It is a fact that a speaker would not only produce a grammatical utterance in the real world, but also the situation in which the sentence is used should be considered. In summary, Hymes claims that competence should be seen as "the overall underlying knowledge and ability for language which the speaker-listener possesses" (p. 13). That is to say,

communicative competence comprises the ability to use a language in context and knowledge about it as well.

Hymes (1972) divides Communicative competence into four areas. That is, firstly, if something is permissible which pertains to the idea of accuracy in terms of grammatical competence structure. It relates to the fact that if the uttered sentence is grammatically accurate or free from errors. Secondly, if something is practicable, which refers to the dependability as well as having grammatically structured viability. As an illustration, there are grammatically structured sentences which cannot be considered as a part of competence due to the limited aptitude of human information processing. Thirdly, if something is applicable, refers to the appropriateness of a sentence used in a particular context. Last but not least, if something truly prepared, refers to a sentence might be appropriate in the context used, feasible and correct in terms of grammar, however, it cannot be using in the real world (Hymes, 1972).

Different scholars have made efforts to improve the concept of communicative competence's definition by Hymes. Canale and Swain's (1980) were among them whom their definition of Communicative competence was broadly recognized. Both researchers proposed numerous, four, dimensions of communicative competence into the academic context. Firstly, a grammar rule competence which signifies to the linguistic competency of Chomsky and correct potential of Hymes too. They suggest that the rules of morphology, phonology, lexical and syntax form sentences (Canale & Swain, 1980). Secondly, sociolinguistic competence denotes to the applicable of Hymes in context. That is to say, it is the aptitude to comprehend the cultural and societal rules that the communication occur. These types of rule involve aspects, notably, "topic, the role of participants, setting, and norms of interaction", as well as "appropriate attitude and register or style in a given context" (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 30). Thirdly, connecting sentences and thoughts, *discourse competence*, to manage coherence and cohesion in the complete discourse. Canale and Swain (1980) mention the discourse rules as "the cohesion (grammatical links), and coherence (appropriate combination of communicative functions) of groups of utterances" (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 30). Lastly, the capability to practice a compensatory role while the language users do not possess a satisfactory linguistic competence, i.e. *strategic competence*. This refers to the practice of "verbal and nonverbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for a breakdown in communication due to

performance variables or due to insufficient competence" (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 30).

The communicative competence defined by both researchers has been reformed after a decade. Bachman (1990, p.87) defines Communicative Language Ability as "as both knowledge of language and the ability to implement the knowledge for communicative language use." Communicative Language Ability involves three features: psychophysiological mechanism, language competence, and the first competence. Based on the structure of communicative competence suggested by both aforementioned researchers (Hymes and Canale and Swain), Bachman (1990) provides a definition of competence. He has categorized competence into a couple of sorts, as illustrated below (Figure 1):

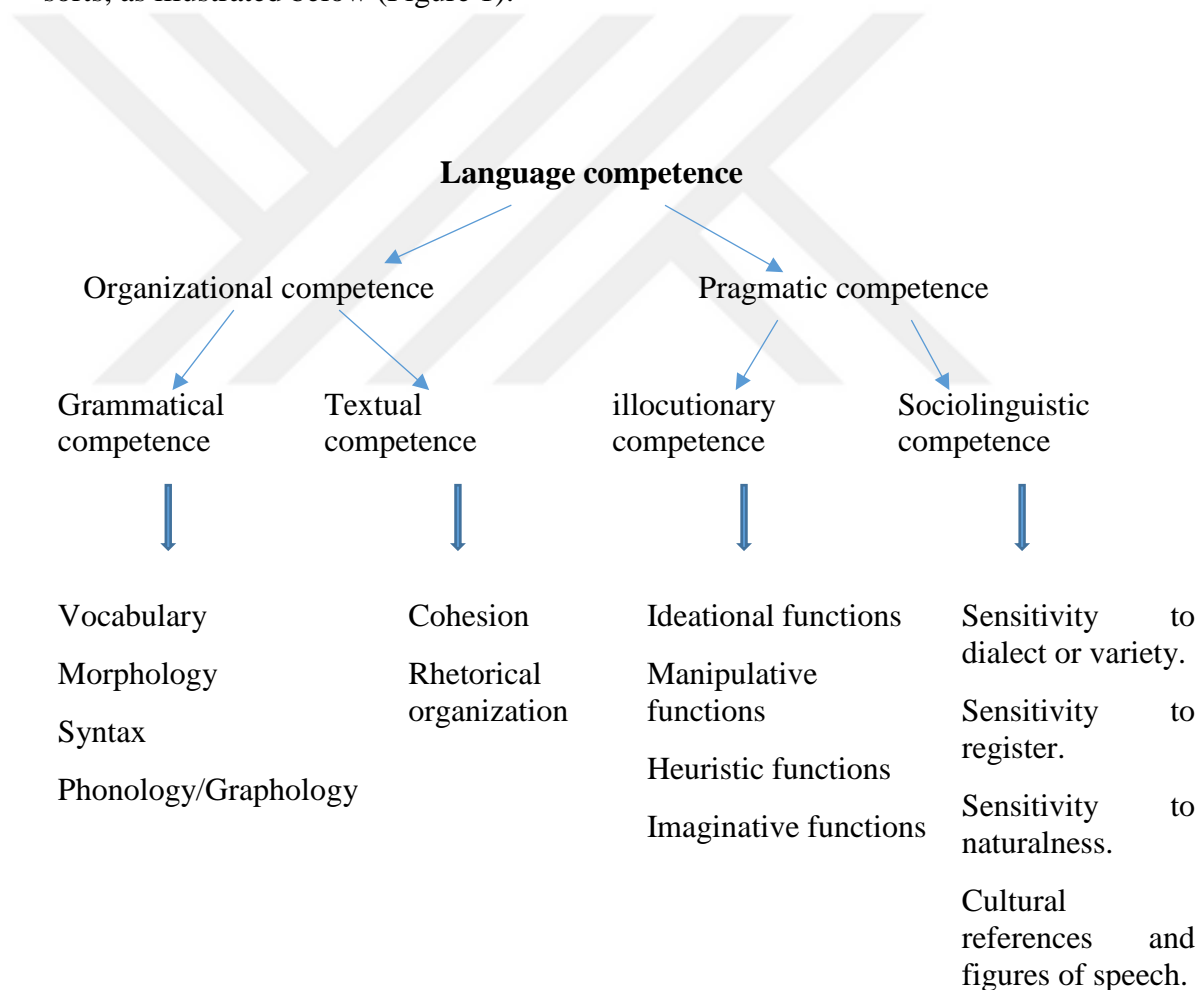


Figure (1) *Components of Language Competence* (Bachman, 1990, p.87)

According to him, language competence signifies understanding (knowledge in general) which is practiced in speaking through interaction (Bachman, 1990). As shown above, the first sort of language competence, according to Bachman (1990), is

organizational competence, which consists of textual and grammatical competence. Textual competence deals with the understanding of linking words to create a text. As for grammatical competence, it involves an understanding of language in the capacities of phonology, syntax, morphology and vocabulary. Another kind of language competence is mentioned as pragmatic competence which includes sociolinguistic and illocutionary competence. The first one refers to how a language function is expressed which can be coped in the context language is used. Conversely, the second one, illocutionary competence, involves using language functions, namely request, warning and assertion (Bachman, 1990).

Communicative competence comprises linguistics and sociocultural areas which consist of many different parts. In summary, communicative competence, as illustrated by Hymes (1972) and Bachman (1990), it is concluded that it involves the overall knowledge of grammatical rules, using appropriate language in various contexts, linking words in a communication. To conclude, the awareness of these definitions provided by them is a key of reinforcing teachers to improve students' communicative competence.

2.2 HISTORY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Before the twentieth century, the methodology of language teaching fluctuated between two sorts of teaching: learning language through using it, communicatively, and learning grammar rules. Looking back at the medieval and classical Greeks times, second languages used to be taught by using a certain language. The ancient languages, such as Greek, and later in Latin, were spoken as Lingua Franca.¹ These two languages were the languages of higher learning and academic purposes all over the western countries. Therefore, the educated people spoke both languages fluently. During this particular time, teachers adopted either indirect approaches or informal ways to teach the form (grammar) as well as meaning (communication) of the language they were using to teach students and used merely oral techniques without any pre-arranged textbook. They might have used hand-written materials for teaching instead (Celce-Murcia, 2014).

¹ Lingua Franca: the term 'Lingua Franca' has come out as a way to refer to communicate in a certain language between speakers with different first languages. (Seidlhofer, 2005)

Back in the Renaissance times, the teaching of Latin and Greek rules of grammar emerged as a key method of teaching due to a large amount of book production by the discovery of printing machines in 1474. Celce-Murcia, (2014) states that with regards to Latin language, it has been found that the form of traditional writings was unlike the Latin language which was practiced with *lingua franca*". Heretofore, some countries, namely German and French, took status as Latin happen to be left as a *lingua franca*.

In the seventies of the nineteenth century, there was a rapid reaction in opposing previous language teaching approaches around the globe, and earlier methods such as Audiolingualism and other ones became out-of-date. Further, the grammar centrality of second language teaching and learning was doubted to be implemented in classrooms. Therefore, Communicative competence was the need so as to language being used communicatively. The EFL scholars maintain that it is Communicative competence, not grammar rules, which should be the mere purpose of language teaching and learning.

2.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF CLT

Communicative Language Teaching emerged while language teaching in the western countries was in need for a shift from old methods to a novel one which could be well-matched with the needs of learners (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). Thereupon, countries, where the English language was taught, were going through a sensitive period in terms of social, economic and political changes.

The Europe Council started to realize the communication need for those who came abroad, immigrants and workers. Because out-dated methods had failed to meet the demands of the learners and students to attain communicative purposes (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). For the first time, when Communicative Language Teaching was used, can be seen in the improvement of the notional-functional curriculum in the nineteen seventies.

Widdowson (1986) states that,

The design of a syllabus, therefore, needs to take into account both the prevailing educational attitudes of a particular community and current thinking to the extent that it is deemed to be well informed about the conditions that promote learning in general ... The essential point is that one cannot devise a pedagogically desirable syllabus ... without regard to particular educational contexts. (124, 1986, p41)

The emergence of Communicative Language Teaching was to fill the gap which Situational Language Teaching had created. Clearly, the teaching of a Situational method aimed to teach based on situational constraints. Yet, the English teaching scholars believed that these approaches, situational approaches, failed to fulfill the essential need of language, such as communicative and functional of the very attributes of language (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). Apart from them, Wilkins (1976) suggested notional syllabus which can serve as essential characteristics of enhancing a foreign language program studying. Preferably, Wilkins (1976) suggests that two categorical kinds should be taken to account, communicative category and notional category functions, in substitute to form a curriculum based on classical models of grammatical rules and terminologies. Notions signify the perceptions, like frequency, quantity, sequence, time and location. Whereas, Communicative functions point out the language functions, notably denials, requests, complaints and offers (Wilkins, 1981). To back the needs of students communicatively, he comprised the category of communication function in a notional syllabus. His concept of notional syllabus significantly impacted the advancement of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). It was because of his notional syllabus, Europe Council advanced a Communicative language curriculum, consisting of language form, notions, situations, language functions and so on. The efforts of Europe council was shown as a beginning stage. It had an essential role in helping of designing a communicative syllabus which concentrated on communication-orientated and student-centered language education (Richards & Rodgers, 1986).

The functional part of the notional-functional syllabus signifies to language functions, and functions are occasionally linked to grammar form (Brown, 2007). Still, linguistic forms are used to attain the aim to communicate. That is to say, SL students achieve the linguistic forms so as to perform various types of functions (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). For instance, a student might learn right vocabulary and grammar but cannot grasp an anticipated function through the selection of terms and grammar in a particular circumstance (Brown, 2007).

Based on a strong notional basis, CLT, Communicative Language Teaching, was broadly acknowledged by British language teaching scholars, textbook authors, curriculum developers, and even the administration of government. It has been swiftly

implemented and extended in the world of SL, second language, and foreign language teaching since the second part of the 1970s. Numerous versions of the communicative syllabus, resources, and classroom activities have been advanced. Even though there is space for personal interpretation in terms of design and procedures, English language scholars acknowledge that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) started from a theory of Communicative Language implementation, and was defined by a design for instruction, materials, teachers and students, and classroom practices. Thus, the aim of CLT is to advance students' communicative competence (Richards & Rodgers, 1986).

2.4 EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND CLT IN IRAQI CONTEXT

In 1873, English as a second language (ESL) was introduced to Iraqi Educational system. After the Second World War, when Iraq was a mandate of Great Britain, English language was brought to the first class of Elementary school. The decision was just continued for one year. Since then onward, the status of English language has shifted from English as a second language (ESL) to English as a foreign Language (EFL). The materials that were used were brought from Egypt. Surprisingly enough, the overall textbooks were based on Classical method and Grammar Translation Method (al Chalabi, 1976). The key factor behind this was that the students appreciated English literature and could able to read. As it is obvious, the key aim of Traditional Method is that students could read English literature at that time.

Previous approaches and methods had failed the students to feed the needs of communication skills. In the early of eighties, ELT scholars made efforts to make a change in Language teaching and learning in the field of grammar-centred to a CLT approach (Widdowson, 1990). The aforementioned shift was well-accepted by the Arab world. Some of Gulf countries, including Iraq, suggested that a conference shall be held to discuss the unification of English Language Curriculum. Sadly, due to political conflicts and wars in the region, the conference was neglected (Abdul-Karim, 2009).

After 2000, the ministry of Education with the help of some local English Language Teaching Curriculum specialists had designed syllabus compatible to principles of Communicative Language Teaching (ELT), and it was called "Rafidain English Course for Iraq". The country was under heavy economic sanctions at that time, therefore, native English-speaking specialists could not be invited to take part in

the project, and the lack of original materials was another reason behind the failure too (Abdul-Karim, 2009). Nowadays, Communicative Language Teaching is thoroughly desired. In this age of modern science and marketing, the world is in need of possessing a commonly-worldwide language of communication. Therefore, students are bound to learn English in terms of accuracy and fluency which will lead them to success and meet the demands of an international quest for a shared language as well as give an opportunity for students to guarantee their future employments (Richards, 2006).

In the northern part of Iraq, KRI, since the uprising of 1991, the local government has taken crucial steps forward to develop an educational system by commencing new schools and universities. Also, the local parliament passed a new system of education which allowed English language teachers to prepare the new curriculum. There is a huge increase in the number of schools since 1991 (1,320) to 2012 (2,641). In this part of the country, two ministries serve the educational system: ministry of Higher Education (MHE), dealing with universities, and Ministry of Education (MOE), dealing with schools. Moreover, by learning the principles of CLT, a student may attain a good sense of identity while expressing thoughts, and become creative too. Since the 1970s, Communicative Language Teaching has a massive effect on language teaching practice because it aims to convey the message of communicative competence.

Acknowledging the fact that CLT and English teaching textbooks and materials are key factors of teaching system in northern part of Iraq, since 2007, has launched a new series of *Sunrise* curriculum published by Macmillan, which is utterly enough for implementing CLT with it, consisting of student's book, activity book, and teacher's book. Macmillan staff argue that *sunrise* is designed compatible with a communicative approach, combining speaking, listening, writing and reading with a clear focus on grammar rules. The course consists of developing Students' English aptitude by using enjoyable topics, stories of adventures which makes the lessons interesting, and activities like guided writing tasks and role play.

2.5 DEFINITION OF CLT

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach “that aims to (a) make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and (b) develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication” (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.155).

As mentioned earlier, Communicative Language Teaching was emerged from the improvement of a notional-functional syllabus. Further, it has also been expanded to investigate the concepts of communicative competence (Brown, 2000). From the beginning of the works of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) until recent times, there are ample principles, features and explanations to "send us reeling" (Brown, 2007, p. 241). To provide a simplified understanding of the main characteristics of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Brown (2007) suggested four interlinked features defining Communicative Language Teaching (CLT):

- The main goal of classrooms is focused on the entire elements of communicative competence not just confined to structural or linguistic competence.
- The main purpose of using language techniques is to involve students in the genuine, practical, efficient practice of language for significant purposes. Grammar rules are not the key emphasis, instead, features of language that allow the student to achieve aforementioned aims.
- Accuracy and fluency are considered as the main parts of principle basis of communicative techniques. Occasionally, fluency might take on more essentiality than accuracy so as to keep the students focused in speaking.
- In a communicative environment, learners must practice the language receptively and effectively.

According to Duff (2014), "Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach to language teaching that emphasizes learning a language first and foremost for the purpose of communicating with the others" (p. 15).

Furthermore, Spada (1990) suggests that CLT is basically dealing with a student-based class rather than a teacher-based one,

Classroom organization that is student-focused, with an emphasis on meaning-based practice and the use of authentic materials in which extended texts predominate, is considered to be more communicatively oriented than a classroom that is teacher-centered, where language itself is the focus of instruction and where most materials are pedagogical, with little extended text. (p. 294)

2.5.1 Principles and characteristics of CLT

Since the 1970s, Communicative Language Teaching has been a well-known approach and broadly practiced in SL (second language) and foreign language classrooms. It shows a positive shift from the traditional methods, which were based on teacher-centered concepts, to a very newer version of learners-centered, CLT. Communicative Language Teaching approach reveals a more strong relationship between learners and teachers. Besides, it centers the primary needs of learners and their purposes. Therefore, to know this fairly recent approach, it is essential to realize the principles and characteristics of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).

Moreover, Communicative Language Teaching approach is proportionately a newly-practiced approach in the field of English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL). Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) considers to be as a "hybrid approach to language teaching, essentially 'progressive' rather than 'traditional'...." (Wright, 2000:7). Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is considered to be derived from the integrative aspect, namely, mental processes, grammar rules, values, sociological concepts and educational study (Savignon, 1991). Overall, most leading scholars of educational system agree that the components of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) are bound to be an approach rather than a method (Richards & Rodgers, 1986; Savignon, 1991; Brown, 1994). For example, as for Brown, "Communicative language teaching is a unified but broadly based theoretical position about the nature of language and language learning and teaching"(1994: 244-245). The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach is an inexplicit concept, in other words, it can have various explications alongside the continuous sequence between a weak version and a strong one. Johnson (1979) maintains that the main role of the weak version is to assimilate communicative tasks into the actual program. However, strong version demands that language is learned (more righteously "acquired") by the way of communication. Besides, Johnson (1979) states that making information breach activities, notably, simulations, dramas, role-play and games, are categorized in the weak version of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Despite the fact that there are various versions and techniques in which Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is defined, education scholars in this field. Littlewood (1981); Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983); Brumfit (1984); Candlin (1981); Widdowson (1978, 1979); Johnson and Morrow (1981); Richards and Rodgers

(1986); Larsen-Freeman (1986); Celce- Murcia (1991) and Johnson (1982), provided some essential characteristics of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT):

First, students are in need of learning grammar rules, functions, and meaning. Nonetheless, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) focuses on the essentiality of the using of language rather than its structure or grammar rules (Larsen-Freeman, 1986; Johnson, 1982). Clearly, both structure and functions are key to look for an effective communication. As shown by Littlewood (1981) who stresses that "one of the most characteristic features of Communicative Language Teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language" (1981:1). Brown (1994) also maintains, "CLT suggests that grammatical structure might better be subsumed under various functional categories...we pay considerably less attention to the overt presentation and discussion of grammatical rules than we traditionally did" (Brown, 1994:245). Also, meaning is taken into consideration alongside structural rules. Finocchiaro and Brumfit state that "meaning is paramount" (1983:91) because it aids the students to be able to convey the message with the conversers.

Second, "Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques" (Brown, 1994:245). Notwithstanding, fluency occasionally gets more superiority than accuracy, and that is due to "fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal" (Finocchiaro and Brumfit, 1983:93). Further, accuracy is judged by contexts rather than abstract. Interestingly, scholars preferred fluency over accuracy to keep students implicitly involved in speaking. Yet, it is essential that fluency has never to be stimulated in lieu of straight, pure and explicit communication. So, more emphasis is encouraged to fluency in communicative classes (Brown, 1994).

Third, the techniques of language teaching are presented in a practical, authentic, and functional way of language teaching to engage students directly to aforementioned principles for a communicative purpose. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) should be taught to provide opportunities for students to engage in actual situations for real communication in real-life. Focusing on creative dramas, projects, games, and role-plays is the essential part of CLT in which students can get benefit from, not just repetition and exams. Furthermore, using of authentic materials, as one of the key characteristics of classroom process, should be taken into account. It is observed that this would provide learners with the opportunity to enhance the methods for

understanding the very native speakers' communication. Obviously, the main goal of the class is seen in communicatively-done purposes. As Johnson & Morrow (1981) mention, feedbacks, choice and information gap are taught to be communicative activities.

Fourth, grammar rules are still undividable parts of the class for learning, however, less analytically, in classical ways together with modern approaches. Savignon (2002:7) states, "... for the development of communicative ability [communication depends on grammar], research findings overwhelmingly support the integration of form-focused exercises with meaning-focused experience". The structure is significant; and students tend to concentrate better on grammar rules as grammar rules share to their communicative desires and skills (Savignon, 1991, 2001; Thompson, 1996). Further, the aforementioned scholars of English teaching claim that there are some misunderstandings about Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) that takes many teachers into a difficult situation in terms of identifying the beneficial improvements that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has conveyed. Clearly, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) does not mean teaching grammar rules but "the exclusion of explicit attention to grammar was never a necessary part of CLT" (Thompson, 1996:10). Communication involvement is seen as an essential part of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) to language improvement, and this, indisputably, involves the great attention to the form and grammatical rules. Traditionally, teaching language communicatively requires more emphasis on natural communication, rather than, giving full importance to the structure. However, it would appear to be irrational teaching CLT approach while grammar regarded as essential part of the classroom.

Fifth, Communicative Language Teaching approach is not narrowed to merely speaking. However, all four skills of English language, reading, writing, speaking and listening, should be developed in order to help students' self-confidence. Clearly, as Celce-Murcia (1991) suggests that in the beginning students emphasis need to be on all four areas of language; reading, speaking, listening, and possibly writing too. Undoubtedly, spoken communication happens through dialogues between speakers and listeners, (most likely between learners), as well as between the reader and writer, but no instant feedback is given by the reader immediately. Henceforward, focus in the classrooms is given to speaking and listening skills. It facilitates students' way of

learning the language. It is a fact that students do not listen to the teachers all the time, but having an interpersonal conversation, practicing utterances themselves, allowing sentence shapes and getting opportunities to make errors and learn from them. The notion of focusing only on speaking skills makes teachers be uncertain about what they teach. The misunderstanding of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as if it is specialized only for the teaching of oral skills is not the way it preaches. Nonetheless, "CLT is not exclusively concerned with face to face oral communication" (Savignon, 2002:7). To sum up, the principles of Communicative Language Teaching approach (CLT) can be applied (almost equally) to all activities of writing, speaking, listening, and reading. That is, it is essential that it is not merely the speaker or writers who are interacting, but rather, it takes place between the speaker and listener, writer and reader, and needs at a minimum of two persons.

Sixth, Celce-Murcia (1991) argues that learners often interact in pairs or groups to convey their messages in circumstances where one individual has information that it is absent in others. In CLT, it is felt that more focus should be on active ways of learning, notably group or pair work to solve problems so as to take full advantage of each other to convey meaning. Some scholars of English language teaching argue that pair and group works are appropriate to all context. Hitherto, group or pair works in classrooms is not seen as a key factor used all the time, and obviously, it is not applicable in some contexts. Thompson (1996) and Savignon (2002) argue that both pair and group works are flexible and helpful ways than that advocates, and they are useful ways of learning which can help the students to communicate meaning and involve in inclusive activities.

Seventh, errors are considered to be an accepted improvement process of the communication skills, so they are simply allowed. Furthermore, students who use language productively and extemporaneously are tolerated to make errors. So, it is essential that those mistakes are constantly corrected. Besides, it is a good idea to let the learners speak as well as giving opinions explicitly. If the errors are tolerated and seen as a normal improvement of the learning process, as mentioned above, learners are allowed to have less information about linguistic and they can still be an effective speaker (Larsen-Freeman, 1986).

Eighth, Students' evaluation is based on accuracy and fluency. Therefore, the learners who have the most knowledge of grammar and vocabulary are not seen as the

paramount speakers. To evaluate, the teachers may carry out an actual communicative-functioned tool to evaluate the students (e.g., Madsen 1983; Hughes 1989). Also, the teacher is allowed to casually evaluate his students' performance in his/her role as a speaker (Larsen-Freeman, 1986).

Ninth, (Larsen-Freeman, 1986) states that first language of the learners has no vital role to play in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Therefore, the targeted language is spoken during classroom activities as well as communicative engagement. Consequently, the learners realize, through classroom communication exchanges, that the targeted language is a tool to communicate with other students. To implement the Communicative Language Teaching approach properly, whatever the context is, "the teacher should be able to use the target language fluently and appropriately" (Celce-Murcia, 1991:8). Conversely, for others, notably Finocchiaro and Brumfit, (1983) claims that the use of the first language is allowed where necessary. That is to say, the teachers can provide guidance of class activities, homework and exam questions by using the first language, rather than, targeted language.

Lastly, Littlewood (1981); Breen & Candlin (1980) state that the teachers are the promoter of students' language learning, and supervisor throughout activities. And co-communicator in communicative activity with the learners. However, he/she is not always a direct interactor with learners, but rather plays the role of an independent individual. On one hand, the teachers also act like a counselor, researcher as well as a learner. On the other hand, the students are responsible for their own learning. They seem to work together with other students. That is, they learn communication through interacting with other speakers (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). To sum up, since the role of teachers is less central, the process of learning or teaching is learner-centered not the other way around. That is to say, the students play an essential role in the learning process.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), clearly, focuses on speaking as well as guiding the students to get away from classical approaches to a newer, more modern, ways of learning. The essential role to be played by the students is that of the speaker between the self, the process of learning, and the materials of it. That is, students are vigorously involved in communication, in terms of meaning, by attempting to make sure that they would receive the message inside the classrooms and activities clearly.

Richards & Rodgers (1986) claim that the students do not only achieve benefits from the negotiator but also a contributor.

In Communicative Language Teaching approach, the educators play certain roles. Firstly, they ease the process of communication, inside the classrooms, possible between interlocutors. As Larsen-Freeman (2000) argues, the teachers play the role of communicators while engaging in communicative activities as well. Moreover, as Richards & Rodgers (1986) states, they perform the roles of counselor, pair/group process organizer and guide.

As mentioned above, Communicative Language Teaching approach pays less attention to structure and grammatical rules (Brown, 2007). Yet, it does not dismiss it altogether. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) proposes that the rules of grammar and its structure may be better perceived "Within various functional categories" (Brown, 2007, p. 242). Besides, accuracy and fluency are taken into account in Communicative Language Teaching classes as two main aims, but, as mentioned before, the essential emphasize goes to fluency. Nonetheless, as evidenced by Brown (2007), to build the fluency, the focus should not be just on communication. Further, Larsen-Freeman (2000) states that errors are tolerated throughout fluency-based classrooms.

Those who studied Communicative Language Teaching, find some worries about it amongst educators. Thompson (1996) shows some confusions among the teachers who are engaged in CLT classrooms in various part of the globe. Clearly, Communicative Language Teaching means excluding grammar from the classrooms and the main emphasis goes to communication (Thompson, 1996). Li (1998) also reports this fact in her research on teachers' perceptions of Communicative Language Teaching in South Korea. Likewise, Li (2003) has probed the teachers' perceptions about CLT and found some misunderstandings among the Chinese teachers. In her study, one-hundred-sixty-four in-service English teachers believed that Communicative Language Teaching approach has no room for grammar rules and the mere focus is on communication activities.

The second misconception about Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is that the teachers believed CLT claims to teach only communicating and listening, with the exclusion of grammar rules. Sato and Kleinsasser's (1999) studied about ten

Japanese teachers' perceptions on Communicative Language Teaching in Australia. The interview data presents that the teachers believed Communicative Language Teaching classrooms are focused on speaking and listening in a second language (target language). Besides, they believed that grammar is not shared in any principles of Communication Language Teaching. Furthermore, numerous teachers said that Communicative Language Teaching implemented activities that were entertaining. They also state that they felt they were not successful in implementing CLT because the classroom did not include entertaining activities (Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999).

In her study, Savignon (2001) proposes that there have to be studies on what Communicative Language Teaching is not. She believes that Communicative Language Teaching does not merely deal with verbal communication between two interlocutors in person. It also emphasizes with discussing meanings by writing and reading. Also, Communicative Language Teaching does not only encourage pair/group works but learners, in some contexts, could work alone for speaking aims. In conclusion, Communicative Language Teaching classrooms also include grammar rules. The key purpose of CLT is to advance the students' understanding to practice this information (Savignon, 2001).

2.5.2 Advantages of CLT

As it was mentioned clearly, linguistic competence was the focus in methods like audio-lingual and translation methods, Communicative Language Teaching aims at communicative competence (Richards (2006). Hence, by facilitating its principles and characteristics, the students are able to use the language in a communicative environment to fulfill their needs in real-life speaking is the essential aim of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Conversely, Brown (1994) stresses that the grammar-translation method "does virtually nothing to enhance a student's communicative ability in the language". Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) argued that the main focus of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is meaning. They both emphasize that CLT, in contrast to other methods like audio-lingual that the main focus is on grammar competence, focuses on meaning rather than grammatical rules. Subsequently, Communicative Language Teaching shifts away from structure learning to the very knowledge of communication competence and how to communicate successfully. The system of linguistic in the second language, in CLT, is well perceived when the students put effort to communicate. So, it is observed that the

major role falls upon the teachers to facilitate Communicative Language Teaching classrooms and move from teacher-centered class to the very students-centered one.

Communicative Language Teaching provides the students more autonomy and directly involved with the learning process. That is to say, the main emphasis is on learner-centeredness, rather than, the teachers being the controller of the whole situation inside classrooms. So, the role of the teacher, as mentioned earlier, is considered to be the facilitator to aid the learners in terms of directing them to active communicative classrooms. This way of helping the students is useful as the students are those who are bound to have the knowledge and forced to learn how to achieve communication through CLT principles. That is to say, the students are well-involved in learning processes. Moreover, the students while learning how to communicate can use the language effectively. Thus, the context of implementing CLT decides the emphasis on linguistic competence which can be achieved through the practically using of actual communication (Brown, 2001).

In Communicative Language Teaching process, learning materials are based on the context where CLT happens (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983). Conversely, grammar translation method teaches the memorization of a "list of isolated words" (Brown, 2001). Moreover, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) urges mastering communication prior other skills, such as writing and reading. That is to say, both writing and reading can be put off until speaking is effectively mastered. Obviously, the focus of CLT is in meaning, as well as communicative competence, so the functions play an essential role in implementing CLT in the classrooms. Functions, as well as the sequence of functions, are worth mentioning in CLT materials.

2.5.3 Disadvantages of CLT

In spite of the fact that CLT has some exceptional useful features, it has shortcomings too. Schmitt (2000) maintained that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) requires understandable vocabulary to use the language functionally, yet, inevitably, it provides little instruction about how to manage vocabulary. Nonetheless, it has been acknowledged by some scholars that sheer vocabulary does not ensure language learning. Therefore, the best practice for CLT involves "both a principled selection of vocabulary, often according to frequency lists, and an instruction methodology that encourages meaningful engagement with words over a number of

recycling” (p.14). Furthermore, Stern (1992) reveals that Communicative Language Teaching approach gravely focuses on the mere concept “communication” so that “in order to account for all varieties and aspects of language teaching we either stretch the concept of communication so much that it loses any distinctive meaning, or we accept its limitations and then find ourselves in the predicament of the “method” solution” (p. 14).

As it was discussed above, there was numerous criticisms on the Communicative Language Teaching principles of learning the language. Having said that, it is essential to develop CLT based on the criticism discussed by the scholars on language learning. Hiep (2007) mentions some articles which raised some debates about Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Further, Hughes (1983) states that CLT leads to the creation of "fluent but inaccurate" students. In Communicative Language Teaching classrooms, it is expected that it is improper when priority to fluency is preceded over accuracy. That is to say, error corrections are not essential in Communicative Language Teaching classrooms. As stated earlier, the essential role giving to the teachers is being a facilitator rather than the controller of the class. Therefore, the teachers would not halt the students and try to correct their grammatical errors accordingly. By doing so, the aspect of accuracy is overlooked and "fossilization" of errors can happen and could never be improved (Brown, 1994). Thus, the prioritization of fluency over accuracy is considered as one of the downs of Communicative Language Teaching classrooms.

As pointed out by some scholars, notably (Chau & Chung, 1987; Burnaby & Sun, 1989), it is a challenging task to implement the principles of Communicative Language Teaching in English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts. In their studies, they conclude that it is difficult to implement CLT in EFL classrooms due to the inappropriateness of tools, first language teachers and large size of the classrooms as well. In English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms, the only place where the students can conduct their communications is the classrooms. As mentioned before, in the CLT classrooms only target language is spoken but in EFL classrooms mother tongue also can be used. Consequently, the context and situational factors do not allow the students to develop their communications skills well enough. Moreover, the absence of native speaker is another barrier which prevents the EFL classrooms apply the authentic materials of CLT. As a result, using Communicative Language Teaching

principles in EFL context seem to be a hard task and stimulating not only for the students but also the teachers.

2.6 TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS CLT

Teachers' attitudes are considered as essential players in the field of Language teaching in terms of shaping the application of a method or an approach. Surprisingly, stakeholders and curriculum designers tend to forget to take teachers' practical beliefs into consideration. Freeman and Richards (1993) argue that it is essential to greatly emphasize on teachers' perceptions towards a particular approach while designing a curriculum, or more specifically, for teachers to focus on their attitudes while teaching in the classrooms.

The educator's attitudes, yet subconsciously believed, leave an essential effect on the classroom teachings activities. Further, it determines what the learners practically learn while faced with an approach or method, this reality has been recognized by many scholars in the field education, notably Clark and Yinger (1979), Gayle (1979), McNergney and Carrier (1981), Nunan (1990), and Stern and Keislar (1977). As a new approach introduced to a particular classroom, it is necessary that the teacher attempt to look thoroughly into it, redefine the material and change if needed, his/or her attitudes incompatible with the given approach within the situation of program,

It is not enough for people to act differently, which is a surface phenomenon, they may also be required to change the way they think about certain issues, which is a deeper and more complex change. (Kennedy 1988: 329)

That is to say, attitude alteration is considered a critical and unavoidable segment of educational development. In the case of the availability of inconsistency between the given approach and teachers' theories found, it becomes an inevitable duty of teachers to redefine the new knowledge of the approach and interpret in taking everything in mind to their specific concepts (Wagner, 1991). Dingwall (1985) states that it is necessary to study the perceptions of the teachers while implementing a new innovative approach introduced to the classroom. Moreover, Breen (1991) argues that this investigation is needed because it can help in implementing the most applicable sort of backing that the teachers need in the classrooms.

Notwithstanding, the essentiality of teachers' perceptions in deciding the innovative well-performed ideas and in comprehending the performances of the teachers in the classrooms have been ignored in L2 classrooms studies (see Grotjahn 1991; Kleinsasser and Savignon 1991; Nunan 1991). Clearly, Kleinsasser and Savignon (1991: 299) maintain,

In our quest for the improvement of language teaching, we have overlooked the language teacher. Exploration ... of teachers' perceptions of what they do and why they do it, holds promise for understanding the frequently noted discrepancies between theoretical understanding of second/foreign language acquisition and classroom practice.

2.6.1 Characteristics of teacher attitudes

As the research of teachers' perceptions has a great importance in English classrooms, there are numerous definitions provided by the scholars of ELT field. Clearly, the definitions have many aspects, yet, they focus on three key features: attitudes can be learned through some mechanisms, they have a great influence on activities, and also they consist of evaluation (Breckler & Wiggins, 1989). Firstly, Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) provide a definition of attitudes as "a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner with respect to a given object" (p. 6). According to both researchers, aptitudes can be learned, therefore, it is possible that the teachers could modify them by studying and learning. In other words, if a teacher faces some new forms of teaching, then the attitudes can be changed accordingly. Secondly, the attitudes encompass to teachers' behavior. Airport's (1935) defined attitudes as "a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related" (p. 1). Greenwald, (1966) mentions that it is clear that this definition suggests the readiness for changing the teachers exposed to a new form of material. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) propose that differentiating between social objectives and behavior itself. Almost entirely, attitudes are not compatible with attitude reactions. Yet, it is important to point out that attitude is the essential purpose to leave effect behavior. That is to say, an individual who is holding a positive attitude towards a material may carry out a positive behavior towards the learning classrooms, not the other way around. Consequently, the predisposition signifies to "the overall favourability of a behavioral pattern" (Fishbein

& Ajzen, 1975, p. 8). This definition sheds light on the fact that the reason underlying the teachers who embrace favorable attitudes to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) have a tendency to perform group/pair works, rather than, regular exams.

Last but not least, another essential component of attitudes is its actual, like-dislike, and evaluative, agree-disagree, quality. For instance, Thurstone (1967) noted that "Attitude is the affect for or against a psychological object" (p. 20). Furthermore, Ajzen (1989) shows "An attitude is an individual's disposition to respond favorably or unfavorably to an object" (p. 241). It is "conceptualized as the amount of affect for or against some object" (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, p. 11).

2.6.2 Characteristics of attitudes

As it was defined before, attitudes have different characterisations and the common definitions suggest that there are three features in which attitudes can be divided to conation, perception and affect (Greenwald, 1966). According to Triandis, (1971), cognition involves the notion that is expressed by human being's thinking. Furthermore, Cognition can be defined as someone's understanding, view, belief and idea on a subject matter (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Triandis, (1971) shows that emotions are essential to drive someone's idea towards a particular matter. Affect deal with an individual's feeling of something. Yet, Fishbein & Ajzen, (1975) argue that Conation refers to behavioral objective as well as acts in relation to a material. Triandis, (1971) shows that even though these components are interlinked, but some empirical studies found out that this is not always the case and they can be different sometimes.

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) suggest that the "attitude" is pragmatic to the actual realm that deals with "a person's favorable or unfavorable evaluation of an object" (p. 12). Further, the term used by both researchers as belief for cognitive components. So, an individual's views denote "the information he has about the object" (p. 12). In addition, both researchers suggest that there is a difference between behavioral intentions and behavior itself. According to them, behavioral intention deals with an individual's purpose to carry out behaviors as the behavior itself shows the individual's "observed overt acts". (p. 13)

2.6.3 Teachers' attitudes towards CLT

In his study, Karavas-Doukas (1996) found the underlying factors of the discrepancies between Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and the

implementation inside the classroom might be the attitudes of teachers. To find out the reasons behind the inconsistencies for teachers who implement CLT in classrooms, Karavas-Doukas (1996) considered an attitude scale to measure the secondary Greek teachers' attitude toward Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Karavas-Doukas (1996) claims that attitudes scale is thoroughly important in unfolding the teachers' beliefs about certain matters. In addition, Karavas-Doukas (1996) proposes that the incompatibility between views and the implementation in the classroom might lead to the abandonment of investigating educators' attitudes prior to applying any different method or approach. In other words, it is not enough to merely encourage the newly-introduced approach and put efforts to persuade the teachers of its influence productively but also the teachers' attitudes about teaching and learning should change (Karavas-Doukas, 1996).

2.6.4 Teachers' favorable and unfavorable attitudes towards CLT

Mangubhai, Dashwood, Berthold, Flores and Dale (1998) studied the teachers' attitudes toward Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). In their study, they used the questionnaire designed by Karavas-Doukas (1996) to investigate the Australian English Language teachers' attitudes toward Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The collected data was categorized under five sub-scales: learner role, grammar role, teacher role, error correction and group work. The results of the study concluded that the teachers had a moderate attitude towards the reasons concerning to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). In this study, it was concluded that learner role had the main emphasis which the participants leaned towards. This proposes that the participants, the teachers, though the learners have an essential role in the classrooms. Yet, it was concluded that the teachers did not agree with everything in this approach, CLT. Clearly, almost half of the respondents believed that the main emphasis should go to structure correctness just after it occurs (Mangubhai et al, 1998).

Correspondingly, the same questionnaire which was designed by Karavas-Doukas (1996) to investigate Greece teachers' attitudes towards Communicative Language Teaching approach, was implemented by Razmjoo and Riazi (2006) to study Iranian EFL teachers' attitudes toward Communicative Language Teaching. The results of the study concluded that the majority of high school teachers concurred with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The participants strongly

agreed about Communicative Language Teaching, particularly, in the capacities of teacher and grammar rules. Generally, in terms of the items in the questionnaire, the participants had encouraging attitudes towards the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach (Razmjoo & Riazi, 2006).

Further, Karim (2004) investigated the teachers' attitudes towards Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Bangladeshi context. It was concluded that a huge number of the participants held positive attitudes towards the very basic features of Communicative Language (CLT). Furthermore, from their response, it was concluded that the participants realized the components and notions of Communicative Language Teaching along with their reported CLT implementations inside the classrooms (Karim, 2004).

Hawkey (2006) investigated the teachers' perceptions on how far they concurred with the very advantages of CLT in the Italian context. Basically, the participants held positive attitudes towards Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in language teaching, clearly "CLT improving learner motivation and interest", as well as "CLT improving communicative skills" (p. 247). Furthermore, the face-to-face interview results showed that the participants had a more positive perception of implementing pair/group work in their classrooms in order to meet the learners' needs for communicative competence (Hawkey, 2006).

Furthermore, in China, high school English teachers' attitudes toward Communicative Language Teaching approach (CLT) was studied by Liao (2003). His study consisted of a two-phase survey, namely questionnaire, and face-to-face interviews. The questionnaire responses concluded that the majority of the participants (%94) held a favorable towards the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching principles in their classrooms (Liao, 2003). Similarly, the second phase, face-to-face interview, showed that the selected participants, four teachers, also favored the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Clearly, their responses concluded that they concurred with CLT in the areas of, "the teacher should take into account the students' need", and "the aim of the class is to enable students to communicate easily in real life situations" (p. 125).

Closely enough, the study of (Chang, 2000) to find out the teachers' attitudes towards Communicative Language Teaching and its implementation inside the

classrooms, show that the participants held favorable attitudes towards CLT. Furthermore, the participants also leaned to practice more CLT activities inside their classrooms. To sum up, the results of aforementioned studies show that the teachers had a positive view about the principles of CLT and implementation of its activities in their class. Whereas, there are numerous of studies indicating the concerns about the teacher's attitudes towards CLT.

In some studies, the results show that the teachers' perceptions of language learning and teaching are inconsistent with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). For instance, the results of Mangubhai et al. (2005) indicate that Australian teachers disagreed with Communicative Language Teaching principles and activities to be solely relied upon inside their classrooms. The main concern of participants was towards the role of grammar and error correction. The bulk of participants had concerns about giving priority to meaning-focused speaking instead of language form. This is a clear indication that every teachers' views towards CLT are not similar in terms of giving more attention to merely communicative competence and less attention to grammar (Mangubhai et al., 2005).

According to Ellis (1996); Hawkey (2006); Liao (2003); Li (2004); Liao (2000); Tsai (2007); Yu (2001), it is suggested that the EFL teachers have concerns about the CLT without having the grammatical instruction merged with. Hawkey (2006) shows that EFL teachers of Italy suggested that grammar correction is an essential inside their classrooms. The data obtained from the face-to-face interviews conclude that the EFL teachers had an opposite view about CLT makes students better to succeed in second language learning. The participants of the study also confirm that the students should know the grammatical form of any utterances otherwise their error would be neglected (Hawkey, 2006). Similarly, the results of Li's (2004) concluded that the EFL teachers must give feedback when the learners use the second language. According to Li (2004), because of the learners' knowledge about first language communication, all they required to acquire were words to utter in the second language.

Furthermore, the face-to-face interview data of Carless's (2004) investigation indicate the concerns of teachers about neglecting students' linguistic competence. The participants of the study conclude that there are some learners who used the easiest grammatical sentence to communicate. That is to say, when the learners faced

communicating, they preferred to use normal ways like guessing (Carless, 2004). According to the study of Burnaby and Sun (1989), it was revealed that the Chinese EFL teachers viewed Communicative Language Teaching to be appropriate just for those students who are learning English as an L2, and for the rest of other purposes, the traditional methods are suitable to learn English as a second language (ESL). Both researchers conclude that almost all the students in China study English for the purposes of document translation and technology (Burnaby & Sun, 1989). Similarly, the same results can be seen in Tsai's (2007) study about CLT in Taiwanese context. The participants of the study concluded that EFL learners do not need to communicate instantly in the target language. Instead, they favor grammar and writing so as to deal with the material content knowledge.

There are also studies about EFL teachers' concerns whether Communicative Language Teaching is suitable in the contexts where it is unlike Western ones in terms of educational system and the size of the classrooms. Studies in China, Korea, and Japan conclude the same results about implementing CLT. In interview phase of their research with ten experienced Chinese teachers, Burnaby and Sun (1989) conclude that the participants saw the Chinese classrooms as teacher-centered ones. Whereas the very principle of Communicative Language Teaching classrooms is student-centered and that raises the concerns of teachers not being capable of answering learners' questions (Burnaby & Sun, 1989). According to Li's (1998) findings in Korea about the implementation of CLT in Korean classrooms, it was revealed that the teachers showed fear if they cannot answer all questions of the learners in CLT classrooms. Further, Burnaby and Sun (1989) shows that the Chinese teachers reported that CLT activities are seen more like games, rather than actual learning. In his study, Pacek (1996) reveals that cultural background had essential influences in implementing Communicative Language Teaching in the Japanese context. The results conclude that the major concern about CLT in Japanese context was the concerns of the learners' parents who considered CLT to be inappropriate for their children in terms of scores. Clearly, Pacek (1996) reveals that the students' parents considered CLT activities not in favor of students with their exams. Instead, they were just some sort of games in the class.

2.7 THE UNDERLYING FACTORS BEHIND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CLT

Despite the fact that teacher's attitudes play an essential role in CLT implementation, the situational limitations and barriers in a particular context have grave influence in the success of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) implementation. Having said that, one of the key reasons which affect the CLT implementation is the students' exams that based on grammatical structure responses. In numerous Asian continent states, the students are examined to pass to the next stage. Different studies concluded that the teachers are concerned about the pressure they felt about to help the learners succeed in the examinations (Karim, 2004; Li, 1998; Liao, 2003; Liao, 2006; Menking, 2001; Pacek, 1996; Tsai, 2007; Yu, 2001). Furthermore, the results of the studies suggest that it was difficult to implement CLT activities in large classrooms (Tsai, 2007; Li, 1998; Liao, 2003; Liao, 2006; Yu, 2001; Karim, 2004). Despite the situational constraints, the teachers and students factors must be taken into consideration. Some teachers are concerned because they are not English-speaking-born person. In China, teachers felt that it was difficult to implement cultural aspects of English because they have not studied their education in a native state (Liao, 2003; Yu, 2001). Further, students' low-proficiency is another factor for the teachers to ignore the use of CLT activities (Chang, 1999; Li, 1998; Liao, 2003; Liao, 2006; Tsai, 2007; Yu, 2001). Undoubtedly, the aforementioned factor can cause failure of the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). In his study, Li (1998) conclude that the situational factors have damaging outcomes on the Koran attitudes towards the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Li (1998) categorized the situational constraints into four parts: students, educational system, teachers and the CLT itself. Each factor has subfactors (Table 2.1):

Table 1

Factors hindering implementation of CLT (Li, 1998, p. 687)

factors	Sub-factors
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deficiency in spoken English - Deficiency in strategic and sociolinguistic competence - Lack of training in CLT - Few opportunities for retraining in CLT - Misconceptions about CLT - Little time for developing materials for communicative classes.
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low-proficiency in English - Lack of motivation for developing communicative competence - Resistance to class participation.
Educational system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large classes - Grammar-based examinations - Insufficient funding - Lack of support.
CLT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inadequate account of EFL teaching - Lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments.

To conclude, Anderson (1993) states that the core attention in terms of hindering the implementation of CLT in the classrooms is that of teachers impotent in English fluency,

.... Teachers do not have the security of the textbook since they must select, adapt and invent materials they use; the students may be perplexed by the communicative approach since they are not accustomed to it; this approach is more difficult to evaluate than other approaches; and perhaps greatest of all, is the fact that the communicative approach tends to go against traditional practice and would be opposed by most older teachers and learners (1993:473).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.0 PRESENTATION

This chapter pertains the research design, population, and sampling as well as data collection instruments. Finally, data collection procedure, a pilot study, and data analysis are discussed.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

In this study, mixed method of quantitative and qualitative data collection was conducted. First, descriptive analyses were performed on the responses obtained from 58 teachers regarding their attitudes towards CLT. As De Vaus (2002:18) defines it, “descriptive research deals with questions of *what* things are like, not *why* they are that way.” Similarly, Koh and Owen (2000:219) define descriptive research as being “based on the premise that problems can be solved and practices improved through observation analysis and description and the most common method is the survey which includes questionnaires, personal interviews, phone surveys and normative surveys.” For the first phase of data collection, a Likert- scale questionnaire (adopted by Karavas-Doukas, 1996) (see appendix I) was used to measure the level of perceived attitudes of the participants. The reliability and validity of previous studies employing the same questionnaire proved that the questionnaire utilized in this study was reliable, (Karavas-Doukas, 1996), 0.81; (Mirzaee, 2016), 0.85. Following data collection, the researcher tested the questionnaire via SPSS Statistics Software Version 21.0 for reliability with the obtained Cronbach’s Alpha of (.76.2).

Since a thorough understanding of a particular subject cannot be obtained via a questionnaire, the researcher supplemented these with semi-structured interviews obtaining the subjective views and experiences of the randomly-selected six participants (who had already answered the questionnaire). The aim of this was to investigate the rationales behind their implementation of CLT in their EFL classrooms (see Appendix II). Before the researcher began conducting the interviews, the items

involved were revised by a university professor of education to verify their compatibility with the research questions. During the interview process, the researcher asked the interviewees prearranged and open-ended questions; however, follow-up questions were also asked.

3.2 RESEARCH POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Participants included 58 secondary teachers during the 2016-17 academic year. Prior to questionnaire distribution, the researcher obtained a letter of consent from the Directorate of Education in Soran district (see Appendix III). Later, the researcher created an online Google form to collect the needed data. Out of 58 participants, only 30 of them responded online. The remaining 28 answered the questionnaire manually after the researcher visited their schools.

The age distribution of participants is presented in Table 2 below. Ages varied between 22 and 55 years.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics of age distribution (N=58)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
22-25	5	8.6	8.6	8.6
26-30	29	50.0	50.0	58.6
31-35	18	31.0	31.0	89.7
36-40	2	3.4	3.4	93.1
41-45	3	5.2	5.2	98.3
45-55	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Five (8.6%) of the participants were between 22 and 25 years of age; twenty-nine (50.0%) were in the age group between 26 and 30; eighteen (31.0%) ranged in age between 31 and 35; two (3.4%) teachers were aged 36-40; three (5.2%) were aged 41-45; and only one (1.7%) was more than 45 years of age (total 58).

Table 3 below presents the descriptive statistics of participants in terms of sex distribution.

Table 3

Descriptive statistics of sex distribution

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
female	13	22.4	22.4	22.4
Male	45	77.6	77.6	100.0
Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Thirteen (22.4%) of the participants were female, while forty-five (77.6%) were male.

As indicated by Table 4 below, participants varied in terms of teaching experience.

Table 4

Descriptive statistics of participants' teaching experience

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
0-5	23	39.7	39.7	39.7
6-10	29	50.0	50.0	89.7
11-15	4	6.9	6.9	96.6
16-20	1	1.7	1.7	98.3
+25	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Twenty-three (39.7%) participants possessed 1-5 years of teaching experience; twenty-nine (50.0%) possessed 6-10 years; four (6.9%) had 11-15 years; one (1.7%) had 16-20 years; and again one (1.7%) had more than 25 years of experience (total 58).

In terms of the highest level of obtained degree in education, Table 5 below shows the descriptive statistics of participants.

Table 5

Descriptive statistics of highest level of education

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Bachelor degree	50	86.2	86.2	86.2
Master's degree	8	13.8	13.8	100.0
Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Fifty (86.2%) of the participants held a Bachelor's degree, while the remaining eight (13.8%) held a Master's degree (total 58).

Table 6 below represents the descriptive statistics of participants' major fields of study.

Table 6

Descriptive statistics of the teachers' major

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
English literature	18	31.0	31.0	31.0
TESOL	5	8.6	8.6	39.7
Linguistics	32	55.2	55.2	94.8
Others	3	5.2	5.2	100.0
Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Eighteen (31.0%) participants majored in the English Literature; five (8.6%) in TESOL; thirty-two (55.2%) in Linguistics; and three (5.2%) in other fields related to ELT (Total 58).

3.3 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

3.3.1 Questionnaire

From mid-November 2016 to February 12, 2017, the researcher administered a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire to 58 Iraqi EFL secondary school teachers (See appendix I). The basis for utilizing such a mode of data collection is demonstrated by Fraenkel and Wallen's (1996) assertion that "it is possible to discover attitudes by asking individuals to respond to a series of statements of preference [. . .] The pattern of responses is then viewed as evidence of one or more underlying attitudes" (p. 129).

The questionnaire consists of twenty-four statements developed by Karavas-Doukas (1996) and it is ordered in terms of "Strongly Disagree", "Disagree", "Neither Agree nor Disagree", "Agree", and "Strongly Agree" with values ranging 1 through 5, respectively.

As Karavas-Doukas (1996) explains, an unfavorable statement is scored 1, while a favorable statement is scored 5. This attitude scale was first employed by the aforementioned researcher to study Greek teachers' attitudes towards the principles of CLT, such as error correction (4 items), group/pair work (4 items), the place of

grammar (6 items), the role of teachers (4 items), and the role of learners (6 items). Therefore, the maximum score for favorable attitudes is 120 and can be achieved by scoring “5” on all the items. However, the minimum score for unfavorable attitudes is 24 and can result from scoring “1” on all the items. In other words, a teacher’s score can range between the maximum score (120), minimum score (24) and the neutral score (72). The questionnaire consists of 12 favorable (2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 24) and 12 unfavorable statements (1, 4, 5, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 21, 23).

In addition, the second questionnaire component inquired regarding the demographic backgrounds of participants and the possibility of implementing CLT principles in an Iraqi context. Since the participants were EFL teachers, the questionnaire was worded in English. Out of nearly 80 questionnaires distributed, either via email or manually, the researcher received only 58 (72.5%) completed forms. To analyze the obtained questionnaires quantitatively, the researcher employed SPSS (Version 20) software.

3.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

As a questionnaire alone is insufficient for acquiring a thorough understanding of an issue, the researcher supplemented this data collection tool with face-to-face interviews. These involved six randomly-selected participants and explored the factors underlying their motivation for implementing CLT in their classrooms. After the first phase of data collection, the researcher invited six of those who had participated to further take part in an interview. After obtaining the participants’ consent, the researcher arranged via phone calls to each participant the date, time, and place of the meetings. The interviews were arranged in accordance with their availability; moreover, they occurred outside of their work environment so as to encourage free discussion and avoid interjections. Before each interview commenced, the researcher thoroughly explained the reasons and protocols of the study. The language to be spoken during the interview was decided by interviewees themselves, and their options included Kurdish (their mother tongue) or English (their target language). Three chose English, two Kurdish, and one switched the language from Kurdish to English after ten minutes. While conducting the interviews, the researcher listened carefully to the participants’ responses and remained silent during this time. The conversations were audio-taped, as the interviewees had been notified beforehand. The researcher took notes during the interviews in order to glean as many details as possible for later

analysis (Patton, 1990). This qualitative data collection lasted for one week, from January 29 to February 4, 2017.

After the interviews were conducted, the researcher translated two of the audios into English and transcribed the audiotapes *verbatim*. This included every word, feeling, and gesture utilized during the interviews. The transcriptions then were revised by the interviewees for verification. Also, the translated versions were reviewed for accuracy by a doctoral candidate holding a Master's degree in ELT as well as by the researcher himself, who is a professional academic translator.

In any research protocol, as argued by Fowler (2002), the interviewees hold the right to the following confirmation before the interviews commence:

1. The name of the organization as well as the name of the interviewer that is carrying out the research.
2. The sponsorship of the research.
3. A brief description of the purpose of the research.
4. An accurate statement of the extent to which answers are protected with respect to confidentiality.
5. Assurance that cooperation is voluntary and that no negative consequences will result to those who decide not to participate in the survey study.
6. Assurance that respondents can skip any questions that they do not want to answer, (p. 149).

Table 7 below explains the demographical backgrounds of the six interviewees.

Table 7

Demographic background of interview participants

No.	Sex	Age	Level of degree	Frequency of using CLT	Major	Experience
T1	Male	31-35	Bachelor	Few times a week	TESOL	6-10
T2	Male	26-30	Bachelor	Daily	Linguistics	6-10
T3	Male	26-30	Bachelor	Few times a week	Linguistics	6-10
T4	Male	26-30	Bachelor	Daily	Linguistics	6-10
T5	Male	26-10	Bachelor	Once a week	Linguistics	6-10
T6	Male	26-30	Masters	Daily	English Literature	6-10

All of the above participants were male. With the respect to age, only one of the participants ranged from 31 to 35 years, while the rest were aged from 26 to 30 years. Concerning the degree level of participants, it was found that only one participant held a Master's degree, while the rest held Bachelor's degree. Furthermore, their majors varied: two of the participants studied TESOL and English Literature, respectively, while the rest studied Linguistics.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

3.4.1 Piloting Procedure

A pilot study is considered one of the most important parts of any study for determining how well the adopted questionnaire meets reliability and validity standards. Lewin (2005) argues that a pilot study simply means to examine the questionnaire with a number of participants. Since the questionnaire of this study was originally adapted from Karavas-Doukas (1996), it was proven that the correlated split-half reliability coefficient was .88, which shows that the questionnaire was reliable. Similarly, the same questionnaire was used to measure the level of Iranian EFL teachers' attitudes towards CLT (Razmjoo and Riazi, 2006). Thus, the questionnaire was tested for reliability with Cronbach's Alpha, which calculated the internal consistency of the items. The reliability coefficient was 0.79, which is reliable according to the standards of reliability (Karavas-Doukas, 1996).

Following data collection, the researcher tested the reliability of the questionnaire, which was found to be reliable with a Cronbach Alpha of 76.2.

3.4.2 Data Collection

3.4.2.1 Quantitative data collection

The quantitative data of this study were gathered by administering a questionnaire to measure the participants' attitudes towards CLT. Since participants were English language teachers, the researcher administered the questionnaire in English. The questionnaire consisted of two components, the first concerning background information of participants in terms of age, gender, years of experience, number of professional training programs attended, frequency of using CLT, and majors of study; and the second involving a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire which was originally used by Karavas-Doukas (1996). Furthermore, the purpose of the questionnaire was to determine the overall attitudes of participants toward the principles of CLT.

As an ethical protocol, the researcher obtained an administrative consent letter from the General Education Directorate of the region to ascertain the validity to of distributing the questionnaire amongst participants. To ease in the data collection process, the researcher designed an online Google form for collecting data. This made it possible for the researcher to distribute the form to all 58 participants, although only 30 replied electronically with the rest replying manually. The quantitative data collection process lasted for two and a half months. The approval letter from the Directorate of Education was attached with all questionnaires in order to assert the purpose of the study.

3.4.2.2 Qualitative data collection

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect the necessary data for this study's qualitative phase (See appendix II). Once the quantitative data was collected, researcher randomly asked six participants to participate further in the interview component. The overall teaching experience of participants between six and ten years. Prior to conducting the interviews, the researcher phoned the interviewees to inform them of the purpose of participation and obtain approval regarding their willingness to participate voluntarily. After the researcher had obtained such consent

via a signed document, an interview schedule was organized to accommodate interviewees based on their availability.

For each interview, the researcher sought to create a friendly, conversational atmosphere in order to avoid an otherwise test-like environment, which might have seemed intimidating to participants. The interviews were conducted in an outside environment where they were free of interruption. To start with, the interviewer explained the purpose of this data collection phase before the face-to-face, semi-structured interviews began. As mentioned previously, the interviewees chose the language in which their interviews were conducted.

The main aim of qualitative data collection was to discern the underlying motivations behind participants' implementation of CLT in their EFL classrooms. Moreover, the interviews investigated the obstacles and encouraging factors both preventing and easing the implementation of CLT inside these classrooms. The researcher did not interfere with or add any views about the interview topics during this process. Instead, he listened attentively and remained non-judgmental in an effort to create opportunity for further conversation. In order to confirm the collected data, the interviews were tape-recorded after gaining interviewees' permission. The average time of each interview was approximately 30 minutes. The period of data collection lasted for one week, January 30 to February 5 during the 2016-17 academic year. Finally, after the data were collected, the researcher translated those responses in the mother language of Kurdish and then transcribed each interview into English. To verify accuracy, the transcripts were reviewed by each participant. Despite the fact that all participants had utilized methods other than CLT, nevertheless important data about the research topic was obtained.

3.4.3 Data Analysis

3.4.3.1 Quantitative data analysis

The computer software SPSS (Version 20) was used for analyzing quantitative data. Descriptive statistics were applied and, accordingly, the percentage and frequency were calculated to determine the demographic backgrounds of the teachers. As mentioned above, the first research question probed Iraqi EFL teachers' attitudes towards the principles of CLT. Thus, the mean, standard deviation, maximum and

minimum were calculated to define the participants' scores. Furthermore, the principles of CLT were divided into five subscales: the importance of grammar, group/pair work, quantity and quality of error correction, teacher role inside the classroom, and the role and contribution of learners in the learning process. Thus, descriptive statistics were applied to all five principles in order to describe the mean, standard deviation and percentages for each item as well as the overall scores for principles.

As mentioned previously, Karavas-Doukas categorized the principles of CLT into five subscales: place/importance of grammar, group/pair work, quality and quantity of error correction, the role of the teacher in the classroom, and the role and contribution of learners in the learning process.

Table 8

Questionnaire Items on the subscales of CLT

Principles	Item numbers
Place/importance of grammar	1, 3, 12, 17, 23
Group/pair work	2, 9, 13, 21, 22
Quality and quantity of error correction	6, 10, 14, 15
The role of the teacher in the classroom	7, 16, 19, 24
The role and contribution of learners in the learning process	4, 5, 8, 11, 18, 20

Thus, to analyze each subscale independently, descriptive statistics were utilized to compute the mean and standard deviation. For unfavorable statements, the scale ranges from 1-5, with 1 being 'strongly disagree' and 5 being 'strongly agree'. The unfavourable statements (1, 17, 23, 13, 21, 22, 10, 15, 19, 4, 5, and 11) are reverse-coded. In other words, the more the mean is near 5, the more positive the participants' attitudes. Descriptive statistics were utilized to learn the results of participants' attitudes towards the subscales in the questionnaire developed by Karavas-Doukas (1996).

3.4.3.2 Qualitative data analysis

As discussed previously, a questionnaire cannot probe in-depth views about a specific subject. Thus, a semi-structured, open-ended interviews were conducted to investigate the second research question, “What kinds of problems do Iraqi EFL teachers encounter when implementing CLT in their language classrooms?,” and the sub-research question, “What are the essential encouraging reasons for the selection of CLT?”.

Creswell and Piano Clark (2007) suggest that for qualitative data analysis, a five-step technique is preferable for "preparing the data for analysis, exploring the data, analyzing the data, representing the data analysis, and validating the data" (p. 129).

After confirming the accuracy of the respondents' data, thematic content analysis was employed to categorize the data. This technique is preferred when “the general issues that are of interest are determined prior to the analysis, but the specific nature of the categories and themes to be explored are not predetermined”, as was the case with this study (Ezzy, 2002, p. 88). Next, the coding process—described by Ezzy (2002) as “disassembling and reassembling the data process”—was considered (p. 94). That is, the data were classified into smaller items of texts. Then, each item was re-organized by categorizing and identifying the themes to yield different obtained data.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

4.0 PRESENTATION

This chapter describes the questionnaire results. Descriptive statistics were employed to achieve the overall score and level of participants' attitudes towards the principles of CLT in terms of the place/importance of grammar, group/pair work, quality and quantity of error correction, the role of the teacher, and the role as well as contribution of learners. Furthermore, the interview results are elaborated. Interviews aimed at investigating the in-depth perceptions of participants regarding the nature of problems or encouraging factors for selecting CLT.

4.1 DESCRIPTIVE DATA ANALYSIS

4.1.1 Results of quantitative data

As discussed above, the quantitative phase of this study aims at investigating the attitudes of the participants regarding the principles of CLT. The first research question was, "What are Iraqi EFL teachers' attitudes towards the principles of the CLT approach?". To answer this question, the researcher administered a questionnaire designed by Karavas-Doukas (1996). The questionnaire was delivered to 80 students in the Soran district of northern Iraq. To the researcher's surprise, only 58 completed questionnaires were returned. The questionnaire consisted of two components: Part One inquired about the demographic information of participants in terms of gender, years of teaching experience, academic major, age, highest level of education, frequency of participation in CLT courses and implementation of CLT principles inside their classrooms. Part Two included a 24-item-questionnaire scale: 12 favourable (3, 12, 2, 9, 6, 14, 7, 16, 24, 8, 18, and 20) and 12 unfavourable statements.

According to Karavas-Doukas (1996), the scores of the scale range from 120 (the highest score for favourability) to 24 (the lowest score for unfavorable statements), with a neutral range of 72.

Table 9

Descriptive analysis of overall attitudes of participants

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Overall attitude score	58	63.65	91.00	76.2933	5.65507
Valid N (likewise)	58				

As illustrated by the table above, most participants had a positive (favorable) attitudes towards CLT principles. The obtained scores ranged from 63.60 (minimum) to 91.00 (maximum), with a mean of 76.29 and standard deviation of 5.65.

Table 10 shows the participants' attitudes toward each principle of CLT.

Table 10

Teachers' Attitudes towards subscales of CLT (N = 58)

Principles	M.	SD.
Place/importance of grammar	2.96	.53
Group/pair work	3.33	.46
Quality and quantity of error correction	2.96	.55
The role of the teacher in the classroom	3.25	.38
The role and contribution of learners in the learning process	3.31	.34

As previously mentioned, the most favorable point was 5 (“strongly agree”) to 1 (“strongly disagree”). The results analysed by SPSS indicate that participants held favorable attitudes toward all five subscales of CLT. More specifically, they exhibited moderate attitudes towards group/pair work, with the highest mean ($M=3.33$), indicating the most favorable items of CLT subscales. Similarly, the participants held moderate attitudes towards “the role and contribution of learners in the learning process”, with the mean score of ($M=3.31$). Furthermore, the participants held moderate attitudes towards “the role of the teachers in the classroom” ($M=3.25$). However, their attitudes towards the “place/importance of grammar” and “quality and

quantity of error correction” gained a low attitudes, with mean scores of ($M=2.96$) and ($M=2.96$), respectively.

4.1.1.1 Frequency and Percentage of “Place/Importance of Grammar”

Before analyzing the data, the researcher categorized each item into the five principles of CLT. The frequency and percentage of respondents are displayed in Table 11 below:

Table 11

Frequency and Percentage range of Participants' Responses toward the Role of Grammar (N =58)

Items	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
1. Grammatical correctness is the most important criterion by which language performance should be judged.*	4 %6.9	19 %32.8	9 %15.5	23 %39.7	3 5.2
3. Grammar should be taught only as a means to an end and not as an end in itself.	3 %5.2	13 %22.4	17 %29.3	21 %36.2	3 %5.2
12. Knowledge of the rules of a language does not guarantee the ability to use the language.	4 %6.9	14 %24.1	6 %10.3	25 %43.1	9 %15.5
17. By mastering the rules of grammar, students become fully capable of communicating with a native speaker.*	7 %12.1	12 %20.7	9 %15.5	24 %41.4	6 %10.3
23. Direct instruction in the rules and terminology of grammar is essential if students are to learn to communicate effectively.*	10 %17.2	14 %24.1	31 %53.2	3 %5.2	0 %0.0

SD=strongly disagree; D= disagree; NAND=neither agree nor disagree; A=Agree; SA=strongly agree. Negative items are presented by an asterisk (*)

Twenty-three participants (39.7%) agreed that grammatical correctness is necessary for learners to achieve communication goals (Item 1). Twenty-one (39.7%) thought that grammatical rules should be taught as a way to achieve communication, but not as the main purpose itself (Item 3). Moreover, twenty-five (43.1%) reported that knowledge of grammar rules does not guarantee learners to achieve

communication skills (Item 12). Twenty-five (41.4%) believed that grammar is essential for learners who seek the capability of communicating with a native speaker (Item 17). Finally, thirty-one (53.2%) remained uncertain regarding whether a direct instruction of grammar is vital for learners to speak fluently (Item 23).

The responses indicate that some teachers prefer grammar rules to be directly involved in their classrooms, while others suggest that grammar rules should be taught as a means for learners to achieve effective communication.

4.1.1.2 Descriptive analysis of “group/pair works” items

Table 12 below displays the frequency and percentage of participants’ attitude levels towards pair and group work.



Table 12

Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Responses toward Pair/group Work (N =58)

Items	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
2. Group work activities are essential in providing opportunities for co-operative relationships to emerge and in promoting genuine interaction among students.	3 %5.2	1 %1.7	5 %8.6	24 %41.4	25 %43.1
9. Group work allows students to explore problems for themselves and thus have some measure of control over their own learning. It is, therefore, an invaluable means of organizing classroom experiences.	1 %1.8	8 %14.0	1 %1.8	32 %56.1	15 %26.3
13. Group work activities take too long to organize and waste a lot of valuable teaching time.*	4 %6.9	20 %34.5	13 %22.4	20 %34.5	1 %1.7
21. Small group work may occasionally be useful to vary the routine, but it can never replace sound formal instruction by a competent teacher.*	2 %3.5	12 %21.1	13 %22.8	24 %42.1	6 %10.5
22. Group work activities have little use since it is very difficult for the teacher to monitor the students' performance and prevent them from using their mother tongue.*	3 %5.4	16 %28.6	11 %19.6	23 %41.1	3 %5.4

SD=strongly disagree; D= disagree; NAND=neither agree nor disagree; A=Agree; SA=strongly agree. Negative items are presented by an asterisk (*)

Twenty-five teachers (43.1%) agreed that group work aids learners in emerging within an environment in which they themselves can communicate with one another (Item 2). Thirty-two (56.1%) argued that group activities enable students to control their learning and, thus, it is an irreplaceable communication tool (Item 9). In terms of the potentially time-consuming nature of group activities, twenty teachers (34.5%) asserted that group activities are difficult to employ in their classrooms. Similarly, the same amount of participants (34.5%) opposed the idea that such activities require time

and organization (Item 13). Twenty-four (42.1%) reported that small group work activities may occasionally be useful, but it is difficult to consider them as alternatives for authentic instruction by an experienced teacher (Item 21). Finally, twenty-three participants (41.1%) agreed that group work activities cannot prevent learners from utilizing first language and monitoring them is difficult (Item 22).

According to the respondents, group activities function as the main tool for learners to gain a self-confidence inside the classroom, although some of the teachers still oppose group activities inside the classroom.

4.1.1.3 Descriptive analysis of “quality and quantity of error correction”

Table 13 below records participants’ attitudes towards the Error Correction Principle. There are four items indicating the Error Correction Principle (Items 6, 10, 14, 15).

Table 13

Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Responses toward Error Correction (N =58)

Items	SD	D	NADA	A	SA
6. For students to become effective communicators in the foreign language, the teacher's feedback must be focused on the appropriateness and not the linguistic form of the students' response.	4 %7.0	12 %21.1	10 %17.5	23 %40.4	8 %14.0
10. The teacher should correct all the grammatical errors students make. If errors are ignored, this will result in imperfect learning.*	5 %8.8	11 %19.3	9 %15.8	22 %38.6	10 %17.5
14. Since errors are a normal part of learning, much correction is wasteful of time.	3 %5.2	21 %36.2	7 %12.1	24 %41.4	3 %5.2
15. The Communicative approach to language teaching produces fluent but inaccurate learners.*	5 %8.8	10 %17.5	16 %28.1	22 %38.6	4 %7.0

SD=strongly disagree; D= disagree; NAND=neither agree nor disagree; A=Agree; SA=strongly agree. Negative items are presented by an asterisk (*)

Twenty-three participants (40.4%) felt that teacher feedback should involve learners' fluency in communication rather than grammatical errors (Item 6). Twenty-two (38.6%) claimed that it is necessary for the teacher to correct all structural rules; otherwise, he/she might contribute to students' imperfection in learning (Item 10). Twenty-four (41.4%) agreed that error correction is a waste of time because errors are an unavoidable part of the learning process, while twenty-one (36.2%) suggested that it is a fact that errors are part of the learning process, but neglecting them results in impotent learning in future (Item 14). Most participants (38.6%) agreed that one disadvantage of CLT is that it focuses more on fluency while neglecting accuracy (Item 15).

From the responses of the participants, it is concluded that error correction is a significant feature of the learning process and is essential to becoming a good communicator in a foreign language.

4.1.1.4 Descriptive analysis of “the role of the teacher in the classrooms”

The table below represents the frequency and percentage of another principle of CLT, “the role of the teacher in the classroom.”

Table 14

Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Responses toward the Role of the Teacher (N=58)

Items	SD	D	NADA	A	SA
7. The teacher as "authority" and "instructor" is no longer adequate to describe the teacher's role in the language classroom.	2 %3.4	14 %24.1	10 %17.2	22 %37.9	10 %17.2
16. The teacher as transmitter of knowledge is only one of the many different roles he/she must perform during the course of a lesson.	2 %3.4	12 %20.7	6 %10.3	31 %53.4	7 %12.1
19. The role of the teacher in the language classroom is to impart knowledge through activities such as explanation, writing, and example. *	1 %1.7	1 %1.7	9 %15.5	33 %56.9	14 %24.1
24. A textbook alone is not able to cater to all the needs and interests of the students. The teacher must supplement the textbook with other materials and tasks so as to satisfy the widely differing needs of the students.	3 %5.2	2 %3.4	3 %5.2	27 %46.6	23 %39.7

SD=strongly disagree; D= disagree; NANA=neither agree nor disagree; A=Agree; SA=strongly agree. Negative items are presented by an asterisk (*)

Twenty-two participants (%37.9) agreed that teachers should act as a facilitator than an instructor inside classrooms. To the credit of this notion, it is widely argued that the classroom should be student-centered rather than teacher-centered in a CLT environment (Item 7). More than half of the respondents (53%) claimed that the teacher as knowledge provider is only one segment of his/her diverse roles, which are supposed to be fulfilled during the lessons (Item 16). The majority of teachers (56.9%) asserted that knowledge of the target language should be transmitted to students through examples, writings and explanations, while fourteen of the total amount (24.1%) strongly agreed (Item 19). Lastly, almost half of the respondents (46.6%) believed textbooks to be insufficient for creating a communicative atmosphere, but the teacher should take tasks and other materials into consideration in order to meet the

needs of learners. Not surprisingly, twenty-three of the total amount (39.7%) strongly agreed in supporting this argument (Item 24).

In their responses, teachers confirmed that the role of teacher should be varied inside classrooms and that the role of the teacher is not as a “director” or “controller” but rather as a “facilitator.” Moreover, they perceived activities as important for imparting the content of the lesson, and textbooks as requiring supplementary explanations and examples when conveying information to students.

4.1.1.5. Descriptive analysis of “the role and contribution of learners in the learning process”

Finally, Table 15 below explains the descriptive analyses of “the role and contribution of learners” principle of CLT.

Table 15

Frequency and Percentage of Participants' Responses toward Role and Contribution of the Learners (N =58)

Items	SD	D	NADA	A	SA
4. Since the learner comes to the language classroom with little or no knowledge of the language, he/she is in no position to suggest what the content of the lesson should be or what activities are useful for him/her.*	3 %5.2	17 %29.3	10 %17.2	25 %43.1	3 %5.2
5. Training learners to take responsibility for their own learning is futile since learners are not used to such an approach.*	6 %10.5	20 %35.1	12 %21.1	17 %29.8	2 %3.5
8. The learner-centered approach to language teaching encourages responsibility and self-discipline and allows each student to develop his/her full potential.	0 %0.0	6 %10.5	3 %5.3	31 %54.4	17 %29.8
11. It is impossible for large class students to organize your teaching so as to suit the needs of all.*	4 %6.9	11 %19.0	5 %8.6	27 %46.6	11 %19.0
18, For most students language, is acquired most effectively when it is used as a vehicle for doing something else and not when it is studied in a direct or explicit way.	2 %3.5	8 %14.0	9 %15.8	33 %57.9	5 %8.8
20. Tasks and activities should be negotiated and adapted to suit the students' needs rather than imposed on them.	4 %6.9	4 %6.6	3 %5.2	37 %63.8	10 %17.2

SD=strongly disagree; D= disagree; NAND=neither agree nor disagree; A=Agree; SA=strongly agree. Negative items are presented by an asterisk (*)

It is observed that twenty-five participants (43.1%) thought that teachers rather than learners should decide the content of the lesson (Item 4). Twenty participants (35.1%) believed that learners should not be trained in order to be familiarized with CLT since they are not used to such an approach (Item 5). More than half of the participants (54.4%) favored learner-centered classrooms (Item 8). Almost half of the respondents (46.6%) reported that it is difficult to organize the teaching process in large classrooms (Item 11). The majority of the participants (57.9%) claimed that language is better to acquire when it is employed as a vehicle to something else, rather than as an object of study in and of itself. (item 18). Lastly, thirty-seven participants (63.8%) agreed that forcing learners to perform tasks and activities could not achieve the goal of CL, while ten of the participants (17.2%) strongly supported this notion (Item 20).

It can be concluded from participants' responses that learners are considered key players in the process of language learning, specifically when it comes to communicative competence..

4.2 RESULTS OF QUALITATIVE DATA

4.2.1 Results of research question 2A

Research Question 2A inquired, "What sort of problems do Iraqi EFL teachers encounter in implementing CLT in their language classrooms?". The main purpose of the interview questions was to identify the most common obstacles encountered by teachers while implementing CLT in their classrooms. Thematic content analysis was employed to categorize the interview data. The interview transcripts were separated into two categories: factors and sub-factors preventing teachers from successfully implementing CLT in their classrooms. The researchers' categorization is based on Li's (1998) categorized rationales hindering the implementation of CLT, and under each factor, there are the following sub-factors: educational system factors; educator factors; learner factors; and CLT factors (see Table 16).

The researcher read and re-read the interview transcripts carefully and subsequently identified codes that were supported by relevant quotes from the interview data.

Table 16

Essential reasons hindering the implementation of CLT

Factors	Sub-factors
Educational system	– Test-based curriculum (T5)
	– Lack of supplies (T5, T6)
	– Size of the classes (T2, T3, T4, T6)
	– Underpayment (T2, T3)
Educators	– Communicative incompetence (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6)
	– Lack of courses and training (T4, T6)
	– Personal problems (T4)
	– Unawareness of methods (T6)
Learners	– Lack of fluency (T1, T4, T5)
	– Familial attitudes to ELT (T1, T3)
CLT	– Contextual inadequacy (T6)

4.2.1.1 Educational system

The first category of factors preventing the successful implementation of CLT activities is related to the existing educational system of northern Iraq. Based on the interview data, the researcher identified the following four key factors: test-based curricula, lack of educational supplies, classroom size, and underpayment.

4.2.1.1.1 Test-based curriculum

Only one teacher (T5) out of the six clearly identified the issue of exam-based curricula. He stressed that teachers are unable to utilize their preferred learning tools, as they should adhere to principles and textbooks mandated by the educational authority. Furthermore, they must utilize other methods compatible with a test-based one in order to guide learners to success. During the interview, this participant also provided the following example for the sake of clarification:

T5: The Grammar Translation Method does not want students to learn merely grammatical rules, but it suggests that it is a vehicle to learn how to speak. But the reality of that time signifies something quite different. For example, the teachers used to tell us “write it down: this is how the present perfect tense is formed— subject + have/has + verb + past participle.”

4.2.1.1.2 Lack of supplies

Two interviewees (T5 and T6) emphasized the importance of CLT equipment as a key factor in avoiding the implementation of CLT. Specifically, T5 asserted that the educational authority does not help to provide necessary equipment. He explains the following:

T5: The system does not even supply learning cards, good markers, or comfortable halls, let alone other important stuff. When you have a class of more than forty students, it is difficult to make groups, and imagine if only four of the students speak. The whole class would be noisy.

The other interviewee (T6) agrees that without basic necessities, a teacher alone is incapable of promoting the implementation of CLT, suggesting the following:

T6: Teachers are not able to the equipment needed for role-playing, games, cards, and other activities. The education authority just moves along—it does not listen to teachers. We need for the government whatever is needed to implement CLT. Furthermore, our buildings, heating and cooling systems, and outdoor areas are not comfortable for students needing to rest.

4.2.1.1.3 Size of the classes

Four interviewees (T2, T3, T4, and T6) indicated the important roles that large classes play in preventing the implementation of CLT. They maintain that it is difficult, if not impossible, to implement CLT in a 40-student classroom. Furthermore, they reported that class activities and giving opportunity to each student, among other necessary activities, are almost impossible in large classes. Two participants explain the following:

T2: One of the biggest problems is that we have a large number of students. There are fifty students in a classroom, which is totally bad. This surely affects the process of implementing a CLT approach. It is difficult for the teacher to control this number of students and the situation. So, this is one of the biggest problems that I have ever noticed.

The other interviewee (T3), supports (T2), reporting, “There are 48 students in one classroom, and this does not appear to be a real learning class, but eventually, it becomes a classroom.”

interviewee (T3) reiterates that the educational system does not help in supporting the teachers:

T3: The system of education itself is not applicable to the situation we are in now. It is completely different when you have only 20 students, not 40, and it is relatively easy to overcome obstacles facing CLT implementation. So, it is very difficult to find a mechanism to convey the very principles of this approach in a proper way. There are numerous students in one classroom, so you cannot conduct group activities. For example, if you have forty students in one class, can you make groups? Of course you cannot, so that is one of the biggest problems.

(T4) provides another reason with a clear example from his own classroom, he argues that the number of the students in one class is so much that the class cannot be controlled easily, suggesting the following:

T4: There must be only 20 students in one classroom according to the standard, and the maximum should be 25 students. But you never see a classroom like this here. There are always more than 35 to 40 students in each classroom. I recall one of my classes that was comprised of 43 students. I think it is difficult to control the classroom. You cannot keep them quiet, control them, and convey your information at the same time. Even the time does not allow you to ensure that everyone has understood the lesson.

Furthermore, (T6) argues that the number of students can have a grave effect on CLT implementation. He complains that “it is a sad reality that public schools are outnumbered. The size of classes do not help, as there are too many students in one classroom. Moreover, the environment does not enable you to implement CLT.”

4.2.1.1.4 Underpayment

Two interviewees (T2 and T3) viewed government payment as an important factor in the implementation of CLT. During the interview, they stressed that it is important for teachers to be well-paid by the government. When asked how underpayment affects CLT implementation, (T2) reports the following:

T2: This is one of the problems that we have in our country. Because they do not get a fair salary from the government, most teachers have another

job, which affects the process of education as a whole. Teachers must recognize the problems of their students, and when they arrive home from school, they only think about how to get another job and gain more money for their families.

Similarly, (T3) confirms this point, stating that financial barriers of the teachers are one of the key factors in preventing them to implement CLT, suggesting the following:

T3: Financial problems directly influence not only English teachers but also those of other disciplines. Teachers are just like all other humankind—they have feelings and are “bread-winners”. So, they must be well-equipped financially and psychologically. Furthermore, if a teacher enters the classroom with a gloomy face, this directly affects students. When the lesson commences, students usually look at the teacher’s face [. . .] the teacher must have a smiley face all the time in order to convey CLT messages. So, I once again reiterate that the financial problems of teachers may hamper successful implementation of the CLT approach, a situation which negatively impacts them.

4.2.1.2 Educators

All interviewees emphasized some obstacles which inhibit them from implementing CLT in their classrooms. They identified four key problems relating to teachers, themselves: firstly, communicative incompetence; secondly, a lack of courses and training; thirdly, personal problems; and finally, unawareness of methods.

4.2.1.2.1 Communicative incompetence

During the interviews, the participants regarded communicative incompetence as one of the important factors obstructing CLT implementation. All interviewees more or less referenced this factor. They reported that since one of the key characteristics of CLT is fluency, the teachers, in general, are not well qualified to use the target language instead of the mother language. For instance, T1 recalls one of his friends, who is also a teacher, telling him the following:

T1: He said that he has an MA from India and he said that he is using only Kurdish in his classrooms. He told me that he even greets the students in Kurdish. The reason is that if he were to greet them in English, they would criticize him by asking, “Where do you think we are?” This happens in public school here, where the target language is not used. Moreover, he said that not all teachers are so not good in English.

Surprisingly, (T2) reported that on one occasion, when he was in the last stage of college and at the edge of becoming a teacher, some of his colleagues could not even speak English. He explains the following:

T2: You know, we were in the last stage of college, and we were about thirty-four students in an English Department. Just four of us—maybe five of us—could speak English. To be honest with you, the rest of the students could not speak English. So, imagine five out of thirty-four! Now they are teachers in schools.

Moreover, (T3) emphasized the importance of speaking in the target language, stating that “a lot of the teachers who teach English do not know the language itself, let alone are able to teach it somebody else. So, I think this directly leads to failure in language teaching.” The interviewee (T3) added, “It is obvious that CLT requires a fluent teacher to impart the message of CLT principles in a successful way. Therefore, if the teachers are not fluent, problems result.

Lastly, (T6) also complained about teachers’ fluency while implementing CLT. He further stresses that they do not even prepare before entering the classroom. He reported the following:

T6: They are not well-qualified, I am not saying they do not have any qualification in terms of fluency. However, in teaching you must be aware of language-teaching theories. You have to know, for example, what EFL entails and what the common problems of language learners are. Professionalism is also important. Teachers have to be hard-working and, at the same time, they have to read because language is an ongoing process. We, as English language teachers, need constantly to read. I personally read and translate. Teachers must also prepare themselves during summer for the following academic term.

4.2.1.2.2 Lack of courses and training

Both (T4 and T6) shed light on another key factor that hinders the implementation of CLT: lack of participation in courses, workshops, and trainings. (T6) illustrated the importance of training by providing one example of his participation on a particular occasion. Below is a transcript of the conversation:

I: Have you ever undergone a CLT training or course?

T6: Yes—I did. I did a workshop in Baghdad in 2010. That teacher still empowers me and enlightens my way. She was over seventy years old and,

despite that, she was very active in the classroom. Whenever I think of ELT, I immediately think of her.

I: Can you tell me more about her?

T6: She was well-qualified to teach the training subject, which was “interchange” textbooks. However, we participants were not qualified as we were not aware of ELT methods. Moreover, the English that we used was not good enough for teaching. I remember telling one of our supervisors that he kept asking our teachers to use simple language, so could he define what he meant by “simple language.”

Conversely, (T4) stated that he was not well-convicted with the teacher who taught them the course. He expressed the following:

I: Have you ever undergone any courses or training of CLT?

T4: Well, it was a long time ago, and the courses were not that long. They were about three days up to a week, no longer. But unfortunately, the teachers who taught us themselves were not efficient in CLT method, yet we were expected to be able to apply it.

4.2.1.2.3 Personal problems

(T4) viewed personal barriers as one of the most important factors inhibiting teachers from successfully implementing CLT. He stressed that economic hardship may isolate teachers from what they are supposed to impart, saying the following:

T4: The economic hardship of teachers is another big barrier. For example, if a teacher is well-paid, the government can punish him when he does not execute his job properly, but if not, the teachers may seek an alternative way to earn their livelihood. This results in impotence during the teaching process.

4.2.1.2.4 Unawareness of methods

Only one teacher (T6) emphasized the lack of teacher knowledge regarding ELT methods. He suggested that even before teachers begin to teach a particular method, they should be familiar with the methods that they are going to implement in their classrooms. Moreover, students are unwilling to participate in daily communication. During the interview, he reported that to know a method before implementing it leads to success in a classroom. He asserts the following:

T6: I personally believe that English language teachers must comprehend ELT methods. For example, they must understand what CLT entails. They must have a thorough knowledge, they must know relevant definitions, and they must know how to apply them on the ground. So, I personally believe that teachers in Iraq are not familiar with ELT methods.

4.2.1.3 Learners

Another important factor raised by the interviewees relates to obstacles caused by students themselves. Based on the data transcript of the interviews, the researcher categorized the factors as follows: lack of fluency and family constraints.

4.2.1.3.1 Lack of fluency

Half of the interviewees (T1, T4, and T5) viewed the lack of student fluency as one of the key obstacles of implementing CLT. (T1) states that “students even do not understand us the way we are pronouncing although it is not the native pronunciation. They are not really familiar with native pronunciation, either. T1 argues the following: “And the students even do not know the way we are pronouncing although it is not the native pronunciation, but they are really not familiar with this as well”.

Similarly, (T4) emphasizes the importance of student fluency in the following way:

T4: Well, I think that the level of students matters because if they are not fluent in English, you cannot teach in English unless in some very special schools. So, whatever your level is, you must teach in Kurdish (mother tongue). I think this is not something useful.

Similarly, (T5) states that “the low level of students’ English is a major obstacle in the implementation of this approach. Some of the students can ask questions in the second language, but only 40 percent.”

4.2.1.3.2 Familial attitudes to ELT

Two (T1 and T3) out of six interviewees regarded family-related problems as obstacles to the implementation of CLT. (T1) expresses the following:

T1: So, if a teacher gives a certain amount of homework, parents try to intervene by calling the school and asking how a student can carry out this

amount of homework. “Why are you giving this much homework?” they ask. In this case, this is also a barrier for the student because even if he/she does not dissuade the teacher from giving homework, his/her parent would solve this problem, and they will come to the teacher for achieving this. This is also another barrier.

I: Are you telling me that the parents of students are not familiar with or well-educated in the system that you are using?

T1: Well, actually they are familiar with it, but they do not share the same perspective as us. What does this mean? Let us say you have a son or a daughter, and he or she comes home from school. He or she does not speak with you and just goes to the bedroom, and continues to do his/her homework in a required way within one hour.

Another interviewee (T3) also sheds light on family-related problems, he differentiates between educated and uneducated family and the impacts on the learning process, arguing the following:

T3: We can also say that the family situation has a grave effect on the CLT approach. For instance, there is a huge difference between an educated family and an uneducated one. This has a direct effect on students’ learning because eventually, the family is a major backer of the learners in order to learn a language.

4.2.1.4 CLT

The final factor hindering CLT implementation inside Iraqi EFL classrooms relates to the inappropriateness of CLT itself within an Iraqi context. Because CLT is based in a native English environment, it is realized that for contexts like Iraq, it is difficult, if not impossible, to adopt it. Extracts from the interview data indicate that contextual inadequacy of CLT in Iraqi is perceived as the main obstacle for implementing CLT.

4.2.1.4.1 Contextual inadequacy

Only one interviewee (T6) out of six strongly believed the Iraqi context to be unfit for CLT. During the interview, he showed his utter disappointment, arguing the following:

T6: To be honest, there are many reasons why teachers in the region will not have the opportunity to use CLT principles inside their classrooms. I personally do not believe that it would happen easily. I am almost disappointed.

4.2.2 Results of research question 2B

To address Research Question 2B, “What are the essential encouraging reasons behind the implementation of CLT in an Iraqi context?” the researcher conducted interviews with six interviewees who had already participated in the first phase of data collection. Based on the investigation of Li (1998) pertaining the factors promoting the selection of CLT in a Chinese context, the interview data was separated into the following four categories: educational system, educators, learners, and CLT. After a careful reading of the texts, the interview transcripts were coded under subcategories (see Table 17).

Table 17

Factors encouraging the selection of CLT

Factors	Sub-factors
Educational system	– Supplying necessary equipment (T2, T6)
	– Decreasing student number in classes (T3,T4)
	– Fluency precedes accuracy (T1)
Educators	– Necessity of courses, training and workshops (T4, T6)
	– Fluency improvement (T3, T4)
	– Role of teacher (T3, T4, T5)
	– Using target language (T1, T2, T3)
Learners	– Learners need to be familiar with CLT (T1, T3)

4.2.2.1 Educational system

The first group of factors which are considered to have a grave impact on promoting the selection of CLT relates to the educational system. The following main sub-factors were realized:

1. Supplying necessary equipment
2. Decreasing student number in classes
3. Fluency precedes accuracy

4.2.2.1.1 Supplying necessary equipment

Two interviewees (T2 and T6) out of six viewed the “supplying of necessary equipment” as having a crucial effect on promoting the implementation of CLT in an Iraqi context. T2 states, “Well, if you have everything like materials, a small number of students, a nice atmosphere, and air conditioners, it is much easier to implement CLT principles inside your classroom.”

One interviewee (T2) similarly emphasizes the importance of CLT equipment, declaring the following:

T2: As we discussed earlier, one of the conditions of learning is outer conditions, like the lack of materials or suitability of school buildings. So, most of our schools in the country do not have enough materials, suitable buildings, or classrooms. So, if this equipment is provided, we can easily overcome the problems facing CLT implementation.

Similarly, interviewee (T6) agrees with (T2), reporting, “We need whatever is needed to implement CLT from the government. Furthermore, our buildings, heating and cooling systems, and rest areas are not comfortable, so when the students get tired they are unable to rest.”

4.2.2.1.2 Decreasing student number in classes

Two interviewees (T3 and T4) reported that it is essential to reduce the number of learners per class in order to allow the teacher to implement CLT activities. During the interview, one interviewee (T3) focused on this point, asserting that “it is completely different when you have only 20 students, not 40, to overcome all the obstacles facing CLT implementation. So, it is very difficult to find a mechanism to convey the very principles of this approach in a proper way.” Similarly, interviewee (T4) reiterated the essentiality of reducing student number in class, reporting that “the number of the students should be reduced for teachers in order to be able to have a comfortable environment.”

4.2.2.1.3 Fluency precedes accuracy

Only one interviewee (T1) out of six viewed fluency as preceding accuracy during CLT implementation, claiming that “in a CLT classroom, it is almost impossible to implement it if the system is not parallel with focusing more on communication rather than grammatical rules. Grammar should be used as a mean to achieve communication

4.2.2.2 Educators

Concerning the reasons why teachers themselves promote CLT selection in an Iraqi context, the interview data suggests the following factors:

1. Necessity of course, training and workshops
2. Fluency improvement
3. Role of teacher
4. Using target language

4.2.2.2.1 Necessity of course, training and workshops

Two interviewees (T4 and T6) reported that participating in courses, trainings, and workshops advocating CLT is essential in an Iraqi context. During the interview, (T4) reported that although the country is experiencing economic hardship, teachers should participate in such opportunities. (T4) explained the following:

T4: Before this crisis, the Ministry of Education used to send numerous teachers to participate in conferences and workshops abroad. I believe that if the government still did so, the teachers would definitely benefit in implementing CLT, although we have economic hardship at the moment. Further, if teachers could afford to participate in such workshops, they would be familiar with the principles of CLT.

Similarly, another interviewee (T4) viewed this point as a key factor in promoting CLT in an Iraqi context, suggesting the following:

T6: After participating in the course I mentioned, I have come to conclude that CLT and comprehension approaches are the most compatible ones in classrooms. But the problem is that the teachers have to take some courses or workshops in order to become well-aware of the methods.

4.2.2.2.2 Fluency improvement

Two interviewees (T3 and T4) believed improving teachers' fluency to be another key factor in CLT implementation. (T3) expressed the following:

T3: If any student wants to learn a language, he/she must first ignore grammatical rules because if you could learn a language, learning its grammatical rules would not be a big issue. The main purpose here is how we can speak, not how we control grammatical rules. In other words, an individual can overcome grammatical rules when he/she is exposed to somebody else, but neglecting fluency is catastrophic. Semantics is more important than grammar.

The other teacher (T4) further explains that "the teacher himself should improve his language ability, and there are numerous teachers who are not well-qualified to teach English."

4.2.2.2.3 Role of teacher

Half of the interviewees (T3, T4, and T5) reported that the role of the teacher inside the classroom is essential. When asked about his role as a teacher, (T2) expressed the following:

I: As a teacher, what is your role inside the classroom? I mean, as previously, do you play the role of "authority" over the students or you become a "facilitator" for the students?

T2: Actually, the ways of teaching have changed rapidly; thus, we need to play the role of "facilitator" because the method demanded is a communicative one. A communicative method does not need the role of "authority," so I think it is better to be a guide rather than a controller.

Furthermore, another interviewee (T4) explains the importance of the teacher's role in the following way:

I: What do you think the role of a teacher should be inside classrooms?

T4: I think the teacher must let the student take part in most of his lesson, and by doing so, the teacher can correct students' errors while they speak. Teachers must force students to participate.

Lastly, interviewee (T5) emphasized that the teacher should play the role of a guide and maintain a student-centered atmosphere inside the classroom. This interviewee elaborates the following:

T5: Teachers do not have to control the classroom. They do not have to cover everything by themselves. A successful teacher is one who utilizes the abilities of his students. I mean that he should enable student to participate, to share, to express sentences, and to make conversations.

4.2.2.2.4 Using target language

Three interviewees (T1, T2, and T4) argued that teachers should utilize the target language inside the classroom in order to achieve CLT objectives. During the interview, an interviewee (T1) explained that teachers should avoid using the mother tongue. He stated the following:

T1: The greatest barrier for teachers is revealing to students that they can speak in the mother tongue, because students will be inclined to communicate with the teacher and peers in the mother tongue, as well. Therefore, they will not stay strong enough.

In addition, another interviewee (T2) shed light on the importance of using the target language by stating the following:

T2: It is better to speak in English in your classroom all the time instead of using your mother language. This will encourage students listen, focus and to learn. Thus, they will be forced to imitate you and to follow your example.

Lastly, another participant (T4) detailed the following:

I: Can you, as a teacher, briefly define what communicative competence signifies to you?

T4: That is a very good question. Well, I think you should gradually expose your students to the components of the language.

I: What do you mean?

T4: Let me explain. If you teach primary students, you may need to use some Kurdish—this is a fact. It might be successful if you directly use the target language first, but all-in-all it is better to use the mother language first in primary stages.

4.2.2.3 Learners

The third group factor in encouraging the use of CLT relates to learners themselves. It was observed from the interview data that one factor affecting students to resist the CLT method was the lack of prior knowledge regarding this approach.

4.2.2.3.1 Learners need to be familiar with CLT

Two interviewees (T1 and T3) reported that if the students would become familiarized with CLT, they would easily overcome any obstacle facing them during CLT implementation. During the interview, one teacher (T1) explained the importance of this issue in the following way:

I: Is it possible for you to implement CLT in your classroom?

T: Sure, why not? Our students are very keen on learning the language in inductive grammar teaching and it is one of the core principles of CLT. The purpose of CLT is to connect people in order to create an opportunity to use the target language.

More specifically, another interviewee (T3) reported that it is vital to clarify CLT for students, stating the following:

T3: Because the CLT approach is new to the students and they do not even know what CLT means, their responses to this subject might not be as good as expected. Students must first be introduced to CLT and aware of how it may be implemented.

The interviewee (T3) further explained the following:

T3: I prefer the way that this approach must be introduced and illustrated before it is imposed on learners. Furthermore, implementation of any types of CLT activities does not mean “killing time,” for their main purpose is learning.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

5.0 PRESENTATION

This chapter consists of two main parts. First, the supportive arguments and differences, if any, related the quantitative research questions are presented. Second, the interview results are compared with pre-existing research to determine if they correspond or conflict with each other.

5.1 DISCUSSION OF THE FIRST RESEARCH QUESTION

The quantitative research questions probed Iraqi EFL teachers' attitudes towards the principles of CLT. The results suggest that these teachers hold positive attitudes towards CLT, in general. This finding corresponds with that of previous studies conducted in China, Bangladesh, Italy, Iran and Taiwan, which similarly conclude that participants hold favorable attitudes towards CLT (Mangubhai et al, 1998; Karim, 2004; Chang, 2000; Razmjoo and Riazi, 2006; Liao, 2003; Liao, 2003). The above-mentioned researchers conclude that EFL teachers are convinced of the value of CLT in an EFL environment.

In the quantitative component of this study, a questionnaire developed by Karavas-Doukas (1996) was administered to examine participants' attitudes towards the five principles of CLT: pair/group work, the role of grammar, the role of the teacher, the quality and quantity of error correction, and the role of learners. As mentioned previously, the findings suggest that the teachers held positive attitudes towards all of these principles. Furthermore, the results correspond with those of Chang (2009), in which participants held more positive attitudes toward pair/group work than technique used in CLT. Likewise, the minimum score for the quality and

quantity of error correction in Chang's study is similar to the score determined by this one.

Similarly, the results of Mangubai, et al. (1998) indicate that participants positively favour the role of learners as the most important principle, as was the case with this study. The results of this study suggest that teachers are no longer playing the role of "controller" inside the classroom, but rather that of "contributor" and "facilitator." Moreover, it is strongly suggested that students are able to play a vital role in the learning process.

Among the CLT principles, the quality and quantity of error correction had a minimum score, which is consistent with the findings of other studies. The findings of Mangubai, et al. (1998) conclude that teachers experience worry concerning error correction. Similarly, the findings of Hawkey (2006) reveal that there are some concerns about the principles of CLT, especially when it comes to the quality and quantity of error correction. The participants of both studies argue that grammatical rules and vocabulary correction are essential since it is important for the students to know the correct form of a sentence or expression. Furthermore, even if one of the core characteristics of CLT is prioritizing fluency over grammatical rules, the results of the aforementioned studies have demonstrated that teachers worry about concentrating on grammar or fluency while correcting learners' errors.

The findings of Rajabi & Godazhdar (2016) support those of the current study, all of which have revealed the highest attitudes score towards group/pair work. Conversely, the minimum score achieved in this study regarded the place/importance of grammar as well as the quality and quantity of error correction, while the findings of the previous study indicate the role of learners as the minimum score obtained.

Finally, the results of this study indicate that teachers' positive attitudes are not the only factor affecting the implementation of CLT. Rather, other factors such as educational system and context should also be considered as essential factors (Rogers, 2003; Carless, 2013).

5.2 DISCUSSION OF THE SECOND RESEARCH QUESTION

The qualitative part of this study examined factors both hindering and encouraging the implementation of CLT in Iraqi EFL classrooms. The results indicate some inconsistencies between CLT in theory and in practice. During the interviews,

participants suggested that the factors improving and hindering the implementation of CLT are related to the following four areas:

1. Educational system
2. Teachers
3. Students
4. CLT

5.2.1 Educational system factors

The interviewees expressed that an educational system can play an essential role in providing an ample atmosphere for the implementation of CLT. Furthermore, they specified that test-based curriculum, lack of supplies, class size, and underpayment hinder this process. The findings of this study are consistent with those of various past studies (Liao, 2004; Liao, 2006; Li, 1998; Chang, 1999; Burnaby & Sun, 1989), which reveal that a large class size and test-based curriculum are considered to be vital in the implementation of CLT. Additionally, the findings of the present study argue that the educational support given to teachers is essential for overcoming restraints pertaining CLT implementation. The findings also suggest that the reduction of class size can lead to the successful implementation of CLT. The lack of support on behalf of educational authorities was deemed by participants as severely obstructing CLT implementation in their classrooms. Lastly, the interviewees also asserted that favourable buildings and salaries for teachers could also provide an appropriate CLT atmosphere inside the classroom.

5.2.2 Teacher factors

The results of the interviews show that teachers play a vital role in implementing the principles of CLT. Furthermore, participants suggested that communicative incompetence, lack of courses and training, personal problems, and unawareness of ELT methods severely hinder the implementation of CLT inside their classrooms. The interviewees stated that trainings and courses can promote the awareness of teachers regarding CLT. On the other hand, a lack of training may lead to an insufficient understanding of CLT implementation. The results of studies conducted by Liao (2003), Li (1998), and Tsai (2007) support those of the present study by suggesting that teachers need to improve their fluency in the target language.

Last but not least, the findings suggest that the role of teachers should shift from “controller of the classroom” and “provider of knowledge” to “facilitator” and “guide.”

5.2.3 Student factors

Teacher-related factors are not the only ones either promoting or hindering the selection of CLT, for learners, too, play an essential role in this issue. The interviewees indicated that lack of fluency and family constraints are two key student-related factors of CLT implementation. It is suggested that the lack of fluency on behalf of students undermines the efforts of teachers during CLT implementation. This finding is supported by those of Tsai (2007), Liao (2003), and Li (1998), which show that it is difficult, if not impossible, for teachers to employ CLT activities among students who are not fluent in English. The results of the interview data indicate that students should be familiar with the principles of CLT prior to its implementation. They also prove that it is essential to consider cultural differences between Western and Eastern (Iraq, in particular) contexts while implementing CLT.

5.2.4 CLT factors

The results of this study indicate a contextual inadequacy in the application of CLT. The findings suggest that it is necessary to differentiate between EFL environments in which CLT is implemented. Moreover, an Iraqi EFL context does not fit the needs of CLT because the target language is used solely in the classroom (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Chang, 1999; Tsai, 2007; Li, 1998). The interviewees also expressed that supplying necessary equipment for CLT activities is essential to successfully implementing them. It is noteworthy to mention that, as suggested by interviewees, an exam-based curriculum does not aid in CLT implementation; therefore, it needs to adapt accordingly.

To conclude, the present study aimed at identifying encouraging factors related to CLT implementation in Iraqi ELF classrooms. The population also significantly differed from that of other studies conducted on this topic. Therefore, contradictory results indicate the positive side of the study.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 PRESENTATION

This chapter provides a general overview of the study and subsequently discusses its potential limitations as well as suggestions for future studies. Finally, a conclusion for the present study is offered.

6.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY AND KEY FINDINGS

The findings of the quantitative phase reveal that the participants held positive views towards the CLT in general. According to Karavas-Doukas (1996), a score less than 24 is considered to have a negative attitude with the neutral score of 74, and any score up to 120 is considered to be positive attitude. Moreover, teachers' attitudes towards the subscales of CLT were determined as follows: teachers held a low attitudes towards "place/importance of grammar", while they had a moderate attitudes towards "group/pair work", the quality and quantity of error correction gained a low attitudes among the participants, the teachers' attitudes towards "the role of the teacher in the classroom" found to be moderate. Lastly, "the role and contribution of learners during the learning process" among the participants found to be moderate.

The qualitative phase was conducted via semi-structured interviews with six participants who had already participated in the first phase of data collection. The researcher administered a guideline as a main tool for acquiring necessary information about the factors that influence the selection of CLT in an Iraqi context, especially in Soran district. Yet, the interviewer did not allow participants to provide additional views. According to Li (1998), the hindering factors of CLT implementation can be categorized into four main areas: educational system, teachers, learners, and CLT. Furthermore, each factor funnelled into a sub-factor, accordingly.

Based on the interviewee responses, it can be concluded that the educational system has a grave effect on the implementation of CLT. The participants reported that the large class size, underpayment, lack of courses, lack of necessary supplies and old-fashioned curriculum significantly hindered CTL implementation. Furthermore, they expressed concern regarding the fluency of some teachers because one of the core pillars of CLT is fluency. Despite teacher fluency, the students themselves were identified obstacles in terms of not being fluent. Finally, the interviewees reveal that CLT is inconsistent with an EFL context, and it was especially developed for an ESL context.

The interviewees suggested that reducing the number of students in each class, providing necessary equipment, changing test-based curriculum, and engaging in trainings and courses may lead to successful CLT implementation. In addition, the participants argued that the teachers should be fluent and familiar with the methods they teach in order to implement CLT.

6.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The present study investigated the attitudes of Iraqi EFL teachers towards the principles of CLT as well as the essential factors influencing the implementation of CLT. Since most previous educational studies are not impeccable, this research recommends some suggestions for further studies. The participants of this study were from one context: Soran District; therefore, the findings could not be generalized to other contexts in the region. Further studies should also be conducted to cover various areas in Iraq. The participants of the study should also represent public and private schools alike. Their views and implementation of CLT might have led to inconsistency. Therefore, further research is required to deal with both public and private school teachers independently. This study was also limited in its investigation of teachers' attitudes toward CLT. Therefore, future studies are recommended to include educational systems and learners attitudes towards CLT.

Finally, since the findings of this study are based solely on what the participants reported, it is difficult to discover whether they apply what they preach. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct action research in future studies.

6.3 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

This present study gives some practical and theoretical implications for stakeholders, curricula designers as well as learners to implement Communicative Language Teaching in Iraqi secondary and high school settings. According to the findings of this study, the following implications can be observed,

First, the obtained results of this present study propose that training and practical courses are needed for teachers to implement CLT in their classrooms. As it was noted by the participants, it is necessary for teachers who are qualified to realize the importance of the knowledge of Communicative Language Teaching. The findings of this study also concluded that the teachers need to obtain teaching skills in order to make all the students participate in activities in various situations.

Also, a number of participants suggested that government should support them in facilitating the implementation of CLT. Therefore, Iraqi schools as well as its government must support by providing courses and workshops to teachers which are consistent with their needs.

Another implication is, based on the views of participants, it is necessary to consider Iraqi culture when implementing Communicative Language Teaching. The teachers who participated in this study mentioned the obstacles they encounter when implementing CLT. Iraqi students, mostly, are not good enough to express their minds inside the classroom in English. Therefore, the results of this study suggest that teachers should make their classrooms student-oriented rather than teacher-oriented. Further, it is obvious that CLT was initially designed for ESL context and western environment, therefore, teachers should realize the differences.

The findings of this study also unfolded the obstacles in introducing Communicative Language Teaching which was initially advanced for western contexts. Therefore, it is necessary that further researches on the issue would be conducted to identify the cultural and situational factors in Iraqi context. As Li (1998) argued, "rather than simply jumping onto the CLT bandwagon by mandating its use, EFL countries should carefully study their TEFL situations and decide how CLT can best serve their needs and interests" (p. 696).

The participants of this study reported that large class size, mother language-based classes, low-level students combined with high level students, and the exam-oriented curricula are considered to be obstacles in applying CLT in Iraqi context.

Therefore, the educational authority should do the following: first, reduce the number of students in classrooms in order to make CLT feasible. Second, the administrators and educators are bound to create a student-centered environment. Third, it is necessary that the low-levelled student be separated from those who are better off in this respect. Fourth, modifying the exam-based curricula into a more comprehensive one that includes not only form and vocabulary but also writing, speaking, conversation and listening.

6.4 CONCLUSION

CLT aims at developing the communicative competence of students during the learning process. Despite the fact that teachers play an important role in leading students to improve their communication skills, no research has been conducted in an Iraqi context concerning this matter. The results of the present study reveal that the teachers possessed positive attitudes towards CLT principles. These favorable attitudes towards the principles of CLT were seen as vital in classroom practices. Based on the interview data, the participants suggested that there are some factors such as educational system, teachers, students, and CLT which influence CLT implementation.

In short, the interviewees suggested some encouraging points for promoting the implementation of CLT in an Iraqi setting.

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APPENDICES



APPENDIX I

Questionnaire sample

Phase one**Part one: Background information**

1. Participant's Name _____
2. What is your age? Mark one option.
 - 22-25 years old
 - 26-30 years old
 - 31-35 years old
 - 36-40 years old
 - 41-45 years old
 - More than 45 years old
3. How many years have you been teaching English? Mark only *one* option.
 - 0-5 years
 - 6-10 years
 - 11-15 years
 - 16-20 years
 - 21-25 years
 - More than 25 years
4. Highest level of education
 - Bachelor degree
 - Doctoral degree
 - Master degree
 - Other (specify): _____
5. What is your sex?
 - Female
 - Male
6. Your major
 - English literature
 - TESOL
 - Linguistics
 - Other (describe): _____
7. Have you undergone Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) methodology course or training?
 - Yes
 - No
8. If yes, how many courses and workshops have you attended?
 - 1

- 2
- 3
- 4 and more...

9. What is the frequency with which you integrate or use Communicative Language Teaching?

- Never
- Once a week
- Few times a week
- Daily

(Chang, 2009)

Part two

For each of the questions below, circle the response that best characterizes how you feel about the statement, where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither disagree nor agree, 4=agree, and 4=strongly agree

	Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	agree	Strongly agree
1.	Grammatical correctness is the most important criterion by which language performance should be judged.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Group work activities are essential in providing students opportunities to develop co-operative relationships, and to promote genuine interaction among them.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Grammar should be taught only as a means to an end, and not as an end in itself.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Since the learner comes to the language classroom with little or no knowledge of the language, he/she is in no position to suggest what	1	2	3	4	5

	the content of the lesson should be or the activities to be done.					
5.	Teaching learners to be responsible for their own learning is not productive.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	For students to become effective communicators in the foreign language, the teachers' feedback must be focused on the appropriateness and not the linguistic form of the students' responses.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	The teacher as 'authority' and 'instructor' is no longer adequate to describe the teacher's role in the language classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	The learner-centred approach to language teaching encourages responsibility and self-discipline, and allows each student to develop his/her full potential.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Group work allows students to explore problems for themselves, and to have some control over their own learning. It is therefore an invaluable means of organizing classroom experiences.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	The teacher should correct all the grammatical errors students make. If errors are ignored, this will result in imperfect learning.	1	2	3	4	5

11.	In a large class, it is impossible to organize your teaching in order to satisfy all the students' needs.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Knowledge of the rules of a language does not guarantee ability to use the language.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Group work activities take too long to organize and waste a lot of valuable teaching time.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Since errors are a normal part of learning, much correction is wasteful of time.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	The communicative approach to language teaching produces fluent, but inaccurate learners.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	The teacher as transmitter of knowledge is only one of the many different roles he/she must perform during the course of a lesson.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	By mastering the rules of grammar, students become fully capable of communicating with a native speaker.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	For most students language is acquired most effectively when it is used as a vehicle for doing something else, and not when it is studied in a direct or explicit way.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	The role of the teacher in the language classroom is to impart knowledge	1	2	3	4	5

	through activities such as explanation, writing, and providing examples.					
20.	Tasks and activities should be negotiated and adapted to meet the students' needs rather than be imposed on them.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Small group work may occasionally be useful to vary the routine, but it can never replace formal instruction by a competent teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Group work activities have little use because it is very difficult for the teacher to monitor the students' performance, and to prevent them from using their mother tongue.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Direct instruction in the rules and terminology of grammar is essential if students are to learn to communicate effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	A textbook alone is not able to meet all the needs and interests of the students. The teacher must supplement the textbook with other materials and tasks so as to satisfy the widely differing needs of the students.	1	2	3	4	5

Adopted from Karavas-Doukas (1996)

APPENDIX II

Interview guide

Dear teacher:

I would like to invite you to take part in a mixed method research study aimed to explore Iraqi EFL teachers' attitudes toward CLT. It is necessary to ask for permission prior any attempts of the study. To participate in the study, the researcher needs to inform you that the study comprises two parts; responding to a questionnaire and a likely in-depth face-to-face interview which is prepared by the researcher accordingly.

The data of the study are utterly closed to the third party and will be remained confidential. I would like to assure you that no information concerning your background will be released without your consent. The interview takes about half an hour; your opinion will offer in-depth information about the research topic. The researcher also would like to inform you that your participation is entirely voluntary, you may withdraw your participation willingly. Therefore, you are asked to sign and provide your email address in case the researcher or the interviewee have further discussion.

Thanks for your kind assistance

Serwan Husein Taha Sherwani

Contact info: +9647507880004

Email address: sarwanenglish@yahoo.com

I hereby provide my background information conditionally, as states by the researcher, keeping my anonymity as well as informing me while necessary to reveal some of my information.

Participant's name: _____

Signature and date: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

1. To start with, please shortly tell me about how you become an English Teacher?
2. Can you tell me how do you feel about your profession?
3. What type of school do you work for? (Primary or Secondary)
4. Briefly tell me what methods are you using in your class? Why?
5. Do you believe that the methodology that you are using currently is applicable in your classroom context?
6. In your own words, how do you define communicative competence?
7. Would you name the method that you implement in your classroom communicative language teaching?
8. What is your view about Communicative Language Teaching?
9. In your view, what factors seem to hinder employing CLT in your teaching?
10. Then, how would you encourage CLT to be implemented inside the classrooms?

APPENDIX III

Letter of consent

<p>إقليم كوردستان - العراق مجلس الوزراء وزارة التربية المديرية العامة لتربية اربيل مديرية تربية سوران التخطيط التربوي</p>	 <p>Kurdistan Regional Government Council of Ministers Ministry of Education</p>	<p>هه‌ريمى كوردستان-عێراق ئه‌نجومه‌نى وه‌زيران وه‌زاره‌تى په‌روه‌رده به‌ريوه‌به‌رايه‌تى گه‌شتى په‌روه‌رده‌ى هه‌ولير به‌ريوه‌به‌رايه‌تى په‌روه‌رده‌ى سو‌ران پلان دانانى په‌روه‌رده‌ى</p>
<p>NO: Date : 03 / 11 / 2016</p>	<p>بهریوه‌به‌رايه‌تى په‌روه‌رده‌ى سو‌ران ده‌ركرده كوڤدى رێكه‌وت / ١٢ / گه‌لاريزان / ٢٧١٦ / كوردى</p>	<p>ژماره: ٥٤٩ رێكه‌وت: ٢٠١٦ / ١١ / ٣</p>
<p>بۆ/گه‌شت قوتابخانه‌كانى سو‌ران و ده‌وروبه‌رى بابه‌ت/په‌شتگيرى</p>		
<p>*****</p>		
<p>تکایه ئاسانکاری بۆ به‌ریز (سیروان حسین طه شیروانی) بکه‌ن له کاتى سه‌ردانى کردنى قوتابخانه‌كانتان به‌مه‌به‌ستى ئه‌نجامدانى توێژینه‌وه‌ى ماسته‌رنامه‌که‌ى له ژێر ناوئێشانى (Teachers' Attitudes towards Communicative Language Teaching Approach: A case of Soran EFL district classrooms, Iraq) بۆ گه‌شت مامۆستایانى بابته‌ى زمانى ئینگلیزى ، تکایه هاوکاری بکه‌ن و بۆ کارى پێویست .</p>		
<p>له‌گه‌ل ریزماندا.....</p>		
		
<p>عزیز سعید ملا به‌ریوه‌به‌رى په‌روه‌رده</p>		
<p>وێنه‌یه‌ك بۆ :- • به‌ریوه‌به‌رايه‌تیه‌که‌مان / پلان دانان • ٢٠١٦/١١/٣</p>		

APPENDIX IV

A Sample of Interview

I: Tell me about the methods that were used while you were in secondary school?

T: I personally believe that during that time of my life it was all grammar translation method.

I: Why?

T: I believe this method is still ongoing, and the teachers use it now as well. Why? Because there are many reasons, namely size of the school, the inability of the teachers to speak, and the curriculum as well.

I: Was the curriculum exam-based or you were focusing on the student to speak?

T: See... I personally believe that English language teachers have to go through the methods of English language teaching. They have to know, for example, what communicative language teaching means, what does it entail? They must have a rich background, they have to know the definitions, and they have to know how to apply them on the ground. So, I personally believe that the teachers in the region, namely in Iraq, they do not know the methods of English language teaching. They just go into the classroom and start teaching. That is my own concern. Last summer I did an English language course. Why did I do that? I wanted to know how the foreigners apply the methods, or what does audio-lingual method mean. If you do not know the content, the aim, and the goal of this method, so you do not know how to apply it. So, I personally believe that teachers do not know. That is why they tend to use grammar translation method because it is easy to apply.

I: Please take me back to your first-year university life when you first involved in the English language... how can you describe that time?

T: I was kind of a mixed feeling, not knowing to follow my learning process or studying my own subjects, so I was in a mixed state of mind. Before going to college, I knew English but we were knowing just some vocabulary words, it was all. But when I went to Hawler, studying in University, it was not easy for me because the language we were taught before, you know, we were not qualified enough to understand or to comprehend the subjects that we were studying in University. So, I spent more than half of my time learning the English language because in college if you do not know English it is not easy to follow your routines of studying, doing your homework, preparing yourself for college. So it was not easy for me. I remember drama class, we were half the way and I did not know who the author was. So, I remember a teacher (Tara Dabagh), she used to say "do you believe killing the hero was a good thing to do?" I asked one of my friends please for God's sake tell me who this hero is... I did not know, I was just following my own way, learning, I was just busy learning the language before.

I: In your first class, were you motivated or demotivated in terms of coming to a new environment; poetry, drama and so on?

T: Personally, I was demotivated. But I regret now, I was shy at the college. The reason was very simple, my language. I had a problem with language, to be honest. I could say that I was the best student in secondary school. But when I went to college I found

that there are many students who are more qualified than I am. So, that was the reason why I was demotivated in college. You have to know the language otherwise, how can you understand a masterpiece of drama, poetry or novel.

I: How did you improve your communication skills?

T: I personally believe that reading and listening to English improve your ability to communicate. So, there would be no communication unless you read and listen to English. Therefore, I kept reading. I remember, when I was in college, that I used to read more than five hours a day. Mostly I would read the dictionary.

I: What kind of roles were your teachers playing in terms of controlling the classroom as a whole?

T: I can say that there were some teachers in college who could control the classroom easily because they were focusing on their materials, they would not spend time talking rubbish. They would know they are teaching. You know the subjects are different, there was some subject, like drama which needed a lot of student participation. But other subjects like grammatical ones did not require our participation a lot.

I: Moving swiftly on, who are you as an English teacher? How did you become a teacher?

T: It is a really difficult question to answer because I went through many phases. But to answer your question, as others do when they graduate from colleges they become teachers and so did I. At first it was not out of my interest but now I love my career. I once again reaffirm that reading even influences on your choice of subjects. It was not easy in secondary school to choose a department but now I realize that I have picked up a good subject. I think this is the career for me, English language teaching.

I: Are you convinced that CLT can achieve its goal in Iraqi context?

T: To be honest, there are many reasons in the region that the teachers will not have this opportunity to use communicative language teaching principles in the classrooms. I personally do not believe that it would happen easily. I am almost disappointed. I will tell you why. Because the teachers do not work academically or they do not read enough to understand the concepts because what I told you previously the teachers have to be familiar with the methods. Furthermore, the implementation of this approach needs a suitable environment which is not available here, in Iraqi context.

I: Have you ever undergone Communicative Language Teaching approach training or course?

T: Yes- I did. I did a workshop in Baghdad in 2010. That teacher still empowers me, enlightens my way. She was over seventy and despite that, she was very active in the classroom. Whenever I think of English teaching I immediately think of her.

I: Tell me more about her?

T: She was well-qualified to teach the subject which was “interchange” textbooks but we are not qualified. Since we are not aware of the English language methods. The English that we use is not good enough for teaching. I remember I told one of our supervisors that you keep asking our teachers to use simple language, can you define what simple language is... so, I told him if you do not know I will tell you what simple language is. I said that language should flow naturally from your mouth, so their

language does not flow naturally from their mouth. This is the reason the teachers him/herself does not know how to speak. So how on earth he/she enables other students to learn the language. And the curriculum is also another problem in this. The Sunrise book which we have does not cover all four skills of language.

I: Name the method that you are using?

T: I tend to use Communicative Approach and comprehension approach, both together. Furthermore, sometimes I tend to use audio-lingual methods.

I: Do you think that this era is the time of ending the methods?

T: After participating in the course I mentioned, I have come to conclude that Communicative language teaching and comprehension approach are the best compatible ones in classrooms. But the problem is that the teachers have to go through some courses, workshops and they have to be well-aware of methods.

I: Please tell me the reasons behind the failure of communicative language teaching implementation the students themselves? What kind of deficiency the students have?

T: We need to differentiate between two things here, private school and public school students are way different from each other, to be quite honest with you. It is a sad reality that the public schools are outnumbered. The size of the classes, there are too many students in one classroom. And the environment does not help you to implement CLT. The process of learning has to start at the very beginning level, in primary school. The state school students cannot write, read, and pronounce even a word. They can hardly read, they read but it is like as if they are reading a Kurdish text. So, the problem arises in the beginning of school system.

I: What area do you focus more; fluency or accuracy?

T: I focus more on fluency. As we discussed before, there would be no fluency unless the students start reading and listening. The opportunity of practicing these two skills is less. I personally have no hopes fluency outcomes.

I: Since one of the core characteristics of CLT is fluency rather than accuracy, do you think your students can implement it?

T: Yes, why not. If you teach in a private school, CLT is the easiest approach to use. There are students in private schools who are even better than their teachers, but when it comes to public school, it is quite the opposite. It is not easy to raise the language awareness of students, especially in state schools. Unless the students are able to speak fluently, it is so difficult to implement the basic principles of CLT.

I: How about the teachers themselves? What kind of deficiency do they carry?

T: They are not well-qualified, I am not saying they do not have any qualification in terms of fluency, teaching because you have to be aware of language teaching theories. You have to know, for example, what EFL entails! Or what are the problems of language learners! Professionalism is also important. Teachers have to be hard-working and at the same time, they have to read because language is an ongoing process. We as English language teachers, we need to constantly read. I personally read and translate. The teachers must prepare themselves in summer for the following year.

I: What about contextual barriers?

T: There has to be more training... supplying equipment in terms of role-playing, games, and card. The education just moves alone they do not listen to teachers. We need whatever is needed to implement CLT by the government. Furthermore, our buildings, heating and cooling system, backyards are not comfortable so when the students get tired they could rest.



VITAE

Serwan Sherwani was born in Erbil, the Northern part of Iraq, in 1986. He graduated from English language and Literature department at Salahaddin University in 2010. He started working as an interpreter in 2012. He speaks English fluently Also, he has basic Turkish, Arabic and Persian skills.

ÖZGEÇMİŞ

Serwan Sherwani 1986 yılında Irak'ın kuzeyinde Erbil'de dünyaya geldi. 2010 yılında Salahaddin Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı bölümünden mezun oldu. 2012 yılında tercümanlık yapmaya başladı. Akıcı bir şekilde İngilizce bilmektedir. Temel Türkçe, Arapça ve Farsça becerilere sahiptir.

