

METHOD VS. POSTMETHOD!: A SURVEY ON PROSPECTIVE EFL  
TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES

A MASTER'S THESIS

BY

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*To my family and friends...*

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The examining committee appointed by the Graduate School of Education  
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The committee has decided that the thesis of the student is satisfactory.

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## ABSTRACT

METHOD VS. POSTMETHOD!: A SURVEY ON PROSPECTIVE EFL TEACHERS'  
PERSPECTIVES

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This descriptive study investigated the awareness level of ELT students regarding postmethod pedagogy, and the teaching methods in Turkey.

Having emerged in the early 1990s, postmethod pedagogy has received mixed reactions in the ELT world. Based on the idea that the concept of *method* has a limiting impact on language teachers, postmethod condition suggests that method is an artificially planted term into the language classrooms; therefore, should no longer be regarded as a viable construct. While postmethod pedagogy calls for a closer inspection of local occurrences, its presence in local curricula among countries outside the European periphery remains questionable in that the innovative condition of postmethod is fairly new, and is still widely overshadowed by Communicative Approaches in educational contexts. By employing a quantitative approach, this study traced the echoes of methods and the postmethod condition in ELT departments in Turkey.

Eighty-eight ELT students from six different universities in Turkey participated in the study. An online survey with four sections was employed for the data collection stages of the study.

Analyses of the data revealed that the Communicative Approaches are the widely preferred methods among third- and fourth-year ELT students in Turkey. Additionally, these students had negative perceptions towards the earlier methods of teaching English. Regarding the postmethod condition, the results indicated that Turkish ELT students still had strong links with the methods, and they were unwilling to abandon the guidance that ELT methods provided them. However, significant difference was observed between teacher groups regarding the *Particularity* principle of the postmethod condition.

The findings of this descriptive study supported the existing literature in that while Communicative Approaches are the dominant methods of instruction in Turkey, which is an English as a Foreign Language setting, some complications remain among prospective teachers in implementing deep-end ELT methods to local agenda.

**Keywords:** Postmethod pedagogy, methodology, ELT methods, methods and approaches, Communicative Language Teaching, ELT students, prospective teachers



## ÖZET

METOT MU METOT SONRASI MI?: İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMEN ADAYLARININ  
BAKIŞ AÇILARI ÜZERİNE BİR ANKET ÇALIŞMASI

Tufan Tıǧlı

Yüksek Lisans, Yabancı Dil olarak İngilizce Öğretimi Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Deniz Ortaçtepe

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Bu tanımlayıcı çalışma, İngilizce öğretmenliği öğrencilerinin metot sonrası dönem ve öğretim metotları hakkındaki farkındalığını araştırmıştır.

1990'ların başında ortaya çıkan metot sonrası dönem, İngilizce öğretmenliği alanından farklı tepkiler aldı. *Metot* kavramının, dil öğretmenleri üzerinde kısıtlayıcı bir etkiye sahip olduğunu ileri süren bu yaklaşım, metodun dil sınıflarına sonradan eklenmiş yapay bir olgu olduğunu ve artık bir geçerlilik taşımadığını vurgulamaktadır. Metot sonrası dönemin savunucuları bu akımın daha iyi anlaşılabilmesi için yerel ölçekli araştırmaların artırılması çağrısında bulunmaktadır, ancak anılan akımın Avrupa dışı ülkelerdeki varlığı, bu akımın yeni olması ve çoğu öğretim alanında İletişimsel Dil Yönetimi'nin gölgesinde kalması sebepleriyle zayıf kalmaktadır. Nicel bir yaklaşım kullanan bu çalışma, metot sonrası dönemin Türkiye'deki İngilizce Öğretmenliği bölümlerindeki izini sürmüştür.

Çalışmaya Türkiye’deki altı farklı üniversiteden seksen sekiz İngilizce Öğretmenliği bölümü öğrencisi katılmıştır. Dört kısımdan oluşan internet tabanlı bir anket, veri toplama bölümleri için kullanılmıştır.

Veri incelemeleri, İletişimsel Metotların Türkiye’deki üçüncü ve dördüncü sınıf İngilizce Öğretmenliği öğrencileri arasında yaygın olarak tercih edildiğini göstermiştir. Ek olarak, anılan öğrenciler eski İngilizce öğretim metotlarına olumsuz yaklaşmışlardır. Metot sonrası dönem ile ilgili olarak, veriler göstermiştir ki, Türkiye’deki İngilizce Öğretmenliği bölümü öğrencileri metotlara halen sıkı bir şekilde bağlıdır ve İngilizce Öğretimi metotlarının kendilerine sağladığı rehberlikten memnundurlar. Ancak araştırma sonucunda uygulamalı öğretmenlik tecrübesi olan ve olmayan öğrenciler arasında metot sonrası dönemin *yerellik* ilkesi bakımından önemli farka ulaşılmıştır.

Bu tanımlayıcı çalışmanın sonuçları mevcut literatürü desteklemiştir zira Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğretimi alanı olan Türkiye’de, İletişimsel metotlar baskın olmasına rağmen, mevcut İngilizce öğretim metotlarını güçlü bir şekilde sınıflarında uygulamaya çalışan İngilizce öğretmenleri benzer uyuşmazlıkları dile getirmişlerdir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Metot sonrası dönem, yöntembilim, İngilizce öğretim metotları, metot ve yaklaşımlar, İletişimsel Dil Öğretimi, İngilizce Öğretmenliği öğrencileri, stajyer öğretmenler

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

### Introduction

Language has always fulfilled a vital role in human relations as a means for communication, a medium for cultural understanding and a mediator in trade. Similarly, teaching of languages dates back to times as old as the emergence of the very first languages. Naturally, there has always been a pursuit of better ways for language teaching among those who have been involved in the profession of teaching languages.

A brief retrospective glance at the history of English language teaching (ELT) and teaching methods reveals that formal English language teaching methodology took its roots in the Middle Ages where the instruction of Latin and English were accomplished through a straightforward, deductive way, which later came to be named as the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) (Danesi, 2003). As GTM sought to unite language teachers under a unified flag of methodology, some scholars of the time such as Guarino Guarini, St. Ignatius of Loyola and Wolfgang Ratke began to raise their discontent with the ongoing trend. However, it was later, in the seventeenth century that Comenius (1592-1670) filed a truly persuasive argument against GTM. He claimed that students learned best when they decipher and produce real life-like dialogues (Danesi, 2003). While Comenius' voice was largely lost within the firm boundaries that GTM had established, the quest for a better method had already begun.

Three centuries later, witnessing the escalation of a surge of methods in the 1950s and 1960s, the field of applied linguistics experienced the real "method boom" in the 1970s, which eventually left language teachers with a fine amount of methods to

choose from (Stern, 1985). Presently, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, teachers are much more equipped with and informed about methodologies in language teaching. The concept of method still constitutes a significant portion of ELT, with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) leading the front. However, the future of method, in its common definition, may be in doubt as the field of ELT witnesses the rise of a novel notion which surfaced in the 1994 series of *TESOL Quarterly*; the postmethod condition.

### **Background of the Study**

There have been numerous attempts to define the concept of method in the history of English language teaching. Fifty years ago, Edward Anthony (1963) proposed a set of three elements; approach, method and technique. According to Anthony (1963), an approach was a set of assumptions dealing with the nature of language, learning and teaching. Method implied an overall plan for systematic presentation of language, based upon the approach, while techniques represented the set of activities applied in the classroom which were consistent with the method, as well as the approach. For Richards and Rodgers (1982; 2001), this definition was correct but inadequate in that it failed to give sufficient attention to the nature of method; therefore, they defined method as an umbrella term to cover approach, design and procedure. Prabhu (1990), on the other hand, explained method as both the classroom activities, and the theory that informs these activities. Of all these attempts to define method, as Richards and Renandya (2002) suggest, Anthony's (1963) earlier depiction still stands out as the most valid and commonly used definition in the literature.

As long as there have been methods, there has also existed the desire to identify *a best method* in language teaching. In his paper on the postmethod condition, Hashemi (2011) points out three periods in the history of language teaching; the gray period, the black-and-white period and the colored period. The gray period, according to Hashemi (2011), is the pre-method era, which does not indicate an absence of methods, but rather the existence of some methods in an uncategorized and unsystematic manner. The period covers the late 14<sup>th</sup> to late 19<sup>th</sup> centuries when language teaching practitioners followed intuition, common sense and experience (Howatt, as cited in Hashemi, 2011). Hashemi (2011) continues his chronicle with the black-and-white period between the late 19<sup>th</sup> and late 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in which norms and judgments of the practitioners of language were still based on binary oppositions such as good or bad, but they followed a scientifically systematic pattern in their search for the best method. In this period, GTM was replaced with the Audio Lingual Method (ALM). While form-based and language-centered methods such as ALM, and Total Physical Response (TPR) dominated the era, more learner-centered and meaning-based methods of the period, namely Community Language Learning (CLL), Suggestopedia, and The Silent Way paved the way for a new period in language teaching. With the introduction of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the 1970s, and later, its successors Content Based Instruction (CBI) and Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT), language teaching entered the colored period, in which language instruction aimed to develop functional communicative second language (L2) competence in learners (Dörnyei, 2009). While the search for the best method was still on its way, it was in the late 80s that certain language researchers (e.g., Allwright, 1991; Kumaravadivelu, 1994; Pennycook, 1989; Prabhu, 1990) started to question the concept of method.

Based on postmodern and postcolonial ideas, Kumaravadivelu (1994) suggested a deconstruction of the term *method*, and instead coined the term *postmethod condition*. Kumaravadivelu (2006), first of all, states that the concept of method has a limiting impact on language teachers and learners in that it is far from the realities of the classroom and is an artificially planted term into the language classrooms. Thus, method should no longer be regarded as a viable construct; instead there is a need for an alternative *to* method, rather than any potential alternative method. Second, Kumaravadivelu (2003) notes that postmethod pedagogy empowers teacher autonomy by encouraging teachers to develop an appropriate pedagogy based on their local knowledge and understanding. In accordance with this empowerment, Kumaravadivelu (2006) offers three possible frameworks to guide teachers who wish to follow a postmethod approach in their classrooms: Stern's (1992) three dimensional framework, Allwright's (2000, 2003) exploratory practice framework, and Kumaravadivelu's (1994; 2001; 2003; 2006) ten context-sensitive macrostrategies.

Within Kumaravadivelu's (2001, 2003, 2006) framework for postmethod condition, there exists three operating principles; particularity, practicality and possibility. *Particularity* suggests promoting a context-sensitive, location specific pedagogy that is based on the local linguistic, social, cultural and political conditions. *Practicality* enables teachers to theorize from their practice, and practice what they theorize; thereby, aiming to diminish the so-called gap between theorizers and practitioners of language. *Possibility*, on the other hand, seeks to highlight the sociopolitical consciousness that students and teachers bring to the classroom. According to Kumaravadivelu (2006), when informed by these three parameters, a

context-sensitive postmethod pedagogy which entails a network of the ten macrostrategies can be constructed.

One of the most striking features within the scope of postmethod pedagogy stands out as its emphasis on local conditions and needs. However, the amount of empirical data obtained through local studies in favor of postmethod pedagogy is still limited (Delpont, 2011), and as Akbari (2008) points out there is a growing need to hear the reflections of teachers who are dealing with the day-to-day errands of language teaching: “Many members of our community have not yet heard about the postmethod and have no regard for social and critical implications of education; the urgently needed first step, it seems, is to raise the awareness of the academia.” (p. 649).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Since the early 1990s, postmethod pedagogy has been subject to many studies (e.g., Alemi & Daftarifard, 2010; Brown, 2002; Kumaravadivelu, 2001; 2003; 2006, Pishghadam, 2012). While some authors (e.g., Bell, 2003; 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 2005; Liu, 1995) have been questioning the notions that postmethod thinking has brought, others (e.g., Akbari, 2008; Canagarajah, 2002; Pica, 2000) have welcomed them. Obviously, postmethod pedagogy suggests a closer inspection of local occurrences; however, its presence in local curricula among countries which are outside the Eurocentric periphery remains questionable in that the innovative condition of postmethod is fairly new, and is still widely overshadowed by CLT and TBLT in educational contexts. In addition, Professor Kumaravadivelu’s personal remark that the

lack of sustained and data-oriented studies on postmethod condition calls for a need to enrich the studies conducted on postmethod pedagogy (Delport, 2011).

Having received an influx of mixed reactions on the global level, the existence of postmethod condition in Turkish ELT agenda may be deemed questionable. It is evident that studies on teaching methods still constitute a significant portion in overall research (KIRMIZI, 2012); however, the appearance of the postmethod as anti-method points at an obvious need for research focusing on the issue. To the researcher's knowledge, among the few researches conducted on postmethod pedagogy, Arıkan's (2006) study touches upon a critical aspect, the role and importance of teacher education with regard to postmethod condition. Can (2009) examines the prospective outcomes of postmethod pedagogy on teacher growth. Finally, Tosun's (2009) study outlines the key elements and briefly comments on the future of the postmethod pedagogy. As a result, while teaching methods continues to be a popular branch of research in the local agenda, post methodology has been largely ignored. Hence, there is an obvious need in the local context to outline whether postmethod pedagogy has received, or continues to receive sufficient attention in the Turkish curricula and among the language teaching practitioners.

### **Research Questions**

In the light of all the aforementioned reasons, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are Turkish ELT students' perceptions of methods and the postmethod pedagogy?

2. To what extent do Turkish ELT students' methodological attitudes towards methods and postmethod pedagogy differ according to their classroom experience levels?

### **Significance of the Study**

Due to the fact that postmethod condition is a state-of-the-art issue in language teaching, more research on the issue is certainly needed. The current study, therefore, is expected to contribute to the body of existing literature on postmethod condition. The results of the study may help better determine the role of postmethod pedagogy in local curricula and present empirical data regarding the perceptions of prospective language teachers who are highly encouraged to become autonomous practitioners of language within the scope of postmethodology.

Akbari (2008) states that methods are prescribed sets of activities in the sense that they are designed for all cultures with little focus on local dynamics. Similarly, Holliday (1994) has mentioned that particular methods such as CLT may answer the cultural and contextual needs of the BANA (Britain, Australia, and North America) countries, whereas complications are likely when the same methods are applied outside those boundaries. In that respect, prospective Turkish ELT instructors should be more aware of the postmethod norms due to high local exigencies present throughout the nation. Therefore, the study, most importantly, may be beneficial in raising attention towards postmethod pedagogy in the local level. Second, the results of the study are expected to be significant in identifying the level of familiarity of ELT practitioners in Turkey with the postmethod pedagogy. Finally, the findings may point to the adequacy or the inadequacy of the role of postmethod in ELT curricula. As a result, the findings

from the study may influence future ELT curriculum designers, ELT teaching methods instructors, teacher trainers and ELT students.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, an overview of the present literature on the historical phases in the methodology of English language teaching, teaching methods and the postmethod condition have been presented. Then, the Statement of the Problem, Research Questions, and the Significance of the Study have been provided. The second chapter focuses on the relevant literature regarding the historical development of English language teaching in the global and the local contexts, provides detailed analysis of teaching methods, and evaluates postmethod pedagogy with greater detail.



## CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

### Introduction

“Many scholars realize that ... what teachers practice in language classrooms rarely resembles any specific method as it is prescribed in manuals”

(Canagarajah, 1999, p. 103).

The aim of this chapter is to introduce and review the relevant literature to this research study examining the role of postmethod pedagogy in Turkish English language teaching (ELT) curricula under three main sections. In the first section, a retrospective outline of the English language teaching methodology will be provided in detail. The second section will focus on postmethod pedagogy, presenting the theoretical and practical dimensions of the postmethod approach compared to conventional, method-based approaches. This section will also include the literature on possible frameworks for postmethod condition. Finally, the third section will provide a review of Turkish ELT history and policies in line with the method-postmethod distinction.

### The Method Era

The systematic presentation of how to teach languages has been the concern of many studies, most of which may be found under the heading of *methodology*. For most language teachers, methods serve as an indispensable element of the instruction process (Bell, 2007). In fact, starting from the very first days of systematic, formal language education, learners and teachers have experienced and utilized a variety of distinctive methods in their lessons.

Although it may be assumed for other methods to have existed in times prior to the ones in official records, the emergence of methods as the present literature depicts dates back to the Middle Ages (Byram, 2001). Since then, teachers of Latin, French, and ultimately, English have adopted a large number of teaching methods, starting with the Classical Method until the rise of the Communicative Approaches.

Thanasoulas (2002) makes a solid distinction between the phases in which a variety of methods were employed. According to him, the systematic instruction begins with Grammar Translation Method (GTM), also known as the Classical Method. Following GTM, Direct Method (DM) becomes the dominant procedure. Later, in the 1940s and 1950s, Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) leads the methodology debate. Then comes the period of Designer Methods in the 1970s, which include a wide range of methods: Total Physical Response (TPR), Community Language Learning (CLL), Suggestopedia (SUG), and The Silent Way (TSW). Finally, the era of method concludes with the emergence of the Communicative Approaches (CA) namely, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT). Succeeding these communicative approaches, the Eclectic Method (EM) may be defined as the last bastion of methodology prior to the recent shift towards beyond methods.

### **The Natural History and Background of Methods**

#### **Early methods.**

The first systematic method for language teaching, the Classical Method, first established itself in the Middle Ages where Latin was taught intensively in order to promote intellectuality and to raise decent scholars (Brown, 2000). The method later, in

the late 1800s, started to be known as the GTM. According to Prator and Celce-Murcia (as cited in Brown, 2000), GTM promotes instruction in the mother tongue, teaches vocabulary as isolated words, provides elaborate explanations of grammar, and pays little attention to pronunciation and the context. GTM stands out as the oldest and longest serving method in the history of ELT (Medrano & Rodriguez, 2013). However, its presence in the modern ELT environments abides, as it continues to be widely employed in certain parts of the world today (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Direct Method (DM) was the second of early approaches, which emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century in reaction to the shortcomings of GTM. Gouin (1831-1896) was the prominent figure in the reformist movement, who suggested a method based on the observations he made upon the language learning process of a child (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). According to Molina, Cañado, and Agulló (2005), in DM approach, a) only the target language was used, b) the main goal was the everyday language, c) questions and answers constituted the means of achieving oral proficiency, and e) correction was not preferable. Although DM became popular in a number of European countries for approximately half a century, and may be said to continue its existence in the present day through its link to the Berlitz Method, the fact that it lacked a through methodological basis led to another shift from DM to Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

ALM was also known as the Army Method, as it was the outcome of a heightened need of the Americans who wished to master both their allies' and enemies' languages following the outbreak of World War II (Thanasoulas, 2002). Synthesizing some of the characteristics of DM, ALM started to dominate ELT methodology for 14

years between 1950 and 1964. According to Danesi (2003), ALM stressed imitation, repetition and drills extensively in order to develop habit formation in learners, promoted the use of the target language for everything except grammar explanations, and heavily advocated the formation of proper pronunciation habits. As Larsen-Freeman (2000) suggests, while ALM became successful in teaching languages, objections towards the method had already begun to surface, mostly towards the limitations of the structural linguistics that the method offered, soon after it enjoyed its popularity in the beginning of the 1960s.

### **Designer methods.**

Linguists such as Rivers (1964) began to challenge ALM advocating that language was an outcome of rule formation, rather than the previously held belief of habit formation. Eventually, critiques such as her led to a *method boom* leading up to 1970s, some of which came to be known under the terminology of Designer Methods (Stern, 1985). As Hashemi (2011) points out, methods of the era can be divided into two groups: form-based methods of the era such as the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and Total Physical Response (TPR), and more learner-centered and meaning-based methods as Community Language Learning (CLL), Suggestopedia (SUG), and The Silent Way (TSW), which are also known as the Designer Methods. While the former group of methods corresponds to a more conventional approach in ELT that stemmed from the classical methods such as GTM and ALM, the latter set of methods are considered to constitute the transformation of ELT into a more communicative practice.

The table below provides an overview and characteristics of the relatively learner-centered Designer Methods:

Table 1

*Designer Methods of the 1970s* (Adapted from Roberts, 2012)

	Theory of Learning	Theory of Language	Teaching Method
The Silent Way	Learning is facilitated if the learner discovers or problem solves. Students work co-operatively and independently from teacher.	Very structural- language is taught in ‘building blocks’, but syllabus is determined by what learners need to communicate.	Teacher should be as silent as possible, modeling items just once. Language is learnt inductively.
Total Physical Response	Learners will learn better if stress to produce language is reduced. Learners, like children, learn from responding to verbal stimulus.	Also structural. Mainly used “everyday conversations” are highly abstract and require advanced internalization of the target language.	Teachers’ role is mainly to provide opportunities for learning. Yet, very teacher directed - even when learners interact with each other, usually the teacher directs.
Community Language Learning	Not behavioral but holistic. Teacher and learners are involved in “an interaction in which both experience a sense of their wholeness.”	Language is communication. Not structural, but based on learning how to communicate what you want to say.	Learners learn through interaction with each other and the teacher. They attempt communication and the teacher helps them.
Suggestopedia	People remember best and are most influenced by material coming from an authoritative source. Anxiety should be lowered through comfortable chairs, baroque music etc.	Language is gradually acquired. No correction.	The teacher starts by introducing the grammar and lexis ‘in a playful manner’ while the students just relax and listen. Students then use the language in fun and/or undirected ways.

### **Communicative Approaches.**

Although interpreted under the scope of methodology, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is sometimes referred to as an approach, rather than a method regarding the common definition of the method in the literature (e.g., Bax, 2003; Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, & Thurrel, 1997; Thanasoulas, 2002).

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), CLT emerged following the research of British linguists in the beginning of the 1970s. Mainly shaped around the framework of Wilkins (1972), CLT offered a systematic presentation of language which focused on the communicative aspects of language rather than the traditional approaches which underlined the significance of grammar and vocabulary. Wilkins' (1972) framework was later employed by the European Council in the design process of a communicative curriculum with different threshold levels which was highly influential in the spread of CLT through Europe and other countries.

According to Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983), some general characteristics of CLT include, but are not limited to: a) communicative competence is the desired goal, b) effective communication is sought, c) language learning is learning to communicate, d) dialogues, if used, center around communicative functions and are not normally memorized, e) meaning is paramount. Similarly, Nunan (as cited in McKay, 2003) lists five basic characteristics of CLT stating that it advocates for:

- an emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- the introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.

- the provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on the language but also on the learning process itself.
- an enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
- an attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom (p. 15).

Under Communicative Approaches (CA), some divergences such as the Content Based Instruction (CBI) and Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) are also observed. The reason for such a difference is mostly linked with Howatt's (1984) distinction between the forms of CLT, which are *the weak* and *the strong* versions. According to him, the weak versions may refer to learning in order to *use* English, while the strong versions mean *utilizing* English to learn a concept.

Within the same cope, CBI, differing from the CLT, is mainly concerned with the teaching of some other content along with the target language. Due to the fact that most subjects, academic ones in particular, constitute a natural learning ground for students to master both the language and the subject matter being taught, CBI has been a popular tool for teaching particularly in certain academic and professional contexts (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

TBLT, on the other hand, seeks to facilitate learning through the target language and real life tasks in which learners may practice language. As Candlin and Murphy (1987) state, tasks present language learning in the form of a problem-solving manner between the existing knowledge of the learner and the fresh knowledge.

Just as CLT, both CBI and TBLT are widely preferred and up-to-date approaches in language instruction for many teachers around the world for the present day (Chowdhury, 2003).

### **The Eclectic Method.**

While some language teachers have been able to restrict their teaching pedagogy under the frameworks such as the classical or the communicative approaches, particularly in the mid-1980s, some began to advocate that there is no best teaching method and teaching is rather about successfully combining distinct perspectives. Later, Prabhu (1990) put forward the argument that if every method was partially correct in language classrooms, then none represented the whole truth alone. He sensibly pointed out that when asked about which method they employed in their classes, present day language teachers often responded as “It all depends,” (p.163). He concluded his argument in favor of eclecticism by suggesting that if teachers refrained from adhering to a single, fixed method, they would have greater gains and be better equipped to face challenges with a variety of methods at their disposal.

Differing from the previous body of approaches and methods to some extent, the relatively recent notion, *principled eclecticism* is the term which is used to describe a pluralistic, desirable and coherent approach to the teaching of languages (Mellow, 2002). An eclectic approach to language teaching involves a variety of activities and tasks to be employed in classrooms. According to Larsen-Freeman (2000), principled eclecticism stands in sharp contrast to a) relying on a single theory or absolutism, b) relativism, and/or c) unconstrained pluralism. The reason why eclectic approach stands



against absolutism and single-theory approach is that such tendencies suggest mechanization and inflexibility (Gilliland, James, & Bowman; Lazarus & Beutler, as cited in Mellow, 2002). The eclectic approach also criticizes relativism in that relativism underlines dissimilarities rather than the similarities (e.g., Larsen-Freeman; Prahbu, as cited in Mellow, 2002). Finally, unconstrained pluralism is ruled out as such an approach suggests a chaotic utilization of infinite number of activities and methods absent any theoretical guidance.

It is evident that *eclecticism* has become a buzzword for many, particularly in the recent years, and the tendency for such an attitude is not ungrounded (Demirci, 2012). Due to its flexible nature, eclecticism in language teaching may present many forms, some of which are listed by Mellow (2002) as follows:

- effective or successful eclecticism (i.e., based on specific outcomes) (Olagoke, 1982),
- enlightened eclecticism (H. D. Brown, 1994, p. 74; Hammerly, 1985, p. 9),
- informed or well-informed eclecticism (J. D. Brown, 1995, pp. 12-14, 17; Hubbard, Jones, Thornton & Wheeler, 1983; Yonglin, 1995),
- integrative eclecticism (Gilliland, James & Bowman, 1994, p. 552),
- new eclecticism (Boswell, 1972),
- planned eclecticism (Dorn, 1978, p. 6),
- systematic eclecticism (Gilliland, James & Bowman, 1994, p. 552),
- technical eclecticism (Lazarus & Beutler, 1993), as well as

- the complex methods of the arts of eclectic, including deliberation (Eisner, 1984, p. 207; Schwab, 1969, p. 20; 1971, pp. 495, 503, 506) (p.1).

### **The Postmethod Era**

For the present day, the concept of method remains strong in the literature, and Teaching Methods classes and method-based teacher training are a tradition in raising ELT teachers in most of the institutional curricula (Bell, 2007). Thus, while the actual emphasis by teachers on theoretical methodology may be deemed doubtful, the presence of the instructed methodology in teacher-raising environments remains fortuitous. Nevertheless, since the 1980s, when Communicative Language Approaches both enjoyed their peak of popularity and slowly began to receive a substantial amount of criticism, some scholars (e.g., Allwright, 1991; Kumaravadivelu, 1994; Murphy, 2001; Pennycook, 1989; Prabhu, 1990; Widdowson, 1990) began not only to point out the shortcomings of Communicative Approaches, but also to question the concept of method itself entirely. Their objections also covered the late trend of eclecticism; which, for them, was another method based approach with multiple utilization of the constructs. Such an effort was observed to comprise two dimensions; the theoretical and the practical. The theoretical dimension covers issues related to English language as being a colonial construct and the discussion of the concept of method. The practical dimension, on the other hand, deals with the daily procedures and the resulting mismatches of teaching methods when applied in language classrooms.

### **The Theoretical Dimension.**

When the severe criticism towards the concept of method surfaced, on a broader level, the debate also stemmed much from the role of English as a political construct used as a *lingua franca* in almost every country (Jenkins, 2007). In order to fully comprehend how teaching methodology is spread around countries which utilize English in either institutional or non-institutional levels, it is of significance to first have some familiarity with ELT demographics worldwide. For Kachru (1992), English language learning demographics may be divided into three groups. The first group is the Inner Circle, which means the traditional and cultural homelands of the English language including the USA, the UK, Canada, Australia or the New Zealand. The Outer Circle is composed of mostly colonized countries such as Nigeria, Pakistan and Bangladesh where English signifies the institutionalized, non-native varieties (English as a Second Language, ESL). Finally, the Expanding Circle refers to the regions such as Greece, Turkey or Japan where performance varieties of the language are spoken particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts.

A brief analysis of modern day power balances show that the Outer and the Expanding Circle countries in Kachru's (1992) classification are heavily influenced by the Western globalization. On the political level, it is inevitable for such an attitude to result in a certain degree of linguistic imperialism for the countries in question. What many researchers and teachers find problematic, at this point, is particularly the political imposition Communicative Approaches present to the non-Inner Circle contexts. To elaborate, as O'Regan (2013) and Akbari (2008) also argue, an imperialistic view of English perceives non-native *Englishes* as deficient, rather than different, and such

differences are treated as signs of error, rather than the emerging or potential features of the language. Similarly, Holliday (1994) states that methodological prescriptions of the BANA contexts may have little currency in outer contexts. The mismatch, therefore, arises from the fact that while non-native varieties and speakers of English heavily outnumber those of the native speakers, the model of the restricted native pedagogy is still accepted as the law of teaching.

Apart from its political side, there had already been a number of pedagogical attempts to reconsider and/or challenge the concept of method entirely, particularly since the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. To begin with, Mackey (1967) was the first researcher to criticize methods as he deemed them to be restrictive and vague. Similarly, Feyerabend (1993) attacked methodology as being scientifically restrictive. Stern (1983) mainly argued that while the concept of method may not be ignored altogether, teachers should not blindly employ the techniques they practice, but instead question them consistently. More recently, Richards and Rodgers (2001) stated that methods were viewed as top-down, prescribed entities by educators, which leave teachers with little space to operate, as well as putting the learners in a passive position. Richards (1994) supported this belief as follows:

While many teachers may have been taught to use a specific method or asked to teach within a framework or philosophy established by their institution, the way they teach is often a personal interpretation of what they think works best in a given situation. For many teachers, a teaching approach is something uniquely personal which they develop through experience and apply in different ways according to the demands of specific situations. (p.104)

Pennycook (1989) was among these researchers whose influential work not only criticized the concept of method theoretically as being prescriptive, but also politically, depicting methods as positivist, progressivist and patriarchal concepts. In doing so, he argued that methods reflected a particular belief of the world and they could account for unequal power balances. In his article, which contains a rich summary of early teaching methodologies and their critical interpretations, Pennycook (1989) came to conclude that:

The Method construct that has been the predominant paradigm used to conceptualize teaching not only fails to account adequately for these historical conditions, but also is conceptually inconsistent, conflating categories and types at all levels and failing to demonstrate intellectual rigor. It is also highly questionable whether so-called methods ever reflected what was actually going on in classrooms. (p. 608)

Allwright (1991), in parallel, labeled the concept of method as insignificant, an attitude which he rationalized with the following reasons:

- it is built on seeing differences where similarities may be more important, since methods that are different in abstract principle seem to be far less so in classroom practice; it simplifies unhelpfully a highly complex set of issues, for example seeing similarities among learners when differences may be more important. . . ;

- it diverts energies from potentially more productive concerns, since time spent learning how to implement a particular method is time not available for such alternative activities as classroom task design;
- it breeds a brand loyalty which is unlikely to be helpful to the profession, since it fosters pointless rivalries on essentially irrelevant issues; it breeds complacency, if, as it surely must, it conveys the impression that answers have indeed been found to all the major methodological questions in our profession;
- it offers a “cheap” externally derived sense of coherence for language teachers, which may itself inhibit the development of a personally “expensive,” but ultimately far more valuable, internally derived sense of coherence . . . (1991, pp. 7–8).

As seen, the theoretical dimension that the concept of method embodied was stage to many controversies. Similarly, a growing body of complaints had begun to emerge from the classrooms, particularly towards the application of deep-end Communicative Methods.

### **The Practical Dimension.**

The attack on the concept of method was not solely theory-based. While ideological mismatches suggested a reform in the way teachers defined their pedagogy, it was still observed that recent Western approaches such as CLT, and its successors CBI and TBLT were highly popular for ELT instructors in all three circles (Chowdhury, 2003). Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), which constitutes the basis

of ELT for many European countries, for instance, described language learners as social agents who should develop general and particular communicative competences as they achieve their everyday tasks (Council of Europe, as cited in North, 2007). However, as Kumaravadivelu (2006) suggests, there had also been a significant number of complaints towards the so-called communicative approaches in the practical dimension. Previous research (e.g., Atsilarat & Jarvis, 2004; Bax, 2003; Canagarajah, 1999; Chick, 1996; Holliday, 1994; Li, 1998; Lowenberg, 2002; Prabhu, 1987; Sato, 2002; Seidlhofer, 1999; Shamim, 1996) showed that practical implications, namely the planning, practicality and assessing of Communicative Approaches could be problematic, particularly for countries outside the Inner Circle. In other words, day to day procedures of a Western, US/Euro-centric teaching model might not be ideal for developing or underdeveloped countries, a fact which constituted the practical basis for the present effort to move *beyond* such methods.

In the light of all these theoretical and practical complications that the concept of method and the Communicative Approaches presented for language teachers, the anti-method movement which began in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and escalated in the 1980s, eventually forcing itself into the literature under the term *postmethod* by Kumaravadivelu (1994) in TESOL Quarterly series. Kumaravadivelu (1994), in his famous article, maintained that the time had come for a shift from the method era to the *postmethod condition*:

Having witnessed how methods go through endless cycles of life, death, and rebirth, the language teaching profession seems to have reached a state of heightened awareness—an awareness that, as long as we remain in the web of

method, we will continue to get entangled in an unending search for an unavailable solution; that such a search drives us to continually recycle and repackage the same old ideas; and that nothing short of breaking the cycle can salvage the situation. Out of this awareness has emerged what I have called a “postmethod condition.” (p. 32)

According to Kumaravadivelu (1994), for a postmethod condition to emerge in the present day, the initial action to be taken is to re-evaluate the power relations between theorizers and practitioners of language; while the concept of method authorizes theorizers with the power of decision making in language pedagogy, postmethod condition enables practitioners of language to produce their own context-sensitive, classroom-oriented innovative approaches. Kumaravadivelu (1994), additionally, points out to three features that postmethod condition offers for language teachers; a) an alternative to the concept of method, b) postmethod and teacher autonomy, and c) principled pragmatism. For him, just as it is for several other researchers (e.g., Nunan, 1991; Pennycook, 1989; Richards, 1987), the urgently needed first step in deconstructing the method is looking for an *alternative to method* rather than an *alternative method*.

Second, Kumaravadivelu (1994) suggests that postmethod pedagogy strongly supports teacher autonomy. He advocates that teachers can freely practice their profession and create their own autonomous learning environments based on the local learner needs, provided that the institutional and curricular constraints of the method-oriented approach are minimized. Therefore, teachers may theorize from their practice and practice what they theorize.



Third, postmethod condition strongly emphasizes the principled pragmatism, a notion which needs to be analyzed in greater detail in order to make a distinction between the eclectic and the postmethod approaches. As mentioned earlier, eclecticism is a relatively modern approach which claims to promote teachers with the ability to operate freely by not adhering to a fixed, particular method. Instead, it also allows teachers to combine different methods into one practice and create their own methodology. No matter how appealing and familiar Eclectic Method may sound to most teachers (Prabhu, 1990), it has also received a great amount of negative feedback due to the fact that it lacks a systematic framework. In a similar way, Kumaravadivelu (1994) rules out the Eclectic Method in that it is unprincipled and uncritical and most often leaves particularly novice teachers with a bunch of scrambled activities to be used in their classrooms. Stern (1992) is another critic of the approach, stating that eclecticism offers no criteria or principles upon which teachers and researchers can define a best theory for themselves. Finally, Widdowson (1990) also famously undermines the approach by stating “If you say you are eclectic but cannot state the principles of your eclecticism, you are not eclectic, merely confused” (as cited in Robertson., & Nunn, R., 2007, p. 467). Thus, Kumaravadivelu (1994), in defining postmethod condition, offers principled pragmatism instead of eclecticism as the third feature. For him, principled pragmatism can simply derive from the *sense of plausibility* of a teacher (Prabhu, 1990, emphasis added, p.161). This sense of plausibility may develop in a variety of ways: a teacher’s hands-on experience, or by means of professional training. As a result, unlike eclecticism, principled pragmatism is not connected to a certain notion of method by any means, enabling teachers to operate as more autonomous practitioners and theorizers of language instruction. As can be seen,

the pioneers of the postmethod condition criticize eclectic approach due to the fact it lacks a concrete framework for teachers to build their own pedagogy upon. The postmethod condition, differing from the eclectic approaches, offers certain criteria that teachers need not to take for granted, but rather make effective use of in order to build their in-class pedagogy (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

### **Frameworks for a postmethod pedagogy.**

Based on these constructs, some of the frameworks that postmethod condition offers for language teachers are: Kumaravadivelu's (1994) Ten Macrostrategies Framework, Stern's (1992) Three-dimensional Framework, and Allwright's (2000) Exploratory Practice Framework.

#### ***Kumaravadivelu's (1994) ten macrostrategies framework.***

Under the guidance of the three operating principles that the postmethod condition offers, Kumaravadivelu (1994) suggests a framework of 10 macrostrategies for teachers. He states that with the postmethod approach, the content and characteristics of L2 classrooms are due to experience a broad number of changes, and this framework may serve as one of the possible, though not the ultimate, guidelines that teachers could adhere to. His framework is as follows:

1. Maximize learning opportunities: This macrostrategy envisages teaching as a process of creating and utilizing learning opportunities, a process in which teachers strike a balance between their role as managers of teaching acts and their role as mediators of learning acts.

2. Minimize perceptual mismatches: This macrostrategy emphasizes the recognition of potential perceptual mismatches between intentions and interpretations of the learner, the teacher, and the teacher educator.
3. Facilitate negotiated interaction: This macrostrategy refers to meaningful learner-learner, learner-teacher classroom interaction in which learners are entitled and encouraged to initiate topic and talk, not just react and respond.
4. Promote learner autonomy: This macrostrategy involves helping learners learn how to learn, equipping them with the means necessary to self-direct and self-monitor their own learning.
5. Foster language awareness: This macrostrategy refers to any attempt to draw learners' attention to the formal and functional properties of their L2 in order to increase the degree of explicitness required to promote L2 learning.
6. Activate intuitive heuristics: This macrostrategy highlights the importance of providing rich textual data so that learners can infer and internalize underlying rules governing grammatical usage and communicative use.
7. Contextualize linguistic input: This macrostrategy highlights how language usage and use are shaped by linguistic, extralinguistic, situational, and extrasituational contexts.
8. Integrate language skills: This macrostrategy refers to the need to holistically integrate language skills traditionally separated and sequenced as listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

9. Ensure social relevance: This macrostrategy refers to the need for teachers to be sensitive to the societal, political, economic, and educational environment in which L2 learning and teaching take place.
10. Raise cultural consciousness: This macrostrategy emphasizes the need to treat learners as cultural informants so that they are encouraged to engage in a process of classroom participation that puts a premium on their power/knowledge (Kumaravadivelu, 1994, pp. 39-40).

This macrostrategic framework of Kumaravadivelu's (2001) is shaped by three operating principles: particularity, practicality and possibility. First and foremost, for any methodology to relate to postmethod pedagogy, it has to start from *particularity* since any sort of teaching pedagogy "must be sensitive to a particular group of teachers teaching a particular group of learners pursuing a particular set of goals within a particular institutional context embedded in a particular sociocultural milieu" (Kumaravadivelu, 2001, p. 538). Teachers, by observing, evaluating and interpreting local occurrences which take place in their classrooms, are to achieve the principle of particularity and thus, will be able to design their own postmethod pedagogy based on their specific learner needs.

The parameter of *practicality* is concerned with two interwoven concepts; theory versus practice. Kumaravadivelu (2001) suggests that no single teaching theory is helpful unless it is generated by classroom practice. As teachers practice, they will gain sufficient hands-on experience to design their own teaching theories. The sole conditions needed for this parameter to take place are continuous action and reflection by the teacher.

Finally, Kumaravadivelu's (2001) three-dimensional system embodies *possibility* which addresses to the core of the Outer and Expanding Circle complications with ESL/EFL teaching. The parameter of possibility refers to the experiences participants bring to the classroom. These experiences are not only shaped by their past learning backgrounds but also broader social, economic and political environments in which they have grown up. Kumaravadivelu (2001) argues that such experiences are able to affect classrooms in ways that are not predictable by policy makers, curriculum designers or text book authors.

***Stern's three-dimensional framework (1992).***

Stern (1992) also offers an alternative framework in which teachers might negotiate between the three principles presented and devise their own plan to accomplish a postmethod pedagogy.

The first principle is *the intra-lingual and cross-lingual dimension*. The principle is mainly linked to the role of L1 and L2 in language classrooms. According to Stern (1992, as cited in Can, 2009), L1-L2 connection is an indisputable fact of life. Thus, the use of L1 in classroom is, as opposed to what many methods advocate (such as the Communicative Approaches), not heresy. On the contrary, teachers are the judges to find the ideal ratio of L1 usage in classrooms.

The second principle is *the analytic-experiential dimension*. The analytic base corresponds to the sets of activities which are non-contextual and theoretic, usually carried out through drills. Experiential base, on the other hand, refers to more meaningful activities such as problem solving tasks, games or songs. Stern (1992) points

out to the fact that in order for effective teaching to take place, both these two bases have to be present in language classrooms.

The third principle in his framework is *the explicit-implicit dimension*. It is generally perceived that while modern methods such as GTM and ALM tend to favor more explicit learning, postmodern ones such as the Communicative Approaches highly advocate for the implicit dimension. Stern (1992), however, puts forward the idea that the ideal balance is, once again, in blending. For him, some aspects of language are convenient to teach implicitly, while some are more practical to instruct explicitly.

***Allwright's exploratory practice framework (2000).***

Allwright's (2000) framework is the other point of reference for teachers who wish to employ a postmethod pedagogy. Allwright (2003) explains what Exploratory Practice referred to as a sustainable path for teachers and learners in the classroom which is capable of creating opportunities for them to develop their own understanding of classroom life as they go on with their teaching and learning. His main emphasis being on the quality of life in language classrooms, Allwright (2003) advocates that understanding the dynamics of classroom atmosphere is far more significant than any teaching method or instructional technique. In that sense, Allwright (2003) proposes six principles and two further suggestions in his framework:

Principle 1: Put "quality of life" first.

Principle 2: Work primarily to understand language classroom life.

Principle 3: Involve everybody.

Principle 4: Work to bring people together.

Principle 5: Work also for mutual development.

Principle 6: Make the work a continuous enterprise.

Suggestion 1: Minimize the extra effort of all sorts for all concerned.

Suggestion 2: Integrate the “work for understanding” into the existing working life of the classroom (Allwright, 2003).

As indicated in the three different models presented above, postmethod pedagogy not only challenges the concept of method entirely, but also presents brand-new frameworks for teachers who wish to promote self and learner autonomy in their classrooms. Although postmethod condition has made a significant impact on the ELT stage, its very bases of operation still lack the adequate amount of knowledge and practical research. As Akbari (2008) points out, what postmethod pedagogy needs for progress at this point may be hidden in the local classrooms of the countries especially outside the Inner Circle, particularly in countries such as Turkey, where the aforementioned complications stemming from the application of high-end Communicative teaching methods are still widely felt (e.g., İnceçay and İnceçay, 2009; Özşevik, 2010).

### **ELT History, Policies and Methodology in Turkey**

As the most commonly used foreign language in Turkey, English corresponds to a variety of social and economic aspects such as job specifications, academic progress or social status. According to Kırkgöz (2005), the introduction of English as a foreign language into school curricula in Turkish education system dates back to *The Tanzimat*

*Period*<sup>1</sup>. Following World Wars I and II, historic records show that the modern Turkish Republic has sought ever more ways to promote the literacy in English with subsequent policies.

On the political level, the reason for such a tendency is, evidently, the post-republic attitude which highly favored modernization in line with the Western-oriented, anti-Soviet policies introduced one after another, particularly in the period of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the modern Turkish Republic. Other reasons why English has particularly dominated the national education system include the economic and technological ones, which have been a direct result of the firm establishment of English as *the lingua franca* throughout the world.

According to Kırkgöz (2007), English language education in Turkey demonstrates three stages. The first stage is the 1950s when the first Anatolian High Schools were opened and English was the compulsory foreign language. 1980s were the second stage, when Turkey was even more influenced by the Western policies and globalization (Friedman; Robins, as cited in Kırkgöz, 2005). The third stage covers the period between the mid-1980s up to the present date in which the presence of English in the education system has become even stronger with EFL instruction dominating all levels of education from primary schools to the post-graduate courses.

Among these three phases, the 1997 reform of the Turkish Ministry of Education stands out particularly significant in the process of English language education in Turkey. According to Kırkgöz (2005):

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<sup>1</sup> Meaning: reorganization of the Ottoman Empire. The period of reformation between 1839-1876.



The 1997 reform stands as a landmark in Turkish history because, for the first time, it introduced the concept of communicative approach into ELT... The basic goal of the policy is stated as the development of learners' communicative capacity to prepare them to use the target language (L2) for communication in classroom activities. The curriculum promotes student-centered learning, to replace the traditional teacher-centered view to learning. The role of the teacher is specified as *facilitator* of the learning process. Teachers are expected to take on a wide range of responsibilities, including helping students to develop communicative performance, and promoting positive values and attitudes towards English language learning. Meanwhile, the students are expected to play an active role in the learning process. (p. 221, emphasis original)

Since then, Communicative Approaches, namely CLT, have indisputably occupied most of the teaching, materials development, curriculum design, testing and teacher training processes of the approximately 90 out of 168 universities in Turkey. A review of the recent literature (e.g., Coşkun, 2011; İnceçay and İnceçay, 2009; Kırkgöz, 2008; Özşevik, 2010) not only confirms this hypothesis, but also points out to certain non-conformist reports with regard to Communicative Approaches.

Özşevik's (2010) study, for instance, conducted online with 61 English teachers, is a clear demonstrator of the mismatches between the actual practices and the perspective Communicative Approaches present for language teachers. The study is a mixed-method one, embodying an online questionnaire as well as semi-structured interviews. The results of the study reveal that contrary to the idealized methodological perspective imposed by CEFR-guided YÖK (The Higher Education Council) and MEB

(Ministry of National Education) educational policies, Turkish EFL teachers experience many difficulties in implementing CLT into their classrooms due to various reasons such as grammar-based centralized exams, heavy teaching loads of teachers and overcrowded classrooms.

Similarly, İnceçay and İnceçay's (2009) study, completed in the preparatory school of a private university in Istanbul with 30 EFL students, show that the application of a deep-end method which stems from the Communicative Approach may be problematic for most learners, but rather, a merger of the traditional approaches and Communicative Approaches works best for EFL learners in Turkey. The study, conducted in a similar fashion with Özşevik's (2010) study, using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, points out to the facts that "...EFL countries like Turkey need to modernize and update their teaching methods which means doing changes by taking students' previous educational habits into consideration" and "students in non-English speaking countries make use of communicative language teaching (CLT) if communicative activities and non-communicative activities are combined in English classrooms" (İnceçay & İnceçay, 2009, p.1). The study contains striking data regarding the mismatches between Communicative Approaches and the Turkish curricula.

Finally, Küçük's (2011) study is worth investigating in relation to the applicability of CLT into the Turkish EFL context. In her study, where one of the research participants admits "Even though I am to use CLT, I combine Grammar-Translation, PPP and CLT" (p. 6), Küçük (2011) talks about the possibility of *adopting* Communicative methods into local contexts, as opposed to the methodological doctrines imposed by the central periphery nations such as the BANAs. She concludes that:

As the centre countries dominate ELT sector, most of the time they undermine the characteristics of the countries where English is taught as a foreign language. It can be concluded that in terms of the methodologies in ELT, teachers should analyse their context and their learners' needs before acknowledging these methodologies as the best way to teach. (p. 7).

As seen, some of research conducted in Turkey also supports the concerns raised over the plausibility and applicability of Communicative Approaches to local contexts. Turkish teachers, experience similar difficulties which methods bring as their colleagues (e.g., Atsilarat & Jarvis, 2004; Bax, 2003; Canagarajah, 1999; Chick, 1996; Li, 1998; Lowenberg, 2002; Prabhu, 1987; Sato, 2002; Seidlhofer, 1999; Shamim, 1996) in other ELT contexts do. The initial step to be taken, therefore, could indeed be the revision of the current methodology for ELT curricula and classrooms.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter presented a brief overview of the ELT methods, and then discussed the emergence of the postmethod condition in relation to the construct of method. Then the chapter provided three of the existing frameworks proposed for a possible postmethod pedagogy. Finally, the chapter presented an overview of the ELT policy developments and methodological perceptions in Turkey. The next chapter will cover the methodology of the study, including participants, setting, and data collection methods.

## **CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

This descriptive study aimed to explore Turkish third- and fourth-year English Language Teaching students' perceptions towards a) English language teaching methods and b) the postmethod condition. For that purpose, the study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are Turkish ELT students' perceptions of methods and the postmethod pedagogy?
2. To what extent do Turkish ELT students' methodological attitudes towards methods and postmethod pedagogy differ according to their classroom experience levels?

This chapter will present information in four main sections which are: the setting and the participants, the research design, the data collection instruments, the research procedure and the data analysis. The first section gives detailed information about where the study was conducted and the specific demographics of the participants. The second section outlines the data collection instrument employed throughout the data collection process, and how the instrument was developed. Finally, the third section presents how the research design is transformed into practice, while the fourth section will cover the overall procedure for the data analysis.

### **The Setting and the Participants**

The study was conducted with eighty-eight prospective ELT teachers at six universities located in different cities of Turkey. In order to conform to the pre-

determined confidentiality policy which was carried out throughout the research procedure, the names of these universities and their participants will not be revealed, and each will be identified with pseudonyms instead (e.g., University 1, Participant 34).

The study aimed at nation-wide demographics. For that, a comprehensive list of all Turkish universities with ELT departments was acquired from online sources, and the OSYM web site. Then the researcher made a list of ten universities based on socio-cultural and geographical features that best reflect the country's population. The universities were selected systematically, embodying different regional and socio-cultural characteristics in order not to focus on the responses of one specific region extensively. Out of the ten universities nine were contacted using e-mails and telephones. One university was contacted by personally meeting one of the professors. Among the ten universities that were contacted, three refused to participate in the study or did not respond to any of the communication attempts. One university failed to provide adequate data, contrary to its promise (See Chapter V, limitations of the study).

Eventually, the setting for the study as its present form involved six Turkish universities among which four were state universities and two were private. Three of these universities were from the Marmara region, two universities were from the Central-Anatolian region, and one university was from the Aegean region. In the Marmara region, two universities were in the same city while the other one was in a different city. In the Central-Anatolian region, the two universities were in different cities.

As for the participants of the study, eighty-eight prospective ELT teachers from the six universities took part in the survey part of the research. See Table 2 for detailed information regarding the participants of the study:

Table 2

*Demographic Information of the Participants*

Background Information	N	%
<b>Age</b>		
19-20	4	4.7
21-22	48	55.8
23-24	25	29
25+	9	10.5
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	74	86
Male	12	14
<b>University</b>		
1	9	10.5
2	27	31.4
3	11	12.8
4	4	4.7
5	17	19.8
6	17	19.8
<b>University Class</b>		
2	4	4.7
3	28	32.6
4	54	62.7
<b>Worked as a trainee/intern teacher (pre-service experience)</b>		
Yes	61	71.8
No	24	28.2
<b>Have professional teaching experience (in-service experience)</b>		
Yes	23	27.4
No	61	72.6

Of the eighty-eight survey participants, 74 were female and 12 were male, and two participants did not state their gender. At this point, the significant difference between the number of male and female participants may be explained with the general fact in Turkey that women, more than men, tend to choose ELT departments with a greater majority. The survey participants were from different age groups; the majority of the participants were in the 21-22-year-old group, with 23-24-year-olds in second place, over 25-year olds in third, and finally 19-20-year-olds in last. Two participants did not state their age. In terms of age, the majority of the participants (55.8 %) were in the 21-22-year-old group, which was the targeted age group, considering the fact that if an individual, in Turkish education system, receives regular education, s/he is expected to be at the age of 21 in third year at university, and 22 in the fourth year. Therefore, the study, on the whole, accomplished its goal in reaching out to third and last year students at Turkish universities. The participants' distribution according to six selected universities differed, too. When the demographic information of the participants was analyzed according to their cities of participation, it was generally observed that participation from more developed cities of Turkey was more, while universities in less developed parts showed less participation. This can be explained by the lack of online facilities in less developed parts of Turkey, weaker socio-economic strength in utilizing the research tool, and lack of instructor guidance, which will also be mentioned in the limitations of the study. As for the participants' year at university, four participants stated that they were sophomore, 28 were junior and 54 participants were in their final years at their universities. Two participants did not state their class at university. The researcher made sure that all participants had taken a Teaching Methods (TM) course at the time of the study by contacting their TM professors to have them forward the survey

only to those students who had fulfilled the pre-requisite. The study was designed to cover particularly the third- and fourth-grade prospective teachers studying at the six universities, since it was estimated that these teachers would have had instruction regarding ELT methodology while the freshman and sophomore teacher candidates would not. The reason these freshman and sophomore prospective teachers were mainly excluded from the target population lies in the fact that it was assumed that prospective teachers with an educational background on teaching methods would give more appropriate responses to survey items. Concerning the participants' years at university, the study may be evaluated as having achieved its objective in addressing the correct population, since 62.7 % of the participants were fourth year students, and 32.6 % were third year. As the study mainly targeted the third- and fourth-year students, the total percentage of 96.3 stood out satisfactory in terms of participant reliability.

Regarding further information on survey participants, the majority of the participants (71.8 %) stated that they had worked either as an intern teacher or in a professional setting before, meaning that they had some practical knowledge in terms of prospective language teaching. When it came to professional teaching experience which involved working in an educational institution independently, the majority of the participants (72.6 %) stated they had not. Of the 23 participants who said they had in-service teaching experience, 22 have also provided the details of their internship experience in terms of the duration and English proficiency levels at which they had taught.



Table 3

*Information on the Duration of In-service Teaching Experience*

Duration (months)	0-6	7-12	13-36
f	9	8	5

Finally, as the study also wanted to outline whether there was a significant difference between the attitudes of teacher candidates with no teaching experience compared to those with pre and in service experience, the total ratio (71.8 %) of the participants with hands-on teaching experience (including pre and in service) helped the researcher to analyze the results.

### **The Instrument**

An online survey was designed for the purposes of the study. According to Oppenheim (2000), surveys are effective and practical ways of gathering data from large populations of participants. In addition, they require little time in their implementation and they are easy to process. The online survey employed in the study was not only practical and effective in terms of gathering the data from distinct regions of Turkey, but also it enabled a faster evaluation process for the researcher.

The survey consisted of four sections, and it was in English. The first section aimed to identify prospective teachers' methodological preferences in their prospective careers [Methods Preference Questionnaire (MPQ)], the second section inquired about prospective teachers' perceptions regarding these teaching methods [Methods

Questionnaire (MQ)], the third section aimed to assess the prospective teachers' perceptions towards the postmethod pedagogy [Postmethod Questionnaire (PMQ)], and the last section asked about the participant demographics. There were nine items in the MPQ, 20 items in the MQ, 25 items in the PMQ, and eight open-ended items in the demographics section (See Appendix 1 for the survey in paper format).

Table 4

*Distribution of Survey Items*

<b>Section</b>	I (MPQ)	II (MQ)	III (PMQ)	IV
	Methodological Preferences	Perception of Methods	Perception of Postmethod	Demographic Information
<b>Items</b>	9	20	25	8

The MPQ had nine items which aimed to assess which teaching method(s) the students would prefer to employ in their prospective teaching jobs. The teaching methods for this part were selected after an extensive analysis of the teaching methods in the literature. The researcher first outlined all the methods mentioned in the literature, and then some of them such as the Natural Approach and Situational Language Teaching were omitted from the list, as the comparison of the literary sources revealed that such items were either not mentioned in all sources, or referred to a slightly different notion than the *method* as intended for the purpose of the study. As a result, nine distinct ELT methods were presented to the survey participants in the multiple choice format with multiple selections available. This meant that out of the nine teaching methods, the survey takers could tick as many as they wanted.

The MQ involved 20 items which tried to outline the prospective teachers' perceptions regarding methods. The items developed for this section presented clear practices which stemmed from the methods presented in the first section. The distribution of each section item according to the methods, and the explanation of the correspondence among the items in the first and second sections are as follows:

Table 5

*Distribution of the MQ Items According to Methods*

Method	GTM	ALM	DM	SLTW	TPR	CLL	SUG	CA	EM
Item	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	2
Frequency									
Item Number	5, 7	14, 20	2, 6	12, 17	1, 16	8, 18	3, 13	9, 10, 11, 15	4, 19

Note: GTM: Grammar Translation Method, ALM: Audio Lingual Method, DM: Direct Method, SLTW: The Silent Way, TPR: Total Physical Response, CLL: Community Language Learning, SUG: Suggestopedia, CA: Communicative Approaches, EM: Eclectic Method

The MQ served as reliability check for the first section (the MPQ), because if a participant marked CLT in the first section, it was expected that s/he would give consistent answers to items numbered 9, 10, 11 and 15 in the second section. The MQ had 20 Likert scale items in which the participants were expected to mark the best response that corresponded most closely to their perception. The 20 item questionnaire was graded by the participants on a scale ranging from one to six, 1-*Strongly Disagree*, 2-*Disagree*, 3-*Somewhat Disagree*, 4-*Somewhat Agree*, 5-*Agree*, and 6-*Strongly Agree*.

The PMQ was designed for the assessment of the perceptions of prospective teachers regarding postmethod pedagogy, and consisted of 25 Likert scale items with the same item markers stated above with a range from 1 to 6. This section of the survey aimed to assess prospective teachers' opinions towards a *possible* postmethod condition without referring to postmethod condition explicitly in any of the items. Although the entire set of items were designed according to the theoretical background that the postmethod pedagogy utilized, no actual reference to the term *postmethod* was made throughout the survey as the study aimed to define the perceptions of these teachers towards a possible postmethod pedagogy.

The 25 items for the PMQ were designed by the researcher based on a postmethod framework which took Kumaravadivelu's (2003) three operating principles as the basis. Table 6 illustrates the correspondence of each item in this section to the operating principles stated by Kumaravadivelu (2003):

Table 6

*The Items in the PMQ According to Kumaravadivelu's (2003) Three Operating Principles*

Principle	Particularity	Practicality	Possibility
Item Frequency	8	12	5
Item Number	3, 5, 6, 10, 12, 14, 19, 20	1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 16, 21, 22, 23	15, 17, 18, 24, 25

Finally, Section IV of the survey included eight open-ended items regarding participant demographics which are gender, age, the name of their university, and their

year at the university. This section also asked the participants whether they had pre-service or in-service teaching practice, and if present, the duration of their experience, as well as the English levels which they have taught at.

### **Data Collection**

The pilot study took place online from April 24 to May 6 with the participation of 20 respondents from Hacettepe University ELT department. The aim of the piloting procedure was to identify potential problems with survey design and items beforehand. Since it was the first time that the researcher utilized an online survey for data collection, some potential complications were expected. In the end, one major technical problem was eliminated and a few minor improvements item-wise were made in order to eliminate potential ambiguities in terms of the perception of some survey items. The survey provided a reliability value of .65 (Cronbach  $\alpha = .65$ ) for the MQ, and .88 (Cronbach  $\alpha = .88$ ) for PMQ of the pilot test.

Following the corrections and improvements in the survey items, the researcher sent the web link of the survey to the pre-determined six universities. ELT Department Heads, Methodology professors and research assistants from these universities were contacted via e-mail correspondence and phone calls, and they were requested to pass the survey link to their junior and senior ELT students via e-mail or in any convenient form such as in-class instruction. The data collection for the online survey began on May 16, 2013, 02:26 p.m. and ended on June 2, 2013, 02:08 p.m.

## Data Analysis

The data analysis consisted of a quantitative analysis of the online outputs which were gathered from the survey web site. The outputs were then put into SPSS 18 by the researcher. For the MPQ, numeric data and nominal measures for nine teaching methods was analyzed by calculating frequencies, means and standard deviations. For the MQ and the PMQ, the Likert scale items had a weighing of: 1-*Strongly Disagree*, 2-*Disagree*, 3 -*Somewhat Disagree*, 4-*Somewhat Agree*, 5-*Agree*,and 6- *Strongly Agree*; therefore, numeric data and scale measures were analyzed in terms of frequencies, means, and standard deviations. In the second part of the data analysis, for the MPQ, the MQ, and the PMQ sections of the survey; Chi Square, Kruskal-Wallis, and one-way ANOVA tests were administrated respectively. These tests aimed to identify whether the attitudes of inexperienced, pre and in service experienced teacher candidates differed among groups.

The last section, which embodied participant demographics, had both numeric and string values in SPSS, and embodied nominal measures. For this part, the items' means were calculated in order to display participant demographics. This section's analysis was done in order to a) identify participant demographics, b) differentiate ELT students according to their experience levels (pre, in and no service).

## Conclusion

In this chapter, the methodology employed for the purposes of the study was described. The chapter began with a description of the educational setting in which the study was conducted. The demographic information regarding the participants was also

provided. Next, the chapter focused on the research instrument employed in the study. Then, the data collection procedure was outlined and the chapter concluded with the data analysis framework.

In the next chapter, the data which was gathered from the survey will be analyzed and presented in detail.

## CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS

### Introduction

This descriptive study aimed to outline Turkish third- and fourth-year English Language Teaching students' perceptions towards a) English language teaching methods and b) the postmethod condition. For that purpose, the study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are Turkish ELT students' perceptions of methods and the postmethod pedagogy?
2. To what extent do Turkish ELT students' methodological attitudes towards methods and postmethod pedagogy differ according to their classroom experience levels?

The study reached out to eighty-eight prospective ELT teachers, who were in their third and fourth years at university, from six different universities in Turkey. An online questionnaire which consisted of four sections was utilized for the data collection. The data from the survey were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS.

The data analysis had two main stages with several sub-stages. Initially, in order to identify Turkish prospective ELT teachers' perceptions towards teaching methods and their preference of teaching methods, as well as their attitudes towards postmethod pedagogy, descriptive statistics were used and the frequencies, means, and standard deviations of Sections I (MPQ), II (MQ) and III (PMQ) of the online questionnaire were determined for eighty-eight participants on a global scale, reporting on the main trends. The second stage of data analysis aimed at a more thorough investigation among



participants, which meant the individual differences between participant groups with pre, in and no service experience. In this stage, first of all, individual participant score averages for each three sections were calculated using Microsoft Excel. Then the average scores for each part were transferred to SPSS. Using these individual scores, the first step was to analyze the distribution groups via Normality Tests. After that, for the MPQ of the survey, where participants choose their favored ones among nine ELT methods, Chi Square Tests with descriptive values were used for the purpose of identifying whether there was a significant difference among teacher candidates with pre, in and no service experience. For the MQ, which embodied items for each of the methods mentioned in the MPQ, Independent Samples Non-parametric K Tests, specifically Kruskal-Wallis Tests with descriptive values were run for each method to determine the same significant differences between teacher candidate groups. Finally, in the PMQ, which had 25 items relating to postmethod pedagogy, one-way ANOVA tests were run for three teacher candidate groups for each of the three operating principles of postmethod condition.

In this chapter, salient findings with regard to the research questions will be presented under these two sections. The first stage will outline which teaching methods are preferred by prospective teachers, as well as their attitudes towards teaching methods' core principles. Also in this section, the same teachers' perceptions towards the postmethod condition will be analyzed. The second stage of the chapter will present data regarding how pre, in and no service teachers' methodological preferences, and attitudes towards postmethod pedagogy vary in comparison to each other.

### **Stage 1: Turkish Prospective ELT Teachers' Attitudes Towards Teaching Methods and the Postmethod Condition**

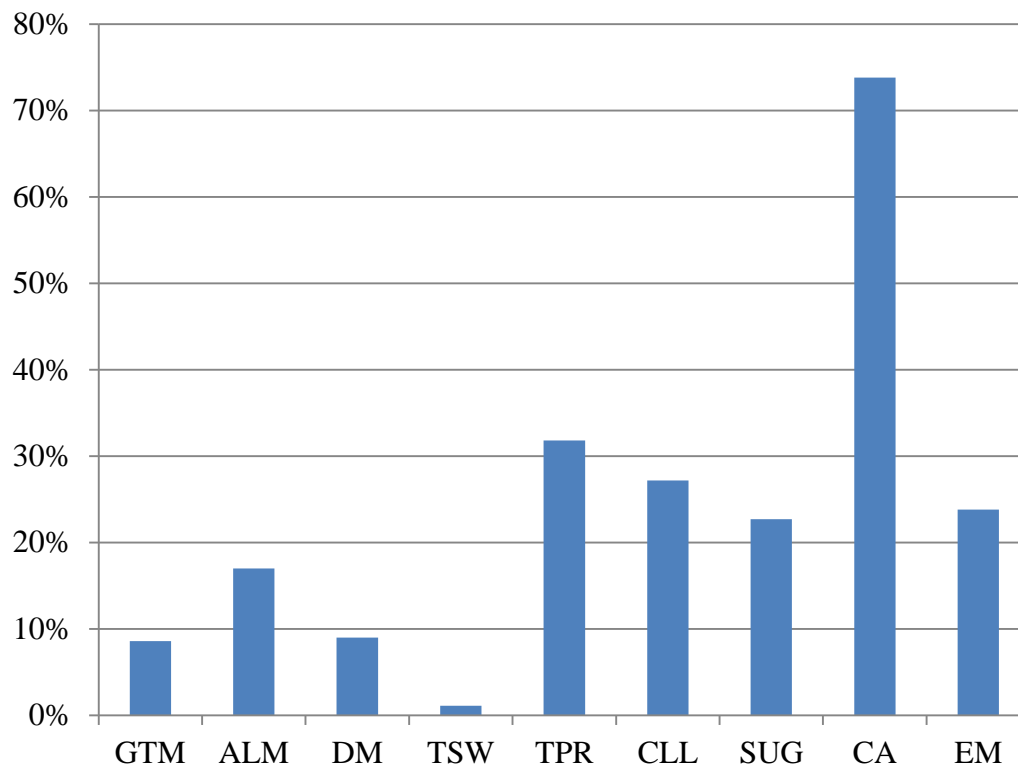
The present study initially aimed to identify which teaching methods prospective ELT teachers from six universities would implement or have implemented in their future and current classes. For that, nine distinct teaching methods were presented to the eighty-eight participants via the online survey.

The data from the responses were transferred to SPSS 18 and analyzed quantitatively. Then, the frequency of each teaching method with regard to the participants' responses was calculated (See Table 7 and Figure 1).

Table 7

*The Frequencies of ELT Students' Preferred Teaching Methods*

Teaching Method	Yes	No
Grammar Translation Method (GTM)	7	81
Audio-Lingual Method (ALM)	15	73
Direct Method (DM)	8	80
The Silent Way (TSLW)	1	87
Total Physical Response (TPR)	28	60
Community Language Learning (CLL)	24	64
Suggestopedia (SUG)	20	68
Communicative Approaches (CA)	65	23
The Eclectic Method (EM)	21	67



*Figure 1.* The Percentages of Prospective ELT Teachers' Preferred Teaching Methods

As both Table 7 and Figure 1 demonstrate, Turkish prospective ELT teachers who are in their third and fourth year at their universities preferred Communicative Approaches over other teaching methods with a remarkable margin (74 %). Total Physical Response was the second most preferred method with 32 %. While Community Language Learning (27 %), Suggestopedia (23 %), and Eclectic (24 %) methods were also adequately represented in terms of teacher-candidate choices, the rarity of earlier methods was also worth noticing.

As a second step, the study focused on prospective ELT teachers' attitudes towards teaching methods and the postmethod condition. To identify these two aspects, the students were asked to rate two separate questionnaires in the MQ and the PMQ of

the online survey. Both sections were on a six point Likert scale in which 1 represented *Strongly Disagree*, and 6 represented *Strongly Agree*.

The MQ of the online survey consisted of 20 items which embodied judgments about the nine ELT methods which were presented to the students previously in the MPQ. This section of the survey was designed both as a reliability check for the first section, and also aimed to identify ELT students' attitudes to significant characteristics of the given teaching methods (See Table 5). For this section's data analysis, first of all, the mean scores and standard deviations for each of the items were calculated quantitatively. Then, the items were grouped under the nine teaching methods, and each group's means and standard deviation ratios were found by calculating the averages of item sums (See Table 8).

Table 8

*Prospective ELT Teachers' Attitudes Towards the Characteristics of Teaching Methods*

<b>Teaching Method</b>	$\bar{x}$	<b>SD</b>
Grammar Translation Method	3.7	1.2
Audio-Lingual Method	3.7	1.3
Direct Method	4.7	1
The Silent Way	4.7	0.9
Total Physical Response	4.2	1.1
Community Language Learning	5.1	0.8
Suggestopedia	5.2	0.9
Communicative Approaches	5.3	0.9
The Eclectic Method	5.1	1.1

The data, in general, once again showed that Turkish prospective ELT teachers' perception of earlier teaching methods such as GTM and ALM was poorer compared to the newer methods such as the Communicative Approaches. In terms of the mean figures, items that stemmed from Communicative Approaches once again had the highest average value  $\bar{x} = 5.3$  ( $SD = .9$ ). On the other hand, Grammar Translation Method and Audio-Lingual Method had the lowest averages  $\bar{x} = 3.7$  ( $SD = 1.2$ ,  $SD = 1.3$ ). Total Physical Response had a lower average mean  $\bar{x} = 4.2$  ( $SD = 1.1$ ) when compared to its degree of practical preference in the first section of the survey. Audio-Lingual Method, similarly, had a lower item-wise average score  $\bar{x} = 3.7$  ( $SD = 1.3$ ) in comparison with its practical preference in Section I (the MPQ) of the survey.

A comparison of the MPQ and the MQ results reveals that while participants' responses for these two survey sections presented slight variations, in general, the trend remained stable in the two sections. The participants marked CA as their favorite methods, and labeled earlier methods such as GTM and ALM as less effective. Given the facts that, CA are the most preferred methods worldwide (Chowdhury, 2003) and GTM, DM and ALM are the earliest examples of methods, the results may be interpreted in line with the current world standards. In addition, based on these general trends, the participant responses may be commented as to have passed the intended reliability check by the researcher, as their responses for these sections were compatible on the whole. The participants' response means to MQ also demonstrated they rejected no method on the broader level, which may point to an inclination towards eclecticism. However, some variations were also observed. TPR was highly preferred in the MPQ. Yet, its lower average mean in the MQ may point to either a lack of inconsistency

among participant responses, or possible flaws in item designs by the researcher. The Silent Way's fluctuations in two sections may also imply the same complications. Concerning other methods, the frequencies remained stable with the MPQ part as the earlier methods of GTM and ALM, for instance, had similarly low preference and perception levels for these two sections.

The same participants' perception of postmethod pedagogy was also analyzed with the help of the PMQ. The PMQ had 25 items which were allocated to three operating principles of the postmethod condition (See Table 6 in Chapter III). Table 9 displays survey responses grouped under Kumaravadivelu's (2003) *Particularity* operating principle:

Table 9  
*Prospective ELT Teachers' Attitudes Towards the Particularity Principle*

Questionnaire Items	N	$\bar{x}$	SD
<b>Particularity</b>			
<b>III. 3.</b> Teachers are resourceful enough to produce their own teaching methods.	87	3.85	1,30
<b>III. 5.</b> Method is what emerges over time as a result of the interaction among the teacher, the students, and the materials and activities in the classroom.	87	4.94	0.95
<b>III. 6.</b> Teachers should not follow a certain method in their classes.	87	4.16	1.65
<b>III. 10.</b> Methods are not applicable in language classrooms.	87	2.31	1.29
<b>III. 12.</b> Methods may be altered to suit local needs.	86	5.08	0.99
<b>III. 14.</b> Every English teacher has his/her own methodology.	87	4.89	1.17
<b>III. 19.</b> Popular methods such as Communicative Language Teaching are not applicable for Turkish language learners.	85	2.62	1.41
<b>III. 20.</b> Popular methods such as Communicative Language Teaching are not convenient for Turkish language learners.	85	2.55	1.44

As seen in Table 9, as far as Kumaravadivelu's (2003) *Particularity* principle is concerned, Turkish prospective ELT teachers had resistant reactions towards the implications put forward by the survey items. The participants *Disagreed* with the statements that methods were useless inside the classrooms, and that in-demand teaching methods such as Communicative Approaches were not convenient for them ( $\bar{x}$  average = 2.49 for items 10, 19 and 20), as opposed to postmethod pedagogy's core assertions. In addition, they did not fully perceive themselves resourceful enough to produce their own methods ( $\bar{x}$  = 3.85, SD = 1.30 = Somewhat Disagree). However, they somewhat agreed with the statements that every teacher should have an individual methodology, and teachers should not value the concept of method too much ( $\bar{x}$  = 4.52 for items 6 and 14). On the other hand, the participants *Agreed* that methods could be altered to answer local needs as postmethod pedagogy suggests.

The second of Kumaravadivelu's (2003) operating principles, *Practicality*, had mixed reactions as well (See Table 10).

Table 10

*Prospective ELT Teachers' Attitudes Towards the Practicality Principle*

<b>Questionnaire Items</b>	<b>N</b>	<b><math>\bar{x}</math></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>
<b>Practicality</b>			
<b>III. 1.</b> Methods are not significant for teaching English.	86	2.10	1,22
<b>III. 2.</b> Methods can never be realized in their purest form in the classroom according to their core principles.	86	3.62	1.45
<b>III. 4.</b> The assumption that teachers are the consumers of knowledge produced by theorists is wrong.	85	3.88	1.22
<b>III. 7.</b> ELT undergraduate students at universities should not be instructed on methods.	87	2.55	1.54
<b>III. 8.</b> Methods are artificially designed constructs.	87	3.14	1.40
<b>III. 9.</b> Methods are irrelevant to ELT classes.	87	2.20	1.27
<b>III. 11.</b> There is a not a single, ideal method for teaching English.	87	5.21	1.17
<b>III. 13.</b> Method is just a tool of instruction for language teachers which helps them deliver their lesson better.	87	4.84	.91
<b>III. 16.</b> Teachers should combine a variety of methods in their classes.	86	5.30	1.14
<b>III. 21.</b> I agree that the era of methods is over.	84	2.68	1.39
<b>III. 22.</b> Methods are not derived from classroom practice.	85	2.69	1.34
<b>III. 23.</b> Teachers should not follow the principles and practices of the established methods.	87	2.59	1.16



As observed, Turkish prospective ELT teachers maintained that there still exists a link between the methods and the classroom practice. The participants *Disagreed* with the statements that the concept of method was obsolete ( $\bar{x} = 2.68$ ,  $SD = 1.39$ ), that methods did not stem from classroom practice ( $\bar{x} = 2.69$ ,  $SD = 1.34$ ), and that the teachers had to give up pursuing the path that current methods paved ( $\bar{x} = 2.59$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ ). They heavily underlined the fact that methods were still significant for ELT classes with the lowest item mean ( $\bar{x} = 2.10$ ,  $SD = 1.22$ ), and the concept of method was valid for the same classes ( $\bar{x} = 2.20$ ,  $SD = 1.27$ ). On the educational side, ELT students stated they needed formal training on methodological level at their universities ( $\bar{x} = 2.55$ ,  $SD = 1.54$ ). On the other hand, the participants *Agreed* that a single method was not adequate for teaching English ( $\bar{x} = 5.21$ ,  $SD = 1.17$ ) and similarly, displayed positive stance towards Eclectic Approach ( $\bar{x} = 5.30$ ,  $SD = 1.14$ ). They also perceived method as a slightly significant tool of instruction in their classes ( $\bar{x} = 4.84$ ,  $SD = .91$ ), and slightly disagreed with the statement that methods were difficult to actualize in classroom practice ( $\bar{x} = 3.62$ ,  $SD = 1.45$ ). Finally, Kumaravadivelu's (2003) proposal to re-distribute theoretical knowledge power among teachers found little echo among Turkish prospective teachers ( $\bar{x} = 3.88$ ,  $SD = 1.22$ ).

As the last principle, *Possibility* aspect of the postmethod pedagogy also collected mixed reactions from the respondents (See Table 11).

Table 11

*Prospective ELT Teachers' Attitudes Towards the Possibility Principle*

Questionnaire Items	N	$\bar{x}$	SD
<b>Possibility</b>			
<b>III. 15.</b> Methods are Western concepts which ignore the local needs of language learners.	85	3.49	1,33
<b>III. 17.</b> Methods should not concentrate on native speakers' values.	86	3.47	1.56
<b>III. 18.</b> ESL/EFL speakers should lead methods design processes since ESL/EFL speakers outnumber those who are native speakers.	82	3.94	1.07
<b>III. 24.</b> Teachers should be sensitive towards the societal, political, economic, and educational environment they are teaching.	87	5.40	.75
<b>III. 25.</b> Teachers should raise cultural awareness in their classrooms.	87	5.47	.84

Turkish prospective ELT teachers *Somewhat Disagreed* with the statements that methods were Western concepts ( $\bar{x} = 3.49$ ,  $SD = 1.33$ ), and they should not focus on native English values ( $\bar{x} = 3.47$ ,  $SD = 1.56$ ). They also displayed attitudes which were significantly close to positive *Agree* level in taking initiative on the methods design processes ( $\bar{x} = 3.94$ ,  $SD = 1.07$ ). The survey takers *Agreed* with the teachers' roles as cultural awareness raisers ( $\bar{x} = 5.40$ ,  $SD = .75$ ) and sensitive local observers ( $\bar{x} = 5.47$ ,  $SD = .84$ ) as emphasized in the postmethod pedagogy.

## **Stage 2: Turkish Prospective ELT Teachers' Attitudes Towards Teaching Methods and the Postmethod Condition With Regard to Their Teaching Experience**

The second stage of data analysis focused on the variations between prospective ELT teacher groups with different experience levels. This time, the descriptive analyses in the first stage of data analyses were handled in more detail to address participant groups' differences.

### **Preference of methods with regard to teaching experience**

The survey participants had been categorized into three groups for data analysis. In-service teacher groups were those who had official teaching experience such as private course teachers, usually on a paid basis. While pre-service referred to those who worked as interns or at similar positions at certain schools that the universities arranged, no-service group covered participants with neither of these experience types (See Table 12).

Table 12  
*Information on Participants' Experience Levels*

Level	f	%
Pre-service	38	45.2
In-service	23	27.4
No-service	23	27.4

To find out whether there were any significant changes in the Teaching methods preferred between pre, in and no service survey participants, initially, the MPQ of the

survey where participants chose among nine methods was analyzed. To conduct this analysis, a Pearson Chi-Square test was run for each of the nine methods and for three participant groups with pre, in and no service experience (see Table 13).

Table 13

*Preference of Methods With Regard to Teaching Experience*

Method		Groups			Total	%	p
		<u>No-service</u>	<u>Pre-Service</u>	<u>In-service</u>			
<b>GTM</b>	Yes	2	4	1	7	8.2	.713
	No	21	35	22	78	91.8	
<b>ALM</b>	Yes	4	7	3	14	16.4	.873
	No	19	32	20	71	83.5	
<b>DM</b>	Yes	0	3	4	7	8.2	.099
	No	23	36	19	78	91.8	
<b>TSW</b>	Yes	0	1	0	1	1.1	.551
	No	23	38	23	84	99.8	
<b>TPR</b>	Yes	8	14	5	27	31.7	.479
	No	15	25	18	58	68.2	
<b>CLL</b>	Yes	8	12	3	23	27	.196
	No	15	27	20	62	72.9	
<b>SUG</b>	Yes	7	7	5	19	22.3	.520
	No	16	32	18	66	77.6	
<b>CA</b>	Yes	15	30	18	63	74.1	.518
	No	8	9	5	22	25.8	
<b>EM</b>	Yes	7	9	5	21	24.7	.752
	No	16	30	18	64	75.2	

Note: GTM: Grammar Translation Method, ALM: Audio Lingual Method, DM: Direct Method, SLTW: The Silent Way, TPR: Total Physical Response, CLL: Community Language Learning, SUG: Suggestopedia, CA: Communicative Approaches, EM: Eclectic Method

As can be seen in Table 13, no significant differences were found for teacher candidate groups with various experience levels, suggesting that Turkish prospective

ELT teachers' preference of Teaching Methods does not differ as they gain more practical experience. As far as the significance levels on the table is concerned, the only item that witnessed a major change was Direct Method ( $p = .099$ ), while GTM ( $p = .713$ ), ALM ( $p = .873$ ), and Eclectic Method ( $p = .752$ ) displayed the least inclination to variation among the three teacher candidate groups. Individual analyses of methods show that earlier methods such as GTM and ALM were seldom preferred by all three participant groups with 8.2 % and 16.4 % respectively. Their distribution among these three groups was also balanced as seen in Table 13. DM was another unpopular method for participants with 8.2 %. The Silent Way was the least preferred method; out of 85 respondents, only one pre-service teacher candidate said s/he would utilize the method. Relatively newer methods that emerged following the earlier methods and the DM (See Chapter II: Literature Review) had a comparatively more reasonable preference ratio among the three teacher candidate groups. TPR, CLL, Suggestopedia and the Eclectic Method had similar percentages, with TPR leading the cluster with 31.7 per cent. Finally, CA were the most popular methods, as out of every four participants, three stated s/he would utilize them. A deeper analysis of this methods' items demonstrate that CA were especially more popular among no-service experienced teacher candidates. Approximately one in every three pre-service and in-service experienced participants stated that they favored these methods; however, for teacher candidates who did not have any experience, this proportion was two in three. These findings may confirm the claims that while CA may seem applicable on the theoretical level, when practical experience is involved, teachers begin to abandon the path such approaches pave (Canagarajah, 1999).

### Attitude changes towards methods with regard to teaching experience

The MQ had 20 Likert scale items which embodied judgments regarding the nine teaching methods presented in the MPQ section of the survey (See Table 5 in Chapter III). This part aimed to measure both the participant attitudes and served as a reliability tool to display whether the responses in the first section of the survey were consistent with this part.

In order to check whether a parametric test can be conducted on the data, a normality test was run for this section of the survey (See Table 14). A Shapiro-Wilk test was preferred as this type of test stands out as the most powerful normality test among the others (Razali & Wah, 2011).

Table 14

#### *Distribution of Groups for the MQ*

<b>Teaching Method</b>	<b>S-W</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p</b>
GTM	.957	87	.005
ALM	.958	87	.007
DM	.869	87	.000
TSW	.187	87	.000
TPR	.164	87	.002
CLL	.169	87	.000
SUG	.218	87	.000
CA	.196	87	.000
EM	.206	87	.000

Note: GTM: Grammar Translation Method, ALM: Audio Lingual Method, DM: Direct Method, SLTW: The Silent Way, TPR: Total Physical Response, CLL: Community Language Learning, SUG: Suggestopedia, CA: Communicative Approaches, EM: Eclectic Method

As Table 14 indicates, the test results were all significant for all the variables, implying that the data were not normally distributed. Hence, as a non-parametric, independent samples K test, Kruskal-Wallis Test was conducted to determine whether the attitudes differed among pre, in and no service participants (See Table 15).

Table 15

*Attitude Changes With Regard to Teaching Experience*

Method		Groups			Total	<i>p</i>
		<u>No-service</u>	<u>Pre-Service</u>	<u>In-service</u>		
<b>GTM</b>	N	23	38	23	84	.158
	$R_i^*$	49.96	37.70	42.98		
<b>ALM</b>	N	23	38	23	84	.943
	$R_i$	41.67	42.13	43.93		
<b>DM</b>	N	23	38	23	84	.749
	$R_i$	40.30	42.01	45.50		
<b>TSW</b>	N	23	38	23	84	.409
	$R_i$	36.89	45.13	43.76		
<b>TPR</b>	N	23	38	23	84	.197
	$R_i$	43.46	37.87	49.20		
<b>CLL</b>	N	23	38	23	84	.364
	$R_i$	45.20	38.49	46.43		
<b>SUG</b>	N	23	38	23	84	.417
	$R_i$	39.13	41.29	47.87		
<b>CA</b>	N	23	38	23	84	.824
	$R_i$	45.04	41.13	42.22		
<b>EM</b>	N	4	7	3	84	.974
	$R_i$	41.54	42.95	42.72		

\*  $R_i$ : Mean Rank

Note: GTM: Grammar Translation Method, ALM: Audio Lingual Method, DM: Direct Method, SLTW: The Silent Way, TPR: Total Physical Response, CLL: Community Language Learning, SUG: Suggestopedia, CA: Communicative Approaches, EM: Eclectic Method

Nine Kruskal-Wallis tests' results indicate interesting results for the three groups. In general, for prospective teachers with no service experience, Kruskal-Wallis tests' results indicate that among no service group, survey items that stemmed from GTM had the highest average total mean score ( $R_i = 49.96$ ) compared to pre and in service groups. For this method, pre-service group had the lowest mean rank score ( $R_i = 37.70$ ) and in-service group had the second highest mean rank score ( $R_i = 42.98$ ). This finding indicates that prospective teachers with no teaching experience have more tendency/preference towards GTM. ALM witnessed a mean rank of  $R_i = 41.67$  for these participants, which was lower than the other two groups, suggesting no-service teachers refrained from this method. Similarly, DM ( $R_i = 40.30$ ), The Silent Way ( $R_i = 36.89$ ), Suggestopedia ( $R_i = 39.13$ ), and Eclectic Method's ( $R_i = 41.54$ ) average mean ranks for no-service group was lower when compared to other two groups with pre and in service experience. Prospective teachers; therefore, showed the least tendency towards these methods, just like ALM. TPR and CLL methods, on the other hand, had mean ranks of  $R_i = 43.46$  and  $R_i = 45.20$ , respectively. For these two methods, no-service groups tendencies remained in second place compared to other groups with pre and in service experience. Communicative Approaches for no-service group had a mean rank of  $R_i = 45.04$ , while for pre and in service groups it was  $R_i = 41$  and  $R_i = 42$ , meaning this method, just like GTM was the most preferred among the no-service group.

For pre-service group, the highest mean ranks when compared to other two groups belonged to The Silent Way ( $R_i = 45.13$ ) and the Eclectic Method ( $R_i = 42.95$ ), meaning these two methods saw the most inclination among the pre-service group. TPR ( $R_i = 37.87$ ), CLL ( $R_i = 38.49$ ) and CA ( $R_i = 41.13$ ); however, embodied the lowest



comparative mean ranks, implying the opposite inclination among the same group. For the remaining methods, which are the earlier methods of GTM, ALM and DM, the mean ranks were respectively  $R_i = 37.70$ ,  $R_i = 42.13$  and  $R_i = 42.01$ . This finding suggested that pre-service teacher group's preference of earlier methods were relatively moderate. Suggestopedia, with an average mean rank of  $R_i = 41.29$ , displayed the same tendency, implying the same status for the pre-service experienced group.

Finally, the in-service group's most preferred methods, when compared to the other two service groups were ALM ( $R_i = 43.93$ ), DM ( $R_i = 45.50$ ), TPR ( $R_i = 49.20$ ), CLL ( $R_i = 46.43$ ) and Suggestopedia ( $R_i = 47.87$ ). As seen, the in-service group was the one with highest number of mean rank preferences for methods, meaning these participants had relatively multiple tendencies towards the utilization of methods. Interestingly, for this group, no method was comparatively low preference to other groups. The remaining methods, GTM, TSW, CA, and EM had respective mean rank values of  $R_i = 42.98$ ,  $R_i = 43.76$ ,  $R_i = 42.22$  and  $R_i = 42.72$  which were neither the most, nor the least preferred methods when compared to other two groups with no and pre service experience.

A general analysis of the same table also points to some similar mean ranks among methods. ALM had relatively stable mean ranks between the groups, with no-services having highest ( $R_i = 43.93$ ), pre-services second highest ( $R_i = 42.13$ ), and no-services lowest mean rank rates ( $R_i = 41.67$ ). For DM, too, no-service, pre-service and in-service groups mean ranks varied between 40 and 46, with pre-service at  $R_i = 42.01$ , in-services at  $R_i = 45.50$ , and no-services at  $R_i = 40.30$ . Community Language Learning had high mean ranks for no and in service experienced groups with  $R_i = 45.20$  and  $R_i =$

46.43 respectively. The pre-service group achieved a mean rank of  $R_i = 38.49$  for this method. Finally, Eclectic Method witnessed the least variation in terms of mean maximum and minimum scores. For this method, no-service group had  $R_i = 41.54$ , pre-service group  $R_i = 42.95$ , and in service group had  $R_i = 42.72$  mean ranks.

In terms of significance values for the same table, no significant changes were observed for the items that stemmed from methods. This finding may be interpreted in two ways. First, the findings revealed that the survey takers' responses were compatible with their responses to Section I (MPQ) of the survey, in which they similarly displayed no significant difference in terms of their methodology. Second, the results conveyed the idea that Turkish ELT students' preference of methods did not change on a significant level as they gained classroom experience.

#### **Attitude changes towards postmethod pedagogy with regard to teaching experience**

The final stage of data analysis focused on whether the participants' attitudes towards the postmethod condition changed on a significant level when they had actual teaching practice. The PMQ had 25 Likert scale items and was designed according to Kumaravadivelu's (2003) three operating principles; *Particularity*, *Practicality* and *Possibility* (See Table 6 in Chapter III).

Identical to the MQ section, to check whether a parametric test can be conducted on the data, Shapiro-Wilk normality test was run for this section as well. Table 16 displays the results of the normality tests:

Table 16  
*Distribution of Groups for the PMQ*

<b>Parameter</b>	<b>S-W</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p</b>
Particularity	.993	87	.906
Practicality	.991	87	.830
Possibility	.973	87	.070

As seen, the test results were not significant for all the variables, implying that the data can be considered as normally distributed. Hence, as a parametric test, one way ANOVA, was run for three operating principles of the postmethod condition for three teacher candidate groups with pre, in and no service experience (See Table 17).

Table 17  
*Attitude Changes Towards Postmethod Pedagogy With Regard to Teaching Experience*

<b>Parameter</b>	<b>Groups</b>			<b>df</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>p</b>
	<b><u>No-service</u></b>	<b><u>Pre-Service</u></b>	<b><u>In-service</u></b>			
<b>Particularity</b>						
$\bar{x}$	3.51	3.91	3.93	2	3.42	.038
SD	.71	.54	.69			
<b>Practicality</b>						
$\bar{x}$	3.14	3.52	3.44	2	2.83	.064
SD	.77	.51	.59			
<b>Possibility</b>						
$\bar{x}$	4.16	4.43	4.44	2	1.90	.155
SD	.60	.63	.45			

As seen in Table 17, for *Particularity*-related items, which mostly focused on context-sensitive, location specific pedagogies based on the local linguistic, social, cultural and political conditions (Kumaravadivelu, 2003), pre and in-service experienced teacher candidates had higher mean scores compared to no-experience candidates. While pre and in service teacher candidates had  $\bar{x} = 3.91$ ,  $SD = .54$  and  $\bar{x} = 3.93$ ,  $SD = .69$  means respectively, the no experience group had  $\bar{x} = 3.51$ ,  $SD = .71$ , and the difference was significant  $F(2, 82) = 3.40$ ,  $p = .038$ .

*Practicality* principle items, which assessed whether participants were willing to minimize the differences between their practices and theories, showed the highest mean among the pre-service teacher candidates ( $\bar{x} = 3.52$ ,  $SD = .51$ ) and lowest for no-service ones ( $\bar{x} = 3.14$ ,  $SD = .77$ ) For the in-service teacher candidates the figure was  $\bar{x} = 3.44$  ( $SD = .59$ ). This difference; however, was not significant  $F(2, 82) = 2.83$ ,  $p = .064$ .

In terms of average mean scores for all teacher candidate groups, the items that belonged to *Possibility* parameter had the highest average means. For no service,  $\bar{x} = 4.16$  ( $SD = .60$ ), for pre-service,  $\bar{x} = 4.43$  ( $SD = .63$ ) and for in-service experienced participants,  $\bar{x} = 4.44$  ( $SD = .45$ ). However, there were no statistically significant differences among the three groups as they were also in favor of this parameter  $F(2, 82) = 1.01$ ,  $p = .155$ . The means for the three groups indicate that all three teacher candidate groups were most inclined towards the attitudes this parameter suggested. In Stage 1 analysis of Chapter IV of the current study, similar results had been suggested for the items that belonged to *Possibility*. That is, the items which belonged to this principle had the highest average means compared to other two principles in general (See Table 12).

Overall, the significance values for this sections' analysis suggested that the pre and in service experienced participants had a higher perception value compared to those with no service experience in terms of *Particularity*. That is, when these prospective teacher groups had actual teaching experience, they responded significantly more positively to the *Particularity* principle items, which emphasized a more context-sensitive pedagogy such as a combination of Communicative Methods with traditional ones in order to be able to reach out to the learners in that particular environment. As for the high mean values that the item *Possibility* suggested, it can be said that these students might be aware of the current changes in the ELT world in terms of intercultural competence and the role of culture in language learning so the items related to sociocultural background and intercultural awareness might have been preferred.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter presented the data obtained via the online questionnaire instrument which embodied four sections. Having been completed by eighty-eight participants from six different universities in Turkey, the online questionnaire aimed to analyze the pre, in and no service ELT students' perceptions towards teaching methods and the postmethod pedagogy. The data analysis comprised of two stages. First, in order to display the general trend among the population, descriptive statistics were utilized and the frequencies, means, and standard deviations of the four survey sections were calculated using SPSS. Second, to identify the differences between pre, in and no service experienced ELT students, Chi Squares, non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis Tests, and one way ANOVA tests were administrated for the sections of the MPQ, the MQ and the

PMQ of the survey. This part of data analysis also included normality tests before the procedures for Kruskal Wallis and ANOVA tests began.

In terms of English teaching methods, the descriptive data analysis results displayed that for the teacher candidates, Communicative Approaches such as CLT and TBLT were significantly popular. Total Physical Response was the second most-popular teaching method for the aforementioned candidates. Regarding postmethod pedagogy, in general, it was seen that Turkish ELT students had resistant reactions towards the postmethod survey which was designed under Kumaravadivelu's (2003) three operating principles.

When the teacher candidates were categorized according to their experience level, no significant change was observed for methodological preferences, and the perception of methods for ELT students with pre, in and no service experience. For their attitudes regarding postmethod pedagogy, the survey items which belonged to the *Particularity* principle witnessed significant changes.

The next and the last chapter of the current study will continue with a more detailed discussion of the findings, pedagogical implications, limitations of the study, and some implications for further studies.

## CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

### Introduction

This descriptive study aimed to identify Turkish third- and fourth-year English Language Teaching students' perceptions towards a) English language teaching methods and b) the postmethod condition. For that purpose, the study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are Turkish ELT students' perceptions of methods and the postmethod pedagogy?
2. To what extent do Turkish ELT students' methodological attitudes towards methods and postmethod pedagogy differ according to their classroom experience levels?

Eighty-eight prospective ELT teachers from six different universities in Turkey filled out the online data collection tool, which was a survey. The study was a quantitative research and the data from the survey was analyzed so using SPSS 18.

The data analysis consisted of two stages. Initially, to identify Turkish ELT students' perceptions towards teaching methods and the postmethod condition, and their preference of actual teaching methods inside their prospective and current classrooms, descriptive statistics were used and the frequencies, means, and standard deviations of each survey section were calculated. Second, Chi Square, Kruskal-Wallis, and ANOVA tests were run for three teacher candidate groups, which aimed to outline the differences between teacher candidates with pre, in, and no service experience.

This last chapter has four main sections. In the first section, a discussion of the findings will be carried out in the light of the current literature. In the second section, implications of the study will be evaluated. The third section will present the limitations of the present study, while the final section will embody suggestions for further research.

### **Findings and Discussion**

This section will discuss the main conclusions that can be drawn from this study by combining the findings coming from the first and second research questions.

#### **Turkish Prospective ELT Teachers' Attitudes Towards Teaching Methods**

The first conclusion that can be drawn from the findings is the Turkish prospective ELT teachers' preference of CA. The results of this study showed that for Turkish third- and fourth-year ELT students, Communicative Approaches were the predominant preferred methods of instruction with a percentage of 74 %, meaning nearly three in every four Turkish ELT teacher candidates favored Communicative Approaches. This finding may be interpreted two-ways. From a method-oriented perspective, this finding is not surprising, given the fact that recent Western methodological approaches such as CLT, CBI and TBLT are highly popular for ELT instructors in all three circles of ELT (Chowdhury, 2003). However, from a postmethod perspective, in spite of the many claims in the literature against the "so-called" Communicative Approaches in their practical dimension (e.g., Atsilarat & Jarvis, 2004; Bax, 2003; Canagarajah, 1999; Chick, 1996; Li, 1998; Lowenberg, 2002; Prabhu, 1987; Sato, 2002; Seidlhofer, 1999; Shamim, 1996), Turkish prospective ELT teachers still favor CA as their favorite methods. In the light of this preference, the participants'



choice of methods may be interpreted as conforming to the current world and literature standards. CA are, as in many countries of Kachru's (1992) three circles, the most popular teaching methods for Turkish ELT students. Additionally, from the external investigation that the researcher carried out, it is seen that CA are heavily emphasized in Teaching Methods classes, which may be regarded as the predominant factor in such data outcome. In that respect, it may be concluded that Turkish prospective ELT teachers' preference of methods conform to those of their peers in the world.

As for the other methods and the characteristics that stemmed from these methods, Total Physical Response was preferred by 31.8 %, which may be explained by the fact that young and very young learners are common target populations for ELT departments and a majority of graduates will be working at K-12 level. Community Language Learning (27.2 %), Suggestopedia (22.7 %), and Eclectic (23.8 %) methods were also among the preferred choices for teacher candidates. At this point, Eclectic Method may be commented on as to have received fewer votes than it should, as the researcher predicted that a higher percentage would be obtained given the results of the overall data analysis in Stage 1, in which participants usually showed positive stances towards Eclecticism (See Chapter IV, Stage 1). The rarity of earlier methods such as GTM and ALM was also worth noticing, implying that Turkish ELT students have mostly abandoned the traditional methods of instruction, or at least, stated so.

The second section of the questionnaire (MQ) aimed to display how coherent were the responses in the first section of the survey, where the participants ticked their favored methods.

As stated in Chapter IV: Data Analysis, overall analyses of the findings indicate that the responses were coherent with the participants' responses in the MPQ. To begin with, similar with the first section of the survey, Communicative Approaches' items had the highest average mean value, while Grammar Translation Method and Audio-Lingual Method had the lowest averages. TPR and ALM's average means stood out relatively lower compared to the first section's responses. Overall, it can be concluded that the participants' responses for the first and second sections were coherent as intended by the researcher. The fact that the MPQ and the MQ yielded similar results confirm the validity of the second section as it contained items that aimed to assess the inclinations of the first section.

The second conclusion that can be drawn from the findings is that having experience in teaching did not make a significant difference since, for teacher candidates with no, pre and in service experience, no significant change was observed regarding their methodological preferences. This finding suggested that the overall tendency of Turkish teacher candidates remained generally stable between groups that had practical teaching experience versus the ones that did not. The only finding for this part to comment on could be that GTM had a higher inclination ratio among no-service groups, which was surprising, as GTM and ALM were the two methods which had received the least votes in Stage 1 of data analysis which embodied descriptives. This once again confirms the suggestion that Turkish ELT students do not tend to utilize earlier methods in their classes.

As confirmed by the analyses of the first two sections of the survey, Chowdhury's (2003) claim that Communicative Approaches are the dominant methods

in current ELT agenda remains viable for Turkish prospective ELT teachers, too. The findings of this section, just as the ones of that before, suggested little room for a postmethod pedagogy to flourish among Turkish ELT students for the time being, at least on the educational level. The results indicate that Turkish prospective ELT teachers are unwilling to adjust their future pedagogies despite the claims in the local literature against Communicative Approaches. A quick retrospective of the local literature reminds us Coşkun (2011) had pointed out to the discrepancies between the practices and beliefs of English teachers. Özşevik (2010) had found out that CEFR-guided (Common European Framework of Reference) educational policies presented complications to Turkish teachers due to reasons such as grammar-based centralized exams, heavy schedules of teachers and overcrowded classrooms. Similarly, Ortaçtepe (2012) had emphasized the discrepancies between these teachers' reported practice of CLT and actual practices.

Therefore, one can initially interpret the results of the current study on the positive side, putting forward the idea that Turkish prospective ELT teachers prefer up-to-date methods in their future classes and thus, conform to world standards. Yet, from an anti-method perspective, given the findings of such studies in the local literature, prospective teachers that participated in the current study may be predicted to experience the same complications as their senior colleagues currently do. At this point, curriculum designers for ELT departments in Turkey may hold the greatest responsibility in that their policies regarding method instruction in ELT departments will be the decisive factors in preventing the possible complications these prospective teachers are likely to experience.

The next sub-heading of this section will present a discussion of the findings according to the postmethod perspective.

### **Turkish Prospective ELT Teachers' Attitudes Towards the Postmethod Condition**

The third conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that Turkish prospective ELT teachers had mostly negative attitudes towards a postmethod pedagogy and maintained a strong link between their teaching philosophy and the methods. More specifically, as far as the *Particularity*, *Practicality*, *Possibility* principles are concerned, the results indicated mostly negative attitudes towards the postmethod pedagogy.

The first of these principles is, *Particularity*, which aims at a context-sensitive pedagogy making use of the local political, social, cultural and linguistic dynamics. General descriptive interpretations in Stage 1 of data analysis showed that Turkish ELT students had a negative attitude and they had resistant reactions. Having conformed to the current trends in methodology in the previous two sections, the participants disagreed with most of the fundamental principles of postmethod approach as they did not see themselves knowledgeable enough to produce their own methods, and they interpreted CA as still viable methods to actualize in the classroom. These findings may be due to the fact that the participants had little or no teaching experience, and on the theoretical level, they believed methods are easier to actualize in their classrooms. For instance, Coşkun's (2011) study had revealed a discrepancy between teachers' attitudes towards CLT and their observed classroom behaviors. Hence, the case may be different when the survey takers of the present study start their actual teaching practices as they

may not be aware of the limitations that the test-based Turkish education system will bring to their workload, and they may begin to ignore the very communicative language teaching notions such as contextualized grammar-teaching, or the task-based activities (Coşkun, 2011). Similarly, when analyzed within the scope of *Particularity* principle; Turkish prospective ELT teachers seem to ignore the findings of Küçük (2011) as well:

As the center countries dominate ELT sector, most of the time they undermine the characteristics of the countries where English is taught as a foreign language. It can be concluded that in terms of the methodologies in ELT, teachers should analyze their context and their learners' needs before acknowledging these methodologies as the best way to teach. (p. 7)

As far as the *Particularity* principle is concerned, on the global level, the same prospective teachers may also want to pay attention to the warnings issued by many (e.g., Akbari, 2008; Holliday, 1994; Kumaravadivelu, 1994) regarding the problematic nature of deep end Communicative Approaches when applied outside their native environments.

Therefore, it may be added that if prospective Turkish ELT teachers intend to have a stronger pedagogy that would allow them to bypass the possible dilemmas that they are likely to encounter in their particular locations of service, refraining from over-valuing the concept of method, and Communicative Approaches may stand out as a sound preference.

On the other hand, the fact that the participants somewhat agreed with the statement that ELT teachers should not value the concept of method too much may be

evaluated as a still positive attitude for the postmethod pedagogy to emerge in Turkish classrooms. As far as Kumaravadivelu's (2003) *Particularity* principle is concerned, prospective ELT teachers agreed that methods can be improvised or changed according to the local context, which is also a positive inclination towards the postmethod condition. These findings are in line with what Kumaravadivelu (2003) puts forward, in that, for him, teachers, by observing, evaluating and interpreting local circumstances which take place in their classrooms, are expected to achieve the parameter of *particularity* and thus, to design their own postmethod pedagogy based on their specific learner needs.

The *Practicality* principle, according to Kumaravadivelu (2003), suggests a more consistent attitude for teachers in terms of their day-to-day practices in the language classrooms. This principle aims not only to shorten the gap between the deep-end methods and the actual practices of teachers, but also to allow teachers theorize from their practice, and practice what they theorize. Within the scope of this principle; however, the teacher candidates in this study advocated their theoretical link to the methods vigorously. They rejected the notion that ELT methods were dead, thus supporting the claims in the literature against postmethod (e.g., Bell, 2003; 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 2005; Liu, 1995). They also objected to the items that suggested method was irrelevant to ELT classrooms, and that teachers had to abandon the path of method. Their lowest item mean in this section belonged to the suggestion whether the methods were still significant for ELT classes, and they disagreed most with this statement. As a result, the very notions that identify postmethod pedagogy which were stated by many that favor a postmethod approach (e.g., Allwright, 1991;

Kumaravadivelu, 1994; Pennycook, 1989; Prabhu, 1990) found little echo among Turkish ELT students. According to the studies conducted in Turkey, there is a substantial amount of complaints towards CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) imposed, deep-end Communicative methods that Turkish teachers currently are obliged to employ (e.g., Özşevik, 2010; İnceçay & İnceçay, 2009; Küçük, 2011). In terms of *Practicality* principle, the literature clearly suggests that in EFL settings, students may benefit from CLT only if communicative and non-communicative tasks are combined in English classrooms (İnceçay & İnceçay, 2009). Similarly, Özşevik's (2010) study advises teachers that some of the perceived difficulties in CLT implementation in Turkey stems from CLT itself, and teachers should treat this method with caution. Given such suggestions, Turkish teacher candidates' responses to the present study once again revealed signs of their possible future mismatches with the methods they currently prefer.

Concerning the last of Kumaravadivelu's (2003) principles, *Possibility*, which emphasizes the sociopolitical consciousness that teachers and students bring into the classrooms; the survey participants hardly perceived methods as Western concepts, and similarly they supported the items that suggested these methods should focus more on native speakers' values. These findings are in line with the findings of Ortaçtepe (2012) which suggested Turkish students perceive native speakers as the authority and the English language used by native speakers as the norm. However, Turkish ELT students confirmed teachers' roles as cultural awareness raisers, and pronounced them as observers who should pay attention to local circumstances, which stood in line with Kumaravadivelu's (2003) claims for the principle of *Possibility*.

The last conclusion of the current study that will be evaluated at this stage is the significant difference between no, pre and in service groups regarding the *Particularity* principle, and the relatively higher item means belonging to the *Possibility* principle.

*Particularity* principle of the postmethod condition demonstrated significant alterations among participant groups as the one-way ANOVA analyses showed. The findings indicate that the ELT students' opinions regarding methodology were subject to change as they gained classroom experience. That is, pre and in service groups had higher perception towards the items under this principle compared to those with no-service experience. They started to support Kumaravadivelu's (2003) core assertion that methods are not relevant and significant for ELT classes. Within the scope of certain items, they also backed up Canagarajah's (1999) claims that teachers' practices in language classrooms are very different from any specific method as prescribed in manuals. These findings once again confirm the commonly held belief that when teachers gain actual classroom experience, they begin to detach from the idealized methodological perspective that is prescribed to them. The reasons for such an inclination may be various. To begin with, when teachers start their actual teaching practices, they may experience the same dilemmas that the local literature suggests, and therefore they may be utilizing a more deconstructive attitude in terms of methods. What is more, as suggested by the parameters' items, they may be re-evaluating their pedagogy when they come face to face with the limitations of their local context as an EFL setting. At this point, they may be beginning to think that so-called, deep-end Communicative Methods may not be the ideal tools of instruction as they imagined. And they may become more inclined to apply techniques such as translation and de-



contextualized grammar teaching, or begin to address their *sense of plausibility* (Prahbu, 1990), which are essentially radical applications for the abovementioned communicative methods. Either way, a distinction in the attitudes of pre and in service teachers was observed in terms of methodology against the ones with no teaching experience. For the other two principles *Practicality* and *Possibility*; however, no significant differences were observed (See Chapter IV, Stage 2), meaning between the teacher candidate groups, the responses did not change on a significant level.

Finally, the high item means observed throughout the data analysis process regarding the Possibility principle is open to interpretation. Initially, Turkish prospective ELT teachers, at this point, may be said to possess considerable degrees of cross-cultural competences which they will certainly make use of when they start their prospective careers. This finding may also imply that these teacher candidates are more inclined towards the socio-cultural dynamics of the contexts that they will be teaching in. Even though no significant differences were found for this principle's items, a general inclination via descriptive analysis of item means showed that the participants mostly agreed with Kumaravadivelu (2003) in terms of being culturally aware and equipped to resolve local conflicts. These findings may even be the prospective driving factors that would eventually inspire Turkish teachers to internalize the three operating principles of the postmethod condition before they start to implement an anti-method pedagogy which may employ Kumaravadivelu's (2003) ten macrostrategies.

All in all, the study revealed that Turkish prospective ELT teachers had mostly negative attitudes towards a postmethod pedagogy and advocated a strong link between their teaching philosophy and the methods. However, their attitudes were subject to

change as they gained practical experience in the classroom. The findings confirmed that what is prescribed method-wise could be significantly different from what is practiced in the classroom, a mismatch which was often put forward in the literature (e.g., Atsilarat & Jarvis, 2004; Bax, 2003; Canagarajah (1999); Chick, 1996; Li, 1998; Lowenberg, 2002; Prabhu, 1987; Sato, 2002; Seidlhofer, 1999; Shamim, 1996).

### **Pedagogical Implications of the Study**

The study reveals significant implications not only for ELT students and teachers in Turkey but also the curriculum designers, and Teaching Methods professors. Just as the world witnesses a change from the modernist approach to a post-modernist one as the metanarratives which used to dictate the world in the 1960s and 70s are shaken one after another (Irvine, 2014), the current world of ELT may be witnessing the same changes as the metanarrative of method becomes obsolete, a claim that has been put forward by many in the literature (e.g., Allwright, 1991; Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Pennycook, 1989; Prabhu, 1990).

The greatest implication of the study, therefore, stands out as the need to recognize the fact that such a change may also occur in Turkish territory. Working on alternative ways to promote currently popular CA more at Turkish universities' ELT departments may present an up-to-date profile for the universities for them to compete with the world; however, the same universities, curriculum designers, and teacher trainers should equally be aware of and ready to take advantage of the possible opportunities which the postmethod pedagogy may present them. Decision makers at universities may want to be more careful in designing their curriculums, thereby giving postmethod pedagogy greater emphasis. Given the results of the present study, which

suggested that teacher opinions on methodology were subject to change as they gained hands-on experience, curriculum designers in ELT departments may choose to under-emphasize the Western methods prescribed for their students. They may start to look for ways to encourage their students to develop context-specific pedagogies that take into account many factors such as the socio-cultural dynamics or cultural values of the settings they are teaching in. Alternatively, they may consider re-evaluating the emphasis they put on the test-based curriculums. In doing so, these decision-makers may prevent the possible method-wise complications that English teachers may experience when they start teaching such as those mentioned by Özşevik (2010), İnceçay and İnceçay (2009), or Küçük (2011).

As for teachers, many (e.g., Atsilarat & Jarvis, 2004; Bax, 2003; Canagarajah, 1999) complain that CA or any other method may be difficult to implement in classrooms in their pure forms. Postmethod pedagogy, with its aim to end such conflicts and complications for ELT teachers, may present the teachers with the opportunity to re-evaluate and re-design their own teaching methods. It may inspire them to answer previously unaddressed dilemmas regarding their pedagogies. At least, the findings of the present study may prompt the ELT teachers to reconsider their valuation of methodology in general.

For ELT students who are the prospective EFL teachers in Turkey, the study may hold similar implications with those for the experienced teachers. It may inspire them to consider their notion of methods and approaches, thereby saving them of the possible methodological dilemmas they are likely to experience when they start their profession.

### **Limitations of the Study**

One needs to address the data from the present study with caution as there are several limitations to it. The greatest limitation of the study was in terms of its scope. It could have been applied on a larger population covering more universities and students from Turkey. The researcher tried to get in contact with more universities from Turkey; however, e-mail correspondences were difficult and slow. Some university staff ignored the e-mails, or first approved to participate in the study, but then refused to comply. Particularly, while the initial research design comprised seven universities, one state university's professor failed to keep his promise to help the researcher conduct the study in his department and later on, did not respond to the e-mails sent by the researcher. As a result, the research was re-designed so as to cover six universities.

In addition, the research design had included semi-structured, focus interviews to be conducted with Teaching Methods professors and students from the same universities. Due to time limitations, and bureaucratic complications, most of these interviews could not be completed. Similarly, the research design also covered analyses of Teaching Methods syllabi from the same universities, yet the researcher could only reach out to two of them due to the above-mentioned reasons, and therefore, omitted the analysis of the syllabi from the research design.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

The findings and limitations of the current study may guide the researchers on how and where to conduct more research on the topic. As Professor Kumaravadivelu calls for a greater number of studies on postmethod pedagogy as well (Delpont, 2011),

the initial aim should be to raise the quantity of local research based on postmethod pedagogy (Akbari, 2008).

The study may be replicated so as to cover first and second grade students at universities, too. Although they were left out intentionally as the researcher regarded third- and fourth-grade ELT students would have more profound knowledge in terms of methods, and would have taken more methodology courses at their universities, focusing on these two samples may present significant findings. A comparison of the first two-graders' attitudes to those of their seniors, before they start taking methodology classes, may reveal significant differences and tell curriculum designers more about the way they shape such prospective teachers' attitudes.

In addition, the scope of the study may be enlarged to cover more universities, more academicians with interviews, and more school levels, such as the high and middle schools where English is also taught on an intensive basis. Within this scope, prospective researchers, for instance, may analyze the possible differences between ELT students and practicing teachers.

Finally, future researchers may include action research within the scope of this study to have a deeper understanding of the classroom dynamics over the methods of instruction, and can gain greater knowledge as to the practical side of the postmethod pedagogy versus other methods. The researcher(s) may observe the outcomes of so-called Communicative methods versus a postmethod pedagogy, which, for instance, allows flexibility in terms of L1 usage, or traditional instruction techniques such as

translation in the classroom. Conducting such research may provide particularly useful data to the nature of post-method pedagogy, which is unfamiliar to many.

### **Conclusion**

This descriptive study, which was conducted with eighty-eight prospective ELT teachers from six different private and state universities of Turkey, showed that the Communicative Approaches are the dominant methodological preference among third- and fourth-year students. The study also revealed that these students also had a poor perception towards the earlier methods of ELT such as the GTM and ALM. The students' aforementioned responses also conformed to their attitudes regarding the significant characteristics of teaching methods, which suggested a sound assessment of their beliefs for the researcher. Last but not least, the study shed light on the current state of affairs for postmethod condition in Turkey. While this section of analysis witnessed mixed reactions along with a significant finding, it was generally observed that Turkish ELT students had a negative attitude towards the deconstruction of the term *method* and they advocated maintaining a strong link between the teacher and the teaching methods. That being said, it was also observed how they displayed attitudes of detachment from their aforementioned commitment to the method as they spent more time in classrooms.

These findings may point to a currently lesser, but potentially huge breach in the heavily-garrisoned fortress of method as the medium of instruction in the Turkish ELT agenda. The question whether this change may bring about positive or negative outcomes is, obviously, open to interpretation and is up to the English teachers to decide, yet the issue remains worthy of further investigation.

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## APPENDIX 1

**QUESTIONNAIRE REGARDING TEACHING METHODS and CURRENT ISSUES IN METHODOLOGY**

This questionnaire is a part of the research project which is being conducted with six Turkish universities in order to identify the awareness level and attitudes of current ELT professors and grad students towards teaching methods and current issues in language teaching methodology.

Your responses will be kept highly confidential. Thank you for your co-operation!

**Section I - Methods Preference Questionnaire (MPQ)****1. Which of the following method(s) would you implement in your future classes?**

- Grammar Translation Method
- Audio-Lingual Method
- Direct Method
- The Silent Way
- Total Physical Response
- Community Language Learning
- Suggestopedia
- Communicative Language Teaching - Task Based Language Teaching - Content Based Language Teaching
- The Eclectic Method







**Section IV - Demographics****4. Please fill out the information below.**

Gender

Age

Name of University

Year (Class) at  
University

Have you worked as a  
trainee/intern  
teacher?: Y / N

Do you have  
professional teaching  
experience?: Y / N

If yes, how long?

If yes, which level(s)  
have you taught?