

For many years (27 years), the GTM method was used in Iranian's high schools for teaching English. However, it is claimed that the teaching policy is changed today and CLT method is used for teaching English in high schools. But the primary question is: What is the level of teacher's pedagogical knowledge in CLT procedure? Many teachers do not have detailed information about the subject of modern techniques of language teaching (CLT), which in the present time is claimed to be taught in high schools. On the other hand, for the reason of absence in distinctive budget and coherent planning, all teachers who teach English in high schools do not have college education in this field. To eliminate this problem, the department of education and training has taken measures of holding training classes for the teachers while on duty, which is necessary but not sufficient. This book is written in order to address these problems.

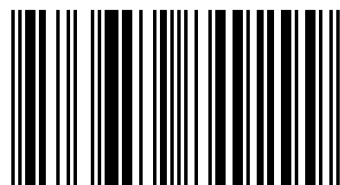


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Zahra Najafi is an English teacher. She has got an M.A. in ELT (English Language Teaching) from Azad University, Isfahan, Iran. During her 7 years of teaching, she was encountered with lots of practical issues in the educational system of schools. Therefore, she decided to recognize and investigate the problems of Iran's Ministry of Education.

CLT: From a Claim to the Practice in Iran's Ministry of Education



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Abstract

CLT has been widely explored and studied by many researchers in the field of English language teaching. There have been many studies conducted on the use of CLT in EFL settings. However, there are only few studies in number that specifically deal with CLT and its implementation in the Iranian high schools. Hence, this study was designed to investigate to what extent the tenets of CLT are practiced in Iranian high school English classes. In addition, it was intended to identify what principles identify the methodology choice among language teachers. To this end, 50 Iranian male and female language teachers, teaching at high schools in Isfahan were observed while teaching English in their classes. A questionnaire based on Karavas- Doukas (1996) was also used. It was shown that although the language teachers to a great extent agreed with the principles of CLT, in practice the language teachers at Iranian high school were observed not to follow these principles. In addition, the findings showed that in general, three categories of agents in language learning classrooms, namely the lesson, the pupil and the teacher determine the methodology which is used in language classes, and the used materials in Iranian high schools in most cases do not provide for a methodology like CLT. This study has implications for the ministry of education and language teachers.

List of Abbreviations

DF	Degree of Freedom
EFL	English as Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
N	Number
CLT	Communicative language Teaching
SD	Standard Deviation
SLA	Second Language Acquisition

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Overview

The introduction chapter starts the research with an in-depth background of the study. The first part of this chapter introduces a brief description of the theoretical background of scaffolding and its implication in learning and teaching. Discussions for the significance of the study are offered in the next part. Definitions of key terms used in this study are provided in the last part of this chapter as well.

1.2 Background of the Study

There has been an increase in demand for English courses due to the global needs for communication and improvement in technological advancements and globalization. In general, the most popular language in the world is English. English is the language of social media networks and websites. English is the language used in every activity at the institutions of higher learning. Therefore, the importance of learning English cannot be ignored in an increasingly interconnected and globalized world (Liao, 2004).

Although, English is not the most widely spoken language in terms of native speakers, it is the most widely used language worldwide, including native and non-native speakers. This is due to the fact that English is used both as a foreign and second language. The primacy of English in the world may be to the fact that it is the language through which international trade and diplomacy are conducted and news and information are disseminated, and as a communicative tool, English functions as a mediator between different socio-cultural and socio-economic paradigms (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

English plays a crucial role in the Iranian educational system. During the last decade a higher demands for learning English has been seen in Iranian society. English can be seen as a medium of instruction in some private schools, colleges, and universities. The higher importance of English language, leads to more attention to language classes. Among so many factors affecting the tidal and changing atmosphere of language classes is the role of the teacher.

Brown and McIntyre (1993, as cited in Cogill, 2008) believe that teacher can have a variety of roles. The facilitator teacher focuses on teacher-student interaction, tries to guide students by asking questions and suggesting options, and encourages students to make informed decisions. In this style, the teacher is a good listener trying to enhance teacher-student interactions and critical thinking. The delegator teacher is characterized as a resourceful person who is available at the request of students. Fostering autonomy in learners is of primary significance for the delegator teaching style. The knowledge possessed by the teacher to some extent, indicates the role s/he takes.

Teacher knowledge

Shulman (1987, as cited in Cogill 2008) defines seven categories to provide a framework for teacher knowledge which are:

1. Content knowledge
2. General pedagogical knowledge eg. classroom control, using group work
3. Pedagogical content knowledge
4. Curriculum knowledge
5. Knowledge of learners and their characteristics
6. Knowledge of educational contexts eg schools and the wider community
7. Knowledge of educational ends purposes and values

Each of these types of knowledge needs detailed explanation. However, as far as the topic of the study is concerned, only some of them will be discussed.

Pedagogical Knowledge

Although Shulman lists Content Knowledge, first, as the topic of this thesis suggests, the researcher will discuss pedagogical knowledge first. Shulman (1987, as cited in Cogill, 2008) considers general pedagogical knowledge as the broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organization that appear to transfer subject matter. Brown and McIntyre (1993, as cited in Cogill, 2008) present some features proposed by teachers and learners that create good teaching. These features are as follow:

- 1-Creation of a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere in the classroom
- 2-Retention of control in the classroom
- 3-Presentation of work in a way that interests and motivates
- 4-Providing conditions so that pupils understand the work
- 5-Making clear what pupils are to do and achieve
- 6-Judging what can be expected of a pupil
- 7-Helping pupils with difficulties
- 8-Encouraging pupils to raise expectations of themselves
- 9-Development of personal mature relationships with pupils
- 10-Teachers' personal talents.
- 11-The management of lesson introductions
- 12-Managing question and answer sessions.
- 13- Building the confidence and trust of pupils (p39).

Pedagogical Content Knowledge

Shulman (1987, as cited in Cogill, 2008) defines pedagogical content knowledge as the knowledge of how to teach within a particular subject area. This type teachers' knowledge enables teachers to ease the learning for students through use of clear explanations, and presenting learning in interesting and motivating ways. Pedagogical content knowledge presents the distinctive bodies of knowledge for teaching, in fact this type of knowledge provides a blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction. (Shulman, 1987, as cited in Cogill 2008)

Brown and MacIntyre (1993, as cited in Cogill 2008) believe that pedagogical knowledge, the knowledge of how to teach, is linked to content knowledge. However, there is much debate about what these links are and how pedagogical content knowledge is formed. Duggen Hass et, al. (2000, as cited in Cogill, 2008) states that the ability to teach science requires more than just an understanding of content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. It also requires an understanding of what happens at their intersection. McNamara (1999, as cited in Cogill, 2008) suggests that it is not the case that content knowledge is just added to pedagogical knowledge, but that a teacher reflecting on classroom practice may create his or her own pedagogical content knowledge. The potential of teachers themselves to create their own pedagogical content knowledge raises more

debate on the relationship between the experiential knowledge and the theoretical knowledge of teachers.

This study intends to investigate the extent to which the principles of communicative language teaching (CLT) are planted in language classes of high school students. Therefore, a brief explanation will be devoted to CLT in the following section.

Communicative language teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is one of the new approaches to language teaching and learning. Hossen (2008) states that the aim of this approach is to develop learners' four basic language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) in English. This approach claims to focus on all of the components of communicative competence, because the language is seen as a means of communication. According to Wilkins (1976, as cited in Celce-Murcia, 1991) communication requires certain functions such as promising, inviting and declining invitations within a social context, that is knowing when and how to say what to whom, such observations brought communicative Approach. Widdowson (1990, as cited in Celce-Murcia, 1991) believes that communicative competence is the goal of Communicative Language Teaching.

The origins of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) date back to 1960s. Howatt (1984) distinguished between a 'strong' version and a 'weak' version of the CLT: The "weak" version which has become more or less standard practice in the last ten years, stresses the importance of providing learners with opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching... The "strong" version of communicative teaching, on the other hand, claims that language is acquired through communication, so that it is not merely a question of activating an existing but inert knowledge of the language, but of stimulating the development of the language system itself. If the former could be described as 'learning to use' English, the latter entails 'using English to learn it' (p. 279).

The concept of communicative competence was originally developed some decades ago by the sociolinguist Hymes (1972), as a response to perceived limitations in Chomsky's (1965) competence/performance model of language in which: Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitation, distractions, shifts of attention and interest and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance. (p. 21)

The communicative approach could be said to be the product of educators and linguists who had become dissatisfied with the audio-lingual and grammar-translation methods of foreign language instruction. They felt that students were not learning enough realistic, whole language. They did not know how to communicate using appropriate social language, gestures, or expressions; in brief, they were at a loss to communicate in the culture of the language studied. Interest in communicative-style teaching enhanced in the 1970s. Authentic language use and classroom exchanges where students engaged in real communication with one another became quite popular (Hymes, 1972).

Communicative competence was then further developed in the early 1980s by Canale and Swain (1980). According to Canale and Swain (1980), communicative competence refers to "the underlying systems of knowledge and skill required for communication" (p. 5). Canale and Swain (1980) proposed four components of communicative competence.

Characteristics of CLT:

There are a lot of interpretations of CLT, but the following characteristics are given by Brown (2003) provide a useful overview:

- 1-The role of the teacher is that of facilitator and guide
- 2-Students are provided opportunities to focus on their own learning process through an understanding of their own styles of learning.
- 3-Students use language productively and receptively, in a communicative class.
- 4-Fluency and accuracy are mandatory for communicative class.
- 5-Learners are engaged in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes rather than aspects of language.
- 6- Classroom goals are given importance (p. 43).

Classroom activities used in CLT are as follow:

Role play, interviews, information gap, games, language exchange, surveys, pair work, learning by teaching are different types of activities used in CLT language classes. The present study intended to shed light on the issue and find out to what extent the principles of CLT are planted in language classes.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

To solve EFL learners' problems, recent instructional approaches emphasize learning by engaging learners in knowledge construction (Merriam, 2001). The conditions of meaningful learning require an appropriate instructional strategy, where students need to elaborate, or generate activities, such as self-questioning (McGroarty, 1984) Many researchers (eg. Yarmohammadi 2000) found that communicative skills have been neglected in the educational system since in countries such as Iran the focus is on achievement and teachers have to prepare students for grammar based exams. Many factors affect the weaknesses in the use of English language even after studying seven years at public school.

Dahmardeh (2009) explains, source of weaknesses as follows:

- (i) Language competence of Iranian language teachers: Unfortunately most Iranian teachers are not qualified enough to implement Communicative Language Teaching approach in their classes effectively. They need in service training sessions to adopt themselves to the requirements of the new curriculum.
- (ii) The time available for language teaching within the school year: Time limitation for the English subject at school is one of the most important constraints in designing the curriculum. Dahmardeh (2009) believes the available time for language teaching in Iran in comparison with other countries is very short.
- (iii) Availability of resources: In most schools in Iran there are 30-35 students in each class and in this situation providing enough communicative materials in the classroom seems very difficult.
- (iv) Lack of pupils' interest: one of the most popular reasons for lack of motivation in students is because the textbooks as well as the syllabus were both structure based, learners do not recognize the needs of language use outside the classroom. In addition, they look at language as an academic subject rather than as skills based and being helpful for their future. (Dahmardah 2009, p. 197).

In recent decades, teachers of foreign languages in many countries, including Iran, have been encouraged to use the approach known as CLT. This approach advocates the development of communicative competence as a primary goal via the extensive use of the foreign language as a means of communication during classroom lessons. CLT has been welcomed by English Language Teaching (ELT) curriculum and syllabus designers of Iran. Moreover, English teachers and instructors have shown eagerness and enthusiasm to incorporate it in their classes. However, we do not know whether CLT is practiced at all, and if practiced how and to what extent. Understandably, education authorities and teacher educators are keen to know how teachers assimilate CLT and how well they incorporate this approach into their foreign language teaching.

Since the concept of CLT originated in the West, it seems that this approach is not applicable to other contexts and because of misunderstanding surrounding the theory and practice of CLT (Savignon, 2002), this exploratory study seeks to investigate the practicality of CLT in two educational domains of Iran as an expanding circle (where English is practiced as a foreign language), namely, public and private institutes. Moreover, due to the fact that EFL instructors and teachers claim that they apply the CLT in their classes, this study, also, probes the extent to which the teachers in these two domains tend to follow the CLT principles.

For many years (27 years) the GTM method was used in Iranian's high schools for teaching English. After many years the teaching policy is changed and nowadays in Iranian high schools the CLT method is used for teaching English. But the primary question is what the level of teacher's pedagogical knowledge in CLT procedure is?

We can categorize some other significant problems which exist in connection with English Language teaching in high schools as follow:

- 1: Absence of adequate educational facilities consistent with modern procedures.
- 2: Inadequate hours of language teaching.
- 3: Late start of language teaching in Iran's education and training system (12 years of age).
- 4: Difference in level of education in schools.
- 5: Insufficient Extracurricular classes and overcrowded classrooms.
- 6: Centralized the educational system
- 7: The same text books are taught all over the country
- 8: Insufficient practice time

In spite of four years of education in a raw, Iranian high school graduates do not acquire the necessary expertise to be able to communicate fluently. Problems such as the above, and the like fueled this study. Therefore, the purpose of performing this research is to maneuver on the knowledge of English language teachers in junior high school level in five educational districts in Isfahan. Similarly, this study intends to find out the principles which guide the EFL methodology in junior high schools in Iran.

1.4 Purpose and Scope of the Study

A skim at the lot of time allocated to language teaching classes in Iranian context shows that the present language teaching policy does not lead to reasonable outcomes. On the other hand, lack of enough knowledge about implementing CLT on the part of the language teachers leads the students not to be competent. Despite the fact that textbooks introduce conversation and other language skills in classrooms, still teachers have the crucial role in language classroom. In spite of extensive efforts of language teachers and learners, little outcomes is seen among the high school graduates. One reason for such phenomenon may be lack of planting suitable language teaching methods in language

classes. Therefore, there is an urgent need to investigate language teaching methods which apply in Iranian high school language classes. To this end, the focus of this study was to elaborate on the pedagogical knowledge of language teachers in Iranian junior high schools. In addition, this study was set to find out the principles which guide the EFL methodology in junior high schools in Iran. Furthermore, the present study attempted to investigate the CLT principles applied in the real ELT context of junior high schools in Iran.

1.5 Research Questions and Hypotheses

Therefore, the present study wants to answer the following research questions:

Research question No 1: To what extent are CLT principles applied in the real ELT context of junior high schools in Iran.

Research question No 2: What are the principles which guide the EFL methodology in junior high schools in Iran?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The general aim of learning a new language is communication. Meanwhile, many EFL graduates in Iran do not have the desired mastery of this language skill. The reason for this shortage may be ascribed to lack of application of proper methods in language classes. Therefore, the results of this study can be fruitful for those practitioners who are engaged in the process of teaching English. In addition, if this thesis leads to positive outcomes, the curriculum developers can make use of the results of this study. They may be motivated to include CLT techniques in language classes. Also they can provide the teacher's edition of the student book, in a way so that these books will have some guides for language teachers. Language teachers can use the results to apply suitable methods in their classroom. Other M.A students can utilize the results to broaden the review of the literature on the topic under question.

Because English language teaching is a major part of educational curriculum in Iran and special attention is given to it in the society, the findings of the present study can be both theoretically and practically significant. Such a study provides information to be taken into consideration by policy makers, language-planners, curriculum designers, textbook developers, language instructors, teachers, and also learners and their parents. In other words, the issue addressed in this study might be of use to two groups of people. At the macro level, the issue may be useful to the policy makers, language planners, curriculum designers, textbook developers and test constructors who are concerned with the following questions:

Why are not Iranian high school graduates proficient enough to communicate efficiently and effectively?

What underlying reasons identify which method to be planted in language classes?

Which language teaching method fits the best in Iranian high school classes?

At the micro level, the issue under question may be useful to the instructors, the learners, and their families as three major members of curriculum especially the instructors who are concerned

with selecting the most useful techniques and principles and designing a more effective course of study by drawing from available approaches, syllabus types and existing research findings.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

1.7.1 Language teaching methodology

According to Brown (2007) method to Language Teaching is a set of procedures or overall plan for systemic presentation to teach second or foreign language.

1.7.2 Pedagogy

According to Alexander (2003, as cited in Cogill, 2008) pedagogy is the act of teaching together with its attendant discourse. It is what one needs to know, and the skills one needs to command in order to make and justify the many different kinds of decisions of which teaching is constituted. (p3)

1.7.3 Pedagogical knowledge

Shulman (1987, as cited in Cogill, 2008) regards general pedagogical knowledge as the broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organization that appear to transcend subject matter.

1.7.3 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Linguists and educationists have defined CLT differently. Some of the common definitions are:

Littlewood (1981): Communicative Language Teaching means systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language, combining these into a more fully communicative view

According to Richards & Rodgers, 2001 Communicative Language Teaching is best considered an approach rather than a method. It refers to a diverse set of principles that reflect a communicative view of language and language learning and that can be used to support a wide variety of classroom procedures.

According to Wikipedia, encyclopedia, "Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach to the teaching of second and foreign languages that emphasizes communication or interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of learning a language".

1.8 Organization of the thesis

The thesis is presented in five consequent chapters. Chapter one, as was discussed above, gives a general overview of the topic in hand in addition to the research questions which are to be answered by the researcher, the key terms are presented here too. Chapter two takes a glance at the history of the topic, that is self-edition and its possible relationship with term paper writing; chapter three deals with the data regarding the participants, the materials and the procedures applied for data gathering; in addition, the data analysis procedure is talked about in chapter three. In chapter four the

gained results are presented and the related tables and diagrams, for better understanding of the results, are depicted; and ultimately this thesis is concluded with chapter five in which the major findings and answers of the research questions are discussed in detail, pedagogical implication and suggestions for further research form the other part of this chapter, and finally a detailed conclusion is presented at the end. In the following chapter, the existing theoretical and empirical background about the topic accompanied with their findings are discussed.

Chapter Two
Literature Review

Chapter Two Literature Review

2.1. Overview

The following sections present the theoretical and empirical background of the topic under question. At first, discussions regarding the teacher knowledge and its different types are presented. Items such as pedagogical knowledge (PK) content knowledge (CK), pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and curriculum knowledge will be discussed. Subsequent to these, there will be detailed discussion on communicative language teaching. In fact this chapter covers a review of the literature and of previous studies related to the research domains. This chapter also includes a review of a number of previous studies related to both domains mentioned above.

2.2. Teacher knowledge

In trying to provide a framework for teacher knowledge, Shulman (1987, as cited in Cogill, 2008) defines seven categories as follows:

1. Content knowledge
2. General pedagogical knowledge eg. classroom control, using group work
3. Pedagogical content knowledge
4. Curriculum knowledge
5. Knowledge of learners and their characteristics
6. Knowledge of educational contexts eg schools and the wider community
7. Knowledge of educational ends, purposes and values

Each of these "knowledges" needs to be discussed in detail. However, initially Pedagogical Knowledge (PK) Content Knowledge (CK), Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) and Curriculum Knowledge seem to be more important. In follow, these types of "knowledges" will be discussed.

2.2.1 Pedagogical Knowledge (PK)

Shulman (1987, as cited in Cogill, 2008) believes that general pedagogical knowledge include the principles and strategies of classroom management and organization that appear to excel subject matter. Brown and McIntyre (1993, as cited in Cogill, 2008) provides 10 qualities that create good teaching (p39):

- Creation of a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere in the classroom
- Retention of control in the classroom
- Presentation of work in a way that interests and motivates
- Providing conditions so that pupils understand the work
- Making clear what pupils are to do and achieve
- Judging what can be expected of a pupil
- Helping pupils with difficulties
- Encouraging pupils to raise expectations of themselves
- Development of personal mature relationships with pupils
- Teachers' personal talents.
- Considering how planning interacts with the management of classes and lessons
- The management of lesson introductions
- Managing question and answer sessions.
- Building the confidence and trust of pupils

These qualities however which refer to general teaching activities and hence PK, appear to lack any reference to how children learn.

The following qualities are in relation with pedagogical knowledge. Cogill (2008) classifies them as teaching activity and teachers' personal dispositions,

lesson planning and preparation

Making clear what pupils are to do and achieve

Considering how planning interacts with the management of classes and lessons

Managing lesson introductions

Managing question and answer sessions.

Understanding children's learning

Viewing children as imitative learners

Viewing children as learning from didactic exposure

Viewing children as thinkers

Viewing children as managers of their own knowledge

Judging what can be expected of a pupil

Helping pupils with difficulties

Encouraging pupils to raise their expectations

Influencing motivation

Creating a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere in the classroom

Presenting work in a way that interests and motivates

Providing conditions so that pupils understand the work

Classroom management Retaining control in the classroom

Teachers' personal dispositions

Ability to develop personal mature relationships with pupils

Personal talents

Ability to build the confidence and trust of pupil

Brant (2006, as cited in Cogill, 2008) suggest that general pedagogic knowledge is often learned from practice.

2.2.2 Content Knowledge (CK)

Shulman (1987, as cited in Cogill, 2008) defines CK as the knowledge teachers have of the subject matter they are teaching. This definition does not include knowledge of the curriculum which Shulman places in a distinct category. McNamara (1991, as cited in Cogill, 2008) suggests that knowledge of subject content is essential not only for teaching itself but also for the evaluation of text books, and teaching aids. He also states that teachers with strong CK may teach in a more interesting way while those with little CK may regress from the more difficult aspects of the subject. In relation to using ICT, Cox et al (2003, as cited in Cogill, 2008) support these views. They suggest that teachers need to possess relevant CK in order to make appropriate decisions when choosing software. There are some views on how teaching experience affects CK. Berg (1989) consider that CK is changed by teaching practice and in particular, by the resources that may be used in teaching. Kirkgoz (2005) argues that CK is only changed if teachers reflect on their teaching beyond a consideration of simple classroom events. Teachers need to consider their own understanding of the subject if practice is to affect CK. Thus the important aspect in changing CK appears to be how a teacher internally reflects on a teaching experience rather than just the experience itself.

Childress (2001). express concern about the lack of research into whether teachers who are confident in their CK bring particular attributes to their pedagogical practice. Chick (1996) found that effective teachers of literacy had extensive knowledge about the subject; his writing about effective teachers of mathematics found that they had knowledge of the conceptual understandings within and between areas of the curriculum. This did not necessarily correlate with high qualifications in mathematics but effective teachers were much more likely to have undertaken mathematics-specific professional development over an extended period. The results of these two studies may not be necessarily contradictory. It is perhaps real understanding of the relevant content knowledge that is the key factor. Berg (1989) agree that teachers' CK is important. Shulman (1987, as cited in Cogill, 2008) suggests that CK is a significant aspect of teaching since it affects planning, task setting, questioning, explaining, giving feedback and assessment. My particular interest however is to investigate the possible role that teachers' knowledge may have on methodology choice.

2.2.3 Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)

Shulman defines pedagogical content knowledge as the knowledge of how to teach within a particular subject area. It enables teachers to ease the learning for students through use of clear explanations, appropriate analogies and presenting learning in interesting, motivating and even entertaining ways. Pedagogical content knowledge identifies the distinctive bodies of knowledge for teaching. It represents the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems or issues are organized, represented, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and presented for instruction. (Shulman, 1987, as cited in Cogill, 2008) agree that PK, the knowledge of how to teach, is intrinsically linked to CK. There is however much debate as to what these links are and how PCK is formed. Bax (2003). consider that the ability to teach science requires more than just an understanding of CK and PK. It also requires an understanding of what happens at their intersection. McNamara (1991, as cited in Cogill, 2008) similarly suggests that it is not the case that CK is simply added to PK but that a teacher reflecting on classroom practice may create his or her own PCK. The potential of teachers themselves to create their own PCK raises further debate on the relationship between the experiential knowledge and the theoretical knowledge of teachers. Bax (2003) suggests that while education has developed a great body of PCK too little has resulted from careful research. Too great a proportion of the literature on education is based on opinion, beliefs and slogans. Creswell, et.al (2003)suggests that "... in much of the spontaneous behavior of skilled practice we reveal a kind of knowing which does not stem from a prior intellectual operation"(p51). Bal (2006) points out that this "kind of knowing" or tacit knowledge alone is not necessarily a good thing, since tacit stupidity exists as well as tacit wisdom. There is need for other ways of perceiving theory and practice, while theory is about saying, practice is about doing and theory and practice represent two different ways of knowing. Bal, S. M. (2006), states that it is important for teachers to differentiate in their own minds between 'wisdom of practice' (Shulman 1997, as cited in Cogill, 2008) which may be subjective and the wider body of knowledge which exists. Gorsuch (2000) suggests that teachers derive their skills from mediation between experience and theory. So the issue of solely theoretical knowledge requirements to define teachers' PCK is disputed, with a consensus view supported by Creswell (2003). that a mix of theory and practice provides greater professionalism. It seems that there are however elements of CK across a spectrum of subject areas that require specific subject knowledge from teachers and which are separate from PCK. Without the appropriate prior CK, teachers will not be in a position to make the appropriate choice of such new resources; additionally, use of new resources may also potentially affect teachers existing CK.

2.2.4 Curriculum Knowledge

Curriculum knowledge is knowledge of what should be taught to a particular group of pupils. It requires understanding of learner's learning potential, national syllabuses, school planning documents and year group plans. In addition any examination or testing syllabuses must be taken into account and any local or contextual requirements considered. There has been the introduction of National Curricula and Primary and Secondary National Strategies. The secondary national strategies not only define what is to be taught but also set out or at least advise on how teachers should teach. This has not caused debate (Brown 2001) but one which is too wide to embark on within this discussion. The arguments made earlier on PK, CK and PCK suggest that teacher knowledge may be influenced through change in their experiences.

2.3 communicative language teaching (CLT)

CLT is a recognized theoretical model in English language teaching today. Many applied linguists regard it as one of the most effective approaches to ELT. Since its foundation in Europe in early 1970s, CLT has served as a major source of influence on language teaching practice. As Li (1998) comments, CLT has extended in scope and has been used by different educators in different ways. What is involved in CLT? Does CLT mean teaching conversation, an absence of grammar in a course, or an emphasis on open-ended discussion activities as the main features of a course? The answers to these questions can be best understood by examining CLT in terms of its historical development, of a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the language classroom. The next section examines these features in detail.

2.3.1 Definition and Principles of CLT

There is considerable debate as to appropriate ways of defining CLT (Markee, 1997). Yet, according to Richards and Rodgers (2001), CLT starts with a theory of language as communication, and its goal is to develop learners' communicative competence. Despite being a simplistic account of CLT, this idea of communicative competence is considered to be the main conception of CLT. Communicative competence included knowing what to say and how to say it appropriately based on the situation, the participants, and their roles and intentions. Traditional grammatical and vocabulary syllabuses and teaching methods did not include information of this kind.

In fact, CLT is not a uniform approach to language teaching (Ellis, 2003). In accordance with a classification proposed by Howatt (1984), CLT consists of a 'weak' and a 'strong' version. The weak version of CLT is based on the assumption that the components of communicative competence can be identified, and thus systematically taught (Ellis, 2003). From this perspective, CLT can be thought to be an analytic approach to language teaching, which means that CLT does not display a fundamental difference from the earlier traditional approaches. This weak version of CLT highlights the significance of providing learners with opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and, characteristically, attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching (Howatt, 1984). Such a version of CLT proposes that instead of teaching the structural properties of language, teachers pay attention to particular notions such as 'possibility', 'possession', as well as language functions such as 'making requests' and 'giving advice.' Howatt (1984) describes the weak version of CLT as "learning to use English" (p. 279). It is possible to claim that this version

is manifested in the proposals for notional/functional syllabuses put forward by Wilkins (1976) and Van Ek (1976).

On the contrary, a strong version of CLT is based on the claim that "language is acquired through communication" (Howatt, 1984, p. 279). In other words, learners do not go through a learning experience in which they acquire the structural properties of a language and then learn to use this structural system in communication. As a matter of fact, they discover the system itself as they learn how to communicate in a language. This version proposes that teachers provide learners with ample opportunities to familiarize themselves with how language is used in actual communication. As Howatt (1984) puts it, the strong version of CLT entails "using English to learn it" (p. 279).

Other authors in the field have defined and characterized CLT in various ways (Brown, 2001; Richards, 2006). According to Larsen-Freeman (1986), the most obvious attribute of CLT is that "almost ever thing that is done is done with a communicative intent" (p. 132). In CLT, meaning is given prime importance, which is achieved through interaction between reader and writer, and through negotiation between speaker and listener. There are a variety of communicative activities (e.g. games, role plays, simulations, and problem-solving tasks), which offer learners an opportunity to practice their communication skills meaningfully in different contexts and by taking on different roles. In the process of utilizing these kinds of performance activities, learners avoid using their native language and teachers occasionally, if ever, correct students' mistakes.

Another typical feature of communicative language teaching is that "it gives planned emphasis on functional as well as structural features of language, combining these into a more completely communicative view" (Littlewood, 1981, p. 1). Teachers who espouse CLT move beyond teaching structural rules of the target language, and create opportunities for learners to use the target language in a meaningful way. In doing so, they help their learners build up communicative competence.

Small group work can also be regarded as an important tenet of CLT. Larsen-Freeman (1986) puts forward that activities in a communicative class are commonly carried out by students in small groups. Negotiation of meaning can be accomplished by involving learners in group work in which they can freely interact with each other. Through small group activities, the students are engaged in meaningful and authentic language use rather than in the simply mechanical practice of language patterns. Emphasizing the importance of pair and group work as an indispensable aspect of CLT classroom, Richards (2006) argues that carrying out activities in pair and group work will benefit the learners in the following ways:

- They can learn from hearing the language used by other members of the group.
- They will produce a greater amount of language than they would use in teacher-fronted activities.
- Their motivational level is likely to increase.
- They will have the chance to develop fluency. (p. 20)

Similarly, it is desirable for a language teacher to present learners with the opportunity to develop strategies for understanding language as it is actually used by native speakers (Canale and Swain, 1980). In this respect, using authentic materials can be helpful for language teachers to expose their students to the target language the way it is used by native speakers. Richards (2006) lists the following arguments in favor of the use of authentic sources as the basis of communicative classroom learning:

- They provide cultural information about the target language.
- They provide exposure to real language.
- They relate more closely to learners' needs.
- They support a more creative approach to teaching. (p. 20)

Another feature of CLT is "its learner-centered and experience-based view of second language teaching" (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 69). As cited in Li (1998), individual learners have their unique interests, learning styles, needs, and goals that should be reflected in the design of instructional methods (Savignon, 1991). Li (1998) further states that it is crucial for teachers to develop materials based on the established needs of a particular class. Besides, in a CLT classroom, students must be made to feel secure, unthreatened, and non-defensive, so teachers adopting CLT should avoid taking on a teacher-centered, authoritarian attitude (Taylor, 1983).

Brown (2001), in describing the key principles of CLT, offers the following six characteristics:

1. Classroom goals are focused on all of the components (grammatical, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic) of communicative competence. Goals therefore must intertwine the organizational aspects of language with the pragmatic.
2. Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus, but rather aspects of language that enable learner to accomplish those purposes.
3. Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.
4. Students in a communicative class ultimately have to use language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts outside the classroom. Classroom tasks must therefore equip students with the skills necessary for communication in those contexts.
5. Students are given opportunities to focus on their own learning process through an understanding of their own styles of learning and through the development of appropriate strategies for autonomous learning.
6. The role of the teacher is that of facilitator and guide, not an all-knowing bestower of knowledge. Students are therefore encouraged to construct meaning through genuine linguistic interaction with others. (p. 43)

Furthermore, Richards (2006) notes that with the introduction of CLT, language teachers and teaching institutions all around the world soon began to reorganize their teaching, syllabuses, and classroom materials. In planning language courses within a communicative approach, grammar was no longer the starting point. It was claimed that meaningful communication provides the learner with a better opportunity for learning than through a grammar-based approach. He then summarizes the overarching principles of CLT as follows:

- Make real communication the focus of language learning.
- Provide opportunities for learners to experiment and try out what they know.
- Be tolerant of learners' errors as they indicate that the learners are building up their communicative competence.
- Provide opportunities for learners to develop both accuracy and fluency.
- Link the different skills such as speaking, reading, and listening together, since they usually occur so in the real world.
- Let students induce or discover grammar rules. (Richards, 2006, p. 13)

The next section will focus on classroom activities that are typical to be found in CLT classroom.

2.3.2 Classroom Activities in CLT

Communicative intent is always given a prime position in every CLT activity. In a communicative class, students are provided with opportunities to use the language a great deal through communicative activities. There are various classifications of activities that are typically found in a communicative language classroom. Paulston and Bruder (1976), for example, in their book *Teaching English as a Second Language: Techniques and Procedures* classified the activity types that they thought were of maximum benefit in enabling students to attain communicative competence into the four categories below:

- i. **Social Formulas and Dialogs:** These cover such speech encounters as greetings, partings, introductions, excuses, compliments, complaints, hiding feelings, etc. It is actually very difficult to lie, to complain and to turn someone down for a date in another language, and the learners of a foreign language need to be taught how to get along with those situations in an appropriate manner (Paulston & Bruder, 1976).
- ii. **Community Oriented Tasks:** These are sets of exercises which compel the student to interact with native speakers outside the classroom.
- iii. **Problem-Solving Activities:** The students are presented with a problem and some alternative solutions, from among which they have to choose one or create their own.
- iv. **Role Plays:** In role plays, students are assigned a fictitious role. The students may even act out the role of themselves. The simplicity of role plays and the improvisation is a matter of student proficiency. Paulston and Bruder (1976) maintain that the teacher should attach importance to the format of the role play which consists of three basic components, whether or not it is a complex one. In the situation, the teacher clearly explains the scene and the plot of the role play, which is followed by the description of the task and the action to be accomplished. Then, the teacher assigns the roles, the list of characters, making sure that the roles are not too elaborate for the students to carry out. Useful expressions part contains the linguistic information, primarily expressions and phrases that will facilitate the acting out of the roles.

Celce-Murcia (1991) also examined the classroom activities that help learners develop their communication skills and grouped them under four basic headings for the ease of discussion:

- i. **Linguistically Structured Activities:** These activities generally revolve around the presentation or the practice of certain linguistic structures. What she suggests is that although these activities are not inhibitive, they may pretty well turn out to be so unless they are contextualized and made meaningful. The structured interview, where the students question each other for factual information, thus exchanging real information; and language game can best exemplify useful linguistically structured activities.
- ii. **Performance Activities:** These are activities in which students prepare something beforehand and deliver their message to the class, which is or can be followed by a classroom discussion. Peer evaluation is an invaluable technique to ensure that the audience is more than passive listeners (knowing that they will evaluate the presenters based on the given criteria draws their attention to the presenter). Role plays and dramas are among the ones that can be cited as examples of performance activities in the sense referred to by Celce-Murcia (1991).
- iii. **Participation Activities:** In participation activities, students take part in some communicative activities in natural settings. Guided discussions, interviews, and oral dialogs best exemplify these types of activities. Here, the factor of authenticity arouses interest and motivation on the part of the learners, calling for a natural need to carry out what is expected by the activity.

iv. Observation Activities: In observation activities, learners are expected to observe and/or record verbal and nonverbal interactions between two or more native speakers of the target language, which is of extreme benefit in that the students appreciate and become aware of the target language as it is actually used in real life.

Another possible distinction can be made between fluency and accuracy activities. It is mostly agreed that one of the goals of CLT is to develop fluency in language use. In Richards's (2006) terms, "fluency is the natural language use occurring when a speaker engages in meaningful interaction and maintains comprehensible and ongoing communication despite limitations in his or her communicative competence" (p.14). He further suggests that in order to build up fluency, teachers should develop classroom activities in which students need to negotiate meaning, use communication strategies to avoid potential breakdowns in communication.

Richards (2006) highlights that activities focusing on fluency have the following features:

- They reflect natural use of language,
- They focus on achieving communication,
- They require meaningful use of language,
- They require the use of communication strategies,
- They produce language that may not be predictable,
- They seek to link language use to context. (p.14)

Finally, other activity types that are typically implemented in a CLT classroom can be listed as follow:

Information-gap activities: The concept of information gap is an important aspect of communication in a CLT classroom. This essentially is based on the fact that in their everyday lives people generally communicate in order to get information they do not possess. This is referred to as an information gap. If students can be involved in information gap activities in order to exchange unknown information in language classrooms, more authentic communication is likely to occur in the classroom. By doing so, they will draw available vocabulary, grammar, and communication strategies to complete a task.

Jigsaw activities: These activities are also based on the information-gap principle. The class is divided into groups and each group has part of the information needed to complete an activity. The class is supposed to fit the pieces together to complete the whole. In that way, they need to use their language resources to communicate meaningfully and so take part in meaningful communication practice.

Communication games: These games primarily involve information-gap activities which are intended to provoke communication in the classroom. The games are generally in the form of puzzles, drawing pictures and putting things given in the correct order. The students have a piece of information which is part of the total, what they need to do is to walk around to get the necessary information in order to reach the entire information, through which an artificial need on the part of the learners is created to get them to speak. Students feel it as a challenge to participate; thus an unconscious learning and practicing of knowledge occurs which erase out the fears learners have for speaking in the class (Johnson & Morrow, 1981).

Discussion and debates: Discussion and debates are of widely utilized activity types due to their low effort demanding nature of the teacher. Every now and then, an intimate atmosphere of discussion occurs in the classroom, however, when appropriately exploited, these discussions will undoubtedly end up in speaking opportunities of extreme worth, both in terms of language presentation and practice. Either encouraging competition or cooperation, which one to choose is a matter of familiarity with the students; the teacher may foster discussion over debate.

Prepared talks and oral presentations: These are the talks which are prepared by students about a specific topic and given in the class with the aim of persuading, informing students about a topic or just to entertain them.

2.3.3 Teachers and Students' Roles in CLT Classroom

The learner-centered characteristic of CLT and the new type of classroom activities imply different roles in the language classroom for teachers and learners than from those found in more traditional second language classrooms. Learners in CLT classrooms are supposed to participate in classroom activities that are based on a collaborative rather than individualistic approach to learning. They are portrayed as active participants in the language learning process. Therefore, CLT alters the role of the teacher. Also, CLT as a methodology has much to do with interaction. It uses communication as a means to reach the goal, which is also communication. Accordingly, it would be wise to claim that teacher's and students' roles in CLT classroom have a dynamic feature, and thus they tend to vary all the time.

Breen and Candlin (1980), in defining the role of the teacher in CLT classroom, notes the following central roles:

The first role is to facilitate the communication process between all participants in the classroom, and between these participants and the various activities and texts. The second role is to act as an independent participant within the learning-teaching group. A third role of the teacher is that of a researcher and learner, with much to contribute in terms of appropriate knowledge and abilities, actual and observed experience of the nature of learning and organizational capacities. (p. 99)

This draws attention to a distinctive feature of CLT – that of a “learner-centered and experience-based view of second language teaching” (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 69). It is thus advisable for teachers adopting a communicative approach to produce and use authentic teaching materials that meet the needs of their particular learners. Moreover, teachers need to motivate their students, as well as provide them with a comfortable classroom atmosphere for language learning. Littlewood (1981) states that the roles of teacher in CLT consist of, but are not limited to, coordinator and manager of activities, language instructor, source of new language, consultant when needed, as well as participant.

In addition, it is typical in a CLT classroom that it is not merely the teacher, but everyone present who manages the classroom performance. Hiep (2007). maintains that teachers can no longer be regarded simply as teachers and learners just as learners, since they both are managers of learning. The traditional image of the teacher as the dominating authority figure in the classroom is dissolved into such a role that necessitates facilitating the communicative process in the classroom where students feel safe, unthreatened and non-defensive.⁴⁴

Furthermore, Hu (2002) proposes that the roles of students in CLT classroom are supposed to be “those of negotiators for meaning, communicators, discoverers, and contributors of knowledge and information” (pp.95-96). Likewise, Dogancay-Aktuna, and Kiziltepe (2005), in their descriptions of students and teacher's roles in CLT classroom, assert that students are vigorously involved in expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning while the teacher takes on more of a facilitator and participant role in the language classroom.

Finally, Deckert (2004), referring to the student centered characteristic of CLT, emphasizes that “CLT approach features low profile teacher roles, frequent pair work or small group problem solving, students responding to authentic samples of English, extended exchanges on high interest topics, and the integration of the four basic skills, namely speaking, listening, reading, and writing” (p.13). He

further states that CLT discourages pervasive teacher-controlled drills, quizzing of memorized material, and extensive explanation on forms of English. Since the main aim of the present study is to investigate if CLT is planted in Iranian EFL context, it is noteworthy to provide a description of ESL and EFL settings, and to present the relevant literature that deals with how CLT relates to each distinct learning environments. Thus, the next section of the literature review will differentiate ESL and EFL environments.

2.3.4 Use of CLT in EFL Contexts and Barriers to Adopting CLT

It has been argued by researchers and writers that taking a set of teaching methods developed in one part of the world and using it in another part bring about problems and challenges (Holliday, 1994; Kramsch and Sullivan, 1996; Pennycook, 1989). According to these authors, education is bound to a particular cultural environment, and good teaching practices are socially constructed in this environment. Accordingly, as cited in Hiep (2007), assuming that what is suitable in one particular educational setting will naturally be suitable in another is to disregard the fact that ELT methodology is rooted in an Anglo-Saxon view of education. Likewise, Phillipson (1992) maintains that since Anglo-American ELT trends lack appreciation of various distinct linguistic, cultural, and educational contexts around the world, they cannot thus produce appropriate teaching and learning materials that will address the local and culture-specific needs of learners. The particular context in which an innovation is introduced determines its success or failure. Markee (1997) argues that "as a socially situated activity, its success is affected by ethical and systemic constraints, the personal characteristics of potential adopters, the attributes of innovations and the strategies that are used to manage change in particular contexts" (p. 41). Breen and Candlin (2001) similarly suggest that "any realization of communicative curriculum must reflect a realistic analysis of the actual situation within which the language teaching will take place" (p. 24).

CLT was initially developed as a Western ELT methodology in the 1970s. However, since then, it has been extensively adopted in both ESL and EFL contexts all around the world. Although implementing CLT in EFL contexts results in a number of problems and challenges, it would be dubious to claim that these problems cancel out its potential usefulness as a language teaching methodology in EFL environments. Larsen-Freeman (2000) warns that in the battle against imported methods, "we may fail to understand the cause of the problem and run the risk of overacting and losing something valuable in the process" (p. 67).

In this framework, along with the growing popularity of CLT in most EFL countries, there have been many studies conducted on the feasibility of CLT innovation and potential problems in its use in EFL contexts such as China, Greece, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Turkey, Vietnam and so on.

Ellis (1994) examined the suitability of the communicative approach in the Vietnamese context. He found that one of the main problems in using a communicative approach in Vietnam was that teachers were dependent on the inherent traditional teaching practices. Also, there was too much focus on grammar-translation in the Vietnamese examination system. According to the study, teachers reported that they did not have the essential knowledge of the target language culture. Based on the findings of the study, Ellis concluded that CLT in its unique form is not suitable for Vietnamese context. He pointed out that "although there is a strong demand for communicative competence in Vietnam, it is not matched by adequate teacher training, communicative language materials and suitable learning environments" (p. 69).

In a similar study, Karavas-Doukas (1996) investigated teachers' attitudes toward the use of communicative approach in Greece. It was reported that although the English curriculum in Greece was based on the premises of communicative language teaching, teachers showed a tendency to carry on the traditional teacher-oriented instruction style. The findings of this study suggested that teachers either did not understand or were unable to see the practical implications of the CLT principles.

In another significant study, Li (1998) looked into Korean teachers' perceptions of the implementation of CLT. The results of Li's study confirmed that the teachers encountered difficulties in using CLT practices in their classes. The difficulties reported by the Korean teachers were divided into the following four categories:

1. Difficulties caused by teachers:

Deficiency in spoken English,
Deficiency in strategic and sociolinguistic competence,
Lack of training in CLT,
Few opportunities for retraining in CLT,
Misconceptions about CLT,
Little time for and expertise in material development

2. Difficulties caused by students:

Low English proficiency,
Little motivation for communicative competence,
Resistance to class participation

3. Difficulties caused by the educational system:

Large classes,
Grammar-based examinations,
Insufficient funding,
Lack of support

4. Difficulties caused by CLT itself:

CLT's inadequate account of EFL teaching,
Lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments. (Li, 1998, p. 687)

According to Li (1998), teachers were reluctant to implement CLT in their language classrooms due to these problems listed above. He claimed that in order for teachers to be willing to make use of CLT in EFL contexts, many adjustments must be made. He further stated that "a conflict apparently exists between what CLT demands and what the EFL situation in many countries, such as South Korea, allows. This conflict must be resolved before EFL teaching in these countries can benefit from CLT" (pp. 695-696).

Sato and Kleinsasser's (1999) research on the potential problems of teachers in Australia teaching Japanese as a foreign language in using CLT in their classes revealed that there was inconsistency between teachers' perceptions of CLT and their actual classroom practices. Those teachers predominantly employed grammar-based activities in their classes rather than the communicative ones. It was reported that they lacked time to prepare authentic teaching materials for their classes. Moreover, teachers had fragmented knowledge of CLT, and their beliefs about language teaching and learning were mostly anchored in their own second language learning experiences.

In addition, in a study that addressed the issues of CLT use in Taiwan, Liu (2005) found out that despite the prevalent popularity of CLT in Taiwan, it was rather difficult to apply CLT into the actual language classroom. Since the education system is mainly exam-oriented in 52 Taiwan, EFL teachers put a heavy emphasis on preparing their students for the National College Entrance Examination in

Taiwan. They essentially teach grammatical structures of English because the exam largely consists of questions that assess that structural forms of the language.

Finally, a case study conducted by Inceciay and Inceciay (2009) investigated the perceptions of 30 Turkish college students to see the appropriateness and effectiveness of communicative and non-communicative activities in their EFL classes. The results of this study suggested that EFL countries such as Turkey needed to modify their teaching methods in a way that would take students' previous educational habits into consideration. It was reported that students benefited from CLT if communicative and non-communicative activities were combined in English classrooms. That is, aligning CLT with traditional teaching practices seemed to be beneficial for EFL students.

In Iran some studies have addressed this issue. For instance Razmjoo and Riazi(2006)studies the practicing CLT language teachers in shiraz. They concluded that teachers have a positive attitude towards CLT but they do not practice it much. These results are not consistent with the common sense view that the public school teachers might not view CLT positively in EFL contexts, including Iran. The results of the study indicate the fact that in real practice, the public domain teachers attach the least amount of importance to the tenets representing CLT; that is, "the target language is not used as the medium of communication," " error correction is done directly and on the spot," the use of idioms, authentic sources and oral skills is the least," and " grammar is taught systematically and in details." This result is in total contrast with the public domain teachers ideas regarding the regarding the CLT principles (Ramzjoo and Riazi, 2006).

The present study, therefore, is intended to check some reasons behind this short coming in order to form a body of research addressing similar issues of concern in EFL in Iran.

Chapter Three
Methodology

Chapter Three

Method

3.1 Overview

This chapter reports the methodology employed to find the answers to the research questions. The first part of this chapter deals with the participants of the study and the way they were selected. The second part discusses the instruments used in this study. Data collection procedure and data analysis are discussed in parts four and five respectively.

3.2 Research design

The purpose of this study was to find out which principles guide the EFL methodology in junior high schools in Iran. Also it was intended to investigate to what extent are CLT principles applied in the real ELT context of junior high schools in Iran. To this end, 50 EFL teachers were chosen and the study was conducted on them using a one shot design through questionnaires and observation.

3.3 Participants

In this study, in order to improve the reliability and generalizability of the results, the researcher tried to choose a high number of participants. From among 150 male and female language teachers, teaching at high schools in Isfahan 30%, around 50 were selected on the basis of accessibility. To put it differently, convenience sampling was used to choose 50 teachers, that is the 50 participants were selected from the language teachers teaching in Isfahan city. The rest of the respondents (N=100) were chosen from among the language teachers teaching in Isfahan province. In order to choose the rest of the participants, necessary co-ordinations were done with the ministry of education, Isfahan office, and the needed consent was received from them. A list of language teachers was taken from the education office and from among them 100 language teachers from different cities of Isfahan province were chosen randomly. However, the variables of sex, age, number of years of experience and degrees was considered in the final choice.

3.4 Research instruments

The used instruments for the present thesis included:

- 1: A questionnaire based on Karavas- Doukas (1996) and modified by the researcher was used in collecting data regarding the principles of CLT.
- 2: An observation form was also completed when observing the teachers in practice to see how they apply CLT principles in real contexts.

3.4.1 The modified questionnaire based on Karavas- Doukas (1996)

A questionnaire including the major principles of communicative language teaching, namely group work, quality and quantity of error correction, the place and importance of grammar, the role and contribution of the learners, and the role of the teacher, served as the instrument of the study.

This questionnaire, which was originally developed by Karavas- Doukas (1996), consisted of 24 statements (12 favorable and 12 unfavorable) which followed the Likert scale.

According to Karavas-Doukas (1996), the maximum score that can be obtained in the attitude scale and the one indicative of the most favorable attitude toward the CLT is 120, whereas the minimum score and the one indicating the least favorable attitude is 24. As such, the participants' responses would fall within the range of 24 to 120, the neutral point of the continuum being 72. (A copy of this questionnaire is available in Appendix A)

3.4.1.1 Validity of the Questionnaire

In order to determine the validity of the instrument, in a pilot study, the researcher randomized the 24 items of the questionnaire and distributed them among 104 teachers of high schools and institutes. Having collected the data, the researchers conducted the data analysis to calculate the validity coefficients in terms of factor analysis, the results are presented in table 3.1.

Table 3.1.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Questionnaire

1	Quality and quantity of error correction (4 statements)
2	Group work/pair work (5 statements)
3	Place/importance of grammar (5 statements)
4	The role of the teacher in the classroom (4 statements)
5	The role and contribution of learners in the learning process (6 statements)

3.4.1.2 Reliability of the Questionnaire

The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated by Karavas-Doukas (1996) utilizing the split-half method. The correlated split-half reliability coefficient was .81 which is a relatively high and acceptable index. Based on the data gathered for the study, the overall internal consistency of the questionnaire was calculated using Cronbach alpha (CA). It turned out to be 0.7924 pointed.

3.4.2 The observation form

Numerous methods of investigating language teaching and learning are in common use. One current method is direct classroom observation. In order to find out to what extent the principles of communicative language teaching (CLT) are applied in language classes, an observation form was used. The form was devised based on the principles of CLT. The principles which were studied through the observation included the following list. In fact, the teachers were evaluated based on the following criteria:

- 1-Emphasis on communication not mastery of language form
- 2- Lack of strict dependence of classroom on text book
- 3- Lack of formal/explicit teaching of grammar
- 4- Primacy of communicative activities over grammar
- 5- Primary interaction of learners with each other rather than with the teacher
- 6- Focus on group work which is a better way to learn a language than teacher-fronted class
- 7- Infrequent treatment of errors
- 8- Responsibility of teacher for responding learners' language needs

9-Helping students in any way that motivates them to work with language

3.4.2.1 Validity and reliability of observation plan

The validity of the observation plan was approved by three experienced professors of the Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics at Shahreza University. To get the reliability of the observation, it was tried to gain both intra-coder and inter-coder reliability for the scheme. For intra-coder reliability, one of the researchers observed and tape recorded the same class at different times and the correlation between the observations and the recordings was computed. To gain inter-coder reliability, two classes were observed by three observers independently at the same time and the correlation of marking the activities done in those classes represented the inter-coder reliability. The intra-coder and inter-coder reliability of the observation plans was found to be .93 and .85 respectively. (A copy of the observation form is put in Appendix B.)

3.5 Procedures

This study was conducted through two phases. The first phase of this study was quantitative since the researcher collected numerical data through distributing the questionnaire explained above. The second phase was qualitative: the researcher observed the practice of some teachers. The study had two phases of collecting data including distribution of questionnaire, and observation. In the first phase of the study a questionnaire devised by Karavas-Doukas (1996) was used. The last step for the collecting data was unstructured observation of classroom practices of the teachers. The purpose of this phase was to know what principles of CLT the teachers who participated in the study apply in language classes. These two phases of data collection are complementary, and they complete each other. Analyzing the results of these phases of data collection and comparing and contrasting them would make the final result(s) more comprehensive and meaningful.

3.6 Data analysis

To find answer for the research questions, first, the needed data were gathered through observation and questionnaire, then the collected data were coded into and analyzed by SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 20). Then appropriate statistical procedures such as frequency and percentage were applied in analyzing the data. In addition, the open ended questions were qualitatively analyzed and discussed.

To analyze the data, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. For the purpose of quantitative data analysis, the answers to the questionnaire items were tabulated in SPSS and the percentage and mean of participants' responses to items of the questionnaire was calculated. As to qualitative data analysis, by utilizing classroom observations the researcher investigated which principles apply in CLT classroom. The two phases of this study were complementary, that is the findings of each phase explained and elaborated more on the findings of the other phases. In other words the qualitative data were used to explain the quantitative data.

Chapter Four
Data Analysis and Results

4.1. Overview

In the present chapter, the researcher intends to give some information on the statistical analyses and the results of the study and also answer the research questions. Using a variety of statistical methods, such as mean and frequency tables, the researcher came to the research findings. By showing the numbers and figures in various tables and diagrams and placing them in different formulas, the researcher tried to extract a number of significant and useful results from the raw data. This research intended to find logical explanations regarding the principles which guide the EFL methodology in junior high schools in Iran. In addition, it was intended to investigate the extent to which the CLT principles are applied in the real ELT context of junior high schools in Iran.

Accordingly, this chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section which deals with the first research question reveals the principles which guide the EFL methodology in junior high schools in Iran. In the second section the extent to which the CLT principles are applied in the real ELT context of junior high schools in Iran has been investigated.

4.2 Results

4.2.1 Investigating the first research question.

The first research question of the present thesis sought to find out to what extent the CLT principles are applied in the real ELT context of junior high schools in Iran. To find answer to this question, a questionnaire including the major principles of communicative language teaching, namely group work, quality and quantity of error correction, the place and importance of grammar, the role and contribution of the learners, and the role of the teacher, was utilized as the instrument of the study. This questionnaire was originally developed by Karavas- Doukas (1996) and consisted of 24 statements (12 favorable and 12 unfavorable) which followed the Likert scale. This questionnaire was distributed among 50 EFL high school teachers teaching in Isfahan high schools.

The items of the teachers' questionnaires were investigated in terms of their percentage so as to see what their general attitude is toward the factors representing the communicative language teaching (CLT) features. To better illustrate the pattern of the respondents' answers to the questionnaires, the first two alternatives (strongly agree and agree) and the last two (disagree and strongly disagree) were combined. The responses of the teachers are summarized in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1.

High School Teacher Attitude in Terms of Frequency (F) and Percentage (P)

	Items	SA+A		U		D+SD	
		F	P	F	P	F	P
1. Grammatical correctness is one of the criteria to judge the learner's performance.		19	38%	14	28%	17	34%
2. Group work activities are essential		42	84%	5	10%	3	6%
3. Grammar is as a means not an end		36	72%	7	14%	7	14%
4. Learners can suggest the content of the lesson		16	32%	6	12%	28	56%
5. Training learners to take responsibility for their own learning		29	58%	4	8%	17	34%
6. The teachers' feedback must be focused on the appropriateness		33	66%	7	14%	10	20%
7. The teacher is no longer an "authority" and "instructor"		28	56%	6	12%	16	32%
8. The learner-centered approach to LT encourages responsibility		42	84%	1	2%	7	14%
9. Group work allows students to explore problems		34	64%	3	6%	13	26%
10. Errors are a natural part of learning language		32	64%	6	12%	12	24%
11. Organizing the teaching so as to suit the needs of all is impossible in a large class		18	36%	12	24%	20	40%
12. Knowledge of the rules of a language is not sufficient.		41	82%	3	6%	6	12%
13. Group work activities are practical		34	68%	2	4%	14	28%
14. Much correction is wasteful of time		36	72%	2	4%	12	24%
15. CLT learners are fluent and accurate		23	46%	4	8%	23	46%
16. The teacher has many different roles while Teaching		36	72%	3	6%	11	22%
17. Mastering the rules of grammar is not enough		41	82%	4	8%	5	10%
18. Language is effective as a vehicle for doing something		44	88%	3	6%	3	6%
19. Activities such as explanations, writing and examples are not the only role of the teachers		34	68%	5	10%	11	22%
20. Tasks and activities should be based on the students' needs		44	88%	2	4%	4	8%
21. Small group work can replace whole class and formal instruction		36	72%	5	10%	9	18%
22. Through group work the teacher can monitor the students' performance		27	54%	8	16%	15	30%
23. To communicate effectively, direct instruction in the rules and terminology of grammar is NOT essential		26	52%	10	20%	14	28%
24. The teacher must supplement the textbook with other materials and tasks		28	56%	10	20%	12	24%

The majority of the high school teachers agree with and appreciate the principles of CLT such as "group work activities are practical and essential" (Items 13 and 9), "To communicate effectively, direct instruction in the rules and terminology of grammar is NOT essential" (Item 23), " The teacher has many different roles while teaching " (Item 16), "Language is effective as a vehicle for doing something " (Item 18), "the leaner-centered approach to language teaching encourages learning" (Item 8) and "errors are a natural part of learning language" (Item 14). However, the majority of the teachers stated that in practice the CLT principles in large classes are impractical if not impossible (Item 11). Overall, regarding the 24 items of the questionnaire, the high school teachers expressed positive attitudes toward the CLT principles with a mean of 81.86 and a standard deviation of 6.74.

Since the overall mean is almost one standard deviation and a half above the neutral point (72), it can be concluded that high school teachers have a positive attitude toward CLT. To present a clearer picture of the teacher attitude findings, the items of the questionnaire are categorized and summarized under the 5 principles of CLT (see Table 4.2). Table 4.2 presents the point that the five principles of CLT are appreciated by the teachers of high school.

Table 4.2
High School Teacher Attitude Regarding the Five Principles of CLT

Principles	SA+A		U		D+SD	
	F	P	F	P	F	P
1. Grammar role (Items 1, 3, 12, 17 & 23)	163	65.2%	38	15.2%	49	19.6%
2. Group work task and activities (Items 2,9, 13, 21 & 22)	173	69.2%	23	9.2%	54	21.6%
3. Error correction (Items 6,10, 14 & 15)	124	62%	19	9.5%	57	28.5%
4. Learner role (Items 4, 5, 8, 11, 18 & 20)	193	64.33%	28	9.33	79	26.33%
5. Teacher role (Items 7, 16, 19 & 24)	126	63%	24	12%	50	25%

According to the figures given in Table 4.2, more than 60% of all the participants agree with applying the five principles of CLT; however, to clarify the point the descriptive statistics regarding what the teachers had chosen is presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3
Descriptive Statistics Of The Five Principles of CLT As Chosen By The participants

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Principles of CLT	5	124.00	193.00	155.80	30.12806

Since the overall mean (155.80) is almost one standard deviation and a half above the neutral point (72), it can be concluded that the teachers have a positive attitude toward CLT with a standard deviation of 30.12. Having found out that the participants have positive belief regarding planting the tenets and principles of CLT in language classroom, in the following section it will be discussed whether the language teachers in Iranian high schools in practice follow what they believe or not. To

this end, as it was said earlier, the teacher participants of the study were observed while they were teaching in language classroom. The results are presented below.

The results of Classroom Observations

As it was mentioned earlier, in order to observe the high school classes, and in order to check if the language teachers practically follow what they claim in language classes or not, the observation form developed based on the tenets of CLT was used. To put it another way, the researcher used the observation form to understand to what extent the principles of CLT are applied in Iranian high school English classes. At first, the descriptive statistics of classroom observations were calculated and statistics like frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were tallied. The results are presented in Table 4.4. In order to give a clearer picture of the used principles, the first two alternatives (very much and much) and the last two (a little and very little) were combined.

Table 4.4.
Descriptive Statistics for the Observation of High schools

Items	Very much & Much		A		A little & Little	
	F	P	F	P	F	P
1. Focus on language as a medium of communication	6	12%	0	0	44	88%
2. Classroom activities maximizing communication Opportunities	5	10%	0	0	45	90%
3. More pupil-oriented	0	0	2	4%	48	96%
4. Tolerating error correction	0	0	0	0	50	100%
5. Rehearsal of real-life situations and for real-life Communication	0	0	0	0	50	100%
6. More emphasis on pair-work and group-work.	0	0	6	12%	44	88%
7. Emphasis on both oral skills & written skills	0	0	5	10%	45	90%
8. Teaching grammar but less systematically	0	0	0	0	50	100%
9. Use of idiomatic/everyday language	0	0	0	0	50	100%
10. Use of authentic resources	0	0	2	4%	48	96%
11. Emphasis on Inferential questions	0	0	2	4%	48	96%
12. Emphasis on meaning	0	0	0	0	50	100%
13. Use of variety of language structure	0	0	0	0	50	100%
14. Emphasis on both fluency and accuracy	0	0	2	4%	48	96%
15. The teacher as the facilitator	0	0	6	12%	44	88%
16. Focus on all the components of Communicative Competence (including Grammatical, Discourse, sociolinguistic and Strategic competence)	0	0	0	0	50	100%

According to the descriptive statistics given in Table 4.4, which shows the amount of attention and importance that high school teachers attached to the principles of CLT in public high school, in real practice, the high school teachers considered the least amount of importance to the features of CLT. In other words, in 88% of cases it was observed "focus was not on language as a medium of communication", while the main principle of language, according to the principles of CLT is communicative competence. Similarly, 90% of the teacher participants were observed not to maximize communication opportunities through classroom activities. None of the high school teachers, in real practice, could tolerate the students' errors; however, error correction should be minimal. Pupil orientation in 96% of cases did not attract high school teachers' attention. Rehearsal of real-life situations and for real-life communication was not seen to be practiced at all, and this is what is completely against the principles of CLT.

Pair and group work which is the basis of CLT was not observed in 88%. 90% of participants did not attach importance on both oral skills and written skills simultaneously. In 100% of cases, grammar was taught directly, although according to the tenets of CLT, grammar should not attract direct attention. Use of everyday language was observed to be minimized to zero. Using authentic resources and inferential questions were not used in 96% of situations. On the contrary, in 100% of situations, the teachers emphasized on meaning. Variety in using language structures was not observed at all. Fluency and accuracy were not emphasized simultaneously, and in 88% of the cases teachers did not consider themselves as facilitators. Finally, none of the observed teachers focused on all the components of communicative competence (including Grammatical, Discourse, sociolinguistic and Strategic competence), which is a basic tenet of CLT.

This result is in total contrast with what the Iranian high school teachers expressed regarding the CLT principles. There might be two possibilities for such contradictory results. Either the teachers do not practice what they claim or they have some limitations to substantiate their viewpoints in real practice. However, in order to assure the obtained results, the same procedure as with the previous questionnaire was followed to determine the neutral point of the second questionnaire. As the total number of the items in this questionnaire is 16 which are followed by 5 Likert scale, the total score is 80 with the minimum score being 16. The difference between these two values is 64, the middle point of which is 32. Then by adding 16 and 32 the neutral point was calculated to be 48. In fact, his procedure was developed by Karavas- Doukas (1996).

Table 4.5
Basic Descriptive Statistics for the Observation of CLT Principles in High Schools

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
VAR00002	16	44.00	50.00	42.7500	2.48998

According to the results presented in Table 4.5, the overall mean of observing the CLT principles in high schools is 42.75 and the standard deviation is 2.48. Accordingly, the overall mean is around 2.1 standard deviations below the neutral point (48), it can be concluded that the teachers do not practice CLT in Iranian high schools.

In order to assure whether the difference between the teachers' claims regarding application of the principles of CLT and what they do in reality, is significant, the mean score of the two groups

of the results- the mean score of the observation and the questionnaire- were compared using an independent samples T-test, the results are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6

Independent Samples T-Test for the Results of Observation and The Questionnaire

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
VAR00002 Equal variances assumed	13.933	.001	7.259	38	.000	15.29167	2.10664	11.02700	19.55634
Equal variances not assumed			8.613	29.025	.000	15.29167	1.77536	11.66078	18.92256

As shown in Table 4.6, the observed level of significance is 0.000 which is smaller than the identified level of significance. ($0.000 < 0.05$). There is a statistically significant difference between what the teachers claim about CLT and what they practice in reality.

4.2.2 Investigating the second research question.

As it was stated earlier, the second research question sought to investigate the principles which guide the EFL methodology in junior high schools in Iran. In order to find answer to this question, a questionnaire which investigated the three categories of agents in language learning classrooms, namely the lesson, the pupil and the teacher, was used. It should be noted that each one of these categories has some subsections which play a crucial role in choosing what method language teachers choose to teach. The results are discussed below.

Table 4.7*High School Teachers' Performance in language Classes*

A. The lesson	Poor	Fair	Good	Superior
Aims	27	10	13	
Achievement of aims	25	8	17	
Utilization of pupils' experience	25	8	17	
Quality of presentation	20	20	10	
Sequential development of lesson	25	14	11	
Teacher modeling of new material	28	17	5	
Use of gestures to elicit varied pupil participation	30	12	8	
Variety of practice activities	25	8	17	
Skill in questioning	28	10	12	
Use of teaching aids	28	10	12	
Motivation	25	17	7	
Skill in dealing with answers	20	20	10	
Ability to maintain interests	28	12	10	
Summary of lesson	30	8	12	
B. The pupil				
Extend of participation	24	20	6	
Quality of participation	30	10	10	
Social interaction	30	15	5	
C. The teacher				
Personal fitness, personality, vitality, speech, knowledge	22	20	8	
Ability to establish rapport	25	10	15	
Pronunciation and use of English	30	10	10	
Classroom management(grouping)	20	25	5	
Attention to routine	25	10	15	

Table 4.7, presents the performance of high school teachers in English classes. According to the statistics presented in Table 4.7, the classroom context is divided into three major categories, each of which plays a crucial and determining role in choosing the methodology used in language classroom. The first category deals with the lesson.

14 subcategories are included under this class. These 14 items, to some extent determine which method to use in language classes. The first class deals with the aims of the lesson from among the 50 observed classes, in 27 cases the aim of the lesson was identified to be poor; in addition, in 25 observation cases, the amount of the achievement of the aims was shown to be poor. Utilization of pupils' experience was observed in 25 cases to be poor. The way the lesson was presented was also observed to be poor in 20 cases. In 25 cases the sequence of the lesson was seen to be poor. It was also observed that teachers do not model the lesson in 28 cases out of 50. In 30 cases the teachers did not use gestures to present materials and elicit pupils' participation.

As shown in Table 4.7, other determining items such as variety in class activities and questioning skills were also observed to be poor. Furthermore, the teachers' motivation was observed to be poor in language classes, and in 28 cases, the teachers did not use teaching aids. 20 cases of the observed classes showed that teachers were not skillful in answering the students' questions. In 28 cases, the teachers were not able to keep the students' interests. According to what was said, the materials in most cases do not provide for a methodology such as CLT. Another group of classroom related issues consists the students and their performance in language classes. According to the statistics presented in Table 4.7, the amount of pupils' participation was observed to be poor in 24 cases. In 30 cases, the quality of students' participation was seen to be poor. Similarly, in 30 cases the pupils were found not to have suitable interaction.

The last class of the items which was observed was the performance of the teachers in language classes. According to the observations by the researcher, personal fitness, personality, vitality, speech and knowledge of language teachers was observed to be poor in 22 cases. In new trends of language teaching the focus is on communication; however, the teachers' ability to establish rapport was observed to be poor in 25 cases. Teachers' pronunciation and use of English was identified to be poor in 30 cases. In 20 cases the classroom management was evaluated to be poor, and finally, in 25 cases the teachers did not paid attention to the routines of the language classes.

All and all, as it was said, the performance of language teachers and the content of lessons along with the role that students had in high school classes, led to implementation of traditional methods of language teaching. These are all against the tenets of CLT. Accordingly, it can be said that in order for a language class to be communicative and active, the roles of language teachers and learners should change.

4.3 Chapter summary

This chapter elaborated on the gained results of the study, in fact through the gathered data, it was tried to test the research hypotheses. Through a series of statistical analyses, the data were analyzed and the hypotheses were tested. In the next chapter, the general conclusion and discussion of the findings are presented.

Chapter Five

Discussions, Conclusions, Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

5.1. Overview

In the present chapter, the results presented in the previous chapter are going to be discussed. The obtained data are discussed in this chapter, and the researcher is trying to find some acceptable answers to the research questions. Moreover, the findings will be reasonably justified; that is to say, based on the literature reviewed and the researcher's own experience, the possible rationale behind each reason is presented. This chapter also contains the conclusion of the study and some implications and explanations are drawn from the results of this study. The limitations and some suggestions for further research for those who are interested to pursue the same line of research are offered later in this chapter, too. Also the results and findings of this research are compared with some other studies in this field. In the following section a brief glimpse is taken to the general findings of this research.

5.2. Results in Brief

The above-mentioned procedure was carried out and certain significant findings were obtained as are presented in brief:

- More than 60% of all the participants agree with applying the five principles of CLT, namely, 1-the implicit role and indirect teaching of grammar rather than explicit grammar instruction and emphasizing the role of grammar as a tool rather than an end. 2-Focusing on group work and task activity rather than individualized teaching.3-Errors are natural part of language learning and error correction is wasting the time. 4- Focusing on a learner-centered class in which the content can be suggested by the learners.
- Although the language teachers to a great extent agreed with the principles of CLT, in practice the language teachers at Iranian high school were observed not to follow these principles.
- In general, three categories of agents in language learning classrooms, namely the lesson, the pupil and the teacher determine the methodology which is used in language classes.
- The used materials in Iranian high schools in most cases do not provide for a methodology like CLT.
- The performance of language teachers and the content of lessons along with the role that students had in high school classes, led to implementation of traditional methods of language teaching.

5.3. Detailed Discussion of the Results

In the process of the research in hand, it was tried to test the study hypotheses empirically, so the following questions were the emphases in the current study:

Research question No 2: To what extent are CLT principles applied in the real ELT context of junior high schools in Iran.

Research question No 1: What are the principles which guide the EFL methodology in junior high schools in Iran?

5.3.1 Addressing Research Question One

According to the data gained from this study and the statistics presented in chapter four and based on the treatment administered to the participants, it seems that the claim of

using CLT in Iranian high school language classes, does not match with what happens in reality. Differently stated, although the ministry of education claims that CLT is practiced in Iranian language classes, what happens in reality has nothing to do with CLT and it is a grammar-based method. This contradiction may be refer back to the fact that either the teachers do not practice what they claim or they have some limitations to substantiate their viewpoints in real practice.

Ashari and zarrin (2014) in a study stated that the main problems mentioned were related to the lack of compatibility of this method with the existing cultural values in Iranian context and EFL learners' need and motivation. Considering the perceived difficulties in utilizing CLT demands and what the EFL situation in Iran allows, it can be concluded that such problems need to be resolved if CLT is to be successfully implemented in EFL context (Iran). In addition, they found that the source of this problem turns back to Political issues, cultural issues, unauthentic materials, chosen topics in the curriculum, students' motivation, lack of balance in presenting the materials and time limit. Awareness of such problems can provide the curriculum writers and textbooks designers as well as EFL teachers and learners with insightful ideas about how to manage and, if required, to change their teaching and learning activities for the successful implementation of this method.

The findings of this research are in line with the findings by Ashari and Zarrin (2014) who investigated the problems and constraints in applying communicative teaching (CLT) in Iran, and came to this conclusion that this method is not applied in Iranian language classes. In the same vein with the present study Dahmardeh (2009) believed that Iranian students after teaching and learning English for seven years and finishing high school, cannot communicate in real situations, but a few simple cases such as greeting and taking a taxi .The application of the communicative approach in teaching English as a foreign language; however, is associated with some problems that can cause the method turn out not to be successful and the learning outcome not to be efficient enough.(Koosha and Yakhabi,2013).

The results of the present study also lend support to the study by Razmjoo and Riazi (2006) who studied the practicing CLT language teachers in Shiraz. They concluded that teachers have a positive attitude towards CLT but they do not practice it much. These results are not consistent with the common sense view that the public school teachers might not view CLT positively in EFL contexts, including Iran. The results of the study indicate the fact that in real practice, the public domain teachers attach the least amount of importance to the tenets representing CLT; that is, "the target language is not used as the medium of communication,"" error correction is done directly and on the spot," the use of idioms, authentic sources and oral skills is the least," and " grammar is taught systematically and in details." This result is in total contrast with the public domain teachers ideas regarding the regarding the CLT principles (Ramzjoo and Riazi, 2006).

Similarly, Deckert (2004), referring to the student centered characteristic of CLT, emphasizes that "CLT approach features low profile teacher roles, frequent pair work or small group problem solving, students responding to authentic samples of English, extended exchanges on high interest topics, and the integration of the four basic skills, namely speaking, listening, reading, and writing" (p.13). He further states that CLT discourages pervasive teacher-controlled drills, quizzing of memorized material, and extensive explanation on forms of English. Student- centeredness is not observed in Iranian high schools.

Finally, a case study conducted by Incecey and Incecey (2009) investigated the perceptions of 30 Turkish college students to see the appropriateness and effectiveness of communicative and non-communicative activities in their EFL classes. The results of this study suggested that EFL

countries such as Turkey needed to modify their teaching methods in a way that would take students' previous educational habits into consideration. It was reported that students benefited from CLT if communicative and non-communicative activities were combined in English classrooms. That is, aligning CLT with traditional teaching practices seemed to be beneficial for EFL students.

5.3.2. Addressing Research Question Two

The second question of the current study shed light on the principles which guide the EFL methodology in junior high schools in Iran. In a quest for finding the answer for this question, a questionnaire which investigated the three categories of agents in language learning classrooms, namely the lesson, the pupil and the teacher, was used. It should be noted that each one of these categories has some subsections which play a crucial role in choosing what method language teachers choose to teach. Classroom context, for example, is divided into three major categories, each of which plays a crucial and determining role in choosing the methodology used in language classroom. The first category deals with the lesson. 14 subcategories are included under this class. These items, to some extent determine which method to use in language classes. In this study it was observed that the classroom related issues of determining the teaching methodology along with teacher-related issues and pupil-related issues are poor according to what is taking place in language classes in Iran and this leads to implementation of the traditional method in language classes.

Among studies conducted in this regard is the study done by Karavas-Doukas (1996) who investigated teachers' attitudes toward the language teaching methodology in Greece. It was reported that although the English curriculum in Greece was based on the premises of communicative language teaching, teachers showed a tendency to carry on the traditional teacher-oriented instruction style. The findings of this study suggested that teachers either did not understand or were unable to see the practical implications of the CLT principles.

5.4. Conclusion

The study was in fact an attempt to shed more light on the point whether communicative language teaching is implemented in Iranian High school English classes or not. In addition, the study also tried to investigate which principles lead to the selection of the methodology in language classes. As it was illuminated in the preceding section of the study, the findings of the study revealed that first: the tenets of CLT as a language teaching methodology are not followed in Iranian EFL high school classes. Second, issues such as teacher-related issues, pupil-related issues and lesson-related issues determine which methodology to be planted in language classes which do not lead to the selection of CLT in Iranian high schools.

5.5. Implications of the Study

The aim of the present paper was to evaluate the problems that could lead to the failure of communicative language teaching in EFL contexts. Compared with other methods and approaches, CLT activities are more difficult to design and implement and place greater burden on EFL teachers. Not only the implementation, but also the assessment of this method seems to be difficult for EFL teachers who are usually used to clear-cut assessment procedures. Considering the perceived difficulties in utilizing CLT demands and what the EFL situation in many countries allows, it can be concluded that such problems need to be resolved if CLT is to be successfully implemented in EFL contexts. Awareness of such problems can provide EFL teachers and learners with insightful ideas

about how to manage and, to change their teaching and learning activities for the successful implementation of this method.

As seen in the study, a number of constraints have made it difficult for CLT to be integrated into English teaching classrooms in Iran. One of the main reasons is that teachers lack the time and energy to devise communicative teaching materials and activities due to their heavy workload. Thus, the first implication of the study is that teachers' heavy workload should be decreased, and thus their work conditions should be improved.

Another implication of the study is that English teaching in Iran needs to be better planned. English is one of the core subjects in Iranian education system. However, the resources available are not sufficient to meet the needs of such a huge program. Given that there are too many students who need to learn English but not enough number of teachers, students are placed, particularly in public schools, into large English classrooms. Accordingly, English instruction is mostly limited to traditional large-group instruction where grammar is given a high significance while oral skills such as listening and speaking are neglected. This being the case, students learning English for many years at school cannot communicate effectively and efficiently with English speakers.

While the present study focused on English teachers in Iran, much of what the Iranian teachers said about communicative and non-communicative activities in the Iranian classrooms and about their difficulties in using communicative activities is common to many parts of the world. EFL teachers and students in these countries share much of the same perception with regard to their classroom teaching activities. In addition, information from this kind of study is also crucial for teachers to develop their teaching methods based on their students' needs.

Another related issue as the results of this research suggest, is that it is needed in Iran to make a reform on the current examination system, since in language tests, only the grammatical points are tested and no communicative test is currently performed. This is due to the fact that English teaching practices are shaped according to the skills taught in language classes which are mainly grammar-based. Attention should be shifted towards other language skills such as listening, speaking, and writing.

Since this study was done among Iranian high school classes; therefore, it can be a starting point to improve language teaching in Iranian high schools. It must be noted that in order for the findings of this study to be pedagogically valid and applicable, first of all, they must be subjected to replication and empirical validation. It is then and only then that the results and findings can be generalized to other populations.

Those language institutes and universities which are following the task of mastering a foreign language in general and oral performance of EFL learners in specific, can experience a success in their task via using the findings of the present study. Meanwhile the people in charge of the ministry of research and science and ministry of education can arrange their plans in a way so that the educational centers make use of the outcomes such studies.

5.6. Limitations of the Study

This study, like almost all studies done in the field of teaching English as a foreign language, is not free of limitations. There exist of course some other problems and possible remedies that have not been mentioned in this article. Basically, due to the nature of CLT which is defined differently by different people one cannot claim to come to an absolute conclusion about the problems associated with using CLT in EFL contexts. Therefore, some limitations of the present study might be noted before the results could be generalized. Firstly, the samples of the participants were restricted to only

100 male and female junior high school teachers. Future studies on more teachers implementing cooperative learning in more classes are recommended in order to generate more evidence on the effects of cooperative learning. In addition, this study was restricted to Iranian high school level EFL classes, and a limited duration of time was considered in this study, for longer periods of time the results may be different. In the present study the necessary data were obtained using observation and questionnaires, other studies can be conducted using other data gathering instruments such as opinionnaires and interviews with language teachers in Iranian high schools.

5.7 Suggestions for Further Research

As far as the scope of this study is concerned, there are some questions which are remained unanswered, and could potentially serve as research questions for further studies. Some of these questions are listed below as recommendations for further research:

1. What are the characteristics and learning styles of Iranian students learning English and English teaching in Iran? Gaining better knowledge on these aspects can help to develop English teaching methods which will better address the unique issues in EFL classrooms.
2. What are students' perceptions of communicative and non-communicative activities in EFL classrooms in Iran? The answer to this question can offer important information for teachers and pedagogues, and help them better understand the needs and interests of learners so that they can make informed decisions in implementing a communicative approach in their classrooms.
3. What are the perceptions of administrators regarding teaching methodologies utilized in Iranian EFL classrooms? The answer to this question can suggest a clear understanding of the perceptions and expectations of administrators who run language institutes.
4. How can Iranian EFL teachers balance grammar instruction and communicative competence in their language classrooms? The answer to this question is crucial to provide more direct assistance to classroom English teachers since Iranian EFL teachers feel and believe that grammar instruction is necessary for Iranian teachers. Yet, they are not well informed as to how to balance grammar teaching with that of communicative abilities.
6. What are teachers' and students' perceptions of CLT at the junior high school? This can bring further information into the field of CLT in EFL settings. In addition, it can suggest interesting sources of comparison between EFL teaching at the junior level.
7. How do demographic factors (i.e., age, gender, years of experience), as well as the school settings (i.e., public vs. private, urban vs. rural) affect teachers' perceptions and practices of CLT in their English classrooms? Answers to these questions are useful since this research did not extend the analysis to determine how much demographic factors and school settings affect teachers' perceptions and use of CLT in the Iranian context.

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Appendices

Appendix A

The questionnaire based on Karavas- Doukas (1996)

Items	Strongly agree	agree	undecided	disagree	Strongly disagree
1. Grammatical correctness is one of the criteria to judge the learner's performance.					
2. Group work activities are essential					
3. Grammar is as a means not an end					
4. Learners can suggest the content of the lesson					
5. Training learners to take responsibility for their own learning					
6. The teachers' feedback must be focused on the appropriateness					
7. The teacher is no longer an "authority" and "instructor"					
8. The learner-centered approach to LT encourages responsibility					
9. Group work allows students to explore problems					
10. Errors are a natural part of learning language					
11. Organizing the teaching so as to suit the needs of all is impossible in a large class					
12. Knowledge of the rules of a language is not sufficient.					
13. Group work activities are practical					
14. Much correction is wasteful of time					
15. CLT learners are fluent and accurate					
16. The teacher has many different roles while Teaching					
17. Mastering the rules of grammar is not enough					
18. Language is effective as a vehicle for doing something					
19. Activities such as explanations, writing and examples are not the only role of the teachers					
20. Tasks and activities should be based on the students' needs					
21. Small group work can replace whole class and formal instruction					
22. Through group work the teacher can monitor the students' performance					
23. To communicate effectively, direct instruction in the rules and terminology of grammar is NOT essential					
24. The teacher must supplement the textbook with other materials and tasks					

Appendix B

Observation checklist

	Very much	Much	Average	A little	Little
1. Focus on language as a medium of communication					
2. Classroom activities maximizing communication Opportunities					
3. More pupil-oriented					
4. Tolerating error correction					
5. Rehearsal of real-life situations and for real-life Communication					
6. More emphasis on pair-work and group-work.					
7. Emphasis on both oral skills & written skills					
8. Teaching grammar but less systematically					
9. Use of idiomatic/everyday language					
10. Use of authentic resources					
11. Emphasis on Inferential questions					
12. Emphasis on meaning					
13. Use of variety of language structure					
14. Emphasis on both fluency and accuracy					
15. The teacher as the facilitator					
16. Focus on all the components of Communicative Competence (including Grammatical, Discourse, sociolinguistic and Strategic competence)					

In the Name of God

Pedagogical Knowledge and Methodology Choice among EFL Teachers in Junior High Schools in Iran

**This Dissertation is dedicated to
My Family**

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