

Teachers' perceptions, attitudes and expectations about Communicative  
Language Teaching (CLT) in post-secondary education in Bangladesh  
by

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### ABSTRACT

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is advocated by many applied linguists and language teachers as one of the effective approaches to English language teaching. CLT has expanded beyond English as a Second Language (ESL) contexts to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. But the implementation of CLT in EFL contexts has proved to be difficult. The goal of the research is to investigate EFL teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and expectations regarding CLT in post secondary education in Bangladesh. The research questions for this study are: (a) what are the perceptions of the participating post secondary EFL teachers about the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)?, (b) what do these teachers believe are the practices that explain communicative activities?, (c) which activities do these teachers use in their classrooms?, (d) what do teachers think are the main barriers in implementing CLT method in Bangladesh?, (e) what do they think are the areas of successes and difficulties in current English teaching in Bangladesh?, and (f) what do they identify as training needs for the successful implementation of CLT in Bangladesh? The participants in this study are 36 university-level EFL teachers. The main instrument used to elicit data for the study was a written questionnaire. It was found that teachers' perceptions of communicative activities and CLT approach correspond with their reported classroom practices. There are positive indications that Bangladeshi EFL teachers are well aware of the basic principles of communicative language teaching and they practice the major communicative activities in the classroom. There were some discrepancies between teachers' perceptions and practices uncovered in this study. These discrepancies are caused by not teachers' misconceptions of CLT or their limited knowledge of CLT pedagogy; rather possibly due to some practical reasons like lack of resources, traditional exams, unequipped and large classes, lack of support from administration.

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Dedication

To my respected parents Md. Bazlul Karim and Amina Khatun,  
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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### *Purpose*

This research investigated the beliefs, attitudes and language instruction practices of 36 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in Bangladesh. Such research is fundamental to implementing alternative approaches to curriculum and instruction of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Bangladesh because, in order for an implementation strategy to be effective, it is first necessary to identify those issues, which will facilitate or possibly inhibit change.

The broad framework of communicative language teaching (CLT) is the most common basis within which to investigate language teaching practices. It is a framework, which is widely referred to in policy statements and curricular goals. However, as previous research (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Ellis, 1994; Fox, 1993; Gamal & Debra, 2001; Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Li, 1998; Mustafa, 2001; Penner, 1995; Rollman, 1994; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999; Thompson, 1996) has shown, teachers have widely differing perceptions of the features of CLT for curriculum and instruction. It has also been shown that the issues which facilitate or inhibit change are quite distinct from one national context to another (Aleixo, 2003). While the principles and theories of CLT may be well documented, beliefs and attitudes about the theory are not consistent. Therefore, it was vital to survey the experiences, attitudes and expectations of teachers. The research would identify probable causes and situations for the current deficiencies in English education in Bangladesh and reveal ways to implement communicative language education successfully.

This research investigated English as a Second Language teachers' perception and expectations regarding Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in post secondary education in Bangladesh. The main goal of the research was to identify factors which will facilitate or inhibit the implementation of communicative teaching of English at post secondary level in Bangladesh.

The basic research questions for the study are:

1. What are the perceptions of the participating post secondary EFL teachers about the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)?
2. What do these teachers believe are the practices that explain communicative activities?
3. Which activities do these teachers use in their classrooms?
4. What do teachers think are the main barriers in implementing CLT method in Bangladesh?
5. What do they think are the areas of successes and difficulties in current English teaching in Bangladesh?
6. What do they identify as training needs for the successful implementation of CLT in Bangladesh?

### *Rationale*

Education is an integral and crucial part of development of a nation. General educational achievement in Bangladesh has been seen to lag behind other countries in the region. For example, literacy rates in Bangladesh are lower than India and Sri Lanka (National EFA 2000 Assessment Reports: Asia-Pacific Literacy database). The need for childhood and adult education cannot be stressed enough. Part of this basic education is

the tremendous need for English as a second language education at the secondary and post-secondary levels. In my opinion, even though English is an official second language in Bangladesh, there is widespread recognition that public schools and post-secondary institutions are failing to equip students with adequate English language proficiency to communicate in English, the international language of commerce, science and development. This is so not only because English is an official language in Bangladesh and knowledge of English broadens access to economic and educational opportunities; but also because post-secondary graduates will be in the forefront of linking Bangladesh to the global economic, technological, intellectual, political, cultural and social world. At present it is believed that current English instruction in Bangladesh is inadequate for global communication (National EFA 2000 Assessment Reports). Many able students are not able to take part in higher education in western countries because of a lack of communicative skill in English. One of the major contributors to the economic, technological and political development of Bangladesh is international participation and the key to that participation is communicative competence in English.

All teachers in Bangladesh receive post-secondary education. In order to enhance English language teaching generally in Bangladesh, the curriculum and instruction these future teachers receive needs to reflect a model of language teaching practices, which will contribute to improved education for all. Improvement in post-secondary language education represents the greatest potential to influence instructional practices throughout the entire school system because the type of instruction these future teachers receive will become the standard for instruction of all students in the secondary schools. Improved curriculum design which incorporates new and more effective approaches to language

instruction is fundamental to enriching the quality of education, not only in English, but throughout the school curriculum.

In the new millennium Bangladesh has to participate in the global economy. In an era of information technology and international business, where English is the most important language for communication, it is an opportune time for Bangladesh to take necessary steps to improve and modernize the English language teaching methodology by adapting the communicative language teaching method in English teaching.

### *English Education in Bangladesh*

The education system is divided into 4 levels-- Primary (from grades 1 to 5), Secondary (from grades 6 to 10), Higher Secondary (from grades 11 to 12) and tertiary. Alongside the national educational system, English medium education is also provided by some private enterprises. They offer 'A' level and 'O' level courses. There is also the Madrasa system which emphasizes on Arabic medium Islam-based education. In 1998 there were about 52,000 primary schools 11000 secondary institutions. The five years of lower secondary education concludes with a Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination. Students who pass this examination proceed to two years of Higher Secondary or intermediate training, which culminate in a Higher Secondary School (HSC) examination. Five education boards lead by the Ministry of Education deal with education up to HSC level. Under-graduate level is finished with HSC. Then begins graduate level by universities. Universities also offer Master's and Doctorate degrees. (Web Source: Education in Bangladesh).

As of 2002, there are 14 public, 31 private universities, and 3,639 colleges in Bangladesh. The number of adult literates (15 yrs +) is 64% of whole population of

131.20 million. 95 % people speak Bengali, 5% speak dialects, and English is widely spoken. English is introduced officially to learners at the age of 6 (Primary 1 level) in public sector. 44 hours per week/school year are officially allocated for year 1 and 2, and 82 hours are allocated for year 3 and 4, which varies district to district. This is delivered for 4 hours per week in 6x40minute lessons. Officially there are 30 teaching weeks per year but 20 weeks is closer to reality. English language and literature is compulsory at the secondary and higher secondary levels. No pre-service training is required to teach at the primary levels and secondary and higher secondary English teachers get in-service training. Higher school certificate holders can teach at the primary level and for secondary and higher secondary levels a graduate degree is the minimum requirement to teach. There is a significant number of private language schools in Bangladesh and estimated 5% learners take private language classes. Typically they offer 4 hours of English per week and generally private students' English is more advanced (Web source: The British Council, Dhaka Website and Education in Bangladesh, 2002).

### *CLT in Bangladesh*

Although officially English is a national, second language in Bangladesh, this does not make Bangladesh an ESL country, as there exists mainly a non-Anglophone environment outside English classrooms. The CLT situation in Bangladesh is thus comparable to other EFL countries. The ministry of education has been trying to implement CLT approach in Bangladesh over the last few years through teacher training and textbook writing projects like English Language Teaching Improvement Project (ELTIP), and PERC, among others (Shahiduzzaman, 2003). The English Departments in both private and public universities of the country, and Institution of Modern Languages

(IML) of Dhaka University are now teaching courses on language teaching approaches and methods, along with other areas like syllabus and materials design, needs analysis, testing and evaluation, so on. The English Departments of most of the major public universities and Institution of Modern Languages (IML) of Dhaka University also offer MA, M.Phil, and Ph.D. degrees in ELT/Applied linguistics. The teachers' training colleges, and currently run ERCs (English Resource Centres) are also training teachers in the communicative approaches and methods (Shahiduzzaman, 2003).

### *Summary*

The present chapter has included a general introduction of the study, which elaborates the purpose and rationale behind conducting the research, provides the research questions, and a brief description of the English education and the current CLT situation in Bangladesh. Chapter 2 provides the review of the literature.

## Chapter 2

### Review of literature

#### *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)*

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a prominent theoretical model in English language teaching (ELT) and CLT is accepted by many applied linguists and teachers as one of the effective approaches. As Li (1998) stated, since its first appearance in Europe in early 1970s and subsequent development in English as a second language (ESL) countries over the past 20 years, CLT has extended in scope and has been used by different educators in different ways. A number of research studies have been conducted and much effort has been put into discussion on the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in English as a foreign language (EFL) countries (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Ellis, 1996; Li, 1998; Xiaoju, 1984).

The majority of the studies focus on the difficulties that teachers face while trying to use CLT. Research has confirmed that many of the difficulties faced by teachers in EFL countries are related to the educational system and classroom environment (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Gorsuch, 2000; Li, 1998). As it was found from these researches, in most EFL countries, curriculum and exams are still grammar-based and classrooms are large and not well equipped. Other problems relate to the teachers' and learners' ability to use CLT adequately (Aleixo, 2003). As EFL teaching takes place in non-English speaking countries, solutions for these problems cannot always be imported from ESL countries. Therefore, it is vital to identify the distinction between English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) contexts, and to identify the additional challenges teachers face within EFL environments.

This chapter will identify CLT and its characteristics according to authors in the field of language teaching and learning. A review of existing literature related to communicative competence and how it functions in CLT will be presented. In addition, the chapter will examine the impact that ESL and EFL contexts have on the implementation of CLT methodology. Finally, this chapter will also present a description of studies that are directly related to the research topic, and deal with elements of the research questions.

### *Defining Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)*

Many excellent chapters and books have been written in order to define and capture the characteristics of CLT (Canale, 1983; Celce-Murcia, 2001; Cook, 1991; Lee & VanPatten, 1995; Littlewood, 1981; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Richards & Schmidt, 1983; Rivers, 1968; Rivers, 1978; Savignon, 1983; Savignon, 1997; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992). Other authors have written various articles and reports on CLT and its main elements of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980; Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, & Thurrell, 1997; Fotos, 1994; McGroarty, 1984; Rivers, 1968; Savignon, 1991; Xiaoju, 1984).

Although there are different definitions and versions of what CLT is and how it functions, there are a few general concepts that are agreed upon (Aleixo, 2003). As cited by Aleixo (2003), CLT is defined by Richards, et al. (1992) as “an approach to foreign or second language teaching which emphasizes that the goal of language learning is communicative competence” (p. 65). This definition presents the main concept of CLT, which is the focus on developing communicative competence among learners. According to Richards and Rodgers (1986), CLT aims to make competence the goal of language

teaching and develop procedures to teach the four language skills that allow the independence of language and communication.

Other researchers in this area have defined and characterized CLT in various ways. Howatt (1984), as cited by Aleixo (2003), presents the idea that there are two versions of CLT. He states:

There is, in a sense, a ‘strong’ version of the communicative approach and a ‘weak’ version. 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, characteristically, attempts to integrate such activities into a wider programme of language teaching. ... The ‘strong’ version of communicative teaching, on the other hand, advances the claim that language is acquired through communication, so that it is not merely a question 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)

According to Littlewood (1981), “one of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language, combining these into a more fully communicative view” (p. 1). CLT advocates go beyond teaching grammatical rules of the target language, and recommend that, by using the target language in a meaningful way, learners will develop communicative competence.

In CLT, meaning is important. Meaning, according to Larsen-Freeman (1986), is derived from the written word through an interaction between the reader and the writer,

just as oral communication becomes meaningful through negotiation between speaker and listener. CLT allows learners to acquire the linguistic means to perform different kinds of functions. According to Larsen-Freeman, "Language is for communication" (p. 133) and true communication is not possible without interaction. Larsen-Freeman also asserts that the most obvious characteristic of CLT is that "almost everything that is done is done with a communicative intent" (p. 132). The communicative approach in language learning and teaching considers that the primary goal of language learning is to build up communicative competence, and to be able to use the language appropriately in a given social context.

In every CLT activity, communicative intent is always emphasized. In a communicative class, students use the language a great deal through communicative activities, (e.g., games, role-plays, group work, etc). According to Johnson and Morrow (1981), activities that are genuinely communicative have three features: information gap, choice, and feedback. An information gap takes place when one partner in an exchange knows something that the other partner does not. In an actual communication, the speaker has the choice of what to say and how to say it. In a drill exercise, students do not have choice and feedback does not happen through forming questions. In a transformation drill there is no immediate, interactional feedback, so the speaker cannot evaluate if his or her communicative purpose has been achieved. Language games such as card games, scrambled sentences, problem-solving tasks such as picture strip story, and role-play activities that match the principles of the communicative approach are integrated in a CLT classroom (Larsen-Freeman, 1986).

Richard and Rodgers (2001) state that, "the communicative approach in language teaching starts from a theory of language as communication" (p. 159). Communicative language teaching thus encourages learners to communicate in a meaningful way using the target language from the very initial stage. While using the language, accuracy is important but communication precedes it. So, it is advocated in CLT that if messages are understood, accuracy may be achieved later. Richards and Rodgers also illustrate that "the emphasis in communicative language teaching on the processes of communication, rather than mastery of language forms, leads to different roles for learners from those found in more traditional second language classrooms" (p. 166). Learners are considered as active participants in the language learning process. As a result, CLT also alters the role of the teacher. According to Breen and Candlin (1980), "the teacher has two main 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" (p. 99). Therefore, due to the different roles of the teacher, when teachers consider implementing CLT, it is important to consider the different teaching environments.

CLT emphasizes on learners-centered teaching. According to Savignon (1991), "communicative language teaching has become a term for methods and curricula that embrace both the goals and the processes of classroom learning, for teaching practice that views competence in terms of social interaction" (p. 263). CLT provides learners with the opportunity to experience language through communicative activities. Referring to Savignon (1991), Li (1998) stated that CLT theory recognizes that individual learners possess unique interest, styles, and goals that need to be reflected in the design of

instructional methods. Li (1998) also added that CLT requires teachers to develop materials based on the needs of a particular class and "students must be made to feel secure, unthreatened, and nondefensive" (p. 679) in a CLT classroom.

CLT also introduced the use of authentic materials in the class. Using authentic materials provides students opportunities to experience language actually used by native speakers and allows them to develop strategies for interpreting language as it is actually used by native speakers (Littlewood, 1981). Canale and Swain (1980) also state that, CLT allows learners to respond to genuine communicative needs in realistic second language situations in order for them to develop strategies to understand language as used by native speakers in reality.

Finally, Brown (2001) offered six characteristics as a description of CLT:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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).

There has been overwhelming agreement that the goal of CLT is to develop communicative competence. The authors concur that CLT has as its primary objective to help students develop communicative competence in the target language. One may enquire, 'what is communicative competence?' The following section will review some common concepts dealing with the issue of communicative competence.

### *Communicative Competence*

Canale and Swain (1980) referred communicative competence as the interaction between grammatical competence, or the knowledge of the rules of grammar, and sociolinguistic competence, or knowledge of the rules of use. Canale and Swain (1980) identified grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence as part of communicative competence. According to Canale (1983), grammatical competence "focuses directly on the knowledge and skill required to understand and express accurately the literal meaning of utterances" (p. 7). Sociolinguistic competence represents

the learner's ability to use the language properly in different social contexts.

Sociolinguistic competence thus demonstrates the learners' ability to go beyond the literal meaning of utterances and recognize what is the intent of such utterances in particular social situations. Canale adds, "sociolinguistic competence is crucial in interpreting utterances for their 'social meaning'" (p. 8). Discourse competence relates to the learner's ability to combine grammatical forms and meaning in an appropriate order for diverse needs. Discourse competence highlights that learners must also be aware of the discourse patterns of the language they are learning. Strategic competence relates to the learner's ability to master verbal and non-verbal communication strategies. Canale explains that such strategies may be needed for two main reasons: "to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to limiting conditions in actual communication or to insufficient competence in one or more of the other areas of communicative competence, and to enhance the effectiveness of communication" (p. 10). Strategic competence helps the learner keep on the flow of conversation. At the beginning stages learners may find that strategic competence can help them communicate even with their limited vocabulary.

Savignon has investigated and written extensively on communicative competence. Savignon (1983, 1997) advocated that a classroom model of communicative competence includes Canale & Swain's (1980) four components of competence. Savignon (1997) has defined Communicative Competence as "functional language proficiency; the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning involving interaction between two or more persons belonging to the same (or different) speech community" (p. 272). Savignon (1997), cited by Aleixo (2003), characterizes communicative competence as having the following elements:

- Communicative competence is a dynamic rather than a static concept. It depends on the negotiation of meaning between two or more people who share to some degree the same symbolic system...
- Communicative competence applies to both written and spoken language, as well as to many other symbolic systems.
- Communicative competence is context specific. Communication takes place in an infinite variety of situations, and success in a particular role depends on one's understanding of the context and on prior experience of a similar kind...
- There is a theoretical difference between competence and performance. Competence is defined as a presumed underlying ability and performance as the overt manifestation of that ability. Competence is what one knows. Performance is what one does.
- Communicative competence is relative, not absolute, and depends on the cooperation of all the participants. (p. 14-15)

Communicative competence is thus central to CLT, and therefore requires teachers to be aware of its many characteristics.

As the main aim of this study is to investigate teachers' perceptions, attitudes and expectations about communicative language teaching (CLT) in post-secondary education in Bangladesh, it is important to focus on the teaching context of Bangladesh. Since there is a foreign language environment in Bangladesh, the review of existing literature that relates CLT use in ESL and EFL settings is necessary. The next section of this literature review provides a description of both ESL and EFL environments, and presents aspects of CLT implementation in each one.

### *Difference between ESL and EFL Contexts*

CLT is being used for both English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL). But it is notable that there is a distinction between ESL and EFL contexts. Although both ESL and EFL refer to the teaching of English to non-native speakers, ESL takes place within an English-speaking environment. This represents students learning English in the United States, Canada, England, Australia or any other country where English is the primary language of interaction, communication, and business. Students thus live and interact with native speakers, and have immense exposure to the target language (Ellis, 1996). Ellis distinguishes ESL and EFL contexts stating that:

ESL is integrative, in that it is designed to help individuals function in the community, EFL is a part of the school curriculum, and therefore subject to contextual factors such as support from principal and the local community, government policy etc. It is also dependent on the teacher's language proficiency, teaching resources, the availability of suitable materials... (p. 215)

Thus for ESL students, language learning is more than a curriculum discipline, it's part of survival; they need to learn the language to survive and grow (Ellis, 1996). Another factor is that, in most cases, students in ESL classrooms usually do not share the same native language as their classmates, so creating friendships and interactions in and outside the classroom depends on the learning and development of the target language. In many cases, the culturally heterogeneous classroom leads to higher motivation and faster adaptation of learning strategies (Ellis, 1996). Also ESL teachers should always play the

role of a facilitator. But as in EFL there is no English-speaking environment, EFL teachers are the only providers of target language.

EFL occurs outside the target language environment. It represents students that are learning English in countries like Japan, Korea, China, Bangladesh, Mexico, Saudi Arabia or any other country where English is not the primary form of interaction and communication among people. In this situation, English is part of the school curriculum, or part of extra curricular activities in language institutes. Generally, students in these situations have exposure to the target language only during class time (Ellis, 1996). Often students learn English with the sole purpose of passing university entrance exams (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Gorsuch, 2000; Li, 1998; Liao, 2000). Also, students share the same native language and the temptation to facilitate conversation with the use of the native language at times is irresistible (Liao, 2000). It is also true that students learning in EFL settings may also have various motivations and will not always share the same interest or dedication to language learning (Li, 1998).

The environment in which learners experience the language is, therefore, very important, as it may affect all aspects of the learning process, from motivation to teaching methods used by teachers (Aleixo, 2003). Considering the fact that language teaching and learning is greatly affected by the environment in which it takes place, it is vital to describe the differences between ESL and EFL as related to the implementation of CLT. Another important factor dealing with teaching and learning environment is the cultural appropriateness of CLT in different EFL contexts. In most parts of the world, learning is done in a traditional fashion, and there is very little chance for learner participation and interaction in the classroom. CLT, on the other hand, requires active student participation

that may cause frustration among students and even affect their motivation. Deckert (1987) suggests, “many students [in EFL settings] receive the language classroom primarily as an occasion for a teacher’s guidance through a textbook or for examination on their own mastery of a textbook” (p. 17). In a traditional teaching context, students may perceive communicative activities as games. Burnaby and Sun's (1989) study conducted in China found that students perceived activities common in CLT as games rather than serious learning. It is CLT teacher’s responsibility to help students adjust. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), as cited by Aleixo (2003), teachers should assist students in identifying and understanding the value of communicative activities for their communicative competence development and this period of adjustment will help students become more familiar with CLT, and, in consequence, allow them to benefit more from its activities. As CLT activities can lead to student frustration and even rejection of the target language, teachers have to guide students through this adjustment period. According to Kang (1999), “ESL/EFL learners vary not only in terms of their purposes for learning English, but also in terms of individual differences in learning due to their educational, ethnic, and cultural diversities” (p. 9).

These afore described differences in ESL and EFL contexts are important to considerations while implementing CLT in EFL context. Most scholars agree that second language acquisition research and second language teaching is not directly transferable to foreign language contexts (Aleixo, 2003). Research shows that although there has been wide spread adoption of communicative language teaching (CLT) in ESL countries, the adoption of CLT in EFL countries has generally been less widely accepted (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Fox, 1993; Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Lewis & McCook 2002; Li, 1998; Penner

1995; Rollman, 1994; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999; Thompson, 1996) and that implementation of CLT worldwide often proved difficult (Li, 1998). The following section describes several studies, which investigated implementation of CLT in different EFL contexts.

#### *Use of CLT in EFL Contexts and Barriers to Adopting CLT*

According to Ellis (1994), teaching in a foreign language setting gives rise to conflicts. Clashes of expectations and clashes of assumptions about the acceptable behavior of individuals from two different cultures are examples of the difficulties in the way of integrating one teaching methodology into another.

Ellis (1994) investigated the appropriateness of the communicative approach in Vietnam. It was found that one of the basic problems in implementing a communicative approach in Vietnam was the teachers' holding on to the deep-rooted tradition. This problem, according to Ellis, was compounded by two traditional practices: the cultural reluctance of the Vietnamese to challenge written words, and the focus on grammar-translation in the examination system. The study also reported that Vietnamese teachers believed that they did not have necessary knowledge of target language culture. Therefore, they felt CLT does not culturally fit for Vietnam and CLT is basically an ESL methodology. This study demonstrated that there is a basic conflict between Western and Vietnamese pedagogical beliefs. Based on the findings of the study, Ellis concluded that CLT approach in its original form is not suitable for Vietnamese conditions and 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). It was suggested that, "the ways of making

communicative approach culturally acceptable to the Vietnamese are in keeping with their own cultural values embedded and reflected in their language they use" (p.71).

Ellis (1996) questioned the universal relevance of communicative approach to language teaching in view of the cultural conflicts of different educational theories arising from the introduction of a predominantly Western language teaching approach in Far Eastern countries. He argued that the Western idea that "communicative competence shares the same priority in every society"(p.216), may not be true and he asserted that to make communicative approach suitable for Asian situation "it needs to be both culturally attuned and culturally accepted" (p.213). EFL teachers working in Asia will have "cultural biases" about the soundness of their educational practices and he suggests that "mediating" can serve as a useful tool in the adoption process and the Western teachers can play the role as "cultural mediators". Ellis concluded that, integration between Western and Eastern teaching is needed to make language teaching successful in EFL countries.

Defeng Li (1998) conducted a study with 18 South Korean secondary English school EFL teachers studying at a Canadian university to identify their perceived difficulties in adopting CLT. All participants answered a written questionnaire and 10 were also interviewed. The results of the study showed that, the teachers reported that they encountered difficulties in trying CLT approach in their classes. The difficulties reported by the Korean teachers fell into four categories: "those caused by i) the teacher, ii) by the students, iii) by the educational system, and iv) by CLT itself" (Li, 1998). The four categories were later subdivided into other subcategories:

1. Difficulties Caused by Teachers:

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

2. Difficulties Caused by Students:

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

3. Difficulties Caused by the Educational System:

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

4. Difficulties Caused by CLT Itself:

a) CLT's inadequate account of EFL teaching; b) Lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments

Among these, difficulties caused by the teachers and by the educational system were mentioned most often. This suggested that, the difficulties in adopting CLT have their source in difference between the underlying educational theories of South Korea and those of Western countries. The Korean system could not change the large classes, grammar based examinations and they had insufficient funding for equipment and facilities. The teachers also reported that they found a lack of support from the administration and they did not have much training to practice CLT in their classes. Most of the teachers made comments on the fact that CLT was taught as knowledge and theory, and they had no practical experience in the methodology or its applications. Other sources of difficulty reported were misconceptions and misinterpretations of CLT by the

teachers. The teachers believed CLT required them to be fluent in English. They generally felt that they had high proficiency in English grammar, reading, and writing, but they had inadequate abilities in English speaking and listening to conduct the communicative class. The teachers had another misconception about CLT that it neglected accuracy. They believed that by concentrating on appropriateness and fluency CLT does not teach form at all and thus neglects accuracy. The teachers also believed that CLT requires more time than traditional method for material development. Li stated that “fourteen teachers reported that lack of time for and expertise in developing communicative materials had been constraints for them [to use CLT]” (p. 689). Also, according to Li, “all 18 respondents referred to large classes as one of the principal constraints on their attempts to use CLT” (p. 691). In addition, one teacher explained that class size makes it almost impossible to use CLT because of problems with class management, noise, giving individualized attention to students, keeping students on task, and lack of space for teachers and students to move around or get into groups.

Li (1998) argued that these numerous problems discourage teachers from trying CLT. Li also explained that many changes must take place before teachers are prepared to use CLT in EFL environments and concluded 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” (p. 696). Some of the conflicts that need attention, according to Li, are related to: educational values and attitudes, reading, oral skills, grammar, students’ attitudes, teachers’ attitudes, pre-service teacher education, and local educational growth. Overall, as Aleixo (2003) stated, in Li’s (1998) study teachers identified more problems

than benefits of CLT use in South Korea, thus indicating difficulties with CLT adaptation in, at least, one EFL environment.

As cited by Aleixo (2003), the culture of English teaching in the EFL environments of Turkey was studied by Altan (1995). The sample of the study included 300 Turkish teachers. The instrumentation consisted of a questionnaire, which included open-ended questions, direct questions, and items on a Likert scale. According to Aleixo, Altan classified teachers' view of English teaching in Turkey into five categories: the teachers' view of the EFL curriculum, teachers' view of language and language teaching, teachers' view of classroom practices, teachers' view of their role, and teachers' view of their profession. The study covered all the categories in detail and presented relevant factors such as reasons why students learn English, the aim of the English curriculum, problems with present language teaching in Turkey, and types of activities that benefit students, among others. Altan also asserted that teachers' years of experience also played an important role in the answers to the questionnaire. Experienced teachers believed that students' aims are mostly to pass examinations and inexperienced teachers viewed grammatical theories of language as useful in teaching and they also required students to do more reading and writing exercises. Aleixo adds that even though teachers differed in opinions because of their years of experience, it was noted that they shared common ground in many areas, such as "thinking and acting responsibly to help develop their students' learning of English" (p. 21).

Gorsuch (2000) investigated Japanese teachers' approval of communicative activities. Eight hundred and eighty four Japanese senior high school EFL teachers participated in the study and they answered an extensive questionnaire through a 5-point

Likert scale. The questionnaire was the main source of data for the study, which involved a series of questions on teaching activities. Based on the data of the study, Gorsuch concluded that teachers were largely influenced by the requirements of the university entrance exam. Since the university entrance exam is the most important and competitive exam in the academic career of students, both the institution and the students put pressure on teachers to let them study materials covered in this exam. Therefore, as the exam is concentrated on grammar knowledge, a communicative competence development doesn't meet the needs of students. Gorsuch also found that most teachers favoured a more traditional way of teaching, and resisted change to the new teaching environment required by CLT activities. Another aspect reported in this study deals with the use of language. Teachers did not use the target language in the classroom, and believed students were not ready to use and produce it. Apart from this, teachers believed that since communicative activities require the use of the target language, without explicit directions from teachers, it was inappropriate for English teaching in high schools.

Penner (1995) reported how Chinese language classroom culture “restricts pedagogical change advocated by foreign agents” (p.1). From her experience she found that it might be very difficult to change the classical traditional approach of language teaching and implement modern approach (in this case CLT) in China. She felt that “because of the discrepancies in educational theory, roles, expectations, methods, material use, and structural concerns, a new Chinese way needs to be developed”(p.12). Penner also observed teachers' beliefs and found teachers believed that their English language knowledge was limited. Some teachers expressed that they felt uprooted and guilty because they were not doing their duty. Teachers also reported to her that foreign

experts did not respect their experience and insight. Penner concluded that “the most important element in this pedagogical change debate is that all the participants clarify their own cultural learning and teaching assumptions, as understanding other culture can really only occur when people understand their own”(p.14). Culture difference in school/educational expectations thus is found to be one of the main barriers in implementing CLT in EFL countries.

In another study, Lewis and McCook (2002) examined the lack of uptake of communicative language teaching principles amongst teachers in Asia. In the study they observed journal entries from 12 Vietnamese high school English teachers written during ongoing in-service workshops. The journals revealed their attempt to implement CLT in their classes. They did implement new ideas but they were also incorporating the traditional features valued in their educational system. This suggests that, though the teachers were willing to adopt CLT, they could not avoid local educational theories totally. They tried to follow what they were introduced to during the in-service course “sometimes successfully, sometimes less so” (p. 152). But their concept of CLT was not clear. They retained traditional aspects of language teaching. The findings of the study demarcate that the teachers were following both the traditional and CLT methods in their practice.

Liao (2000) pointed out three difficulties in the way of successful application of CLT in China:

1. lack of target language culture knowledge
2. no familiarity with the new method
3. the negative influence of educational tradition on teachers.

According to Liao, language and culture are closely related in CLT and it attempts to develop students' culture knowledge along with their ability to use language for real communication. But most Chinese teachers not only lack English proficiency but also lack cultural knowledge. Because of this Chinese teachers are not able to teach the target culture. Liao added, to make CLT application successful in China, teachers need to master a high level of target culture knowledge. This view is reminiscent of Ellis's (1994) findings of the Vietnamese CLT study where Vietnamese teachers believed that they did not have necessary knowledge of target language culture and this believe in fact led to teachers' misconception about CLT that it does not culturally fit for Vietnam and CLT is basically an ESL methodology.

While addressing the issues regarding the Indonesian ministry of education's English instruction reform initiative, Mustafa (2001) identified the real situation of communicative approach to teaching English in Indonesia. He argued that the communicative approach in Indonesia had failed to help students become more competent in the use of English for real-life purposes. According to him, Indonesia lacks certain conditions that are required to enable language learners to become communicatively-competent participants in social interaction in the English language; in particular, English language learners in Indonesia do not have much exposure to English language use in real-life situations. Mustafa added that the enabling condition for successful CLT application is not always easy to create in Indonesian schools. He identified the teachers' lack of confidence in using the language before their class, that is the lack of English language proficiency; time constraint, which limit students' social communication in the classroom; large classroom; crowded curriculum; type and focus of

exams (form-focused nationally-administered test); absence of good, authentic learning materials; teachers' tendency to rely on non-communicatively-engaging learning tasks (much emphasis on teaching grammar and syntax); absence of visible social use of the language outside classroom as reasons that inhibit the adoption of CLT. Most importantly, as emphasized by Mustafa, communication based instructional materials had lost their pedagogical value due to the fact that the English language is not used in the day-to-day social communication in the EFL environment.

Most significant barriers or difficulties in implementing CLT, reported by EFL teachers and/or researchers in the reviewed literature, are: (a) lack of administrative support, (b) lack of resources, (c) lack of sufficient English language knowledge, (d) wider curriculum, (e) large class size, (f) discrepancy/inconsistency between CLT syllabus and nationally administered exams, (g) teachers' holding on to traditional methods, and (h) lack of authentic learning materials.

Another difficulty reported by Mustafa (2001), which is noteworthy, is the absence of visible social uses of the target language outside classroom, due to which, according to him, communication based instructional materials had lost their pedagogical value in Indonesia.

### *Teacher Misconceptions*

While exploring the literature concerning the suitability of CLT in EFL contexts, it also becomes evident that one of the major barriers in implementation and success of CLT such as, misconceptions and misinterpretations of CLT are related to cultural values and practices of EFL countries. Teachers' beliefs and knowledge cause misinterpretations of CLT. The study findings of Li (1998), Penner (1995), Ellis (1994), and Lewis and

McCook (2002) show that although different educational values and practices are the main reasons for difficulties in implementing CLT in the respective contexts, misconceptions and misinterpretation of CLT among teachers are also playing role as barriers.

Apart from the differences of ESL and EFL contexts, and that of culture, EFL teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and practices also generate difficulties in implementing CLT in respective EFL countries (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Ellis, 1994; Fox, 1993; Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Rollman, 1994; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999; Sun & Cheng; 2000; Thompson, 1996;). EFL teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and practices are related to cultural values and practices of the respective countries. As Karavas-Doukas (1996) stated, "one of the causes of the discrepancy between prescribed theory and classroom practice may be teacher attitude" (p. 187). According to Richardson (1996, 1994), as cited by Sato and Kleinnsasser (1999), "beliefs influence teaching practice more directly than knowledge" (p. 496) and " in order to understand how teachers make sense of teaching and learning, one should focus on teachers' beliefs and practices" (p.496). Several researchers (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Fox, 1993; Gamal & Debra, 2001; Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Rollman, 1994; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999; Thompson, 1996) studied teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards CLT and found misconceptions and misinterpretation of CLT among them.

Thompson (1996) sets out four of the main misconceptions. Talking to "a large number of teachers" (p. 10) he found that they criticize or reject CLT for the wrong reasons. The four main misconceptions he mentioned are:

- CLT means not teaching grammar
- CLT means teaching only speaking
- CLT means pair work, which means role-play
- CLT means expecting too much from the teacher.

Thompson gave importance to attempting to clear away the misconceptions to save CLT and also to implement CLT properly.

Some of the misconceptions set out by Thompson (1996) were also found by Sato and Kleinsasser (1999) when they conducted a study to document the views and practices of CLT by Japanese as a second language (JFL) in-service teachers in Australia. They found that the teachers persisted in traditional practices in their classes. The teachers believed that CLT relied heavily on speaking and listening skills, CLT involved little grammar teaching and used time consuming activities. The teachers held misconceptions about CLT and there were discrepancies between their beliefs and practices. So, in this Australian JFL context, teachers' misconceptions and beliefs about CLT are acting as main barriers for implementation of CLT.

In another study, Burnaby and Sun (1989) reported the views of 24 Chinese teachers of English on the appropriateness and effectiveness of "Western" language teaching methods for use in Chinese situation. By western language teaching, Burnaby and Sun mean teaching whose objective is the development of communicative competence among students. Data were collected from a Canadian/Chinese cooperative program in English and French language training and cultural orientation in Canada, and "an informal study done by Sun on the views on western teaching methods of Chinese teachers at the tertiary level" (Burnaby & Sun, 1989, p. 224). The study showed that the

teachers believed that the communicative approach was mainly applicable in China only for those students who planned to go to an English speaking country, but not good for other students, mainly ones that are English majors. This finding demonstrates that Chinese teachers had misconception about CLT approach. This is consistent with Ellis's (1994) findings that Vietnamese English teachers believed that CLT is basically an ESL methodology and it did not culturally fit for Vietnam.

The Chinese teachers in Burnaby and Sun's study also believed that as CLT curriculum contains lessons and activities based on students' interests and needs, it is time consuming. The teachers also reported that they had limitations with respect to sociolinguistic and strategic competence in English and they cited various constraints on implementing western methods, including the context of wider curriculum, traditional teaching methods, class size and schedules, resources and equipment, and lack of training. Besides misconceptions, these observations also document different educational practices as other barriers in implementing CLT in China. Teachers reported the strength of the traditional relationship between teachers and students and this relationship has impact on the teaching methods. Teachers expressed that most of the communicative language teaching activities were time consuming and they seemed like games rather than serious learning to them. They felt they were not teaching when they use such activities and anticipated the students would complain against them. Teachers also showed concern about the lack of authentic materials in English and communicative reading exercises. Burnaby and Sun (1989) concluded that, even though CLT is widely accepted and appropriate for ESL environments, it may not be the case for all EFL environments, especially China.

Again, inconsistency between teachers' attitudes and classroom practices was also found in Karavas-Doukas's (1996) study. He observed 14 Greek English language teachers' classroom practices and found that although the teachers held favorable attitudes towards CLT, their classroom practices differed significantly from the principles of the communicative approach. Teachers showed tendency to follow an "eclectic approach, exhibiting features of both traditional and communicative approaches in their classroom practices" (p. 193). The lessons mainly were teacher-centered and showed explicit focus on form. Pair work activities were found to be used in two classrooms but group work activities were never applied. The findings implied that the teachers misinterpreted CLT as also in Karavas-Doukas's voice, "the teachers misinterpreted the new idea (CLT) and translated them to conform to their existing classroom routines believing that they are doing what the new approach calls for"(p.194). He declared that the reason behind the discrepancy is that, teachers' existing attitudes and beliefs were mostly neglected before introducing the new approach.

Gamal and Debra (2001) explored 120 Egyptian EFL teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards the communicative language approach in language teaching and learning. They focused on the importance of the social and cultural context upon teachers' attitudes and practices and identified some of the constraints on successful implementation of CLT. The findings indicated that specialist teachers were using a variety of CLT they termed the communicative approaches (CA) and holding beliefs consistent with the CLT more than the non-specialist teachers. That is, specialist teachers seemed to be more willing to adopt communicative practices than non-specialist teachers. On the other hand, experienced teachers expressed their unwillingness towards

communicative attitudes and practices. Gamal and Debra asserted that the reason might be that the experienced teachers were more opposed to change and found it harder to include new theory with their own practical experience of the classroom.

Apart from teachers' beliefs and attitudes, the researchers in this study identified other economic and social/cultural constraints in the way of successful implementation of CLT methodology in Egypt. As described by Gamal and Debra (2001), economic constraints included low pay, lack of resources, large-sized unequipped classrooms, and lack of appropriate teacher training provision are some of the constraints for the success of CLT in Egypt. The limited resources made it difficult for teachers to prepare and present the teaching according to the CLT approach. Egyptian EFL teachers reported that discrepancy between the teaching syllabus and the examination syllabus also hinders the CLT application in the classes. According to the researchers (Gamal & Debra, 2001), the cultural tradition was another major barrier in the way of CLT application in Egypt. It is Egyptian cultural traditions that students avoid expressing their views for fear of losing face or offending others. Group work, pair work, and discussion thus become less fruitful because of students' negative attitude towards these activities. Apart from this, as stated by Gamal and Debra, teachers are seen as knowledge holders and they might consider that if they play games with students or ask students to role-play in class, they might not be seen as doing their job. This finding corresponds with Burnaby and Sun's (1989) findings that Chinese teachers felt they were not teaching when they use CLT activities and anticipated that the students would complain against them. Gamal and Debra also identified EFL teachers' lack of English proficiency and limited knowledge of CLT pedagogy as constraints.

### *Summary*

Information from the studies reviewed in this chapter gives us a real picture of the CLT innovations in some EFL countries and provides evidence that it is difficult to implement CLT in EFL countries. The difficulties have their roots in different cultural and educational theories and practices and some major barriers for implementation of CLT in EFL countries are teachers' misconceptions and misinterpretations of CLT, which are related to teachers' beliefs and attitudes. The most common misconceptions and misinterpretations derived from the reviewed literature are:

- CLT is basically an ESL methodology
- CLT requires high proficiency in English
- CLT requires time consuming activities and puts greater demand on teachers
- CLT means only group work and pair work.

These misconceptions are consistent with the four misconceptions about CLT reported by Thompson (1996): CLT means not teaching grammar; CLT means teaching only speaking; CLT means pair work which means role play; and CLT means expecting too much from the teacher. The following figure summarizes the misconceptions and misinterpretations found from the reviewed literature:

Table 1

*Summary of EFL Teachers' Misconceptions and Misinterpretation about CLT*

Misconceptions/ Misinterpretations	Penner 1995	Ellis '94	B'by Sun'89	Mustaf 2001	Li '98	Sato/ Kle'99	Gamal Deb'01	Fox '93	Thomp '96
CLT requires high proficiency in English	x		x				x		
CLT requires time consuming activities	x		x		x	x			
CLT means only group work & pair work	x				x		x	x	
CLT is basically an ESL methodology		x	x	x					
CLT requires higher knowledge of TL			x						
CLT means not teaching grammar					x	x			x
CLT means teaching only speaking					x				x
CLT emphasizes on Grammar only				x				x	
CLT means discourse competence only								x	
CLT means only pair work									x
CLT expects too much from teachers	x		x		x	x			x

Two other studies (Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Lewis & McCook, 2002) reported that teachers think that they know and follow CLT approaches, but in fact they follow only their misinterpreted version of CLT. Which misconceptions teachers' hold, are not discussed in these two studies.

In the context of China, Vietnam, Korea, and Egypt, it has been seen that cultural values are expressed as educational values by the EFL teachers (Ellis, 1994; Lewis & McCook, 2002; Li, 1998; Penner, 1995). Teachers have widely differing perceptions of the features of CLT for curriculum and instruction. In the review of related research it is also seen that, the issues which facilitate or inhibit change are quite distinct from one national context to another. While the principles and theories of CLT may be well documented, beliefs and attitudes about the theory are not consistent. Review of literature also indicates that teachers' attitudes are grounded in particular social contexts and in fact EFL teachers' beliefs and attitudes cause misconceptions and misinterpretations about CLT. Also, according to Li (1999), as cited by Gamal and Debra (2001), teachers' adopt their pedagogy based on their epistemological beliefs and occupational ideology. This

point of view is confirmed by the significant differences found among teachers in several EFL countries which according to Gamal and Debra (2001), due to their specialization, teaching experiences, and training, and by the many ways in which practical and cultural constraints hindered teachers' ability and willingness to adopt the communicative approach. Therefore, while implementing CLT in EFL/ESL countries in Asia, the countries need to take into account that this implementation is basically an integration of Western pedagogy into Eastern practices and they have to persist the implementation process gradually and also by considering their own socio-cultural and educational contexts.

## Chapter 3

### Research Design

Although CLT is a widely known and practiced approach, little is mentioned in the literature about the ways of successful application of this approach in different educational environments. In view of the requirements that CLT places on learners as well as teachers, there is much to be asked about the ability to adapt this approach to EFL settings (Aleixo, 2003). The present study investigates English language teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and expectations of CLT in EFL setting in Bangladesh. The primary focus of this study is on teachers and their role in the adaptation and use of CLT in EFL environments in Bangladesh and the research questions for this study are:

1. What are the perceptions of the participating post secondary EFL teachers about the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)?
2. What do these teachers believe are the practices that explain communicative activities?
3. Which activities do these teachers use in their classrooms?
4. What do teachers think are the main barriers in implementing CLT method in Bangladesh?
5. What do they think are the areas of successes and difficulties in current English teaching in Bangladesh?
6. What do they identify as training needs for the successful implementation of CLT in Bangladesh?

As the study relies mostly on teachers' self reported feelings, personal perspectives, and experiences about the use of CLT in Bangladeshi classrooms, a survey

research design was chosen and a descriptive and interpretive analysis of the results was done. Qualitative research has been well established in most academic fields of study. According to Aleixo (2003), it has a unique approach to research that draws mostly on multiple sources and on people's views and opinions of specific experiences. In this study, multiple sources are data from 36 teachers, survey instrument that asks for opinions and judgments as well as open-ended responses, related research, and personal experience. It was important to use a qualitative research approach because of the dependence on individual perceptions of a particular language teaching situation. Furthermore, according to Marshall and Rossman (1999), one of the significant reasons for selecting qualitative research is "to stress the unique strengths of the genre for research that is exploratory or descriptive" (p. 60).

#### *Rationale for Selecting the Universities*

Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), North South university (NSU), and BRAC university are private universities, accredited by the State of Bangladesh and the University Grants Commission. The program of study and the academic regulation of these universities are based on the American course structure and semester system, (i.e., credit system). IUB, NSU and BRAC are committed to produce graduates of international standards who will be equipped to provide new leadership to the national economy through skilled employment, entrepreneurship and/or applied research. The curriculum of these universities have been carefully designed to provide students with, (a) communicative skills, (b) socio-cultural background, (c) applied skills or project based experience, and (d) an area of sub-specialization (IUB, NSU, and BRAC websites:

<http://www.iub-bd.edu/frameset-aboutiub.htm>; [http://www.northsouth.edu/about\\_nsu/](http://www.northsouth.edu/about_nsu/);

<http://www.bracuniversity.net/>). The three universities, selected for data collection, recognize the effectiveness and need of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach to teach English language and in my opinion these universities are model institutions for CLT practices in Bangladesh.

I have selected Independent University (IUB), North South University (NSU), and BRAC University for data collection as these institutions focus on following CLT approach and are actively involved in educational research in Bangladesh, and they also feel a need to investigate and improve the communicative language teaching situation in Bangladesh. The universities believe that improved curriculum design, which incorporates new and more effective approaches to language instruction, is fundamental to enriching the quality of education, not only in English, but also throughout the school curriculum.

The research at these institutions will provide necessary insights into ESL teachers' beliefs, practices, and expectations of CLT, which will help to get a clearer picture of the overall standard of ESL teaching and also to measure the success or failure of CLT in these three universities. The experience and findings from these three universities will also be useful for other institutions to measure their levels of CLT practices and also will help in implementing and practicing CLT successfully. Furthermore, this survey will help identify the levels of impediments and ways and means of developing and implementing quality English education at the post secondary level in Bangladesh.

### *Participants and Setting*

The participants in this study are university-level EFL teachers most of whom are highly experienced. Total 36 ESL teachers participated in the study. All the participants are between 24-58 years of age. Each works at one of three private English medium universities located in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Invitation letters to participate in the study were distributed to the teachers through the English Department Chairs of three private universities and teacher participation in the study was voluntary. The three private universities selected for the study are: Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), North South University (NSU), and BRAC University.

### *Data Collection Procedure*

Data collection for this study consists of written survey questionnaires distributed between August, 2003 and November, 2003. According to Wiersma (1995), as cited by Scott (2001), survey research "measures opinions and is probably the single most widely used research type in educational research" (p. 169). Four universities in Bangladesh were contacted by E-mail for authorization to collect data and three responded positively. The fourth university did not respond to the request for participation in the study. Once the authorization was received, total 50 questionnaires were mailed by post in the first week of August, 2003 to the three universities (25 questionnaires to IUB, 10 to NSU and 15 to BRAC University taking into consideration the number of English teachers at those institutions). Each package contained a cover letter (see Appendix A) requesting the English Department Chairs of the three universities to distribute the questionnaires to the English teachers. An invitation letter to participate in the study was attached to each questionnaire (see Appendix B). The letter was professional and friendly which explained

the research in brief and furthermore stated that the survey research was being conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master's degree. It was also made clear that participation in the study was voluntary and teachers' confidentiality was guaranteed. In the questionnaire the participant teachers were also requested to report only what they actually practice, not what they think was correct or would like to practice. This direction to focus on personal belief was intended to get a more accurate report of teachers' beliefs, attitudes and expectations. To make sure the maximum return of the questionnaires, follow-ups were conducted by E-mails to each participant institution almost every week between August and September, 2003.

Out of 50, total 36 questionnaires were returned (20 from IUB, 10 from BRAC and 6 from NSU) that represents a response rate of 72%. Out of 36 returned questionnaires, 55.56% represents IUB, 27.78% represents BRAC, and 16.67% represents NSU. The researcher started receiving the questionnaires by the end of October, 2003 and received the last questionnaire at the last week of November, 2003. Out of 36 responses, 2 were returned by fax and rests of the responses were received by postal mail. Further E-mails and phone calls were made to the Department Chairs of the participating universities to make sure whether there was any possibility of getting more responses, but no more questionnaires were received.

After careful reading of all the 36 questionnaires, no missing responses for the data analysis were found and all the 36 questionnaires were, therefore, analyzed for the results. As the teachers were not asked to provide their names when returning the questionnaire, there was no identification of individual participants. Institutions and

teachers' responses to items were coded and the data were entered into Excel database of a laptop computer (PC with Windows XP).

### *Questionnaire*

The main instrument used to elicit data for the study was a written questionnaire (see Appendix C) administered to ESL teachers in Bangladesh. According to LeCompte and Gotez (1982), as cited by Scott (2001), "scientific traditions, such as the survey method, focus on a small number of questions that are constructed before data collection and cover a wide range of elements" (p. 14). This survey research used the technique of the questionnaire for data collection as according to Wiersma (1995), as cited by Scott (2001), compared to interviews with the teachers, the questionnaire is more relaxing and it examines the teachers' approaches to teaching more accurately. Also, as it was not possible for the researcher to go to Bangladesh to interview English teachers himself, the questionnaire helped to avoid any error or bias in the data that could result from using another interviewer or a number of interviewers.

The questionnaire included 11 questions with both open-ended and questions with fixed alternatives (See Appendix C). In order to check the comprehensiveness, clarity, and representativeness of the interview questionnaire a pilot testing / trialing was conducted. The questionnaires were distributed to 20 Chinese, Korean, and Persian ESL teachers at University of Victoria. They were asked to complete the questionnaire and 10 participants returned the questionnaires. Teachers' responses were spontaneous and demonstrated no misunderstandings of any item of the questionnaire. Therefore, based on the findings of the pilot study, no changes were made in the sequential order or wording of items of the questionnaire.

The first three questions elicited the demographics of the participants: age, gender, and years of teaching experience. This demographic information was sought as it helps to classify the variables for the analysis to be used to determine whether such factors have an effect on attitude or practices, and also to situate the sample with regard to the general population of EFL teachers in Bangladesh. In Question no. 4 teachers were asked to indicate the types of English courses they were currently teaching or had taught in last 3 years by selecting types of classes from a list of seven. The seven categories included were: Spoken English, Remedial English, Reading, Writing, EFL major, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English literature, and Other English courses. The remaining questions of the questionnaire asked directly about beliefs and practices of CLT.

Question no. 5 was designed to elicit teachers' perception about communicative activities. Twelve items (both communicative and traditional grammar activities) were listed and the teachers were asked to select the activities they thought were communicative in nature.

Question no. 6 included fifteen items, descriptive of CLT, intended to elicit teachers' perception about general attributes of communicative language teaching. The teachers responded by checking the appropriate boxes besides each item: true, not true, and don't know. The fourteen items and activities listed in this question were selected to represent an array of common features of CLT. The items were all selected from the literature reported in Chapter 2 and have been previously claimed to be communicative or non-communicative. The fifteenth item was "other", which allowed the participants to comment on any of the 14 selections or put other observations.

Question no. 7 was intended to find whether the teachers faced difficulties in adopting CLT in Bangladesh or what are the possible causes of difficulties in adopting CLT in Bangladesh in their opinion. For each of fourteen items, the teachers were asked to rate their opinion on which they thought caused difficulties or might be the cause or causes of difficulties in adopting CLT in Bangladesh on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating “no problem” and 5 indicating “major difficulty”. The options included in this question were selected from related research literature and they intended to get an overall picture of what the post secondary English teachers think are the major barriers in implementing CLT method in Bangladesh (research question no. 4).

Question no. 8 was designed to capture teachers' attitudes towards classroom activities associated with communicative approaches to English language teaching. Teachers were given a choice of 14 procedures/activities, both communicative and traditional grammar teaching method in nature, and were asked to rate them in terms of their choices and dependency of uses by circling an item from 1 ("use it regularly") to 5 ("never tried").

The next two Questions (9 and 10) were designed to derive teachers' opinion about the present and future of English Language Teaching (ELT) situation in Bangladesh. Question 9 asked teachers to indicate their opinion on 12 areas of ELT in Bangladesh by circling a scale from 1 indicating "currently not successful" to 5 indicating "currently most successful". Question no. 10 sought teachers' opinion on the priority of teacher training in Bangladesh for the development of English language teaching (ELT). The question included ten possible areas that need more training for teachers and

participants were asked to express their opinion on those areas by circling from a scale of 1 ("not important) to 5 ("extremely important").

The last question (Number 11) was an open ended one that provided participants with a chance to impart their suggestions about the implementation and practice of communicative language teaching method in Bangladesh. Questions 4, 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10 included a section-"other", for the participants to add additional information or express their opinion relating to the particular questions.

### *Summary*

This chapter has included the design of the research, which incorporated the rationale for selecting the participating universities, description of participants and setting, a detailed account of data collection procedure, and a question by question description of the questionnaire. Chapter 4 presents the analysis of the data.

## Chapter 4

### Data Analysis

Data for this study were collected using the written questionnaires described in the previous chapter. The analysis of data proceeded in several stages. First, all the questionnaires were tabulated to record the responses for each participant for each item. The tabulations were then read and re-read carefully to identify patterns and commonalities. Tables were made to summarize the frequency of responses to each question. Following the tabulation of individual question items, further analyses were conducted with sets of questions, which were grouped together because they relate to a common issue or theme. For example, items from questions that intended to find teachers' perceptions about CLT techniques and CLT methods (Question 5 and 6) were compared with the items in question 8 that asked about teachers' classroom practices. Such a comparison provides information about the correspondence between teachers' attitudes and beliefs and their practices. The comparison of findings about perceptions and practices were then further compared to responses from questions about teachers' perceived difficulties in adopting CLT in Bangladesh as well as their suggestions regarding the needs for training on different areas for the development of English language teaching. The frequencies, commonalities and patterns discovered in the data are used to answer the research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of the participating post secondary EFL teachers about the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)?
2. What do these teachers believe are the practices that explain communicative activities?

3. Which activities do these teachers use in their classrooms?
4. What do teachers think are the main barriers in implementing CLT method in Bangladesh?
5. What do they think are the areas of successes and difficulties in current English teaching in Bangladesh?
6. What do they identify as training needs for the successful implementation of CLT in Bangladesh?

#### *Analysis of Question Responses*

The first 4 items asked for demographic information only. These results were reported in Table 2 to describe the sample of participants that were surveyed.

Table 2

#### *Participants' Age, Gender and Years of Experience*

		<b>IUB</b>	<b>NSU</b>	<b>BRAC</b>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	12	3	6	21
	Female	8	3	4	15
<b>Age</b>	22-30	12	0	4	16
	31-39	5	3	4	12
	40-50	1	2	2	5
	51-60	2	1	0	3
<b>Years of Experience</b>	1-5	14	2	7	23
	6-10	3	1	3	7
	11-20	2	2	0	4
	21-30	1	1	0	2

*Question no. 5: Which of the following do you think are communicative techniques?*

Question 5 was designed to capture teachers' perception about the sort of activities they believe are characteristics of communicative activities. To determine

teachers' perception of communicative activities, a list of twelve items, some pertaining to common features of CLT activities and some to traditional grammar-teaching activities, was presented. Teachers were asked to select those activities they thought to be communicative in nature. These data are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

*Summary of Teachers' Perceptions of Communicative Activities*

No.	Question: Which of the following do you think are communicative techniques?	Yes	No	Total responses
1.	Fill in the blanks	7	29	36
2.	Looking up words in the dictionary	2	34	36
3.	Writing an essay in English	6	30	36
4.	Having a debate or role-play	33	3	36
5.	Group-discussion on a controversial topic	33	3	36
6.	Reading dialogues	15	21	36
7.	Going on the internet and joining a chat group	20	16	36
8.	Practice speaking in pairs	33	3	36
9.	Dictation task	15	21	36
10.	Story telling in front of the class	26	10	36
11.	Grammar exercises	3	33	36
12.	Describing a picture to a partner	31	5	36

The CLT techniques that teachers identified most consistently are:

- *Having a debate or role-play (91.67%)*
- *Group discussion on a controversial topic (91.67%)*
- *Practice speaking in pairs (91.67%)*
- *Describing a pictures to a partner (86.12%) and*
- *Story telling in front of the class (72.23%)*

The activities most commonly identified by teachers as traditional teaching activities, that is, non-CLT activities, are:

- *Looking up words in the dictionary* (94.45%)
- *Grammar exercises* (91.67%)
- *Writing an essay in English* (83.34%) and
- *Fill in the blanks* (80.56%)

Teachers indicated different beliefs about the communicative nature of 4 items:

*Going on the internet and joining a chat group, Reading dialogues, Story telling in front of the class, and Dictation task.*

Fifty six percent of the teachers selected *Going on the internet and joining a chat group* as communicative technique and 44.44% selected it as non-communicative. It may be that teachers' have different interpretations of what the features of CLT are. Other possible reasons for the difference in belief may be that some teachers were not aware of or comfortable in the use of internet or computer for communicative language teaching or may be that they did not have access to computer and therefore did not regard internet a communicative activity.

In case of the item *Reading dialogues* 41.67% of the teachers selected it as communicative activity and 58.33% selected it as non-communicative. Some of the teachers might have thought that reading scripted dialogues is not communicative while others thought oral reading is communicative. This uncertainty suggests a difference of opinion regarding the relative character of communicative dialogues in CLT. It may be that 58.33% of the teachers regard scripted dialogue as an authentic model of interaction because it includes discourse as well as grammatical elements. But other teachers may have a different conception of authentic dialogue. That is, they think that scripted dialogue reading in CLT is opposed to the authentic nature of oral interaction. The

internal definition of CLT also includes the idea that the language people produce orally is communicative does not correspond with reading dialogue working from a script.

Differences in understanding CLT are also evident in the case of one communicative activity: *Story telling in front of the class* and *Dictation task*. Twenty seven percent of the teachers thought that story telling is not communicative. One explanation could be that teachers understood that story telling could not be communicative if it is done by just reading from a text.

The possible explanation of why 41.67% of the teachers thought the ‘dictation task’ as communicative is that they might have thought it as a listening activity, as listening activities are effective practices that facilitate students’ comprehension and play significant role in their eventual production, i.e., communication. The 58.33% of the teachers who thought it non-communicative may have regarded it as a writing task, so some teachers may have exclude writing/reading from CLT.

*Question no. 6: What is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method in your view?*

Question 6 was intended to elicit teachers' conceptions about general principles of communicative language teaching. This item listed fifteen items, some which are descriptive of CLT, and some of the items are common misconceptions about CLT that have been reported in the research literature. Responses to this questionnaire item indicate Bangladeshi English teachers' conceptions about general principles of CLT. Responses to the previous item relate to specific practices, not underlying principles.

The items selected most frequently by the teachers as characteristics of CLT are:

- *CLT is student/learner centered approach (83.34%)*
- *CLT relies heavily on speaking and listening skills (77.78%)*

- *CLT means strategic and socio-linguistic competence (66.67%)*

A majority of the teachers also identified *CLT emphasizes fluency over accuracy* (66.11%) and *CLT emphasizes communication in second language* (58.33%) as two other characteristics of communicative language teaching.

The items selected most frequently as “Not true”, i.e., as not characteristics of CLT, are:

- *CLT means only group work and pair work (88.89%)*
- *CLT means not teaching grammar (86.11%)*
- *CLT means teaching speaking only (86.11%)*
- *CLT means discourse competence only (80.56%; none of the teachers selected it as ‘true’).*

Table 4 shows teachers' responses to question no. 6.

Table 4

*Summary of Teachers' Perceptions about Communicative Language Teaching Approach*

No.	Question: <i>What is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in your view?</i>	True	Not true	Don't know	Total responses
1.	CLT is student/learner centered approach	30	4	1	35
2.	CLT means strategic and socio-linguistic competence	24	5	6	35
3.	CLT means discourse competence only	0	29	6	35
4.	CLT emphasizes fluency over accuracy	22	14	0	36
5.	CLT emphasizes communication in second language (L2)	21	13	1	35
6.	CLT relies heavily on speaking and listening skills	28	6	0	34
7.	CLT requires teachers to have high proficiency in English	25	11	0	36
8.	CLT means only group work or pair work	3	32	1	36
9.	CLT requires higher knowledge of target language culture	10	21	5	36
10.	CLT means not teaching grammar	2	31	2	35
11.	CLT means teaching speaking only	2	31	3	36
12.	CLT puts too much pressure on teachers	10	23	3	36
13.	CLT requires a lot of time to prepare class activities	22	13	1	36
14.	CLT is basically an ESL methodology, not EFL	8	13	15	36

Overall, teachers' identification of the major characteristics that describe CLT and those that do not describe CLT, which are commonly held as misconceptions of CLT, demonstrates that the teachers in this sample have a consistent and generally clear understanding of the attributes of CLT. Consistency in identifying the characteristics of CLT is also evident when the same number of teachers said it is "true" that *CLT emphasizes fluency over accuracy* (66.11% teachers) and *CLT emphasizes communication in second language (L2)* (58.33% teachers). Although there is consistency in identifying these items as characteristics of communicative language teaching, there are indications of some uncertainties as 38.89% and 36.11% teachers consecutively identified these items negatively, i.e., "Not true". The possible explanation for 38.89% teachers' identifying *CLT emphasizes fluency over accuracy* as not indicative of CLT principles could be that they might have believed that although sometimes fluency has to be given priority over accuracy, to achieve communicative competence, accuracy is equally important. Such an explanation is consistent with Brown (2001), who asserts, "fluency and accuracy are both important goals to pursue in CLT. While fluency may in many communicative language courses be an *initial* goal in language teaching, accuracy is achieved to some extent by allowing students to focus on the elements of phonology, grammar, and discourse in their spoken output (p.268)".

Thirty six percent of the teachers selected *CLT emphasizes communication in second language (L2)* as "Not true". This is unexpected, as most teachers had identified the other basic characteristics of CLT in a way that is consistent with most general accounts of the approach. This unexpected response suggests that the conception of CLT in Bangladesh has a feature that is not generally included in formulations of CLT.

Some inconsistencies or discrepancies were also found in the cases of teachers' responses to four other descriptions of CLT. When 63.89% of the teachers responded as "Not true" in the case of the feature *CLT puts too much pressure on teachers*, 61.11% of the teachers responded to the feature *CLT requires a lot of time to prepare CLT activities* as "True". This might be because preparation of CLT activities may take a long time for these teachers but overall they may not think CLT puts too much pressure on them. Also, it may be that these teachers are aware of the overall effectiveness of the communicative language teaching approach and therefore try to practice communicative activities although it requires a longer time to prepare them.

It is noteworthy that 58.33% of the teachers indicated "Not true" that *CLT requires higher knowledge of target language culture*. These Bangladeshi EFL teachers' concept of target language culture seems different than the attitude toward culture reported in the literature from China and Vietnam (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Ellis, 1994). This may be because of Bangladesh's colonial past with Britain, which has made the status and practices of English in Bangladesh unlike any other foreign language countries. These 58.33% teachers presumably believe that the goal of communicative language teaching in Bangladesh is to give students communicative and socio-cultural competence that is necessary in the Bangladeshi context, and which may be enough for other English speaking countries. Possibly these teachers view the needs and practices of spoken English in Bangladesh and any other English speaking countries as the same. It seems that these teachers believe that while an understanding of the target language culture is important, cultural differences do not prevent the students from learning the language.

Teachers differ in their beliefs about the feature *CLT is basically an ESL methodology, not EFL*. Forty one percent of the teachers said they "Don't Know", 22.22% said it's "True" and 36.11% said it's "Not true". Teachers' uncertainty in case of this feature is not surprising. In Chapter 2, research evidence was reported that other EFL teachers had the misconception that CLT is basically an ESL methodology and not effective for EFL contexts (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Ellis, 1994; and Mustafa, 2001). As there are differences between ESL and EFL contexts, this may contribute to some uncertainties or misconceptions about the CLT application of CLT principles in these two contexts. But Bangladeshi teachers' selection of this feature of CLT as "Don't know" indicates their uncertainty, not misconception of CLT.

*Question no. 7: The following are some difficulties that other EFL/ESL teachers had in adopting CLT. Did you come across these difficulties or do you think they might be difficulties for you in adopting CLT in Bangladesh?*

Question no. 7 was intended to find out which difficulties teachers faced in adopting CLT in their classes and what they think might cause difficulties for them in adopting CLT in Bangladesh. The perceived difficulties listed in the question were selected from research literature, which identified probable causes of difficulties in adopting CLT while investigating the CLT situations in other EFL countries. This related research is described in Chapter 2.

Table 5

*Teacher's Perceived Difficulties in Adopting CLT in Bangladesh*

No.	<b>Questionnaire:</b> <i>The following are some difficulties that other EFL/ESL teachers had in adopting CLT. Did you come across these difficulties or do you think they might be difficulties for you in adopting CLT in Bangladesh?</i>	No Problem	Manageable Problem	Major Difficulty	Total responses
1.	Teachers' lack of sufficient spoken English competence	6	14	16	36
2.	Teachers' lack of target culture (English) knowledge	11	11	14	36
3.	Teachers' little time to prepare communicative materials	9	9	18	36
4.	Students' low-level English proficiency	3	12	21	36
5.	Students resist communicative class activities	9	12	15	36
6.	Not enough authentic teaching materials to use	8	11	17	36
7.	Traditional grammar-based examinations	4	10	22	36
8.	Large class size	4	6	26	36
9.	The differences between EFL and ESL teaching contexts	7	24	5	36
10.	Lack of training in CLT	4	11	21	36
11.	Lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments of communicative competence	5	8	23	36
12.	Lack of support from administration	6	10	20	36
13.	Teachers' misconception of CLT	8	11	17	36
14.	Unsuitability of Western educational assumption in Asia	7	10	19	36

Major difficulties selected by the teachers are:

- *Large class size (72.22%)*
- *Lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments of communicative competence (63.89%)*
- *Traditional grammar-based examination (61.11%)*
- *Lack of training in CLT (58.33%)*
- *Students' low-level English proficiency (58.33%)*
- *Lack of support from administration (55.56%)*

Among teachers' responses to these six items, only the first 2 responses exhibit a strong consensus. The other 4 items show differences of opinions.

The item most frequently selected by the teachers as "no problem" is *Teachers' lack of target culture (English) knowledge (30.56% of the teachers selected)*. This

response is related to question no. 6 where 58.33% of the teachers said it's 'not true' that *CLT requires higher knowledge of target language culture* (Table 4: item 9). The "manageable problem" according to most of the teachers was: *The differences between EFL and ESL teaching contexts* (66.67% selected). The teachers may believe that although there are differences between EFL and ESL teaching contexts and these create some difficulties in practicing CLT, those difficulties might be manageable in Bangladeshi EFL context. Bangladeshi EFL teachers may consider that the contextual and cultural differences do not prevent students from learning English in Bangladesh.

Significant number of teachers' identification of the items *Teachers' lack of sufficient spoken English competence* (55.56%) and *Teachers' misconception of CLT* (52.78%) as not a major difficulty is remarkable. Both these issues have been reported in previous research as major impediments in adopting CLT but in this study these factors are not the case in Bangladesh. These teachers may feel that they already have sufficient fluency to teach English communicatively and that the attainment of sufficient fluency is readily achievable in the current circumstances of Bangladesh. Furthermore, it may be that Bangladeshi English is accepted as a world English and therefore quite appropriate as a style of English for instruction.

EFL teachers in this study do not hold many misconceptions about CLT, as shown in their responses to Question no. 6. The teachers in this study report that 'misconceptions of CLT' are a 'manageable problem'. This is consistent with the previous finding that the teachers did not hold many misconceptions.

Teachers differ in their beliefs about the difficulty presented by *Students' resist communicative class activities* and *Students' low-level English proficiency*. Almost half

of the teachers (41.67%) reported that students' resistance to communicative class activities is a major difficulty, but 33.33% of the teachers thought it was a manageable problem. On another item, 33.33% of the teachers reported that students' low level English proficiency is a manageable problem. Teachers may have reported that students' resistance to communicative activities and students' low English proficiency have some impact on their language teaching but these do not pose major difficulties for them in doing communicative activities. Students' resistance may occur due to their affective factors and also because of their lack of English proficiency, which the teachers may be able to overcome by proper motivation and using communicative materials according to the levels of their students.

*Question no. 8: Please indicate which of the following classroom procedures you currently use as part of your English language teaching.*

Question no. 8 was designed to identify teachers' experiences using classroom activities associated with communicative approaches to English language teaching. Findings from this question would reflect the interaction of beliefs with teaching practices, i.e., to see the extent of correspondence between responses in questions 5 and 6.

Table 6

*Teachers' Experiences Using Classroom Activities Associated with Communicative Approaches to English Language Teaching*

No.	Questionnaire: Please indicate which of the following classroom procedures you currently use as part of your English language teaching:	Use it regularly	Use it sometimes	Never tried	Total Responses
1.	Grammar explanation	13	15	7	35
2.	Group discussion	24	11	1	36
3.	Pair work	23	10	3	36
4.	Translation	8	9	18	35
5.	Dictionary vocabulary exercises	12	13	10	35
6.	Simulations/role play	20	9	6	35
7.	Reading and reporting from websites	5	12	18	35
8.	Reading and reporting from newspaper	12	13	11	36
9.	Reading aloud	14	9	12	35
10.	Pronunciation drills	14	12	10	36
11.	Games	12	6	17	35
12.	Listening to audio tape and answering questions	24	4	6	34
13.	Call on students to orally respond to any issues/topic	26	6	4	36
14.	Reading and reciting dialogues	9	14	12	35

The activities most of the teachers reported they use regularly are:

*Call on students to orally respond to any issues/topic (72.22%),*

*Group discussion (66.67%),*

*Listening to audio tape and answering questions (66.67%),*

*Pair work (63.89%), and*

*Simulations/role play (55.56%)*

These five most frequently reported activities are commonly referred to in descriptions of communicative teaching activities. The activities teachers most frequently selected as 'never tried' are - *Translation (50% selected)* and *Reading and reporting from websites (50% selected)*. Responses to other activities demonstrate differences of choices and dependency of uses among teachers.

One of the most important and commonly reported used communicative activities in the general literature about CLT is "Games", which only 33.33% of the teachers reported they use regularly and 47.22% of them said they never tried in the class. It is possible that the teachers are aware of 'Games' as communicative activities but games are not being practiced by half of them because of physical circumstances, such as class size or bolted down desks that prevent free movement. It may be that the idea of playing language games at a university is also inconsistent with their understanding of language teaching.

In the case of the activity *Reading and reporting from website*, only 13.89% of the teachers said they 'use it regularly' when 50% of them said they 'never tried' it. It seems that these 50% of the teachers were not aware of or comfortable in the use of internet for communicative language teaching purposes or their repertoires of the communicative activities were limited.

In case of the traditional teaching techniques or activities, 36.11% of the teachers said that they use *Grammar explanation* and 33.33% said *Dictionary vocabulary exercises* regularly. For 'grammar explanation' it is possible that their intent is probably not to focus on an analysis of grammar but rather to encourage students to correctly use the grammar they already know. Communicative language teaching also does not restrict teachers from teaching grammar, as correct use of grammar is indicative of and a requirement for communicative competence.

Thirty nine percent teachers' responses to activities *Pronunciation drills* and *Reading aloud* as 'use it regularly' indicate inconsistencies in their dependency of uses. These teachers possibly use pronunciation drills believing that pronunciation drills are

necessary activities to achieve accuracy, as both fluency and accuracy are equally important to achieve communicative competence. Teachers may also use drills depending on the students' needs or types of class they teach. As also described in Question no. 6, the possible explanation of 63.89% teachers' (38.89% said 'use it regularly' and 25% said 'use it sometimes') use of *Reading aloud* activity is that they might use it as listening and pronunciation activities believing that these facilitate proper communication or at least prepare the students for participating in real communication. Reading aloud activities may also be the part of different communicative games or total physical response activities (TPR).

Teachers' response to *Reading aloud* activity corresponds with their response to the item *Reading and reciting dialogues* where 63.89% of the teachers reported they use this activity. The possible explanation provided for the use of *Reading aloud* activity may be applicable for teachers' use of *Reading and reciting dialogues* and also that reading and reciting dialogue is a highly communicative activity if students create their own dialogues and then read or recite that but this is not clear in this study.

*Question no. 9: Please indicate your opinion about the following areas of ELT in Bangladesh.*

Question no. 9 was intended to get teachers' opinions about the current English Language Teaching (ELT) situation in Bangladesh. Teachers were asked to indicate their opinions on 12 areas of ELT.

Table 7

*Teachers' Opinions on Different Areas of ELT in Bangladesh*

No.	Question: Please indicate your opinion about the following areas of ELT in Bangladesh:	Currently not successful	Moderately successful	Currently most successful	Total responses
1.	Reading speed	16	15	4	35
2.	Cultural understanding of English countries	15	16	4	35
3.	Read English text book / newspaper	15	9	12	36
4.	Oral fluency	18	9	9	36
5.	Exam success	9	18	9	36
6.	Preparation of ELT teachers	10	17	9	36
7.	Reading comprehension	18	7	11	36
8.	Speak with native English speakers	17	11	7	35
9.	Vocabulary knowledge	15	13	8	36
10.	TOEFL preparation	15	14	7	36
11.	Effective teaching material	12	16	7	35
12.	Convenient and equipped classroom	21	8	7	36

It is found that out of the 12 areas teachers indicated, the most frequent response was “Currently not successful”. Most frequent ‘currently not successful’ areas indicated by the teachers are:

- *Convenient and equipped classroom* (58.33%)
- *Oral fluency* (50%)
- *Speak with native English speakers* (47.22%)
- *Reading speed* (44.44%)
- *Vocabulary knowledge* (41.67%)
- *TOEFL preparation* (41.67%)

In comparison to the frequency of responses, only in 5 areas there were indications of some success, where teachers were almost evenly divided between ‘currently most successful’ and ‘not successful’:

- *Exam success* (most successful- 25% / not successful- 25%)
- *Read English text book / newspaper* (most successful- 33.33% / not successful- 41.67%)
- *Preparation of ELT teachers* (most successful-25% / not successful- 27.28%)
- *Effective teaching material* (most successful- 19.44% / not successful- 33.33%)
- *Reading comprehension* (most successful- 30.56% / not successful- 50%)

These are the areas in which teachers feel some success may be because these are rather traditional goals and they have lots of experience meeting these goals. Teachers may know what exams are like and they prepare the students very well accordingly. In my experience as an EFL teacher in Bangladesh, I found that students' reading comprehension ability is traditionally given priority and students also achieve good oral and silent reading and reading comprehension skills. But when it comes to successful oral or written communication in English, Bangladeshi EFL students are usually not successful. The reason for not being successful in communicating in English with native speakers and lack of vocabulary knowledge is due to the practice of traditional grammar focused and teacher centered teaching practice overall in Bangladesh which lacks communicative and social-functional activities in the classrooms.

TOEFL preparation that is not successful may be due to the same reason that in traditional classes listening comprehension and communicative writing are not prioritized. The EFL classrooms overall in Bangladesh also usually are not well equipped and large in student size, which also hinders the maximum student participation and successful implementation of communicative activities like games.

Teachers' do not demonstrate any strong consensus about the most successful or unsuccessful areas of ELT in Bangladesh. There is a category labeled as "Moderately successful" in the table, which summarizes the number of responses to the scale of 3 (unlabeled in the questionnaire). It was thought that these responses might be the indications of "moderate success" or indication of "uncertainty". For the items teachers most frequently selected scale 3 of the questionnaire, which are also thought to be as moderately successful areas of ELT, are:

- *Exam success* (50% of the teachers selected),
- *Speak with native speakers* (47.22% of the teachers selected),
- *Effective teaching material* (44.44% of the teachers selected), and
- *Cultural understanding of English countries* (44.44% teachers selected).

Although the majority of teachers thought *Reading speed* and *TOEFL preparation* as currently not successful areas, a significant number of teachers, 41.67% and 38.89%, also selected scale 3 for these two areas.

*Question no. 10: What do you think would be the priority for teacher training in Bangladesh for the development of English Language Teaching (ELT)?*

Question no. 10 sought teachers' opinions on the priorities of teacher training in Bangladesh for the development of English language teaching (ELT).

The areas that need training the most as indicated by the teachers are:

- *Preparing English language material* (88.89% selected "extremely important")
- *CLT techniques* (80.56% selected "extremely important")
- *Fluency in English* (72.22% selected "extremely important")
- *Assessing students* (69.45% selected "extremely important")
- *Practice reading and writing in English* (69.5% selected "extremely important").

No teacher selected “Not important” for needing more training in cases of *CLT*

*Techniques and Preparing English language material.*

Table 8

*Teachers’ Opinions on the Priorities of Training in Bangladesh*

No.	Question: <i>What do you think would be the priority for teacher training in Bangladesh for the development of English Language Teaching (ELT)? Need more training of teachers in:</i>	Not important	Important	Extremely important	Total responses
1.	-fluency in English	2	8	26	36
2.	-practice reading and writing in English	3	8	25	36
3.	-CLT techniques	0	7	29	36
4.	-cultural knowledge of English countries	10	15	11	36
5.	-grammatical explanation of English	10	13	13	36
6.	-use of video in the class	10	8	18	36
7.	-knowledge of language acquisition	5	12	18	35
8.	-assessing students	2	9	25	36
9.	-preparing English language material	0	4	32	36
10.	-using the internet to teach English	10	12	14	36

Although teachers’ consistently indicated the need for training in these 5 areas, all of these may not be indicative of their problem areas. They might be expressing their priorities for training in these areas for the overall development of English language teaching in Bangladesh, as question no. 10 asked them. In the case of fluency, it is evident from the findings of Question no.8 that teachers in this study use a number of the most widely advocated CLT activities in their classrooms, and in Question no. 7 a majority of the teachers (55.56%) expressed that teacher’ lack of sufficient spoken English competence is not a major problem for Bangladesh. These indicate that participant teachers’ English language knowledge is believed to be sufficient and their fluency is not a hindrance to teaching communicatively. They expressed their opinion for the need for training in fluency in English. Even though they regard their own English to be adequate they appear to hold the belief that potential teachers are not adequately fluent

considering the lack of sufficient English proficiency of EFL teachers overall in Bangladesh, which can be a major difficulty for the success of CLT.

Training in assessment may be a need for these EFL teachers and also for the overall development of ELT in Bangladesh, as significant number of teachers (61.11%) indicated that *Traditional grammar-based examinations* pose major difficulty for them and/or might pose difficulty in the way of adopting CLT in Bangladesh. Also teachers' responses to Question no. 9 indicated that only nine teachers thought *Exam success* is 'currently most successful' in Bangladesh. Teachers' training for *Practice reading and writing in English* may not be explained very well, as teachers who have good proficiency in English may have sufficient reading and writing abilities. Possibly they thought that CLT requires teachers to have native-like proficiency in reading and writing.

Teachers' were almost equally divided in indicating their priorities for training in the areas of *Cultural knowledge of English countries* (only 30.56% of the teachers responded that training in this area is "extremely important" and 27.28% said "not important) and *Grammatical explanation of English* (36.11% of the teachers responded that training in this area is "extremely important" and 27.28% said "not important"), which apparently may also indicate their differences of opinion about the needs for training. Very few teachers expressed a need for training in these two areas. This is not surprising, as it is also a finding in Question no. 6 where 58.33% of the teachers said it's "Not true" that *CLT requires higher knowledge of target language culture*. Due to its colonial past with Britain, EFL teachers in Bangladesh may have a different concept of target language culture. For example, they think the needs, and practices of spoken English in Bangladesh and any other English speaking countries are same. As these

Bangladeshi teachers may have believed that the cultural differences between Bangladesh and any other English speaking countries do not prevent the students from learning English, they regarded their cultural knowledge of English countries as not essential for the success of CLT or overall development of English language teaching in Bangladesh.

A possible reason behind the majority of the teachers not indicating high priority for training in *Grammar explanation in English* may be that these teachers believe they already have sufficient grammar knowledge and they know how to teach grammar. Teachers' having such a belief is not surprising as being introduced to communicative language teaching approach, traditional grammar teaching method of teaching English was followed in Bangladesh. This required teachers to have thorough grammar knowledge, so teachers may naturally feel confident about their grammar explanations required to facilitate and achieve communicative function of their students. This explanation is supported by the findings in Question no. 8 that 77.78% of the teachers use grammar explanations (36.11%- regularly and 41.67%- sometimes).

*Results of question no. 11: Do you have any suggestions about the implementation and practice of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method in Bangladesh? Please comment.*

This open-ended question provided participants with a chance to impart their suggestions about the implementation and practice of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method in Bangladesh. Only 3 teachers commented and 2 of these made suggestions for more training opportunities in Bangladesh and another teacher indicated skepticism about the success of CLT in Bangladesh but did not present any specific reason for this opinion.

### *Analysis of Response Patterns*

This section provides description of analyses of the patterns across the participants' responses to the questionnaire items. The goal was to look for the consistencies and/or inconsistencies in teachers' responses with regards to three main issues:

- perceptions about communicative activities and overall communicative language teaching approach,
- classroom practices, and
- expectations of CLT in Bangladesh

*Teachers' perceptions about communicative activities and overall communicative language teaching approach.*

The analysis of the questionnaire data (in Questions no. 5 and 6) demonstrated that the activities identified by most of the Bangladeshi EFL teachers in this study are some of the most important and commonly advocated CLT activities in the general literature and that the CLT characteristics they identified best describe communicative language teaching. It was also found that some common misconceptions about CLT among EFL teachers, reported in research literature, were identified by the majority of teachers in this study as "Not True". That is, Bangladeshi teachers that were surveyed do not hold these common misconceptions.

*Correspondence between teachers' perceptions of communicative activities and CLT approach:*

It was found that, teachers' responses in Question no. 5 about communicative activities correspond with their responses in Question no. 6 about the characteristics of communicative language teaching (CLT).

Teachers identified *Having a debate or role-play, Group discussion on a controversial topic, Practice speaking in pairs, Describing a picture to a partner, and Story telling in front of the class* as communicative activities, which correspond with their consistent identification of communicative language teaching characteristics in Question no. 6, where a majority of them identified that *CLT is student/learner centered approach, CLT relies heavily on speaking and listening skills, and CLT means strategic and socio-linguistics competence*. The identified activities are student-centered and they emphasize speaking and listening skills; also role-play and simulations on a real life situation focus on the improvement of students' strategic and social-linguistic competence. The CLT activities identified by the teachers represent their beliefs about CLT and they are reflective of their understanding of CLT approach. The next two characteristics identified by the teachers as characteristics of CLT approach - *CLT emphasizes fluency over accuracy* and *CLT emphasizes communication in second language (L2)*, also are reflective of CLT activities identified by the teachers, as the activities teachers reported they practice mainly are oral communication, interaction and fluency activities.

The most frequent and consistent CLT activities selected by the teachers in this study are designed and practiced in the classrooms based on the basic principles of CLT, which are identified consistently by majority of the teachers in this study. Therefore, there are correspondences between teachers' perceptions of CLT activities and CLT approach, which is a positive indication of Bangladeshi ESL teachers' awareness of the general principles of communicative language teaching.

*Teachers' classroom practices.*

It was found that the majority of activities reported by teachers' (in Question no. 8) as part of their English language teaching correspond with their identification of activities they believed communicative in nature (in Question no. 5).

Correspondence between teachers' perceptions and practices:

- i) Teachers' identified communicative activity *Having a debate or role-play* (Table 3: item 4) correspond with their reported practice *Simulations/role play* (Table 6: item 6).
- ii) Teachers' identified communicative activity *Group discussion on a controversial topic* (Table 3: item 5) correspond with their reported practice *Group discussion* (Table 6: item 2)
- iii) Teachers' identified communicative activity *Practice speaking in pairs* (Table 3: item 8) correspond with their reported practice *Pair work* (Table 6: item 3).
- iv) Teachers' identified communicative activity *Describing a picture to a partner* (Table 3: item 12) correspond with their reported practice *Pair work* (Table 6: item 3).
- v) Teachers' identified communicative activity *Story telling in front of the class* (Table 3: item 10) correspond with their reported practice *Call on students to orally respond to any issues/topic* (Table 6: item 13).

Table 9

*Correspondence of Teachers' Perception of CLT, Communicative Activities, and their Classroom Practices*

<b>Features identified by teachers as characteristics of CLT Q6</b>	<b>Frequency of responses</b>	<b>Features identified by teachers as communicative activities Q5</b>	<b>Frequency of responses</b>	<b>Activities teachers reported they practice in the classrooms Q8</b>	<b>Frequency of responses</b>
CLT is student/learner centered approach	30	Having a debate or role-play	33 selected	Simulations/role play	20 selected
CLT relies heavily on speaking and listening skills	28	Group discussion on a controversial topic	33 selected	Group discussion	24 selected
CLT means strategic and socio-linguistics competence	24	Practice speaking in pairs	33 selected	Pair work	23 selected
CLT emphasizes fluency over accuracy	22	Describing a picture to a partner	31 selected	Pair work	23 selected
CLT emphasizes communication in second language (L2)	21	Story telling in front of the class	26 selected	Call on students to orally respond to any issues/topic	26 selected

But, teachers' identified communicative activities do not correspond directly with their commonly used practice *Listening to audio tape and answering questions* (Table 6: item 12). Although this communicative practice is not very interactive in nature, teachers practice this as it facilitates listening comprehension and oral production, which can be similar to other information exchange activity like *Describing a picture to a partner*.

But, in case of the items that are traditional and not communicative in nature, inconsistencies are evident in teachers' perceptions of communicative activities and classroom practices. The inconsistencies are:

- a) *Looking up words in the dictionary* (Table 3: item 2): 94.45% of the teachers identified the activity as non-CLT but 33.33% of them said they use *Dictionary vocabulary exercises* (Table 6: item 5) “regularly”, 36.11% said they “use it sometimes”, and 30.56% said they “never tried”.
- b) *Grammar exercises* (Table 3: item 11): 91.67% of the teachers identified the activity as non-CLT but 36.11% said they use *Grammar explanation* (Table 6: item 1) “regularly”, 41.67% said they “use it sometimes”, and 19.44% said they “never tried”.

These inconsistencies in teachers’ perceptions about CLT activities and their classroom practices demonstrated that although Bangladeshi EFL teachers in this study report practicing some major communicative activities in their classrooms they also practice some non-communicative teaching activities. But as explained before in 4.1.4, teachers possibly use dictionary and grammar exercises believing that communicative language teaching does not restrict teachers from teaching grammar and they use dictionary and explain grammar only to facilitate students’ meaningful uses of English, not to hamper the communicative flow of the class. The examination system in Bangladesh may be another reason for these teachers’ practicing some traditional activities, especially since vocabulary and grammar are a part of the exams.

*Teachers’ perceived difficulties and their expectations of CLT.*

This section includes an analysis of (a) the relationship between teachers’ perception of CLT approach and their perceived difficulties in adopting CLT in Bangladesh, (b) the relationship between teachers’ perceived difficulties and their opinions on the current ELT situation, and (c) the relationship of teachers’ perceived

difficulties and current ELT situation of Bangladesh with teachers' opinions about the priorities of teacher training in Bangladesh

Identifying the relationships between teachers' perceptions and suggestions/opinions is believed to be important by the researcher as the positive relationship between teachers' perceived difficulties and their opinions on the current ELT situation and the priorities of teacher training would help to design an effective CLT implementation plan for Bangladesh.

*Correspondence between teachers' perceptions of CLT approach and their perceived difficulties in adopting CLT:*

Some of the teacher reported difficulties do not correspond with their perceptions of communicative language teaching approach:

In case of *CLT requires higher knowledge of target language culture* (Table 4: item 2) 58.33% of the teachers identified it as "not true", but 38.89% of them identified *Teachers' lack of target culture (English) knowledge* (Table 5: item 2) as "major difficulty" in adopting CLT in their classrooms and overall in Bangladesh.

Teachers did not identify the requirement of the knowledge of target language. Possibly their concept of target language culture is different because of Bangladesh's colonial past with Britain, which has made the status and practices of English in Bangladesh unlike other foreign language countries and as they believe that cultural differences between Bangladesh and other English speaking countries do not prevent the students from learning English, they regarded their cultural knowledge of English countries as not essential for the success of CLT or overall development of English language teaching in Bangladesh. But 38.89% of the teachers recognized the lack of target / English culture knowledge as a major difficulty may be because in their mind

they were considering the knowledge of Bangladeshi culture as the target culture knowledge, which they have and other EFL teachers in Bangladesh also need to have.

Relationship was found in teachers' perceptions of CLT and their reported difficulties when 61.11% of the teachers identified characteristic *CLT requires a lot of time to prepare class activities* (Table: 4: item 13) as "true" and 50% of them identified *Teachers' little time to prepare communicative materials* (Table 5: item 3) as "major difficulty". A majority of the teachers in this study reported that it requires a lot of time to prepare CLT activities. But this does not prevent them from utilizing CLT because they all report substantial levels of using CLT.

*Correspondence between teachers' perceived difficulties and their opinions on the current ELT situation in Bangladesh:*

Teachers' opinions on 'currently not successful' areas of ELT in Bangladesh mostly correspond with their reported difficulties in using CLT in their classes and the overall adoption of this approach in Bangladesh (in Question no. 7).

The teachers indicated some success in 3 areas: (a) preparation of ELT teachers, (b) exam success, and (c) Effective teaching material. But 2 items do not correspond with their reported difficulties in using CLT in their classes and the overall adoption of this approach in Bangladesh:

a) *Exam success* (Table 7: item 5): 25% of the teachers selected it as "currently most successful" and 50% of the teachers selected it as "moderately successful". These responses do not correlate with teachers' perceived difficulty *Traditional grammar-based examinations* (Table 5: item 7), which was identified by 61.11% as "major difficulty".

That teachers think exams are successful may be because they prepare students very well before the exams based on their awareness of what exams are like. Traditional

grammar-based exams may be another reason for exam success, because of which teachers may teach students grammar. These teachers may have years of experience with grammar teaching but not CLT, so grammar teaching may be easy and familiar to some of the teachers.

b) *Effective teaching material* (Table 7: item 11): 19.44% of the teachers selected it as “currently most successful” and 44.44% of the teachers selected it as “moderately successful”. These responses do not correspond with teachers’ perceived difficulty *Not enough authentic teaching materials to use* (Table 5: item 6), which was identified by 47.22% of the teachers as “major difficulty”.

These teachers may be indicating that although they have limited teaching materials, they are still doing a good job in teaching EFL. May be they have developed teaching that is appropriate to the materials that are available. Some of them may be putting effort in developing or contextualizing the materials but they feel the need for more materials. As for professional development and teaching English more effectively teachers always look for more effective teaching materials, their recognition of lack of authentic teaching materials as a major difficulty is not surprising. Furthermore, English teaching materials are considered authentic when they are used according to the levels of the students (Brown, 2001) and also when students can relate the topics of those materials with their background knowledge and they can see the relationship of those topics with real life. This may require development of some teaching materials considering the Bangladeshi context, as just imitating or following Western texts or topics will not be authentic in the Bangladeshi context and it will not bring expected language learning outcomes there. Considering these issues teachers may have identified the lack of

authentic materials as a major difficulty, as we also know that what is appropriate and effective in a Western context may not be the same in case of Bangladesh.

*Relationship of teachers' perceived difficulties and current ELT situation of Bangladesh with teachers' opinions about the priorities of teacher training in Bangladesh:*

It was found that teachers' expressed opinions about the most important priorities of teacher training in Bangladesh mostly correspond with teachers' perceived difficulties in using and/or adopting CLT (Question no. 7) and their opinions on the current ELT situation in Bangladesh (Question no. 9):

a) *Preparing English language material* (Table 8: item 9): 88.89% of the teachers felt the need of training in this area as "Extremely important". This expressed need corresponds with teachers' perceived difficulty *Not enough authentic teaching materials to use* (Table 5: item 6), which was identified by 47.22% of the teachers as "major difficulty". It further corresponds with their expressed current ELT situation regarding *Effective teaching material* (Table 7: item 11), which was identified by 33.33% of the teachers as "currently not successful".

The convergence of several items shows that participating EFL teachers are very concerned about effective teaching materials and the need for expertise in material development in Bangladesh. However, it does not indicate that English language teaching in the three participating universities was negatively affected due to the lack of teaching materials. After all, participating teachers did report developing materials most of the time on their own and it was not a major difficulty. As mentioned earlier, teachers may be indicating that they have limited teaching materials, but they are reporting still doing a good job in teaching EFL.

Materials and resources are likely to be limited in a country like Bangladesh which is not wealthy and it may be that participant teachers in this study also are focusing on the needs of English teaching materials that are appropriate and effective for the Bangladeshi English language context. As a teacher myself, I found that looking for more teaching materials is also a trend among teachers as it is a part of the development of the teaching profession.

b) *CLT techniques* (Table 8: item 3): 80.56% of the teachers felt the need of training in this area as “Extremely important”. This expressed need corresponds with teachers’ perceived difficulty *Lack of training in CLT* (Table 5: item 10), which was identified by 58.33% of the teachers as a “major difficulty” and also corresponds with lack of success in *Preparation of ELT teachers* (Table 7: item 6).

It is found in questionnaire items that participating EFL teachers have a basic repertoire of CLT techniques and they use the major CLT techniques in their classes. English medium university teachers of this study have good repertoires of CLT techniques, but EFL teachers overall in Bangladesh may need training in understanding and developing CLT techniques. These teachers may have expressed their concern about CLT techniques for other EFL teachers.

c) *Assessing students* (Table 8: item 8): 69.44% of the teachers felt the need of training in this area as “Extremely important”. This expressed need corresponds with teachers’ perceived difficulty *Lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments of communicative competence* (Table 5: item 11), which was identified by 63.89% of the teachers as “major difficulty”.

Teachers' opinions on the priority of training in assessing students seems logical here as they may know how and have lots of experience to assess grammar from years of experience but they may not know how to assess the communicative abilities of students, which naturally creates frustration among them. Traditional grammar-based exams certainly are a major impediment for proper assessment of communicative language learning. Communicative language learning and teaching cannot be successful if the exams do not reflect what was practiced and taught in the EFL classes as part of the communicative syllabus. Therefore, training in communicative assessment of students needs to be considered seriously and it is a major issue for further implementation of CLT in Bangladesh.

### *Summary*

This chapter has included the data analysis of the study. The analysis is divided into two sections: (a) analysis of question responses, which focused on analyzing the frequency of the responses, and (b) analysis of response patterns, which focused on the analysis of the correspondence of the responses in different questions. These analyses demonstrated that teachers' perceptions about communicative activities and principles mostly correspond with their reported classroom practices and also that the most important teacher expressed priorities for teacher training in Bangladesh mostly correspond with their perceived difficulties in using and adopting CLT and their opinions on the current ELT situation in Bangladesh. The following chapter will give a detailed discussion of the data analysis and findings presented here.

## Chapter 5

## Discussion

*Major Findings*

The present study reveals that participant Bangladeshi EFL teachers have very good understanding of the communicative activities and the general principles of communicative language teaching (CLT), and they practice the major communicative activities in their classes.

It was also found that the teachers did not support some of the common misconceptions about CLT, which are reported in research literature as one of the major impediments to implementation and practice of CLT in EFL context (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Fox, 1993; Gamal & Debra, 2001; Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Li, 1998; Rollman, 1994; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999; Thompson, 1996). EFL teachers in this study identified the following concepts of CLT negatively: “CLT means only group work and pair work” (Fox, 1993; Gamal & Debra, 2001; Li, 1998; and Penner, 1995), “CLT means not teaching grammar” (Li, 1998; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999; Thompson, 1996), “CLT means teaching speaking only” (Li, 1998; Thompson, 1996), and “CLT means discourse competence only” (Fox, 1993).

It is also found that there are positive relationships between teachers’ perceptions about CLT and their classroom practices as EFL teachers in this study report practicing some of the major communicative activities in their classes. Some of the most frequently used activities by the teachers in this study are: call on students to orally respond to any issues/topic, group discussion, listening to audio tape and answering questions, pair work, and simulations/role play. Although there are some discrepancies between teachers’

perceptions and practices in this study, these are not remarkable as these are not causing obstacles in the way of communicative practices or discouraging teachers from practicing CLT; and these discrepancies are not caused by teachers' misconceptions of CLT or their limited knowledge of CLT pedagogy, rather possibly due to some practical reasons like lack of resources, traditional exams, under equipped and large classes, and lack of support from administration.

#### *Comparison of the Findings with Related Literature*

Findings of this study are significantly different from previous related research where it was found that EFL teachers mainly persisted traditional practices in classes (Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999), showed unwillingness to use communicative activities (Gamal & Debra, 2001), favored more traditional way of teaching (Gorsuch, 2000), and found it difficult to change the classical traditional approach of language teaching and implement modern approach (Penner, 1995).

Unlike the teachers reported in these previous studies, Bangladeshi EFL teachers in this study reported practicing major communicative activities in their classes. Although it is reported that teachers use traditional activities like dictionary use and grammar explanations, it is unlike the previous findings, as these activities are not a hindrance to communicative language teaching practices. Bangladeshi EFL teachers in this study reported using grammar explanation due to their awareness that communicative language teaching does not restrict teachers from teaching grammar, as 31 teachers (86.11%) in this study reported it as "not true" that CLT means not teaching grammar. They possibly explain grammar only to facilitate students' meaningful uses of English, not to hinder the communicative flow of the class. Thus teachers in this study do not hold the

misconception that ‘CLT means not teaching grammar’ which was identified by Li (1998), Sato and Kleinsasser (1999) and Thompson (1996).

Bangladeshi EFL teachers’ perceptions about CLT also contrast with Li’s (1998) findings “a typical misconception of teachers was that by concentrating in appropriateness and fluency, CLT does not teach form at all and thus totally neglects accuracy” (p. 689).

Findings from the present study also do not conform to Lewis and McCook’s (2000) and Karavas-Doukas’s (1996) studies, which revealed that Vietnamese and Greek EFL teachers were following both traditional and communicative methods in their practices mainly due to misconceptions about CLT. Bangladeshi EFL teachers’ use of grammar explanation along with the major communicative activities is very significant for the implementation and success of CLT overall in Bangladeshi post secondary level, as findings from previous studies were that EFL teachers in most cases only follow or try to hold on to only traditional grammar practices, whereas Bangladeshi EFL teachers practice major communicative activities and use grammar explanations and accuracy as part of the communicative function or to facilitate communicative competence. It has been established that the traditional grammar teaching method is not an effective way to develop learners’ communicative competence (Krashen, 1985, 1992; Nunan, 1989). Many researchers believe that if grammar is taught in a communicative way, mastering grammatical knowledge is important to learners’ overall development toward target language use (Ellis, 1994, 1995; Fotos, 1994; Garrett, 1986; Lightbown, 1991; Lightbown & Spada, 1990; Littlewood, 1981; Lee & VanPatten, 1995; Rivers, 1981; Riggensbach & Lazarson, 1991; Sachter, 1991; Savignon, 1991; Smith, 1981; Widdowson,

1996). Li (1998) also asserted that there is plenty of research literature that advocates inclusion of grammar instruction in second language teaching. He also added, “While trying to introduce CLT, teachers should not feel guilty about teaching grammar” (p. 697). Therefore, Bangladeshi EFL teachers seem to be aware of the need of grammar for achieving communicative competence and they are teaching grammar to students may be to facilitate and achieve communicative competence, which is advocated by researchers for the success of CLT.

Another important finding of this study is regarding the teachers’ perceived need for the knowledge of target language culture. Ellis’s (1994) study found that Vietnamese teachers believed that they did not have necessary knowledge of target language culture to successfully practice CLT. Ellis asserted that this belief led to Vietnamese teachers’ misconception about CLT that it does not culturally fit for Vietnam and that CLT is basically an ESL methodology, not suited for EFL contexts. Liao (2000) pointed out that a lack of target language culture was one of the major difficulties in the way of successful implementation of CLT in China. Burnaby and Sun’s (1989) study also showed that Chinese teachers believed that the communicative approach was mainly applicable in China for those students who planned to go to an English speaking country.

But in this study, Bangladeshi EFL teachers did not identify additional knowledge of the target language for the success of CLT in Bangladesh. These teachers may believe that the status and practices of English in Bangladesh are not like other foreign language countries due to the fact of being a colony of Britain. As a result of Bangladesh’s long association with English, it is not as ‘foreign’ as in other countries that lack a long historical relationship with English.

These teachers may also believe that their cultural knowledge of English is sufficient for using English in Bangladeshi context. The majority of the teachers reported that teachers' lack of target culture knowledge is a manageable problem for Bangladesh. Only 8 of 36 (22.22%) Bangladeshi teachers identified 'CLT is basically an ESL methodology, not EFL' as 'true'. In contrast, Ellis's (1994) reported this was a major misconception amongst Vietnamese teachers. It was found that misunderstanding does not stop Bangladeshi teachers from practicing communicative language teaching. It was also described in the previous chapter as an uncertainty, not a misconception among Bangladeshi teachers as 36.11% of them said it is true and 41.67% of them said they don't know whether CLT is basically an ESL methodology. Furthermore, while expressing their opinions about the difficulties in adopting CLT in Bangladesh, the teachers said that the difference between ESL and EFL would not create any major difficulty in the way of successful implementation and practices of CLT.

Another significant finding of this study, in contrast with previous studies (Li, 1998; Mustafa 2001; and Penner, 1995), is that Bangladeshi EFL teachers do not support that teachers' lack of high proficiency in English is a major difficulty for practicing and implementing CLT in Bangladesh. Mustafa (2001) pointed out teachers' lack of English language proficiency as a factor that inhibits the adoption of CLT in Indonesia. Li (1998) found that teachers in his study believed that CLT required them to be fluent in English and they generally felt that they had high proficiency in English grammar, reading, and writing, but they had inadequate abilities in English speaking and listening to conduct communicative class. Penner (1995) also observed that Chinese teachers in his study believed their English knowledge was limited. But majority of the

teachers in this study identified that although CLT requires teachers to have high proficiency in English, they believe their English knowledge is sufficient for Bangladeshi context. Bangladeshi teachers' practice of major CLT activities support the idea that either they have sufficient English proficiency or they think that Bangladeshi teachers' English proficiency is not a major difficulty in practicing and adopting CLT in Bangladesh. But the majority of the teachers in the present study identified 'students' low-level English proficiency' as major difficulty in practicing and adopting CLT in Bangladesh. This is similar to Li's (1998) findings where teachers reported that due to students' low English proficiency they encountered difficulties in trying CLT approach in their classes. From my own experience I have found that when students are enrolled in post secondary levels and university levels in Bangladesh, their low-level English proficiency usually poses difficulties for the teachers to do oral interaction and other communicative activities in the classrooms. Therefore, successful and effective practices of functional and social communicative activities in the classroom thus is hampered or delayed. But findings from this study demonstrated that participating teachers' overall communicative practices is not hampered or discouraged due to the lack of students' English proficiency, which is indicative that students' low level English proficiency may not have negative impact on the success of CLT, rather CLT can help to improve students' English proficiency.

But the findings regarding Bangladeshi teachers' perceptions that CLT is time consuming, support Li (1998), Sato and Kleinsasser (1999), and Thompson's (1996) findings. The majority of the teachers in this study supported the idea that CLT requires a lot of time to prepare class activities, which was also evident in Li's (1998) study where

teachers reported lack of time for developing communicative materials had been a constraint for them to use CLT. Sato and Kleinsasser (1999) also found that one of the reasons behind Japanese as a second language teachers' persistence in traditional practices in their class was their belief that CLT used time consuming activities. Thompson (1996) set out this belief of teachers as one of the misconceptions of CLT, which inhibit successful practice and implementation of CLT. But it is noteworthy that although Bangladeshi EFL teachers believe that CLT is time consuming and teachers have little time to prepare communicative activities, and this poses a difficulty for successful implementation of CLT in Bangladesh, yet, unlike Korean EFL teachers in Li's (1998) study, Bangladeshi teachers do not appear to be discouraged from practicing communicative activities in their classes. It is evident from the findings that teachers practice and are willing to practice communicative activities and they do not think that preparing communicative activities is too much pressure for them.

Teacher reported difficulties in practicing and adopting CLT in this study. Majority of the teachers in this study identified 'Large class size' as a difficulty in practicing CLT or as a possible constraints in the way of adoption of CLT in Bangladesh which was also reported by teachers in researches of Li (1998), Mustafa (2001), Burnaby and Sun (1989), and Gamal and Debra (2001) as one of the constraints or difficulties for successful implementation of CLT. Bangladeshi teachers also reported that EFL classes are not well-equipped and convenient which is true as Bangladesh may lack resources as an underdeveloped nation and classrooms are also inconvenient may be due to large number of students and immovable desks and chairs which hinders the maximum student participation and successful implementation of communicative activities like role-play,

group-work and games. Therefore, the majority of the teachers in this study identified large class size as a major difficulty in adopting CLT in their classes or overall in Bangladesh but they may not find it totally impossible to use communicative activities as the findings also demonstrate that they use some of the major communicative activities in their class. This finding does not fully coincide with Li's (1998) observation in case of Korea: "The teachers found it very difficult, if not entirely impossible, to use CLT with so many students in one class because they believed that oral English and close monitoring of class activities were essential in CLT" (p. 691).

Traditional grammar-based examination was reported as a barrier to implementing CLT in the current study and it was also identified by Li (1998), Mustafa (2001) and Gorsuch's (2000). Lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments of communicative competence was also reported by Li (1998), Mustafa (2001) and Gorsuch's (2000) as another major constraints in implementing CLT in Korean, Indonesian and Japanese context. These factors are also identified by the majority of the Bangladeshi EFL teachers as a difficulty or possible difficulty in practicing and adopting CLT in Bangladesh. Bangladeshi EFL teachers' opinions about the traditional grammar-based exams as a difficulty and their priority of training in assessing students are logical as they may have expertise to assess grammar from years of experience but they may not know how to assess communicative abilities of students.

Bangladeshi EFL teachers also identified 'Lack of support from administration' as one of the difficulties in practicing and adopting CLT. This is consistent with Li (1998) and Burnaby and Sun's (1989) studies. Li's (1998) study showed that Korean teachers found the lack of support from administration frustrating and as Li stated

“Teachers generally found this lack of professional, administrative, and collegial support discouraging” (p. 693). Chinese teachers in Burnaby and Sun’s (1989) study reported their dissatisfactions regarding their status of professional development. Their dissatisfaction with administration is evident as they thought, “their own level of academic knowledge was not being enhanced in the way it would have been” (p. 230). Participant Bangladeshi EFL teachers’ report about lack of support from administration may be similar to Korean and Chinese contexts or it may be a general fear among the teachers that if administration does not support teachers CLT implementation will not be successful in Bangladesh.

Lack of training in CLT was also reported by Bangladeshi teachers as a major difficulty in adopting CLT, which is similar to Li (1998), Burnaby and Sun (1989), and Gamal and Debra’s (2001) findings where EFL teachers identified it as a constraint in the way of successful implementation of CLT. But although EFL teachers thought it a major difficulty in adopting CLT in Bangladesh, it may not be true that participant teachers are in serious need of training in CLT or their lack of training in CLT is posing problem in practicing communicative language teaching. This research found that Bangladeshi EFL teachers have a basic repertoire of CLT techniques and they use the familiar CLT techniques in their classes. These teachers indicate a need for more training in developing and implementing CLT techniques. Bangladeshi EFL teachers overall need training in understanding and developing CLT techniques.

Another major difficulty in implementing and practicing CLT is teachers’ lack of English language proficiency or lack of confidence in using English, which was reported by Liao (2000), Li (1998), Mustafa (2001), and Penner (1995) in their studies. But more

than half of the EFL teachers (55.56% of them) in the present study did not think that teachers' lack of English proficiency was a major difficulty for them. On the other hand the majority of the teachers (72.22% of them) have expressed their opinions that oral fluency is a priority for teacher training in Bangladesh. This is indicative that oral fluency may not be a problem for the participant teachers of the three English medium universities, but lack of oral fluency can be a major problem for other EFL teachers overall in Bangladesh.

Lack of authentic teaching materials and teachers' lack of time and expertise in material development were also mentioned in previous research as major difficulties in implementing CLT, which are reported by teachers in this study also. Mustafa (2001) identified lack of authentic teaching materials as one of the reasons that inhibit the adoption of CLT in Indonesia; Burnaby and Sun (1989) reported that Chinese EFL teachers showed concern about the lack of authentic teaching materials in English and communicative reading exercises; Choi (1999) reported that Korean EFL teachers had difficulty in finding authentic materials and learner-centered activities; and Li (1998) reported that the teachers she studied had little time and expertise in material development as a major difficulty for the success of CLT in Korea. In the present study half of the teachers did not feel that 'not enough authentic teaching materials to use' is a major difficulty for Bangladesh and majority of the teachers (63.89%) also felt that 'effective teaching material' is currently successful in Bangladesh. But most of the teachers (88.89%) here expressed priority for training in 'preparing English language materials' and half of them expressed that 'teachers' little time to prepare communicative

materials' might be a major difficulty for adopting and practicing CLT in Bangladesh, which is similar to Li's (1998), Burnaby and Sun (1989), Mustafa's (2001) findings.

Teachers in this study might have limited teaching materials, but that did not stop them from communicative teaching, and their focus seems to be self-sufficient in preparing communicative teaching materials. In Li's (1998) study, he mentioned that all the available textbooks were "developed under the influence of the grammar-translation and audiolingual methods, so teachers had had to write their own materials and design their own activities if they wanted to use CLT" (p. 689), which may not be true in case of these Bangladeshi teachers in this study. But it was not clear from this study, as it was not within the scope of this study, what kind of teaching materials in particular they referred to, whether conversation, reading, writing, or audio-visual. Half of the teachers in this study also felt that their lack of time to prepare communicative materials is a major difficulty in adopting CLT, which is also evident in Li's (1998) findings as he stated "Because most of the teachers were already overloaded, any additional work was a burden for them" (p.689).

### *Conclusion and Implications*

Findings of this study demonstrate that, participant Bangladeshi teachers' perceptions and practices of CLT and their perceived difficulties in using and adopting CLT in Bangladesh are not similar to other EFL countries. Most significantly, these teachers have positive attitudes towards CLT, showed correspondence between their theoretical knowledge and their practices of CLT, and they did not hold many misconceptions about CLT. Most of the studies that have investigated EFL teachers' perceptions and attitudes regarding CLT practices and implementation (Burnaby & Sun,

1989; Ellis, 1994; Gamal & Debra, 2001; Lewis & McCook, 2002; Li, 1998; Liao, 2000; Mustafa, 2001; Penner, 1995; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999; Sun & Cheng, 2000) concluded that the difference between ESL and EFL contexts or the unsuitability of Western ESL methodology in EFL context was identified by teachers as one of the main reasons for CLT implementation to be difficult or not being successful in EFL countries. But this is not the case for Bangladesh in this study. Therefore, despite the differences between EFL and ESL contexts, there seems to be a positive environment for the successful implementation of CLT in Bangladesh. Thus, the three participant universities- North South University, Independent University, and BRAC University, may be considered as model institutions for CLT development and implementation in Bangladesh.

As mentioned earlier in this section, when research found that while other EFL countries faced difficulties due to the unsuitability of ESL methodology in their EFL contexts, the Bangladeshi EFL teachers in this study reported practicing CLT and indicated their efforts to implement CLT. They may not be imitating a Western methodology, but rather, considering their own educational conditions and communicative needs. This idea is supported by findings of this study as the majority of participant teachers expressed their opinions that they do not lack the cultural knowledge of English countries. Possibly they do not see any difference between the uses of English in Bangladesh and in English countries. So, it could be assumed that they are applying their knowledge of Bangladeshi culture for the purposes of CLT. The success of CLT in the three universities of this study shows that CLT can be successful in the EFL context of Bangladesh given that CLT needs to be implemented and practiced considering the

Bangladeshi context and its communicative needs, which will be a “locally appropriate version of CLT” (Tomlinson, 1990).

Based on the findings that CLT implementation was not successful in many EFL countries, researchers suggested integration between EFL and ESL contexts and also prioritized consideration of EFL countries’ own educational condition to make the new methodology or approach well-rounded and practical for their own contexts (Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Ellis, 1996; Li, 1998; Sun & Cheng, 2000).

Burnaby and Sun (1989) asserted that to make the communicative approach successful, Western and EFL countries should carefully consider the comparability of conditions in two settings. According to Ellis (1996), to make the communicative approach suitable for an Asian situation “it needs to be both culturally attuned and culturally accepted” (p.213). He suggests that “mediating” can serve as a useful tool in the adoption process of CLT and that, integration between Western and Eastern teaching is needed to make language teaching successful in EFL countries. According to Sun and Cheng (2000), there needs to be a compromise between CLT methodology and conditions and the provisions of the context in which it is to be implemented. Sun and Cheng believe that the adoption of CLT in the EFL context is basically a curriculum development, which is to integrate the context into a communicative language teaching curriculum. They add that, in EFL teaching, the effect of the context on a program is more notable than it is in an ESL context and knowing more about the context helps to better adapt the new methodology into the program. Sun and Cheng (2000) also recommended that, "adaptation of teaching methodology will be more successful if the theory of learning and teaching where CLT methodology is derived from is reviewed and

studied with the characteristics of the program context in mind" (p. 25). Li (1998) also suggested that the adoption of CLT in EFL countries like South Korea should be "gradual and grounded in the countries' own EFL situation" (p. 677) and EFL countries "should adapt rather than adopt CLT in their English teaching" (p. 696). The ministry of education, education policy makers, and post secondary institutions in Bangladesh need to consider these suggestions/ issues for the successful implementation of a Bangladeshi version of CLT.

#### *Implementing CLT in Bangladesh*

The positive attitude towards CLT methodology and practices that is found in these three participating universities may not be evident overall in Bangladesh and the findings from this study cannot be generalized. The EFL teachers in this study may be the representatives of the best in Bangladesh and other EFL teachers overall in Bangladesh may have misconceptions about CLT method, which is indicated by half of the participants in this study as a possible difficulty in adopting CLT in Bangladesh and teachers also may lack expertise in its practices. But, for the successful CLT implementation in Bangladesh these three participating universities can play a vital role in CLT training in other post secondary institutes. Other institutions can hire EFL teachers from one of the universities of this study to get expertise, which may not be a large-scale national development program; interested post-secondary institutes can prepare an internal development model in collaboration with these universities. Some EFL teachers in Bangladesh may be reluctant to try CLT, as it is not familiar or it requires changes of the traditional on their part or due to misconceptions of CLT. So, teachers need assistance and encouragement in trying out new ideas, activities, and

materials. Teachers should have the opportunity to retrain and refresh themselves in CLT and more importantly “teachers should receive help in revising, refining, or changing their educational theories” (Li, 1998; p. 697). Bangladeshi teachers need continuing support with CLT and this can be achieved by appointing highly qualified teaching consultants and conducting in-service teacher education programs (Li, 1998). Proper training can teach them how to use CLT in their classrooms and they can be motivated to overcome the difficulties.

EFL teachers from the universities in this study can take the initiative for in-service teacher training and development programs. They can go to local post-secondary institutions to arrange seminars and training programs on CLT for EFL teachers. A TEFL certificate program can be developed for the institutions that are found to be struggling or facing difficulty in adopting CLT and an experienced and qualified teacher from these three participating universities of this study can run this certificate program. Proper modeling can help the teachers realize that it is possible to introduce communicative teaching strategies and methods in their local contexts. As mentioned earlier, the three private universities of this study can be good models where CLT is being practiced and implemented, and thus other local EFL teachers will be able to see that it is possible to use and practice the recommended strategies/methods of CLT in their classes.

Apart from teacher training, attention should be given to the following areas for the overall success of CLT in Bangladesh:

*Vocabulary and grammar teaching:* As Bangladeshi teachers are aware of the importance of grammar as part of communicative teaching, and as apparently they teach some grammar or use grammar explanations for communicative functions, they may need to be

more informed as to how to teach grammar communicatively and they also need to work on finding methods of communicative grammar instruction appropriate to their teaching context.

While integrating grammar instruction and communicative language use, teachers can also use alternative methods such as the grammar-consciousness-raising tasks suggested by several researchers (Ellis, 1995; Fotos, 1994; Rutherford, 1987; Smith, 1981). This viewpoint emphasizes the importance of communicative grammar, which is designed to relate grammatical structures to contexts in which they may occur naturally. In traditional grammar teaching, grammar usually is an end of the lessons; therefore, grammatical knowledge itself is emphasized and little effort was made to relate grammar to the context of real communicative use. On the other hand, in communicative teaching, teachers are recommended to teach students to understand grammar as a means rather than end in itself (Choi, 1999). Communicative language teaching in fact does not reject grammar teaching and in communicative approach, the issue of grammar teaching lies on how to teach grammar, not on whether to include grammar in the syllabus.

Regarding vocabulary teaching, rather than memorization of vocabulary from an isolated list or from dictionary, communicative and modern methods of vocabulary teaching need to be applied in Bangladesh where students will be trained to properly guess vocabulary from context and learn incidentally while reading. Additional vocabulary classes and attention to vocabulary learning in every EFL classes might also help in improving the vocabulary knowledge of students.

*Materials and resources:* Like other EFL countries, lack of authentic materials and audio-visual materials is also common in Bangladesh. Materials and resources are likely to be

limited in a country like Bangladesh which is not wealthy and may be participant teachers in this study have also focused on the needs of English teaching materials that are appropriate and effective for Bangladeshi English language context. But as mentioned earlier, it was not clear from this study what kind of teaching materials they referred to in particular, whether conversation, reading, writing, or audio-visual. Also, Bangladeshi teachers' idea about authentic materials is also not clear. Authentic materials and learner centered-activities are recommended in communicative language teaching and an idea about authentic materials is found from Omaggio (1993) while prioritizing the use of authentic materials he stated that “ample opportunities to learn language in context and apply their knowledge to coping with real-life situation” (p. 79). Success of CLT may require the development of some teaching materials considering the Bangladeshi context, as just imitating or following Western texts or topics may not be authentic in Bangladeshi context. Extra funding is also needed to obtain books, materials, and audio-visual equipment for communicative activities and when the funding is not available, using CLT may become hard (Li, 1998).

More research needs to be done in Bangladesh to find out the actual problems in EFL classrooms, what kind of material development teachers referred to and are needed in the Bangladeshi context and necessary steps that should be taken to the make the classrooms convenient and equipped for communicative language teaching.

*Assessment/evaluation:* As communication or oral interaction is one of the important components of CLT, teachers may face difficulty in giving and assessing oral tests to a large number of students, which was found by Li (1998) that South Korean teachers “found it difficult to balance content and language when scoring oral exams” (p. 695) and

overall they “found it disconcerting that there were no prescribed ready-made assessment tools for communicative competence” (p. 695). Also in the cases of reading and writing assessment, the lack of standard grading categories and criteria will pose a major difficulty in successful communicative assessment. Furthermore, communicative language learning and teaching cannot be successful if the exams do not reflect what was practiced and taught in the classes as part of the communicative syllabus. Gorsuch (2000) concluded that, if the exam is concentrated on only grammar knowledge, a communicative competence development does not meet the needs of students. Based on the findings in a Vietnamese CLT situation, Ellis (1994) also asserted that, the design and content of texts and examinations will need to be consistent with communicative goals for communicative language teaching to become a reality. Therefore, designing communicative assessment standards and criteria for Bangladeshi EFL students needs to be considered seriously and it is a major issue for further implementation of CLT in Bangladesh.

There is no question that in the present world English is the most important language to communicate and to compete in the global market, for the nation to advance in education, science and technology, to build better infrastructure, and to strive to bring the nation out of the ‘developing nation’ status, Bangladesh needs to be competent in English. To replace the traditional out-of-date, teacher centred grammar-teaching method it is vital to find the underlying problems with the present post-secondary English curriculum and to take the necessary steps to improve and modernize the English language teaching methodology. The text-centered and grammar-centered practices need to be replaced by the student-centered, fluency-focused, and problem solving activities

required by CLT. Referring to Frymier (1987) and Fullan (1993), Li (1998) asserted that teachers are central to long-lasting changes in any effort to improve education and also “Teachers and administrators must be aware of the shift in societal needs and make conscious and persistent effort to introduce more CLT into English teaching” (p. 696). In fact, government, educators, administrators, researchers, teachers, and students all have to take part in the development process of communicative language teaching in Bangladesh. As Savignon (1991) also suggested, teamwork among linguists, methodologists and classroom teachers is needed for the success of CLT, because that will offer the “best hope for the elaboration and diffusion of language teaching methods and materials that work, that encourages and support learners in the development of their communicative competence” (p. 274).

#### *Recommendation for Further Research*

The following are recommendations for further research:

1. Like some other major researches in this related field (Aleixo, 2003; Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Li, 1998; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999;), this research did not extend the analysis to determine if demographic factors (i.e., age, gender, years of experience, and field of teaching) have effects on teachers’ perceptions, practices, and opinions and whether teachers’ perceptions, practices, and opinions of CLT vary by university or not. Further research can be conducted to determine these factors.
2. The study focused on teachers’ perspectives. A study that includes students’ perspectives would help to better understand Bangladeshi CLT situation.

3. The population of the study was post-secondary EFL teachers in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Additional research with teachers in other areas in Bangladesh would be desirable.

4. Since the population of this study was EFL teachers in private English medium universities, additional research with EFL teachers in public universities and colleges would be a useful correlational study.

5. Additional quantitative research could enhance the result of the present study by investigating teachers' beliefs and practices from a different angle, because foreign and second language teaching is a complex phenomenon (Ellis, 1994).

### *Summary*

This chapter elaborates that unlike the teachers reported in the previous related studies, Bangladeshi EFL teachers in this study demonstrated very good understanding of communicative language teaching principles and its' practices and teachers, reported practicing the major communicative activities in the class, and also did not support some of the common misconceptions about CLT. The findings were then compared with related literature. Finally, based on the findings of the research, it is suggested that the adoption of CLT should be gradual and grounded to Bangladesh's own EFL situation and for the overall success of CLT in Bangladesh, priorities and proper attention should be given to the following areas: (a) teacher training, (b) vocabulary and grammar teaching, (c) materials and resources, and (d) assessment / evaluation.

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## Appendix A

Standard cover letter sent to the three universities in Bangladesh

RE: Request for permission to ask teacher participation in a graduate research study entitled: "Investigation into teachers' perceptions, attitudes and expectations about communicative language teaching (CLT) in post secondary education in Bangladesh".

Dear Sir or Madam:

As a graduate student at the University of Victoria, BC, Canada, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree. The goal of my research is to investigate English as a Second Language teachers' perception and expectations regarding Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in post secondary education in Bangladesh. The main purpose of the research is to identify factors to be addressed in curriculum planning and teacher education in order to implement more effective (communicative) methods of teaching English at the post-secondary level. The proposed research survey can serve in the planning of a realistic and contextually appropriate implementation plan to modernize the English language teaching curriculum in Bangladesh.

Participants of this study will be Bangladeshi English as second language teachers and I seek your permission to ask the ESL teachers in your institution to participate. Teachers will be informed that their participation in this research is entirely voluntary and that their choice to participate or not has no relevance to their employment and will not be reported to any university officials. Participating teachers will be asked to complete a questionnaire that will take about 20 minutes to complete. All reporting of the information in my thesis or any subsequent papers will be done anonymously and no individual or institution will be identified by name. There are no known or anticipated risks to participants in this research.

This study is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Robert Anthony, Associate Professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Victoria, who can be contacted by E-mail: [ranthony@uvic.ca](mailto:ranthony@uvic.ca) or by phone: 250.721.7780.

As part of the University of Victoria's process to review all research involving human subjects I am required to ask you to write a letter to me indicating that:

- you have read a description of my proposed research,
- and you give me permission to ask teachers at your university to participate.

If you have any further inquiries, please feel free to contact me either by phone: 250.383.7051 or email: [kmrk@uvic.ca](mailto:kmrk@uvic.ca)  
Look forward to hearing from you at your earliest.

Best regards

Khaled Mahmud Rezaul Karim,

## Appendix B

You are being invited to participate in a study entitled

**"Teachers' perceptions, attitudes and expectations about communicative language teaching (CLT) in post-secondary education in Bangladesh."**

The study is being conducted by Khaled M. R. Karim who is a graduate student in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Victoria, Canada. As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for an MA degree in Language and Literacy focusing ESL. This research must comply with the ethical standards for research with human subjects. This information letter outlines these ethical standards and has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee.

The goal of the research is to investigate English as a Second Language teachers' perception and expectations regarding Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in post secondary education in Bangladesh. The main purpose of the research is to identify factors to be addressed in curriculum planning and teacher education in order to implement more effective (communicative) methods of teaching English at the post-secondary level.

Research of this type is important because there is research evidence from a number of countries that successful implementation of Communicative Language Teaching is dependent on the beliefs and attitudes of teachers. Therefore an important first step in curriculum implementation is to ascertain the attitudes of teacher. Furthermore, there is great interest in introducing Communicative Language Teaching to Bangladesh in order to improve English language performance of students. The proposed research survey can serve in the planning of a realistic and contextually appropriate implementation plan to modernize the English language teaching curriculum in Bangladesh.

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a Bangladeshi ESL teacher, teaching at the post-secondary level. If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include completion of a questionnaire and returning the questionnaire to the researcher. Participation in this study (completion of the questionnaire) will take about 20 minutes. There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research.

It has been shown that the successful implementation of Communicative Language Teaching depends on accurately anticipating the attitudes of teachers. The potential benefit of your participation in this research is that this survey will provide information to institutions to facilitate implementation of communicative language teaching methods. The information may be used to inform the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching in Bangladesh.

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. By completing and returning the questionnaire you are indicating your consent. However, once the anonymous questionnaire is returned by mail it is not possible for me or any one else to identify any individual response and so data cannot be removed should you wish to withdraw from participating in the study at a later time.

Your anonymity will be protected. There will be no identifying marks on the questionnaire. Basic demographic information: age, sex, years of employment will be asked. However, the researcher will not know any identities of participants. Furthermore the demographic information will only be reported in aggregate, which will not permit employers or anyone else to identify contributing participants.

Your confidentiality and the confidentiality of the data will be protected by destroying the original questionnaires after the transcription of data onto an electronic database for analysis. Upon successful completion of the project the electronic database will be erased.

Other planned uses of this data include submitting a thesis, sending copy of research report to each participating institution and using the aggregate data for conference papers and publication.

If you wish to have further information you may contact Khaled M. R. Karim by phone: 011.250.383.7051 or e-mail: [kmrk@uvic.ca](mailto:kmrk@uvic.ca) ; or my thesis supervisor Dr. Robert Anthony, at 011.250.721.7780 or e-mail: [ranthony@uvic.ca](mailto:ranthony@uvic.ca). In addition to being able to contact the researcher and the supervisor, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Associate Vice-President, Research at the University of Victoria (001-250-472-4362).

If you are satisfied that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and you wish to participate, then you should complete the questionnaire and mail it to me using the addressed envelope. By completing the questionnaire and mailing it, you are giving consent for your information to be used in this study. Remember, you are not to make any identifying remarks on the questionnaire or on the envelope. Your return address is not required.

## Appendix C

Terminology:

**English as a Second Language (ESL):**

Referred to as "situations in which English is being taught and learned in countries, contexts and cultures in which English is the predominant language of communication" (Carter & Nunan, 2001; p. 2).

**English as a Foreign Language (EFL):**

EFL is used in contexts where English is neither widely used in communication, nor used as the medium of instruction (Carter & Nunan, 2001; p. 2).

**First language (L1):** L1 usually implies that a person has acquired the language in infancy and early childhood within the family. It also means that the learner is usually proficient in the language (Stern, 1983).

**Second language (L2):** The concept of L2 (including foreign language) indicates the prior availability of a L1 to the individual. It may also imply a lower level proficiency of L2 in comparison with the L1 (Stern, 1983).

**Second language acquisition (SLA):**

SLA, according to Krashen (1982), means that students are able to interact in a meaningful and natural way of communication, in which speakers are concerned with the meaning they are

conveying and understanding instead of the form of their utterances.

**Approach:** "Theoretically well-informed positions and beliefs about the nature of language, the nature of language learning, and the applicability of both to pedagogical settings" (Brown, 2001; p. 16).

**Method:** " A generalized set of classroom specifications for accomplishing linguistics objectives. Methods tend to be concerned primarily with teacher and student roles and behaviors and secondarily with such features as linguistic and subject-matter objectives, sequencing, and materials. They are almost always thought of as being broadly applicable to a variety of audiences in a variety of contexts" (Brown, 2001; p. 16).

**Competence:** "Knowledge of the grammatical and other rules of a language which enable a speaker to use and understand it" (Hubbard *et al*, 1983; p. 326).

**Form:** "The actual words (written) or sound (spoken) used to express something in language, as opposed to meaning or use. Form is often synonymous with structure" (Hubbard et al, 1983; p. 327).

**Meaning:** "The conventional or literal meaning of a particular form" (Hubbard et al, 1983; p. 329).

## Appendix D

## Questionnaire

Accurate report of teachers' beliefs, attitudes and expectations is very important in order to design and develop curriculum. Therefore, please report only what you actually practice, not what you think is correct or would like to practice.

1. Age \_\_\_\_\_

2. Sex \_\_\_\_\_

3. How many years have you been a teacher of English at post secondary level? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What types of courses have you taught in past 3 years?

- Spoken English    Remedial English    Reading    Writing    EFL major
- English for Specific Purposes (ESP)    English literature
- Other English courses (*please specify*) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Which of the following do you think are communicative techniques? (*Please check*)

- Fill in the blanks
- Looking up words in the dictionary
- Writing an essay in English
- Having a debate or role-play
- Group discussion on a controversial topic
- Reading dialogues
- Going on the Internet and joining a chat group
- Practice speaking in pairs
- Dictation task
- Story telling in front of the class
- Grammar exercises
- Describing a picture to a partner

6. What is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method in your view? (*Please check one*)

- |  |                               |                                   |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| CLT is student/learner-centered approach             | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> Not true | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| CLT means strategic and socio-linguistic competence  | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> Not true | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| CLT means discourse competence only                  | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> Not true | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| CLT emphasizes fluency over accuracy                 | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> Not true | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| CLT emphasizes communication in second language (L2) | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> Not true | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |
| CLT relies heavily on speaking and listening skills  | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> Not true | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |

CLT requires the teachers to have high proficiency in English	<input type="checkbox"/> True	<input type="checkbox"/> Not true	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
CLT means only group work or pair work	<input type="checkbox"/> True	<input type="checkbox"/> Not true	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
CLT requires higher knowledge of target language culture	<input type="checkbox"/> True	<input type="checkbox"/> Not true	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
CLT means not teaching grammar	<input type="checkbox"/> True	<input type="checkbox"/> Not true	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
CLT means teaching speaking only	<input type="checkbox"/> True	<input type="checkbox"/> Not true	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
CLT puts too much pressure on teachers	<input type="checkbox"/> True	<input type="checkbox"/> Not true	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
CLT requires a lot of time to prepare class activities	<input type="checkbox"/> True	<input type="checkbox"/> Not true	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
CLT is basically an ESL methodology, not EFL	<input type="checkbox"/> True	<input type="checkbox"/> Not true	<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Other			

---

7. The following are some difficulties that other EFL/ESL teachers had in adopting CLT. Did you come across these difficulties or do you think they might be difficulties for you in adopting CLT in Bangladesh?

Try a scale (circle one), how much of an issue is:

**1-** no problem --- **3-** manageable problem --- **5-** major difficulty

a) Teachers' lack of sufficient spoken English competence	1	2	3	4	5
b) Teachers' lack of target culture (English) knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
c) Teachers' little time to prepare communicative materials	1	2	3	4	5
d) Students' low-level English proficiency	1	2	3	4	5
e) Students resist communicative class activities	1	2	3	4	5
f) Not enough authentic teaching materials to use	1	2	3	4	5
g) Traditional grammar-based examinations	1	2	3	4	5
h) Large class size	1	2	3	4	5
i) The differences between EFL and ESL teaching contexts	1	2	3	4	5
j) Lack of training in CLT	1	2	3	4	5
k) Lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments of communicative competence	1	2	3	4	5
l) Lack of support from administration	1	2	3	4	5
m) Teachers' misinterpretation of CLT	1	2	3	4	5
n) Unsuitability of Western educational assumption in Asia	1	2	3	4	5
o) Other					

---

8. Please indicate which of the following classroom procedures you currently use as part of your English language teaching: *(Please circle a scale)*

1 - use it regularly ---- 3-use it sometimes ---- 5 - never tried

a) Grammar explanation	1	2	3	4	5
b) Group discussion	1	2	3	4	5
c) Pair work	1	2	3	4	5
d) Translation	1	2	3	4	5
e) Dictionary vocabulary exercises	1	2	3	4	5
f) Simulations / role play	1	2	3	4	5
g) Reading and reporting from websites	1	2	3	4	5
h) Reading and reporting from newspaper	1	2	3	4	5
i) Reading aloud	1	2	3	4	5
j) Pronunciation drills	1	2	3	4	5
k) Games	1	2	3	4	5
l) Listening to audio tape and answering questions	1	2	3	4	5
m) Call on students to orally respond to any issue/topic	1	2	3	4	5
n) Reading and reciting dialogue	1	2	3	4	5
o) Other					

---

9. Please indicate your opinion about the following areas of ELT in Bangladesh? *(Please circle a scale)*

currently  
1- not successful ----- 5- most successful

Reading speed	1	2	3	4	5
Cultural understanding of English countries	1	2	3	4	5
Read English text book/news paper	1	2	3	4	5
Oral fluency	1	2	3	4	5
Exam success	1	2	3	4	5
Preparation of ELT teachers	1	2	3	4	5
Reading comprehension	1	2	3	4	5
Speak with native English speakers	1	2	3	4	5
Vocabulary knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
TOEFL preparation	1	2	3	4	5
Effective teaching material	1	2	3	4	5
Convenient and equipped classroom	1	2	3	4	5

Other *(please specify)*

---

10. What do you think would be the priority for teacher training in Bangladesh for the development of English Language Teaching (ELT)? Please try a scale (*Circle one*):

<i>Need for more training of teachers in:</i>	1- not important --- 3- important ----- 5- extremely important				
-fluency in English	1	2	3	4	5
-practice reading and writing in English	1	2	3	4	5
-CLT techniques	1	2	3	4	5
-cultural knowledge of English countries	1	2	3	4	5
-grammatical explanation of English	1	2	3	4	5
-use of video in the classroom	1	2	3	4	5
-knowledge of language acquisition	1	2	3	4	5
-assessing students	1	2	3	4	5
-preparing English language material	1	2	3	4	5
-using the internet to teach English	1	2	3	4	5

Other areas of training needed:

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11) Do you have any suggestions about the implementation and practice of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method in Bangladesh? Please comment.