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A CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW ON COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING IN EFL CONTEXTS: CHALLENGES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own original work except as cited in the references and that it has not been previously submitted to this university or any other institution for any degree, diploma, or qualification.

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Kimkong Heng
November, 2014

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ABSTRACT

Since its inception in Europe in the 1970s, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has gained increasing popularity and worldwide recognition as an approach to language teaching which promotes learners' communicative competence and addresses the insufficient emphasis of traditional methods on communication skills. The spread of CLT from its birthplace in Western countries to its new home in non-Western countries has drawn considerable attention from researchers and practitioners in the field of ELT, which results in numerous research studies conducted to investigate the implementation of CLT in its new place – the EFL contexts. Although there are reports of strong support for CLT from many contexts, much of the research on CLT innovations in EFL contexts indicates that there are a large number of challenges with which EFL teachers have to deal in implementing CLT in their classrooms. The present critical literature review, as its name suggests, aims to explore the challenges EFL teachers face in introducing CLT into their classrooms and examine suggestions put forward by different researchers in order to tackle those potential challenges. This critical review suggests that the challenges or constraints in practicing CLT in EFL settings can be classified into five broad categories, including teacher, student, educational system, methodological, and cultural factors. The review also reveals that most of the suggestions provided by researchers in the field seem to fit into eight categories which comprise eight feasible solutions such as (1) organising teacher education programs, (2) adjusting educational values and attitudes, (3) promoting oral skills and English-speaking environment, (4) modifying the traditional grammar-based examination format and content, (5) developing effective assessment tasks and tools for communicative competence, (6) initiating educational reform, (7) considering teachers' and learners' perspectives, and (8) adopting a new language teaching approach. The review concludes that there seems to be no one particular method or approach that fits in all teaching or learning contexts. In order words, the concept of a one-size-fits-all approach should be refined and replaced by a principle of an eclectic approach or an idea of extracting key components of various methods and apply them in accordance with the context or situation in which the teaching and learning take place. In one word: adapt.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching, CLT implementation, CLT in EFL contexts

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the study

The last few decades have seen the growing popularity and widespread acceptance of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as an approach in language teaching which has a significant effect on how language is learned and taught. Since its inception in the 1970s, CLT has been discussed extensively in the ELT literature and its basic principles have been adopted and applied in language classrooms all around the world. This approach, generally recognized as a *new* method to language teaching, is developed in response to the realization that "knowledge of grammatical forms and structures alone does not adequately prepare learners for effective and appropriate use of the language they are learning" (Berns, 1990, p. 79). Moreover, as its name suggests, CLT is based on the premise that language is a means of communication and therefore the main goal of learning a language is to be able to communicate effectively and appropriately. In other words, the teaching and discussions of grammatical rules which have been receiving considerable attention in every classroom before are now replaced by the use of various tasks and activities designed to build learners' fluency and communication skills. The purpose of this paper is to critically review the literature on CLT innovations in EFL contexts by looking specifically at (1) major constraints EFL teachers face in implementing CLT in their classrooms and (2) suggestions which have been put forward by different researchers in response to addressing those constraining challenges.

The teacher who used to be an indispensable knowledge-giver person in the traditional classroom has now become a facilitator, in communicative classrooms, whose job is to encourage and guide learners to complete various classroom tasks using the target language of which they are capable (Breen and Candlin, 2001; Larsen-Freeman, 1986; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Richards, 2005; Richards & Rogers, 2001). As for the learners, they are no longer regarded as passive knowledge-receiver members of the class; however, they are expected to be active and cooperative class participants who take control of their own learning and are willing to interact with one another in order to build up their communicative abilities (Breen and Candlin, 2001; Brown 2007b; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011;

Nunan, 1989). As Breen and Candlin (2001) state, in the process of communication and learning how to communicate, "the sharing and negotiating of meanings" among people who are involved in that process are necessary, and in order to make such information sharing possible, each participant must be able to "interpret the meanings of others and to express his own meanings" (p. 11). Thus, in CLT classes, learners are more likely to share information, negotiate meanings, and try to understand others and make themselves understood in a variety of classroom interactions rather than work individually to remember lists of words and to master the language forms.

1.2. A move towards a communicative approach

According to Savignon (1991), a CLT movement (i.e., a movement towards a communicative approach) started in Europe and the United States in the 1960s when applied linguistics, teachers, and other stakeholders came to the realization that the then current language teaching approaches did not prepare students well for communication outside the classroom. Such a realization brought about the design of a syllabus based on the concepts of notions and functions of language, which later led to the development of a communicative approach or CLT. It should be noted the CLT movement occurred in accordance with a paradigm shift in education which saw the emergence of a new paradigm, a paradigm which gives rise to a move towards the concept of constructivism, learner-centredness, metacognition, cooperative learning, and process-oriented instruction (Renandya, Lee, Wah, & Jacobs, 1999). The paradigm shift in educational, moreover, has brought about a paradigm shift in ELT which in turn highlights major differences between the traditional and new paradigm in ELT, as can be seen in Table 1 on the following page.

The CLT approach, which was originated in Western countries and later imported to non-Western countries, seemed to appear at the right time in the history of language learning and teaching because of two main reasons (Richards and Rogers, 2011). Firstly, the fact that students were often seen to be unable to communicate or perform well in real-life situations, despite their mastery of grammatical competence and reading and writing skills, led to a clear need for a paradigm shift in language teaching which was a global trend at that time. Moreover, those who are interested in a more interactive and communicative approach to language teaching found CLT to be appealing and suitable for meeting their needs. Secondly,

as an alternative to the traditional methods (e.g., Situational Language Teaching and Audiolingualism), CLT was supported and welcomed by many leading applied linguistics, publishers, and institutions. These two reasons allowed CLT to gain considerable attention from other stakeholders in the field of ELT, particularly classroom practitioners who adopt and use it in their classrooms in the hope that this communicative approach will help their learners to develop what Hymes (1972) referred to as communicative competence (See 2.3, for details about communicative competence), interpreted by McCarthy and Carter (2001) as "what a speaker needs to know about how a language is *used in particular situations* for effective and appropriate communication" (p. 55, italicized by the authors).

Table 1. *Major differences between the traditional and current paradigm in ELT* (Renandya, Lee, Wah, & Jacobs, 1999, p. 40)

Traditional paradigm	Current paradigm
1. Focus on language	1. Focus on communication
2. Teacher-centred	2. Learner-centred
3. Isolated skills	3. Integrated skills
4. Focus on accuracy	4. Focus on fluency
5. Discrete point tests	5. Also holistic tests
6. Traditional tests (e.g., multiple choice)	6. Also authentic assessment (e.g., portfolios)
7. Emphasis on product	7. Emphasis on process
8. Individual learning	8. Individual and cooperative learning

Such increasing popularity and successful practice of CLT in ESL classrooms have drawn widespread attention and interest from policy makers, curriculum designers, and practitioners in other parts of the world, who are in need of a good teaching method which can prepare their learners for real-life communication outside the classroom setting. The strong need for a new method and the curiosity about its promising avenue have led to the importation of CLT into EFL contexts where reforms in national curriculum were then initiated to include CLT as its central component. A national CLT-based syllabus, for example, was introduced in China, North Korea, and Japan in 1992, 1997, and 1999, respectively (Butler, 2011). Similarly, other

Asian nations such as Malaysia, Taiwan, and Vietnam have been reported to adopt and incorporate CLT into their curricula as well (Nunan, 2003).

1.3. Purpose of the study

In response to the positive and growing recognition of CLT as an approach which effectively promotes learners' communicative competence, a plethora of literature on CLT principles and characteristics has been published (Brown, 2007b; Brumfit, 1984; Littlewood, 1981; Nunan, 1991; Richards & Rogers, 2001), and a number of research studies have been conducted to investigate the attitudes of EFL teachers and learners towards CLT and examine the suitability and possible challenges in the implementation of this communicative approach in EFL contexts (Anderson, 1993; Chang & Goswarni, 2011; Chung & Huang, 2009; Hu, 2002; Li, 1998; Liao, 2000; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999; Savignon & Wang, 2003; Shamim, 1996, Yu, 2001). Despite reports of CLT being advocated and implemented in many non-Western countries (i.e., EFL contexts), numerous studies have shown that the adoption of this communicative approach has met with many difficulties ranging from teachers' and students' resistance to teachers' lack of knowledge and skills in practicing CLT and from students' low English proficiency and motivation to lack of teaching resources and effective assessment instruments (Chang and Goswami, 2011; Hiep, 2007; Islam & Bari, 2012; Jarvis and Atsilarat, 2005; Kustati, 2013; Li, 1998, 2001; Memari, 2013; Miller and Aldred, 2000). Thus, an extensive exploration of the major challenges that hinder the so-called successful practice and implementation of CLT in EFL contexts is needed in order to gain a better understanding of the potential difficulties and limiting factors so that they can be treated and addressed in ways that minimize unfavorable situations and maximize desirable outcomes. To this end, the present study is aimed at critically reviewing the literature on the integration of CLT in EFL classroom contexts by paying close attention to the challenges in implementing this approach and the suggestions for successful implementation put forth by previous studies. It is hoped that this critical literature review would not only help shed some more light on the current issues of CLT innovations in EFL contexts, but also provide a useful reference for teachers, administrators, curriculum designers, and other stakeholders who wish to implement or incorporate CLT into their EFL classrooms or EFL curriculum.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The development of CLT

The development of Communicative Language Teaching can be traced back to the late 1960s when there was a widespread dissatisfaction with older methods, particularly Situational Language Teaching in the United Kingdom and Audiolingualism in the United States, which devoted full attention to the mastery of grammatical structures or lexical items, but failed to prepare learners for real communication outside the classroom (Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, & Thurrell, 1997). The reaction to traditional language teaching approaches did not occur at random; it coincided with two main events (Savignon, 1991). Firstly, it was a response to the criticisms from Noam Chomsky, a well-known American linguist, who stated in his classic book *Syntactic Structures* (1957) that structural theories of language did not account for "the fundamental characteristic of language – the creativity and uniqueness of individual sentences" (Richards & Rogers, 2001, p. 153). This raised doubts about the effectiveness of approaches to language teaching at that time which heavily focused on the ability to master the grammatical structures but not the communicative and interactive nature of a language and therefore a strong need to develop alternative methods was considered.

Secondly, there was a need to develop an approach or methodology which could respond to the language needs of a rapid influx of immigrants and foreign workers in Europe and the result was the development of a syllabus by the Council of Europe based on "functional-notional concepts of language use" (Savignon, 1991, p. 263). The concepts of notions (time, size, duration, quantity, place, etc.) and functions (agreeing, greeting, requesting, apologizing, etc.) form the basis for the functional-notional syllabus, a syllabus which aimed to equip learners with communicative needs through a planned selection of functions, notions, vocabulary, and grammar (Guntermann & Phillips, 1982). This (functional-notional) syllabus together with the need to develop alternative methods which could respond to the communicative needs of learners and be able to address what earlier methods had failed to address (i.e., the focus on communication of meaning rather than just the mere mastery of grammatical structures) began the process leading to the development of what is known as

the Communicative Approach or Communicative Language Teaching (Richards & Rogers, 2001).

2.2. The definition of CLT

To begin with, CLT is generally regarded as an approach, rather than a method, that "aims to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 155). This approach, which places a primary focus on language use, fluency development, learner-centeredness, and the ability to communicate in a variety of settings, is derived from "a multidisciplinary perspective" including linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology, and education (Savignon, 1991, p. 265). It concerns how learners learn a language, the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom, and the classroom activities that help facilitate learning (Richards, 2005). In other words, CLT is a learner-centred approach where teachers are no longer regarded as knowledge givers and learners not knowledge receivers, and the prime focus or ultimate goal of this communicative approach is to develop learners' communicative competence through a variety of classroom tasks and activities.

According to Brown (2007a), Communicative Language Teaching is seen as "an eclectic blend of the contributions of previous methods" into an approach which goes beyond the teaching of "rules, patterns, definitions, and other knowledge about language" to the teaching of genuine, spontaneous, and meaningful communication (p. 18). The traditional practice of grammar teaching, therefore, receives much less attention while fluency development is critical in CLT classes. Similarly, Lightbown and Spada (2013) see CLT as an approach to teaching which emphasizes the communication of meanings in interaction rather than the practice of grammatical forms in isolation. They believe that successful language learning involves not only knowledge of the structures and forms of a language, but also the functions and purposes that a language serves in different communicative settings. Moreover, Littlewood (1981) states the communicative approach helps to broaden our perspective on language and language learning. We did not view the mere mastery of linguistic forms and structures (grammar and vocabulary) as the end goal of language learning anymore, yet we begin to consider language in terms of its communicative functions because only mastering the structure of a language is not enough for students to function in real situations outside the

classroom. Therefore, the CLT approach aims to provide students with opportunities and strategies to build up their communicative competence, a concept very central to CLT.

2.3. Communicative competence

Before discussing what communicative competence entails, it is imperative to distinguish the terms *competence* and *performance* introduced by Chomsky (1965). According to Chomsky competence refers to "the speaker-hearer's knowledge of the language" and performance is "the actual use of language in concrete situations" (1965, p. 4). In other words, competence is the knowledge of grammar or the linguistic system that a speaker possesses while performance is the actual utterance or speech production which reflects a speaker's competence. However, viewing competence solely as the knowledge of grammar fails to take into account other aspects of language, particularly the knowledge of rules of language use, which contribute to the appropriateness of utterances. As a result, a broader notion of competence – communicative competence – was proposed by an American sociolinguist Dell Hymes (1972) as a reaction to Chomsky's (1965) concept of competence (Canale and Swain, 1980).

For Hymes, the concept of communicative competence refers to our abilities to interact with other speakers through meaning negotiation within particular social contexts (Brown, 2007a) and it includes both "grammatical competence or knowledge of the rules of grammar and sociolinguistic competence or knowledge of rules of language use" (Canale and Swain, 1980, p. 6). Thus, the notion of communicative competence involves knowledge of the language and the ability to apply the underlying knowledge in real communication in appropriate contexts. Put another way, communicative competence involves knowing what to say, what not, and how, when, and where to say it appropriately with different interlocutors. The following are Richards' (2005) definition of communicative competence and Canale and Swain's (1980) widely-accepted framework for communicative competence.

According to Richards (2005), the following aspects of language knowledge can be observed in communicative competence:

1. Knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions

2. Knowing how to vary our use of language according to the setting and the participants (e.g., knowing when to use formal and informal speech or when to use language appropriately for written as opposed to spoken communication)

3. Knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g., narratives, reports, interviews, conversations)

4. Knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge (e.g., through using different kinds of communication strategies) (p. 3).

Canale and Swain (1980) proposed a theoretical framework for communicative competence which includes four components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Grammatical competence is a crucial factor to consider in any communicative class which concerns the development of accuracy in speech utterances and it includes "knowledge of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology" (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 29). Sociolinguistic competence, however, encompasses sociocultural rules of language use and of discourse. These rules, according to the authors, concern the appropriateness of utterances and attitude or style in producing the utterances in a given sociocultural context based on various factors such as "topic, role of participants, setting, and norms of interaction" (p. 30).

The third component in the framework is discourse competence. Although this type of competence is similar in many ways to grammatical competence, it is concerned with the ability to connect or combine a series of utterances into one meaningful discourse. In other words, discourse competence, as its name suggests, is involved with textual or intersentential grammar while grammatical competence only deals with grammar within a sentence level (Brown, 2007a). The fourth component of Canale and Swain's communicative competence is strategic competence which is defined as "verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or due to insufficient competence" (p. 30). This definition is later on revised by Swain (1984, p. 189) to include "communication strategies that may be called into action either to enhance the effectiveness of communication or to compensate for breakdowns". Simply put, strategic competence is how language is manipulated in a way that meets our communication goals (Brown, 2007a).

The construct of communicative competence put forth by Canale and Swain (1980) is then modified by Bachman (1990, cited in Brown, 2007a) who uses an umbrella term *language competence* instead of communicative competence. Bachman proposed a broader term called organizational competence to incorporate Canale and Swain's grammatical and discourse competence. Thus, the organizational competence includes knowledge of both sentence-level and discourse-level grammar. As for sociolinguistic competence, Bachman prefers the concept of pragmatic competence, and divides it into two parts called illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence. Brown (2007a) refers to illocutionary competence as aspects of language which are connected with "sending and receiving intended meanings" (p. 221) and sociolinguistic competence as other linguistic aspects related to register or language style such as politeness and formality. Bachman then separates strategic competence from the other components of communicative competence and reserves it for the last stage in the process of meaning negotiation and speech production (Brown, 2007a). To this end, whether it is communicative competence or language competence, this concept is central to Communicative Language Teaching and is the ultimate goal of language learning in general.

2.4. The characteristics of CLT

According to Richards and Rogers (2001), there is no single model of CLT that is universally accepted as authoritative, nor a single text or authority on this approach; therefore, CLT can be subject to a variety of interpretations. Some may consider CLT as an integration of grammatical and functional teaching while others view it as a teaching procedure that involves learners in problem-solving tasks through pair or group work. In keeping with the subjectivity of the interpretation of CLT, Brown (2007b) does not offer a precise definition of CLT and instead provides seven interconnected characteristics of this approach. Those characteristics include (1) a focus on all of the components of communicative competence: grammatical, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic, (2) a focus on the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes which does not neglect the significance of language forms, (3) a focus on both fluency and accuracy which are complementary, not mutually exclusive, (4) a focus on classroom tasks that equip students with the skills necessary for communication in contexts outside the classroom, (5) a focus on developing autonomous learners who could continue to learn the language beyond the classroom contexts, (6) a focus on the teacher's roles as a facilitator and guide, not a

knowledge giver, and (7) a focus on the students' roles as active participants in the classroom where cooperative and collaborative learning is emphasized. According to Brown, some of the characteristics of CLT listed above may pose considerable difficulty for nonnative-speaking teachers who are less proficient in the second language, and this issue will be discussed and addressed in subsequent sections.

Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983, as cited in Richards & Rogers, 2001) list 22 characteristics of the Communicative Approach that are distinct from those of the Audiolingual Method. Some of those key features of CLT include the focus on meaning, communicative functions, significance of contexts, opportunities to communicate (though struggling), fluency, and effective communication. Other characteristic features from the list are the feasibility of using mother tongue is necessary, the minimal amount of drilling allowed, the use of pair or group work to promote learning, and roles of teachers as facilitators in the teaching and learning process. Eight years later, Nunan (1991) comes up with five essential features which characterize the communicative approach as follows.

1. An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language
2. The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation
3. The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language, but also on the learning process itself
4. An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning
5. An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom (p. 279).

However, Savignon (2005) states that there is a huge amount of uncertainty as to what are and are not essential features of CLT and she then offers the so-called non-characteristic features of CLT which include (a) CLT is not exactly synonymous with the exclusive oral communication and therefore reading and writing activities should not be neglected; (b) CLT is not about the all-pervasive presence of small or pair work because some tasks are context dependent in nature and therefore inappropriateness may arise when conducting such activities; (c) CLT is not a one-size-fits-all approach even it is globally recognized; and (d) CLT does not downplay the significance of knowledge of syntactic rules of language,

discourse grammar, and sociocultural awareness. Furthermore, Savignon points out that, due to the vital role played by the contexts or situations in which CLT is practiced, it is better to view CLT as " an approach or theory of intercultural communicative competence to be used in developing materials and methods appropriate to a given context of learning" (p. 645). Hence, despite the subjectivity in terms of its nature and what constitutes its features, the main characteristics of CLT have been seen to revolve around the development of learners' communicative competence through a variety of classroom tasks, be it group work, individual work, or whole class discussions.

2.5. Communicative activities

According to Richards and Rogers (2001), the type of exercises or activities which can be used with the communicative approach is not limited to a certain numbers or options, that is, the list of communicative activities can be limitless. However, to be regarded as communicative, the activities must possess particular qualities such as engaging learners in communication and helping them to achieve specific communicative ability set forth in the lesson objectives and offering learners the opportunity to complete tasks which involve "information sharing, negotiation of meaning, and interaction" (p. 165). In addition to these qualities, Littlewood (1981) highlights four purposes of communicative activities which positively contribute to the process of language learning. The first purpose is to provide learners with what he called "whole-task practice", the opportunity to practice a combination of individual skills to master a larger one (p. 17). Second is to improve learners' motivation, which means helping learners understand how they can achieve their objectives (ability to communicate with others) through participating in different classroom activities. The third purpose involves promoting learners' natural learning through using the target language for communication both inside or outside the classroom. The last contribution that communicative activities have to offer is to "create a context which supports learning" (p. 18).

Littlewood (1981), moreover, divides communicative activities into two main categories: "functional communicative activities and social interaction activities" (p. 20). Functional communicative activities involve an information gap or a problem for learners to solve using the language available to them at their specific level. Thus, this kind of activities requires

learners to do whatever they can with the language at their disposal to share, discuss, and evaluate information and to get their intended meanings across. As for the social interaction activities, Littlewood argues that not only do learners have to pay attention to the aim of communication, that is, to get the messages across effectively, but they also have to focus on "the social context in which the interaction takes place" (p. 20). Thus, social interaction activities are the kind of activities that provide learners with an opportunity to simulate communication or interaction more likely to be found in the real world outside the classroom. Such activities may include conversations, discussions, dialogues, role plays, debates, improvisations, and other simulation activities.

In a similar fashion, Rao (2002) who examines Chinese students' perception of communicative and non-communicative activities in EFL classrooms speaks of activities like games, role plays, simulations, and problem-solving tasks as communicative activities. Moreover, Rao identifies student-student interaction, student-teacher interaction, and the use of songs as communicative activities while drilling, dictionary exercises, grammar rule explanation, and error correction as non-communicative activities. Sato and Kleinsasser (1999) also refer to role play, games, survey, group work, and simulations as communicative activities. For Corbett (2003), activities that involve learners in information gap or information transfer tasks are archetypal examples of communicative activities.

2.6. The roles of teachers in CLT classes

In the classroom, in general, there are various roles teachers need to adopt which can be classified into five major roles such as controllers, prompters, participants, resources, and tutors (Harmer, 2007). Teachers as a controller is a traditional role which teachers position themselves as a knowledge transmitter who leads the class from the front, commonly referred to as teacher-fronted. This role can be appropriate when "giving explanations, lecturing, making announcements or bringing a class to order" (Harmer, 2007, p. 109). As a prompter, teachers can support their students by suggesting or offering words or phrases needed in a particular activity as in a role play, for example. For the role as a participant, teachers can act as a student or a participant in activities such as group discussions, role plays, or similar group activities. As a resource, teachers must make themselves available when the students need help with guidelines of the task or definitions of words or phrases. However, teachers

have to limit the kind of help provided to the students to ensure that they will develop into independent learners rather than ones who are over-reliant on the teacher. The fifth role as a tutor is a combination of the roles of a prompter and a resource, and in this role the teacher can go around the class providing individual students or small groups further directions or explanations they might need in order to proceed with the task in hand.

In communicative classrooms, the teacher's role is vitally important and care must be taken to avoid undesirable results which may be caused by what Littlewood (1981, p. 19) called "unnecessary intervention on the teacher's part". Thus, teachers have to play a careful role while students are in the process of carrying out the task or activity. To this end, Littlewood notes that teachers can offer help or advice when the students are seen to have problems in coping with the demands of the task or the lack of language skills to perform the task. Moreover, in some cases, teachers should step back and act as a monitor or an observer who tries to identify students' weaknesses and strengths so that corrective feedback or further action can be taken to help them minimize their weak points and boost their strengths. In addition, teachers sometimes have to be more authoritative in advising students to behave or not to behave in a certain manner or they can decide whether a particular mistake or error made by the students should be immediately corrected or rectified at a later time. Then there is a time when teachers have to take part in an activity as one of the participants or a "co-communicator", provided that their role is not a dominant one (p. 19).

In a similar vein, Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) state that one of the major responsibilities of the teacher whose role is a facilitator in the CLT class is to create classroom environments conducive for the promotion of communication. In doing so, the teacher can be an advisor or a feedback provider depending on the demands of the situation and the students' needs. Also, he or she can engage in the activity with the students as a co-communicator mentioned above. Hedge (2000) also notes a number of roles the teacher has to adopt in a communicative classroom. In addition to his or her role as one who presents new language, the teacher spends a great deal of time to fulfill their duties such as "setting up activities, organizing material resources, guiding students in groupwork, encouraging contributions, monitoring activities, and diagnosing the further needs of students" (p. 63). Thus, the teacher may play a role as an organizer, a resource, a guide, a monitor, a corrector, or a diagnoser in order to help facilitate the students' language learning process.

According to Breen and Candlin (2001), the two main roles of the teacher within a communicative methodology are as a facilitator and an independent classroom participant. The teacher's first role as a facilitator is to ensure the successful communicative process between "all participants in the classroom, and between these participants and the various activities and texts" (p. 17). The second role is as a classroom participant who has certain other roles depending on the objective of the lesson. For example, the teacher can be a monitor, an organizer, a resource, a guide, a feedback giver, an observer, a researcher, and a learner. Despite so many roles the teacher has to perform, Richards and Rogers (2001) add three more roles of the teacher in CLT classes, including a needs analyst, a counselor, and a group project manager. As a needs analyst, the CLT teacher has to determine learners' learning needs and select the kind of instruction that responds to those needs. The teacher's role as a counselor is to demonstrate or provide a role model of an effective communicator for students to follow. For the role as a group process manager, the teacher is an organizer who makes "communication and communicative activities" possible in the classroom setting (p. 168).

2.7. The roles of learners in CLT classes

According to Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011), learners in CLT classes are expected to be actively engaged in any class activity designed to enhance their communicative abilities. Their role is mainly as communicators who try to understand others and make themselves understood during interactions with other class members even when their target language skills are limited. In other words, learners in a communicative class are more likely to be involved with face-to-face classroom interactions which require them to negotiate meanings, share information, and collaborate with peers to accomplish certain tasks using the target language. Likewise, Nunan (1989) states that, in a communicative classroom, learners have active and negotiative roles, meaning that they should be encouraged to be actively involved in making decisions about the design and selection of learning tasks. Moreover, they should no longer play their traditional roles as passive recipients of knowledge, but adopt their new roles which require them to be active, independent and able to take charge of their own learning.

A detailed account of leaner roles within a communicative curriculum is provided by Breen and Candlin (1980, 2001) who state that the main task of all language learners is to discover how to learn the language. They have to "adopt the role of negotiation between themselves, their learning process, and the gradually revealed object of learning" (Breen & Candlin, 2001, p. 18). As a negotiator in their learning process, learners should both contribute and receive, and they have to take responsibility for their own learning. They need to be as independent and cooperative as possible by sharing classroom responsibilities with the teacher and other learners, that is, to "learn in an interdependent way" (p. 19). In addition, learners have another important role as a feedback giver. They can either be "a potential teacher for other learners" or "an informant to the teacher" concerning their learning experiences, expectations, and outcomes as well as the appropriateness of the pedagogical instruction to their learning needs (p. 19).

2.8. CLT in EFL contexts

Communicative Language Teaching reached its prime during the 1980s when a great number of scholarly books were published with the popular word *communicative* on their cover (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). During that period, CLT was so dominant that "it guided the form and function of almost all conceivable components of language pedagogy" (p. 61). Such an influential role of CLT in English Language Teaching (ELT) methodology has made inevitable the spread of CLT from Western countries such as the UK and the USA, where English is learned and taught as a second language (i.e., ESL setting) to the non-Western ones, for example, China, India, Korea, and Japan, where English is considered as a foreign language (i.e., EFL setting). According to Butler (2011), for example, CLT was introduced in Asia as early as the 1970s, but it took no less than a decade to "become the center of attention among general English language educators and policy makers" (p. 39). Similarly, in a survey devoted to recent developments in ELT in 15 countries in East Asia (Southeast Asia and Northeast Asia), Ho (2002, p. 18) found that "CLT has become a dominant theoretical model since the 1980s in this part of the world".

The literature on ELT shows that CLT has appeared or been adopted in the EFL contexts since the last quarter of the twentieth century, the time when CLT was at its peak level. In China, for instance, CLT was introduced in the late 1970s (Hui, 1997; Yu, 2001); in Hong

Kong it was the early 1980s (Tong, 2004); in India in the 1980s (Behara, 2013; Gupta, 2005, 2009); in Bangladesh the 1990s (Matin, 2013); and in Turkey the late 1990s (Kirkgoz, 2008). Although CLT has had its presence in EFL classrooms for more than three decades, its effectiveness and compatibility with EFL classroom settings remain contested and receive considerable attention from researchers and practitioners in the field. Research investigating the adoption of CLT in EFL contexts worldwide generally reveals that the implementation of CLT has faced many problems such as learners' and teachers' resistance, teachers' lack of knowledge and skills, class sizes, lack of teaching materials, effect of grammar-based examinations, and other culture-related factors (Anderson, 1993; Burnaby and Sun, 1989; Chang and Goswami, 2011; Ellis, 1994; Hiep, 2007; Jarvis and Atsilarat, 2005; Liao, 2000; Ngoc and Iwashita, 2012; Shamim, 1996; Valdes and Jhones, 1991; Wong, 2012; Yu, 2001).

Despite a host of problems mentioned above, there are cases which indicate that the implementation of CLT in EFL contexts results in remarkable success and is welcomed by teachers and students alike. In a recent study by Chang (2014) which explores the effect of CLT on the learning motivation of 163 nursing students in Taiwan, for example, it is found that CLT instruction has a positive effect on students' learning motivation, particularly their instrumental or extrinsic motivation. In another study which seeks to investigate Iranian high school and institute teachers' attitudes to CLT, the data indicated that positive attitudes towards CLT is shared among all teachers who strongly favour the use of CLT principles in their classes (Razmjoo & Riazi, 2006). Several other studies which surveyed teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards CLT practices in EFL classroom settings also reveal teachers' generally favourable attitudes towards the use of CLT in their classrooms (Al-Mekhlafi & Ramani, 2011; Chang, 2011; Christ & Makarani, 2009; Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Lashgari1, Jamali, & Yousofi, 2014; Saricoban & Tilfarlioglu, 1999; Tsai & Lee, 2007; Wang, 2000). In addition, research exploring learners' views of the practice of CLT in EFL settings also suggest that the majority of learners welcome the communicative approach in their classrooms (Asassfeh, Khwaileh, Al-Shaboul, & Alshboul, 2012, Chung and Huang, 2009; Ngoc & Iwashita, 2012). However, such studies appear to be limited in number (Savignon & Wang, 2003).

CHAPTER THREE
CHALLENGES IN PRACTICING CLT IN EFL CONTEXTS

With a relatively low rate of success, as mentioned earlier, the adoption of CLT in EFL contexts has faced considerable difficulties and challenges (Li, 1998, 2001). The majority of the difficulties which are summarized in Table 2 on the next page can be organized, based on their causes, into five categories: those related to (a) teacher factors, (b) student factors, (c) educational system factors, (d) methodological factors (i.e., CLT itself), and (e) cultural factors. Among the five categories, factors related to the teacher, the students, and the educational system are most frequently mentioned, with the teacher factors seem to be at the centre of attention in the literature on CLT innovations in EFL contexts.

3.1. Teacher factors

It is obvious that the success or failure of the implementation of CLT in EFL contexts relies heavily on the involvement and commitment of classroom teachers; however, research has shown that a number of major constraints which prevent the successful implementation of CLT in EFL classrooms are related to the teachers themselves (Chang and Goswami, 2011; Hiep, 2007; Kustati, 2013; Li, 1998; Liao, 2000; Yu, 2001). For example, a study by Li (1998) which investigated a group of South Korean secondary school teachers' perceived difficulties in adopting CLT revealed that the teacher-related difficulties which are mentioned most often includes (a) deficiency in spoken English, (b) deficiency in strategic and sociolinguistic competence in English, (c) lack of training in CLT, (d) few opportunities for retraining in CLT, (e) misconceptions about CLT, and (f) little time and expertise for developing communicative materials. Many other studies confirm the lack of proficiency in English on the part of the teacher as one of the major challenges in adopting CLT in EFL contexts successfully (Anderson, 1993; Burnaby & Sun, 1989; Liao, 2000; Sato and Kleinsasser, 1999; Valdes and Jhones, 1991).

In another study which explored factors that promote or hinder EFL teachers' implementation of CLT in Taiwanese college English classes, Chang and Goswami (2011) found that teachers' lack of knowledge and skills in practicing CLT and their lack of training are the two major problems that prevent them from applying CLT in their classrooms. These problems

Table 2. *Summary of the difficulties in implementing CLT in EFL contexts*

Sources and difficulties
Teacher factors
Lack of knowledge and skills in practicing CLT
Misconceptions about CLT
Lack of proficiency in English
Lack of time to prepare or develop communicative materials
Lack of opportunities for professional development
Fulfill the demand of the institutional/national curriculum
Teachers' resistance to practice CLT
Student factors
Low English proficiency
Lack of motivation or need to use English and develop communicative compete
Resistance to class participation
Not accustomed to CLT
Educational system factors
Large classes
Effect of grammar-based examinations
Lack of resources and equipment
Lack of institutional support
Insufficient funding
Influence of traditional practice
Class time is limited/short
Methodological factors
Lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments
Inadequate account of EFL teaching
Excessive demands placed on teachers
Requires much preparation time
Lack of exposure to authentic/target language
Contextual factors
Beliefs about teacher and learner roles
Teacher-learner classroom relationship
Learning styles

are not just for English teachers in Taiwan. In the context of China, for example, Yu (2000) states that the lack of qualified English teachers is one of the most common constraints preventing the adoption of CLT. Similarly, Liao (2000) also cites teachers' inability to teach communicatively, their lack of language proficiency, and their unfamiliarity with the communicative approach as difficulties that limit the application of CLT in Chinese EFL classrooms. In the context of Vietnam, moreover, Hiep (2007) reports that there are many difficulties Vietnamese English teachers encounter in practicing CLT. Among the difficulties which range from educational system to cultural and personal constraints, teachers' limited knowledge in applying CLT and their lack of confidence and skills are major factors which add up to the numerous challenges in implementing CLT in the Vietnamese context.

In an exploration of CLT implementation in six Southeast Asian countries such as Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand and also Vietnam, Kustati (2013) mentions that the implementation of CLT in these Asian countries is rather unsuccessful and faces many dilemmas, two of which are lack of qualified English teachers and the fact that teachers are not ready for the dramatic paradigm shift from traditional methods to CLT. Similarly, in a survey case study which explored the impact of English on educational policies and practices in seven other Asian countries in the Asia-Pacific region, including China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan, and (again) Vietnam, it is found that "poor English skills on the part of teachers as well as inadequate teacher preparation make it very difficult, if not impossible, for many teachers to implement CLT in their classrooms" (Nunan, 2003, p. 606). Moreover, in the same Asian context, Ho (2002) reports that 15 countries in East Asia face a host of problems when it comes to implementing CLT although the communicative approach has played a dominant role in EFL classrooms since the 1980s. The author also notes that teachers' poor command of English, limited number of English teachers, and lack of teacher training, among others, make the success of adopting CLT in East Asian English classrooms remain sceptical.

3.2. Student factors

A number of student-related difficulties can be noted in the literature on CLT implementation in EFL classrooms. The most frequently mentioned challenges include students' low English proficiency, their resistance to class participation, their unfamiliarity with CLT, and their lack

of motivation or need to use English. According to Li (1998), the three major impediments to implementing CLT in the South Korean EFL context are students' low English proficiency, their poor motivation to improve their communicative competence, and their resistance to class participation. Li explicates that students' limited command of English greatly affects the practice of communicative activities in the classroom, which in turn leaves the teachers frustrated and in some cases give up CLT. In a similar manner, since the students have experienced and become well accustomed to the traditional way of schooling, in which "they sit motionless, take notes while the teacher lectures, and speak only when they are spoken to" (p. 691), it is very unlikely to find them actively participating in communicative class activities. In fact they may be resistant to the communicative approach, and therefore the teacher may lose confidence in their attempts to employ CLT in their classrooms.

The fact that learners' low proficiency in English and their resistance to class participation post major problems which hamper efforts to introduce CLT into the EFL classroom setting can be seen in many different contexts, and there is ample empirical evidence from many different parts of the world. From Pakistan, Shamim (1996) indicates that learners' resistance is one of the major obstacles in introducing innovative CLT into her English classroom. From China, Anderson (1993) pinpoints that in addition to the lack of qualified teachers and teaching materials, learner resistance is another great constraint preventing Chinese EFL teachers from practicing CLT successfully. It is then confirmed by Yu (2001) who points out that the adoption of CLT suffers a variety of constraints, one of which is resistance from the teachers and students. From Taiwan, Chang and Goswami (2011) highlight learners' resistance to class participation and their low English proficiency as two key factors which impede the implementation of CLT. From Thailand, in their case study examining the attitudes of 800 students and 40 practitioners at a Thai university towards CLT, Jarvis and Atsilarat (2005) offer a list of problems which restrict the implementation of CLT, with students' low English proficiency at the top of the list, followed by their low responsibility in the class, their uncomfortability with CLT, their particular attention to accuracy instead of fluency, and interestingly their preferences for learning styles (e.g., prefer to listen and believe the teacher rather than trying to explore the language by themselves and prefer to be explained explicitly) which contradict the principles of CLT.

In a more recent study investigating South Korean elementary and secondary school teachers' opinions and concerns about the national curriculum, Lee (2014) also found that students'

lack of proficiency and motivation is still an issue in implementing CLT in South Korean EFL classrooms. This finding is supported by Jabeen (2014) who conducts a study to assess the situation of CLT being used in Indian secondary schools. Jabeen found that most of the teachers have positive attitudes towards CLT; however, some remain sceptical of its effectiveness because there are certain challenges which need to be tackled before CLT can be successfully implemented. Those limiting factors include students' lack of prerequisite English proficiency, lack of teaching materials, and teachers' lack of fluency in English. Several other studies also confirm that learners' low level of English proficiency, their resistance to participating actively in class activities, and their lack of motivation are major factors inhibiting the implementation of CLT in EFL contexts (Chick, 1996; Hiep, 2007; Islam & Bari, 2012; Ngoc and Iwashita, 2012; Sato and Kleinsasser, 1999).

3.3. Educational system factors

Several major constraints related to the educational system commonly identified in the research studies include large classes, grammar-based examinations, lack of teaching resources and facilities, lack of support, influence of traditional practices, and limited class time. The literature on CLT implementation seems to indicate that almost all of the studies which look into the problems and possibilities of adopting CLT in EFL contexts found large class sizes to be a big issue surrounding the practice of the communicative approach (Anderson, 1993; Chang & Goswami, 2011; Ellis, 1994; Hiep, 2007; Jarvis and Atsilarat, 2005; Li, 1998; Neau, 2003; Ngoc & Iwashita, 2012; Yu, 2001). The huge number of students in one classroom, between 40 and 60 in Vietnam (Hiep, 2007), around 50 in South Korea (Li, 1998), more than 50 in Taiwan (Chang & Goswami, 2011), between 50 and 60 in China (Chang, 2004), and between 45 and 60 in Cambodia (Neau, 2003) unsurprisingly makes it difficult for the teachers to run their normal traditional classes, let alone communicative classes which require teachers to monitor, offer help or advice, and provide each student or group with individualized attention during communicative activities such as pair work, group work, or role plays.

The grammar-based examinations also have a dramatic impact on the integration of CLT in EFL classrooms. Since many kinds of examinations or tests, for example, high school exit exams and university entrance exams, focus exclusively on the knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and translation, the teachers are under considerable

pressure to prepare their students and help them succeed in such exams (Li, 1998). The students are also under pressure, which makes them less interested in improving their communicative competence and in most cases they are "unwilling to be involved in communicative tasks which are not included in the tests" (Chang & Goswami, 2011, p. 9). Thus, most teachers are left with no choice but to teach to the exam and deal only with skills tested in the examination (Ansarey, 2012; Qoyyimah, 2009). The role of the traditional, form-oriented examinations as a powerful impediment to the adoption of CLT in the EFL setting is also discussed in many other studies such as Anderson (1993), Burnaby and Sun (1989), Ellis (1994), Hiep (2007), Liao (2000), Miller & Aldred (2000), Vongxay (2013), just to list a few.

In addition to the problems related to the large number of students in one class and the pressure from the rigid grammar-based examinations, other challenges which also discourage EFL teachers from adopting CLT in their classrooms stem from a dire shortage of teaching resources and materials, lack of institutional support, and a long-lasting impact of the traditional teaching practices in many contexts. In fact, the problems resulted from the inadequate supply or lack of teaching materials is very common in EFL contexts, especially in the developing countries, as evident in Ho's (2002) survey of ELT development in 15 East Asian countries and Kustati's (2013) review of CLT implementation in six Southeast Asian countries; both of which found that lack of instructional materials creates a major obstacle for the teachers to implement CLT in their classes. Moreover, lack of administrative or institutional support (Islam & Bari, 2012; Li, 1998; Rahimi & Naderi, 2014; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999) and the influence of traditional practices (Anderson, 1993; Chung & Huang, 2009; Liao, 2000) are also major barriers to implementing CLT in EFL contexts.

3.4. Methodological factors

Several studies have found that one of the factors which causes the adoption of the communicative approach in EFL classrooms to be less successful or even unfeasible relates to CLT itself (Ahmad & Rao, 2013; Chang & Goswami, 2011; Li, 1998; Memari, 2013; Ozsevik, 2010). According to Li (1998), there are two major problems with CLT itself. Firstly, it is argued that the CLT methodology does not clearly indicate how teaching should occur. Li explained that all of the participants in the study agreed that accounts of CLT have not taken into consideration key differences between ESL and EFL contexts such as "the purposes of learning English, learning environments, teachers' English proficiency, and the

availability of authentic English materials" (p. 694). Therefore, it is very difficult to introduce CLT into EFL settings, specifically the Korean EFL setting, because CLT was initially developed for the ESL contexts. Secondly, there is a lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments in CLT, meaning that "there were no prescribed, ready-made assessment tools for communicative competence", and therefore the teachers found it "disconcerting" that they "would have to design their own" (Li, 1998, p. 695). Li (1998), furthermore, reports that many South Korean teachers in his study who are implementing CLT are unsure of how to assess their students' communicative competence in sound and meaningful ways within the style of the communicative approach. In this case, the problem lies in the subjective criteria for oral tests and the difficulty in balancing weighting between the content of the talk and the language used by the testees or examinees.

In other more recent studies, similar CLT-related problems have also been found to restrict teachers' adoption of CLT in four different EFL contexts such as Turkey (Ozsevik, 2010), Taiwan (Chang & Goswami, 2011), Pakistan (Ahmad & Rao, 2013), and Iran (Memari, 2013). In his study of 61 Turkish teachers of English, for example, Ozsevik found that the lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments and CLT's inadequate account of EFL teaching are two main challenges confronting Turkish EFL teachers in introducing CLT into their classrooms. This finding is in line with that of Li (1998), discussed above. Likewise, the lack of efficient ready-made assessment instruments in CLT is also a chief concern for Taiwanese, Pakistani, and Iranian EFL teachers when it comes to trying out the communicative approach (Ahmad & Rao, 2013; Chang & Goswami, 2011; Memari, 2013). As mentioned above, most teachers are unsure of what criteria to include in the assessment instruments and they tend to find it discouraging and disconcerting to design their own assessment tools amidst the large number of tasks they have to do daily. In addition to the lack of prescribed assessment instruments, the three studies indicate that lack of English environment (i.e. minimal chances to use English outside classrooms) which is an unfavourable factor for CLT to work is also creating an insurmountable barrier for teachers to consider and integrate CLT into their teaching practice.

Furthermore, another aspect of the challenges related to CLT is that it is time-consuming and places excessive demands on the part of the teachers because it requires a considerable amount of preparation time for teachers to design materials for communicative activities and to think about effective techniques for conducting those communicative activities in their

classrooms successfully (Anderson, 1993; Gupta, 2004; Islam & Bari, 2012; Miller & Aldred, 2000; Qoyyimah, 2009; Sakui, 2004; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999; Wong, 2012). With reference to the CLT situation in India, for instance, Gupta (2004) states that the untrained and unoriented teachers "could not cope with the demands of a CLT-based course" (p. 266); as a result, the communicative classes were anything but teacher-centred and examination-driven in reality. Anderson (1993) also allures to the demanding nature of CLT as a major constraint to the use of the communicative approach in Chinese EFL classrooms. In a similar fashion, Sato and Kleinsasser (1999) who studied the views and practices of CLT by Japanese in-service teachers found that almost all the participants agreed that CLT uses time-consuming activities. That is, it requires much preparation time for the teachers to design materials for communicative activities since the availability of such materials is extremely limited. Sakui (2004) confirm this finding by reporting in her two-year longitudinal study of Japanese high school English teachers that CLT was not successfully implemented because of several internal and social factors ranging from teachers' understanding of CLT to grammar-oriented examinations to time constraints (i.e., the preparation for CLT activities requires considerable time). Such a conception about CLT clearly demotivates the Japanese EFL teachers to use CLT in their classes. Furthermore, a similar conception is also shared by EFL teachers in Bangladesh, Thailand, and Hong Kong. Islam and Bari (2012), in their comparative study of the challenges faced by Bangladeshi and Thai EFL teachers in implementing CLT, report that both groups of teachers face 18 problems with roughly similar levels of difficulty, and CLT's being time-consuming is one of them. From Hong Kong, Miller and Aldred (2000) list 17 problems perceived by student teachers as constraining factors in using CLT methods in Hong Kong classrooms, and again one of the problems is that CLT requires a lot of preparation time or simply time-consuming. Thus, it is completely obvious that the implementation of CLT in EFL contexts appears unlikely to succeed unless classroom teachers are fully supported and problems regarding the lack of teaching resources, particularly materials for communicative activities are properly addressed.

3.5. Cultural factors

In addition to the aforementioned contextual factors which are closely related to teachers' quality, students' motivation and participation, class sizes, lack of teaching materials, grammar-based examination pressure and so on, factors related to differences between Western and non-Western culture also play a significant role in influencing the practice of

CLT in EFL contexts. According to Hu (2002), CLT started in Europe and its tenets were drawn from "developments in sociolinguistics, discourse theory, psycholinguistics, applied linguistics, and second language acquisition research that have occurred largely in the West" (p. 94). Therefore, some important tenets of CLT, such as learner-centredness, the emphasis on fluency and communicative competence, and the use of language games and other communicative activities, seem not to mesh well with educational values and beliefs in many non-Western countries where classrooms are still highly teacher-centred, accuracy and mastery of grammatical knowledge are strongly emphasised, and students are seen to be passive receivers of knowledge rather than active and independent learners.

Taking the Chinese culture into consideration, Hu (2002) argues that, among other things, the traditional Chinese culture of learning is one of the most potential constraints on the adoption of CLT in the Chinese EFL context. He explains that CLT is in conflict with the Chinese culture of learning in several ways, including the nature of teaching and learning (e.g. interactive vs. imitative and repetitive), roles of teachers and students (e.g. learner-centredness vs. teacher-centredness), learning strategies (verbal interaction vs. mental activeness and memorisation), and qualities valued in teachers and students (e.g. independent and individualized vs. and receptive and conformative). Similarly, Hui (1997) stated earlier that the adoption of CLT in China was constrained by several factors pertaining to the economy, administration, population, teachers' academic ability, and culture. She elaborated that Chinese culture, which is based on Confucianism, promotes compromise between people, and students have been trained throughout their school life to be obedient, respectful, and less assertive towards their seniors, particularly their teachers. Therefore, they tend to be understandably reluctant to actively participate or speak out in class, which causes most communicative activities (e.g. group work or discussions) to go awry. Such a problem or situation is also found to be true in many other EFL contexts, which leads Ellis (1996) to question "the universal relevance of the communicative approach to language teaching" and argue that CLT needs to be "both culturally attuned and culturally accepted" if it is to be made suitable for the contexts of non-Western countries, specifically the Asian EFL contexts (p. 213).

In reference to many difficulties encountered by Vietnamese EFL teachers who implement CLT, Ellis (1994, 1996) and Hiep (2007) also speak of cultural constraints concerning beliefs about teacher and learner roles and their classroom relationships. Such problems can

probably be explained by the embedded role of Vietnamese teachers as mentors who are responsible for both students' academic matters and moral behaviour (Kramsch and Sullivan, 1996). Moreover, the teachers are considered knowledge holders in the classroom while the students are like empty vessels ready to be filled in. Students' dependence on their teachers together with other constraints, therefore, makes it less likely for CLT to flourish in the Vietnamese EFL setting. Quite similarly, the dominant role of the teachers in the classroom and the students' over-reliance on their teacher are also limiting issues for implementing CLT in the context of Thai EFL classrooms (Jarvis and Atsilarat, 2005).

From Turkey, furthermore, Kirkgoz (2008) pinpoints three major factors which affect the implementation of the country's Communicative Oriented Curriculum; they are cultural factors, teacher-related factors, and contextual factors. Regarding the cultural factors, the study found that Turkish EFL teachers have to adjust their values, beliefs, and attitudes to achieve the stated objectives of the Western approaches-based curriculum, and such professional adjustments generally results in teachers' unpreparedness to cope with the innovation, which in turn leads to classroom practices deviating considerably from the principles of CLT (i.e., teacher-centred instruction). Carless (1999) also refers to cultural factors as one of the most important factors that hinder the implementation of communicative or task-based approaches in Hong Kong. Since the innovative (i.e., communicative) curriculum posits that teachers and learners should function as facilitators and active knowledge constructors rather than transmitters and passive receivers of knowledge, respectively, it goes against the existing educational norms in Hong Kong, where the teachers are considered role models and sources of authority and knowledge to whom learners are expected to be obedient and respectful. To put differently, one of the main roles of the teacher is to impart knowledge to the students and therefore teacher talk tends to dominate in the classroom. Changing such a traditional and dominant role is obviously not an easy task for most teachers to accomplish, which no doubt leads to considerable difficulties in implementing the communicative approach in EFL classrooms settings.

Having discussed the five major constraining factors which are frequently identified in the literature on CLT implementation in EFL contexts, it goes without saying that the adoption of CLT has yet to reach the pinnacle of its success despite its widespread acceptance as a modern method to language teaching. In his article entitled "The end of CLT: a context approach to language teaching", Bax (2003) argues that the dominance of CLT has a negative

effect on language teaching and learning because CLT fails to take into consideration the context in which it takes place. He further argues that the great emphasis on methodology or the way we should teach has led to the widely held belief that the methodology is "king" and 'the magic solution" (p. 281), ignoring the profound significance of the context in which the language is learned and taught. Bax therefore concludes that "it is therefore time for the profession to place methodology and Communicative Language Teaching where they belong – in second place – and recognise that the learning context, including learner variables, is the key factor in successful language learning" (p. 286).

Bax's (2003) argument seems to be legitimate considering the pivotal role of the context in language teaching and learning. As discussed above, the ESL setting where CLT was developed is distinct from the EFL context where CLT is adopted or imported in many ways such as the learning environment, learning purposes, language input, and teachers' proficiency (i.e., native vs. non-native English teachers). Such distinction clearly affects learners' motivation to learn English as well as their chances to use the target language. As Krieger (2005) points out, language classes in the ESL setting are usually multilingual, whereas classes in the EFL setting are usually monolingual despite an increasing trend towards more multilingual classes. Students in EFL contexts, moreover, tend to have low intrinsic motivation because English seems to be less relevant to their daily lives; however, the opposite is true in ESL settings. Put simply, living in English-speaking countries, students would be highly motivated to learn and improve their English since they can immediately see the benefits of English firsthand, that is, to be able to communicate with other people from all around the world. As for their counterparts in the EFL contexts, English is just a subject to learn in school and they do not need it for communications outside the classroom. Therefore, the level of their motivation to learn and the chance of their exposure to English are more likely to be lower and inevitably limited, which is confirmed by Oxford (2001) who states that in ESL settings language input is "abundant", whereas in the EFL environment input in the target language is "restricted" (p. 359). In what follows, suggestions put forward by different researchers who deal with the adoption of CLT in EFL contexts will be critically examined, followed by a conclusion which attempts to draw out implications for implementing CLT in EFL classrooms successfully.

CHAPTER FOUR
SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING CLT IN EFL CONTEXTS

To overcome the obstacles for the optimal implementation of CLT in EFL contexts, a number of researchers have offered many helpful suggestions which are apparently intended to tackle all of the major difficulties in the previously mentioned five categories, including teacher, student, educational system, methodological, and cultural factors (Ansarey, 2012; Bax, 2003; Chang & Goswami, 2011; Chowdhury, 2003; Li, 1998; Liao, 2000; Vongxay, 2013). A close examination on the literature of CLT innovations reveals that the majority of the suggestions centre on the ideas of (1) organising teacher education programs, (2) adjusting educational values and attitudes, (3) promoting oral skills and English-speaking environment, (4) modifying the traditional grammar-based examination format and content, (5) developing effective assessment tasks and tools for communicative competence, (6) initiating educational reform, (7) considering teachers' and learners' perspectives, and (8) adopting a new language teaching approach. Each of these suggestions is briefly discussed as follows.

4.1. Organising teacher education programs

Since one of the most common problems in implementing CLT in EFL settings stems from teachers' lack of proficiency in English, providing the teachers with professional in-service training courses is absolutely crucial. According to Liao (2000), the in-service training course can last between several days to two years and can cover a wide range of topics. Teachers can, for example, enrol in the teacher education program to build up their English proficiency in general, or they can join the training course to improve their specific teaching strategies and skills and learn some practical know-how such as how to deal with large classes successfully, to teach communicatively, to motivate students to actively involve in communicative activities, to design materials for communicative classes, and to overcome other difficulties in practicing CLT in their classrooms. The teacher education program may also focus on other classroom management skills, particularly skills in managing different classroom interactions tasks such as individual, pair, or group work successfully (Chang & Goswami, 2011; Littlewood, 2007).

The teacher education program is not only limited to the in-service teacher training courses, but it also includes pre-service teacher preparation programs. As defined by Johnson (2009,

p. 3), teacher education is about "teachers as learners of teaching"; therefore, the prime objective of the teacher education program is to equip teachers or student teachers with knowledge and skills which enable them to be able to cope with the complexity of the teaching and learning process. Moreover, since the learning of teaching is a lifelong learning process, "helping teachers become professionals who are adaptive experts" should be the ultimate goal of the teacher education program (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). In other words, providing pre-service and in-service teachers with skills and abilities to adapt and adjust to the complexity and unpredictability of what would happen in the classroom is absolutely necessary. Similarly, Li (1998) also recognizes the significance of pre-service teacher education by arguing that the major focus of pre-service teacher education should be on the development of student teachers' autonomy and their decision-making, problem-solving, and reflective teaching skills.

4.2. Adjusting educational values and attitudes

As mentioned earlier, the principles of CLT seem to be in conflict with the educational values and beliefs of many non-Western countries. Therefore, a strong need to adjust such values and beliefs, particularly beliefs about the roles of teachers and students, is crucial for the success of implementing CLT in EFL classrooms. The traditional conception of the roles of teachers and students and their relationship in the classroom should be refined. Put it another way, teachers should no longer regard themselves as the knowledge holders who are responsible for transmitting knowledge to their empty-vessel students; however, they should function as facilitators whose main jobs are to create a classroom environment conducive for the students to learn and grow and to assist and encourage them to actively participate in classroom activities designed to develop their communicative competence. Similarly, students themselves should be seen as classroom participants who are actively engaged in different activities and tasks rather than a group of audiences who sit still and do nothing besides listening to their teacher and making responses only when spoken to.

In addition to adjusting the beliefs about teachers' and students' roles, attitudes towards language teaching and learning in general need to be reshaped as well. As Li (1998) states, all stakeholders such as teachers, students, parents, administrators, and policy makers need to change their "conception of what constitutes good English teaching" if CLT is to be implemented successfully (p. 696). In a similar fashion, Chang and Goswami (2011) suggest

a need for all parties involved to adjust their educational values by focusing on developing students' communicative competence rather than on mastering test-taking skills. However, it should be noted that the fundamental shifts in the educational values and beliefs takes time (Li, 1998). Therefore, a genuine willingness to change and all kinds of support, including individual, collegial, institutional, and governmental support are required to make it possible for the adjustment of educational values and beliefs to happen.

4.3. Promoting oral skills and English-speaking environment

It is obvious throughout the aforementioned discussion that the central focus of language classrooms in EFL settings tends to be on the development of learners' grammatical knowledge, vocabulary, reading, translation, and test-taking skills, with little emphasis on enhancing their oral skills or communicative competence. To facilitate the implementation of CLT, increasing emphasis should be placed on learners' communicative abilities. This can be done by including more listening and speaking activities in the classroom (Li, 1998) and creating a school environment that not only fosters the development of students' communicative competence, but also evaluates it on an ongoing basis (Chang & Goswami, 2011; Essossomo 2013). Teachers also need to maximize fluency practice activities and minimize emphasis on accuracy, and they have to be very careful and "judicious in their selection of speaking activities" (Krieger, 2005, p. 11). In other words, the activities have to be structured (having time limit and clear rules), appealing, and not too cognitively challenging.

Moreover, teachers need to promote learners' willingness to communicate in the classroom by facilitating and creating a safe classroom environment in which learners would feel more comfortable and less nervous to take the risk of speaking in front of their peers. To promote students' willingness or intention to interact with other students in the class using the target language, teachers need to consider several major variables, such as learner personality, their attitudes towards the learning situation, their motivation and anxiety level, and their perceived L2 competence and self-confidence, which play influential roles in students' willingness or unwillingness to communicate in the target language (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1998). In a similar manner, Harmer (2001) suggests teachers consider four important points to promote the use of English (i.e., the target language) in the classroom. First, teachers need to set clear guidelines on when mother tongue use is acceptable or

permissible. Second, tasks should be carefully and appropriately selected to suit the students' proficiency level. Third, an English classroom environment should be fostered and created. Fourth, gentle but constant persuasion and encouragement (e.g., Please speak English.) need to be used to keep the students on the right track of using English to complete class activities.

Regarding the promotion and development of students' oral skills, it might be useful to incorporate Nation's (2007) four strands of meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output, language-focused learning and fluency development into the classroom. Nation explains that meaning-focused input involves learning through listening and reading while meaning-focused output involves learning through speaking and writing. Thus, the first two strands involve students in using language receptively and productively, that is, using the four macro skills. The third strand which should not make up more than one-quarter of the class time is language-focused learning, also known as "focus on form, form-focused instruction, deliberate study and deliberate teaching, learning as opposed to acquisition, intentional learning and so on" (Nation, 2007, p. 5). In this part, learners are introduced to activities and tasks which require them to deliberately learn language features such as spelling, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and other language elements. The last strand, fluency development, involves putting what learners already know into practice in the four macro-skill areas. Put simply, fluency development is not about "learning new items", but about "getting good at using what is already known" (p. 7).

4.4. Modifying traditional grammar-based examinations

The negative impact of grammar-based examinations on students' lack of motivation and active involvement in communicative classroom activities is well documented in the literature on CLT (See, for example, Anderson, 1993; Ansarey, 2012; Cook, 2009; Coskun, 2011; Chung & Huang, 2009; Li, 1998; Liao, 2000). Repeated calls for changing the traditional examination format and content are therefore ubiquitous. Both classroom tests and high-stake examinations are frequently criticized for their lack of communicativeness. In other words, most of the exams are usually composed of multiple-choice questions which test students' knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, reading, and translation skills, with very few of them, if any, delve into examinees' communicative abilities, particularly speaking skills. Thus, in order to implement CLT successfully, the grammar-based examinations have to be

thoroughly reviewed and modified to include questions or tasks which really test students' communicative competence.

Considering the notion of backwash or washback – the effect of tests on learning and teaching (Hughes, 2003) – and the belief that tests are "powerful determiners of what happens in the classroom" (Anderson & Wall, 1993, p. 115), transforming the focus and content of traditional grammar-based examinations tends to be an absolute necessity. Probably only after such form-based tests and exams are modified and improved will the practice of test-driven teaching and learning (i.e., teaching and learning to the test) be reduced and eventually eliminated. Furthermore, including communicative tasks in the test or exam is more likely to motivate students to pay more attention to and be more willing to participate actively in communicative class activities which often receive scant attention from students who are under pressure to pass the exams. Putting all together, since the integration of CLT into the classroom is clearly intended to develop students' communicative competence, the tests or exams whose major purpose is to assess their performance and competence need to be communicative as well.

4.5. Developing effective assessment tasks and tools for communicative competence

The lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments, as discussed above, has been found to be one of the major constraints preventing EFL teachers from trying to jump on the CLT bandwagon (Chang & Goswami, 2011; Li, 1998; Memari, 2013). Therefore, an obvious solution to this problem is to develop effective or practical assessment tasks and instruments for testing and evaluating students' communicative competence, specifically their oral production. However, when it comes to testing oral skills and developing tools for assessing speaking skills, many problems arise, which usually leads to teachers' insufficient use of oral tests or their avoidance of testing speaking skills (Knight, 1992). Knight (1992) adds that such problems include lack of time to design the test and time to test each individual student as well as lack of knowledge of what criteria to use in the assessment instrument. He then offers a list of assessment criteria, as seen in Table 3 on the following page, to consider when assessing speaking skills and explains how the selection and weighting of those criteria vary depending on the purpose of the test and the context in which the test takes place. Similarly, Brown (2001, 2004) also provides assessment criteria for assessing oral production, particularly open-ended oral interviews. Brown's assessment criteria, called Oral proficiency

test scoring categories, have six categories, including grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, pronunciation, and task, each of which is assigned measuring indicators and score levels, ranging from 1 to 5 (See Appendix A).

Table 3. *Criteria for assessing speaking skills* (adapted from Knight, 1992)

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1. Grammar
      a. range
      b. accuracy

---

2. Vocabulary
      a. range
      b. accuracy

---

3. Pronunciation
      a. individual sounds (esp. phonemic distinctions)
      b. stress and rhythm
      c. intonation
      d. linking/elision/assimilation

---

4. Fluency
      a. speed of talking
      b. hesitation while speaking
      c. hesitation before speaking

---

5. Conversational skill
      a. topic development
      b. initiative (in turn taking, and topic control)
      c. cohesion: i) with own utterances
                    ii) with interlocutor
      d. conversation maintenance (clarification, repair, checking, pause fillers, etc.)

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6. Sociolinguistic skill
      a. distinguishing register and style (e.g. formal or informal, persuasive or conciliatory)
      b. use of cultural references

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7. Non-verbal skill
      a. eye-contact and body posture
      b. gestures, facial expressions

---

8. Content
      a. coherence of arguments
      b. relevance

In the process of designing and developing effective assessment tasks, a consideration of Brown and Hudson's (1998) concept of alternatives in language assessment might be very useful. Brown and Hudson classify language assessment into three broad categories: (a) selected-response assessments (including true-false, matching, and multiple-choice assessments); (b) constructed-response assessments (including fill-in, short-answer, and performance assessments); and (c) personal-response assessments (including conference, portfolio, and self- or peer assessments). They also suggest that each type of assessment has its own advantages and disadvantages; therefore, in choosing a specific means of assessment, it is vitally important to consider the negative and positive consequences or the effect of assessment on teaching, learning and curriculum, the significance of feedback in assessment, and the importance of using multiple sources of information in making important decisions such as designing and selecting assessment strategies and interpreting assessment results.

Moreover, Brown and Hudson (1998), after reviewing three separate papers by Aschbacher (1991), Herman, Aschbacher, and Winters (1992), and Huerta-Macias (1995), come up with a comprehensive list of characteristics for alternative assessments or alternatives in assessment, as can be seen in Table 4 on the following page. There are many options regarding alternative assessment procedures that teachers can select to use in their classrooms. For example, Huerta-Macias (2002) offers a list of assessment procedures which include "checklists of student behaviours or products, journals, reading logs, videos of role plays, audiotapes of discussions, self-evaluation questionnaires, work samples, and teacher observations or anecdotal records" (p. 340). A few more assessment procedures such as port-folios, conferences, diaries, self-assessments, and peer assessments can also be used (Brown and Hudson, 1998). Similarly, in addition to a brief discussion of performance-based assessment, Brown (2004) provides a detailed description and comprehensive guidelines on how to use several assessment tasks which belong to the alternatives in assessment such as portfolios, journals, conferences and interviews, observations, and self- and peer assessment. Thus, classroom language teachers might consider integrating this type of assessment tasks into their classrooms in order to provide their students with ample opportunity to develop their communicative competence through a variety of tasks which go beyond the mastery of grammatical knowledge and linguistic structures.

Table 4. *Characteristics of alternatives in assessment* (Brown & Hudson, 1998, pp. 654-655)

1. require students to perform, create, produce, or do something;

2. use real-world contexts or simulations;

3. are nonintrusive in that they extend the day-to-day classroom activities;

4. allow students to be assessed on what they normally do in class every day;

5. use tasks that represent meaningful instructional activities;

6. focus on processes as well as products;

7. tap into higher level thinking and problem-solving skills;

8. provide information about both the strengths and weaknesses of students;

9. are multiculturally sensitive when properly administered;

10. ensure that people, not machines, do the scoring, using human judgment;

11. encourage open disclosure of standards and rating criteria; and

12. call upon teachers to perform new instructional and assessment roles.

4.6. Initiating educational reform

All the suggestions which have been made above may not allow CLT to be fully and enthusiastically embraced by teachers, students, and other stakeholders without a reform in the educational system. No doubt the major root causes of the problems EFL teachers face in adopting CLT in their classrooms, as discussed earlier, lie in large classes, lack of teaching resources and materials, lack of institutional support, impact of grammar-based examinations and traditional teaching practices. These problems which are common in many developing countries tend to stem from the practice of the educational system which has rarely, if not ever, undergone reform or innovation. Thus, to address the situation, a reform in the education system is definitely needed. In other words, class sizes should be smaller to allow teachers a better chance to monitor their students and provides them with individualized feedback and attention they need. An adequate supply of teaching resources and facilities is also a major necessity, without which a successful teaching-learning process would be highly unlikely. Moreover, full support from colleagues, administrators, parents, and the community as a whole is obviously and absolutely crucial for the success of CLT implementation (Savignon & Wang, 2003).

Also integral to the reform in education system is innovation in curriculum. To integrate the communicative approach into EFL classrooms successfully and to transform less communicative language classrooms into more communicative ones, it is of paramount importance and need to introduce curriculum innovation and aim specifically for a communicative curriculum. In the process of designing and implementing the communicative curriculum, Breen and Candlin (2001) propose a curriculum framework in reference to the characteristics of CLT. Their curriculum framework consists of three interdependent components, including (a) purposes of language teaching, (b) methodology of a communicative curriculum, and (c) evaluation of learner progress and of the curriculum. The three components are in turn made up of seven principles which can be seen in Table 5 below. This curriculum framework is more or less useful as a reference for teachers, administrators, policy makers, curriculum developers, and other individuals involved in the process of curriculum design and implementation.

Table 5. Breen and Candlin's (2001) curriculum framework (Breen and Candlin, 2001, p. 10)

The Curriculum	Purposes	1. Communicative
		2. Demands on the learner
		3. Learner's initial contributions
	Methodology	4. The classroom process
		5. Teacher / learner roles
		6. Role of content
	Evaluation	7. Evaluation of learner progress / Evaluation of curriculum

Note: *Purposes, methodology, and evaluation are interdependent.*

4.7. Considering teachers and learners' perspectives

In their suggestions for CLT to be implemented successfully in EFL contexts, a number of researchers have called for a consideration of teachers and learners' needs and problems (Anderson, 1993; Ansarey, 2012; Eveyik-Aydin, 2003; Lee, 2014; Ngoc & Iwashita, 2012; Ozsevik, 2010). In the process of curriculum development, for example, educational policy makers should consider teachers' voices by listening to their difficulties in implementing the

curriculum (Lee, 2014). Similarly, more attention should be paid to teachers' perspectives on the use of a new method or the introduction of a new curriculum since the success of the innovative method or curriculum depends largely on teachers' cooperation and involvement (Eveyik-Aydin, 2003). In addition, teachers' heavy workload and their low salary have to be properly addressed; otherwise, they would not have sufficient time and attention to commit themselves to designing communicative activities for their classes or providing their students with quality services to which they are entitled (Ansarey, 2012; Ozsevik, 2010).

With regard to the consideration of students' voices, Ngoc and Iwashita (2012) recommend teachers be willing to listen to students' concerns and expectations so that "any potential mismatches can be identified, and teachers can modify their teaching practice in accord with what learners need" (p. 40). Teachers also need to be open with their students and share with them their perceptions and attitudes towards language learning while at the same time they need to be flexible and keep a watchful eye on any changes in their students' attitudes so that they can tailor their teaching practice to suit such situations. Moreover, in selecting techniques, lesson organization, and supporting materials for a particular class, Brown (2007b) suggests teachers consider three important questions such as *who* the learners are, *where* they are learning, and *why* they are learning. In other words, teachers need to take into account an array of major contextual variables in language learning and teaching which include, among other things, learners' age and proficiency level, societal expectations, cultural factors, political constraints, the status of English, and the purposes of learning English.

In a similar manner, Oxford (2001) draws teachers' attention to two other learner variables, learning styles and learning strategies, which play influential roles in learners' ability to learn in a particular context. There are four implications for classroom practice teachers should consider in order to improve their instruction. Firstly, teachers should try to better understand their students by assessing their learning styles and strategies. Secondly, after knowing about students' learning style and strategy preferences, they should adjust their instruction to match those preferences. Thirdly, teachers need to remember that there is no single instructional methodology that fit all students; therefore, a broad approach which is the communicative approach that focuses on accuracy and fluency might be an option. Fourthly, teachers should consider conducting strategy instruction in their classrooms by either starting with one strategy (e.g., guessing meaning from context) at a time or using strategies-based instruction.

Concerning the same learner variables (i.e., learning styles and strategies), Purpura (2014) also offers three classroom implications which are worth taking into account. They are (a) raising learners' awareness of strategy use, (b) promoting learners' strategy awareness through classroom activities, and (c) being aware and informed of findings from strategy research.

4.8. Adopting a new language teaching approach

Despite the many suggestions discussed above, several researchers propose an alternative to CLT (e.g., Adi, 2011; Bax, 2003; Chlopek, 2008; Corbett, 2003; Hu, 2005; Jarvis & Atsilarat, 2005; Xiao, 2009). The three most commonly mentioned alternatives are (a) a context approach, (b) an intercultural approach, and (c) an eclectic approach. Bax's (2003) Context Approach, as its name suggests, prioritizes the context in which language learning and teaching take place. It is argued that an emphasis on the learning and teaching context is a move towards more effective teaching. In other words, in the Context Approach, the learning context is the first priority, whereas the teaching approach and language focus receive the second or third priority. Several key aspects of the context include learner variables (e.g., their learning needs, styles, and strategies), the coursebook, local conditions, and culture (See Appendix B, for the priorities and produces for the Context Approach). In a similar vein, with reference to Bax (2003), Jarvis and Atsilarat (2005) propose a context-based approach as an alternative to the communicative approach. They argue that "language learners learn best in teaching and learning environments that are harmonious with their learning styles and expectations" (p. 14); therefore, the learning context should be placed at the top of everything else.

According to Corbett (2003), the communicative approach, which holds the view that learners will develop their communicative competence and linguistic knowledge and skills by engaging in a variety of information gap or information transfer tasks, tends to underrate the importance of culture. To address such limitations, Corbett advances an intercultural approach to language teaching whose ultimate goal is not to teach learners to attain "native speaker proficiency", but to equip them with "intercultural communicative competence" (p. 2). Despite its primary emphasis on developing learners' intercultural understanding and helping them become cultural diplomats or mediators, the intercultural approach does not disregard the significance of learners' language development. In other words, intercultural communicative competence and communicative competence are equally valued, meaning that

teachers can integrate intercultural awareness raising tasks into their communicative classrooms so that students can learn both language and culture at the same time. To implement the intercultural approach successfully, Corbett (2003) adapts Nunan's (1989) framework for designing communicative tasks. In the framework, a task consists of six components, including goals, input, activities, learner's role, teacher's role, and settings. Each component can then be modified to include tasks or activities which not only raise students' cultural awareness, but also develop their communicative competence.

With the advent of globalisation and internationalisation, foreign language teaching and learning change. Learning a language is not only learning about its phonology, morphology, syntax, and vocabulary, but also about the culture of that language (Chlopek, 2008). Put another way, one of the main purposes of learning a language today is to become a successful intercultural communicators. To this end, Chlopek (2008) suggests a number of intercultural activities for EFL classroom settings, particularly for culturally homogenous classes. Three stages are proposed for the successful implementation of the intercultural approach. Stage One allows students to learn and reflect on their own culture through various individual work and group discussion activities. Stage Two is aimed at allowing learners to learn about the cultures of the English-speaking countries and compare them to their own. In Stage Three, students are encouraged to "expand their cultural knowledge by learning about all cultures of the world" (p. 15). The final stage is the hardest and longest stage, but it is useful in raising students' awareness of the many cultures which are different from their own. Implementing the intercultural approach, it is hoped, will equip students with abilities to understand, tolerate, appreciate, respect, and communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds.

In addition to the two alternatives, an eclectic approach is also an alternative which has received considerable attention in the CLT literature. Many researchers have suggested adopting an eclectic approach to language teaching in response to the many difficulties in implementing CLT in EFL contexts. Hu (2005), for instance, strongly supports the adoption of an eclectic approach by arguing that it is important for teachers to "draw on various methodological options at their disposal to meet the demands of their specific teaching situations" (p. 67). Hu also adds that full support should be given to teachers to help them develop their competence and skills in dealing with all the difficulties and challenges in implementing CLT in their classrooms. Likewise, having acknowledged that CLT does not

work well in many Asian EFL classrooms, specifically in an Indonesian classroom setting, Adi (2011) refers to an eclectic teaching method as an alternative and suggests modifying certain characteristics of CLT to suit the local context. Furthermore, in response to the issue of rejecting and embracing CLT in the Chinese EFL context, Xiao (2009) proposes an eclectic model that combines the strengths of three approaches, namely the traditional approach, CLT and the context approach. Xiao also suggests balancing form and meaning, along with selecting appropriate pedagogical practices for a smooth classroom progression, in implementing the eclectic approach.

However, with regard to the adoption of a new language teaching approach, Kumaravadivelu (1994) goes beyond suggesting an alternative to CLT. He instead proposes a concept of a postmethod condition as an alternative to method. Kumaravadivelu mentions that the postmethod condition which signifies a search for an alternative to method rather than an alternative method is the result of the widespread dissatisfaction with the conventional concept of method where the same old ideas have been continually recycled and reused. Moreover, the post method condition is argued to be able to create possibilities for redefining the theoriser-practitioner relationship by empowering teachers with knowledge, skills, and autonomy. Kumaravadivelu (1994) also argues that the postmethod condition would enable teachers to "theorise from their practice and practice what they have theorised" through self-evaluation and reflection on their own teaching practice (p. 30). 10 macrostrategies are proposed for the postmethod condition. Those macrostrategies include (a) maximizing learning opportunities, (b) facilitating negotiated interaction, (c) minimizing perceptual mismatches, (d) activating intuitive heuristics, (e) fostering language awareness, (f) contextualizing linguistic input, (g) integrating language skills, (h) promoting learner autonomy, (i) raising cultural consciousness, and (j) ensuring social relevance (See Appendix C, for a brief description of each macrostrategy).

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

Communicative Language Teaching has enjoyed its increasing popularity and worldwide recognition as a new approach to language teaching since its early days in the 1970s. As the communicative approach, which was developed in response to the widespread dissatisfaction with older methods, CLT has significantly changed the practice of language learning and teaching throughout the world. CLT has also been helpful in reminding language teachers, learners, school administrators, and other stakeholders that the ultimate goal of learning a language is to develop an ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in different contexts. In other words, learning a language is more than just learning about its grammatical structures and vocabulary, but about the functions and purposes that a language serves in different communicative settings. Therefore, it is important for teachers to provide their students with ample opportunities to be actively engaged in different classroom activities designed to facilitate their communicative competence. Moreover, teachers need to create a classroom environment conducive for the development of their students' self-confidence, motivation, autonomy, and positive attitudes by constantly encouraging them, listening to their problems and trying to meet their learning needs through a careful and informed pedagogical selection.

The foregoing discussion not only provides a better understanding of the major challenges that hinder the practice and implementation of CLT in EFL contexts, but also offers useful suggestions for dealing with all the constraints so that CLT can hopefully be implemented successfully. The difficulties which fall into five broad categories, including teacher, student, educational system, methodological, and cultural factors are directly and indirectly experienced by teachers who have strived to introduce CLT into their EFL classrooms, in the hope that this communicative approach would help develop their students' communicative competence and make them become good English communicators who can understand other English speakers and make themselves understood without any problems. The suggestions which have been discussed earlier are not *ready to use recipes* for the successful implementation of CLT in EFL settings at all; however, they are put forward as a reference

for ideas or options which can be used to tackle common problems associated with the adoption of CLT in EFL contexts.

5.2. Implications for language classrooms

The discussion, furthermore, indicates that any teaching method is valid or effective on its own right, meaning that a particular method seems to be applicable and useful in a specific context. There tends to be no one particular method or approach that fits in all teaching or learning contexts. The realization that no method could claim supremacy is strongly approved by Prabhu (1990) who states that there is no best method. In a similar way, Corbett (2003) speaks of doubts about "one size fits all approaches" to second language teaching and learning, which leads him to compromise his claim about the versatility of his intercultural approach to English language teaching. Perhaps the following classroom implications by Celce-Murcia's (2014, pp. 11-12) could best ameliorate this situation.

1. Assess student needs: Why are they learning English? For what purpose?
2. Examine the instructional constraints: time (hours per week, days per week, and weeks per term), class size (nature of enrolment), materials (set syllabus and text, or completely open to teacher?), and physical factors (classroom size, available audiovisual and technological support). Then decide what and how much can reasonably be taught and how.
3. Determine the attitudes, learning styles, and cultural backgrounds of individual students to the extent that this is possible, and develop activities and materials consistent with findings.
4. Identify the discourse genres, speech activities, and text types that the students need to learn so that they can be incorporated into materials and learning activities.
5. Determine how the students' language learning will be assessed, and incorporate learning activities that simulate assessment practices into classroom instruction.

Finally, when selecting and applying a particular method or approach into the classroom, it is vitally important to consider different contextual and sociocultural factors which play influential roles in determining the success or failure of the language teaching and learning process. We also have to bear in mind that there is no such thing as a one size fits all approach; therefore, we have to be able to "extract the key components of the various

methods" (Harmer, 2007, p. 78) and apply them in accord with the context or situation in which the teaching and learning take place. To conclude, teaching is an art which requires great commitment, creativity, and flexibility on the part of the teacher and therefore the ability to adapt is the key to success.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A. Oral proficiency test scoring categories

Appendix B. The Context Approach to language teaching: Property and procedures

Appendix C. Kumaravadivelu's (1994) strategic framework for L2 teaching

Appendix A. Oral proficiency test scoring categories

(Brown, 2001, pp. 406 – 407)

Criteria	Indicators	Score
Grammar	Errors in grammar are frequent, but speaker can be understood by a native speaker used to dealing with foreigners attempting to speak his language.	1
	Can usually handle elementary construction quite accurately but does not have through or confident control of the grammar.	2
	Control of grammar is good. Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy to participate affectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics.	3
	Able to use the language accurately on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs. Errors in grammar are quite rare.	4
	Equivalent of that of an educated native speaker.	5
Vocabulary	Speaking vocabulary inadequate to express anything but the most elementary needs.	1
	Has speaking vocabulary sufficient to express him simply with some circumlocutions.	2
	Able to speak the language with sufficient vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social and professional topics. Vocabulary is broad enough that he rarely has to grope for a word.	3
	Can understand and participate in any conversation within the range of his experience with a high degree of precision of vocabulary.	4
	Speech on all levels is fully accepted by educated native speakers in all its features, including breath of vocabulary or idioms, colloquialisms, and pertinent cultural references.	5

Comprehension	Within the scope of his very limited language experience, can understand simple questions and statements if delivered with slowed speech, repetition, or paraphrase.	1
	Can get the gist of most conversations of non-technical subjects (i.e., topics that require no specialized knowledge).	2
	Comprehension is quite complete at a normal rate of speech.	3
	Can understand any conversation within the range of his experience.	4
	Equivalent of that of an educated native speaker.	5
Fluency	(No specific fluency description. Refer to other languages areas for implied level of fluency.)	1
	Can handle with confidence but not with facility most social situations, including introductions and casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information.	2
	Can discuss particular interests of competence with reasonable ease. Rarely has to grope for words.	3
	Able to use the language fluently on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs. Can participate in any conversation within the range of this experience with a high degree of fluency.	4
	Has complete fluency in the language such that his speech is fully accepted by educated native speakers.	5
Pronunciation	Errors in pronunciation are frequent but can be understood by a native speaker used to dealing with foreigners attempting to speak his language.	1
	Accent is intelligible though often quite faulty.	2
	Errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker. Accent may be obviously foreign.	3
	Errors in pronunciation are quite rare.	4
	Equivalent to and fully accepted by educated native speakers.	5
Task	Can ask and answer questions on topics very familiar to him. Able to satisfy routine travel need and minimum courtesy	1

	requirements. (Should be able to order a simple meal, ask for shelter or lodging, ask and give simple directions, make purchases, and tell time.)	
	Able to satisfy routine social demands and work requirements; need help in handling any complication or difficulties.	2
	Can participate effectively in most formal and informal conversation on practical, social, and professional topics.	3
	Would rarely be taken for a native speaker, but can respond appropriately even in unfamiliar situation. Can handle informal interpreting from and into language.	4
	Speaking proficiency equivalent to that of an educated native speaker	5

Appendix B. The Context Approach to language teaching: Property and procedures
(Bax, 2003, p. 287).

First priority: Context

Step 1
Teachers will develop analytical tools for analysing and understanding the learning context

Step 2
Teacher will analyse the context carefully and systematically as far as possible. This includes enhanced awareness of these areas, for example:

Individual	Classroom culture	Local culture	National culture
Personal differences	Group dynamic	Regional differences	Political context
Learning styles	Group motivation	Status of teacher and students in community	Religious context
Learning strategies	Classroom environment	Attitude and behaviour of parents	Social context
Personal motivation	School environment	Local environment	National environment
etc.	*etc.*	*etc.*	*etc.*

Adapt from Holliday (1994)

The above analysis would always have priority over the next two areas:

Second (or third) priority: Teaching approach
This may involve decisions related to methodological aims and means, including decisions relating to syllabus, classroom seating, materials, methods, student groupings, etc.

Second (or third) priority: Language focus
This will involve decisions related to the aspect of language to be focused on, such as lexis, for example, or phonology, or grammar.

Appendix C. Kumaravadivelu's (1994) strategic framework for L2 teaching
(Celce-Murcia, 2014, pp. 10 - 11)

Macrostrategy 1: Maximize learning opportunities. The teacher's job is not to transmit knowledge but to create and manage as many learning opportunities as possible.

Macrostrategy 2: Facilitate negotiated interaction. Learners should initiate classroom talk (not just respond to the teacher's prompts) by asking for clarification, by confirming, by reacting, and so on, as part of teacher-student and student-student interaction.

Macrostrategy 3: Maximize perceptual mismatches. Reduce or avoid mismatches between what the teacher and the learner believe is being taught or should be taught as well as how learner performance should be evaluated.

Macrostrategy 4: Activate intuitive heuristics. Teachers should provide enough data for learners to infer underlying grammatical rules, since it is impossible to explicitly teach all rules of the L2.

Macrostrategy 5: Foster language awareness. Teachers should get learners to attend to and learn the formal properties of the L2 and then to compare and contrast these formal properties with those of the L1.

Macrostrategy 6: Contextualize linguistic input. Meaningful discourse-based activities are needed to help learners see the interaction of grammar, lexicon, and pragmatics in natural language use.

Macrostrategy 7: Integrate language skills. The separation of listening, reading, speaking, and writing is artificial. As in the real world, learners should integrate skills: conversation (listening and speaking), note-taking (listening and writing), self-study (reading and writing), and so on.

Macrostrategy 8: Promote learner autonomy. Teachers should help learners to learn on their own by raising awareness of effective learning strategies and providing problems and tasks that encourage learners to use strategies such as planning and self-monitoring.

Macrostrategy 9: Raise cultural consciousness. Teachers should allow learners to become sources of cultural information so that knowledge about the culture of the L2 and of other cultures (especially those represented by the students) becomes part of classroom communication.

Macrostrategy 10: Ensure social relevance. Acknowledge that language learning has social, political, economic, and educational dimensions that shape the motivation to learn the L2, determine the uses to which the L2 will be put, and define the skills and proficiency level needed in the L2.