International Journal of Educational Investigations 2016 (June: Special Issue), Vol.3, No.6: 42-68
Available online @ www.ijeionline.com ISSN: 2410-3446

An Investigation of Saudi EFL Teachers' Perceptions of the Appropriateness of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in a Saudi Context

Fatuma A. Abdulkader[1]*

1. Northumbria University, Newcastle, UK

*Corresponding Author's Email: fatuma.2012@hotmail.com

Abstract - This study investigates Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions of the appropriateness of the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach in the Saudi context. The study also highlights key aspects such as English as foreign language (EFL) teachers' attitudes toward CLT and the difficulties that they face in implementing the approach in their classrooms. Qualitative and quantitative methods were employed to address the purpose of this study. Two main instruments were used: questionnaire and semi-structured interview. The data were collected from 35 Saudi English language teachers studying at MA and PhD levels at Newcastle University. The results of this study indicate that Saudi EFL teachers have a positive attitude toward the CLT approach. However, the findings reveal that EFL teachers perceive many difficulties in implementing CLT in their classrooms. Three sources of difficulty were consistently identified: difficulties initiated by students, difficulties initiated by teachers and the educational system. These issues were most salient in the results in relation to implementing CLT in Saudi contexts.

Keywords: Communicative language teaching (CLT), English as a foreign language (EFL)

1. INTRODUCTION

The rise of communicative language teaching (CLT) has marked a great change in the paradigm of English language teaching since the late 1960s. This paradigmatic shift represents a change from a focus on mastering linguistic structures to viewing language in terms of communicative proficiency. Thus, the goal of CLT would be achieved by developing learners' communicative competence, so that they are able to interact through appropriate social behaviours (Brandl, 2008). Savignon (2001) also argues that CLT can affect learners' competence in the target language and encourage them to interact appropriately. Thus, CLT has been acknowledged and welcomed as an effective language teaching approach, based on its various sets of principles which present a communicative view of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in educational settings and institutions around the world (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). According to Richards and Rodgers (1986), CLT is best considered "an approach rather than a method" (p. 86). Significantly, the theoretical characteristics of CLT can be seen at the level of design and procedure in various proposals for syllabus and activity design (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). Teachers in many different EFL contexts are required to use the CLT approach in their English teaching classes due to the high demand for improving learners' communicative competence. However, the use of CLT in EFL contexts is often considered challenging because of incompatibility between the communicative

principles and embedded institutional practices, which tend to be strongly aligned with traditional teaching approaches. The introduction of a new teaching approach in an EFL context requires understanding of teachers' perceptions of teaching in terms of their preferred teaching methods. Moreover, in implementing such an approach it is necessary to consider different aspects of the language teaching environment (e.g. curriculum, activities, and teachers' and students' perceptions).

Several studies have shown the importance of implementing the CLT approach in an EFL context (e.g. Anderson, 1993; Ellis, 1996; Li, 1998; Littlewood, 2007; Wang, 1990). However, the majority of these studies have highlighted difficulties related to the educational system, the lack of ability on the part of both teachers and learners to employ CLT techniques, and classroom environment (Aleixo, 2003; Dailey, 2010; Li, 1998). Common difficulties in implementing CLT in EFL contexts discussed in the literature include the existence of traditional teaching methods, the context of the wider curriculum, lack of authentic materials, class size, work overload and a lack of teachers trained in CLT (Hall & Hewings, 2001). With the high demand to produce learners proficient in English, teachers have different perceptions of CLT: whereas some view traditional approaches, such as grammar translation or the audio-lingual method, as most appropriate in their context, others believe that the CLT approach is more appropriate and effective in developing learners' communicative competence. From this standpoint, this study aims to examine Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the appropriateness of CLT in the Saudi context. The following section presents a detailed statement of the research problem.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

English has a strong and tangible presence in the Saudi education system (Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). It is the only foreign language taught in Saudi Arabian public and private schools and in a variety of business and government institutions. In addition to being taught in public educational establishments, English is taught at all Saudi universities as either an elective subject or as a major area of study. Students who are not English majors are also required to take a preparatory English course. In most university departments, English is used as a medium of instruction in studies such as Medicine, Business Management and Computer Science (Al-Seghayer, 2012), despite the fact that English is a second language for the students. Many students have little exposure to English outside the classroom. Consequently, the level of the English language ability of Saudi students appears to be very poor upon completion of their high school education (Al-Shammary, 1989).

There are several factors which may result in Saudi students' low proficiency in English. For example, the teaching of English is often undertaken by means of conventional teaching methods which rely heavily on a teacher-centred approach, whereby the teacher dominates the English language learning setting (Al-Hazmi, 2003; Syed, 2003, Elyas, 2008; Elyas & Picard, 2010, 2012).This often leads to low motivation in English language learners and in turn to poor communicative performance when they use English in social and educational settings. Ideally, as Nunan (1999) argued, "... teachers should find out what their students think and feel about what they want to learn and how they want to learn" (p. 4).

However, in educational settings such as that of the Saudi context, this may conflict with the institutional culture and the perceptions of teachers in terms of what is an appropriate teaching approach.

1.2. Aims of the Study

Students' communicative skills are often insufficiently developed due to the aforementioned problems and they require further study to bring them up to par. For instance, the English language teaching approach must extend beyond the walls of the classroom in order to create a link between what is taught in the classroom and what occurs in real-life situations (Richards, 2006). Effective instructional programmes consequently rely upon an exploration of the needs and expectations of language learners (Savignon & Wang, 2003). For the CLT approach to be effective it is necessary that both students and teachers perceive the development of communicative proficiency as a key aim, that teachers endorse the principles of the CLT approach and that the institutional context does not constitute a barrier to the implementation of CLT.

Thus, this study aims to achieve the following three objectives:

1. To investigate Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions with regard to the appropriateness of CLT in their classrooms.
2. To determine factors that might facilitate or prevent the implementation of CLT in the Saudi context.
3. To identify difficulties faced by Saudi teachers when using CLT in their classrooms.

1.3. Research Questions

The following four research questions were developed to guide data collection for this research:

1. What are Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions of and attitudes toward the principles of CLT?
2. What are Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions of the appropriateness of CLT in their classrooms?
3. What difficulties do Saudi teachers face when implementing CLT?
4. Do teachers consider that CLT enhances students' communicative competence?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Communicative language teaching (CLT) reflects a certain model or theory which emphasizes that the main purpose of language use is to make use of it in real-life situations that require communication (Celce-Murcia, 2001; Hymes, 1971). English language teaching approaches have faced many changes over the last fifty years and now CLT is one of the most common approaches in both EFL and English as a second language (ESL) context. In order to

understand the theoretical background of English language methods, an examination of three language teaching approaches is presented: (a) the grammar translation method, which is one of the most dominant teaching methods in some Middle-Eastern language teaching institutes and is still used to some extent in more traditional language teaching contexts; (b) the audio-lingual method, developed in response to grammar translation's lack of focus on listening and speaking (Howatt & Widdowson, 2004); (c) the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach, a flexible approach which stresses the importance of communication skills in language learning. I then turn to an in-depth focus on CLT, considering definitions of the approach and the related concept of communicative competence, the underlying principles, teachers' and learners' roles in the communicative language classroom and activities. The section concludes with a review of empirical studies of CLT in various EFL contexts.

2.2. Historical Development of Language Teaching Approaches

2.2.1. The grammar translation method

The grammar translation method, also called the classical or traditional method, was conventional in the 19th century, when it was used to teach the classical languages, Latin and Greek, but persists today. This method focuses on memorizing and mastering the structure of grammar in order toread literature in the language and to benefit from the intellectual development of the learning process (Harmer, 2007; Howatt & Widdowson, 2004). In addition to learning grammatical "rules", typically, learners translate texts from the target language (L2) into their native language (L1), but also from L1 to L2. In the language teaching situation, the learners' native language tends to be used for classroom interaction, with little attention paid to using the target language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards & Rodgers, 1986). This approach is intended to motivate and enable language learners to learn foreign languages (Larsen-Freeman 2000; Harmer, 2007; Richards & Rodgers, 1986). However, the teaching methods are mostly dependent on drilling grammatical structures without taking into consideration the importance of learning a language through interaction. Thus, this method does not help students to create sentences in order to communicate in real-life situations (Nunan, 2004; Richards & Rodgers, 1986; Tarone & Yule, 1989). In terms of classroom interaction, there is no student–student or student–teacher engagement; the students' role is minimized to the level of answering textbook questions or working on an individual basis. Alternative activities, such as group or pair work, are almost entirely neglected (Lindsay & Knight, 2006).

The classroom teaching approach in grammar translation is primarily teacher-centred in terms of sources of knowledge and direction. This approach does not help students to express their own ideas and allow them to communicate with each other in the classroom (Nunan, 1999). The teacher is the only language instructor, controller and source of information in the classroom. Students are required to listen and complete tasks according to the directions given by the teacher. As a result, communication between learners tends to be limited in the classroom, thus preventing them from offering or sharing their opinions concerning the content of language learning.

2.2.2. The audio-lingual method

The principles of the audio-lingual method were drawn up based on structural linguistics and behavioral psychology (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Kumaravadivelu (2006) and Richards and Rodgers (1986) pointed out that according to structural linguists, language can be viewed in various ways: first, language consists of phonemes, morphemes, phrases, clauses and sentences, which are linearly connected in a structured, systematic and rule-governed way; second, language aural-oral, thus giving priority to listening and speaking in language teaching; third, every language can be seen as unique in terms of having a determinate number of structural patterns. Linguistic structure can be analyzed, described, arranged and graded and can be taught and learned following a similar discrete path. According to behaviorism, learning is a simple mechanism of stimulus, response and reinforcement, and no distinction is made between language learning and the learning of other subjects (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

Furthermore, Byram (2000) argued that the audio-lingual method does not allow learners to transfer what they have learned in the classroom into real communication outside the classroom, or communicative competence, i.e. what Hymes (1979) described as "... the overall underlying knowledge and ability for language use which the speaker-listener possesses" (p. 13). In contrast, Richards (2006) claimed that communication-based learning provides the language learner with better opportunities to learn than a grammar-based approach. Thus, language learning or teaching not only relies on grammatical patterns, but also the norms of sociocultural knowledge.

2.2.3. Communicative language teaching (CLT)

Since the 1970s, the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach has gained acceptance as the theoretical model of English language learning and is considered an effective approach by many applied linguists and EFL teachers around the world (see e.g. Brandl, 2008; Celce-Murcia, 2001; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Nunan, 2004; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Tarone & Yule, 1989). It challenges many of the criticisms of the grammar translation and audio-lingual methods, both in terms of the view of language – focusing on communicative competence or proficiency – and the approach to teaching and learning (interactive rather than didactic and individual). Scholars have produced a considerable body of literature defining CLT and its principles (see e.g. Cook, 1991; Flowerdew & Miller, 2005; Howatt, 1984; Hymes, 1972; Lee & VanPatten, 1995; Littlewood, 1981; Littlewood, 2007; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Savignon, 1997; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992). The following sections focus on CLT in greater depth, beginning with an overview of how different scholars in the applied linguistics field have defined CLT.

2.3. Defining CLT and Communicative Competence

The concept of CLT has been discussed from different points of view, such as what the CLT approach is and how it works in EFL contexts. There are general concepts upon which experts agree. For instance, Richards, Platt and Platt (1992) stated that CLT is "an approach to foreign or second language teaching which emphasizes that the goal of language

learning is communicative competence" (p. 65). Similarly, according to Richards and Rodgers (1986), the CLT approach in language teaching "starts from a theory of language as communication, to develop learners' communicative competence" (p. 69). The main goal of CLT is to develop the ability of the language learner to interact appropriately using the knowledge of grammar they have learned in various social contexts. Although other experts have defined and categorized CLT differently (e.g. Howatt, 1984; Littlewood, 1981; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Scarcella & Oxford, 1992), it can be understood that the central function of CLT is to develop learners' communicative competence in the four language skills.

The term "communicative competence" was coined in the 1970s and concerns the development of the capacity for expression, interpretation and negotiation of meaning. It relates to both the psycholinguistic and sociocultural aspects of second language learning (Hedge, 2000; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Liu, 2007; Savignon, 2002). Hymes (1972) defined communicative competence as "the overall underlying knowledge and ability for language which the speaker-listener possesses" (p. 13). Communicative competence was also described by Cook (2001) as a "speaker's ability to put language into communicative use" (p. 20). Hymes' understanding of communicative competence encompassed not only social and cultural knowledge but also included the ability to employ that knowledge in effective communication (Hedge, 2000). The major components of communicative competence have been discussed by a number of scholars in the field (Bachman, 1990; Canale and Swain, 1980; Hedge, 2000; Hymes, 1972; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Liu, 2007; Richards, 2006; Savignon, 2002; Tomlinson, 2003). These highlight the development of different aspects of learners' language capability, such as linguistic competence, the use of appropriate language in different situations, discourse competence and strategic of competence (Chang & Goswami, 2011). Richards (2006) categorized the key aspects of communicative competence as follows:

a) knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions;

b) knowing how to vary 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);

c) knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g., narratives, reports, interviews, conversations);

d) knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge (e.g., through using different kinds of communication strategies). (Richards, 2006, p. 3).

Reflecting these aspects of communicative competence, Savignon (2002) suggested that communicative language teaching "refers to both processes and goals in classroom learning" (p.1). In terms of goals, but especially processes, there are weak and strong versions of CLT: the weak version entails learning about the language in order to use the knowledge for communicative purposes, whereas the strong version involves learning through communication, i.e. the provision of opportunities for the learner to practice using the language in meaningful communication (Howatt, 1984). Perhaps in part due to these

differences, the adoption of the CLT approach varies from one institution to another in EFL contexts and there is some misunderstanding of what CLT is (Li, 1998).

In contrast to traditional approaches, which were criticized for their focus on accuracy over fluency, the CLT approach has faced criticism for its focus on communication and using the target language as much as possible at the expense of the teaching of grammar, which is largely ignored. However, some scholars disagree: Larsen-Freeman (2000) pointed out that CLT requires students to perform certain functions within a social and educational context and Littlewood (1981) stated that the features of CLT can be described as systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language, then combining these in a more fully communicative perspective. Littlewood (1981) considers that CLT allows learners to be able to relate linguistic forms to appropriate knowledge to understand and use that knowledge in creating specific functional meaning. Richards and Rodgers (2001) also states that one of the characteristics of CLT is that it pays attention to the structure of language which reflects its functional and communicative uses. Despite issues with the interpretation of the CLT approach, it has gained acceptance internationally based on the principles underpinning it that reflect a communicative view of language in EFL educations institutions around the world (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

2.4. CLT Principles

The principles of CLT have been discussed extensively in the literature (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards, 2006). Brown (2001) described six characteristics in relation to the key principles of CLT:

1. Classroom goals are focused on all of the components (grammatical, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic) of communicative competence. Goals, therefore, must interlink the organizational aspects of language with the pragmatic.

2. Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus, but rather are aspects of language which enable learners to accomplish these goals.

3. Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles which underlie communicative techniques. At times, fluency rather than accuracy may have to take on more importance in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.

4. Students in a communicative class ultimately have to use language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts outside the classroom. Classroom tasks must therefore equip students with the skills necessary for communication in these contexts.

5. Students are given opportunities to focus on their own learning processes through understanding their own styles of learning and the development of appropriate strategies for autonomous learning.

6. The role of the teacher is to be a facilitator and guide, not a fount of all knowledge. Students are therefore encouraged to develop meaning through genuine linguistic interaction with others. (Brown, 2001, p. 43)

From the above, it is clear that the learners are the central focus in the CLT approach and it is their communicative needs that provide the original source in designing the curriculum (Savignon, 2002). The shift in focus to the learner leads to consideration of the roles played by the teacher and students.

2.5. Teacher and Learner Roles in the CLT Classroom

At the level of language theory, Richards and Rodgers (1986) emphasized that "the primary function of language is for interaction and communication" (p. 71). Thus, in the CLT classroom, learners can be motivated and encouraged to use the target language and there tends to be more focus on fluency rather than accuracy in developing language for the purpose of interaction in different situations. This is in contrast to the traditional classroom in which structural accuracy was the main concern of teachers (Brumfit, 1984). Thus, Richards and Rodgers (1986) state that "the emphasis in communicative language teaching on the processes of communication, rather than mastery of language forms, leads to different roles for learners from those found more traditional second language classrooms" (p. 76). Learners take an active role in the learning process, initiating and interacting rather than being passive in class (Maley, 1986). According to Richards and Rodgers (1986) the learner needs to be "a negotiator between the self, the learning processes and the object of learning" (p. 77) and this involves negotiation within the group in the classroom procedures and activities.

The altered role for learners also involves a shift in the role of teachers. Breen and Candlin (1980) consider that a language teacher has at least two roles in CLT. The first role can be described as that of facilitator, helping participants to become engaged in the communication process through involvement in the various activities in the classroom. The second role is "to act as an interdependent participant within the learning-teaching group" (Breen & Candlin, 1980, p. 99). Thus, the teachers are both the organizers of resources and as resources themselves; as such, they guide classroom procedures and activities.

2.6. Activities in the Communicative Classroom

As the main purpose of CLT is to enable learners to use the target language in various situations communicatively, Larsen-Freeman (2000) stated that obvious characteristic of the approach is that "almost everything ... is done with a communicative intent" (p. 129). The concern in CLT is to develop the knowledge of linguistic forms and the meanings and functions of the language to use them in different situations. For instance, learners need to understand various aspects of functional and structural settings and choose appropriate vocabularies by understanding their use in specific situations (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Littlewood, 1981; Richards, 2006).

CLT is about communication and language learning can take place when learners are involved in a real process of communication, which primarily entails information exchange and negotiation of meaning, incorporating authentic materials into pedagogical practices, and working in pairs and small groups (Lantolf, 2000; Littlewood, 1981). The activities in CLT classroom are unlimited; they comprise various practices which enable learners to attain the

objectives of the communicative syllabus. In these activities, learners are engaged in communicative processes such as information sharing, negotiation of meaning and interaction (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). The use of authentic materials is one of the characteristics of CLT as they provide learners with opportunities to practise the target language and link classroom language learning to real-life communication, emphasizing communication through interaction (Lantolf, 2000; Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

2.7. Empirical Studies of CLT in EFL Contexts

The first study, conducted by Aleixo (2003) considered teachers' perceptions of CLT and its application in language institutes and high schools in Southern Brazil. Three data collection methods were used written questionnaires, classroom observation and interviews with 14 language teachers. The data were gathered from four different institutes and schools. With regard to Aleixo's (2003) findings, two main problems arose in terms of using CLT in Brazil: the first concerned a range of limitations in relation to teaching and learning issues in the four schools (e.g. large number of students (40-45) in one class and overloaded teaching hours). Aleixo discussed the limitations in each school and explained the setting. The second problem related to how teachers in Brazil implement CLT principles in the classroom, revealing a lack of training in such principles.

Karim (2004) conducted a study to investigate university-level EFL teachers' perceptions, attitudes and expectations regarding CLT in EFL contexts. The study took place in post-secondary education in Bangladesh. Data were collected purely by means of a qualitative research approach, which focused on individual insights into a particular language teaching context. A questionnaire was issued to 36 teachers in this study. The participants were asked to respond giving opinions and judgements and open-ended responses, raising related research issues and personal experiences (Karim, 2004). The findings revealed that Bangladeshi EFL teachers have a positive attitude towards CLT and practise the major communicative activities in their classroom. However, Karim pointed out some differences he observed between teachers' perceptions concerning CLT and their teaching practices in the classroom. He stated that these discrepancies might be due to several issues, for example:

a) lack of resources;

b) traditional exams;

c) unequipped and large classes, and

d) lack of support from the administration. (Karim, 2004, p. 78)

The majority of the topics discussed by teachers in Bangladesh and the challenges they encountered with respect to English language teaching were similar for the most part to those in other EFL contexts as discussed in this literature review.

Finally, Li (1998) conducted an important study to investigate teachers' perceptions of the implementation of CLT in the Korean context. The analysis of findings revealed that the Korean teachers faced problems in implementing CLT practices in their classrooms. Li (1998) divided the problems stated by the Korean teachers into four categories, as set out in Table 1.

Table 1. ***Difficulties in implementing CLT***

Sources	Reported Difficulties
Teachers	Deficiency in spoken English Deficiency in strategic and sociolinguistic competence Lack of training in CLT Few opportunities for retraining in CLT Misconceptions about CLT Little time for developing materials for communicative classes
Students	Low English proficiency Lack of motivation for developing communicative competence Resistance to class participation
Educational system	Large classes Grammar-based examinations Insufficient funding Lack of support
CLT	Inadequate account of EFL teaching Lack of effective and efficient assessment instruments

(Li, 1998, p. 687)

Li (1998) found that due to the problems discussed by Korean English language teachers, they were not able to implement the principles of CLT effectively in their classes.

There have been several studies and articles that have discussed the implementation of CLT and the various difficulties encountered with the approach around the world (Canale & Swain, 1980; Littlewood, 2007; 21 Raissi et al., 2013; Richards, 2006; Savignon, 1991, 2003). Nevertheless, to the best of my knowledge, there is a gap in the literature in relation to research that takes into consideration Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions as regards the appropriateness of CLT use in Saudi Arabia, although some studies have considered the use of specific aspects of the application of CLT and of teaching English more broadly in Saudi Arabia. For example, Rahman and Alhaisoni (2013) considered issues in teaching English in the Saudi context in terms of the challenges and possibilities, Al-Yousef (2006) focused on the teaching of reading comprehension to ESL/EFL learners and Grami (2012) discussed various features of EFL teaching in the Saudi context. However, none of these studies have investigated precisely Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions with regard to the appropriateness of CLT in the Saudi context.

In this study, I explore the characteristics of CLT implementation in the Saudi language teaching context by investigating the perceptions of EFL teachers. Thus, I aim to reduce the deficit in knowledge with regard to issues concerning CLT in the EFL environment and contribute to the study of CLT in general. I also aim to improve the English language

teaching situation in Saudi Arabia. The following section provides the methodological framework for this research.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this section, the methodology used to address the research questions relating to the investigation of Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions is presented. The section covers the research questions, research design, data collection and analysis procedures, research sample, validity and reliability and ethical issues.

3.1. Research Questions

This study focused on four major areas: Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions of CLT, the extent to which teachers implement CLT in their language teaching classrooms, the kinds of difficulties they face in implementing CLT in their context, and finally the extent to which they consider CLT appropriate for English language teaching in the Saudi context. The study has thus attempted to address the following overarching thesis question:

How do Saudi EFL teachers perceive the appropriateness of CLT in their language learning and teaching context?

The following sub-questions provided a means of operationalizing the overall research question to enable the collection and analysis of data:

1) What are Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions of implementing CLT?

2) Are teachers implementing CLT in their language teaching classrooms?

3) What difficulties do Saudi teachers face in implementing CLT in their context?

4) Do teachers consider the CLT approach appropriate for English language teaching in the Saudi context?

3.2. Research Design

In this study, I adopted a mixed methods research design. As Creswell (2009) stated, mixed methods research is a means of collecting, analyzing and mixing qualitative and quantitative data at some stage in the research process in order to understand the problem under investigation. Collecting information through the use of two or more procedures (triangulation) can result in better quality information (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Long, 2005) and as both qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments are considered good sources of information, neglecting to use one source is self-defeating (Brown, 1995). Dornyei (2003) pointed out that qualitative methods are useful for determining the nature of the current situation and quantitative data are useful for determining the extent of the need or effect. The following section presents the data collection and analysis procedures with regard to the investigation of EFL teachers' perceptions of the appropriateness of the application of CLT in the Saudi context.

3.3. Data collection and Analysis Procedures

In this study, questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were employed with a sample of Saudi EFL teachers.

3.3.1. Questionnaires

Questionnaires are among the most widely used instruments in research studies. They are very useful for gathering large-scale information regarding different kinds of issues, such as language needs, communication difficulties, preferred learning styles, preferred classroom activities and attitudes, and beliefs (Cohen et al., 2007; Nunan, 1992; Oppenheim, 2000; Richards, 2001; Robson, 2002). The questionnaire used in this study was designed to include the principal items which directly addressed the research questions. The general sequencing of questions required asking questions about the participants' experience before moving to questions about their beliefs and of broader language teaching issues. The advantage of discussing a research issue from different angles increases consistency and reliability, as participants may not fully explore their opinions in their responses to initial questions. Likewise, participants may require more questions to help them with recall and to raise their awareness (Oppenheim, 2000). In this study, questionnaires were distributed to 35 English language teachers via email. This comprised the quantitative element of the methodology.

3.3.2. Analysis of questionnaire data

The questionnaire employed in this study comprised closed-ended questions, so that participants' responses on each item could be measured using scales to meet the aims of the study. Responses were analysed statistically using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, which is commonly used in applied linguistics and educational research (Dornyei, 2007). For example, number of participants who selected each item was calculated using frequency, whereas percentages were used to provide additional figures (e.g., to figure out number of the participants who answered a particular item among the whole participants in the study). A variety of coded responses were used in the questionnaires. These included yes/no and four-point Likert-scale type response codes, for instance: "to a great extent", "to some extent", "to a limited extent" and "not at all". The responses for each set of scaled items were selected to match the specific items. English language teachers were asked about the appropriateness of CLT in relation to their teaching context, experiences of applying CLT in the language classroom and the difficulties they faced.

3.3.3. Semi-structured interviews

As Richards (2003) pointed out, interviews are a good way of obtaining in-depth data concerning teachers' beliefs, feelings and attitudes. Moreover, Richards (2003) and Dornyei (2007) argue that the interview is a natural and socially acceptable method of exploring people's experiences and opinions. Thus, the interview is considered an effective method for collecting qualitative information from a selected number of participants and for improving the interpretation of qualitative results (Pring, 2000). Interviews in qualitative studies can be used either as the primary strategy for data collection, or in conjunction with other techniques (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). In this research, the interviews played a crucial role in checking, expanding and triangulating the data gathered from the questionnaire. As Seidman (2006) put

it, the interview "provides access to the context of peoples' behaviour and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of the behaviour" (p. 10). Using such additional sources would have improved triangulation and as a result, the overall findings of the study would be improved (Ozsevik, 2010). Five teachers were interviewed in the semi-structured interviews. The time and place was arranged with each teacher and all interviews were tape-recorded with the participants' consent.

3.3.4. Analysis of interview data

Questions during the interview primarily focused on a number of practices concerning the use of CLT in language classes, for example, the importance of CLT for Saudi English language learners, as well as questions about difficulties that teachers had faced in implementing CLT in their context. As Robson (2002) suggested, an analytical framework was used to classify and group the data according to the issues raised in response to the questions. Thus, the semi-structured interview data were analysed in accordance with themes identified inductively during the data analysis process. In order to keep anonymity, participants will be referred to with a number (e.g. Teacher 1, 2, 3 etc.).

3.4. Research Participants

The context of this study is the Saudi Arabian EFL setting. The target participants of this study were Saudi English language teachers (N=35). The reason for collecting the data from these teachers was on account of their extended language teaching experience, as they had been involved in the EFL teaching process for between five and 10 years in Saudi higher education institutes. Based on their extensive teaching experience in EFL, I considered that they would be able to provide in-depth information with regard to different second language teaching approaches. Thus, their involvement in this study was very important. All of the participants are now studying at PhD level in TESOL and Applied Linguistics in the UK.

3.5. Relationship between the Research Questions and Data Collection

Researchers should select an approach which meets the purpose and objectives of the study under investigation (Davis, 1995). In this study, qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and data analysis were used to respond to the four research questions. The purpose of using the mixed methods approach was to comprehend the appropriateness of CLT in the Saudi EFL context through investigating language teachers' perceptions. There is also a need to give an extensive and detailed description of teachers' perceptions as accurately as possible in terms of how English language teaching processes take place in the language classroom.

3.6. Piloting: Refining the Validity and Reliability of the Data Collection Procedures

Nunan (1992) described validity as "the extent to which a piece of research actually investigates what the research purports to investigate" and reliability as "the consistency and explicability of research" (p.14). In relation to interviews, Gay (1996) stated that reliability

and validity conditions are met when " the interviewers accurately reflect the feelings, opinions, and so forth, of those interviewed and consequently permit appropriate interpretation of narrative data" (p. 217).

This study involved a number of procedures designed to ensure reliability and validity. As Oppenheim (2000) pointed out, every aspect of research needs to have been measured previously to ensure it works as intended. Thus, conducting a pilot study helps the researcher to understand the extent of the success and reliability of the research instruments. The use of piloting in the case of a questionnaire is necessary to establish whether it is too long or too short, the wording is ambiguous, the type of questions and general format are easy to comprehend, the questionnaire is visually adequate, the questions are not redundant and the directions are easy to follow (Cohen et al., 2007). In this study, the first draft of the questionnaire was given to a sample consisting of three experienced language teachers. As a result of their feedback, a number of questions were re-worded. Similarly, interview protocols need to be piloted and thus the questions were first tried out with four students on the MA in TESOL and were considered to be applicable.

4. FINDINGS

This section presents the results of the questionnaire and interviews. The themes arising from both the questionnaire and the interviews are set out in three categories: (a) EFL teachers' perceptions concerning the principles of CLT; (b) difficulties and problems in implementing CLT in Saudi Arabia; (c) teachers' views and suggestions on the subject of improving the use of CLT in the Saudi context. The latter was an emergent theme in the data. An integrated approach is adopted in the presentation of the qualitative and quantitative findings in relation to each theme.

Due to the word limit this section presents part of the findings for instance, with regard to teachers' perceptions and language teaching difficulties.

4.1. Teachers Perceptions of Language Teaching Difficulties in the Saudi Context

The study participants were asked to answer the following question: "What difficulties are inherent in the Saudi language teaching context?" The main problems that the participants identified in the Saudi English language teaching context relate to the following areas: students' motivation toward English language learning, large number of students in a class, lack of interest in trying out new teaching methods, lack of proper teacher training and extensive teaching hours. These issues were also reflected in the response to the question "Are teachers in Saudi encouraged using CLT?"

A teacher who had been teaching for more than 10 years stated "Yes, we have been encouraged to use CLT, however lack of training, large numbers of students in a class, extensive teaching hours, and preparation of different activities take up valuable time and hinder the proper application of CLT in our context" (Teacher #2).

Another disagreed, saying "No, teachers are not encouraged to use any particular method, not only CLT" (Teacher #1). When asked to clarify the reason, she added that "The significance of CLT has not been recognized yet due to the number of obstacles that the current educational system has encountered."

Table 2 below illustrates the themes derived from the interview data gained with regard to essential problems in English language teaching in the Saudi context, together with the numbers of participants who expressed these concerns (N = 5).

Table 2. ***Essential problems in teaching English in the Saudi context***

	Themes verified from the interviews	**Number of Participants**
1	Students' attitudes toward communicative-based activities	**4**
2	Large class size	**5**
3	Teaching materials	**4**
4	Lack of proper teacher training	**5**
5	Extensive teaching hours	**5**

4.1.1. Students' attitudes toward communicative-based activities

Analysis of the interviews reveals that four teachers believe that students hold a negative attitude towards CLT and this can be considered one of the challenges that teachers face when they try to implement the CLT approach in their classes. The students' negative attitudes can be classified in relation to two factors: (a) poor communicative ability and (b) lack of motivation to practice English inside and outside classes. One of the teachers declared that "The level of English language ability for Saudi students is very poor upon achievement of their high school education" (Teacher #3) and another said that "... most Saudi students have low communication skills in English although they have been taught it for six years prior to university" (Teacher #5). This suggests that the students do not know the correct way to use the language for communicative purposes and could be due to the fact that students hardly have any opportunities to practice or use what they have learned in class. Thus, one teacher remarked: "Students' level of spoken language is always a problem. They are unable to talk in groups. They tend to prefer individual work. This can also be due to their fear of making mistakes in front of others and lack of confidence in their ideas" (Teacher #4).

Another teacher made a significant point concerning the Saudi educational system. She stated that:

> *Based on my experience, as a language learner previously, and now as an English language teacher, the Saudi Arabian educational system does not encourage students to express their opinion or allow them to talk freely in class. Teachers mostly focus on what is in the exams and don't concern themselves with developing students'*

communicative ability. As a result, students rarely say anything and hardly participate in various types of activities such as speaking. (Teacher #2)

An additional question was put, asking teachers to offer their opinion as to what is preventing students from engaging in classroom participation. One teacher considered the problem from a cultural and contextualized perspective:

I feel that it is not only the students' attitude towards CLT, but it is the formal education process at university level that matters; also the overall outlook towards education in general and towards English language learning in particular, which I feel lacks clear direction. Therefore, language courses should be more culturally appropriate and contextualized. These comments and overall assessments are based on my experience of teaching low achievers. (Teacher #3)

In response to the same question, another teacher reported that "Most language teachers prefer traditional teaching methods to CLT due to the fact that they have large numbers of students in a class" (Teacher #1); this issue is considered in the following section.

4.1.2. Large class sizes

The results of the questionnaire data show that having a large number of students in a class causes major problems for Saudi EFL teachers with regard to implementing CLT in English classrooms. Of the total of 35 participants, 17 (48.6%) indicated that they had a minimum of 35 students in their classes, whilst 6 (17.1%) stated that the number of students was between 25–30 students in a class. Also 7 (20.0%) teachers responded that the average number of students in their class was 20–25 students. Only 5 (14.3%) teachers stated that they have 15-20 students in their class.

Figure 1 below presents the results obtained from the teachers regarding the numbers of students in their classroom.

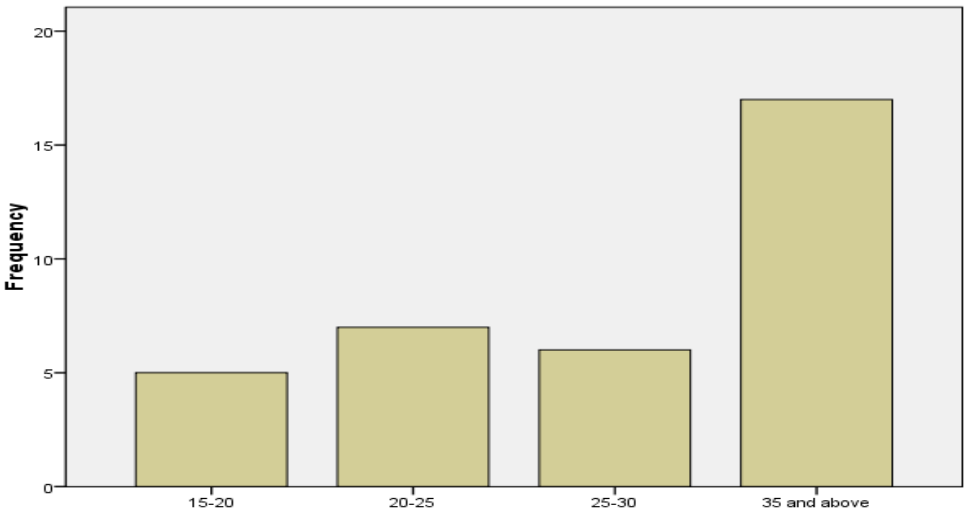

***Figure 1*. Regular numbers of students in a classroom**

During the interviews, the problem of having a large number of students in a class was also highlighted by the participants. All of the participants agreed that a successful language teaching environment should not have too many students in a class. However, their experience was of large numbers. Clarifying the reasons behind this, one participant made the following comment:

> Although there are obvious shortages in terms of English language teachers, the government still accepts more students in each semester. This action, in turn has a negative effect upon the students and the educational process at large. I believe that 10–12 students only need to be in a class in order for a teacher to implement communicative activities, but with our current situation it's hard to use CLT with 30–35 students in a classroom. (Teacher #4)

Another teacher pointed out that "Having a large number of students in one classroom has consequences. For example, teachers cannot control issues such as classroom management or pay attention to individual differences" (Teacher #3).

4.3.3. Teaching materials

In response to question 7 in the teachers' questionnaire, all the participants indicated that the teaching materials currently used in the Saudi language teaching context are a major problem for teachers when they try to implement CLT in their classrooms. The majority of the participants believe that the materials are not suitable with regard to the students' language level and recommend that teaching materials need to be either changed or entirely revised.

The participants stated that, due to the centralized educational system, teaching materials are always decided on by the administration office. In addition to the extensive teaching hours (see 4.3.4), teachers have no opportunity to adapt any materials more appropriately to cover the various points as they are required. For example, teachers point out that the textbook is mainly concerned with grammatical points rather than encouraging autonomous and active learning. As one of them states: "Many of the activities in this course book are based on structured situations and the aim is mostly grammar learning" (Teacher #2). This view was also reflected in the interviews:

I do not think that the textbooks teachers use will develop the students' communicative ability, because I have noticed myself during the past five years that the textbooks mainly focus on grammar with little attention to various vocabularies. (Teacher #5)

> I believe that the materials that have been used are not suitable to meet the needs of the communicative based approach. They need to be revised entirely to meet students' needs. (Teacher #4)

There are a number of teachers who are rather critical of the teaching materials. For instance, the majority of teachers criticize the textbooks for their lack of significance in terms of improving the students' communicative ability. There is common agreement amongst the teachers that the course books should be relevant to the students' immediate and future language needs.

One of the teacher's states: “As far as CLT is concerned, what the students learn and what they need to learn is hardly achieved. There is no consistency between the current materials and the CLT approach” (Teacher #3).

4.3.4. Lack of proper training for teachers

This section covers questions related to the training of teachers in the use of the CLT approach and the extent to which universities provide this type of professional training to support and improve Saudi EFL language teachers’ abilities. The purpose is to identify the potential reasons why teachers do not implement the CLT approach in their classrooms. As shown in Figure 2, the majority of the teachers (26, 74.3%) had been taught the CLT approach but had never been given any actual training in the use of CLT. Only nine (25.7%) of the participants indicated that they had experienced a teacher training programme.

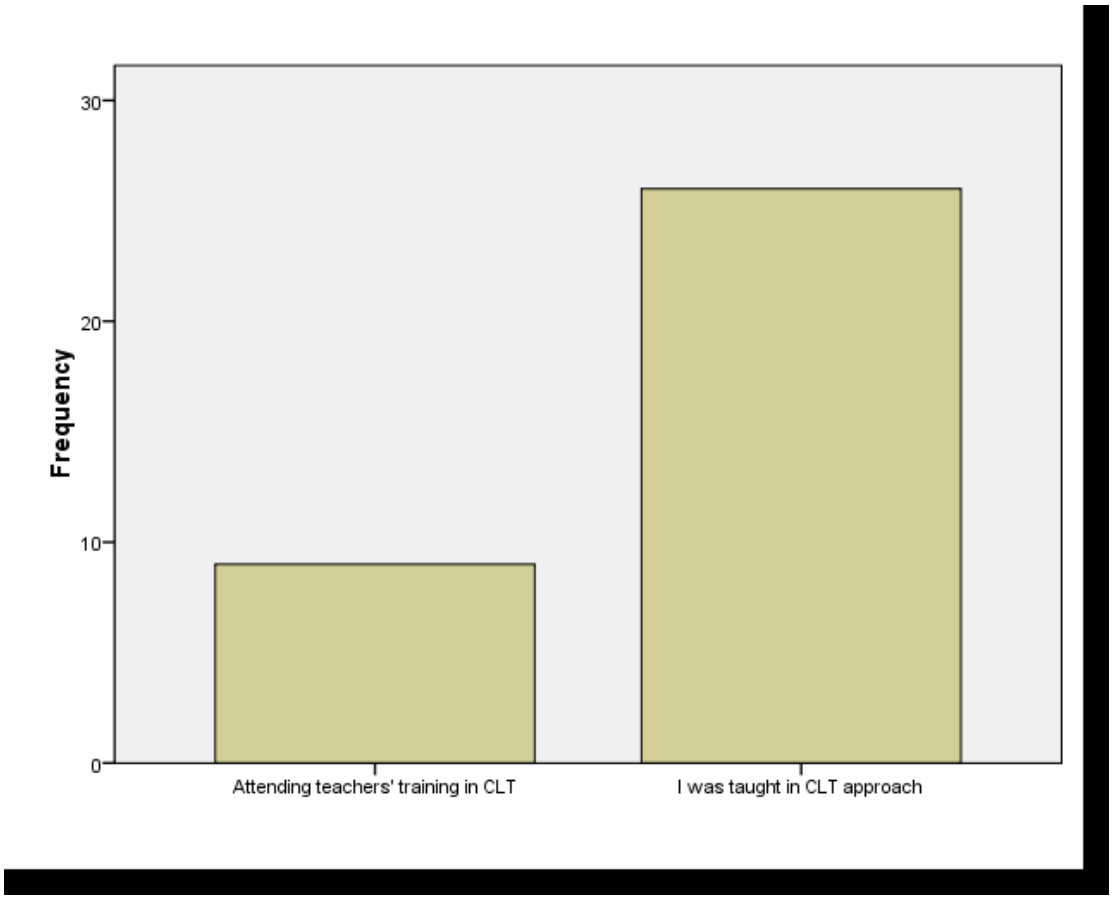

Figure 2. **Summary of teachers’ training in CLT**

The interview participants’ responses to the question “Are teachers in Saudi encouraged to use CLT?” also shed light on this issue, for example:

Syllabus designers and decision makers often claim that the curriculum is based on CLT principles, but provide no guidance about how to use it or what should/shouldn’t be done. (Teacher #3)

I knew about CLT from my personal reading, but honestly, I did not quite understand how to use it in classrooms. (Teacher #4)

4.4. Overall Attitudes on the Use of CLT in the Saudi Context

The findings obtained from the participants' interviews show that most of the respondents express a desire to provide suggestions to improve English language teaching in the Saudi context. The participants emphasize the fact that university graduates generally study English for more than ten years, using the traditional teaching approach. The teaching of English is often accomplished through the use of conventional teaching methods which rely heavily on a teacher-centred approach with the teacher dominating the English language learning setting. As a result of following this approach, the standard of English is often limited.

5. DISCUSSION

This section discusses the findings presented in section 4, organized to address the research questions in turn. The purpose was to identify and articulate changes which are required in order to improve the implementation of CLT in a Saudi Arabian language teaching context. The findings of the study reveal that the majority of the participants hold a positive attitude with regard to the principles of CLT. However, this is in contrast to their practice, as evidenced by the fact that they tend to use memorization and translation from Arabic into English (see 4.2). Also, despite the fact that the participants appear to have confidence in CLT, it seems that they do not use the approach in their classes.

This issue was further discussed during the interviews and the participants' answers reflect the belief that the current Saudi English language teaching context is too demanding to allow teachers to use the CLT approach effectively. Each participant offered her own personal experience with regard to the implementation of CLT in her classroom. For example, one of the participants stated that she never uses CLT for a number of reasons, such as her extensive teaching hours and the large number of students in her class. She also reported a lack of understanding amongst the Saudi English language programme leaders regarding the importance of CLT in the current English language teaching context.

For further clarification of participants' perceptions towards CLT, the following question was posed: "How would you describe CLT in your words?" The participants' responses show that they have a reasonable understanding of CLT: some responded that CLT centres on the students and their use of the language and that the practice of a student-centred approach is considered key in the CLT classroom. Another participant added that CLT is one of the most favoured teaching methods in teaching second/foreign languages as it focuses on the students' interaction inside the classroom. The participants also considered that CLT is based on interaction between teachers and students, as well as between the students themselves.

In general, the findings show that the participants in this study were able to communicate the basic characteristics of CLT in their responses. However, a major critical finding of this is that, although the importance of CLT is well recognized by most of the participants, the results reveal that the majority of these participants do not use CLT in their classrooms. These differences are not caused by teachers' misunderstanding of CLT or having an inadequate knowledge of the approach; rather, the discrepancy may perhaps arise for several practical reasons, such as the need to implement the traditional teaching approach, centralized examination boards, and lack of support from the teaching organization. In addition, another lesson which can be learned from the findings is that having a positive attitude towards CLT alone is not sufficient for implementing the approach. Therefore, as the participants suggest obstacles which discourage teachers from practicing CLT in their classrooms need to be removed.

6. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the appropriateness of CLT in the Saudi Arabian context. This section discusses a number of interrelated subjects. The section is divided into different parts. First, I address the implications of this study for English language teaching in Saudi Arabia. Second, suggestions and recommendations are made in relation to the difficulties identified in implementing the CLT approach in the Saudi context. Third, I discuss a number of limitations of the study. Finally, conclusions are drawn.

In the field of EFL teaching/second language acquisition research, CLT has received considerable attention from researchers and linguists. Much has been written about CLT as an effective language teaching approach and its principles in the language classroom (e.g. Canale & Swain, 1980; Chang & Goswami, 2011; Li, 1998; Littlewood, 2007; Pennycook, 1989; Savignon, 1991, 1997, 2003). However, less attention has been paid to the implementation of CLT in certain EFL contexts such as Saudi Arabia. Therefore, this study has aimed to investigate Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions towards the appropriateness of CLT in Saudi contexts. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect the data (questionnaire and semi-structured interview) and in the analysis. Generally, it was found that teachers have positive attitudes towards the appropriateness of CLT in teaching language. The findings also emphasized teachers' awareness of the CLT principles in developing language learners' ability. However, according to the participants' responses, teachers in Saudi Arabia encounter several difficulties in implementing CLT and these constitute major barriers to its application in EFL language classroom. Perhaps due to these barriers, despite retaining positive perceptions of CLT, teachers still tend to use traditional methods (e.g. memorizing and translation).

Over all, more research needs to be done in cooperation between EFL teachers, scholars and educational institutions to facilitate better language teaching outcomes. Teachers also need more practical training which allows them to write their own materials and institute communicative practices in the classroom according to students' communicative needs.

6.1. Implications of the Study

From the results of this study, it is apparent that the English language teaching context in Saudi Arabia requires certain revisions to make better use of CLT within existing opportunities. The following discussion mainly addresses EFL teaching in Saudi Arabia, but can also be extended to other EFL countries. Challenges and difficulties which prevent the effective use of CLT in many EFL settings such as Saudi Arabia must be determined to achieve the maximum benefits from CLT. Thus, consideration needs to be given to the following areas with the aim of resolving the difficulties identified for instance, the English education system.

6.1.1. English education system

As discussed in sections 4 and 5, a number of difficulties limit teachers' opportunities to implement CLT in Saudi English language classrooms. A major factor is the centralized educational system in Saudi Arabia and certain aspects and impacts of this system which affect the teaching and learning experience. For example, extensive teaching hours and large class sizes prevent teachers from having time to make effective use of CLT in their classes. In addition, teaching methods are usually focused on conventional teaching methods in which grammar is prioritized over other important skills, such as listening and speaking. Therefore, in order to implement CLT in the Saudi context, teaching hours and class sizes need to be reduced and the provision of training in communicative-based approaches and appropriate materials needs to be considered.

6.2. Limitations

All research has its limitations and this study is no exception. Due to time constraints, the study had to be exploratory in nature. Also the participants (35) were drawn from teachers studying (MA and PhD) at Newcastle University and it was not possible to extend the study to include more teachers in Saudi Arabia, which would have made for a larger, more robust sample. It would also have been preferable to have had more teachers keen to participate in interviews. Furthermore, I wish I could have conducted the study in the Saudi EFL context, using one more instrument – classroom observations – in order to examine the actual teaching methods of the teachers. Also, issues to do with students were explored purely through teachers' perceptions and it would be beneficial to include their own perceptions.

6.3. Suggestions for Future Research

On the basis of the findings and the limitations identified above, there are several suggestions for future research.

1. Given the findings concerning students' lack of motivation and preference for individual tasks, investigating Saudi EFL students' motivation towards CLT activities could enhance not only teaching but also learning.

2. One of the difficulties in using CLT in Saudi context was identified as lack of support from programme leaders. I would suggest that further research to include the perceptions of

programme leaders would be fruitful to identify their priorities and any misconceptions they might have in relation to the importance of CLT in the English language teaching process.

3. Although there are clearly shortages in terms of English language teachers, the government still accepts more students each semester. This in turn has a negative impact upon the students' learning and the language teaching process due to large class sizes. Future studies might investigate the impact of large class sizes on students' language learning, especially in the Saudi context.

REFERENCES

Al-Hazmi, S. H. (2003). EFL Teacher Preparation Programs in Saudi Arabia: Trends and Challenges. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37 (2), 341 – 344.

Al-Seghayer, K. (2012). Teaching English in primary schools. *Saudi Gazette*, October 20, 2012. http://www.saudigazette.com.sa.

Al-Shammary, E. (1989). Teaching English in Saudi Arabia: To Whom, When and How Should English Be Taught? Journal of King Saud University. *Educational Sciences & Islamic Studies*, 1, (1), pp. 171-194.

Al-Yousef, H. S. (2006). *An Evaluation of the Third Grade Intermediate English Course book in Saudi Arabia*. (Unpublished MA thesis). King Saud University.

Aleixo, M. B. (2003). *Teachers' perceptions of communicative language teaching use in Brazil* (unpublished MA thesis).

Anderson, J. (1993). Is a communicative approach practical for teaching English in China? Pros and cons. *Science Direct, System, 21*(4), 471–480.

Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. (1998). *Qualitative research for education: an introduction to theory and methods*. 3rd ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Brandl, K. (2008). *Communicative language teaching in action: putting principles to work.* Upper Saddle River, N. J.: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Breen, M. P., & Candlin, C. (1980). The essentials of a communicative curriculum in language teaching. *Applied Linguistics, 1*(2), 89–112.

Brumfit, C. (1984). *Communicative methodology in language teaching. The roles of fluency and accuracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brown, J. D. (1995). *The elements of language curriculum*. New York: Heinle &Heinle.

Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by principles: an interactive approach to language pedagogy*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc. 53

Byram, M. (2000). *Routledge encyclopedia of language teaching and learning.* London: Routledge.

Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics,1*, 1–47.

Candlin, C., & Mercer, N. (2001). *English language teaching in its social context*. London: Routledge.

Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). Language teaching approaches: an overview. In Celce Murcia, M. (Ed.) *Teaching English as a second or foreign language.* 3rd ed. (pp. 3–10). Boston: Heinle and Heinle.

Chang, M., & Goswami, J. S. (2011). Factors affecting the implementation of communicative language teaching in Taiwanese College English Classes. *English Language Teaching, 4*(2), 3–12.

Chomsky, N. (1959). Review of 'verbal behaviour' by F. Skinner. *Language, 35*(1), 26–58.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education*. New York: Routledge.

Cook, V. (1991). *Second language learning and language teaching.* 2nd ed. London: Arnold.

Cook, V. (2001). *Second language learning and language teaching*. London: Arnold.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: qualitative and quantitative, and mixed methods approaches.* 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Dailey, A. (2010). Difficulties implementing CLT in South Korea: mismatch between the language policy and what is taking place in the classroom. *University of Birmingham, November 2010.*

Davies, P., & Pearse, E. (2000). *Success in English teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Davis, K. (1995). Qualitative theory and methods in applied linguistics research. *TESOL Quarterly, 29*(3), 427–453.

Dornyei, Z. (2003). *Questionnaires in second language research: on struction, administration, and processing*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Dornyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ellis, G. (1996). How culturally appropriate is the communicative approach? *ELT Journal, 50*(3), 213–218.

Ellis, R. (1994). *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Elyas, T. (2008). The Attitude of American English within the Saudi Education System. *Novitas-ROYAL* (Research on Youth and Language), 2(1).

Elyas, T., & Picard, M. (2010). Saudi Arabian Educational History: Impacts on English Language Teaching. Education, Business and Society: *Contemporary Middle Eastern Issues*, Vol. 3(2), 24-40.

Elyas, T. & Picard, M. (2012). Towards Globalized Notion of Teaching English in Saudi Arabia: A Case Study. *Asia EF*,. 41.2, pp. 120136.

Flowerdew, J., & Miller, L. (2005). *Second language listening: theory and practice.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Gambhir, V. (1995). *The teaching and acquisition of South Asian languages.* Pennsylvania, USA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Gay, L. (1996). *Educational research: competencies for analysis and application*. 5th ed. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Grami, M. G. (2012). Are learning-centred approaches the answer to Saudilanguage classes? *ARECLS, .9, 1-14.*

Hall, D. R., & Hewings, A. (2001). *Innovation in English language teaching.* London: Routledge, in association with Macquarie University and The Open University.

Harmer, J. (2007). *The practice of English language teaching.* 4th ed. England: Pearson Education Limited.

Hedge, T. (2000) *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hinkel, E., & Fotos, S. (2008). *New perspectives on grammar teaching in second language classrooms.* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Howatt, A. P. R. (1984). *A history of English language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Howatt, A. P. R., & Widdowson, H. G. (2004). *A history of English Language teaching*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hymes, D. (1971). *On communicative competence*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania in Press.

Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.) *Sociolinguistics* (pp.269–293). Harmondsworth, UK:Penguin.

Hymes, D. (1979). On communicative competence. In C. Brumfit & K. Johnson (Eds.) *The communicative approach to language teaching.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Karim, K. M. (2004). Teachers' perceptions, attitudes and expectations about communicative language teaching (CLT) in post-secondary education in Bangladesh (unpublished MA thesis). University of Victoria, Canada.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). *Understanding language teaching. From method to post method.* London: Lawrence ErIbaurn Associates.

Lantolf, J. P. (2000). *Sociocultural theory and second language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000). *Techniques and principles in language teaching.* 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

Lee, J., & VanPatten, B. (1995). *Making communicative language teaching happen*. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.

Li, D. (1998). It's always more difficult than you plan and imagine: teachers' perceived difficulties in introducing the communicative approach in South Korea. *TESOL Quarterly, 32*(4), 677–703.

Lindsay, C., & Knight, P. (2006). *Learning and teaching English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Littlewood, W. (1981). *Communicative language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Littlewood, W. (2007). Communicative and taskbased language teaching in East Asian classrooms. *Language Teaching, 40*(3), 243–249.

Liu, J. (2007). *English language teaching in China: new approaches, perspectives and standards.* London: MPG Books Ltd.

Long, M. H. (2005). *Second language needs analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mahboob, A. & Elyas, T. (2014). English in Saudi Arabia: A Historical and Linguistics Analysis. *World Englishes*, Vol. 33 (1),12-35

Maley, A. (1986). A rose is a rose, or is it?: Can communicative competence be taught? In Brumfit, C. (Ed) *The practice of Communicative Teaching*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

McDonough, J., & McDonough, S. (1997). *Research Methods for English Language Teachers.* London: Arnold.

Miller, L., & Aldred, D. (2000). Student teachers' perceptions about communicative language teaching methods. RELC Journal, 31(1), 1–22.

Nunan, D. (1992). *Research methods in language learning.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, D. (1999). *Second language teaching & learning.* London: Heinle and Heinle.

Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-based language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.

O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Oppenheim, A. N. (2000). *Questionnaire design, interviewing and attitude measurement*. London: Continuum.

Ozsevik, Z. (2010). The use of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): Turkish EFL teachers' Perceived Difficulties in Implementing CLT in Turkey. (unpublished MA thesis). *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*.

Pennycook, A. (1989). The concept of method, interested knowledge, and the politics of language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly, 23*(4), 589–618.

Pring, R. (2000). *Philosophy of education research*. London: Continuum.

Rahman, M., & Alhaisoni, E. (2013). Teaching English in Saudi Arabia: Prospects and Challenges. *Academic Research International, 4(1), 2223 9944.*

Raissi, R., Nor, F., Aziz, M., Zainal, Z., & Saleh, Z. (2013). A Comparison between Students' and Teachers' Ideas Regarding Communicative Language Teaching Implementation in Malaysian Secondary Schools; A Qualitative Survey. *Journal of Basic and Applied Scientific Research, 3(4)608-614.*

Richards, J. (2001). *Curriculum Development in Language Teaching Cambridge: Cambridge*: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J., & Rodgers, T. (1986). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C., Platt, J., & Platt, H. (1992). *Dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics.* 2nd ed. Essex, England: Longman.

Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*.2nd ed. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative language teaching today*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Richards, K. (2003). *Qualitative inquiry in TESOL.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Robson, C. (2002). *Real world research: a resource for social scientists and practitioner-researchers.*2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell.

Savignon, S. J. (1991). Communicative language teaching: state of the art. *TESOL Quarterly, 25*(2), 261–277.

Savignon, S. J. (1997). *Communicative competence: theory and classroom practice*. 2nd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

Savignon, S. J. (2001). Communicative language teaching for the twenty first century. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.) *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (3rd ed.) (pp. 13–28). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

Savignon, S. J. (2002). *Interpreting communicative language teaching: contexts and concerns in teacher education*. New Haven, London: Yale University Press.

Savignon, S. J. (2003). Teaching English as communication: a global perspective. *World Englishes, 22(1), 55–66.*

Savignon, S., & Wang, C. (2003). Communicative language teaching in EFL contexts: learner attitudes and perceptions. *IRAL 41*, 223–249.

Scarcella, R. C., and Oxford, R. L. (1992). *The tapestry of language learning: the individual in the communicative classroom.* Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and the social sciences*. 3rd ed. Printed on acid free paper: Manufactured in the United States of America.

Syed, Z. (2003). TESOL in the Gulf: the Sociocultural Context of English Language Teaching in the Gulf. *TESOL Quarterly, 37(2), 337–341*.

Tarone, E., & Yule, G. (1989). *Focus on the language learner: approaches to identifying and meeting the needs of second language learners*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tomlinson, B. (2003). *Developing materials for language teaching*. London, New York: Continuum.

Wang, R. (1990) Focusing on oral communication competence. *English Teaching Forum 28, 36–38.*