İngilizce Dil Öğretim Yöntemi Olarak İletişimsel Yaklaşım: Van Atatürk Anadolu Lisesi Örneği*

Communicative Approach as an English Language Teaching Method: Van Atatürk Anatolian High School Sample

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Özet: Bu araştırma, Türkiye'de Orta Öğretim Kurumlarında İngilizce öğretim yöntemi olarak kullanılan İletişimsel Yaklaşımın hedeflenen dil becerilerini gerçekleştirmede ne kadar etkili olduğunu araştırmak amacıyla yapılmıştır. Çalışma, Van ili Atatürk Anadolu Lisesi 10, 11 ve 12. sınıf öğrencilerini kapsamaktadır. Araştırma sürecinin başında, öğrencilerin İngilizce düzeylerini ölçmek için bir seviye sınavı yapıldı. Elde edilen sonuçların İletişimsel Dil Öğretimine dayalı Orta Öğretim Kurumları Genel Liseler İngilizce Öğretim Programında hedeflenen kazanımlarla örtüşmediği saptandı. Dil eğitimi alan kişilerin çoğunlukla daha önce çalışılan ve sıkça kullanılan gündelik kalıplaşmış ifadeleri söyleyebildikleri; üretkenliğe dayalı, daha önce denemedikleri yapıları ve değim özelliği taşıyan ifadeleri söyleyemedikleri veya söylemekten çekindikleri sonucuna varıldı. Ayrıca, mevcut alan yazındaki diğer çalışmalarla, konu hakkındaki farklı görüşlere de yer verilerek çalışmanın sonunda, iletişimsel yaklaşım açısından elde edilen olumsuz sonuçların olası nedenleri üzerinde duruldu ve birtakım önerilerde bulunuldu. Bu araştırma, iletişimsel dil öğretim modelinin Van Atatürk Anadolu Lisesinde hedeflenen dil becerilerini karşılamakta etkisiz kaldığını ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar sözcükler: İletişimsel Dil Öğretim Metodu, İletişimsel Yaklaşım, Türkiye'de Yabancı Dil Öğretimi

Abstract: This study tries to find out how effective Communicative Approach is as a widely practiced English teaching method in Turkish Secondary Schools. The study covers the 10th, 11th and 12th grade students of Van Atatürk Anatolian High School. At the initial stage of the study, a sample level test was given in order to evaluate the available English level of the students. At the end of the study, it was found out that there was a discrepancy between the principal target benefits of Secondary Schools English Teaching Program, which is principally based on CLT and the results obtained. The majority of the language learners could only utter daily or structural expressions mostly studied beforehand or often practiced but could not reproduce those never experienced or those depending on creativity. Furthermore, the possible reasons for these negative results were discussed and questioned whether or how much they were associated with CLT. Finally, some suggestions were put forth in the light of other studies and views on this field. This study suggests that CLT is not efficient enough in achieving the language targets set for the second language (L2) learners in Van Atatürk Anatolian High School.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Communicative Approach, L2 Teaching, Foreign Language Teaching

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Introduction

Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) in Turkey has always been discussed and criticized by language professionals, but the origin of the problem has been missed as much. The problem can be described as infertility in FLT. Despite a long period of time enough to teach a language, school graduates not only from secondary schools but also from higher education still cannot communicate in the target language, which is English for the scope of this study. In the research which have focused on the issue in different parts of the world so far, the accused have been teachers, their lack of knowledge, lack of materials, unwilling students, or absence of authentic surrounding. However, they skipped the way by which all those aforementioned are processed. Those not skipping accused all the methods but *Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)*, which is the most dominant and experienced foreign language teaching method in many current English Language Teaching (ELT) applications. In this limited study, we tried to find out whether CLT plays a role in the infertile language teaching practices in Van Atatürk Anatolian High School as a secondary school model.

Among ELT methods the CLT *is* the most widely used in Turkey as well as in other countries in the world. Moreover, it is regarded as the most reliable and efficient way of teaching language not only for English but also for other languages, yet however much it is praised or however widely it is used, there are hard facts about infertile practices of CLT. Even so, until recently, the idea of CLT and its usefulness have been almost completely neglected except in very few studies in the field and the lack of critical studies did not skip the Turkish setting, either. Accordingly, Savignon (2003) claims that in literature, CLT has not received adequate attention and those already existing put the blame on the practices, teachers and the materials or on the challenges that teachers encounter during in-class activities rather than the method itself. In one of these studies, for instance, Sato and Kleinsasser (1999) revealed that there was a contradiction between teachers' understandings of communicative language teaching and their actual class experiences in Australia because of the different challenges such as deductive explanations of grammar points, large classrooms, education system, and teachers' fragmented knowledge of CLT. In this study, the problem is associated with teachers' understanding and with the physical conditions where the class experiences took place. Furthermore, a study conducted by Sakui (2004) in Japan showed that despite the support of the ministry of education in Japan, the general practice of the English lessons in this country are mainly based on grammar teaching and far more grounded than CLT. Similarly, Bal (2006) carried out a study on the teachers' perceptions of communicative language teaching in Turkish EFL setting theory versus practices. His study

was carried out in Adana, Turkey and found out that English teachers who participated in the study generally did not apply CLT activities in their EFL classrooms. Furthermore, they consumed much time on explicit grammar teaching and reading activities rather than CLT practices. In other words, teachers in Turkish EFL settings are generally unfamiliar and inadequate with CLT practices. Both studies above put the blame on inadequate settings and CLT practices rather than the method. On the other hand, there are few studies revealing the opposite. Nunan (1987), for example, investigated CLT as manifested in the classroom. He contended that although teachers, with graduate diplomas in TESOL, were highly skilful in CLT classroom activities and had targets for communicative classes, there were few cases for desirable communicative language competence.

In this study, we aim to study whether CLT applications in High Schools, particularly in Van Atatürk Anatolian High School give the expected feedback or not. We also aim to find out whether CLT is appropriate for the Turkish learners who study English as a foreign or second language. Furthermore, in this study, it is also questioned to use the first language in teaching second language grammar to encourage creativity and to aim to make learners communicate easily without expecting ideal native speaker's pronunciation or fluency, which is almost completely rejected by CLT practitioners. Although it is difficult to set an absolute right way of language introduction by means of communicative means since it depends on many variables such as teachers and teachers' understanding of CLT, materials, culture, native language and the native language's family especially as to its syntax and grammar, we anticipate that even though this study is limited to a sample school, it will show interesting results in terms of language education in Turkey and lead to further research interests in the field.

Methodology

This study mainly focused on the productivity and efficiency of the communicative skills of the application of CLT in English classrooms in Van Atatürk Anatolian High School, the main purpose of which is to teach foreign language in Turkish National Education system. Having taken permission from the directory of the setting school, the researcher identified 300 participants of different grades in the school, where the participants were studying. Then, the teachers to give the test were met and given the details of the research, and were asked to make the students fill out the questionnaire in a lesson hour duration, which was 45 min. It was very important that during these sessions, the participation was voluntary, and no compulsion was made on the participants. Eventually, the participants were also given the opportunity to ask

questions about the questionnaire. Consequently, at the final phase of the study, the tests were collected and the answers given by the participants were evaluated and illustrated in charts and tables.

Setting

The study was carried out in the 10th, 11th and 12th grades of Atatürk Anatolian High School in the province of Van, Turkey. It is the oldest high school in this city. The school admits the students, having a relatively high level of score from SBS examination (e.g. an exam for Turkish secondary school students to be replaced in high schools accordingly). It has almost all educational opportunities for the students.

Participants

The study was conducted with 300 Anatolian High School students. The participants were selected from three different grades, including 10th, 11th and 12th grades in equal numbers. Their ages range between 14 and 16. Anatolian high school students are admitted with the average of three examinations, taken every year by the students at the end of each secondary school year. Therefore, they all have a certain level of acquisition ability.

Instruments

In this study, we used a sample test based on the principles of the quantitative research method in order to elicit data related to the students' acquisition of English, their reproduction level of the language and the reflection of the CLT practices on the students in EFL settings in Turkey. The main purpose of the sample test was to give the researcher necessary information about the participants' level of acquisition and reproduction as well as their general understanding of English. The test covers the range of language proficiency from elementary to pre-intermediate level and includes three types of questions, the first type of which aims to measure the theoretical English knowledge, the next of which aims to measure the ability of analysis, and the last of which targets to evaluate the participants' levels of synthesis. Therefore, it consisted of three parts, named as 'PART A', 'PART B', and 'PART C'. Moreover, each of the parts includes two levels of questions, numbered as 'I' and 'II'. The language questioned in Level 'I' is made up of the daily routine and structurally fixed imitative language, whereas the language questioned in Level 'II' is of rare and reproductive features. Level I and Level II questions are characterized by how often they are exposed rather than how difficult they are.

There are 45 questions in the test. In PART A, there are ten theoretical levels of questions, five of which are in level I and the other five are in level II. In PART B, in addition, there are ten analysis level of questions, five of which are in level I and the other five

are in level II, but in three types of questions. However, in PART C, there are twenty five synthesis level of questions in two different types, twenty of which are in the first part including ten level I and ten level II questions, and five of which are in the second part including only reproduction level II of questions, which aimed to define the participants' perceptions of English as well as their language proficiency. In this part, the creativity of the participants was aimed to be evaluated and rather than one standard answer, any possible meaningful answer was regarded as correct answer. Open ending questions are those that ask for unprompted opinions. In other words, there are no predetermined set of responses, and the participants are free to answer whatever they choose.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from our sample test were analyzed by using the quantitative research method involving the systematic collection, organization, and interpretation of numeric material derived from the test so that the analysis of the data collected via the instruments could be interpreted in scientifically valid solid units.

The analysis was performed in several stages. Initially the sample tests were collected from the teachers and then they were divided into the groups according to their grades. Second, the variables were set, which were labeled as Level I and Level II, and Part A, Part B and Part C. The variables were set according to the grades of the students (i.e. 10th, 11th and 12th grades), levels of knowledge (i.e. Part A, Part B and Part C), and level of the questions (i.e. Level I and Level II). The grades are the classes in which the participants study. Moreover, the levels of knowledge are those determined according to the measurement and evaluation principles that suggest the educationalists to use different types of measurement means measuring different levels of knowledge such as theory, analysis and synthesis, which were named as 'Part A', 'Part B' and 'Part C'. Similarly, the levels of the questions are those having nearly the same difficulty level and content but differ in their commonness or creativity, which were titled as 'Level I' and 'Level II'.

Next, the total correct answers for each question were counted and their frequencies were calculated. Then, total correct answers over the total participants (i.e. 300 Sts) were proportioned as '…/ 300' as well as with their percentages as '… %'. After this process, the frequencies and the percentages were applied to the afore mentioned variables of the questions. The statistical data, calculated in frequencies and percentages were processed with the program MS Office Excel 2003 by a statistician in Van District Office of Turkish Statistical Institute and then the results were illustrated in tables, bars and pie charts. This study analyzed some parts of the data obtained from the open-ended questions via

content analysis technique in order to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within texts or sets of texts. Thus, we quantified, illustrated (see Table 6) and analyzed the presence, meanings and relationships of such words and concepts, then made inferences about the messages within the texts.

Findings

The participants' acquisition, production and perception of English are compared with and contrasted to different variables and illustrated by charts and tables. The data reveal that the learners participated in the study generally lack the ability to use the foreign language in a creative way. The majority of the participants failed in the level of reproduction. In all three levels of knowledge, i.e. theory (Part A), analysis

(Part B) and synthesis (Part C), the participants were markedly unsuccessful in relatively unfamiliar expressions and sentences (Level II). In other words, students in this EFL setting are generally inadequate with creative practices. In addition, the discrepancy between students' theoretical perceptions of English and their inability in reproductive practices prevents them from implementing the target language principles in a real context.

The Participants Acquisition of English

The frequencies and the number of the correct answers to both levels, i.e. Level I (familiar language) and Level II (unfamiliar language), in three levels of knowledge (i.e. Part A, Part B, and Part C) are shown successively in Table 1:

Table 1.

The overall correct answers to Level I and Level II questions and their rational frequencies

| | **Columns Labels** | | | | | |
| | **LEVEL 1** | | **LEVEL 2** | | | |
Line Labels	**Overall Correct Ans.**	**Overall Rate**	**Overall Correct Ans.**	**Overall Rate**	**Total Overall Correct Ans.**	**Total Overall Rate**
PART A	1141	3.803	216	0.72	1357	4.523
1	**229**	**0.763**			229	0.763
2	**235**	**0.783**			235	0.783
3	230	0.766			230	0.766
4	223	0.743			223	0.743
5	224	0.746			224	0.746
6			**67**	**0.223**	67	0.223
7			**22**	**0.0733**	22	0.073
8			79	0.263	79	0.263
9			**27**	**0.09**	27	0.09
10			**21**	**0.07**	21	0.07
PART B	961	3.203	347	1.156	1308	4.36
11	73	0.243			73	0.243
12	80	0.266			80	0.266
13	**246**	**0.82**			246	0.82
14	192	0.64			192	0.64
15			49	0.163	49	0.163
16			179	0.596	179	0.596
17	143	0.476			143	0.476
18	227	0.756			227	0.756
19			50	0.166	50	0.166
20			69	0.23	69	0.23
PART C	2241	7.47	1204	4.013	3445	11.483
A-1	**234**	**0.78**	**45**	**0.15**	279	0.93
A-2	**290**	**0.966**	179	0.596	469	1.563
A-3	227	0.756	112	0.373	339	1.13
A-4	206	0.686	82	0.273	288	0.96
A-5	79	0.263	**45**	**0.15**	124	0.413
A-6	**245**	**0.816**	76	0.253	321	1.07
A-7	**279**	**0.93**	**14**	**0.046**	293	0.976
A-8	**271**	**0.903**	72	0.24	343	1.143
A-9	202	0.673	14	0.046	216	0.72
A-10	208	0.693	**18**	**0.06**	226	0.753
B-1			134	0.446	134	0.446
B-2			88	0.293	88	0.293
B-3			173	0.576	173	0.576
B-4			74	0.246	74	0.246
B-5			78	0.26	78	0.26
Overall Total	**4343**	**14.476**	**1767**	**5.89**	**6110**	**20.366**

According to the table above, whereas the learners can reproduce familiar statements used in everyday English (with a ratio of 0.9, 0.8 or 0.7), they fail to reproduce unfamiliar but similar ones (with a ratio of 0.04, 0.1 or 0.2) (see bold figures in Table 1). The resulting figures in the study also reveal that learners taught through CLT are only successful in the statements with which they are familiar whether the task is of theoretical (shown as Part A in the questionnaire), analytical (Part B) or reproduction (Part C) level. In Figure 1, each answer of the participants for each question in the questionnaire was shown in a bar chart with Level 1 and Level 2 questions in all three levels of knowledge (i.e. theoretical, analytical and reproductive).
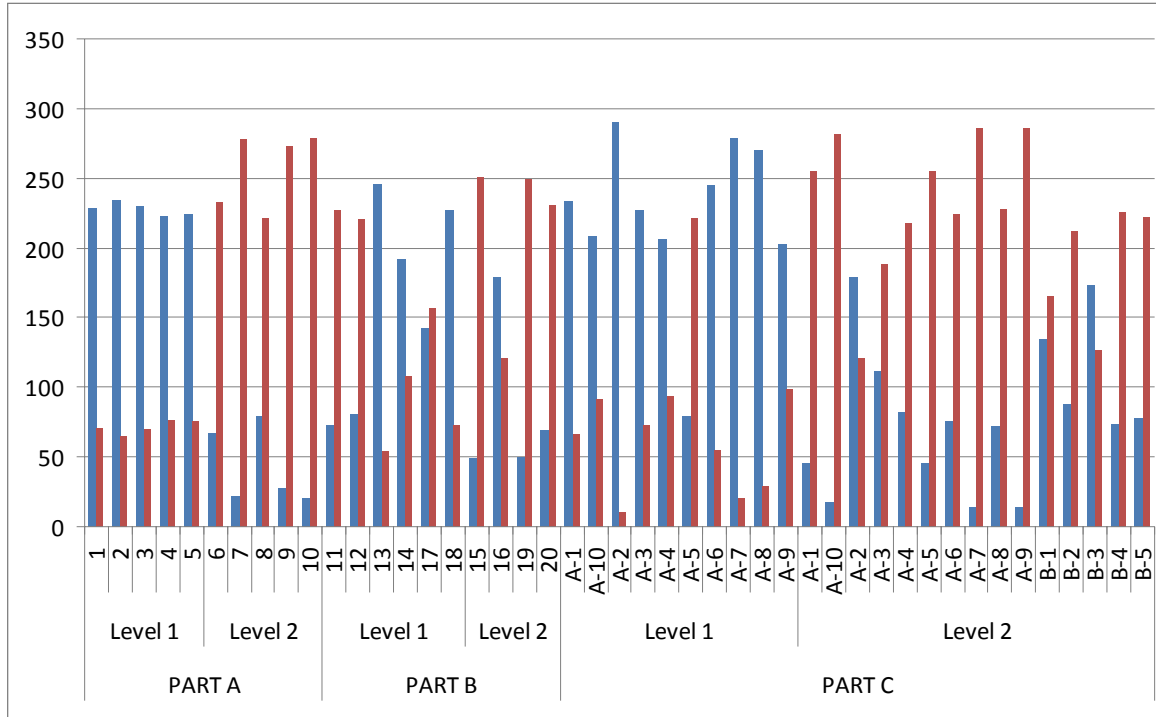
Figure 1.

The difference between the highest value which is 0.96 or 290 of the total 300 participants for the question Level 1 A2 in Part C and the lowest value which is 0.04 or 14 of the total 300 participants for the question Level 2 A7 in the same part is found to be 0.92, which is a significant figure in our study.

In another statistical data (see fig. 2), the results were divided into six parts as Part A Level 1, Part A Level 2, Part B Level 1, Part B Level 2, Part C Level 1, and Part C Level 2 . The correct answers for each group were counted and illustrated in Figure 2:
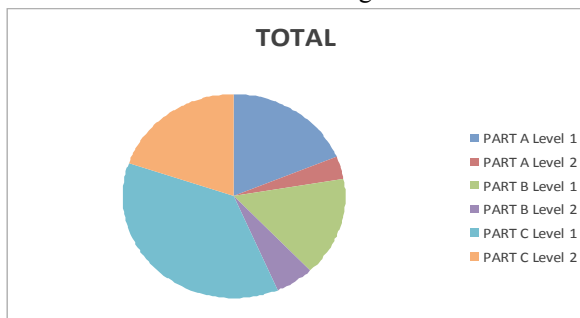

Figure 2.

Furthermore, the total correct answers for Level 1 and Level 2 were separately shown in figure 3.
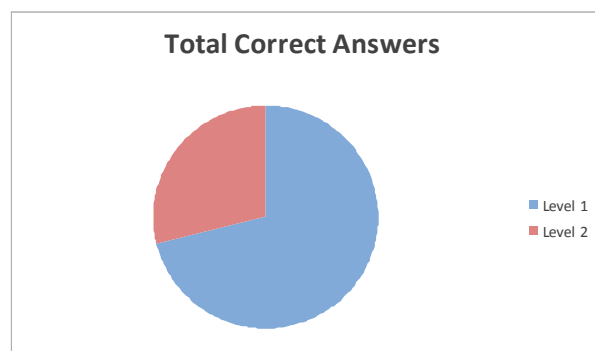

Figure 3.

As shown in Figure 3, despite their parallel structures and few vocabulary differences, there are significant differences in the number of the correct answers. For example, in the third question of Part C, the students were seen to write 'How are you?' which is included in Level 1 questions, however, they could not write 'How are your children?' which is included in Level 2 questions. The total numbers and the

percentages of the correct answers in total Level 1 and Level 2 questions were shown below in Table 2.

Table 2.

Level I and Level II in all parts

Variables	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Level I	4419	73,6	73,6	73,6
Level II	1194	19,9	19,9	19,9
Total	(300X20)6000	100,0	100,0	100,0

Whereas 73,6 % of the participants could answer Level 1, composed of familiar daily expressions, this figure decreases to 19,9 % in Level II questions, composed of unfamiliar expressions. The results were also evaluated and illustrated according to the levels of the knowledge.

Theoretical Acquisition

The theoretical English knowledge of the participants was measured by theoretical questions including grammatical structures and rules. Part A of the sample test, used as a questionnaire in this study, is composed of multiple choice grammatical questions and measures the participants' ability to identify English verb tenses. While the participants were asked about tenses such as Simple Past, Past Continuous, Simple Future, Present Perfect, and Simple Present are in Level I, they were asked to recognize Past Perfect, Future Continuous, Present Continuous, Future Perfect, and Past Perfect Continuous. The frequencies and the percentages of the correct answers of Level I and Level II questions in Part A are shown below in Table 3.

Table 3.

Level I and Level II in Part A

Variables	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Level I	1141	76	76	76
Level II	216	14,5	14,5	14,5
Total	(300x5)1500	100,0	100,0	100,0

As we understand from the table, we can see that there are significant differences between Level I and Level II correct answers in Part A. Even though the participants can distinguish Simple Present (question numbered 5) and even Present Perfect (question numbered 4) (see Figure 4), they are not successful to identify Present Continuous (question numbered 8) or Future Continuous (question numbered 7) as well as the formers.

In the following Figure 4, you can see the sharp decrease in Level II questions. The differences are not associated with the difficulty level but with the familiarity since Level I and Level II questions are

characterized by how often they are exposed rather than how difficult they are. In the first five questions (Level I), the average correct answers are seen to be 220-250, whereas in the second five (Level II), they range between 0 and 80.
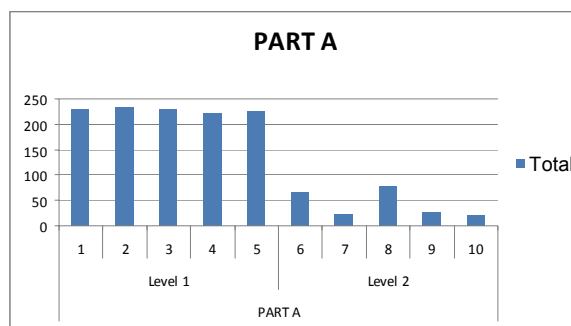

Figure 4.

In figure 5, total correct answers to Level I and Level II in Part A were illustrated in a pie chart. However, the missing values were neglected. The chart clearly illustrates the important level of reproduction and knowledge difference between familiar and unfamiliar expressions or L2.
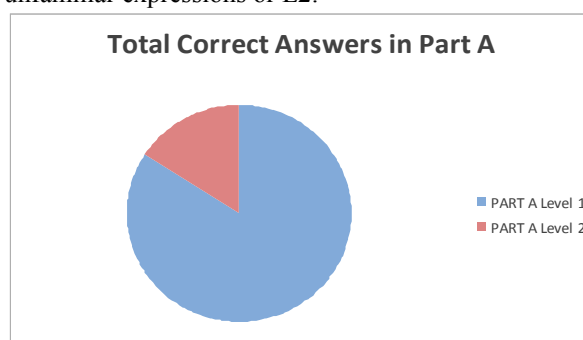

Figure 5.

Consequently, the results from the questions of theoretical level of knowledge reveal obvious differences in the participants' acquisition of target language grammar, at least for the tense acquisition in this current study. The results in this part of the questionnaire were interpreted in figures and tables in order to be made quantitative data. In this study, the underlying reasons of these significant differences in grammar acquisition are claimed to be resulted from the language teaching methodology (i.e., CLT) that is currently practiced in schools by MEB. Grammatical side of the language is neglected and communication is dominantly suggested. The classroom materials or textbooks make the language a complex puzzle and the students are confused. Communication is ideally aimed, but the way to communication is characterized by imitations and limited by the language exposed during an education semester. As far as understood from the results in this study, the students could identify the grammatical terms they had been frequently exposed but the ones they had relatively less imitated or heard.

As a result, of this study, we claim that foreign language learners should not be limited to what they have been exposed. Moreover, in grammar teaching, neglecting the L1 leads to a language made up of imitated expressions of an outside world rather than another saying of communication as well as the native language already owned. Noam Chomsky (1988) states that the principle of structure-dependency is used in all languages and any human being who knows any language therefore includes the principle of structure-dependency within their knowledge of language. Therefore, it is worth to consider L1 as a better alternative to be used in language teaching in order to teach a foreign language grammar.

Analytical Acquisition

Analytical acquisition of a language can be measured by questions allowing the students to break the material into pieces and identify the differences or recognize the details in the target language. In this study, in order to measure the analytical abilities of the participants, they were asked true/false questions based on a given single sentence. Furthermore, they were asked to answer multiple choice questions requiring analytic ability in the target language. In this part, called Part B in the questionnaire, total 10 questions were asked, five of which are in Level I and the other five in Level II. In both levels, the questions are analytical and have nearly the same level of difficulty but differ in their familiarity, which is the same case in Part A. The frequencies and the percentages of the correct answers of Level I and Level II questions in Part B are shown below in Table 4.

Table 4.

Level I and Level II in Part B

Variables	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Level I	931	62	62	62
Level II<u	427	28,4	28,4	28,4
Total	(300x5)1500	100,0	100,0	100,0

Unlike Part A and in Part B, there are no significant differences between the figures. The figures are relatively nearer than those in Part A. In this Part, there are fewer correct Level I answers than those of Part A. However, there are more correct Level II answers than those of Part A (1141 Level I and 216 Level II in Part A appear to be 931 Level I and 427 Level II in Part B). The relative decrease in Level I and increase in Level II can be linked to the frequency of visual exposure to the structures and expressions. The decrease shows the lack of enough analytic competence in identification of the details, whereas the increase reveals the fact that analyzing can be relatively better achieved in text based or visual language. The

following chart (Fig. 6) clearly illustrates the proportion of the correct answers of Level I to those of Level II in Part B.
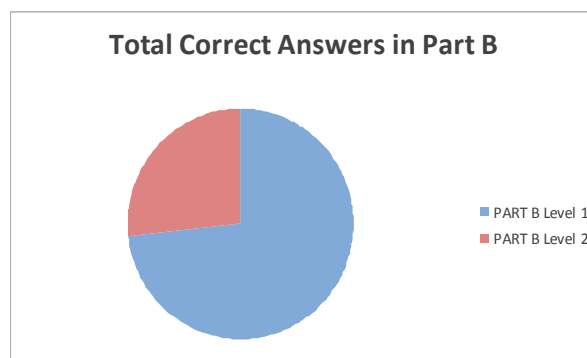

Figure 6.

In Figure 6, the correct answers are illustrated for each question in Part B. The eleventh and the twelfth questions are partly reading. The participants are required to analyze and identify the details in a given sentence. Whether they are Level I or Level II, the number of the correct answers is low, which reveals the fact that reading activities performed in CLT classes are not productive enough to make the students catch the meaning in details or the grammatical slenderness of the structures. In CLT, reading activities are organized in order to get the general idea, scan for specific information or expose the students as much vocabulary as possible. In fact, the premier goal in reading activities of the CLT based textbooks is to introduce the structure to be taught in a context before the class presentation. As a result, rather than understanding whatever is read, CLT suggests understanding the general idea of what is read.
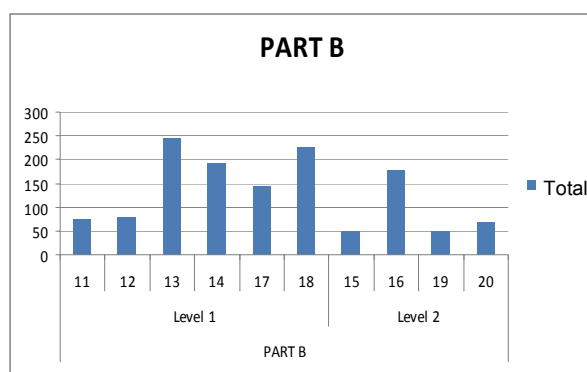

Figure 7.

The other questions are multiple choices and illustrate similar distribution of the correct answers of afore mentioned Level I and Level II differences, except for the question 16. The percentage of the correct answers in Part B is 62% for Level I, 28.5% for Level II, and 45% for average.

In this study, the overall low success level in this part may be related to the lack of analytical approach of CLT.

The difference in the figures of Level I and Level II shows the importance of familiarity in the acquisition of any subject or ability to reproduce the language in CLT.

Synthesizing Acquisition

Synthesis level of a language learner can be identified by how much this learner can synthesize the acquired knowledge to reproduce a meaningful statement in the target language. Communicative competence entails not only knowledge about language but the ability to use language, appropriately, in real life situations. Therefore, CLT comprises much more than the traditionally taught areas of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. In this context, following interconnected characteristics of CLT provide students in a communicative class ultimately to use the language productively and receptively in unrehearsed contexts outside the classroom. Classroom tasks must, therefore, equip students with the skills necessary for communication in those contexts. In this study, however, the results revealed contrary to what is expected from an average CLT learner. In order to measure the synthesis level of the students, the participants were asked 25 questions in Part C, ten of which are in Level I and the other fifteen of which are in Level II. In the first ten questions of the latter part, there are some idiomatic expressions in order to understand the language perception and creativity of the participants. The other five of this part are, moreover, particularly situational questions, depending on a given situation and allow the participants to think over giving the massage in the target language and reproduce his/her own statement. The participants were expected to write any meaningful sentence related to the given context rather than to write a fixed answer.

Table 5.

Level I and Level II in Part C

Variables	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Level I	2241	74,7	74,7	74,7
Level II A	547	21,9	22,0	22,0
Level II B	654	36,4	36,4	36,4
Total	(300x10)3000	100,0	100,0	100,0

In the table above (see Table 5), the frequencies and the percentages of the correct answers of Level I and Level II questions in Part C are shown. The table shows that the students are almost three or four times as successful in Level I questions as in Level II, which reveals that rather than the difficulty level of the questions (whether they are of Part A, Part B or Part C), the identifying factor here is the familiarity of the language they dealt with. In all three difficulty levels; theoretical, analytical or synthetic, Level I questions, composed of familiar expressions, have a significantly

higher rate of accuracy than Level II questions, composed of unfamiliar expressions but the same level of difficulty. The percentage of the correct answers in Level I of Part C is 74, 7 %, whereas, in Level II-A, it is 21, 9 % and 36, 4 % in Level II-B.

The following chart (Fig. 8) clearly illustrates the proportion of the correct answers of Level I to those of Level II-A/ Level II-B in Part C:
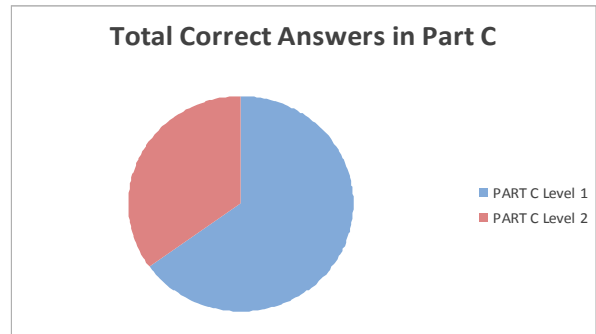

Figure 8.

Note that while Level I is composed of ten questions, Level II is composed of fifteen questions and of two parts Level II-A and Level II-B. Despite this fact, the rate of Level I is still dominant over Level II. Since the reproduction ability of the students is evaluated in this level of knowledge, the results are closely related to the final target of the language teaching, that is, communication. Communication in foreign language requires translation of the inner feelings and opinions to the native speaker of the target language addressed. The study reveals that in all three parts of this questionnaire, whatever the kind and however difficult the question is, the percentage and the frequencies of the correct answers in Level I and Level II are almost in the same rates. Level I is about 70 %, while Level II is about 20 %. This result arises a question about the method of teaching, by which those participating in the study have been taught. CLT and its philosophy deductive learning is the one to be responsible of this fact.
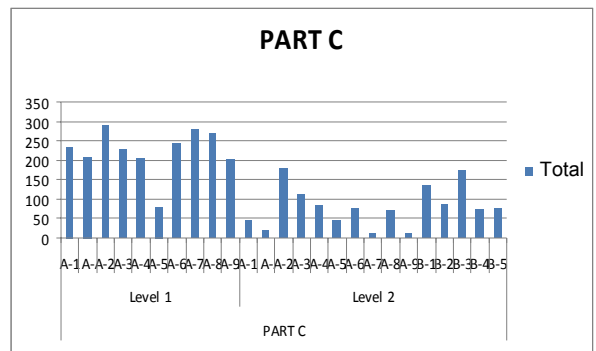

Figure 9.

In Figure 9, the correct answers are illustrated for each question in Part C. Question Level II-A 8 and 10,

having the lowest rate of correct answers, ask the participants idioms to observe the students' attitudes in alternative thinking and creativity. The majority of the participants failed to replace the idiom even though they were not expected to write the original matching. They either omitted the questions or tried to translate them word by word. The reason is supposed to be resulted from the participants' hesitation to reproduce an expression not having been heard or experienced before, and the underlying reason may be attributed to CLT, which makes the target language mythicized and the creativity a sin. In this context, Honna (1999) points out that by virtue of this perfectionism, Japanese tend to hesitate to interact with English speakers until, as they often are heard to say, they develop complete proficiency in the language. This proves that the problem is not unique to Turkey or to that limited study in particular.

The Participants' Perception of English

The study also questioned the participants' own comment on some specific expressions. Their responses to those questions reflected their perception of foreign language, particularly English. In Part C, the participants were asked to write the English matching of *'Ne var Ali?'* (Question 1 in Level II-A), which means *'What's the matter (with you), Ali?'* in English. The majority of the responses given were exactly word to word translation of *'Ne'*, and *'var'*, that is, *'what'* and *'there'*, resulting in *'What's there Ali?'* or *'What is, Ali?'*. Another example is Question 7 of the same part and level, asking the participants to write the English matching of *'Sudan ucuz'*, which means *'very cheap'* in English. However, their superficial matching in English is *'water'* for *'su'* and *'cheap'* for *'ucuz'*. The participants considered the superficial matching rather than its meaning, resulting in *'Cheaper than water'*. Moreover, the following examples (see Table 6) are other interesting findings in the study:

Tablo 6.

Idiomatic findings in the study

Turkish	English Meaning	Superficial Matchings	Output
'Sudan ucuz'	*'very cheap'*	*'water'* for *'su'* *'cheap'* for *'ucuz'*	*'Cheaper than water'*
'Adam Akıllı'	*'very well'*	*'Man'* for *'adam'* *'clever'* for *'akıllı'*	*'The man is clever'*
'Geçmiş olsun'	*'I hope you will recover soon'*	*'Past'* for *'geçmiş'* *'ol'* for *'be'*	*'It be past' / 'Past be'*

Furthermore, there was an interesting finding for asking the time. In Part C, the Question 8 of Level II-A asks the students *'Uçağınız saat kaçta?'*, which means *'What time is your flight?'* in English. However, since the students imitated, repeated, heard and practiced it as a whole sentence as *'What time is it?'* deductively, they automatically built the sentence as *'What time is **it** your airplane?'*.

These findings reveal the misconception of foreign language acquisition in CLT classes. CLT allows the students not to use one's own comment but that of an ideal native speaker's. Therefore, the ideal authentic material is presented as the target behavior of the learners. Students are discouraged when the ideal target is presented authentically. Perfectionism is the main drawback of the deductive communicative approach in language teaching for the learners who learn the target language as a foreign language. The learners hesitate to use inexperienced or never heard statements owing to CLT's deductive nature. The target must be set realistically and the student should get to know that the target is communication. In other words, understanding and being understood rather than the perfect accent, perfect pronunciation, or letter to letter understanding, which none of us can achieve fully even in our own mother language.

Consequently, according to the findings in this study, the ideal target destination of CLT is far from the real practices in schools, at least in this setting of the study. The results are sharply different from CLT based curriculum purposes. What is suggested in this study is to use the L1 neglected by CLT in teaching L2 grammar and thus benefiting from those structures in common and to aim learners communicate easily without expecting ideal native speakers' pronunciation or fluency. The final target must at most be as nearly possible well as L1, not the same as or more than L1 or as well as the target language itself.

Discussion

Considering the research questions we aimed at the beginning of the study which our study is based upon we conclude that Communicative Language Teaching is teaching of a language for communicative purposes. Therefore, it constantly reflects a communicative side of language and thus emphasizing that learners learn a language through using it to communicate, authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities, fluency should be an important dimension of communication, communication involve the integration of different language skills, and learning be a process of creative construction and involves trial and error. The techniques used for language teaching, thus, are based on communicative and authentic means. The target language, or L2, is regarded as the ideal and final purpose of the method, which has been set as perfect as native language. It presents many advantages for foreign learners to acquire L2 by using the language itself and being exposed to authentic language as much

as possible. This leads to more accurate pronunciation and larger vocabulary memory for foreign language learners during its long teaching period. However, despite all these opportunist intentions and implications of CLT, the results in this study show that at least in this setting, i.e. in Van Atatürk Anatolian High School, the participants having been taught English via CLT for a period of time ranging from two to four years are incompetent in comprehension, knowledge, analysis and reproduction levels of the language.

The common controversy lies in the communicative emphasis of CLT. In order to set a communication as well as a native speaker, CLT exaggerates and mythicizes the target language so much that learning barriers such as hesitation and lack of confidence can be observed easily not only among the learners but among the teachers as well. In Turkish National Education, language teaching, particularly English teaching, is based upon CLT and this approach determines the main outlines of English curriculum in national education system. Even though there is a long period of time arranged for English teaching in not only elementary school but also high school curricula, the students still have difficulty to reproduce or understand the target language. There is an increased level of hesitance and lack of confidence among Turkish learners, most of which result from the desire for using the language as well as an ideal native speaker prototype. Therefore, the purpose of language teaching and the final target of whether we want students to express themselves fluently in the target language regardless of focusing on their accent must be described and reset. In the former colonized Eastern or African countries, for instance, you can easily distinguish the second language English speaker even though it is his/her formal second language having been taught together with the native language since very early ages. On the other hand, in Turkey, where English is only a foreign language taught in schools, the targets are set in order to achieve a speaker reproducing the language without referring to his/her native language both mentally and culturally. Nevertheless, although MEB sets the national goals in its overall national education targets, it persistently suggests CLT, which aims to adapt the learner to the target culture for foreign language learning in high schools.

Another aspect lying under the failure is thought to be the deductive method imposed by CLT. Learners are taught the language from context to structure, which causes a memorized language acquisition. Nevertheless, Ömer Demircan (1990) underlines the possible harmful effects and drawbacks of teaching administrated by using a deductive method like communicative approach and suggests that deductive learning without performing experiments, exercises, and observations turns into memorization rather than a conscious learning. It will be inevitable for a student who constantly learns by a deductive method to get accustomed to dependence to others and falling into an intellectual inactivity.

According to the opinions and discussions above, we can say that CLT as a language teaching method, particularly as an English teaching method for this study, is too idealistic to be practiced in Turkish Education System due to the overall targets expected from the language teaching and the linguistic or cultural characteristics of the native language. This method of teaching aims to make the learners of foreign language acquire it unconsciously and use the language as a reflexive action like his/her mother tongue. This is of course a good target but a hard one considering the time and cost to be spent. In our fast changing technology age, where economy and time is exchanged with money, this method makes the ELT institutions and publishers happy unlike the students.

Conclusion

In this study, we tried to understand the effectiveness of CLT and whether it was an appropriate and yielding method in language learning in High Schools, particularly in Van Atatürk Anatolian High School. The results obtained from the study proved that a majority of the participants could deal with everyday statements, but failed in unfamiliar expressions which they had never tried before. In the theoretical level, the participants were found to be much better at imitative or structural statements than the creative ones (e.g.14.6 % / 76 %) although the questions had the same kind of grammar structures but required memorized or creative thinking ability. The second part consisted of analytical questions targeting reading and understanding skills of the participants. The results were still parallel to those obtained in the first part standing for the grammar proficiency. The participants were much more successful in the common used daily tasks than the reproductive ones, as were they in the former part (e.g. 28.4% / 62%). These results were not different from those obtained in the third part, prepared to measure the practical speaking skills of the students. The results were 74,7 % in favor of common situations, whereas they were 21,9 % and 36,4 % in creative structure-free situations. In brief, the study revealed that the participants were more successful in a text based language involving what is heard and what is practiced through the learning process than a creative one that can be extemporized, which was the reciprocal of what is aimed in MEB's special purposes of language teaching. Seeing the results and considering the Anatolian status (e.g. foreign language-weighted teaching) of the participants, we put the blame on the current teaching methodology CLT as the principal substructure of English teaching approach in MEB for making the students learn English as a set of structural patterns rather than a living concept.

From all these figures, our wonders about CLT applications at the beginning of the study were proved to be worthwhile. The participants were dominantly successful in everyday and common language which they experienced or were exposed in the text books or recordings during their lessons, whereas they were equally unsuccessful in creative, unfamiliar or structure-free contexts. Therefore, from the data interpreted in this study, we understand that CLT cannot meet the expectations set by MEB and the language practitioners. A useful and productive language acquisition did not appear at the end of the study. The participants were only successful in those commonly used daily expressions. When they were required to reproduce the language, they mostly failed. The problems are thought to result from the gaps in CLT, which is the main purpose of the study. The language perception in Turkish Education System appears to be an imitative and repetitive process, by which learners can only communicate as much as they memorized or were exposed to.

Based on the findings from this research, it is also argued that many teachers' and educators' insistence on CLT are often not supported by the learners' output. This should not lead to a complete distrust of this approach, but rather to more efforts on drawing its guidelines. MEB should question CLT about whether it is the best suited foreign language method for Turkish learners. As Cook and Newson (1998) states, the authorities must first determine the priorities about the description of a normal L2 speaker. Is it a person who can effortlessly pass for a native speaker in all circumstances, a person who can just about order a coffee in a restaurant, a person who can translate Shakespeare or a person who can interpret the small print in a contract? What kind of speaker do we aim? Only if those are demystified, can they arrange the targets and the teaching methods accordingly. In order to achieve these educational purposes, a whole framework of language teaching which incorporates different approaches and methods appropriate to the national necessities is one of our suggestions, by making use of their advantages and avoiding the disadvantages. In fact, the sole communicative approach to language learning should be questioned and a new fundamental model with authentic syllabuses, materials and teaching aids must be suggested to be established for Turkish learners.

Finally, the universal purpose of learning a language is usually of communicative concern rather than mass of rules, which is also claimed and supported not only by CLT but also in this study as well, however, the problem is how to maintain this target or whether CLT is efficient enough to achieve this purpose as was set at the beginning of the study. Since all languages have common features, the influence of L1 and culture exists as a matter of fact and must be taken into consideration in the teaching and learning of a foreign language. The role of learners' native language and culture cannot be ignored in the intercultural communication, while in the communicative approach the learner's own language and culture is something to be avoided or even abandoned in the acquisition of the foreign or second language. The culture of a society cannot be isolated from the language. Otherwise, foreign language learning cannot go beyond imitation or repetition without referring to L1. It is necessary for any language teaching should be as real as the native language itself. Moreover, trying to create an authentic atmosphere in order to achieve a communicative purpose according to CLT is like touching the left ear with the right hand, since we already have an authentic native language background and experience supported by the culture.

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