

IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE
TEACHING ACROSS SIX FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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to Kent State University
College of Education, Health, and Human Services
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degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

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CURRICULUM
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IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING
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The purpose of this qualitative multicase study was to examine how college foreign language instructors implement communicative language teaching (CLT) to teach beginner-level classes across six foreign languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Russian, and Spanish. Multiple data collection methods were used to gather the data: one electronic survey, 48 classroom observations, document analysis, and a semi-structured interview with each participant.

Findings revealed that the instructors' implementation of CLT was limited as a few CLT features occurred across the six classes, including providing positive feedback and accepting students' errors. Only two instructors (Chinese and German) used the target language extensively and used visual aids to support students' comprehension. There were several factors that hindered the instructors' ability to implement CLT: lack of teaching preparation and experience, lack of teaching freedom, the predominance of structure-based activities in the textbooks, the instructor's domination of the classroom communication and interaction, the instructor's explanation of language rules explicitly, and the classroom layouts. The findings also revealed that language differences played a role in implementing CLT. Five language instructors (Arabic, French, German, Russian, and Spanish) reported

that it was challenging to implement CLT when teaching inflections in these highly inflected languages. By contrast, the Chinese instructor reported that the simplicity of Chinese grammar helped her engage students in communicative activities. The Chinese instructor's concern was teaching pronunciation and to what extent her implementation of CLT was effective in giving students feedback on their pronunciation errors.

The implications of this study point to the need for strategies and techniques, such as using visual aids and follow-up questions to maximize the use of the target language and enhance the implementation of CLT in the classroom. There is a need for research on helping novice instructors critically evaluate and implement the best practices of CLT and for more studies like this one in which CLT is examined across languages.

DEDICATION

To my parents.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Unlike traditional foreign language teaching methods, which emphasized teaching language rules, the communicative language teaching approach (CLT) promotes use and practice language (Littlewood, 2012). This means that students learn foreign languages not through mastering rules; rather they learn them through usage and collaborative activities. This tenet parallels first language acquisition, especially with the assertion that social interaction enables the individual to construct his or her language (Dixon-Krauss, 1996; Rast, 2008). Along with this, Krashen (2009) argues that language acquisition happens when language is used for communicative purposes.

In the field of foreign language education, Richards (2002) emphasizes that, “successful language learning depends on immersing students in tasks that require them to negotiate meaning and engage in naturalistic and meaningful communication” (p. 145). CLT reflects this theoretical perspective about teaching foreign language through communication and interaction. In addition, it reflects the “learning-by-doing” notion as it views foreign language learning as the result of using language for communicative purposes (Brandl, 2007). This teaching approach has two essential features: (a) engaging students in communicative and interactive activities; and (b) using authentic materials to allow students to practice communicative language functions (Lochland, 2012). The CTL approach shifted the role of the instructor from being a lecturer and editor of students’ linguistic errors to the role of a facilitator and monitor who selects and uses activities that engage students and increase their willingness to participate and practice foreign languages (Richards, 2006). The instructor

creates a communicative classroom environment where students learn the use of the foreign language for communicative purposes (Lee & VanPatten, 2003).

Some researchers and instructors claim that this approach is not practical to teach all foreign languages. For instance, Ohta (2001) suggests that CLT is appropriate when there are linguistic and cultural similarities between the foreign language and the students' native language because these similarities enhance students' ability to communicate in the foreign language. She argues that it is easier for American students to communicate and speak French, for example, than speak Japanese in the classroom because there are many similarities between French and English. Gokcora and Eveyik-Aydin (2011) found that instructors of Arabic as a foreign language believe that CLT is not appropriate to teach Arabic and is time-consuming. Wolf (2015) suggests that the American students' unfamiliarity with German language and culture undermines effectiveness of this teaching approach because it mainly concentrates on speaking skills. Geana (2012) postulates that exclusive use of CLT is not suitable to teach the Romanian language because Romanian has a complex morphological structure. Thus, these claims that CLT is not suitable to teach some foreign languages shows the need for more studies to examine whether these claims are actually true, or whether with training and adaptations, CLT can be used to teach all foreign language. For this reason, this current study aimed to participate to extend the implementation of CLT to teach foreign languages. It investigated its implementation to teach beginner-level classes across six foreign languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Russian and Spanish.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this multicase qualitative study was to investigate college foreign language instructors' implementation of CLT to teach beginner-level classes across six

foreign languages (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Russian, and Spanish) at large public university in the United States, which I will call University X to preserve the participants' anonymity.

Research Question

This study was guided by the following question: How do, if at all, college foreign language instructors implement CLT to teach beginner-level classes across six foreign languages?

Significance of the Study

The communicative language teaching (CLT) approach, which emphasizes teaching foreign language through comprehension and the intensive use of language in class is widely practiced around the world (Liao & Zaho, 2012; Richards, 2006; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Yet, research on CLT has focused only on teaching certain languages, mainly English and European languages (Ariatna, 2016; Decoo, 2011; Ko, 2014). Little is known about the implementation of CLT to teach languages such as Arabic and Russian (Bardovi-Harlig, 2003; Gokcora & Eveyik, 2011). Ellis (1997) argues that pedagogical practices should acknowledge differences among languages. For instance, Wilmsen (2006) believes that the gap between spoken and written systems in Arabic impedes implementing CLT. Linnell (2001) states, "at the present time, teachers and researchers have virtually no idea which structures in Chinese would or could be incorporated into meaningful tasks that require collaboration among participants" (p. 70). Collaborative activities are essential in CLT because they are the gateway to promoting the communicative or interactive use of language in class (Curits, 2017). Benati (2009) states that Japanese instructors encounter difficulty in implementing CLT due to the lack of training in using CLT to teach Japanese. Thus, research on CLT encounters a methodological problem because it focuses on certain languages and

assumes that the results are applicable to other languages without enough evidence to confirm these assumptions.

There is a need to conduct studies that investigate the implementation of CLT in teaching in a greater variety of languages to compare results and determine the similarities and differences in implementing CLT among them. In other words, instead of conducting one study that focuses on English, and another that examines French, and a study in Arabic, researchers should conduct a single study that examines implementing CLT across these three languages. Conducting studies across foreign languages might deepen the understanding of implementing CLT at the same institution, with the same methodology across foreign languages. A few studies have examined the implementation of CLT across multiple foreign languages. Gallagher (2011) found that there were inconsistencies between beliefs and practices in using CLT by college instructors of French and Spanish as a foreign language. The instructors assumed that they implemented CLT while they did not follow its principles. Mangubhai, Marland, Dashwood, & Son (2005) conducted a study that examined Chinese, German, Indonesian, and Japanese teachers' understanding of the concept of CLT. They concluded that the teachers mixed the theoretical principles of CLT with principles from other teaching methods. This current study aimed to continue the efforts in investigating the implementation of CLT across multiple foreign languages.

Summary

CLT emphasizes that students should learn language through interaction and communicative activities. The instructor in CLT encourages students to use the foreign language in the classroom and participate in collaborative activities. As was discussed above, to date, most studies in CLT have focused only on certain languages, especially English and European languages. More research needs to be done on other languages. The present study

aimed to fill this gap by investigating college foreign language instructors' implementation of CLT across multiple languages.

Definition of Terms

Some of the terms used in this research study are common words but are defined here as they apply to CLT. Other terms used are more specific to CLT. The definitions follow:

- *Communicative competence*: Communicative competence refers to “the underlying system of knowledge and skills required for communication” (Canale & Swain 1980, p. 3). It concerns the individual's ability to use language in accordance with social norms. For instance, communicative competence helps the individual in determining when it is proper to use informal language such as the learning the difference between using “can” and “could” when asking people for help. Stated differently, communicative competence means using language in an understandable and acceptable way. Communicative competence includes four linguistic components: grammar, sociolinguistic, discourse, and verbal and non-verbal communication strategies (Canale & Swain 1980).
- *Communicative language teaching approach*: Communicative language teaching refers to a foreign language teaching approach directed at promoting students' ability to use the foreign language to communicate and interact with others. Unlike traditional foreign language teaching methods, which focus on promoting students' grammatical and linguistic abilities, CLT aims to improve students' communicative skills such their ability to use language for communicative purposes.
- *Comprehension*: Comprehension means the learner's understanding of listening or reading materials (i.e., input). Smith (1975) suggests that comprehension and learning are inseparable, and that comprehension happens before learning. In his

perspective, comprehension is a relating or connecting process while learning is a modification or elaboration process. Hence, the learner first relates a new experience to what he or she is already knows (comprehension) and then modifies or elaborates that previous knowledge (learning).

- *Foreign language teaching approach*: Foreign language teaching approach is set of assumptions about language, teaching and learning (Anthony, 1963; Brown, 1994).
- *Foreign language teaching method*. Richards and Rodgers (2014) define foreign language teaching method as “a systematic set of teaching practices based on a particular theory of language and language learning” (p. 2).
- *Fluency*: Fluency can be defended as “natural language use that occurs when a speaker engages in meaningful interaction and maintains comprehensible and ongoing communication despite limitations in his or her communicative competence” (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 96).
- *Input*: Listening or reading materials. Stated differently, input refers to linguistic signs the learner receives, which need be decoded to understand the message.
- *Output*: The learner’s production of language (i.e., writing and speaking).
- *The Target Language*: The target language is another term that researchers use for the foreign language. It refers to learning any language after learning the first language (Richards, Schmidt, 2013).
- *Second and foreign language distinction*: There is a distinction between learning a second and foreign language. Learning a second language refers to learning another language in a country or area where the community use it a communication language such as learning English in the United States or learning French in France, while

foreign language means learning a language where the community does not use it in their daily life such as learning Arabic or Russian in the United states.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The chapter addresses the relevant theoretical and empirical studies pertaining to the communicative language teaching approach (CLT). To this end, I first shed light on the theoretical background of CLT. Second, I address the shift of attention in research away from grammatical competence to communicative competence and how this shift has impacted the teaching of foreign languages. Third, I discuss the well-known communicative competence models that guide CLT practices. Fourth, I approach the principles and characteristics of CLT and then review its actual practice since its inception in the 1970s. In addition, I discuss the effectiveness of CLT. Finally, I provide an overview of the Task-Based Language Instruction (TBLI), the most recent communication-based instruction used to teach second and foreign language, which is now considered as an extension of or a reform to CLT (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

Theoretical Background of CLT

The teaching of language structure (grammar) dominated foreign language instruction for many years (Rutherford & Smith, 1988). This emphasis on the structural aspects of language reflected structural linguistics and behaviorism consideration of language as a set of linguistic rules students master to use a language (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). However, a dramatic change took place with the appearance of modern linguistics and the popularity of sociolinguistic and pragmatic studies. For instance, the sociolinguist Hymes (1972) postulates that speakers of a language speak

and write according to the social context and situation in which they are using language.

Peoples' use of a language is influenced by what is socially acceptable and what is not. Stated differently, language production defers to social norms. In the words of Hymes (1972, p. 15), "there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless just as rules of syntax can control aspects of phonology, and just as semantic rules perhaps control aspects of syntax." Students need to know how grammar works in a certain situation and context (Thompson, 1996).

Teaching language recently considers language to be a form of human behavior, particularly a human communication tool (Rutherford & Smith, 1988). Consequently, since the twentieth century, language pedagogy moved from the practice of teaching language as a set of linguistic skills to teaching it as a human communication tool. CLT approach in teaching second and foreign language became the application and implementation of this teaching philosophy. To understand the emergence and goals of CLT and challenges its implementation present, it is necessary to discuss its theoretical background.

From Grammatical Competence to Communicative Competence

Two new concepts to the field of linguistics: language competence and language performance. He argues that structural linguistics limits itself to recording and describing people's speech which contributed little to the understanding of the nature of human language and how it is acquired and used. He suggested that linguists should investigate latent grammatical knowledge in speakers' brains, which he designated competence as compared to actual use of language of language, which he

called performance. or use (Chomsky, 1965). That is, Chomsky believes that the individual's capability to use language has two dimensions: (a) grammatical competence, which is the hidden knowledge of language and structures the individual holds in the brain, and (b) grammatical performance, which is the individual's actual speech and use of language. Chomsky, was more interested in competence than performance.

Research on second language acquisition and teachers began devoting their efforts to improving learners' grammatical competence and grammatical performance (Canale & Swain, 1980). However, Campbell and Wales challenged Chomsky's grammatical competence and grammatical performance concepts arguing that Chomsky failed to consider the relationship between speech and social contexts and that he overlooked the importance of performing comprehensible speech (Campbell and Wales, 1970, as cited in Llurda, 2000). Hence, in their view, Chomsky disregarded the social role in language acquisition and use. Stated differently, an individual might produce a grammatically correct sentence, but still fail to make him or herself understood. Consequently, Campbell and Wales suggested using the terms communicative competence and communicative performance as an alternative to Chomsky' grammatical competence and grammatical performance. This new term (i.e., communicative) includes social interaction and communication as guide of language acquisition and use. Hence, for them, language is not primarily a matter of a grammatical system as Chomsky assumes.

The above objections and modifications paved the road for Hymes (1972) to analyze Chomsky's concepts of grammatical competence and performance

extensively. Hymes emphasizes that Chomsky's assumptions of an ideal or optimal speaker, who performs only correct sentences at the grammar level is unrealistic, because people in real life use language according to their social norms and acceptance. Hymes (1972) calls for using other terms, such as "communicative competence" instead of "grammatical competence," and "communicative performance" rather than "grammatical performance." Halliday defined communicative competence can be defined as the speaker's ability in accordance with spoken discourse (Halliday, 1978 as cited in Pennycook, 2007), and communicative performance refers to the actual use of language (Hymes, 1972). Therefore, communicative competence is the individual's ability latent in his or her brain and communicative performance is the actual use of language. Hymes suggests that the communicative competence includes four aspects:

- Whether (and to what degree) something is formally (grammatically or linguistically) possible;
- Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available;
- Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated;
- Whether (and to what degree) something is, in fact done, actually performed and what it is doing entails (Hymes, 1972, p. 281).

CLT in Practice

The 1970s witnessed a dramatic shift from grammar-based language teaching approach to communication-based language teaching approach (Nassaji & Fotos,

2011). Researchers in Europe endeavored to accommodate an increased number of immigrants and guest workers and their needs to communicate and merge in European societies, especially when teachers complained that although students might produce correct grammatical utterances, they often failed to use grammar appropriately (Savignon, 1991; Murray & Christison, 2001). A student might correctly explain and comprehend grammar but be unable to apply it when he or she speaks. Krashen's (1982) monitor hypothesis emphasizes that during communication and interaction, the individual does not have time to consciously consult his knowledge of language and grammar. In other words, during communication, the learner focuses mainly on meaning and does not have enough time to think about grammar. A learner who spends time checking and editing grammar accuracy often fails to communicate his or her message successfully. This explains why the traditional grammar instruction may not improve students' communicative competence.

Hence, instructors observed that course syllabi organized around grammatical topics suffered from this limitation. To overcome this shortcoming, many language researchers in the 1970s began advocating functional syllabi. Wilkins in 1972 adopted Firth's functional grammar to design a notional/functional syllabus (Savignon, 1991). Wilkins emphasizes that language pedagogy should combine language forms and meaning. Therefore, language syllabi should be designed based on semantic notions (e.g., time, space, existence, etc.) and communicative functions (i.e., making a request, apologizing, accepting an invitation). In Wilkins' (1972) words, "language is always used in a social context and cannot be fully understood without referring to that context" (p. 16). The main difference between the functional/notational design

and the traditional grammar-based design is that syllabus in grammar-based design is organized according to grammatical points (nouns, verbs, adjective clauses, etc.). In the notional/functional design, educators assess and identify students' communicative needs and then build a syllabus based on those needs (Savignon, 1991). Wilkins' efforts encouraged the Council of Europe to recommend this design for second and foreign language courses in Europe. Consequently, second and foreign language courses in Europe began focusing primarily on pragmatics and its functions (Savignon, 1991, Murray & Christison, 2010). The notional/ functional reflected the classic version of CLT, prioritized fluency in speaking over accuracy. In addition, it placed emphasis on improving spoken language and overlooked written language (Widdowson, 2007). The assumption was that improving students' skills in speaking and listening automatically promote reading and writing skills (Spada, 2007).

Notional/functional instruction led to the birth of another course design (Language for Specific Purposes design (LFSP). The goal of LFSP was to help learning the use of language in specific workplace or educational settings (Richards, 2006). Munby (1978) suggests that LSP design aims to improve foreign workers to do their job duties and to help students to study and learn in a medium of second or foreign language. The later goal (i.e., assisting students to study in a second or foreign language) was called Language for Academic Purposes (LAP) design (Munby, 1978). It aims to familiarize students with language discourse in academic settings.

In Germany, the history of CLT is a little different and the influence of Habermas' philosophy of social democracy and his assertion on empowering the

individual's freedom became central to teaching second and foreign languages (Savignon, 1991). For instance, researchers Candlin, Edelhoff, and Piepho concerned with empowering students in the classroom thought developing materials that provided students with the choices and autonomy that they need to learn a language (Candlin, 1978, as cited in Savignon, 1991). In Asia there was a resistance to the use of CLT during the 1970s and 1980s (Hu, 2002a, 2005; Yu, 2010, as cited in Bulter, 2011). Bulter (2011) identifies three factors behind the resistance in adopting CLT in the Asian context. First, CLT conflicts with traditional learning and teaching principles in Asia which, for example, does not focus on oral activities and group work. Second, CLT activities and materials were developed to practice the use of language in Western cultures. Third, classroom factors, such as having a large class size, challenge teachers' practices regarding CLT.

In the United States, teachers depend on their experiences and preparation in incorporating CLT into their teaching and they were frustrated by the complexity and ambiguity of the communicative competence concept (Savignon, 1991). Generally speaking, second and foreign language teachers around the world were overwhelmed when they were asked to teach for communication when standardized tests remained grammar based (Gorsuch, 2000; Savignon, 1991). In addition, teachers did not find a tangible guidance on how to create a communicative classroom context (Hiep, 2007). For this reason, teachers were varied in their implementation of CLT. This phenomenon highlights the negative consequence of overlooking teachers' important role and needs. In addition, some teachers felt that CLT was not an effective teaching approach because CLT did not allow them to teach as much as they could in the

traditional teaching methods (Gatbonton & Segalowitz, 2005), because in classical CLT practice only engages students in communicative activities and hopes they will acquire the language. This CLT version reflects the extreme perspective of second and foreign language learning influenced by Krashen's (1982) work and his claim that grammar instruction does not lead to second language acquisition. In his point of view, students need to be only exposed to a second language, and they will acquire it in a manner similar to how they acquired their first language.

This notion has received serious criticism. For instance, Swain, (1985) found that although students in an immersion French classroom spent close to five years engaging in natural interactions in French with their classmates, their language did not improve, and their grammatical accuracy remained low. Researchers found that an individual may use second or foreign language for many years without language improvement (Schmidt, 1992). This led research in CLT to develop designs that allow a balance between language form and meaning. Nassaji and Fotos (2011, p.10) state, "there is now ample evidence for the importance of form-focused instruction. However, form- focused instruction refers to grammar instruction that takes place within communicative contexts."

Teachers who prefer lecturing and explaining felt uncomfortable because CLT placed much emphasis on learning than teaching. Moreover, many teachers claimed that they employed CLT in their teaching, but observations of their class did not confirm the teachers' claim (Gatbonton & Segalowitz, 2005). For this reason, researchers make a distinction between a communicative syllabus (what is taught) and methodology (how to teach) because they have found teachers may build syllabi for

language teaching based on communicative functions, but their classroom teaching methodology does not necessarily reflect this (Ellis, 2003).

Methodologists in CLT began to explore the relationship between the sociocultural aspects of a language and developing communicative competence in it (Knapp, Seidlhofer, & Widdowson, 2009). Thus, a number of researchers asserted that teaching grammar should be implicit (Thompson, 1996). Also, in the CLT practice, many teachers were forced to teach only what students could do with language. They often minimized or overlooked teaching grammatical competence (Thompson, 1996). Teachers began to emphasize language fluency over accuracy, which requires engaging students in communicative activities to promote students' communicative skills (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Language curriculum was designed to be learner-centered and learners' goals, needs, and abilities received more attention (Cattell, 2009). However, the learner remained an abstract concept. Researchers determined learners' needs, abilities, and goals without investigating what students really need (Cattell, 2009). For this reason, the classical version of CLT could not be considered as a real learner-centered pedagogy (Cattell, 2009) since teachers mostly controlled activities and practice (Lee & VanPatten, 2003).

Teachers tried to connect classroom learning to the student everyday life; for example, teachers used activities that require students to talk about what they did over the weekend, or movies they watched (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). Hadley (2001) suggests that authentic activities allow students to use language in a naturalistic communicative situation. Lee and VanPatten (2003) argue that activities that require students to speak about a single event in the past or describe images are not effective

to develop students' language learning. Further, they emphasize that using activities that consists of questions such as "What do you like about learning English?" or "What are you going to do this weekend?" do not promote language learning. This type of activities is not effective because students might give very short answers and in incomplete sentences (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). The teacher should use activities that offer ample opportunities for students to negotiate meaning and collaborate with each other to achieve the activity requirements (Bygate, Skehan & Swain, 2001; Ellis, 2003). The CLT classic version focused on meaning and did not adequately address language forms (Nunan, 2004).

One of the essential questions that occupied the literature since the 1970s is how grammar should be taught. For instance, during the seventies the literature was inconclusive about how grammar should be presented (Hadley, 2001). Munby (1978) suggests that grammatical competence and communicative competence are distinct and should be taught separately; he proposes that grammatical competence should be taught first and that it is not essential for communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980). Canale and Swain (1980) disagreed with teaching grammar competence separately in accordance with Hymes' (1972) suggestion that some grammar rules are useless without the use of language and vice versa. Also, they state that a minimum knowledge of the grammar of a foreign language is crucial for students to communicate effectively in that language.

Moreover, in her study Savignon (1972) found that the group who received additional teaching hours for communicative competence scored significantly higher on a communicative competence test. By contrast, there was no significant difference

in grammatical competence test among groups including the group that had received additional teaching hours for grammatical competence (Canale & Swain, 1980). Reviewing the aforementioned studies led Canale and Swain to conclude that: (a) focusing on grammar teaching in the classroom is not sufficient to develop communicative competence; (b) developing grammatical competence is not relevant or necessary for developing communicative competence. Basically, the difference between teaching grammar in classic CLT and traditional methods is slight because the teacher is the one who analyzes grammar for students, especially when students are urged to use specific rules (Ellis, 2003).

In CLT strong version, the teacher's role is considered as that of a resource person and architect (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). During classroom activities, the teacher has the information but does not provide it to learners unless they ask for it (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). In addition, the learner decides whether he has understood the subject or is in need for more clarification. It is the learner's responsibility to gather information and negotiate meaning since he or she no longer merely listens and responds to the teacher's commands (Lee & Van Patten, 2003). "When the instructor takes on the role of architect, the one who design and plans but is not responsible for the final product, then students become builders or workers, who put it together" (Lee & Van Patten, 2003).

Criticisms of CLT

CLT has challenged teaching grammar in explicit manner since the 1970s and in teaching a shifted second and foreign language, it has shifted the focus from teaching of grammar to teaching language around pragmatic functions, subject matter,

tasks, projects, and semantic notions (Tosun, 2009). However, this approach has encountered serious criticisms in the past two decades. First of all, unlike audio-lingual method, which was derived from behaviorism, no learning theory guides the practice of CLT (Dornyei, 2013). In addition, CLT is theoretically broad, which has resulted in many different interpretations of the meaning of CLT and how it would be implemented (Littlewood, 2012; Savignon, 2007). The classic version largely ignored teaching language forms and concentrated on allowing students to freely interact without paying attention to language structure. The current version tries to make a balance between accuracy and fluency. Research on CLT focused on materials and tasks and language behaviors, such a focus increased many challenges for the teachers (Savignon, 1991). Savignon (2007) states that based on their own preparation and experience, teachers differ in terms of using CLT approach to teach for communicative competence. Some of them feel frustrated because communicative competence is an ambiguous concept. Others prefer to develop their own materials. Li (1998) indicates that teachers select activities based on how well they engage students in meaningful and authentic language use.

Teachers in China reported that using CLT to teach English as a Foreign Language was difficult for several reasons: a wider curriculum context, issue of appropriate class sizes, availability of resources and equipment, and the low status of teachers (Burnaby & Sun, 1989, as cited in Li, 1998). Beaumont and Chang (2011) mention that success in implementing CLT requires: (a) reducing the class size, (b) offering authentic materials for teachers to use, and (c) freeing teachers from the worry of giving exams. Teachers' various views and challenges created a big gap

between research on CLT approach and its practice. Consequently, some teachers have rejected research findings on CLT and have returned to using standardized tests and putting the emphasis on teaching grammar (Savignon, 1991). Teachers need high level of language proficiency to use CLT to teach second or foreign language (Marton,1988, as cited in Amengual-Pizarro, 2007). Since no article or book gives a certain definition of CLT, further research should clarify teachers' misconceptions of CLT without which the use of this approach would be inadequate (Thompson, 1996). Wong (2010) emphasizes that instructional decisions teachers take when they use CLT is based on their students' need. However, CLT neglected students' local needs and focused on teaching language as native speakers use it (Savignon, 2007). CLT would not be effective in teaching second and foreign language unless researchers address teachers' needs, beliefs, and provide them with clear and precise suggestions. Researchers such as Littlewood (2012), Dornyei (2013), and Kumaravadivelu (2006) argue that CLT is not a robust teaching method; rather it is a broad approach. It is worthwhile to note that many of the previous studies on CLT were quantitative.

Tasks Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

The failure of identifying certain borders of CLT led to a move to Task-Based Language Teaching method (TBLT). Some researchers view TBLT as a new method, others consider it as another version of CLT (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). What can be said about TBLT is that like CLT the emphasis is on communication; however, it is narrower than CLT. Brandl (2007) suggests, "using tasks as central units that form the basis of daily and long-term lesson plans" (p. 7). Tasks and activities, according to the CLT newer version view, are sufficient and necessary, because learning means

allowing learners to experience language used for real communication (Ellis, 2003). As tasks and activities became the center of language curriculum (Ellis, 2003), task performance helps to achieve learning objectives (Skehan, 1998, as cited in Brandl, 2007). Thus, the teacher is no longer the facilitator of learning, rather tasks, materials, and activities play this role. So, according to this view, the teacher no longer holds significant authority in the classroom and it is fair to say that according to the above ideas the teacher becomes a medium or a technical expert, who could show people how to use machines and materials only when they found it difficult to use these or only when they ask for help.

Swain (2005) identifies essential communicative task characteristics: (a) the task's main focus is on the meaning or message; (b) the teacher might provide a little focus on form; (c) the priority is on the learner's activity to complete the task not on the teacher's intervention. In other words, the teacher only facilitates and organizes the task and gives learners opportunities to be active and creative. Pyun (2013) mentions that the task should make learners focus on meaningful exchanges and promote their use of language in the real world. The task could be a short practice exercise or a work plan that requires spontaneous use of language to communicate meaning (Ellis, 2012). Nunan (2004) suggests that the task can be comprised of three components: (a) input, which might be a dialogue or reading passage; (b) an activity that is driven from the input; (c) a specification of the teacher's and the learner's role during the conducting of the activity. Ellis (2003) identifies three features of the task. First, the task might be open or closed in terms of goals to be achieved. For instance, learners can work on a picture to identify its different colors. In contrast, a task might not have a specific

goal, such as learners engaging in a conversation or dialogue. In his view, the open task gives the learner an opportunity to control the topic and the relevant discourse while conducting the activity. However, the closed task restricts the learner to use specific language patterns. Secondly, the task might occur in a one-way or two-way speaking style. In a one-way exchange, the learner sends information without receiving oral feedback. In a two-way exchange, the learner engages in a regular communication with others where he or she sends and receives oral messages from others to shape the discussion. Third, the task can be focused or unfocused. The focused task aims to provide learners with opportunities to practice certain linguistic rules whereas the unfocused task is designed to allow the learner to practice using language in general. Hence, the latter type does not aim to teach specific rules; rather, it gives the learner an opportunity to practice rules he or she already knows. Finally, the task can be a real world or a pedagogic target task. This depends on the authenticity of the task and its representation of using language as it is used in real life.

Summary

Language is seen as a tool that people use to achieve their communicative purposes. For this reason, teaching language methods should teach students how to use language to achieve their communicative goals in both spoken and written forms. Students should possess the ability to communicate their ideas and feelings with others effectively. This goal is not easy, especially in foreign language teaching environments, where students have little opportunity to practice the language in real-life situations outside of class and where their motivation to learn the language might be low. In the 1960s and 1970s, the teacher was concerned with teaching students

grammar and language structures. Success in teaching foreign languages meant that students know language grammar and structures regardless of their ability to use those rules in their everyday life. However, several researchers concluded the fact that mastering the grammatical system of a language does not improve students' ability to use it. This inadequacy of grammar-based instruction directs researchers and educators to establish and develop communication-based instruction to reinforce students' capacity in using foreign language. CLT is the most popular teaching approach that educators have implemented since the 1970s. Yet, because teaching students to use language for communicative purposes is a daunting task, researchers have tried to reform and improve this approach since its advent. Researchers have relied on theories from different realms such as second language acquisition, sociolinguistics, and psychology to improve the effectiveness of this foreign language teaching approach. However, nearly forty years after the publication of Canale and Swain's (1980) seminal article on communicative approaches to language teaching, there is still considerable debate on how this approach should be used. In addition, research on CLT should pay more attention to the teacher's needs because his or her role has been largely neglected.

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) is seen as potential method to reform and address criticisms that encountered CLT. Unlike CLT, which is an approach, TBLT is a concrete teaching method that focuses on designing and using communicative activities or tasks that allow students practice a foreign language for communicative purposes. In addition, this method attempts to make a balance between language forms and language use for communication.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I describe and provide a rationale of my choice of research methodology, describe the context of the study, including the purposeful selection of both setting and participants, and outline data gathering and analyzing methods. Finally, I discuss research trustworthiness of the study.

Theoretical Framework

This study was designed from Guba and Lincoln's (1985, 1989, 1994) social constructivist perspective based on the premise that knowledge is socially constructed. Social constructivism, as Guba and Lincoln propose, is appropriate to guide this study for several reasons. First, Guba and Lincoln's research paradigm is consistent with the social constructivist nature of language learning and teaching. For instance, Vygotsky (1978) postulates that language is learned social interaction. The importance of social interaction for foreign language learning, indeed, has been demonstrated (e.g., Gass & Mackey, 2007, Long, 1983; Long & Porter, 1985). Equally important, communicative language teaching (CLT), which is the center of this study, emphasizes that foreign language should be taught through social interactive activities (Lee & VanPatten, 2003). Accordingly, Guba and Lincoln's social constructivist paradigm is compatible with the nature of language learning and the CLT view of foreign language teaching.

Second, the social constructivist ontological, epistemological and methodological principles accommodate the purpose of this study. For example, social constructivism asserts that people construct reality in accordance with their

experiences, activities, and perceptions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, 1989). Several previous studies showed that instructors are varied in their implementation of CLT based on their teaching experiences and perceptions of foreign language learning and teaching (e.g., Hiep, 2007; Liao & Zhao, 2012; Sato & Kleinsasser, 1999). Hence, considering the influence of instructors' experiences, activities, and perceptions is necessary for understanding their implementation of CLT. In addition, from an epistemological point of view, valid knowledge in social sciences is a result of interaction between the researcher and participants (Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011). Hatch (2002) states, "it is through mutual engagement that the researcher and respondents construct the subjective reality that is under investigation" (p. 15). Finally, in the social constructivist paradigm, the researcher investigates social phenomena as they occur naturally (Creswell, 2007; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Hatch, 2002). In other words, the researcher does not manipulate the settings or behaviors being studied. This feature is appropriate for this study because I aimed to understand foreign language college instructors' implementation of CLT across six languages as it occurred without intervening or alerting their teaching.

Qualitative Research

The purpose of this study was to examine college foreign language instructors' implementation of CLT in teaching beginner-level classes across six languages. The central research question guiding this study was: How do, if at all, college foreign language instructors implement CLT to teach beginner-level classes across six languages? As I considered the best methodology for this study, I concluded that qualitative research would be most suitable because this methodology is used to

answer how and why research questions (Hays & Singh, 2012). In addition, I wanted to investigate the participants' implementation of CLT as it occurs naturally.

Merriam (2001) states that qualitative research is especially useful in examining social phenomena in natural settings.

The context or setting where foreign language instructors teach influences their CLT implementation (Nishino, 2008). Qualitative research was appropriate for this study because it considers the influence of contexts and settings on social behaviors (Yin, 20003). Boeije (2010) suggests that qualitative research allows the researcher to investigate the use of language and communicative processes. CLT focuses on promoting students' ability to interact, communicate, and use the foreign language they are learning. In CLT, the instructor teaches language by using it as a communicative tool (Sarma, 2015). Hence, qualitative research methodology is proper for conducting this study.

Multicase Study Design

A qualitative multicase design was selected to conduct this study. McNabb (2010) states that multicase design helps the researcher gain a deeper understanding of the research phenomenon under study. The nature of case study as a qualitative research design is used to examine one or more cases within a bounded system (Creswell, 2007). In this present study, I investigated six college foreign language college instructors' implementation of CLT in a university in the United States. The instructor taught foreign language in one setting as they all taught foreign language in the same department. Multicase design was especially appropriate for this study because I wanted to understand how each college foreign language instructor

implemented CLT in teaching his or her class and compare the instructors' implementation of CLT across the six foreign languages of this study. Hence, this design enables me to analyze findings both within and across the six cases. Creswell (2007) indicates that case studies are suitable to provide "in-depth understanding of a case or cases" (p. 78). Finally, multicase study allows the researcher to understand similarities and differences among cases (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This feature of multicase study design allows me to understand how CLT is implemented across six languages.

Research Context

The study took place at the main campus of University X in the United State. University X is a public research university. According to the university website, University X has more than 41,000 enrolled students when the study took place.

The specialist assistant in University X's language department informed me that it offered 13 languages including American Sign Language, Arabic, Chinese, French, Greek, German, Japanese, French, German, Italian, Latin, Russian, and Spanish. Of these languages, six were offered as undergraduate majors (American Sign Language, Classics/Latin, French, German, Russian, and Spanish). A designated faculty member typically coordinates the lower level instruction (elementary and intermediate). Coordination typically entails textbook selection, preparation of a standard syllabus, supervision of other instructors, preparing standard exams and assessments, and often teaching a model class to be observed by teaching graduate assistants.

The specialist assistant also shared that the department usually has approximately 100 instructors of different ranks. Elementary language classes are taught primarily by graduate assistants, doctoral fellows, and adjunct faculty; they are rarely taught by tenure-track faculty.

Participants

Participants for this study were solicited through purposeful sampling. Merriam (2001) states, “purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 61). The participants were recruited based on the foreign language and level they taught. I selected six languages as a target for this study: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Russian, and Spanish based on their reputed difficulty level for native speakers of English. The United States Foreign Service Institute (FSI) has classified languages into four levels of difficulty according to their similarity to English as well as the amount of class hours the average English speaker needs to attain language proficiency (Tokuhama-Espinosa, 2008). According to the research, difficulty or ease of these languages for native speakers of English depends on linguistic factors. Easier languages tend to share commonalities such as vocabulary, writing systems, morphology, and derivation (Stevens, 2006). For instance, many words in the French language are similar to English words roughly have the same meaning and, therefore, are highly recognizable to native speakers of English (Stevens, 2006). According to Stevens, this familiarity drastically reduces the time needed to learn French. Conversely, Arabic and Chinese are lexically unrelated to English (Stevens, 2006). In addition, the orthographic

systems in Arabic and Chinese are completely different from English, which can be a major hurdle for native speakers of English (Noda, 2003).

The FSI has a standardized scale for determining degrees of proficiency ranging from 0-5. For instance, 0 proficiency means that the learner has no language ability, 3 means the learner has sufficient language ability, and a 5 means the learner has reached native speaker ability in the language. Table 1 illustrates language difficulty levels, class hours required to reach the sufficient proficiency level (3), as well as the relationship between English and the different languages in each level.

Table 1

Language Difficulty Levels for English Speakers

Level	Languages	Class Hours	Relation to English
Level I	Afrikaans- Danish- Dutch- French - Italian Swedish- Romanian- Norwegian- Portuguese- Haitian- Spanish .	240-720 class hours	Languages somewhat related to English and relatively easy for Native English speakers
Level II	Bulgarian – German - Greek- Hindi- Indonesian- Malay- Swahili- Urdu- Persian	480-1320 class hours	Languages with some significant linguistic and/ or cultural differences from English
Level III	Albanian- Bosnian- Czech- Hebrew- Russian - Polish- Thai- Zulu- Bengali- Uzbek	1100 class hours	Languages with significant linguistic and/ or cultural differences from English
Level IV	Arabic- Japanese- Chinese - Korean- Cantonese	2200 class hours	Languages that are exceptionally difficult for native English Speakers

Note. Adapted from Tokuhama-Espinosa, 2008, p. 65.

As the table displays, Spanish and French are grouped in level I because they are somewhat linguistically similar to English and therefore are relatively easy for native speakers of English. German and Russian are moderately easier than Arabic and Chinese, but harder than Spanish and French. Arabic and Chinese are relatively difficult languages for native English speakers. Selecting six languages allowed me to systematically include languages with varying difficulty levels. Based on this strategy, the sample size for this study was six foreign language instructors who taught one of these languages for beginners.

Six language instructors, one in each of these languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Russian or Spanish participated in this study. To ensure anonymity, I will call these classes Arabic 101, Chinese 101, French 101, German 101, Russian 101, and Spanish 101. Each taught a section of elementary language I (e.g., Arabic 101, Chinese 101) at University X in the Fall 2016 semester. Table 2 summarizes the participants' demographic information.

Table 2

Participants' Backgrounds

Instructor	Educational Background	Class	Faculty Position	Teaching Experience	Age	Gender
Arabic	MA: Translation Studies (in progress) BA: Translation Studies.	ARAB 101	Teaching Assistant	None	26-30	Male
Chinese	M.Ed.: Curriculum and Instruction BA: Chinese Language and Literature	CHIN 101	Lecturer	7 years	31 or older	Female
French	MA: Translation Steadies (in progress) BA: Psychology, Minor in French	FR 101	Teaching Assistant	None	20-25	Male
German	Ph.D.: Translation Studies (in progress) MA: Translation Studies (in progress) BA: German Literature, Minor in Music.	GER 101	Teaching Assistant	7 years	31 or older	Female
Russian	MA: Translation Studies (in progress) BA: Russian Philology.	RUSS 101	Teaching Assistant	2 years	26-30	Female
Spanish	MA: Teaching English as a Second Language (in progress) BA: Psychology	SPAN 101	Teaching Assistant	None	20-25	Male

Other background information relevant to the study is the instructors' academic preparation to teach foreign language. The participants' teaching preparation was varied from none (Arabic, French, Russian) to limited (German) to more extensive (Chinese, Spanish). The Russian instructor had not taken any classes or workshops in foreign language teaching. Nor did she attend a departmental orientation for new instructors. The Arabic instructor's limited knowledge regarding teaching foreign languages came from his self-selected readings about teaching foreign language and from his informal experience in teaching English as a foreign language in Iraq to some of his neighbors and friends. The French instructor participated in a one-day program orientation offered by the department at the beginning of semester. In this orientation, he was introduced to the course requirements for Elementary French I.

The other instructors took at least one course related to foreign language teaching. For example, the German instructor completed a master's course in methodology of teaching German as a Foreign Language at a University in the United States prior to attending University X. According to the participant, the course covered the structural teaching method, the inductive teaching method, and content- and task-based instruction.

The Chinese and Spanish instructors' preparation was more extensive. The Chinese instructor came to the United States before six years to teach Chinese within a program called STARTALK. According to the participant, STARTALK is a grant program aims at increasing the number of American citizens who speak and teach critical foreign languages that are rarely taught in the U.S. such as Chinese and Arabic. Participants in this program join several workshops of their choice for teachers in varied teaching areas such as the use of the foreign language in class, learner-centered instruction, and integrating culture and language in teaching, etc. In this program, the Chinese instructor took several workshops.

She was most interested in and enrolled in several related to integrating culture with Chinese language teaching. Subsequently, the Chinese instructor completed a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction. Additionally, the Chinese instructor attended several teaching conferences, and has presented in two conferences on the integration of Culture with Chinese language teaching.

The Spanish instructor, who was completing his final semesters in a master's degree in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), during this study, has taken several methodology courses such as Methodology in Teaching English as a Second Language, Second Language Acquisition Theories, and Second Language Curriculum and Testing.

Three of the instructors teach their native languages (the Arabic, Chinese, and Spanish instructors). The Russian instructor is a native of the Armenian language; she began learning Russian in second grade, and as mentioned above, she earned a bachelor's degree in Russian Philology. The German and the French instructors were native speakers of English and they began learning the German or French in their undergraduate programs.

Instructional Context

Two major sets of variables form the teaching context: enrollment details and physical features of the classroom. Each will be discussed in turn. Table 3 summarizes the enrollment details which were gathered from the Schedule of Classes for Fall 2016.

Table 3

Enrollment Details

Class	Enrolled
Arabic	12
Chinese	14
French	25
German	21
Russian	15
Spanish	24

All classes in this study were 4-credit hours. Each met Monday through Thursday for 50 minutes, although meeting time varies as shown in Table 3. The Arabic, Chinese, French, German classes were in the morning before 12:00 pm. The Russian and Spanish classes were in the afternoon. The next set of contextual factors relate to the physical features of the classrooms. Comparable features are presented in Table 4, seating capacity and seating style types were collected from Registrar's Classroom Scheduling Matrix.

Table 4

Classroom Features

Class	Seating Capacity vs. (Actual Enrollment)	Classroom Type (Seating Style)	Room Size
Arabic	24 (13)	SEMX (tablet-arm chairs)	517 sq. ft.
Chinese	40 (12)	CLAX (movable tables and chairs)	367 sq. ft.
French	60 (25)	LECX (fixed tables and chairs)	870 sq. ft.
German	70 (23)	CLAX (movable tables and chairs)	1243 sq. ft.
Russian	48 (23)	LBCX (movable tables and chairs)	1665 sq. ft.
Spanish	30 (24)	SEMX (movable tables and chairs)	982 sq. ft.

The six classrooms varied as to their layout, equipment, and room for the instructor and students to move about. The enrollment data and classroom configuration are important because they influence the implementation of CLT. As mentioned in Chapter 2, teachers reported that the large classroom size makes it difficult for them to implement CLT (Hiep, 2007; Sreehari, 2012). The classroom condition or layout affects the instructor's implementation of CLT. It should be flexible to allow students work in pair and group

activities (Wright, 2005). The traditional classroom layout where students sit in rows facing the instructor confines students and the instructor movements to carryout communicative activities.

Data Collection Methods

I gathered data through multiple means: an online survey, 48 observations (eight per participant), a semi-structured interview with each participant at the end of the semester, and analysis of the syllabus for each class. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that triangulation or using multiple methods of data collection strengthens research findings, as it allows the researcher to examine social phenomena from different angles. Furthermore, using a combination of observations, interviews, and document analysis substantiates the findings (Merriam, 2001). These multiple methods were used to enhance the results' credibility.

Table 5 provides a rationale for the research question and data collection methods.

Table 5

Methods of Data Collection

Research Question	Methods to Answer the Question
How, if at all, do college foreign language instructors implement CLT in teaching beginner-level classes across six foreign languages?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One Online Survey: Third week of Fall 2016, to gather information about participants' backgrounds. 2. Course Syllabi Examination: Third week of Fall 2016, to determine whether or not the syllabi were communicative-based. 3. 48 Classroom Observations: eight 50-minute observations conducted from the fourth to fourteenth week of Fall 2016, to examine implementation (or lack thereof) of CLT. 4. One Semi-Structured Interview: in the final examination week and the week after of Fall 2016, to confirm conclusions that were drawn from observations regarding the participants' implementation of CLT.

Survey

I began the study by gathering demographic information from the participants via Qualtrics Survey Software regarding their backgrounds (Appendix A). Dornyei (2003) points out that surveys are useful and practical to obtain information about the participants' backgrounds. The survey consisted of seven items to uncover the participants' biogeographical information, educational levels, fields of study, foreign language professional development and years of language teaching experience. Research has demonstrated that instructors' backgrounds, training, and years of experience play a role in their perception and implementation of CLT. For example, Savignon (2007) found that instructors from China tend to implement the grammar-focused method rather than CLT. The grammar-focused method focuses on teaching grammar while CLT aims to promote students' ability to interact and communicate in the foreign language. In addition, instructors with more teaching years of experience implement CLT better than novice instructors (Littlewood, 2007). The survey took approximately ten minutes and was distributed in the second week of the Fall 2016 semester. The participants were given a week to complete it.

Document Analysis

After participants completed the survey, I requested copies of their course syllabi as an additional data point. Since the course syllabus guides the instructor's decision-making, the selection of activities, teaching materials, and learning assessments (Nunan, 1988), I examined the syllabi to determine which of their components are communicative-based and which are not. There are typically two major types of foreign language syllabus: grammar or communicative-based (Richards, 2006).

The grammar-based syllabus focuses on mastering rules and is organized around grammatical points (e.g., verbs, nouns, adjectives); the four language skills (reading, writing,

speaking, and listening) are taught separately and learning assessment concentrates on applying language rules and are mainly tests and quizzes (Richards, 2006; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Munby, 1981; Morgan & Neil, 2014). By contrast, the communicative-based syllabus focuses on improving students' ability to use language for communicative purposes and is organized around notions and themes to promote communicative skills (Richards, 2006; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Munby, 1981). Learning assessment concentrates on students' ability to communicate in the foreign language and students' performances are assessed through exams, quizzes, and alternative assessments such as interviews, journals, dialogues, and portfolios (Richards, 2006; Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Munby, 1981). For these reasons, using a communicative-based syllabus is consistent with implementing CLT. I focused on three major elements in the syllabus: teaching objectives, content, and learning assessments (Brown, 2000; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). I provided a description of each component.

Observations

After gathering data through the survey and the syllabi, I conducted a total of 48 observations; eight per instructor to capture in detail how the instructors implement CLT. Each observation lasted 50 minutes. In my observations, I took the role of non-participant. This technique was chosen to minimize the distraction or influence on the instructors' teaching decisions and routines. Flick (2009) contends that the non-participant observation reduces influence of the researcher's interest on participants' behaviors. During the observation, I sat in a location apart from the students, but within a distance to view the teacher and the class. I wrote extensive field notes.

The observations began in the fourth week and continued until the fourteenth week Fall semester, 2016. I conducted one observation every week for each participant but there

were a few weeks where I could not coordinate to observe all participants because of class time conflict, exams or preparations for exams. I scheduled the observations based on the participants' preferences. The participants gave me two or three days as options and I visited them when it was possible for me. I did not inform them about the specific days of the observation, except for the German instructor and the first three of the Chinese classroom observations as they asked me to do so. After that, they told me when they had exams or quizzes and days that I could visit and gave me the option to visit without informing them beforehand. Table 6 presents a summary of the observation rounds.

Table 6

Timeline for Observations

Weekly Timeline	Languages
Week 4: 9/19-25/2016	Arabic, French, German & Russian
Week 5: 26/9-10/2/2016	Arabic, Chinese, Russian & Spanish
Week 6: 10/3-9/2016	Chinese, French, German, Russian, Spanish
Week 7: 10/10- 16/2016	Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Russian, Spanish
Week 8: 10/17-23/2016	Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Spanish
Week 9: 10/24-30/2016	Chinese, French, German, Russian, Spanish
Week 10: 10/31- 11/6-2016	Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Russian, Spanish
Week 11: 11/7-13/2016	Arabic, Chinese, Russian, French, German, Spanish
Week 12: 11/14-20/2016	Arabic, Russian, Chinese & German
Week 13: 11/21-27/2016	Thanksgiving Recess
Week 14:11/28-12/4/2016	Arabic, French, Spanish

During the eight observations for each participant, I attempted to document what occurred in class including teaching strategies, activities, and materials the participants used.

I also documented the interaction between the instructors and their students, this includes instructor's explanation of lessons, comments, questions, instructions, and students' responses, questions, and conversations with instructor. Moreover, I noticed how the instructor taught the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) and culture and students' conversations with each other. (See Appendix B for an example of notes from an observation)

The eight observations were sufficient to reach the saturation point. Grady (1998) mentions that the research reaches the saturation point when "the new data tend to be redundant of data being collected" (p. 26). After the fifth observation, I realized that many patterns in the classroom such as the participants' behaviors, methods, activities, and materials became repetitive. For instance, the French instructor used to open his class with a short quiz, and then uses the Power Point technology to explain rules. After explaining rules, students work in individually or in pairs to practice the rules they have learned. Finally, he closed the class with a discussion of the homework for the next day.

The Chinese instructor seldom spoke English in class. She always spoke in Chinese unless the students failed to understand or when she discussed cultural issues, assignments and tests. Before the beginning of the class, she used the projector-screen to display a song or short clip in Chinese with English subtitle while she was sitting on her chair. At the beginning of class, she went through the name of the day and the date in Chinese and asked students how was their day and the day before. Students usually gave short answers or described their feelings or what they have done on the day before the class. She displayed the weekly calendar on the board and pointed on the day's name and date. She relied on the power point to presented rules or vocabulary showing students some examples, asking them to repeat after her. She, in most of her class time, engaged students in interactive activities

such as role-play and information-gap activities, and dialogues. Sometimes, students watched and discussed short videos, and finally the teacher gathered the homework and discussed online assignments or the test for the next session.

Semi-Structured Interview

After the completing the observations, I scheduled one semi-structured interview with each instructor. The interviews took place during the final week of the semester and the week after. The goal of the interviews was to confirm my understanding of the participants' implementation of CLT as well as interpretations of what I observed in the classroom. Questions for this interview concentrated on decisions that the participants made in the classroom. (Appendix C). Hatch (2002) suggests that using the interview method in conjunction with observations provides the researcher with more details about the participants' perspectives about their actions. I audio-recorded and transcribed each interview.

Data Analysis

Analyzing the data was achieved through the constant comparative method whereby I inductively coded, categorized, and compared each set of data to reveal themes (Mathison, 2005). Thomas (2009) states that themes capture and summarize the content of the data. I chose this method because it is suitable to analyze qualitative data (Grove, 1988) as it allows the researcher to identify patterns and characteristics within data (Glaser & Strauss, 2006).

I began the data analysis with a willingness to remain open (Charmaz, 2014) and avoid making quick judgments regarding the participants' implementation of CLT. Analysis was an ongoing process that started while I was collecting data and continued through the writing stage. Following each observation, I immediately read my field notes several times to gain more understanding of what happened in class and to become familiar with the data. I

wrote analytic memos to capture my thoughts and impressions regarding the data (samples in Appendix D). I attempted to identify methods and instructions that the instructors used, how they used them, and how students reacted to the instructors and engaged in learning. In addition, I assessed whether the participants implemented any of CLT features and principles (Appendix E). For example, one feature of CLT is engaging students in pair or small group activities, so I kept track of class activities and their format (e.g., pair or small group versus whole class).

Charmaz (2014) states that initial coding is the first step towards defining conceptual categories and it aides the researcher to notice and fill data gaps. Starting in the third week and continuing through the eighth (final) week of observations, I established and refined the initial coding scheme. I chose this time frame because I wanted to wait until I had observed each class at least twice to have a sense of the teaching context but start initial coding soon enough that I would clearly remember events that occurred during the observations.

To accomplish initial coding, I coded data segments as actions and incidents as Charmaz (2014) recommended because observational field notes are recorded in the researcher's own words. Coding them as actions help them researcher avoids coding his or her own words. For instance, when the French instructor explained grammar by comparing English grammar to French grammar, I coded this as "explaining grammar via comparing E/F." To give another example, when students in the Arabic class repeated word pronunciation after the instructor, I coded this as "students repeating word pronunciation." By coding data as actions, I captured how teaching processes unfolded, and how the instructor and students communicated and interacted. This helped me determine whether the instructors implemented any features of CLT and if they did, how? In addition, I used the *in vivo* coding technique (Charmaz, 2014) when applicable, whereby I used the participants'

own words as codes. For example, when a student in the German class could not answer the instructor's question and said, "I can't say that word" to the instructor, I coded it as (student can't say the word). Charmaz (2014) mentions that in vivo codes provide "a deeper understanding of what is happening and what it means" (p. 135). Furthermore, I employed a third type of code to track the language that the instructor and students used because I noticed a wide variety of language usage between the different classes. CLT requires the instructor to use the foreign language as much as possible while teaching (Curtis, 2017). For example, the Chinese instructor explained Chinese National Day in English, so I coded it as Explaining Culture in English. This code consists of two pieces of information: the content of instruction Chinese National Day and the language that the instructor uses English. This technique helped me to determine in which teaching situations the instructors used English and when they used the foreign language which enriched the findings.

Following Charmaz' (2014) recommendations, I coded every action the instructors and the students performed, without prejudging the action's relevance. I used this technique to gain a holistic understanding of the data. During this stage, I read and reread the field notes and consulted my analytic memos and assigned codes sequentially. Next, I rewrote the codes in list format on a new sheet of paper and refined the codes to make them shorter and more representative of the data (Appendix F).

Once I had completed initial coding for each participant, I proceeded to focused coding to "sift, sort, synthesize, and analyze large amount of data" (Charmaz, 2014, p. 138). I gathered and grouped initial codes across observations for each participant based on their similarities to identify their conceptual categories to perform focused coding. For instance, the initial codes revealed that the Arabic instructor used "explicit corrective feedback," where he corrected and explained students' errors, "repetition" where he repeated the error with

adjusting intonation to draw the student's attention to the error, and “positive feedback” by saying words such “good,” “excellent,” and “great.” I grouped these three codes under a single category called “providing feedback.”

After completing initial and focused coding for each participant’s observations, the next step was to prepare the observation data for comparison with the interview data for each participant. Similar to what I did for observation field notes, I performed initial and focused coding for each interview. This process began with transcribing the interviews by hand, listening to the recorded interviews and reading each interview transcript many times to check their accuracy and to get a sense of the data. I coded the interviews line by line as (Charmaz, 2014) recommended. I grouped similar initial codes together to identify the focused codes. I then compared categories that emerged from the interview and observations for each participant against each other. Finally, I compared categories across the participants’ data. I looked at each category that I gathered from each participant and compared it against other categories to identify the major categories of the study. I continued the comparison until I reached the major themes: 1) foreign language teaching preparation; 2) teaching practices, which includes teaching vocabulary and grammar, teaching culture, teaching language skills, and providing feedback; and 3) teaching obstacles.

Establishing Trustworthiness

According to Merriam (2002), “all researchers aspire to produce valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner. And both producers and consumer of research want to be assured that the findings of an investigation are to be believed and trusted” (p. 22). In this present study, I relied on Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) strategies to enhance the study’s trustworthiness. They posit four criteria to improve the quality of naturalistic studies: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. To ensure this study’s

credibility I used the triangulation strategy, which refers to using more than one data collection method or checking the data interpretation with peers or more knowledgeable scholars. I used four data collection methods: survey, semi-structured interview, observation, and the documents. In terms of transferability, I provided the reader with thick description and elaborated the procedure of collecting and analyzing the data. I also provided sufficient information about the participants' educational backgrounds and teaching experiences, which play an important role on their beliefs and practices regarding CLT (Savignon, 1991).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that there is no credibility without dependability. Thus, the strategies used to address credibility are sufficient to establish dependability. I used methods triangulation or as Lincoln and Guba called it "overlap methods" to ensure both credibility and dependability. In term of ethical issues, I completed the Institutional Review Board (IRB) application requirements before conducting this study. I used pseudonym for the participants and the university to preserve the participants' anonymity. The names and the data gathered from the participants were kept strictly confidential and individual responses will not be identified.

Summary

The goal of this present study was to examine foreign language college instructors' implementation of CLT in teaching beginner-level classes across six languages. The study was shaped by the social constructivist research paradigm because its ontology, epistemology, methodology, and results fit the basic belief that guides this study's processes and procedures. Accordingly, a qualitative multicase research design was employed since my goal was to understand how the participants, if at all, implement CLT in their teaching of beginning classes. I used four data collection methods: survey, semi-structured interviews, documents, and observations. These four methods were practical and enabled me to answer

my research question. The survey helped me to gather data about the participants' educational backgrounds and teaching experiences. Through the observations, I was able to examine the participants' implementation of CLT in their teaching. The semi-structured interview helped me to gain in-depth information about implementation of CLT and to confirm and clarify what I observed in the classes and to probe for additional demographic information. Documents enabled me to examine the syllabi that the participants used. To analyze the data, I used the constant comparative method because it is compatible with the inductive nature qualitative research.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The purpose of this multicase qualitative study was to examine how, if at all, college foreign language instructors implement the communicative language teaching approach (CLT) to teach beginner-level classes across six languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Russian, and Spanish. Six instructors who taught one of these languages at University X participated in this study. By the way of thick description in which Merriam (2001) described “the context, the players involved, and the activities of interest” (p. 8), I represent key findings for the research question: How do, if at all, college foreign language instructors implement CLT to teach beginner-level classes across six foreign languages?

As described in Chapter 3, I collected the data through multiple data collection methods: online survey, eight classroom observations for each participant, syllabus analysis, and one semi-structured interview, per participant. I examined a total of 6 syllabi consisting of a total of 46 pages, and 12 pages of surveys. I approximately spent 4000 minutes in observations, and 200 minutes in interviews. The most time I spend with an instructor was 41 minutes, the least time was 25 minutes. Table 7 represents the entire data set collected from this study. It illustrates the number of pages I analyzed (survey, observation field notes, interview scripts) and the amount of time that I spent with each participant during the classroom observations and interviews.

Table 7

Summary of the Data Collection and Analysis

Types of Data Collected	Number of Pages and Minutes with Each Participant													
	Arabic		Chinese		French		German		Russian		Spanish		Total	
	P	M	P	M	P	M	P	M	P	M	P	M	P	M
Survey	2		2		2		2		2		2		12	
Observation Field Notes	120		153		128		125		143		114		783	
Classroom Observations		500		500		500		500		500		500		4000
Interviews	44	34	33	29	41	41	36	41	25	20	33	35	212	200
Syllabus Analysis	14		6		7		7		4		8		46	

Note. P = pages. M = minutes.

I conducted both within and cross-case analysis. In this Chapter, I present first each case individually. I describe the instructor's preparation to teach foreign language and the instructional context. Then, I examine the instructor's beliefs about CLT and teaching foreign language. Following this, I describe the participant's teaching practices. After discussing each individual participant's case in depth, I provide within and cross cases analysis focusing on similarities and differences across cases. To put the findings in context of CLT research, I open the chapter with a summary of the instructor's role in a communicative-oriented class.

Instructor's Role in a CLT Classroom

As described in Chapter 2, CLT is a foreign language teaching approach strives to promote students' ability to use foreign language for communicative purposes such as introducing and expressing themselves, communicating in public places, exchanging information with others, and understanding formal and informal use of a foreign language. In other words, it aims at teaching students the use of foreign language for everyday life. It is considered a teaching approach rather than a method because it provides a set of principles that the instructor follows to create a communicative and interactive classroom environment

to allow students use and practice foreign language in the classroom (Richards & Rodgers, 2014), rather than dictating specific procedures to follow.

When using this approach, the instructor works as a facilitator, co-communicator, and creator of a communicative environment by engaging students in pairs or group activities where they use the foreign language to interact with each other. The instructor prepares collaborative activities and intervenes when students need help, so he or she does not dominate the classroom interaction or use the lecture method in which students would be expected to passively listen to him or her. The instructor increases the use of the foreign language (target language) and decreases the use of students' first language in the classroom. The instructor and students should use the target language as much as possible, since using the students' first language hinders the quality of interaction and communication in the classroom (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Littlewood & Yu, 2011).

Additionally, in the CLT approach, the instructor accepts students' errors and understands that making errors is a necessary part of the language learning process. Therefore, the instructor's main goal is improving students' language fluency rather than accuracy. This means improving students' ability to engage in and maintain meaningful and comprehensible conversations with others despite their language limitations and errors. The instructor also teaches students to use the foreign language appropriately in different situations (e.g., malls, airports, hotels, workplace). This involves teaching students the use of formal and non-formal language. In addition, the instructor should familiarize students with conversational strategies such as: asking for assistance from the other speaker, asking for repetition, and expressing non- understanding. These strategies enable the student to improve language fluency and overcome conversational breakdowns. The exams and quizzes that the instructor uses should focus on language usage, not knowledge of grammar.

The Arabic Instructor's Case

The Arabic instructor was a third-semester master's degree student in the Translation program (see more demographic information about him in Chapter 3). He taught Arabic to fulfill the assistantship requirement. There were 12 students enrolled in his section.

The Arabic classroom was 517 square feet. Some students sat in individual student desks in the last row facing the instructor and other students sat around tables in the middle of the class but they all faced the instructor. The classroom was too crowded with furniture to rearrange the student desks and too crowded for the instructor to circulate among the students comfortably. Students sat where they wanted (as opposed to assigned seating) in small clusters. Figure 1 illustrates the classroom layout. As for the equipment, the instructor had access to a projector screen and a chalk board, but it was difficult to use them simultaneously since, when lowered, the projector screen covered up most of the chalk board.



Figure 1. Arabic classroom layout.

Preparation for Teaching Foreign Languages

The Arabic instructor completed a bachelor's degree in Translation Studies in 2010. His only knowledge regarding teaching foreign languages came from his self-selected readings about teaching foreign language and from his informal experience in teaching English as a foreign language prior to coming to the United States. He did not receive formal

teaching preparation. He worked as a tutor and private English teacher irregularly for one year before coming to the United States. He also voluntarily taught English to some of his neighbors and friends. The Arabic instructor shared in the interview that he read about foreign teaching theories and methods. For example, he read about CLT and its focuses on the student as the center of the learning process. Then he mentioned that he was interested in learning Arabic grammar and poetry, so he used to meet with some of his friends to discuss these two topics. The instructor expressed his passion and interest in learning more about foreign language teaching methods. He shared that he would enroll in a foreign language teaching methods or English teaching methods classes if he gets an opportunity to pursue a doctoral degree in translation studies or in a curriculum and instruction program.

Teaching Practices

Over the semester, the Arabic class consisted of 59 sessions. Each session lasted 50 minutes in the morning (four times a week: Monday through Thursday). The instructor spent 40 sessions teaching new concepts, nine sessions reviewing for tests, and 10 sessions in tests. Of the 40 sessions dedicated to new concepts, the Arabic instructor spent the first eleven weeks (30 sessions) teaching the alphabet system. He taught one or two Arabic letters in each session. Besides teaching the letters, the instructor taught a list of vocabulary, grammar, and culture once a week or every other week.

In the interview, the Arabic instructor shared that for planning lessons, he wrote the classroom activities on sheets of paper and prepared PowerPoint presentations and pictures. In a typical session, the instructor spent the first five minutes reviewing what he taught in the previous session. For example, in the second classroom observation, he began by greeting students, “أهلاً وسهلاً يا شباب.” This in Arabic means “Welcome, guys.” He immediately switched to English, “Now we have a busy day, but first what did we study yesterday?”

students together replied that they learned the Arabic letter **ص**. The Arabic instructor then asked, “what is the word that has **ص**?” Before students provided the answer, the instructor said, “صورة” and continued, “what does صورة mean?” a student replied, “picture.” The instructor went on and reminded students of the difference between the Arabic letter **س** and the Arabic letter **ص**.

After the review, the instructor taught one or two Arabic letters each session as mentioned above. He used a PowerPoint presentation, which included a picture of the human articulatory system to show students the speech organs that produce the letter sound.

The instructor pronounced the letter and asked students together to repeat after him. Students then watched a cartoon video on YouTube approximately two minutes long. Figure 2 presents a screenshot of the YouTube video that the instructor used in class. The video consisted of a children’s song to demonstrate the letter pronunciation. Students heard the pronunciation of the letter in five or six different words.

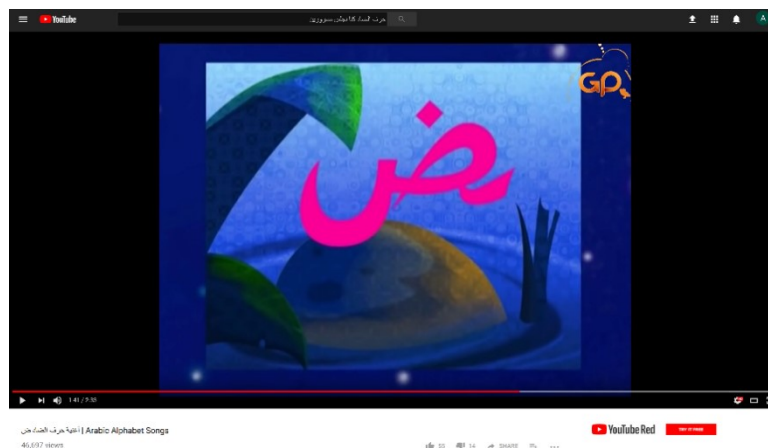


Figure 2. Screenshot of YouTube video used to teach the Alphabet system.

After the YouTube song finished, the instructor asked students to repeat some of the words that they heard. Then he taught students the writing of the letter in different positions of the word (at the beginning, the middle, and the end of the word). He used a picture in a PowerPoint slide, and supported that by writing on the chalk board, so students notice how

the letter is written. During his explanation, the Arabic instructor asked questions in English about what he was teaching, and student answered his questions in chorus. In other words, he did not ask a specific student to answer his questions. In addition, students interrupted him and asked questions to get more clarification of what he was teaching. Once the instructor explained the letter pronunciation and writing, he asked students to write individual words on their small white erase board to practice spelling (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Small white erase board.

He pronounced the word and students wrote it and raised their small boards to get his feedback. For example, in the fourth classroom observation, the instructor said, “Now, let us write “طيب.” Students wrote the word طيب, which means “good” and showed the instructor their writing. The last activities of each class tended to be one or two textbook drills. The drills most often were reading aloud activities and can be described as mechanical and controlled practice activity, which “students can successfully carry out without necessarily understanding the language they are using.” (Richards, 2006, p. 16). Students listened and read individual words, not embedded in sentences or paragraphs. (Figure 4). It is worthwhile to notice that some words in these drills did not have meaning in Arabic such as item 10 (تينو) in the drill in Figure 4. That is, in some instances, the book contained nonsense words that were invented merely to illustrate sounds.

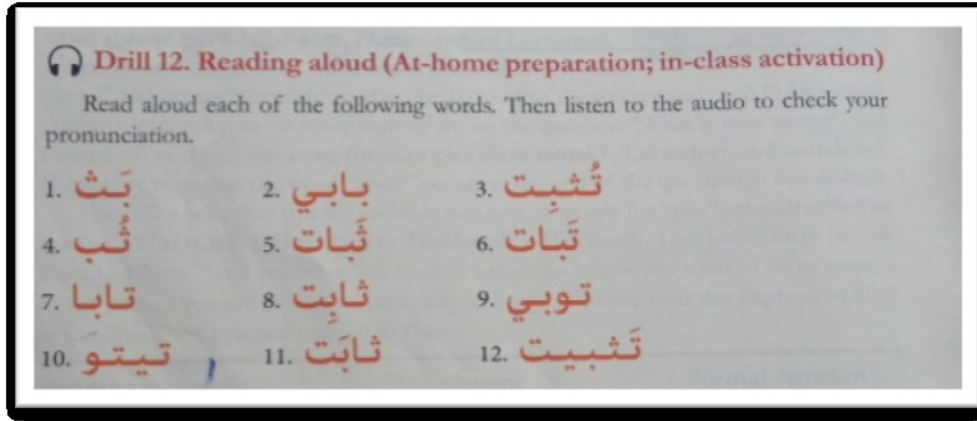


Figure 4. Sample of the textbook drills that the instructor used in class.

To complete the textbook drills, the instructor sometimes divided students into small groups of three or four students or the whole class completed the activity together.

Teaching Grammar and Vocabulary

The Arabic instructor taught vocabulary, grammar and culture once a week or biweekly. At the end of each chapter, students learned a list of vocabulary from the textbook and learned either grammar, or a cultural topic. The instructor taught grammatical points and asked students to put the vocabulary that they learned in a sentence. He mentioned in the interview that the textbook that he used did not include special or specific sections for grammar. This is perhaps because the textbook's focus was on teaching the alphabet system. A sample of the vocabulary can be found in Figure 5.

**Vocabulary and Conversation:
Describing People**

New Vocabulary
Listen to and learn these words.

Meaning	ma5ri	shaami	Formal /written
man	راجل	رجال	رجال
woman	ست	مرأة	امرأة
girl	بنت	بنت	بنت
boy	ولد	ولد	ولد
story	قصة	قصة	قصة
short (masc./fem.)	قصير/ة	قصير/ة	قصير/ة
tall, long (masc./fem.)	طويل/ة	طويل/ة	طويل/ة
beautiful (masc./fem.)	جميل/ة	جميل/ة	جميل/ة
nice, pleasant (masc./fem.)	لطيف/ة	لطيف/ة	لطيف/ة
never mind! Don't worry about it! sorry!	معايش!	معايش!	
problem	مشكلة	مشكلة	مشكلة
wrong, a mistake	غلط	غلط	غلط
si/madam	أندوم		

Figure 5. Sample of the textbook vocabulary lists.

The instructor used the translation method to teach vocabulary. He presented vocabulary on a PowerPoint in both Arabic and English languages. Table 8 shows a sample of how the instructor presented these words on the PowerPoint. The PowerPoint slide illustrated in Table 8 was used in my third observation.

Table 8

Teaching Vocabulary through PowerPoint

Vocabulary	
English	Arabic
Ready	جاهز
Coffee	قهوة
Sugar	سكر
Milk	حليب
Juice	عصير
Water	ماء
I go	أذهب
I drink	أشرب

In this particular classroom observation, the instructor collected the homework, reviewed what students learned in the previous session, and then he presented the vocabulary list on the PowerPoint. He read each word in Arabic and translated it into English. For instance, he said, “جاهز, which means “ready.” For a female, we say “جاهزة” and continued, saying, “قهوة, which means “coffee,” or “Who likes coffee?” He asked students to translate ‘I like coffee’ into Arabic. A student answered, “أنا أحب قهوة.” This in Arabic means I like coffee. The instructor then asked students to translate other sentences into Arabic. This manner of presenting vocabulary was observed in other visits to the Arabic class as well.

He then moved to grammar and similarly used the translation method to teach students verb conjugations. He wrote short sentences on the board and translated them. For example, he wrote: هم يحبون الحليب, هي تحب الحليب, هو يحب الحلب and orally translated each one of these sentences into English “He likes milk, she likes milk, they like milk.” After finishing, he taught the Arabic letter “ط” as described in the above section.

Teaching Culture

The Arabic instructor taught some cultural topics such as the names of the Arab countries and their capital cities, formal and informal greetings, introducing someone, coffeehouses, guests' and houses' rules. He explained these cultural topics in English. He shared that he used English because he felt it is easy for students to understand him when he spoke in English. The Arabic instructor mentioned that he used English most of the class time because he believed students could not understand what he said when speaking in Arabic. The instructor reported that he used pictures to show students, for example, cities and countries. The instructor did not use activities to teach cultural topics. He presented these topics in English while students listened and interrupted when they had questions.

Teaching Language Skills

Teaching the four language skills was limited because the instructor focused on teaching the alphabet system. Students' writing, and reading was limited to words. After teaching a new Arabic letter, the instructor asked students to read and write a word that includes the new letter that they were learning in class. He also said that he used the bingo game as an activity to teach listening, reading and writing. In addition, the textbook included activities in which students listened to a list of words and were asked to identify or distinguish their letters.

Oral production received more attention in this class because students were asked to present five skits. In small groups of three, they developed a scenario at home, wrote it together, practiced it at home and came to present it in class. The instructor indicated in the interview that he used these skits to teach the four skills, writing, reading, speaking, and listening.

Providing Feedback

The Arabic instructor used three types of feedback in class: positive feedback, repetition, and explicit corrective feedback. Positive feedback refers to the instructor's affirmation or sign that the student's performance was acceptable. In providing positive feedback, the instructor used encouraging words such as "good," "ممتاز," which means "excellent," "أحسننت," which means "well done," "صح," which means "correct," after a student or a group of students completed the performance. The instructor did not specify to what extent the students' performance was correct (i.e., totally or partly correct); rather, he just indicated that he accepted the performance. The second type of feedback was repetition which means the instructor's reiteration of the student's erroneous utterance with a high intonation to draw his or her attention to the error. The participant used this type of feedback to correct students' errors without telling them what their error was. The third type of feedback was explicit corrective feedback where the instructor overtly discussed and corrected students' errors. For example, in the sixth classroom observation, the Arabic instructor asked students to pronounce the word "غراب," which means "crow," and a student pronounced it, but the instructor replied, "No, the sound here is kind of the vowel *u*." When asked about his use of feedback, the Arabic instructor reported, "If they say something correct, I would definitely say these encouraging words, like 'أحسننت' [well done], 'جيد' [good], 'ممتاز' [excellent], and 'رائع' [wonderful], so I started doing it unconsciously." In describing the reason behind using this feedback type he said:

I found through this experience, that there is no better way of getting the best of students at least having them respect the teacher, respect the class, that he is or she is making progress, than respecting the student and make him or her feel that they are something.

He also mentioned that he avoided using negative feedback even when students made mistakes. For the homework, he wrote notes describing their errors and the correct form.

The Arabic Language Instructor's Obstacles

There were two obstacles that the Arabic instructor mentioned during the interview. First, he reported that teaching the alphabet system consumed eleven weeks of the semester; therefore, his students could not read or learn many words until the whole alphabet system was covered and until they learned the pronunciation and writing of all the Arabic letters. He believed that the alphabet should be introduced in a short amount of time, so students could read, listen, and learn vocabulary. Second, he shared that the textbook did not include grammar sections nor explained grammar explicitly, which made students ignore grammar, although the instructor explicitly taught it and emphasized its importance. The Arabic instructor stated, "I ended up telling them that and students, I know it is a natural thing, when they do not find something on the book, they will assume that is not an important thing to know." He believed that students focused on the textbook as it was organized when preparing for the tests.

Syllabus Analysis

The Arabic language instructor's syllabus was analyzed in terms of the following components: course objectives, course learning outcomes, and course assignments.

Course Objectives

The syllabus included three course objectives: (a) introducing students to the Arabic alphabet system and enabling them to pronounce, distinguish, and write the Arabic letters accurately, (b) introducing students to the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) and helping them read short texts, write short notes and messages, and engage in simple conversations, and (c) developing students' vocabulary skills to communicate with

others. The course objective section indicated that the course provided phonetic practices, intense speaking training regarding everyday conversations, and practices of writing simple sentences. The course also provided written and spoken information and practices of reading comprehension and listening to audio materials.

Course Learning Outcomes

The course learning outcomes were as follows:

1. Identify letters, words and phrases in short simple texts.
2. Understand the meaning of simple sentences and short paragraphs.
3. Recognize parts of speech and sentences.
4. Reproduce from memory word phrases, short sentences in context, and communicate information on common aspects of daily life.
5. Communicate orally with words and phrases.
6. Identify cultural products and practices observed in the target language.
7. Identify geographical features, historical figures and major contributions of countries from the target culture.

Course Assignments

The course assignment components were divided into three parts: attendance and participation, homework assignments, and tests and presentations. The syllabus emphasized that students should prepare for each session, attend and actively participate in all sessions. The homework assignments refer to the textbook drills. These drills were phonics-based where students listened to words and identified and distinguished their letters. In addition, there were dictation drills where students listened and wrote words as they heard them. The textbook was accompanied by a website to allow students to complete and submit the listening drills.

There were six tests, a midterm and final exam. The instructor mentioned in the interview that the tests and exams items were similar to the textbook drills. They focused on mastering the pronunciation and writing of the Arabic letters. Also, there were short listening questions regarding students' personal information and families and writing sections which required students to write simple autobiographical sentences. Moreover, the exams included choosing the correct words from a list to complete sentences. The presentation consisted of five skits as described above. Students in groups of three to four prepared a scenario at home, wrote it on a piece of paper, memorized it, and finally presented in class. Table 9 illustrates the grade distribution.

Table 9

Arabic Class Grade Distribution

Assignment	Grade
Attendance and Preparation	15%
Homework Assignments	15%
Tests and Presentations	30%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	25%

Findings from the Arabic Instructor's Case

The first finding from the Arabic language instructor's case reveals a lack of lack of teaching preparation and teaching experience. The Arabic instructor did not receive any formal teaching preparation. As noted in the description of the participants' background in Chapter 3, the Arabic Instructor's knowledge about teaching foreign languages came from his self-reading about learning and teaching theories. He shared that this self-reading provided him only with a general understanding of some learning and teaching theories and methods such as CLT. The Arabic instructor taught for one year of informal (private teaching lessons) in teaching English as a foreign language.

Although the Arabic instructor did not receive teaching preparation, he held some conceptions that incidentally were communicative-teaching based. For example, he believed that the essential foreign language teaching objective is promoting students' communicative skills to introduce themselves, speak about their families, friends, hobbies, and understand others when discussing these topics. This teaching objective is at the center of CLT as it aims to promote students' ability to communicate with others (Brandl, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). Yet, the instructor believed that focusing on teaching grammar in the traditional explicit method is the way to empower students and enable them to communicate with others, while in a CLT class, grammar should be taught in a communicative context where students learn the use of grammar through meaningful activities (Van Patten & Lee, 2003; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). In other words, in a CLT class, students do not learn grammar in an abstract manner; rather, they learn using grammar in a meaningful and communicative context.

The Arabic instructor also believed that students should be the center of the learning and teaching processes. He explained, "Everything is centered around the students, so if there is something that would be helpful for them and be of essence to their learning process, then I will definitely consider following that approach or doing this activity." Johnson (2015) states "it is essential for communicative language teachers to foster a student-centered environment where students' learning styles, preferences, experiences, and competences are valued and acknowledged" (p. 45). When asked about his interpretation of CLT, the Arabic instructor responded that CLT means "putting the student in the center of the learning process and everything is centered around him or her getting the [unintelligible] and being able to speak the language, write the language, read the language." He was even uncomfortable with the word instructor: "I would not like to use the word instructor or lecturer or teacher, he is

more of moderator, facilitator for that process.” Student-centered instruction, and the view of the instructor as moderator or facilitator, are features of CLT. This shows that the Arabic instructor valued some key features of CLT, even if they did not occur in his own class.

The Arabic instructor indicated that he strove to keep students interested, focused, and motivated through using game activities, group work activities, and visual aids to create appealing and friendly classroom environment. Using group work activities and visual aids are two CLT features (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Thus, again, I noticed that this instructor did aspire to employ some aspects of CLT, whether by coincidence or by influence of what he had read about language teaching.

In addition, the Arabic instructor believed that students should be responsible for their own learning, which means that they should study and prepare before attending class sessions and the then instructor just activities and reinforces what students studied at home. This concept is an essential CLT feature because in a CLT class, the instructor is a facilitator of students’ learning while the students are expected to “take on a great degree of responsibility for their own learning” (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 98).

The instructor mentioned one more of CLT features, which is group work activities. He emphasized that group work activities are essential to any foreign language teaching class. Mukalel (2005) states that the instructor in a CLT class engages students in group work activities because this type of activities provides student with opportunities to practice the target language.

In teaching practice, the Arabic implemented the phonics and grammar-translation teaching methods. He used phonics to teach the Arabic alphabet system throughout eleven weeks of the semester. Using this method for more than half of the semester restricted the instructor and students’ ability to use language for communicative purposes because the focus

was on building students' phonemic awareness and mastering the sound-symbol relationships. In the interview, the Arabic instructor shared his frustration and disagreement with spending most of the class time teaching the alphabet system. He concluded, "I think the curriculum itself, the book itself need to be altered or modified a little bit to address the most important issues, especially grammar and the alphabet should not take that long time."

In addition to implementing the phonics method, the Arabic instructor used the grammar-translation method. In the grammar-translation method, the instructor analyzes rules, engages students in translation activities, and presents vocabulary in bilingual word lists (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The instructor followed this method as he analyzed rules, translated sentences from English into Arabic (and vice versa) and asked student to translate sentences. In addition, he used bilingual word lists to teach vocabulary.

Most of the class activities were structural not meaningful or communicative. Richards (2006) defines the structural activity as "controlled practice activity which students can successfully carry out without necessarily understanding the language that they are using" (p. 16). The student's role in completing structural activities is applying the rules that they learned correctly to complete the drill regardless of their ability to apply those rules in a real-life situation (Benati, 2009). Most of the activities that the Arabic instructor used fell in this category. They were multiple-choice, gap-fill, and matching drills. One of the activities that the instructor used was quasi-communicative activity. The instructor used skits to teach speaking where students in groups of three to four created and practiced a scenario at home, and then presented in class. Skits are considered as quasi-communicative activity because students rely on memorization to communicate with each other during their performance and they prepared the conversation beforehand (Richards, 2006). The Arabic instructor shared

that when he asked students to create skits, he required them to apply some of the rules that he had learned.

Although the instructor implemented the phonics and the grammar-translation methods, he implemented some CLT features. His students completed many activities in groups of three to four. As mentioned above, the Arabic instructor believed that group activities are essential to any language class. However, the activities that students completed were not communicative-based activities as they focused on language rules. In addition, students interacted and communicated with each other in English. However, in a communicative-based activity, students should use the target language to communicate because the goal is to give them opportunities to use and practice the target language. These two issues, the structural nature of the class activities and using English minimized the quality and the value of group work activities.

The Arabic instructor motivated his students through frequent use of positive feedback and he accepted students' errors as he avoided providing negative feedback and used implicit feedback (repetition). The instructor used these two techniques to show students respect and to encourage them to continue learning Arabic. Thus, with regards to feedback, the Arabic instructor did use some CLT features.

The instructor spoke in English during most of the class time. He mentioned that he wanted to speak in Arabic much more in class, but when he spoke in Arabic, he felt students were confused and could not understand him. In a CLT class, the instructor uses the foreign language to provide students with sufficient input to promote their language comprehension (Benati, 2009).

The syllabus that the instructor used included two communicative teaching objectives: engaging students in short conversations and developing vocabulary skills to communicate

with others. The syllabus also indicated that one of the course teaching objectives is developing students' phonemic awareness. Since the instructor spent eleven weeks in teaching the alphabet system, improving students' phonemic awareness received most of attention in this class. In addition, using the grammar-translation method did not provide the communicative classroom environment for students to learn vocabulary in a communicative context.

In sum, the Arabic instructor believed in implementing some features of CLT even he did not receive any teaching preparation, but he could not put some of them in practice appropriately. His teaching focus was on teaching rules rather than teaching students the use of Arabic for communicative purposes. The Arabic instructor used English as a medium of instruction and dominated the classroom communication, which hindered his ability to create a communicative classroom environment. The syllabus that the instructor used did not support him to implement CLT as it concentrated on developing students' phonemic awareness.

The Chinese Instructor's Case

The Chinese instructor has a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction (see more demographic information about her in Chapter 3). The Elementary Chinese I class, which was the focus of this study, was four credit hours. The class met four times a week, for fifty minutes (Monday through Thursday before noon). There were fourteen students enrolled in this class. The room, 367 square feet, was classified as CLAX by the Registrar, meaning tables and chairs were moveable. Students sat in rows facing the instructor.

There was sufficient space for the instructor and students to move around. The classroom was equipped with a digital projector and dry erase whiteboard. When the instructor used the digital projector, it covered the middle of the whiteboard and, therefore, she only wrote on its right side. Figure 6 shows the classroom layout.



Figure 6. Chinese classroom layout.

Preparation for Teaching Foreign Language

As mentioned above, the Chinese instructor received a bachelor's degree in Chinese Language and Literature and a master's in Curriculum and Instruction. She also joined a foreign language teaching program called STARTALK. In this program, she attended several workshops related to teaching Chinese and integrating culture with Chinese language teaching. The Chinese instructor was satisfied with the teaching preparation she received as she used phrases such as "I was very lucky" and "I learned a lot" when she commented on her foreign language teaching preparation. During the interview, I noticed that she used several pedagogical terms or several terms from the field of second language acquisition such as "cultural competence," "comprehensible input," "presentational communication," "interpersonal communication," "authentic materials," "summative assessment," and "formative assessment."

Beliefs about Teaching Foreign Languages

The Chinese instructor believed that the main focus of this Elementary Chinese language I is enabling students to "greet each other in a culturally appropriate way and can introduce themselves." She further said that the class should establish the necessary linguistic foundations for success in the next class. The instructor believed that listening and

speaking are the most difficult Chinese language skills, especially since students do not have the opportunity to practice these skills outside the course. From her point of view, the instructor should create a rich classroom environment where students listen and speak Chinese frequently. In addition, she believed that Chinese pronunciation is difficult, and requires more attention. She also mentioned that motivating students is crucial to make them continue learning Chinese. The Chinese instructor stated that CLT can be defined as “teaching students to communicate at interpersonal and presentational levels.” She mentioned that she is interested in integrating culture into her teaching.

Teaching Practices

The Chinese class consisted of 57 sessions over the course of the semester. The instructor spent the first two sessions teaching the Chinese sound system and the next two sessions teaching the Chinese writing system. There was a short quiz after students learned each system. Once she taught these two systems, she integrated grammar, speaking, listening, and vocabulary in the following sessions until the end of the semester (total of 42 sessions). Writing was taught through homework assignments. Sometimes, I observed students writing short answers or words in class. There were two test sessions before and two after the midterm exam and one oral exam at the end of the semester (total of six test sessions). There was one speaking presentation in the eighth week of the semester. There were two review sessions at the end of the semester. Table 10 summarizes the structure of the Chinese class.

Table 10

Chinese Classroom Structure

Content	Number of Sessions
Teaching the Chinese Sound System	2
Teaching the Chinese Writing System	2
Teaching Grammar, Speaking, Listening and Vocabulary	42
Tests and Exams	6
Speaking Presentations	1

The instructor shared that she utilized the backward curriculum design where she defined teaching goals and evaluated her teaching according to them. When preparing lessons, she mentioned that she first identified the lesson objectives and then created appropriate activities to achieve those objectives. She frequently used formative and summative assessments to assess students' learning.

In a typical Chinese session, students arrived a few minutes before the class and watched a video or a song in Chinese with English subtitles until the beginning of the session. During this time, the instructor sat at her desk either working on some papers or discussing the homework with individual students. She informed me that she used this time before the beginning of the class to give students oral feedback on their writing assignments when needed.

The instructor opened the session by asking students individually about their week or weekend. The instructor and students spoke in Chinese. Sometimes a student struggled because he or she did not understand the question or could not answer. The instructor usually spent approximately ten minutes on this activity. Next, the instructor would present the weekly calendar in Chinese language and pointed to the day of the session, the day before, and the day after while speaking in Chinese. Then she pointed to each day of the week and

students in some sessions repeated after her. These three activities (watching a clip in Chinese before the session, asking students about their week or weekend, and discussing the weekly calendar) were essential part in each session, which it lasted up to fifteen minutes of the class time. Sometimes, the instructor began the class by discussing the weekly calendar without asking students about their week or weekend.

After discussing the weekly calendar, the instructor would engage students in three to four activities. For each activity, she first would present the rule that she wanted to teach using pictures, video or authentic materials (wall clock, purse, gloves) and then involved students in the activity. For example, in one session, I observed her teaching family members. She used pictures of the former president of the United States, Barak Obama to teach the words *father*, *mother* and *daughter* in Chinese. She spoke in Chinese while pointing to each family member emphasizing the word father, mother, daughter) in Chinese (父親, 母親 & 女兒). Then she presented another family member and repeated pointing each family member and sounding out the names for the words while students repeated after her. In another example, she used pictures of wall clocks to teach time. She used a picture of wall clocks. Each clock represented a specific time. She repeated the pronunciation of each time, and then asked students to repeat after her. After, that she depicted different times and asked students to tell her what the time was. Finally, she pronounced the time and asked students to write it in their small white dry erase boards (approximately, 11 x 14 Inches) similar to what the was done in the Arabic class (Figure 3). Thus, for each activity, the instructor first presented the new rule while students watched and listened to her to her, partly engaged students in the activity, and finally students practiced the rule. In other words, students, for example, only would repeat after the instructor, and then they would practice the rule.

The instructor used individual, pair and whole group activities. She explained that she selected activities according to the topic being taught. When teaching speaking, she divided students into pairs to recite a dialogue in front of their classmates. By contrast, students completed listening activities individually. The Chinese instructor taught students how to talk about hobbies. She asked one student to come in front of the class and faced the other classmates. Students read a word such as (music, football, basketball) from a PowerPoint behind the student, and the student acted according to the word that he or she heard students said (e.g., if the word was football, the student should act as a football player). The Chinese instructor used Chinese as the language of instruction. She and her students spoke Chinese most of the class time. She shared that she used English only when students could not understand her. She stated that she used pictures as visual support tools to help students' comprehension of what she said. She also explained that she used activities and materials to make learning fun.

Teaching Grammar and Vocabulary

The instructor used Chinese language to teach grammar and vocabulary. She followed the same sequence of teaching rules as mentioned in the previous section. For example, when I observed her teaching question formulation. She used a PowerPoint to display a set of statements along with a question on each statement. Using the PowerPoint, the instructor explained to students how each statement can be converted into a question, she used her hand and pointed the statement while she was speaking about the statement and moved her hand to the question when speaking about the question. She pointed the key word that transfers the statement into question. Next, she read both the statement and the question and students repeated after her. She used some English phrases such as saying, "No matter what, subject, verb, object" and "The adverb goes before the verb." The instructor finally

presented several statements and asked students individually to transfer them into questions. She urged students to not translate, “This is when you translate them to English. This makes you mistaken. First, find the question word.”

Since I noticed that the other instructors taught verb conjugations in many sessions. except for her, I asked the Chinese instructor how she taught verb conjugations. She replied that the Chinese language does not have verb conjugations. She also mentioned that teaching questions was not difficult. She further said that Chinese grammar is not complicated.

To teach vocabulary, the Chinese instructor used techniques similar to the ones she used to teach grammar. I observed her teaching words for hobbies (e.g., *music, basketball, football, etc.*). She used a PowerPoint presentation that included pictures to represent hobbies. She spoke in Chinese about each picture and read a word under each picture. After finishing, she went again through each picture but in the second time, students repeated after her. Then all pictures were in one PowerPoint slide. She pointed each picture while she was speaking in Chinese and students repeated after her. Next, she asked a student to come in front of the class and face his or her classmates. She put the PowerPoint on a slide including a picture of a hobby. The student could not see the slide, he or she only listened to his or her classmates reading the word of the hobby and he acted accordingly. Finally, students did the same activity but the second time, the teacher had the students play a type of charades game by acting out and guessing the hobbies.

Teaching Culture

The Chinese instructor mentioned that the textbook ignored teaching about Chinese culture. For this reason, she incorporated simple cultural concepts into the classroom conversations when it was relevant. She shared that, for example, when she was teaching dates and ages, she explained the appropriate way to ask a Chinese person about his or her

age. She also explained the Chinese Zodiac and how students viewed this Chinese tradition. In class, I observed her teaching the Chinese National Day. She used a video of approximately three minutes to show students how Chinese people celebrate this day. The video was in Chinese with English subtitles. The instructor commented on the video in English describing Chinese people's activities and events that take place in this day and the six days after. Unlike teaching grammar, vocabulary and speaking, where she spoke and communicated with students in Chinese, she used English to teach culture.

Teaching Language Skills

As mentioned above, the Chinese instructor integrated grammar, vocabulary, speaking and listening in each session. When asked about teaching listening, she replied, "Listening? Everyday. I use the Chinese language." Students listened to the instructor speaking Chinese most of the class time. Students also spoke in each session, especially when the instructor asked them short questions regarding their week or weekend or when they practiced grammar. In addition, the Chinese instructor used dialogue to teach speaking. I observed her using dialogue three times during the eight classroom observations I made. She divided students into pairs, providing them with a dialogue, asked them to practice it, and present in front of their classmates. She read the entire dialogue to the whole class before asking them to practice it. In one dialogue, students wore hats to represent characters from the dialogues.

The Chinese instructor stated that there were writing assignments, which were related to their everyday life.

Providing Feedback

The Chinese instructor used several feedback types: positive feedback, repetition, explicit correction, and speaking and writing rubrics. In providing positive feedback she used words such as okay, good and very good, 謝謝 (means thank you in English) when she

accepted the student's performance. However, there was no indication to what extent the student's performance was acceptable. The Chinese instructor also used hand clap to affirm the students' performance. The second type of feedback used in class was repetition. She repeated what a student said with an emphasis on correct form of the student's utterance. The Chinese instructor explained that she repeated students' pronunciation errors because she did not want to make students feel anxious, she wanted them to speak and feel comfortable while speaking. The third feedback type was explicit correction in which she explicitly corrected the student's error. When using the explicit correction, the instructor sometimes wrote the correct form on the whiteboard. The instructor used also speaking and writing rubrics to give students feedback.

The Chinese Instructor's Obstacles

The Chinese instructor did not mention any obstacles except that students struggled and felt anxious because of the amount of Chinese used in class. She shared that it took students a while to become comfortable with learning in Chinese. In addition, she wished that the class focused only on topics that are relative to students' everyday life.

Syllabus Analysis

The Chinese instructor's syllabus was analyzed in terms of the following components: course objectives and course assignments.

Course Objectives

The course objectives focused on students' ability to read, write, listen and speak short sentences and basic Chinese regarding family members, ages, time, location, interests, hobbies, and daily activities. In addition, students should be able to read instruction and directions (e.g., price in stores), per the syllabus, upon completing the course, students should be able to identify basic and highly frequent Chinese characters.

Course Assignments

There were four assignments: attendance and participation, homework, quizzes, and final exam. The grade distribution of these assignments is illustrated in Table 11.

Table 11

Chinese Class Grade Distribution

Assignment	Grade
Attendance and Preparation	10%
Homework Assignments	30%
Quizzes and Tests	30%
Final Exam	30%

Students were required to attend and participate in each session. According to the syllabus, for each undocumented or unexcused absence, a student's participation grade would be lowered by 5%. The syllabus indicated students who participated perfectly were given 50 extra bonus points. Homework assignments were written exercises regarding topics that were relative to students' life such as family members, daily activities and hobbies. Students also completed grammar and vocabulary exercises from the textbook. These exercises were fill in the blanks, translation, answering short questions. Students took a test at the end of each chapter and there was a midterm and final exams. For speaking assignments, students were asked to give short presentations in front of their classmates about basic topics such introducing themselves, speaking about their families, their daily activities, and hobbies. Similar to the Arabic class, students practiced speaking presentation more than communication and interaction with each other.

Findings from the Chinese Instructor's Case

The Chinese instructor received relatively extensive teaching preparation as she holds a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction and participated in several workshops and

conferences in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. The workshops and conferences that she participated in focused on integrating Chinese language and culture into teaching. The Chinese instructor felt that she received helpful teaching preparation. As noted in the presentation of her case, in the interview, the Chinese instructor used several terms from second language acquisition and foreign language pedagogy like *comprehensible input* and *authentic materials*. Using these terms appropriately shows that she was familiar with some issues regarding teaching foreign languages. In addition, she mentioned that the workshops she took as part Startalk, she learned the use of the backward design to plan and evaluate her lesson.

The Chinese instructor believed in implementing several CLT features. First of all, from her point of view, the goal of teaching Elementary Chinese was promoting students' speaking and listening skills and their ability to express themselves. This belief coincides with an essential CLT teaching goal. Larsen-Freeman (2000) stated that the CLT aims at enabling "students to communicate in the target language" (p. 128).

The Chinese instructor emphasized the importance of accepting students' errors to encourage them to participate more in class. She shared that she avoided correcting their errors explicitly; rather, she repeated the error in the accurate form. She said, "I want them to make mistakes, because I want them to speak." In a CLT class, the errors are seen as natural language learning habit and are part of students' communicative skills development (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

The Chinese instructor also believed that using visual aids and authentic materials are essential to enhance students' comprehension ability. CLT emphasizes the use of pictures, videos, and other visual aids to provide comprehensible input and promote classroom communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). She also advocated using authentic materials.

Using authentic materials that are related to students' everyday life is a CLT feature (Savignon, 2008). In addition, the Chinese instructor believed that the instructor should maximize the use of the target language in class and minimize the use of students' native language. She mentioned that since students are learning Chinese in a foreign environment, they might have no opportunity to practice Chinese, except in class. For this reason, she emphasized the use of Chinese extensively in class. This is another CLT feature. In a CLT class, the instructor avoids using students' native language to immerse them in the target language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Another CLT feature that the Chinese instructor mentioned was group work activities. She believed that engaging students in group work activities is important to create a friendly and fun classroom environment and to give students opportunities to practice Chinese. The Chinese instructor interpreted CLT as "teaching students to communicate at interpersonal and presentational levels."

As for teaching practice, the Chinese instructor implemented CLT to some extent. First, she and her students communicated and spoke in Chinese during most of the class time. The Chinese instructor taught language rules in Chinese. She discussed listening, speaking, and reading activities in Chinese. At the beginning of sessions, she asked students short questions about their weeks and weekends. The use of Chinese created a communicative context in class. However, the instructor spoke in English when a student could not understand her, when she explained culture, and when she discussed the homework and exams.

Second, the Chinese instructor used visual aids (i.e., pictures and videos) and authentic materials, as she reported in the interview, to enhance students' comprehension of what she was saying and to promote communication in class. I noticed that she also used facial expressions and hand gestures to make students understand what she said. Moreover,

the examples, sentences, words that she discussed were usually presented in the PowerPoint presentation that she used; therefore, students listened to her and read simultaneously. This deliberate use of visual aids, authentic materials, facial expressions, hand gestures, written language helped in maximizing the use of Chinese in class. Third, the Chinese instructor used several communicative activities such as the short questions that she asked her students at the beginning of sessions.

Fourth, the Chinese instructor used pair work activities to complete some of the class activities. Fifth, she accepted students' errors and encouraged them to participate in class even if they made mistakes. Sixth, she integrated language three skills while teaching language rules in class: listening, reading, speaking. While she was teaching, students listened to her speaking, reading what was presented on the PowerPoint presentations. Christison and Murray (2014) state, "in a communicative view of language, language skills are integrated to accomplish certain tasks rather than separated to practice language skills" (p. 146). However, the one who communicated and interacted most in the classroom was the instructor. Students' participation was limited as they did not engage in long or free conversations. They usually performed one sentence when the instructor asked them the short questions. In addition, in some of the classroom activities, students to performed only one word. The instructor used dialogues, but reciting dialogues does not represent the spontaneous conversation. It only focused on the presentational speaking skill. The limitation of students' participation and communication in the classroom hindered the implementation of CLT.

The French Instructor's Case

The French was pursuing a master's degree in Translation Studies (see more demographic information about him in chapter 3). He taught this class as his assistantship duties. This was his first semester as a master's student.

The French classroom was 870 square feet. It was a stadium-style lecture classroom, with long curvy tables that could not be moved (Figure 7). There was sufficient place for the instructor to move between the rows of student seats. There were a digital projector and whiteboard. When the instructor used the digital projector, he only used the right side of the whiteboard. During the class time, the instructor stood behind his desk or in front of whiteboard explaining the lesson.



Figure 7. French classroom layout.

Preparation for Teaching Foreign Languages

The French instructor holds a bachelor's degree in Language and Mind with minor in French Language in 2015. He then obtained a scholarship to Study French in Paris for six months. The French instructor's teaching preparation was very limited. He only participated in a one-day program orientation offered by the department at the beginning of semester for teaching assistants. In this orientation, he was introduced to the course requirements for Elementary French I, the use of the Blackboard Learn Course Management System, his duties as instructor, and classroom management strategies. He commented on his teaching

preparation, “no real formal training in teaching. It was kind of let us see how it goes type thing.” To teach this class, he resorted to his own learning experience of French as he felt that his methods and strategies were effective. However, he realized that there were differences between his and his students’ experience. He began learning French in seventh grade and the content was less than the content his students were studying. The French instructor believed that he needed more teaching training. He mentioned that he was nervous at the beginning of the semester but then “things went very well” especially that the program offered him teaching materials such as the syllabus, quizzes and exams and he had the freedom to make appropriate changes.

Belief about Teaching Foreign Languages

The French instructor believed that language is a dynamic concept. He said, “language is a fluid concept. It is something that needs to be used. You need to be speaking and listening and conversing to really understand it.” He further explained that using lectures is not sufficient to teach French as a foreign language, the instructor should engage students in reading, speaking, listening and writing activities.

From his point of view, the goals of this introductory French class included: learning the foundations of French language and leading students to realize that, “English is not the only way for conceptualizing the world in terms of language and there are a lot of different possibilities the way that we combine words and the way that we use syntax.” Upon the completion of this class, students should understand that there are many ways to conceptualize the world. The French instructor also aimed at instilling students’ desire to learn French.

The French instructor believed that the instructor should use the trial and error strategy to gauge students' reactions and interest in his teaching methods and activities. In his teaching, he attempted to make learning stimulating and personable.

The French instructor was not sure if he heard of CLT before, but he guessed that this teaching approach means, "looking at language as a means of communication and using it to facilitate, like spreading ideas rather than being super rigid about like you say things in this way you say things in that way." He thought that CLT concentrates on the communicative aspect of language rather than the grammatical aspect. He believed that using this method is appropriate to teach beginning students, but students in upper language levels would need to focus on grammar more than just learning French from speaking. Finally, he believed that successful teaching occurred when students understood the lesson, when they did not hesitate, and they made only minor errors. Also, when they did well in the exam.

Teaching Practices

The French class consisted of 57 sessions over the course of the semester. There were four sessions per week of 50 minutes before noon (Monday through Thursday). The class was textbook-based as each session covered four to seven pages of the textbook. For instance, in the third session, students studied pages 2-3 and 11-13. Pages 2-3 were activities (Figure 8) and pages 11-13 were grammar and pronunciation explanation and exercises (Figure 9).

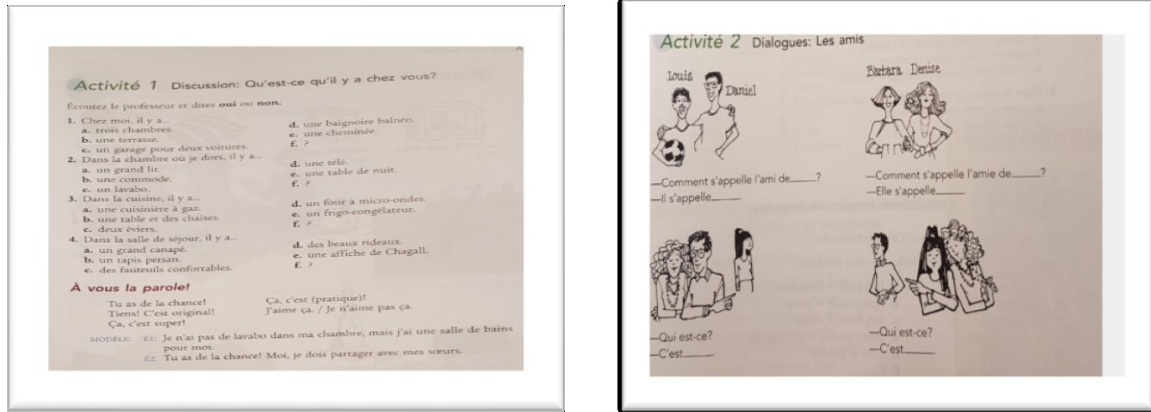


Figure 8. Sample of the French textbook activities.

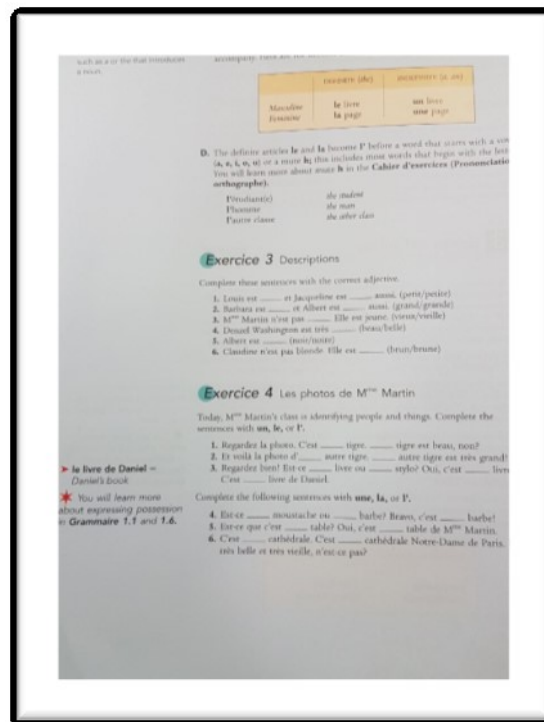


Figure 9. Sample of the French grammatical exercises.

Over the course of the semester, the instructor spent 38 sessions teaching and explaining the textbook pages. There was a total of six test sessions; one at the end of each chapter. The instructor stated that he spent the first 20-30 minutes of the first session teaching the French alphabet system.

There were five review sessions to prepare students for the chapter tests. Table 12 summarizes the structure of the class.

Table 12

French Class Structure

Content	Number of Sessions
Teaching the Alphabet System	< 1 (20-30 minutes)
Teaching and explaining the textbook pages	38
Presentations and Interviews	8
Review for Exams	5
Tests	6

The French instructor shared that for lesson plans, he looked at the daily schedule to determine what textbook pages and grammatical points should be covered in the session. He then tried to figure out how to simplify rules and not merely repeat what is in the textbook. Next, he prepared a PowerPoint presentation and activities for the session. He used the textbook activities and exercises where he took a screenshot of them and pasted them into the PowerPoint presentation. A typical French class began with a one-page, five-minute vocabulary or grammar quiz with gap-fill questions. The French instructor spoke in both English and French while distributing and collecting the quizzes using phrases and words such as “Just do it,” “Handing your homework now,” and “passez.”

After the quizzes, the instructor began the lesson by reminding students of what they studied in the previous lesson and providing an overview of the current topic or topics. After that, he used a PowerPoint presentation which included pictures that were taken from the textbook (see for an example Figure 10).



Figure 10. Sample of pictures the French instructor used in class.

The instructor typically would read the sentences in the picture or have a student read them he would analyze the sentences in the picture with a focus on the specific grammatical point that he wanted to teach. The instructor hoped that students prepared and read the textbook pages before coming to the class to be familiar with the new topic.

Once the instructor analyzed the sentences, he either engaged students in an activity to apply what they had learned or moved to another grammatical point. The instructor used the textbook exercises. Figure 11 presents a sample of the textbook grammar drills.

Exercice 3 Descriptions

Complete these sentences with the correct adjective.

1. Louis est ____ et Jacqueline est ____ aussi. (petit/petite)
2. Barbara est ____ et Albert est ____ aussi. (grand/grande)
3. M^{me} Martin n'est pas _____. Elle est jeune. (vieux/vieille)
4. Denzel Washington est très _____. (beau/belle)
5. Albert est _____. (noir/noire)
6. Claudine n'est pas blonde. Elle est _____. (brun/brune)

Exercice 4 Les photos de M^{me} Martin

Today, M^{me} Martin's class is identifying people and things. Complete the sentences with **un, le, or P**.

1. Regardez la photo. C'est ____ tigre. ____ tigre est beau, non?
2. Et voilà la photo d'____ autre tigre. ____ autre tigre est très grand!
3. Regardez bien! Est-ce ____ livre ou ____ stylo? Oui, c'est ____ livre. C'est ____ livre de Daniel.

Figure 11. Sample of grammar drills.

The instructor mentioned that he asked students to complete the activities sometimes individually and sometimes in pairs to change the routine. He did not want to keep students work individually or in pairs all the time. Additionally, he mentioned that he used pair work because students may get nervous when he called on them to complete the exercise in front of their classmates or a student might take a long time to answer. He further stated that when a student makes a mistake in front of his or her classmates, this discourages the whole class. Working in pairs is also an opportunity to establish friendship among students and it makes them more comfortable. However, the instructor usually called on a specific student to answer a short question after introducing a new grammatical point.

The instructor mentioned that he sometimes tried to use “something fun like a video or song.” The French instructor mentioned that he used English when a student had question and could not vocalize it in French, and when he wanted to make sure that students completely understood what he said, especially when discussing the exams or homework. In addition, he stated that he used English when he explained “dense grammar.” For French, he spoke it “wherever I thought it is appropriate and not too impossible for them to follow.” Also, he spoke French when giving activity instructions, but he repeated it in English when students did not understand.

Teaching Grammar and Vocabulary

As mentioned in the previous section, the French instructor used a PowerPoint presentation with one to three pictures taken from the textbook on each slide. The French instructor read or asked a student to read the sentence under the picture and then analyzed it. For instance, I observed him teaching *the reflexive verbs*. He said, “We are gonna talk about everything you do every day, habits. We are gonna study reflexive verbs.” He further said, “reflexive verbs are what you do to yourself.” He presented a picture of a person taking a

shower, another picture of a person draying himself, and a third one of a girl brushing her teeth. For each picture, he read the French sentence under the picture and then translated it into English with focus on the reflexive verb. When he finished explaining, he commented, “In French, there are many reflexive verbs that we do not use in English.” He asked students to repeat one of the sentences which was about a person washing his hand. A student asked a question about how to identify this type of verbs, and another student asked about the usage of pronouns with the reflexive verbs. The instructor used the whiteboard to answer students’ questions. The instructor and students spoke in English. After discussing this grammatical point, the instructor presented several sentences on a PowerPoint slide and called on some students to use a reflexive verb to complete them.

In the interview, the instructor mentioned that he used pictures and the context to teach vocabulary. When he used the context, he gave students a sentence in which all the vocabulary words were familiar except for the new vocabulary item. He stated that he used translation to teach students vocabulary.

Teaching Culture

The French instructor expressed his satisfaction of how the French culture was presented in the textbook. He shared that many reading passages were culture-based and some of sentences used to teach vocabulary or grammar were about French famous figures. Once when I observed, the instructor taught students verbs and vocabulary related to shopping. While he presented pictures and sentences as described above, he shared some French shopping customs based on his own experience when he was in France. The instructor used English to teach culture. The French instructor shared that students also learned about baptism in French godson and goddaughter.

Teaching Language Skills

The French instructor focused considerably on teaching grammar and vocabulary in class. There were two instances where I observed him teaching speaking through dialogue. He read the dialogue and divided students into pairs. Each student was asked to represent one of the dialogue characters. He shared that sometimes he gave students the beginning of the dialogue and asked them to complete it and then recite it. In terms of listening, he shared that students listened to him in class speaking French. This was the opportunity for students to listen to French. The French instructor informed me that students write in French for five to ten minutes at the end of every other session, applying the grammatical points and vocabulary. They were asked to apply and use the grammatical points and vocabulary they learned.

Providing Feedback

The French instructor expressed his need to improve his feedback strategies. In class, I observed him using three methods: positive feedback, repetition and explicit feedback. For example, after explaining reflexive verbs, he asked students questions and commented on the correct answers by saying: “excellent” and “oui,” which means “yes.” He often used the French word “très bien,” which means “very good.” However, the French instructor did not specify to what extent the students’ performance was correct. The second feedback type he used was repetition where he repeated the student’s error with emphasis on the correct form. The French instructor explained, “If it was a pronunciation error, I would try and say it slowly, you know, so that I knew that they could hear it and then I would have them repeat it back to me a few times.” He further explained that he focused on correcting obvious pronunciation errors that change the meaning of a word.

The French instructor used explicit corrective feedback where he explicitly analyzed and corrected the student's error. He said, "I would try and break it down for them and have them explain it to me why it was wrong rather than me putting the words in their mouth." The French instructor indicated in the interview that writing and analyzing the error on the whiteboard help students understand the mechanism behind the correct form.

The French Instructor's Obstacles

The French instructor stated that he struggled because the content that this class covered was too much and he did not have enough time to explain everything. In addition, some of students registered in this class because it was a requirement as they had to learn another language. These were the two main obstacles he mentioned in the interview.

Syllabus Analysis

The French language instructor's syllabus was analyzed in terms of the following components: course objectives and course assignments.

Course Objectives

Per the syllabus, the Elementary I course objectives focused on (a) promoting students' ability to maintain basic conversations regarding the topics of the textbook by using grammatical structures and vocabulary taught in the textbook, (b) promoting students' ability to communicate about their own experiences informed by the topics discussed in the textbook (e.g., family relationships, university life and leisure activities at University X, (c) composing short writings with accurate grammar use and comprehensible communication of meaning, (d) reading and listening to basic texts in French, and (e) internalizing the grammatical structure of everyday, work, and academic language.

Course Assignments

The course assignments were divided into seven types: participation and preparation, homework, quizzes, chapter tests, oral interviews and presentation, final exam, and portfolio (optional). The distribution of the grade is illustrated in table 13.

Table 13

French Class Grade Distribution

Assignment	Grade
Participation and Preparation	20%
Homework	10%
Quizzes	10%
Chapter Tests	30%
Oral Interview/Presentation	15%
Final Exam	15%
Portfolio (Optional)	1%-3 %

The participation and preparation section indicated that students should attend each session and prepare before coming to class. Students also were urged to speak exclusively in French as the class was to be taught in French. The homework was a long assignment for each chapter that students completed online. The French instructor shared that this assignment included several multiple-choice items and fill-in-the-blank items regarding grammar and vocabulary. It also included dictation, short listening questions, and reading comprehension. The syllabus asked student to complete one or two exercises every day. The whole assignment should be done at the end of chapter. There were several short quizzes at the beginning of class to assess students' understanding of what they have learned in the previous session. As mentioned above, these quizzes were grammar and vocabulary based. By the end of the chapter there was a test which was in fill in blanks, multiple choice on listening comprehension, vocabulary, and grammar. In addition, students wrote an essay

using the vocabulary and grammar they had learned in the chapter. Two interviews were required as well. The first interview was one in which the instructor asked students short questions regarding their life, family, and friends. At the end of the semester, there was another interview with two or three students together where the instructor asked them a question and they answered and commented on each other's answer. For the presentation, students in groups selected a situation and wrote a scenario using grammar and vocabulary they learned, and then they performed the skit in front of their classmates. The final exam was comprehensive but similar to the chapter tests. Students were advised to document their progress during the semester in a portfolio, but this was optional.

Findings from the French Instructor's Case

The French instructor had very limited teaching preparation. He only attended one-day orientation program at the beginning of the semester where he learned about his responsibility as an instructor and about the departmental teaching policies. He shared that he was nervous at the beginning of the semester because he did not know what to expect and how he should teach. For this reason, he resorted to his own learning of French and utilized that learning experience in his teaching. He also used what he called "trail-error" strategy where he implemented some ideas and teaching strategies and gauged students' reactions and learning from implementing strategies.

However, he did not receive any academic teaching preparation, he believed in some CLT features. For example, CLT has "shifted language teaching from viewing language as "a static, reified system to be learned, towards a view of communication as a fluid and negotiable system to be performed" (Brumfit, 2001, p. 48). The French instructor had a very similar belief. He said, "language is a fluid concept. It is something that needs to be used. You need to be speaking and listening and conversing to really understand it." He believed

that language is best learned through use and interaction. Learning foreign languages through communication and interaction is the heart of CLT because this teaching approach is based on the theoretical assumption that the main language function is communication (Brundl, 2007).

In addition, he emphasized the importance of considering students' motivation and interests to encourage them to continue learning French. Considering students' motivation and interests are two of CLT features (Nunan, 1988). The French instructor acknowledged the importance of group work activities. He shared that group work activities create a friendly and comfortable classroom environment. He believes, group work also provides students with an opportunity to work together and help each other. From his point of view, when students work individually and make errors this might discourage the entire class. He also mentioned that he tries to make language learning personable and relatable to a student's life.

When asked about his interpretation of CLT, the French instructor stated that CLT means "looking at language as a means of communication and using it to facilitate, like spreading ideas rather than being super rigid about like you say things in this way you say things in that way." He believed that this teaching method is suitable to teach beginning students. However, he thought that upper language class levels might require more focus on teaching grammar.

In teaching practice, the primary teaching method that the French instructor implemented was the grammar-translation method. As mentioned above, in the grammar-translation method, the instructor focused on analyzing language rules and translating sentences and words from students' native language into the target language and vice-versa. Even when the French instructor taught speaking through dialogue, he discussed the dialogue

in English. Also, he used English when teaching pronunciation in a lesson where he compared French pronunciation with English pronunciation. When teaching grammar, which occupied most of the class time, the instructor presented short sentences on a PowerPoint presentation to deductively analyze them with his students. The sentences were short. The instructor did not focus on the meaning of the sentence. His focus was on the grammatical points that he taught. The instructor and his students spoke and communicated in English most of the class time. Most of the activities that the instructor used focused on language structures.

Although, the French instructor employed a lot of grammar-translation techniques, he implemented some CLT features. First, he encouraged students through positive feedback. Second, he accepted students' errors and used the repetition feedback strategy to correct their errors implicitly. Third, the instructor used pair work activities to complete activities. However, the instructor used visual aids, mainly pictures, but he did not discuss the pictures with students. Finally, when students worked in pairs or groups, they discussed the activities in English and these activities tended to be more structural-based activities.

The German Instructor's Case

The German program offered four Elementary German I sections. The participant of this study taught one of these sections. During the time of the study, she was a master's degree student. Teaching this class was a requirement of her assistantship that she received from the language department at University X. This was her first semester in the program and she was enrolled in three master's classes.

The classroom size was 1243 square feet. Students sat in rows facing the instructor and seating capacity was greater than enrollment. There was sufficient space for the instructor and students to move around. There were a digital projector and dry erase

whiteboards. The whiteboards on both the front and side walls, allowed for simultaneous use of the projector and whiteboards (Figure 12).



Figure 12: German classroom layout.

Preparation for Teaching Foreign Language

The German instructor' teaching preparation was relatively limited. She studied a master's course in methodology of teaching German as a foreign language at a university in the United States prior to attending University X. The course covered the structural teaching method, the inductive teaching method, and content- and task-based instruction. In the course, there was emphasis on students taking charge of their own learning and on applying the European Standard and making online language portfolios. The instructor had nine years of experience in teaching German.

Belief about Teaching Foreign Languages

The German instructor believed that students should be responsible for their learning and should practice language in class. She also believed that objective of this introductory language level was making students familiar with the language broadly and to motivate them to continue learning German. She shared that the instructor should create an interactive classroom environment to provide students with opportunities to practice language. This objective can be achieved by teaching relevant topic to students and through

discussions and conservation. The German instructor explained that students should be provided with authentic materials and situations to help them practice and use the German language outside the class. She emphasized that students' positive feedback and satisfaction do not necessarily indicate that the instructor was successful in his or her teaching. For her, successful teaching is achieved when students use and become interested in using new German words or phrases and when they communicate with each other in German language. In her words, "It is not that students feel happy because they might be happy, but they do not use German at all." This means that for her students' use of German is essential for successful teaching.

Teaching Practices

The German class consisted of 57 sessions. It was a textbook-based class as the sessions were divided by the textbook chapters. For example, the first 13 sessions covered the textbook introduction (Einführung) and the second 10 sessions covered the first textbook chapter (kapitel 1) and so on. The class covered four chapters of the textbook. There were three test sessions at the end of first three chapters and a final exam. Many of the sessions began with a short quiz on listening and reading comprehension, speaking, grammar and vocabulary. Table 14 summarizes the structure of the class.

Table 14

German Class Structure

Content	Number of Sessions
Teaching the German Alphabet System	1
Teaching and explaining the textbook chapters	51
Tests and Exams	4

The German instructor mentioned that the coordinator gave her the lesson plans and the PowerPoint presentations to use in her teaching. When preparing for lessons, she

reviewed the teaching materials provided by the coordinator and figured out how to use them in her teaching. She also tried to understand the logic behind the lesson and how these materials could serve her teaching.

The German instructor mentioned that the session routine depended on the topic (i.e., grammar, vocabulary, reading a text, listening or watching a video). At the beginning of each chapter the focus was on grammar, so first she reminded students of what they learned in the previous session and then explained the new rules and “Showing examples of how it is applied.” After that, students practiced through examples that were written in a PowerPoint presentation to understand how the rules she taught can be applied.

If the lesson focused on vocabulary, students repeated after her and then learned the vocabulary in context. If the lesson was on reading or listening, introduced the topic and divided students into small groups of three to four students to read or listen then answer the comprehension questions individually and then check with a small group of three.

Teaching Grammar and Vocabulary

The German instructor taught grammar through presenting and discussing short sentences to explain grammatical points. She presented these sentence on PowerPoint presentations and explained their structure in German. Figure 13 shows a PowerPoint slide with three sentences that the instructor used to teach students the German definite articles.

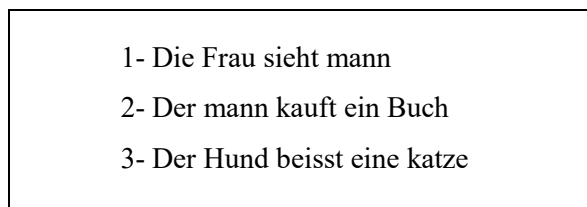


Figure 13. Sample of PowerPoint slide.

The translation of these sentences is (1) The woman sees man, (2) The man buys a book, (3) The dog is biting the cat). The instructor used these short sentences as examples of

the grammatical points that she taught. She presented the sentences on a PowerPoint presentation, explaining the rules and in the second classroom observation taught students regular and irregular verbs. In a PowerPoint, she displayed several verbs. First, she displayed the verb in a tense and then called on students to give other tenses. After the student gave an answer, the instructor showed the correct one. The instructor used some English words such as “regular” and “irregular,” and “past tense” and “present tense.” To teach vocabulary, the instructor presented vocabulary accompanied with a picture and asked students to repeat after her. She made students practice with her and then with each other in small group.

Teaching Culture

The German instructor taught varied cultural topics such as addressing people, and geography. To teach culture, the instructor used English. For example, I observed her teaching the German currency. She first asked students, “what is the word for currency in German?” A student answered, since the instructor introduced vocabulary before teaching culture. The instructor explained the currency system in German and the changed in 2002 when Germany stopped using the Deutsche market as its official currency.

Teaching Language Skills

The German instructor taught reading and listening in a similar fashion. To teach reading, she asked students to read the passage individually and silently and answer its questions. Once they completed, the students checked the answers with a partner. After that, the whole class discussed the answers under the instructor’s leadership. For listening, the instructor asked students to read the questions about the text first and then students watched a short clip without answering the questions. The second time, students watched the clip again and answered the questions, and they did the same while watching the clip for the third time.

After that, each student checked his or her answers with a partner and then the whole class discussed the questions. For teaching speaking, in pairs, students recited a short dialogue from the textbook. The instructor divided students into pairs and gave them a few minutes to read the dialogue and finally they recited it. Also, she presented short questions on a PowerPoint slide and students in pairs answered these questions while she listened to them.

Providing Feedback

The German instructor mentioned that she tried to provide feedback in German if it was possible and if she thought the students could understand. The first feedback type was the explicit correction in which the instructor guided students to find and correct the error. The instructor described her used of this type, “lately I think I have been writing the sentence on the board and encouraging them to find where the correction needs to be to draw attention to it.” I observed her using this method as she described and when the student could not locate or correct the error, the instructor provided the answer. In addition, the questions that she used to encourage students to identify and correct the error were in German. The second feedback type that I observed the instructor using was positive feedback correction where she used encouraging words such as “good,” “okay,” and “yeah” when she accepted the student or students’ performance. These words did not clarify to what extent the performance was correct. Finally, the instructor used repetition where she repeated the student’s performance or part of it with emphasis on the correct form.

Syllabus Analysis

The German language instructor’s syllabus was analyzed in terms of the following components: course objectives and course assignments.

Course Objectives

The course objective section in the syllabus indicated that the class concentrated on practicing the five language skills: speaking, listening, reading, writing, and cultural knowledge. Students were expected to understand simple conversations, and stories, read and understand short texts. They also were expected to be able to engage in short conversations on everyday topics and write short essays on familiar topics using grammatical points and vocabulary they learned in class. Finally, students learned about culture and life in German speaking countries.

Course Assignments

There were five class assignments: class participation, unit tests, homework, quizzes, essays, and a final exam. For the class participation, students were required to attend and engage in all sessions. The syllabus emphasized that participation is the center of this class and students need to actively participate in class. The second assignment was the homework which students completed online. Similar to French class, students in German class were asked to complete several fill-in-the-blanks, complete vocabulary tables, answer short reading and listening questions and submit them before the end of the semester. The third assessment was writing essays. Students were asked to write about several topics. Table 15 shows the writing assignments and their description.

Table 15

German Class Writing Assignments

Writing Assignment	Description
1	Write 50 words describing yourself
2	Write 75 words describing your daily life
3	Write 75 words describing a friend of a family member
4	Writing 100 words describing your preparation for a party
5	Writing an essay which is part of the final exam

There were many announced and unannounced short quizzes at the beginning of each session on varied language: listing, vocabulary, and grammar and speaking. There was a test at the end of each chapter and a final exam. Table 16 illustrates the grade distribution on each assignment.

Table 16

German Class Grade Distribution

Assignment	Grade
Class participation	35%
Unit Tests	20%
Homework	10%
Quizzes	10%
Essays	10%
Final Exam	15%

Findings from the German Instructor's Case

The German instructor received relatively limited teaching preparation. She took a master's course in foreign language teaching methods at John Hopkins University. This course introduced her to some teaching methods such the structural teaching method, the inductive teaching method, and content and task-based instructions. The course focused on improving students' responsibility for their learning.

The German instructor believed some CLT features. She felt that students should take more responsibility and charge of their learning. She shared that students should be exposed and practice language in real situations that are similar to everyday situations outside the class. In a CLT class, the instructor uses activities that resemble the use of the target language in daily life (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). She also believed that the instructor should use authentic materials. She mentioned that one of her teaching objectives is

motivating students to continue learning German. When asked about CLT interpretation she said that CLT means “working in context in the target language as much as possible, I think everything is based on the context rather than explaining in English for instance, describing how things are and trying to apply it in practice.”

In teaching practice, the German instructor implemented the structural teaching approach. This approach holds that “language as reality is structured and the structure may be predicted and expressed as a set of elements holding a fixed set of relationships” (Mukalel, 2005, p. 57). The German instructor explained language rules in an explicit way and used structural activities to provide students with opportunities to apply rules.

Although, the German instructor implemented the structural approach, she implemented some CLT features. First, she used the German language as a medium of instruction. She communicated with her students most of the class time in German. Second, she used pictures as visual aids to support students’ comprehension, especially when she taught vocabulary. When teaching grammar, she used PowerPoint presentations. The PowerPoint slides contained sentences that she analyzed to teach grammar. The German instructor used these sentences to teach grammar. Third, the German instructor used group work activities, when students completed reading and listening activities, but students spoke in English while competing the activities. Fourth, she accepted students’ errors and used the repetition technique to implicitly correct their errors.

The Russian Instructor’s Case

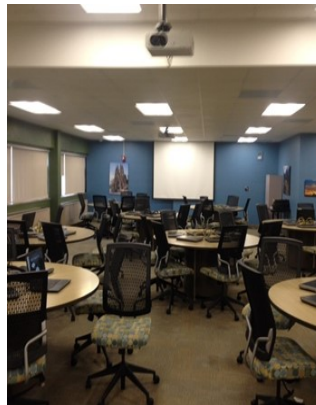
There were two elementary Russian I sections in the Russian Language program when the study took place. The participant of this study taught one of these sessions. She was a master’s student studying Translation with focus on English- Russian translation. She taught this class as an assistantship requirement. She was studying three master’s classes.

The Russian class met four times a week for 50 in the afternoon (Monday through Thursday). The classroom size was 1665 square feet. It was a recently remodeled language learning laboratory. Seating was arranged in round tables equipped with laptops. Each table accommodated five students. Students and the instructor could move without restriction. There was considerable open space. Although there was only one instructor computer station, there were digital projectors on each end of the classroom, each with a small whiteboard on the left of the projector screen (Figure 14).

View from back



View from Center Front



View from Front Corner



Figure 14. Russian classroom layout.

Preparation for Teaching Foreign Language

The Russian instructor reported that she had not taken any classes or workshops in foreign language teaching. Nor did she attend a departmental orientation for new instructors.

Belief about Teaching Foreign Languages

The Russian instructor believed that the goals of teaching in this beginning class was “to help the students, American audience to provide basic speaking skills to speak in a Russian environment.” She stated that her students:

already know how to greet, how to ask the time, how to ask what day it is. For example, week days, they know months, they know seasons, they know how to speak about the daily life, what they do, so elementary things.

She believed that students need to put efforts to master these skills. They should not depend on what she gave in the 50 minutes in session. They need to review what they learned in class and find good strategies and practice because the lack of listening is a problem. She shared that it is difficult to provide an excellent language in a foreign language environment.

She described the best teaching best teaching practice, “Speaking and listening, just interaction. Interaction is the best way, they listen to what I say, and I listen to what they say.” The Russian instructor explained success in teaching, “immediately I understand from [students’] eyes, if they are not surprised, not scared, it means that they get everything.” This means the instructor should concentrate on the communicative aspect of language rather than the grammatical aspect. The Russian instructor was more concerned with communication as a form of interaction rather than defining methods. When asked about the meaning of CLT, she said, “It is unavoidable method, I mean I do not understand any teaching method without communication. Really, otherwise it is gonna be just monologue, which is very boring, which is not sufficient, which is failure.” She needs to explain everything.

Teaching Practices

The Russian class consisted of 56 sessions during the term. It is textbook based as each set of sessions covered a textbook chapter. For example, the first two weeks were allocated to teach the Russian alphabet which was an introductory textbook chapter. The third and fourth weeks were assigned to teach the first chapter and the fifth and sixth weeks

covered the second textbook chapter. There were five tests, one at the end of each chapter. There were several quizzes and two presentations, but the instructor did not allocate sessions to them. Table 17 summarizes the structure of the class.

Table 17

Russian Class Structure

Content	Number of Sessions
Teaching the Alphabet System	5
Teaching and explaining the textbook pages	46
Tests	5

The instructor shared that for lesson preparation, she looked at what students should learn, what she expected from them. She then made a PowerPoint presentation, and she attempted to provide examples as much as possible. She endeavored to simplify her lesson because she believed Russian grammar is very complicated.

A typical session began by checking students' homework and clarifying any difficulty they encountered. Then the Russian instructor provided a quick overview of what she would teach in the current lesson. She presented or introduced the topic through a PowerPoint presentation which included several slides. Each slide provided linguistic rule (grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary) accompanied by several sentences as examples. She explained the rule in English and sometimes compared the Russian and the English grammar. Next, she either asked students to translate from English to Russian, asked them to repeat after her or asked them individually short questions. Sometimes, she asked students to complete one or two exercises from the textbook (Figure 15). When the textbook exercise used, the Russian instructor asked students to work in pairs and asked each other a question, the instructor herself asked each student one of the exercise questions (Figure 15).

1-7 Fill in the blanks with the appropriate words and phrases.

1. An older member of a Russian delegation visiting your university wants to get acquainted with you. Open and close the conversation appropriately:

— Здравствуйте. Давайте _____ . Меня _____ Белоусова Анна Николаевна. А _____ зовут?
 — Меня? _____ .
 — Очень _____ познакомиться.
 — До _____ !
 — До _____ !

5-4 Когда? В какой день? В какие дни? With a partner, practice asking and answering on what day things will happen.

Вопросы	Ответы
В какие дни ты слушаешь лекции?	В понедельник.
В какие дни ты не слушаешь лекции?	Во вторник.
В какие дни у тебя русский язык?	В среду.
В какие дни ты смотришь телевизор?	В четверг.
В какие дни ты не занимаешься?	В пятницу.
В какие дни ты идешь в библиотеку?	В субботу.
В какие дни ты отдыхаешь?	В воскресенье.
В какие дни ты работаешь?	
В какие дни ты встаешь поздно?	
В какие дни ты встаешь рано?	
В какие дни ты играешь в футбол?	

Figure 15. Exercises from the textbook.

Teaching Grammar and Vocabulary

As mentioned above, the Russian instructor used PowerPoint presentations in her teaching. When she taught grammar, she first presented the rule and sentences as examples to show students how the rule is applied. For examples, I observed her teaching the plural. She used PowerPoint slides similar to Figure 16.

МНОЖЕСТВЕННОЕ ЧИСЛО
 Plural of Nouns

For masculine and feminine plural nouns the basic endings are – **Ы** and –**И**.

Например:

<i>fem.</i>	<i>masc.</i>
Лампа - лампы	мальчик-мальчики
Ручка - ручки	телефон-телефоны
Газета - газеты	галстук-галстуки
Фамилия - фамилии	стол – столы

Exceptions

- Some masculine nouns take stressed – **а́** as the plural ending.

например:
 дом – дома́
 свитер- свитера́
 паспорт – паспорта́
 город- города́

Figure 16. PowerPoint presentation slides the Russian instructor used.

The Russian instructor explained these rules in English and once she finished she asked students one by one to give her a plural of a singular noun. The instructor used the textbook exercises. In a similar fashion, the instructor used pictures on PowerPoints to teach vocabulary. For example, I observed her teaching color names. She used a PowerPoint presentation to show students pictures of seven colors with their names in Russian. The instructor pronounced the color name in both Russian and English. She presented another slide where the colors were in pictures without written words. She pointed to the color and asked students individually in Russian (I assumed that she was asking what is the color). Students answered, and she commented, "It is brown" and "Okay, blue." She vocalized the word in Russian when it appeared that a student struggled.

Teaching Culture

The instructor reported that there was no specific cultural topics that she taught. When it is appropriate she discussed some cultural topics. The textbook for example taught students about famous Russian people such as Tolstoy, Pushkin, Gorbachev when students were practicing the Russian alphabet system. The Russian instructor shared that she provided information about these Russian figures. The instructor also encouraged students to attend the tea hour and explained to students why Russians like tea not coffee like many other nations. In one of my class observations, I arrived the class in five minutes before its beginning, but I found the instructor and students were leaving to join the tea hour. In another classroom observation, the Russian instructor brought Russian candy and shared it with her students. She explained what the candy consisted of. She told students that there was a Russian supermarket nearby and gave them the address.

Teaching Language Skills

The Russian instructor reported that she used cartoon videos to teach listening. She shared that students watched the videos and answered some questions about the characters that appeared in those videos. She said that the textbook did not include sufficient reading passages while her students wanted to practice reading. For this reason, she selected reading passages and emailed them to students. Students read the passages at home and came to read it together in class with her. I observed her reading a short poem with students. She asked each student in class to read the poem aloud.

Providing Feedback

The Russian instructor in the interview mentioned that she did not think of what type of feedback she gave her students. She paused and said, “I never thought of this, I just correct.” In class, I observed her using three feedback types: positive feedback, repetition, explicit correction. To provide positive feedback, she used encouraging words, especially the Russian word “super” and English words such as “good” and “okay.” Unlike the Chinese and French instructors, when the Russian instructor used the positive feedback, she sometimes gave some comments such as “Okay, for the first time” and “Good, but you need to put more emphasis on the letter R.” In addition, the Russian instructor used her facial expression by nodding and saying, “Aha.” The instructor used repetition with emphasis on the correct form. Finally, she used the explicit correction where she overtly pointed out and corrected the student’s error. For instance, I observed her teaching students suffixes in the present tense. She described the rule and asked students to translate some sentences from English into Russian. When students made errors, the instructor commented, “No you cannot say... okay” and “drop the *e* and stressed on...” The instructor sometimes wrote the correction on the whiteboard.

The Russian Instructor's Obstacles

The main concern that the Russian instructor had was the insufficient opportunities for students to practice Russian because they learned in a foreign environment. In addition, she believed that the textbook was not designed to help students learn Russian for their everyday life. Rather, the book focused on academic vocabulary and topics that students can later learn.

Syllabus Analysis

The Russian language instructor's syllabus was analyzed in terms of the following components: course objectives and course assignments.

Course Objectives

The syllabus stated that the learning objectives were: enabling students to perform in varied real situations in speaking, writing, listening, and conversation, learning the necessary Russian structures that students need to complete communicative tasks and drills aiming to increase accuracy, and providing introduction to Russian culture to prepare students to interact with Russian.

Course Assignments

There were four class assignments: participation, homework, oral presentation, and chapter tests. Students were required to attend all sessions and participate. For the quizzes, the instructor asked students oral questions from time to time and estimated the grade that they deserved based on their performance. Homework assignments included questions from the textbook (e.g., fill in blanks, matching, and multiple choice). Oral presentations were short stories and dialogues that students presented in class in small groups. Finally, there was a test at the end of each chapter. Table 18 shows the grade distribution.

Table 18

Russian Class Grade Distribution

Assignment	Grade
Participation (attendance, preparedness, quizzes)	20%
Homework	20%
Oral presentation	10%
Chapter tests	50%

Findings from the Russian Instructor's Case

The Russian instructor did not receive any teaching preparation. Although she did not receive teaching preparation, she held some foreign language teaching beliefs that were communicative-based. For example, she believed that the goal of teaching this class was promoting students' communicative skills to express themselves and speak about simple topics such as time, seasons, months and simple daily life. CLT aims at promoting students' communicative ability (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). She also believed that foreign languages are best learned through language use and practice. She said, "Speaking and listening, just interaction. Interaction is the best way, they listen to what I say, and I listen to what they say." As mentioned above, CLT emphasizes learning second and foreign languages through communication and interaction with others. When asked about her interpretation of CLT, she said that CLT means any interaction and communication between the instructor and his or her students. She stated, "It is unavoidable method, I mean I do not understand any teaching method without communication. Really, otherwise it is gonna be just monologue, which is very boring, which is not sufficient, which is failure."

In teaching practice, she followed the grammar-translation method as she analyzed Russian language rules (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) and translated sentences from Russian onto English and vice versa. She also compared Russian rules with English rules.

The Russian instructor used Russian language as a medium of instruction where she and her students spoke English most of the class time. She mentioned that when she taught listening, she discussed the listening content, asked students, and students answered her questions in Russian. The Russian instructor accepted students' errors. She repeated their errors in the accurate form. She also encouraged students through positive and encouraging words. In addition, the Russian instructor used pictures in class. The activities that she used were translation activities, and structural activities such as matching, fill-gap. She also asked students to complete some activities in small groups.

The Spanish Instructor's Case

The Spanish program is the biggest foreign language program in the department. There were twelve Elementary Spanish I sections. The participant of this study taught one session. He was a native speaker of Spanish from Spain who was in his last semester in the Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) master's program. He was a graduate assistant who taught this class as his assistantship responsibility. He was enrolled in three masters' classes. The Spanish class met four times a week for 50 minutes each day (Monday, Tuesdays, Wednesday and Thursday). The classroom seating was not arranged in rows but rather in a U-shape with movable tables. Students and the instructor could move about the classroom without obstruction. The equipment was set up with a long whiteboard that has sufficient writing space even when the projection screen was lowered. Figure 17 shows the classroom layout.

View from back



View from Back Corner



Figure 17. Spanish classroom layout.

Preparation for Teaching Foreign Language

The Spanish instructor was in his last semesters in a master's degree. He was a student in the Teaching English as a Second Language program when this study took place. Throughout his master's program he has taken several methodology courses such as Methodology in Teaching English as a Second Language, Second Language Acquisition Theories, and Second Language Curriculum and Testing. He explained his preparation, "I did not have any training before or teaching experience. It has been mostly from the master's classes."

Belief about Teaching Foreign Languages

The instructor shared that he did not have a clear pattern in his mind of what he needed to teach and how to teach it. The instructor explained that he attempted to use varied activities to find out which of these activities engaged students and improved their learning. For instance, he asked student to write a haiku which is Japanese poetry style that consists of three verses and five lines. He commented, "the idea was for them to have something out of the ordinary because most of the time they do write a letter. We are basically going to do the same but just because it is gonna be called a haiku it is gonna be different." He also asked students to work together when witting the haiku because he felt that working in groups was

better than working individually. The Spanish instructor was modifying activities and teaching strategies to improve his teaching.

The Spanish instructor believed that the goal of this class was to give students, “an introduction to what Spanish is. Introducing some basic concepts like gender and number in Spanish. Also having them start using grammar and useful expressions.” The Spanish instructor believed that focusing on teaching grammar is a fundamental element to improving students’ language abilities. He further stated that using grammatical activities such as gap-fill activities are helpful to make students master grammar and therefore use it correctly when they speak. When asked about CLT, he mentioned that it means “focusing on making students successfully communicate.” He explained that students in the CLT approach, learn foreign language through its use and interaction, which eventually leads to learning and mastering grammar without explicit teaching. However, he indicated that he did not implement many aspects of this approach because he believed that students need to learn grammar explicitly. In addition, students need to analyze the language structure. The instructor believed that it is not sufficient if students learn how to speak Spanish without understanding its structure because they will make errors without the ability to correct themselves.

Teaching Practices

The Spanish class consisted of 55 sessions for this semester. Each session lasted 50 minutes. The instructor spent the first two sessions teaching the Spanish alphabet. The instructor spent 44 sessions teaching grammar, speaking, reading, writing and vocabulary, there were three sessions for oral presentations, three sessions for review and preparation for the tests and there were three test sessions at the end of each chapter. Table 19 summarizes the structure of the class.

Table 19

Spanish Class Structure

Content	Number of Sessions
Teaching the Alphabet System	2
Teaching grammar, speaking, reading, writing, and vocabulary	44
Oral presentations	3
Review for Tests	3
Tests	3

The Spanish instructor shared that for preparing for the class he followed the syllabus and the daily calendar. He prepared a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed the topics in the textbook. These exercises were gap-fill, matching, completing sentences. Next, the instructor might explain another grammatical point and used a same method to teach it.

The Spanish instructor opened the sessions typically by using a PowerPoint presentation to explain a grammatical point. The PowerPoint slides were written in Spanish and the instructor explained them in English. Next, students completed one or two exercises from the textbook. Then the instructor moved to teach reading or listening. Sometimes, the instructor taught only grammar in a session, especially when he taught more than one grammatical point. In addition, the Spanish instructor mentioned that he discussed a cultural fact when there was time.

Teaching Grammar and Vocabulary

As mentioned above, the Spanish instructor used PowerPoint presentations to teach grammar. The instructor presented a grammatical point in one or more slides that were written in Spanish and explained the slides content in English. He used the whiteboard to clarify how the grammatical point should be applied. After expanding the grammatical point, he asked students to complete one or two textbook exercises. The textbook exercises were

gap-fill, matching, completing sentences. Figure 18 presents a sample of the textbook exercises. The instructor presented the exercise on the PowerPoint and discussed its items one by one. A student who knew the right answer voluntarily answered and the instructor corrected if there was an error.

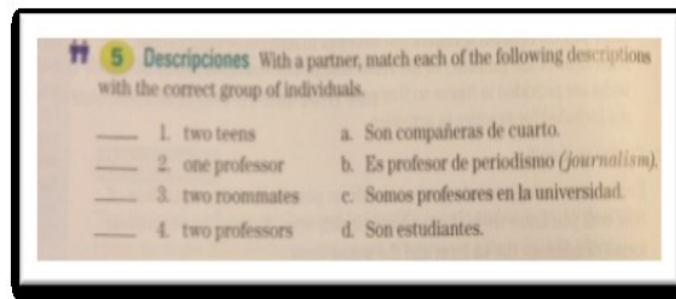
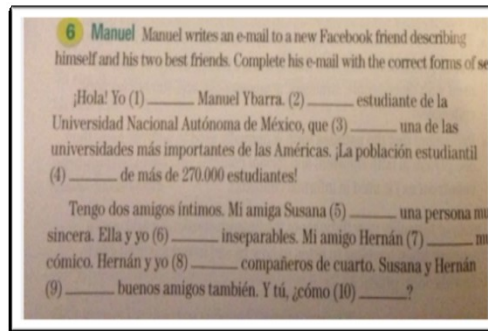


Figure 18. Spanish class textbook drills.

Teaching Culture

The instructor taught culture in two methods. Either the listening or reading materials were culture-based or the instructor discussed a cultural fact with students. The instructor stated that he shared a cultural fact with students when he had time in class. For example, I observed him discussing Thanksgiving customs and foods in Spain. He discussed this topic in English. Some reading and listening materials were culture-based. I observed the instructor discussing some hand gestures in Spanish culture. Students were watching and listening to a video about the meaning of some hand gestures in Spanish culture. He also used English to explain it to students.

Teaching Language Skills

The Spanish instructor taught reading, listening and speaking in class. To teach reading, he first discussed the comprehension questions with students and then asked them to read and answered the questions of the text. After that, he discussed each question. He asked the question and students answered. Students together answered the questions. The instructor wrote the answer on the whiteboard. When the instructor taught listening, he discussed the listening comprehension questions with students before listening. Next, students watched the video together and answered comprehension questions. The instructor gave students one or two more opportunities to listen and answer the questions. Finally, he discussed each question with the whole class and wrote the answers on the whiteboard. In teaching speaking, the instructor used activities and divided students to work in small groups three to four students. For example, I observed him using the picture description activity. He gave each group of students a picture. Two of the group members saw the picture, spent some time thinking how to describe it to the other member or members, and then they described it in Spanish and the other member or members based on their description drew a picture similar to the original picture.

Syllabus Analysis

The Spanish language instructor's syllabus was analyzed in terms of the following components: course objectives, course learning outcomes, and course assignments.

Course Objectives

The syllabus indicated that the course had four teaching objectives: (a) introducing students to the four language skills—reading, writing, speaking, and listening—with focus on communication, (b) developing vocabulary skills so students can engage in short conversation with others, comprehend listening and reading texts, and write short notes and

messages, (c) developing cultural awareness of the Hispanic world, and (d) building students' ability to express themselves in everyday situations.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon the completion of this class, students should be able to identify words in phrases in simple contexts and understand the main idea of simple reading and listening texts.

Students also should memorize and produce some Spanish phrases that are used in everyday life. In addition, students should be able to communicate with others in simple situations.

Finally, students should be able to identify some differences and similarities between the Hispanic culture and their own culture.

Course Assignments

There were four course assignments: preparation before the class, active class participation, homework, and four tests at the end of each chapter. Table 20 summarizes the grade distribution.

Table 20

Spanish Class Grade Distribution

Assignment	Grade
Preparation before class	10%
active class participation	20%
Homework	10%
Tests	60%

Findings from the Spanish Instructor's Case

The Spanish instructor received relatively extensive teaching preparation. He was enrolled in his last semester's degree in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) program at University X when the study took place. In this program, he attended several master's classes about teaching English as a second language such as Methodology of

Teaching English as a Second Language, Second Language Curriculum and Testing, and Theories of Second Language Acquisition. The Spanish instructor mentioned that he did not have a specific teaching method, technique, or strategy that he utilized to achieve his teaching goals. He modified his teaching practice according to students' performance and positive reactions to his methods or strategies. He tried to find activities that engage students and help them learn. The Spanish instructor believed that the instructor should use Spanish extensively in class. He also believed that using group activities creates a friendly classroom environment and helps students learning from each other.

When asked about CLT, the Spanish instructor shared that CLT means “focusing on making students successfully communicate.” He explained that students in CLT, learn foreign language through its use and interaction, which eventually leads to learning and mastering grammar without explicit teaching. He did not advocate CLT because he believed that students need to learn grammar explicitly. He shared that learning Spanish through interaction and communication would lead students to make errors that they can avoid if they learn grammar explicitly. The Spanish instructor's belief that CLT means focusing on communication and ignoring grammar is consistent with the soft or classical version of CLT. This version emphasizes that interaction and communication is sufficient to learn second, and foreign language and that teaching grammar is not necessary (Richards, 2006, Richards & Rodgers, 2014). However, the current or strong CLT version emphasizes that grammar is necessary and should be taught in a communicative context (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

The Spanish instructor believed that verbal inflections in Spanish are difficult to learn for American students because they change constantly. This concept requires explicit teaching method and much practice.

The Spanish instructor's belief of the importance of teaching grammar explicitly and that CLT means ignoring teaching grammar hinders his willingness to implement CLT. He stated that the goal of teaching this class was teaching basic Spanish grammar such as gender and teaching students using grammar in conversation. He believed that he did not implement many CLT aspects.

In teaching practice, the Spanish instructor implemented the structural teaching approach. He concentrated on teaching Spanish structures explicitly. Unlike the German instructor who used German as a medium of instruction, the Spanish instructor used English. He discussed reading and listening activities in English. Many activities that students completed in class were structural exercises that focused on applying the rules that students learned. For examples the instructor used fill-gaps, matching, completing sentences.

Cross-Cases Analysis

The findings show that the participants were varied in their teaching preparation. Two participants received a relatively extensive teaching preparation (Chinese and Spanish instructors), one received limited (German instructor), and three received very limited teaching preparation (Arabic, French, and Russian instructors). In addition, the participants were varied in their teaching experiences. Table 21 shows the instructors' years of teaching experiences.

Table 21

Instructors' Teaching Experience, in Years

Instructors' Teaching Experience					
Chinese	German	Russian	Spanish	French	Arabic
7	7	2	1	0	0 ^a

^a Informal tutoring and private lessons in Teaching English as a foreign language.

Instructors with more teaching preparation and teaching experience were able to practice their beliefs about CLT more than others. For example, the Arabic, French, and Russian instructors believed in maximizing the use of the target language in class, but they could not practice this belief. On the other hand, the Chinese and German instructors were able to use the target language most of the class time. To do so, they used visual aids such as pictures and presented a written version of what they were saying in the target language to make it possible for students to comprehend what they said. The Spanish instructor believed in maximizing the target language in class, but he used (English) most of the class time because he felt that it is easier and faster than using Spanish.

The participants were somewhat varied in their understanding of CLT. Four of the six participants (Chinese, French, Russian, and Spanish instructors) explicitly used the term *communication* or *communicate* to describe CLT, while the other two (Arabic and German instructors) did not.

The Chinese instructor said that CLT is “teaching students to communicate in interpersonal and presentational levels.” The Spanish instructor’s understanding of CLT was similar. For him, CLT involves “focusing on making students successfully communicate.” He explained that students in the CLT approach, learn foreign language through its use and interaction, which eventually leads to learning and mastering grammar without explicit teaching.

The French instructor shared that CLT is “looking at language as a means of communication and using it to facilitate, like spreading ideas rather than being super rigid about like you say things in this way you say things in that way.” In his view, CLT concentrates on the communicative aspect of language rather than the grammatical aspect. The Russian instructor was more concerned with communication as a form of interaction

rather than defining methods. She said, “It is unavoidable method, I mean I do not understand any teaching method without communication. Really, otherwise it is gonna be just monologue, which is very boring, which is not sufficient, which is failure.”

While the instructors (Chinese, French, Russian, and Spanish) focused on the term *communicate* or *communication*, the Arabic and German instructors described CLT based on two CLT characteristics: the foreign language teaching context and learner-centered instruction. The German instructor described CLT as “working on context in the target language as much as possible, I think everything is based on the context rather than explaining in English for instance, describing how things are and trying to apply it in practice.” Even though this instructor concentrated on the context rather than communication, she shared the French and Spanish instructors’ emphasis that, in a communicative oriented class, grammar is taught in an implicit manner.

The Arabic instructor focused on the student’s role in the learning process: “CLT is putting the student in the center of the learning process and everything is centered around him or her getting the [unintelligible] and being able to speak the language, write the language, read the language.” He was even uncomfortable with the word *instructor*: “I would not like to use the word instructor or lecturer or teacher, he is more of moderator, facilitator for that process.” From his point of view, students should prepare well before classes and the role of the instructor is to activate what students have learned themselves. This shows that although some instructors did not receive teaching preparation, they grasp the CLT general idea.

The study shows that three instructors implemented the grammar-translation method in their teaching (Arabic, French, Russian) where they translated sentences and vocabulary from English into the target language and vice versa. The Arabic instructor used the phonics method for more than half of the semester to teach the Arabic alphabet system. Two

instructors (German and Spanish) used a structural-based approach where they focused on explaining rules explicitly. However, the German instructor used German language to explain rules while the Spanish instructor used English. The Chinese instructor implemented several CLT features. She and her students spoke English extensively in class. She explained rules in a meaningful context. She focused on students' comprehension and ability to apply rules in a context. She used pair work activities. She encouraged students to participate in class and accepted their errors. She used some communicative language activities such as surveys, and role play. She used authentic materials. Finally, she used visual aids to enhance students' comprehension.

Although the Arabic, French, German, Russian, and Spanish did not did not implement CLT in every facet of their teaching, they did implement some features. They used pair and group work activities. They used visual aid materials. Some of the classroom activities that they used were quasi-communicative activities such as dialogues and skits. They accepted students' errors. The German instructor used German during most of the class time. Most of the activities that these instructors used were structural activities that focused on language rules, which students could complete without understanding the meaning of the sentences.

Summary

This chapter presented findings of this multicase study of six college foreign language instructor implemented CLT or lack thereof in teaching beginner-level classes across six foreign languages. I presented the findings from analyzing each case and then I presented across case analysis. The findings indicated that although the participants were varied in their teaching preparation, they all implemented some of CLT features. However, there were differences and similarities in how they implemented them.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

This study aimed to understand how, if at all, college foreign language instructors implement the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach to teach beginner-level classes across six foreign languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Russian, and Spanish. This question is significant because research in the field of foreign language education has historically focused on implementing CLT in teaching certain languages, especially English. The implementation of CLT in teaching other languages such as received little attention (Mosquera, 2012). Savignon (2008) states, “Too often, accounts of second language acquisition (SLA) and CLT leave readers with the impression that English is the only language worth studying and that English language teachers, methodologists, and researchers are the only experts worth reading” (p. 24). English has received wide attention because it is the most widely-learned foreign language in the world. The research conducted on CLT in certain languages, especially English does not provide data or clarification on how it is implemented in other languages. For example, Geana (2012) postulates that exclusive use of CLT is not suitable to teach the Romanian language because Romanian has a complex morphological structure. Similarly, Wilmsen (2006) argues that the distance between the written and spoken forms of the Arabic language poses difficulty when implementing CLT and mentions that this issue with CLT has not yet been addressed. This current study was an attempt to fill the aforementioned research gap by examining the implementation of CLT across multiple foreign languages.

Overview of the Study

This study was designed as a qualitative multicase study because “case studies are the preferred strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed” (Yin, 2003, p. 1). The

question that guided this study was: how do, if at all, college foreign language instructors implement CLT to teach beginner-level classes across six languages?

The participants were purposefully selected based on the foreign language they were taught, the level language in the course, and their willingness to participate in the study. Each instructor taught one of the following languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Russian, and Spanish. Two of these languages (Spanish and French) are somewhat linguistically similar to students' native language, English, and therefore are relatively easy to learn while German and Russian are moderately easier than Arabic and Chinese, but harder than Spanish and French. Arabic and Chinese are relatively difficult languages for native English speakers (Stevens, 2006; Tokuhama-Espinosa, 2008).

The instructors in the study taught at University X, a large public university in the United States. The data were collected through multiple methods. First, the participants completed a survey to provide an understanding of their demographic background. Second, I conducted a total of 48 classroom observations, eight per participant. The classroom observations began in the fourth week of the semester and continued until the fourteenth week. I then analyzed the course syllabi to gain more understanding of the instructional context. Finally, I interviewed the participants to enhance my understanding of what I observed in the classrooms. I used the constant comparative method to analyze the data in which I inductively coded, categorized, and compared each set of data to reveal themes (Mathison, 2005). I conducted two levels of analysis: within- and across cases. For each individual participant, I used two levels of codes: initial codes and focused codes (Charmaz, 2014).

In Chapter 4, I presented the findings; in this chapter, I discuss implications for the findings. In addition, I suggest topics for future studies and implementation of CLT an

approach for teaching foreign languages. I close the chapter with some final analyses and conclusions.

Theoretical Considerations for Implementing CLT

Vygotsky's sociocultural learning theory (1978, 1986) and the interactionist approach in second language acquisition (Gass & Mackey 2015; Mackey, Abbulh, & Gass, 2012; Ortega, 2009) provided the theoretical framework for understanding how instructors implement CLT to teach beginner classes across six foreign languages. This learning theory and the second language acquisition approach have informed essential CLT principles such as the role of language input, language output, corrective feedback, and collaborative learning activities (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory asserts that social interaction enables the individual to construct his own language (Pujol-Berche, 1993, as cited in Rast, 2008). Also, most of what people learn about language is achieved through social interaction (Dixon-Krauss, 1996), which mediates language learning (Ortega, 2009). Vygotsky introduced the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) to explain the interrelation between learning and development. According to Vygotsky (1997), learning takes place between two mental development levels: actual and potential. Learning, especially systematic learning, should move the individual from what he is capable of doing alone (actual mental development) to what he cannot do without others' support (potential mental development). The interactionist approach in second language acquisition emphasizes that interpersonal and intrapersonal interactions play a central role in acquiring first and second language (Ellis, 1997). Gass and Mackey (2015, p. 197) state, "within the interactionist approach, learning takes places through an interactive context."

Krashen (1981) claims that learning another language occurs when the learner is provided with oral or written input in context. He argues that the context helps the learner understand the target language and, therefore, learn that language. For this reason, the instructor should provide students with sufficient exposure to the target language and should maximize the use of the target language in class (Salim, 2001). The first theoretical implementation relates to exposing the learner to the target language. In language teaching, the target language refers to learning any language other than the learner's native language (Richards & Schmidt, 2013). Only two instructors (Chinese and German) were able to maximize the use of the target language in class and used it as a medium of instruction. The other four instructors communicated with their students in English most of the class time.

Another theoretical implementation is the classroom interaction. From the perspective of sociocultural theory, second language learning happens incidentally when learners interact to achieve a concrete objective such as understanding what the other person said (Lantolf, Thorne, & Poehner, 2015). In addition, Long's (1983) interaction hypothesis postulates that students' social interaction provides them with the necessary information regarding the correct and incorrect use of the language (Gass & Mackey, 2015). In this study, the six instructors dominated the classroom conversation. Students seldom interacted with each other in the target language. The instructors controlled the classroom interactions. In five classes: Arabic, French, German, Russian, and Spanish, the instructors gave students opportunities to practice the target language by eliciting answers to short questions following the introduction of a new language rule. This interaction was limited or controlled by the language rule that students just had learned. In a CLT class, students need to practice the target language for communicative purposes. Thus, the focus is not on using specific rules, rather it is on students' ability to express their feelings and communicate their thoughts. This

study showed that there is a need to provide students with more opportunities to practice the target language without being constrained by specific language rules.

Pair and group work activities are essential because this type of activity allows students to learn from each other. The instructor should divide students into pairs or groups based on their learning levels. Learning is more likely to occur when the learner interacts with others who are at a higher learning level (Vygotsky, 1986, as cited in Johnson, 2005). Although, all six instructors used pair and group work activities. However, only the Chinese instructor selected the members of each group. She asked students to change their seats in the classroom for each session. She explained to me in the interview that this strategy makes students work with different members. Other instructors let students pick their own partners. Finally, Vygotsky states, “the acquisition of a foreign language differs from the acquisition of the native one precisely because it uses the semantics of the native language as its foundation” (1986, p. 160). This suggests students’ native language influences their foreign language learning. Research shows that students’ native language is one source of error when learning a foreign language (Ortega, 2009). In this study, three instructors (Arabic, French, and Russian) used translation between English and the target language as their primary method. Some researchers suggest the use of translation to teach a foreign language makes students view the foreign language through their native language, which causes confusion and mixing of the two languages (Pan & Pan, 2012, as cited in Fernandez-Guerra, 2014).

Discussion of the Findings

In addition to the theoretical considerations, there are several findings, which can be discussed about the cases both individually and collectively. These findings can help in understanding how college foreign language instructors implement CLT to teach beginner

classes across six foreign languages: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Russian, and Spanish. First, I discuss the findings within and across the cases.

The Arabic Instructor's Case

Teaching preparation and teaching experience provide a teaching background that help the instructor practicing his beliefs regarding teaching of a foreign language. The first significant finding is that the Arabic language instructor had very limited teaching preparation and this was his first semester of teaching. The Arabic language instructor's only knowledge about teaching foreign languages came from his self-reading. He shared that this reading provided him with general understanding of "learning and teaching theories." His education (bachelor's, and master's in progress) was not in language teaching, but rather in Translation. Although he has a teaching assistantship through the language department, he was not formally prepared to be a foreign language instructor. The Arabic instructor believed that the goal of teaching this beginning class was to promote students' communicative skills. He also advocated several CLT features such as group work activities, using visual aids, motivating students, and accepting students' errors. However, the lack of teaching preparation and teaching experience hindered his ability to put these beliefs regarding CLT into practice appropriately.

Another major finding is the amount of time allocated in standard departmental Elementary Arabic I syllabus to the teaching the Arabic alphabet system (30 sessions or almost two third of the semester) limited the time that could be used for practicing communication and restricted the instructor's ability to create a communicative classroom environment. The instructor concentrated on teaching phonemic awareness, and therefore overlooked teaching comprehension and the use of language for communicative purposes. Students learned how to pronounce and write many words without even knowing the

meaning of some of them as the goal was to master the sound-symbol relationships. For this reason, comprehension and communication were not priority in this class. The reputation that Arabic language is difficult and the differences between Arabic and English alphabet system is a potential explanation of why the Arabic syllabus focused primarily on teaching the Arabic alphabet system. It is worthwhile noting that there are few studies that have investigated teaching the Arabic alphabet system (Huthaily, 2008; Alhawary, 2018). The Arabic instructor shared his frustration because students used the transliteration system and waited learning reading and writing until they learned all the Arabic letters. He concluded, “I think the curriculum itself, the book itself needs to be altered or modified a little bit to address the most important issues, especially grammar and the alphabet should not take that long time.” This case brings to light the problem of teaching the Arabic alphabet system, as the instructor spent much of the class time on this concept. Teaching the alphabet system through the phonics method and for long time negatively influenced the implementation of CLT.

The third finding from the Arabic case is the explicit teaching of language rules. Similar to teaching the alphabet system, the Arabic instructor focused on mastering rules when he taught grammar. To this end, he presented short sentences on the whiteboard, analyzed and compared or translated them into English. Using this method centralized language rules at the expense of meaning and language use for communicative purposes. I noticed that most of grammatical points that were taught in this class were inflections such as grammatical gender, verb inflections, the adjective. Arabic language is a rich inflected language (Lahlali & Abu Hatab, 2014). Unlike English, which has 8 subject pronouns, Arabic language has 12 subject pronouns and corresponding verb forms in various tenses and moods. Table 22 illustrates the Arabic subject pronouns.

Table 22

Arabic Subject Pronouns

Arabic Subject Pronoun	Arabic Subject Pronoun Function	Transliteration
أنا	I	Ana
هُوَ	He	Hwa
هي	She	Hea
هما	They for (dual)	Huma
هُم	They for (plural masculine)	Hum
هُنَّ	They for (plural feminine)	Huna
أنتَ	You for (singular masculine)	Anta
أنتِ	You for (singular feminine)	Antee
أنتما	You for (dual)	Antoma
أنتم	You for (plural masculine)	Antom
أنتنَّ	You for (plural feminine)	Antuna
نحنُ	We	Nahnu

There are few grammatical gender forms in English while Arabic has human masculine, human feminine, non-human masculine, and non-human feminine. In Arabic, performing verb conjugations correctly requires taking some cognitive decisions: selecting the appropriate subject pronoun, determining the tense of the verb, determining the number (singular or plural), determining the grammatical gender, and adding the appropriate prefix and suffix. English is considered as a less inflected language (Eysenck & Keane, 2010). It is possible that CLT is more suitable for teaching inflections in less inflected languages such as English more than in teaching highly inflected languages such as Arabic.

Another characteristic of the Arabic class is the use of English language for communication during most of the class time. English was the medium of instruction. The Arabic instructor seldom spoke in Arabic with his students. In a CLT class, the instructor uses foreign language to provide students with sufficient input to promote their language

comprehension (Benati, 2009). Maximizing the use of the foreign language is essential to build students' comprehension skills. In addition, the instructor is a model to demonstrate how a foreign language is used, so students need to observe how the instructor uses and communicates in the foreign language. The Arabic instructor stated that he tried to use Arabic but when he used Arabic "students were always lost." lack of adequate preparation for teaching and teaching experience restricted his ability to use Arabic as a medium of instruction, and therefore, he could not create a communicative classroom environment.

Another notable characteristic is the instructor's domination of the classroom conversation and interaction as he spent most of the class time explaining rules, giving instructions, discussing the activities and the homework. The class was instructor based. There were three interaction modes: Form the instructor to students when the instructor reviewed previous lesson, explained rules, gave instructions, provided feedback, from students to the instructor when students answered his short questions (e.g., translation questions) after completing classroom activities, and when they asked the instructor questions, and between students when they worked in small groups to complete classroom activities, and when they helped each other understand rules. This environment restricted the students' practice of communicating in Arabic.

Finally, the objectives of the syllabus did not match classroom teaching practice. The syllabus emphasized communication, but this emphasis was not reflected in class. In fact, the syllabus emphasized communication, teaching the four language skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing), and teaching phonetics practices in everyday life. The teaching materials that the instructor uses should be consistent with the learning objectives stated on the syllabus. As mentioned above the textbook were structure-based, and not communicative-based.

The Chinese Instructor's Case

In stark contrast to the case of the Arabic instructor, the Chinese language instructor has extensive formal teaching preparation as she holds a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction and attended several workshops and conferences in teaching Chinese as a foreign language. During the interview, she shared that she received sufficient teaching preparation. I noticed that she used several academic terms commonly used in language teaching research such as "cultural competence," "comprehensible input," "presentational communication," "interpersonal communication," "authentic materials," "summative assessment," and "formative assessment," which shows that she at least has some familiarity with the current academic discourse in language teaching a foreign language. In addition, she had seven years of teaching experience. These two factors: preparation for teaching and experience in teaching played a positive role in her ability to implement CLT in her class.

Another major finding in the Chinese language class is the instructor's use of the Chinese language as a medium of instruction. She explained language rules in Chinese and communicated with her students in Chinese during most of the class time. This extensive use of Chinese language enabled her to create a communicative classroom environment. Despite the fact that the Chinese language, like Arabic, has a completely different writing and sound system than English (English has an alphabetic system, while Chinese is a symbolic language system), the Chinese instructor managed to maximize the use of the Chinese language. There are three potential reasons behind her ability to use Chinese extensively. First, she used visual aids. Visual aids helped students comprehend what she was saying. Second, she provided a written version of what she was discussing on PowerPoint presentation, so students listened to her speech and read simultaneously, which support students' comprehension. Third, she used her facial expressions and gestures.

Another finding is the simplicity of the grammatical points that she taught, which increased the instructor's ability to teach them in a communicative context. Unlike what I observed with the teaching of other languages, I never observed her teaching verb conjugations. When I asked about this, she said that Chinese does not have verb conjugations. In addition, to convert a statement into a question, the student only needs to add the word question at the end of the statement and it automatically converts it into a question. Chinese language does not have "gender distinction of masculinity and femininity" (Wong, Li, Xu & Zhang, 2010, p. 34). Unlike the other five instructors, the Chinese instructor did not mention the word "grammar" in the interview until I asked her how she taught grammar. One might speculate that the simplicity of grammatical points that she taught, allowed her to implement CLT.

Yet, the Chinese instructor shared her concerns about teaching pronunciation. She stated, "I always think that pronunciation is very important. We do have homework, but student really did not pay attention to the homework. We have recordings, but students really did not pay attention." She further said, "I probably need to focus more on their pronunciation, because Chinese language is different." Chinese is a tonal language and pronouncing a syllabus in a different tone changes the word meaning (Flaws,2006). For example, the word "mā" with a high-level tone means "mother," "mà" with rising tone is a marker in a question, and "mǎ" with failing-rising tone means "horse" (Wang, 2015). CLT does not focus on teaching pronunciation. Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (2007) stated that the proponents of CLT "have not dealt adequately with the role of pronunciation in language teaching, nor have they developed agreed-upon a set of strategies for teaching pronunciation communicatively" (p. 9). Szyszka (2017) mentioned that CLT neglected teaching pronunciation. When implementing CLT, the importance of pronunciation in

Chinese language should receive more attention to help Chinese instructors teach pronunciation in communicative context.

The activities that the Chinese instructor used did not focus on learning language rules, rather, they focused on increasing comprehension and students' use of Chinese for communicative purposes. For example, the instructor asked students at the beginning of each session about their weekend or week. She used a survey, where students asked their classmates about their family members and their birthday days. She also asked students to tell her different times of the day. This type of activities allowed students to use language for communicative purposes. However, these activities were limited to the sentence level. There is a need to expand the exchange of conversation above the level of performing one sentence. Thus, students' limited interaction and communication in the classroom hindered the implementation of CLT.

Despite the use of open-ended questions that focused on communication, the class remained instructor-based as the Chinese instructor dominated the classroom conversation. Students' use of Chinese was controlled, especially when she asked them at the beginning of the class about their weekend or week. Also, when she asked them about time, and when students asked each other about their birth days. Implementing CLT requires that students use language closer to its usage in everyday life. Possibly, the instructor found it a challenge to enhance students' participation and interaction because this was an introductory language class. Students just began their journey in learning Chinese and did not have enough language to extend their participation and interaction in the classroom. This hindered the implementation of CLT as students' interaction in the classroom was limited.

Finally, the syllabus that she used matched her teaching practice. The syllabus indicated that the students' practice of Chinese will be limited. This provides another explanation of why the instructor focused on short sentences.

The French Instructor's Case

The French instructor lacked both an adequate preparation for teaching and experience in teaching. He did not receive any teaching preparation. This was his first teaching semester. The French instructor expressed that he was nervous at the beginning of the semester because he had no vision or expectation of how he should teach. To overcome this obstacle, he resorted to his own learning experience of French as a teaching guide. He evaluated his teaching success based on students' reactions and feedback on teaching strategies and techniques that he used. Having an adequate preparation for teaching and experience in teaching are two important factors because they helped the instructor in The French instructor believed that "language is a fluid concept. It is something that needs to be used. You need to be speaking and listening and conversing to really understand it." He advocated implementing several CLT features such as motivating students, accepting their errors, and using pair and group work activities. However, the lack of teaching preparation and teaching experience restricted his ability to integrate these features of CLT into his teaching practice.

Another important finding is time constraint. The French instructor shared that he could not give students sufficient opportunities to practice and use French language in class because the class content was too much to be covered in four credit hours. The syllabus shows that the class was textbook-driven, and the instructor had to cover 189 pages, with 95 concepts (grammatical points, pronunciation, vocabulary). In addition, eight sessions were devoted for oral presentations and interviews, five sessions for test review, and six sessions

for tests. Thus, since many class sessions were dedicated to summative assessments, the instructor had only 38 sessions to introduce and practice new concepts. Additionally, the French instructor had 25 students in the class. Under such a circumstance, creating a communicative classroom context becomes a huge challenge. He stated that he was overwhelmed by the content, so he used lectures and taught language rules explicitly to cover the content. A potential explanation of why the Elementary French coordinator or the department overloaded the class with this amount of the content is the reputation that French is relatively easy to learn for native speakers of English.

This leads to another finding which is the complexity of language rules that the instructor taught and its role in his ability to teach these rules in a communicative context. The French instructor spent many sessions teaching French inflections such as verb conjugations, grammatical gender, the adjective, singular and plural nouns, and regular and irregular verbs. The instructor shared that teaching verb conjugations requires a traditional teaching method where the instructor analyzed sentences explicitly and explained to students how language rules work. He believed that the complexity of these language rules requires explicit explanation. He said, “This is something that should be drilled into your head, especially that this is a foreign language setting and you are not speaking the language every day.” Unlike English and Chinese, French is a highly inflected language (Lorch, 1991).

The French instructor used English during most of the class time. He seldom spoke French. The low use of French did not support creating a communicative classroom context, and therefore implementing CLT. The French class was instructor-based, as the instructor dominated the classroom conversation. Students participated when the instructor asked them to answer short questions after he introduced a new concept, when they provided the answers after completing the class activities, and when they asked the instructor questions for more

clarification. Students interacted with each other when they worked in small groups to complete activities. However, they spoke in English while working on activities.

Finally, the classroom layout was not appropriate to implement CLT. It was a stadium-style lecture classroom. This type of classroom layout does not support the instructors' implementation of CLT because in a CLT class, students should be able to face each other and work in groups.

The German Instructor's Case

Although the German instructor had more training than both the Arabic and the French instructor, she received relatively limited teaching preparation as she only took one master's class in teaching German as a foreign language. This class introduced her to some teaching methods such the structural teaching method, the inductive teaching method, and content and task-based instructions. The course focused on improving students' responsibility for their learning. The German instructor has seven years of teaching experience. During the interview, she used several terms from the literature on second-language acquisition and teaching such as "authentic materials," "target language," "task-based instruction," and "teacher-based instruction." Having teaching preparation even if it was limited and these years of teaching experience helped the instructor to at least articulate teaching difficulties and problems that he or she encounters and to discuss some solutions.

Teaching freedom is another essential finding in this study. The German instructor shared that she could not apply much of what she believed in because this was her first teaching semester and she did not have the freedom to modify or adjust the class instruction to fit her teaching style. She said that the coordinator would give her more freedom next semester. The materials that the German instructor used were developed by the department. The instructor's ability to implement CLT requires teaching freedom that allows him or her to

select materials, activities, and teaching strategies that are suitable to implement CLT, especially when the textbook activities are structure-based.

Another finding is her use of German as a medium of instruction. She explained German language rules in German and communicated with her students most of the class time in German. There are two reasons behind her ability to maximize the use of German in class: (a) She used pictures, so students listened to her speaking and saw a picture or a set of pictures to understand what she was discussing, and (b) she provided a written version of what she was discussing on PowerPoint presentations, so students listen and read at the same time. The German instructor also wrote on the whiteboard the sentences that she analyzed. Using German in class helps in creating a communicative classroom environment. This suggests that experienced instructors know how to use the target language. She and the Chinese instructor used visual supports and written support on PowerPoint. This is perhaps a matter of experience that the French and Arabic instructors did not have.

The instructor explained language rules in explicit method. Her explanation of language rules relied on providing a sentence and breaking the sentence into segments with focus on the rule that she taught. The focus was on mastering language rules not on meaning or students' ability to use rules in communicative context. The German instructor believed that the explicit method is the best to teach verb inflections. Most of these activities were fill-in-the-blank activities. The German instructor spent most of the sessions teaching inflections such as verb conjugations, grammatical gender, single and plural. German is a highly inflected language (Blackshire-Belay, 1991) and the instructor's focus on teaching the inflections hindered her ability to teach language in a communicative context.

The German class was instructor-based class as the instructor spent most of the class time explaining rules and the students' participation in class was highly controlled. Students

participated in class when they completed fill-gaps activities that the instructor used after introducing any new concepts, answering the short questions that the instructor asked, and when they asked question. The communicated with each other when they worked in small groups (3-4) to complete activities. However, they communicated in English.

Finally, the classroom layout did not support implementing CLT as students sat in rows facing the instructor. To implement CLT, the classroom should be flexible to use for different communicative activities. For example, students should be able to sit in circles when they need to face each other.

The Russian Instructor's Case

The Russian instructor did not receive any teaching preparation, but she had two years of teaching experience. She holds a bachelor's degree in Russian Language Philology from and was a master's student in Translation Studies during the time of the study. Teaching preparation and teaching experience are two important factors that guide the instructor's teaching decisions and practices. The Russian instructor believed that the best way to teach Russian is through practice. However, the lack of teaching preparation and teaching experience did not support her in creating a communicative classroom environment where students could communicate in Russian and practice its use.

The second finding is the lack of teaching materials that are appropriate for practicing Russian. The Russian instructor shared her frustration because the textbook focused on academic language. In addition, she mentioned that the textbook lacked materials on reading and listening. Implementing CLT requires using teaching materials that give students opportunities to practice language that reflect the everyday use of the target language.

Most of the activities that she used were from the textbook and they focused on language rules. The instructor also used dialogues, but students recited them, which does

provide a genuine communicative practice. The instructor mentioned that she provided video cartoons and discussed those with students in Russian. There should have been more communicative activities to help students practice the target language.

The Russian instructor used English during most of the class time as it was the medium of instruction. She seldom spoke or communicated with her students in Russian. As mentioned above, maximizing the use of the target language and minimizing the use of English is necessary to create a communicative classroom environment. In addition to using English extensively, she broke sentences into small segments to draw students' attention to specific rules. This method gave priority to language forms and ignored the importance of meaning or the use language rules in a communicative context. Many of the language rules that she taught in this class were inflections such as verb conjugations, grammatical gender, grammatical cases, the adjective, plural and singular. She also taught pronunciation. She shared that teaching verb conjugations was difficult.

The fifth finding is that the Russian instructor was an instructor-centered class as the instructor dominated the classroom conversations and interactions. Students participation in class was limited as the instructor used the lecture teaching method. Finally, there was a gap between the syllabus and the teaching practice. The syllabus indicated that the class was communicative based, but this was not reflected in class. These factors restricted the Russian instructor's ability to implement CLT.

The Spanish Instructor's Case

The Spanish instructor received relatively extensive teaching preparation. He was in his last semester of a master's degree in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL). However, he had limited teaching experience as this was only his second teaching semester. This lack of teaching experience limited the instructor's ability to implement CLT. He

mentioned that he was still figuring out the teaching strategies, and techniques that are appropriate to teach Spanish. He stated, “I would not say that I have a clear pattern in my mind of what I want to teach and how I should teach it.” With more teaching experience, the instructor would be able to evaluate, modify his teaching practice and find strategies that help him put his teaching beliefs into practice including his belief regarding the implementation of CLT.

The second finding is the explicit teaching of language rules. The Spanish instructor broke sentences into small segments and focused only on the rule that he wanted to teach. Dividing sentences into small segments put the focus on rules and excluded the importance of the meaning and the use of rules in a communicative context. The Spanish instructor believed that the explicit teaching of language rules is necessary for two reasons: 1) students need to have control over rules; and 2) some Spanish rules such as verb conjugations and grammatical gender require explicit teaching. The Spanish instructor focused on teaching language inflections such as verb conjugations, grammatical gender, adjectives. Spanish is a highly inflected language (Watson, Byrd, & Carlo, 2011). It is possible that the complexity of the grammatical points that the instructor taught the presence of many grammatical details and exceptions played a role in hindering the instructor’s ability to use CLT.

The Spanish instructor used activities that focused on mastering language rules such as fill-gaps and matching activities. This type of activities put the priority on rules and ignored the importance of language meaning and students’ use of Spanish in a communicative context. There were reading and listening activities; however, the instructor and students discussed their comprehension questions in English. There were no oral presentations or assignments to help students’ practice speaking and communication.

Another finding is the use of English as a medium of instruction. The Spanish instructor used English during most of the class time to explain rules, discuss the homework and exams, give instructions on how the classroom activities should be done, and answer students' questions. Students also used English when they worked in groups to complete the classroom activities. Using Spanish to listen and speak is essential for students and it is also important to create a communicative classroom environment.

The Spanish was an instructor-centered class, as the focus was on the instructor and his explanation of language rules and instructions. Students' participation was limited to their answering the fill-gaps and matching activities or asking the instructor questions about language rules, homework, and exams or when they worked in groups to complete activities.

Finally, there was a gap between the teaching objectives on the syllabus and teaching practice. The syllabus emphasized that the class was communicative-based, and it aimed to promote students' communicative skills to be able to communicate and express themselves in basic situations. However, the instructional emphasis was on teaching language rules, and students did not have opportunities to practice the use of Spanish for communicative purposes.

Findings Across Cases

This study shows that there are common threads underlying the instructors' implementing CLT among the six cases. First, four instructors (Arabic, French, German and Russian) received nil to limited teaching preparation. The lack of teaching preparation hindered their ability to implement CLT. In addition to the lack of teaching preparation, four instructors (Arabic, French, Russian, and Spanish) had little teaching experience (0-2 years). They were in the process of identifying challenges that they encountered and findings teaching strategies that are suitable to their teaching beliefs. It seems some features of CLT

were easy to implement for them such as providing feedback and accepting students' errors. They partly implemented some CLT features such as using pair and group work activities, and they found a challenge in implementing other CLT features such as the extensive use of the target language and providing students with sufficient opportunities to practice the target language. The second common thread is the teaching context. Implementing CLT requires teaching freedom and teaching responsibility that allow the instructor to select suitable teaching activities and materials to promote students' communicative language skills. The instructor should be able to make the necessary modifications to create a communicative classroom environment.

The Chinese instructor implemented CLT more than any other instructors. This might be because she was the program coordinator. Instead of relying on textbook activities, she used other activities such as surveys. She did not rely on the textbook activities rather she used other activities such as surveys. She was able to select or develop activities that made learning more personable and suitable to her own class. One instructor was not allowed to make any modification or to use alternative teaching materials or activities. Two instructors had limited freedom where they could only add some teaching activities. The other two instructors had freedom, but not know the extent of their freedom and it seems that there was a lack of communication between them and their coordinators. Only the Chinese instructor had sufficient freedom to tailor her teaching practice to be consistent with her beliefs and to address students' communicative needs. Giving instructors teaching freedom and responsibility are essential for enhancing their ability to create a communicative classroom environment.

Six classes were instructor-centered classes. Five instructors (Arabic, French, German, Russian, and Spanish) used the lecture method of teaching, as they explicitly

explained language rules. Students participated when they had questions, concerns or when they gave short responses. They also participated when they recited dialogues or skits. The Chinese instructor gave students more opportunities to participate as she asked them at the beginning of each session about their week or weekend and asked them short questions during the class time. However, their responds were limited to single sentences. Students need to participate more in the classroom and engage in conversations. Their voice should have a place in the classroom.

Another common thread is the nature of the foreign languages. For instance, five languages (Arabic, French, German, Russian, and Spanish) are highly inflected languages. The instructors of these language focused on teaching inflections, especially verb inflections. They believed that the explicit language teaching is best to teach verb inflections because there are many details that students should know and master for accurate use. On the other hand, there is no verb inflections in the Chinese language and the grammar that the instructor taught was not complex. This is another potential explanation of why the Chinese instructor was able to implement CLT more than any other instructors. However, the Chinese instructor shared her concerns about teaching pronunciation. As mentioned above, research in CLT has ignored teaching pronunciation. The Arabic instructor spent eleven weeks teaching the alphabet system. This long duration of teaching only the alphabets restricted the instructor's ability to create a communicative classroom environment. Unlike the French, German, and Spanish alphabet systems, which are similar to the English alphabet system, the Arabic and the English alphabet system are vastly different, which led the Arabic coordinator to allocate nearly two- third of the semester to teaching only the alphabet system. There should be more studies that investigate the time that is needed to teach the Arabic alphabet system and the methods for teaching it in a communicative context. The Russian and Chinese languages also

have different alphabet systems. Russian has the Cyrillic script and Chinese characters. However, the Russian instructor spent four sessions teaching the alphabet system and the Chinese instructor spent five sessions introducing the Chinese characters. Research focus on implementing CLT to teach English has, so far, overlooked the differences among languages.

Finally, the use of the target language contributes in creating a communicative classroom environment. Two instructors (Chinese and German) used the target language extensively in their classrooms while the other four instructors (Arabic, French, Russian, and Spanish) used English as a medium of instruction. The Chinese and German instructors were able to maximize the use of the target language because they used visual aids and they provided a written version of what they discussed, so students listened and read simultaneously. In addition, the Chinese instructor used facial expressions and hand gestures.

Addressing the Research Question

CLT implementation can be compared based on the instructor's ability to create a communicative classroom environment where students practice the foreign language and learn how to use it in situations that resemble real life situations. In this study, the Chinese instructor was able to implement CLT more than any other instructor because she used Chinese as a medium of instruction and seldom spoke English in the classroom. She used classroom activities that allowed students to practice the language. However, the length of students' conversations and the limitation of their practice hindered her CLT implementation. When students participated in her class, their answers usually contained a single sentence. Students did not have opportunities to engage in longer conversations, where they could express their feelings and thoughts, listen and speak, instead of just providing very short answers. In other words, although the Chinese language was extensively used in the classroom, the Chinese instructor used Chinese more than her students did, and their

participation was limited to speaking in single sentences. This case highlights the quality of the students' participation and conversation in the classroom. In a similar case, the German instructor used German as a medium of instruction and she communicated with her students in German. However, unlike the Chinese instructor she used activities that concentrated on mastering language rules. In addition, her students spoke in English, especially while they were completing the classroom activities. Enhancing the quality of CLT in these two classes requires providing students with more opportunities to communicate and interact.

The other four language instructors (Arabic, French, Russian, and Spanish) used the grammar-translation method, where English was the medium of instruction, and therefore there was a lack of communication in the target language in their classrooms. Students in these classes were not immersed in the foreign language. The instructors focused on the explicit teaching of language rules explicitly. Their students also communicated in English while completing the classroom activities.

This study also shows that there are several factors that should be considered while attempting to improve the instructor's ability in successfully implementing CLT. Teacher preparation and teacher experience are essential because these two factors provide the necessary knowledge and ability to implement CLT. Three instructors: Arabic, French, and Spanish found it a challenge to communicate with their students in the target language and to provide more opportunities for their students to practice the use of the target language. In addition, the complexity of the grammatical points that the instructors taught hindered their implementation of CLT. Five instructors: Arabic, French, German, Russian, and Spanish concentrated on teaching verbs conjugations. These languages are considered as highly inflected languages. Instructors shared that verbs inflections requires explicit language

teaching because students should have control on them. The explicit teaching method restricted implementing CLT.

The Chinese instructor did not encounter this difficulty because Chinese does not have verb inflections. Yet, the Chinese instructor shared concerns about teaching pronunciation because Chinese is a tonal language. As mentioned above, research in CLT ignored teaching pronunciation. Another factor that plays a role in implementing CLT is the amount of freedom available to instructors and their level of responsibility. The Chinese instructor was the program coordinator, so she had teaching freedom to select activities that help students practice language. Three instructors did not have enough teaching freedom. The instructor should have teaching freedom and responsibility that allow him or her to select alternative activities and teaching materials that give students more opportunities to be active and communicate in the classroom.

Implications

There are several implications that can be gathered from these findings. The implications of the study the amount of preparation required to teach a foreign language, CLT implementation, foreign languages programs offered at a college/university, and the field of the study.

Implications for the Preparation of Foreign Language Instructors

The role of the foreign language instructor has changed dramatically from teaching students a set language rules and vocabulary to the role of teaching students to communicate across cultures and to the use of foreign language to acquire new knowledge (Huhn, 2012). This is a complex task, which requires considerable teaching preparation. In the case of foreign language learning (as opposed to second language learning, where students live in the target language environment), learners may have a few opportunities to practice language

outside of class or to meet native speakers of the language they are learning. Thus, the instructor should be a model in demonstrating the use of a foreign language and s/he should be able to represent the culture in which that language is spoken.

There is an immediate need to educate foreign language instructors on best practices in foreign language teaching. Three instructors in this study (Arabic, French, and Russian) did not receive any formal teaching preparation. Consequentially, in the interview, they reported pedagogical challenges and not knowing how and where to look for solutions. For example, they wanted to use the foreign language more in their class, but they felt their students would not understand them. The Arabic instructor said, “When I speak Arabic, [students] were always lost.” In addition, although they instinctively believed in and advocated for several features of CLT, they lacked the teaching preparation needed to apply those beliefs. These three instructors relied on students’ feedback and satisfaction, rather than second language acquisition theories, to guide their teaching. By contrast, the German instructor, who took just one methods class in teaching German as a Foreign language, was able to articulate ideas for solving pedagogical difficulties in her class.

For these reasons, instructors, who lack teaching preparation before they start teaching, should take at least one, ideally several, preparatory classes related to foreign language teaching and learning, such as a methods class or second language acquisition theories class. In addition, the instructor should co-teach with more experienced instructors or the coordinator of the program. There should be frequent meetings and workshops where the foreign language program instructors share their difficulties and ideas with each other and with the program coordinator. New instructors should observe highly effective and seasoned instructors, even across languages. Foreign language program coordinators need to work closely with instructors who do not have sufficient teaching preparation.

Implications for Teaching Practices

The study's implications for teaching practices affect several areas of teaching: communicative activities for beginning classes, using the target language in the classroom, pair and group work activities, integration of writing skill, and teaching freedom and responsibility.

Communicative activities for beginning classes. This study finds that the activities that the instructors used focused on teaching language rules rather than teaching language use. The activities that were communicative based were limited and controlled by requiring the use to produce a certain output. Students did not have opportunities to experience the use of language as it is really used outside of the class where speakers engage in spontaneous speech and communicate their ideas and express their feelings. The common activity that the six instructors used were short questions. They asked a student a short question, and the student's responses were in single short sentences. For example, the Chinese instructor asked her students about what they did on their weekend. A student replied in one short sentence, "I visited my family." Then the instructor moved to another student.

It is true that it was a challenge for instructors because students at this beginning foreign language level had a very limited language repertoire, which hindered their ability to engage in long conversations. However, the instructor might use follow up questions to engage students in longer conversation if necessary to build their communicative skills. For example, when the instructor asked a student what he or she did on their weekend and the student replied, "I visited my family," the instructor could have asked a second question such as: when did you visit them? Then she could have added another: Did you visit them? and might add another question: did you eat lunch or dinner with them?

Using the follow up question technique would extend conversations with students.

In addition, students should learn forming questions and engage in conversations where they ask each other multiple questions. Finally, the instructor also should make some modifications over the textbook drills when they structure-based to add a communicative or more aspects to the drills whenever possible.

Using the target language in the classroom. Since the classroom might be the only place where students practice the target language, it is essential that the instructor exposes them to the target language. Turnbull and Arnett (2002, p. 211) note that “there seems to be near consensus that teachers should aim to make maximum use of the (TL).” Krashen’s (1982) input hypothesis emphasizes the importance of listening and reading for second and foreign language acquisition. In addition, the instructor is the most language proficient in the classroom and he or she should be a role model for students of how the foreign language is used. If the instructor does not use the target language in the class, it is difficult to ask students to use it.

Three instructors (Arabic, French, Russian) in this study expressed the challenge they encountered when they speak the target language in the classroom. The Spanish instructor felt that he should have used the target language more but using English was easier and faster for him. These four instructors lacked teaching experience. Butzkamm (2003) found that using the target language is difficult for novice instructors.

The Chinese and German instructors who had seven years of teaching experience were able to use and maintain the target language in the classroom. They used the target language as a medium of instruction and manage to communicate with their students in it. The findings show that they used certain strategies to maintain the target language. They use visual aids such as pictures to support students’ understanding of what they said. They provided a written version of what they were discussing, so students listened to them and read

simultaneously. The Chinese instructor used objects such as a model of wall clock to teach time, small purse and backpack, and gloves. She also used gestures. These strategies were useful for maintaining the target language in the classroom and therefore creating a communicative classroom environment. Novice instructors' use of these strategies would support them in maximizing the target language in the classroom.

Pair and group work activities. In a CLT class, pair and group work activities are used to provide students with opportunity to practice and use of target language (Mukalel, 2005). Pair and group work activities motivate students, over a positive classroom climate, and improve students' speaking skills (Savignon, 2008). Richards and Schmidt (2013) emphasize that group work "facilitate real communication and naturalistic language use" (p. 234). Pair and group work activities are key element in implementing CLT. Five instructors in this study (Arabic, French, German, Russian, Spanish) engaged students in pair and group work activities, however, many activities that they completed, especially the textbook activities. Students used English language while collaborating to achieve those activities. Thus, even they worked in pairs and group activities, they did not practice the target language and learned how to use it for communicative purposes. Even when the instructors used dialogues and skits, students relied on memorizing scripts, so perhaps students were busy with memorizing more than communicating. This shows an immediate need to provide more communicative pair and group work activities that engage students in more communicative and spontaneous conversations. The conversation flow should not be highly predicted.

There are many communicative activities that the instructor can use. For example, when teaching location prepositions (e.g., right, left, behind and next to), the instructor might divide students into pairs, give them a map of the university campus, or their city and one student asks the other to locate several places or buildings on the map. When teaching foods,

students in small groups act as if they are at a restaurant and order meals from a menu. The instructor might prepare a few questions and each student in a small group has a question that he or she asked each member of the group. In short, when the instructor engages students in communicative pair or group work activities he or she should make sure that the activity is not structured- based, and the conversation is not highly predicted.

Integration of writing skill. In a CLT class, language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) are integrated to teach students their use for communicative purposes (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The integration of language skills reinforces learning as the student uses multiple skills to complete the classroom activities (Alhawary, 2013; Christison & Murray, 2014;). Integrating language skills is essential to provide students with authentic learning situation. In real life, people use language skills in an integrating manner. Mickan (2013) states that “the integration of so called language skills is normal in human interaction” (p. 27). The findings show that there was a lack of integrating writing skills into the classroom activities. The French and Spanish instructors allocated five to ten minutes every two or three class sessions for writing short essays. They taught writing separately. The Chinese, German, Russian and Spanish assigned homework writing where students also wrote short essays. Students seldom wrote in the class. The Arabic instructor was the only instructor who asked students frequently to write words to teach spelling after introducing a new letter or word. However, students’ writing of single words is limited writing practice. The Arabic instructors’ focus on the classroom was on students’ applying of the rules that they were learning and their use of these rules while speaking. This finding calls for more integration of writing skill in class in the class activities.

Teaching freedom and responsibility. Kliebard (1988) suggests that the teacher is typically the best one who knows his or her classroom situation, conditions and his or her

students' needs. He spends hours in observing students' behaviors and difficulties they face while they are learning. The instructor should have enough academic freedom to teach and decide what should be done to improve students' learning. Pinar (2012) emphasizes that without freedom, the teacher cannot teach successfully. Implementing CLT requires teaching freedom where the instructor can modify, personalize, or use alternative activities, especially activities that address students' communicative needs. Five instructors in this study used the textbook activities, even when three of them (Arabic, German, and Russian instructors) did not feel that textbook activities were appropriate for their students. The Chinese instructor did not rely on the textbook activities, rather she designed or selected activities for each lesson, and she personalized those activities. One instructor was not allowed to make any modification and used only teaching materials that were supplied by the department. Other three instructors did not know to what extent their teaching freedom was.

This finding brings to light the importance of teaching freedom where the instructor tailors his or her teaching practice to address students' communicative needs. Possibly, the coordinators limited the instructors' teaching freedom as they knew the instructors were novice. In addition, since there were other instructors who taught the same level, the coordinators wanted to keep the same standard for all sections. The instructor should have more teaching freedom.

Implications for the Instructional Context

The study's implications for instructional context pertain to the teaching environment—specifically, classroom layout. Classroom layout plays a central role in implementing CLT. Wright (2005) suggested that the classroom arrangement should allow students to work in pair and small group activities. Five classroom layouts in this study were not appropriate for CLT implementation as the desks were in straight rows facing the front of

the classroom where the teacher typically stood. The Arabic classroom was not organized and taught in a room crowded with furniture. The French classroom was a stadium-style lecture classroom. In the German and Chinese classrooms students sat in rows. These types of classroom layout do not support the instructors' implementation of CLT. The ideal classroom layout was the Russian classroom, as students sat in circles facing each other. Teaching foreign languages should take place in classrooms where students sit in circles where they can work in pair and in groups.

Implications for the Field of the Study

The study's implications for the field of study pertain to implementing CLT in teaching different foreign languages and using Multiple Data Collection Methods to Investigate CLT Implementation.

Implementing CLT in teaching different foreign languages. CLT has been widely used to teach foreign languages around the world (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). However, as mentioned above, researchers have focused on implementing CLT to teach certain languages, especially the English language. This study shows that the instructors of other foreign languages such as Chinese, Arabic, French, Russian, and Spanish had concerns and obstacles that needed to be addressed. Five instructors (Arabic, French, German, Russian, and Spanish) used the traditional and explicit method to teach grammar, especially to teach verb inflections. These instructors believed that teaching verb inflections requires explicit learning and teaching. The Spanish and Russian instructors shared that it is difficult to teach verb inflections in a communicative way. The French and Spanish instructors asserted that the only method to learn verb inflections is explicit structural practice. While these instructors advocated and practiced the explicit method in teaching verb inflections, the Chinese instructor did not teach verb inflections. She shared that there are no verb inflections in the

Chinese language. This was one of the differences between the Chinese language and the other five foreign languages in this study. Research shows that these five languages (Arabic, French, German, Russian, and Spanish) are considered to be highly inflected languages (Charles, 2013; Lahlali & Abu Hatab, 2014; Lorch, 1991; Watson, Byrd, & Carlo, 2011) while English is a less inflected language (Eysenck & Keane, 2010). These differences among languages need to be addressed to make CLT suitable to teach varied foreign languages.

Using Multiple Data Collection Methods to Investigate CLT Implementation.

Many previous studies utilized only one data collection method such as interview or survey to investigate instructors' implementation of CLT (e.g., Al Asmari, 2015; Farooq, 2015; Foote, Trofimovich, Collins, & Urzura, 2016; Mowlaie & Rahimi, 2010; Razmjoo & Riazi, 2006; Sreehari, 2012). This study shows that the instructors may believe and some CLT features, but they could not implement it holistically. For instance, the Arabic and French instructors believed in maximizing the use of the target language in class, but they could not implement this CLT feature. Also, the instructors might have implemented a CLT feature without mentioning that feature during the interview. For instance, the Russian instructor did not mention that she accepted students' errors, which is a CLT feature, but she implemented this feature in her teaching. When asked about her feedback strategy, she said, "I never thought about that. I just correct." To gain adequate understanding of how instructors implement CLT, researchers need to use multiple methods of data collection.

Implications for Foreign Language Programs

This study suggests that there should be a foreign language program committee that includes a member from all foreign language programs at the foreign language department.

This study shows that even though the six foreign languages were taught at the same

department, and they taught many similar concepts (e.g., the alphabet system, verb inflections, grammatical genders, question formation, speaking about basic things such as family and friends) there were variations on how they taught these topics. For example, the Arabic instructor spent eleven weeks teaching the alphabet system, the Chinese spent four sessions in teaching the Chinese characters, the French spent two 20-30 minutes, and the Russian spent five classes teaching the alphabet system. In addition, some activities that they used were communicative and others were not. It is important to have a foreign language committee where coordinators of different foreign languages meet, exchange ideas, and discuss issues and obstacles that they encounter.

Limitations

There were few limitations that occurred with this study. First, this study only includes classes taught at the beginner level. It does not reflect intermediate or advanced language levels of instruction. Second, depending on program policy, the experience level of instructors can differ widely. In this program, the majority of instructors who teach beginner foreign language classes are graduate assistants in the master's and doctoral programs for translation studies. Being assigned a class does not require a having background in teaching pedagogy. They fulfill assistantship requirements by teaching a beginner class. After their graduation, they plan to work in the translation field. Some of participants (French, Arabic, German, Russian) in this study were graduate assistants; therefore, their beliefs and practices of CLT would be affected by how they view themselves as professional instructors. Teaching foreign languages is a secondary job for them. Thus, these instructors do not represent foreign language instructors who are prepared to work primary as foreign language instructors. Transferring the findings to other contexts requires considering this factor.

Areas for Further Study and Conclusion

This study reveals that three instructors implemented the grammar-translation method (Arabic, French, Russian), two implemented a structure-based method (German and Spanish) one implemented CLT (Chinese). Although these instructors did implement teaching methods other than CLT, they implemented some of its features. For example, the six instructors accepted students' errors and motivated them to participate in class. In addition, three instructors (Arabic, French, and Russian) believed and advocated a CLT feature, which is maximizing the use of the target language in class, but they encountered difficulty when attempting to use the target language in class. On the other hand, the Chinese and German instructors were able to communicate in the target language with their students during most of the class time because they used visual aids to support students' comprehension of what they were saying.

The six instructors used pair and group work activities but many activities in five classes (Arabic, French, German, Russian, and Spanish) were structure, not communicative-based and students communicated in English only while completing these activities. This study emphasizes that pair and group work activities require that students use the target language to complete the activity and the activity should be communicative-based.

The study also shows that there are differences among various foreign languages that should be acknowledged when implementing CLT such as teaching tonal languages such as Chinese and highly inflected languages such as Arabic, French, German, Russian, and Spanish. More studies that examine implementing CLT to teach tonal and highly inflected languages are needed. In addition, there is a need for studies that examine the students' perspective how visual aids support their comprehension. More studies are needed to examine

how program coordinators can help novice instructors overcome obstacles they encounter when implementing CLT.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SURVEY

Appendix A

Survey

Opening Greeting:

I am Ahmed Alsaghiar, a doctoral student at University Kent State University. I am conducting a dissertation about university-level instructors' beliefs and practices regarding foreign language teaching to complete my doctoral degree in Curriculum and Instruction.

Please, take your time to complete this survey to the best of your ability. When you are finished, click submit.

Responses to this survey will be kept strictly confidential and individual responses will not be identified or reported.

You can contact me if you have any questions.

e-mail: aalsaghi@kent.edu (I submitted the survey through the Qualtrics Survey Software Program).

1- Gender

Male Female

2-Please, indicate your age.

20-25 years

26-30 years

31 or above

3-How many languages do you speak?

1

2

3

more than 3

4-What is the highest educational degree you hold?

Bachelor

Master

Doctoral

5- Do you hold or are you pursuing a degree in education, languages, applied linguistics or translation?

Yes No

6-If yes, please specify the title of the degree.

What Language do you teach?

7-How many years of experience do you have in foreign language teaching?

0-1

2-4

5-9

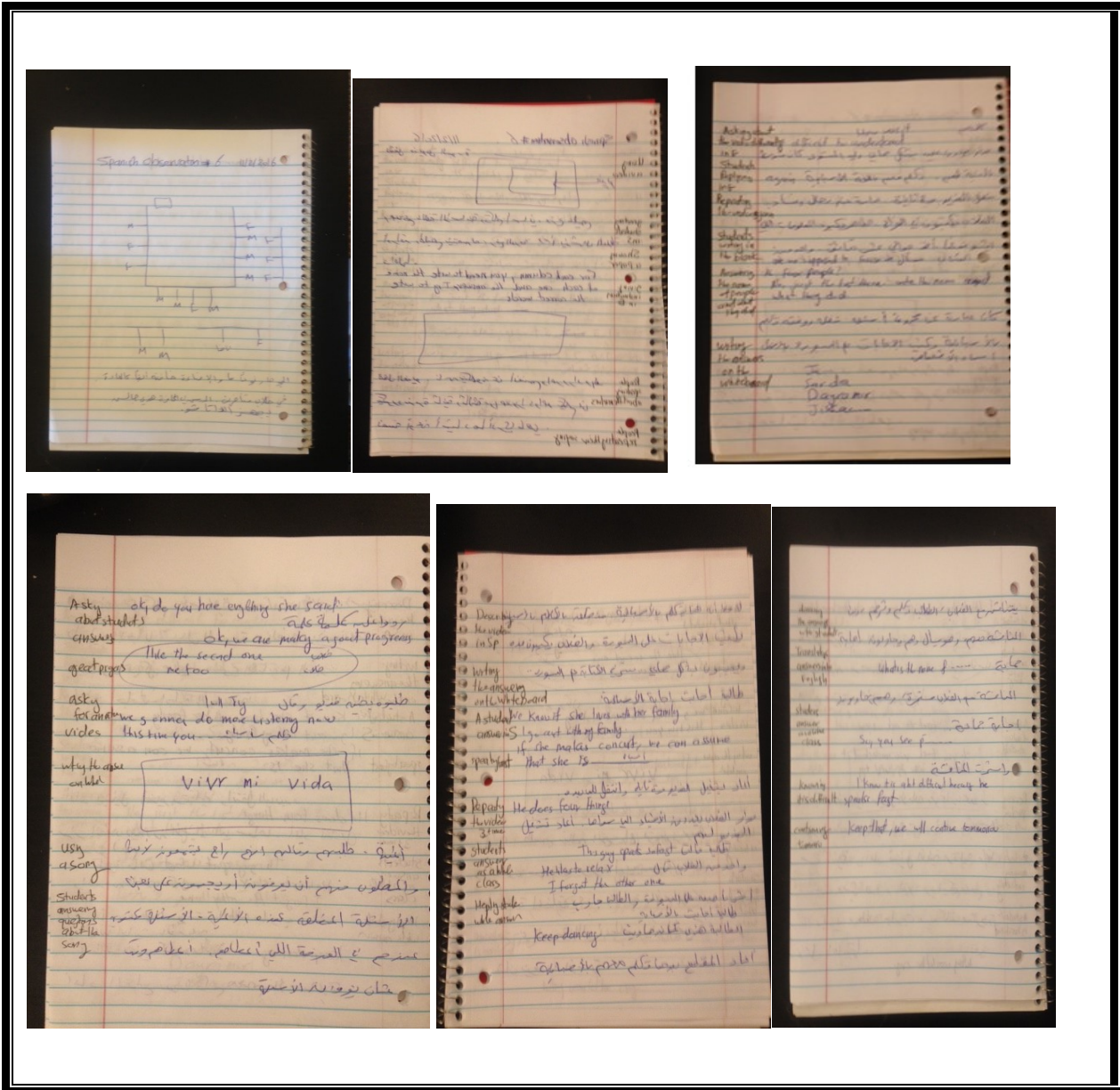
More than 10

APPENDIX B
FIELD NOTE SAMPLE

Appendix B

Field Note Sample

Spanish Observation #6



APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Appendix C

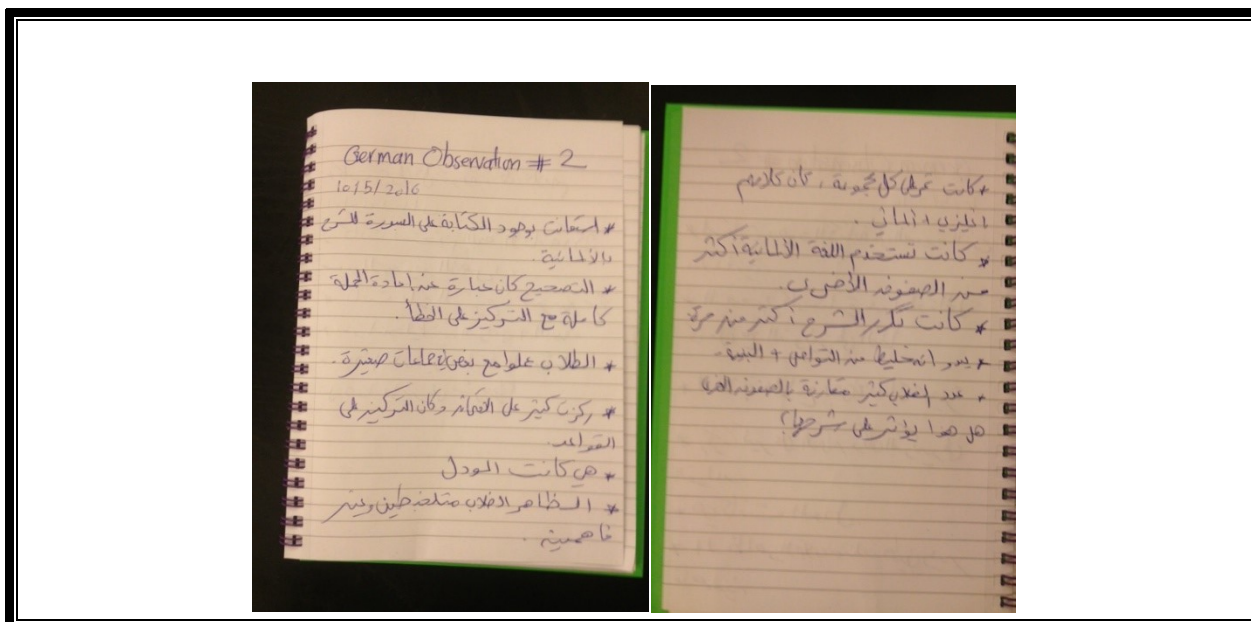
Interview Questions

1. Could you tell me about your recent formal education?
2. What, if any, foreign language training/ classes/workshops have you taken?
3. How has your teaching experience of elementary 1 been shaped?
4. In your opinion, what are the ultimate goals of teaching elementary 1? How can these goals be best achieved?
5. Could you describe your typical lesson in this semester?
6. When do you usually use English in class? Why?
7. When do you usually use the target language in class? Why?
8. Could you describe your use of feedback? Why?
9. What kind of activities do you usually use in class? Why?
10. What kind of materials do you usually use in the classroom? Why?
11. Why do you use these materials in the specific order I observed?
12. Generally, when do you feel that you teach well? Why?
13. To what extent do the exams reflect your teaching? What is your opinion of these exams?
14. How do you evaluate the course design?
15. What do you think CLT means?

APPENDIX D
ANALYTICAL MEMOS

Appendix D

Analytical Memos



Translation of the Memo into English

German Observation # 2

10-5-2016

- She used the whiteboard to explain rules in German.
- The feedback was in repetition format with emphasis on the error.
- Students worked together in small groups.
- She focused on the upcoming exam and the rules they will be tested on.
- She was the role model.
- It seemed that students are confused and did not understand.
- She went through groups, listened to them, and talked to them.
- She used the German language a lot in class.
- She repeated her explanation many times.
- She wrote the examples she used on the whiteboard (this seemed her strategy to aid students' comprehension.)
- She read each example more than one time.
- There are many students in her class. How does this affect her teaching?
- The class seemed to be a mix of structuralism and CLT.

APPENDIX E
CLT FEATURES

Appendix E

CLT Features

CLT Features

1. The primary goal of CLT is enabling students to use language for communicative purposes.
 2. Students learn the use of language for different communicative purposes and in varied contexts.
 3. Students are responsible for their learning development.
 4. Students work collaboratively in pairs or groups.
 5. Students frequently practice the use of language.
 6. Students practice the use of communication strategies.
 7. CLT is learner-centered and the instructor is only a facilitator and learning guide.
 8. The instructor analyzes students' communicative needs.
 9. The instructor motivates students to participate in the classroom.
 10. The instructor puts emphasis on improving both fluency and accuracy.
 11. The instructor provides rich input (i.e., speaking and reading) to students.
 12. The instructor provides comprehensible input to students.
 13. The instructor tolerates students' errors since they indicate that they are learning.
 14. The instructor provides students with feedback.
 15. Language comprehension has priority over language rules.
 16. The four language skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening are integrated in lessons.
 17. Classroom activities are authentic (i.e., reflect real-world activity).
 18. Materials used in the classroom are authentic.
 19. The syllabus focuses on improving students' ability to use language for communicative purposes.
 20. Learning assessment focuses on language performance, not language rules.
 21. Alternative assessments are used such as interviews, journals, dialogues, and portfolios.
-

APPENDIX F
INITIAL CODES

Appendix F

Initial Codes

Initial codes from the Arabic Observation # 1:

- Greeting Students in Arabic
- Students respond in Arabic
- Warm-up
- Asking about the meaning of vocabulary in E
- Students answering as a whole group
- Positive feedback (ممتاز)
- Using picture
- Presenting the letters in PPT pictures
- Speaking in English about pronouncing the letters
- Showing students a picture of the sound articulation
- Asking students to repeat after him
- Students repeating the letters
- Showing students a clip of children pronouncing the letters
- Speaking in English about writing the letters
- Writing the letters on the while board
- Asking student to write the letters in their small while boards
- Positive feedback
- Showing students words on PPT pictures
- Asking students to pronouns the words
- Students answer in a whole group
- Writing some words on the blackboard and asking student to pronounce them
- Students answer individually
- A student express the difficulty (hard)
- Repeating the word with the correcting pronunciation
- Positive feedback (أحسننت, ممتاز)
- Giving the students the word meaning in E
- Asking students to open their textbooks in E
- Asking them to read words in the textbook exercise
- Students individually read words
- Positive feedback (ممتاز)
- Repeating the word with the correct pronunciation
- Explaining culture in E
- Displaying vocabulary in a table on the PPT
- Translating the words for students
- Students together read the words

APPENDIX G

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Appendix G

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study



Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Study Title: University-Level Instructors' Beliefs and Practices Regarding Communicative Language Teaching Across Foreign Languages

Principal Investigator: Ahmed Alsaghiar

You are being invited to participate in a research study. This consent form will provide you with information on the research project, what you will need to do, and the associated risks and benefits of the research. Your participation is voluntary. Please read this form carefully. It is important that you ask questions and fully understand the research in order to make an informed decision. You will receive a copy of this document to take with you.

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to investigate university-level instructors' beliefs and practices regarding the communicative language teaching method across beginner foreign language classes. It seeks to understand what university-level instructors believe about the communicative language teaching method and how they, if at all, practice it in their teaching. This study provides foreign language instructors with an opportunity to express their beliefs and discuss their teaching practices to be considered in the future studies since the instructor plays a significant role in foreign language teaching and it is important to hear his/her voice. It also helps in understanding differences and similarities in instructors' beliefs and practices regarding the communicative language teaching across foreign languages.

Procedures

The study does **not** require you to change your teaching in any way or implement instructional interventions. All what you will be asked are: (1) complete a survey about your teaching method, which will take approximately 10-15 minutes, at the beginning of the semester, (2) participate in an individual interview about your belief and practice of foreign language teaching, which will last 30 to 40 minutes, and (3) allow the researcher to visit up to 11 of your class sessions to observe your teaching. The researcher will not participate in your class. He will stay quiet and take notes about your teaching processes and procedures for the study purpose.

Audio and Video Recording and Photography

With your permission, the interview will be audio-taped to facilitate collection of information, and later transcribed for analysis. Shortly after the interview has been completed, the researcher will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of the conversation and to add or clarify any points that you wish. All information you provide is considered completely confidential. Your name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study, however, with your permission anonymous quotations

University-Level Instructors' Beliefs and Practices Regarding Communicative Language Teaching Across Foreign Languages

Page 1 of 3



may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained in locked office in my supervisor's office. Only researchers associated with this project will have access. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study.

Benefits

The potential benefits of participating in this study may include providing foreign language instructors with an opportunity to express their beliefs and discuss their teaching practices to be considered in the future studies since the instructor plays a significant role in foreign language teaching and it is important to hear his/her voice. In addition, the results of this study will contribute to the field of foreign language education. It aims to reduce the gap between instructors' beliefs and practices of the communicative teaching method and their teaching practices across different languages. Investigating instructors' beliefs and practices across foreign languages and make a comparison among them might reveal some linguistic factors that influences instructors' beliefs and practices of the communicative language teaching method.

Risks and Discomforts

There are no anticipated risks beyond those encountered in everyday life.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Identifying information will not be made available in the publication and/or presentation of the research data. Information obtained from you through the survey, interview, and observations will not contain identifying information about you unless express consent is signed from you. Your study related information will be kept in a secure location and only the researchers will have access to the data. Research participants will not be identified in any publication or presentation of research results; only aggregate data will be used. Your research information may, in certain circumstances, be disclosed to the Institutional Review Board (IRB), which oversees research at Kent State University, or to certain federal agencies. Confidentiality may not be maintained if you indicate that you may do harm to yourself or others.

Compensation

Participating in this study does not require you to change any of your teaching routine, methods, or strategies.

Voluntary Participation

Taking part in this research study is entirely up to you. You may choose not to participate or you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You will be informed of any new, relevant information that may affect your health, welfare, or willingness to continue your study participation.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, you may contact Ahmed Alsaghiar at (330-389-1302) or Dr. William Bintz at (330-672-0658). This project has been approved by the Kent State University University-Level Instructors' Beliefs and Practices Regarding Communicative Language Teaching Across Foreign Languages



Institutional Review Board. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or complaints about the research, you may call the IRB at 330.672.2704.

Consent Statement and Signature

I have read this consent form and have had the opportunity to have my questions answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I understand that a copy of this consent will be provided to me for future reference.

Participant Signature

Date

APPENDIX H

AUDIOTAPE/VIDEO CONSENT FORM

Appendix H

Audiotape/Video Consent Form



AUDIOTAPE/VIDEO CONSENT FORM

University-Level Instructors' Beliefs and Practices Regarding Communicative Language Teaching Across Foreign Languages

Ahmed Alsaghiar

I agree to participate in an audio-taped interview about university-level instructors' beliefs and practices regarding communicative language teaching across beginner foreign languages as part of this project and for the purposes of data analysis. I agree that Ahmed Alsaghiar may audio-tape this interview. The date, time and place of the interview will be mutually agreed upon.

Signature

Date

I have been told that I have the right to listen to the recording of the interview before it is used. I have decided that I:

____want to listen to the recording

____do not want to listen to the recording

Sign now below if you do not want to listen to the recording. If you want to listen to the recording, you will be asked to sign after listening to them.

Ahmed Alsaghiar may use the audio-tapes made of me. The original tapes or copies may be used for:

____this research project ____publication ____presentation at professional meetings

Signature

Date

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