

**COMPARING THE APPLICATION OF
COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (CLT)
TOWARD PRIMARY, SECONDARY, AND UNIVERSITY
TEACHERS IN INDONESIA**

YENNY RAHMAWATI

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SECONDARY, AND UNIVERSITY TEACHERS IN
INDONESIA**

YENNY RAHMAWATI

Bachelor of English Education
(State Islamic University (UIN) Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta, 2005)

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degree of

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DECLARATION

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or tertiary institution, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due acknowledgement is made in the text of the thesis.

Signed

Date: 12/07/2010

Yenny Rahmawati

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All Praise Be to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds*

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ABSTRACT

Communicative language teaching (CLT) is probably the most popular approach in the recent English language teaching (ELT) in Indonesia. The curriculum underpinning ELT in the country has changed several times, although in the last 26 years its basis has been revolving around the communicative approach. Despite the fact that the communicative curriculum has been implemented for a long time, some research studies (Dardjowidjojo, 2000; Musthafa, 2001) indicated that it has not brought significant improvements in the terms of learners' outcome. The reason for this might be a number of the teachers appear to have developed some misconceptions of CLT. This study is, therefore, aimed at exploring EFL Indonesian teachers' perspectives toward communicative language teaching in their classrooms. Six participants were involved in this study in which two participants were chosen from each level of education (primary, secondary and university levels). The study employed a qualitative design by using questionnaire and in-depth interviews as methods of data collection. The results indicated that the university teachers in this study tend to have a broader view of CLT, while a number of the school teachers appear to have developed some misconceptions of it, i.e. the "not" teaching grammar and the teaching "only" speaking. The data also revealed that all of the teachers encountered challenges in implementing CLT, such as big classes, students' motivation, and limited time allotment.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview

Forty three final year senior high school students were having their English lesson taught by a female teacher. It was a small classroom equipped with 22 sets of fixed tables and benches, which made it impossible for the students to move the benches. The big window panes were the only access for the students to see a large field where the other students were having their sport lesson. A blackboard was hanging on the wall in front of the class with a bunch of chalk sticks on the teacher's table at the left front end of the class.

The topic for this meeting was the "comparative degree". The teacher explained the material with her limited English mixed in with a greater proportion of Bahasa Indonesia. She stood in front of the class explaining the materials, while the students listened carefully to what she was saying. When it came to activities, the students were asked to discuss in pairs the questions in their textbook, which was prescribed by the government. The students used Bahasa Indonesia throughout the discussion, and were engaged in the activity until the bell rang. The teacher asked them to continue the work at home, saying that it would be discussed in the next meeting. Nonetheless, in the next meeting, it turned out that she explained different material. There was no room to check the students' understanding of the lesson since the curriculum asked her to teach all of the prescribed materials.

She also understood that due to the upcoming national examination she had no choice but to follow the curriculum. ¹

The above illustration indicates how difficult it is for both the teacher and students to achieve the intended goal in the current curriculum prescribed by the government: the communicative curriculum. The teacher was faced with the fact that there was barely room for her to expand what was prescribed in the national curriculum. Meanwhile, the students, many of whom had low proficiency of English, were unable to share ideas in the target language. This condition is common in Indonesian classrooms, especially in rural areas where the teachers are considered as the only source of information and the students' motivation is low (Yuwono, 2005).

English functions as a foreign language in Indonesia and as part of the national education system in the country. Therefore, English is a subject taught at schools and is tested in the final examination. The current ELT curriculum in Indonesian schools adopts Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This approach was introduced by Indonesian scholars who studied in the US in the late 1970s and was supported by publishers, who developed a significant number of course books (The Jakarta Post, 1999b). The promotion of the concept of CLT through ELT materials has spread widely throughout the country. The popularity of CLT keeps increasing as many teachers apply the concepts of CLT in their classroom. However, the

¹ This illustration is an account based on my observation in March 2005 of a class in a public school in a rural area in Indonesia.

use of CLT has also brought some concerns for teachers in their classroom practice. Some problems are related to the readiness of Indonesian teachers to implement CLT (Suwandi & Bharati, 2007), while others concern about teachers' lack of confidence, time constraints, the lack of availability of authentic materials and the drive for exam-oriented lessons (Dardjowidjojo, 2002; Musthafa, 2001).

Not only in Indonesia does CLT appear to be very difficult to implement but also in some other EFL countries. Much research discusses the problems of implementing the concept of communicative competence (Canagarajah, 1999; Han, kim, & Park, 1997). Why are the concepts of CLT difficult to implement in many EFL contexts? What are the challenges that teachers face in implementing CLT in their classrooms? Teachers' perceptions concerning the use of CLT may influence their attitudes and practices in its application in the classroom, and thus impact on the success or failure of ELT (Li, 2000).

Because of the above reasons, I have decided to undertake a research study that explores teachers' perceptions in applying CLT in the classroom in Indonesia. I am aware that similar research studies in relation to this topic have been conducted in some countries in Asia, such as in China by Li (2000), in Japan by Sakui (2004) and in Vietnam by Hoa Hiep (2007), but empirical studies in this area have not explored much in the Indonesian context. Moreover, to gain a better insight into the concept, I compare CLT

practice at three different levels of education: primary, secondary and university.

1.2. Significance of the Study

This research is expected to provide input to teachers, education practitioners and the Indonesian government concerning the challenges that teachers face in implementing CLT in Indonesian classrooms. It also aims to provide a better insight into the concept of CLT in classroom practice in Indonesia.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

By conducting this research, I aim to explore the teachers' perceptions of CLT and its implementation in their classrooms.

1.4. Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into five chapters, the first of which introduces the study. Chapter Two is the Literature Review, which discusses theories of communicative competence and communicative language teaching, provides reviews of the Indonesian education system, English language teaching in Indonesia and the application of CLT in Indonesia. Chapter Three, entitled Methodology, provides the details of the research design. Chapter Four, Findings and Discussion, establishes and discusses the findings of the research. Chapter Five provides the conclusion of the study and recommendations to develop further pedagogical understandings of CLT in the Indonesian context.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the theories of communicative competence and their application in English language teaching in Indonesia. The chapter begins with a description of the notion of communicative competence and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) by visiting the existing literature, and then followed with a brief description of the school curriculum and English Language Teaching (ELT) in Indonesia. Finally, this chapter concludes with a general review of the application of CLT in Indonesian classrooms.

The development of English as a global language has strengthened its position as a lingua franca. As a consequence, most countries in the world – especially non-English speaking countries - consider English as an important language to be learnt. This condition impacts on the educational system in many countries; some have English as a medium of instruction, while others have English as a compulsory subject at school.

Where English is a second or a foreign language in their countries, many teachers try to adopt teaching approaches suggested by the West. As Musthafa (2001) argues, English is believed to belong to the West, therefore the teaching approaches should be based on the ‘owners’ of the language.

One of the most popular teaching approaches, CLT, is based on the understanding of what constitutes a goal which is widely adopted by teachers in Asian countries (Li, 2000).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as the application of communicative competence in the classroom has also been accorded great attention from the educational world. I, once, thought that the approaches suggested by the West must be appropriate and suitable in every context. However, I found myself 'trapped' in the maze of myriad promotions of the concept. I tried to implement this concept in my classroom, but often found myself referring back to my 'traditional' method of teaching, which I believed my students were most comfortable with. As an example, at that time, I had my students work in groups, as CLT suggests that group work is beneficial in the classroom to achieve the intended learning objective (Richards, 2005). However, in my context it was hard to implement this concept. I had about 40 students in my class and grouping students was not easy. It took time to organise the group, and the classroom became very noisy. I found myself becoming frustrated at my vain attempts to make the students listen to me, and I also received a complaint from the teacher next door because of the noise. This is what Dardjowidjojo (1997, as cited in Jazadi 2004, p.4) called the "pragmatic constraint" that big classes have, which could prevent a teacher from performing well.

Many research studies have investigated the application of communicative competence as a goal in the classroom. Some of those have shown positive reactions toward the communicative approach, while others have indicated

dissatisfaction, as this innovation is considered to bring difficulties and shows little success (Li, 2000). Brown (2007) contends that the communicative classroom is the main intended goal in language teaching. Therefore, the problems that appear in the application of CLT should not discourage teachers and students from achieving communicative goals. Meanwhile, Bax (2003) argues that CLT creates problems and, consequently, to overcome the problems CLT has to be eradicated as an approach in language teaching.

Some researchers, such as Canagarajah (1999) and Phan Le Ha (2008) state that the values embedded in CLT as a Western innovation have created conflicts with those of the local cultures of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) countries. For example, Canagarajah (1999) observes how the students disengaged from the learning process when they were taught using imported materials, which they thought were irrelevant and inappropriate to their context and culture. As these scholars contend, ELT material is not value-free. CLT thus brings Western values and beliefs as it is promoted by and based on Western styles of teaching. For this reason, careful considerations should be made when implementing this concept.

Despite the above mentioned debate, the concepts of communicative competence appear to continue to greatly impact various EFL countries, associated as they are with the notions of CLT and the hope that CLT will improve the teaching of English (Li, 2000). More importantly, the promotion of CLT in ELT has brought the idea that the so-called 'old methods' and the

so-called 'traditional approaches' are regarded as old fashioned, which often makes many teachers underestimate other teaching methods (Phan Le Ha, 2008).

2.2. A Review on Communicative Competence (CC)

The notion of communicative competence arose as a challenge to the concept of competence suggested by Chomsky (1965), who stated that competence is "the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language" (p.4). He also differentiates the idea of "performance" from "communicative", maintaining that "the actual use of language in concrete situations... In actual fact, it obviously could not directly reflect competence" (p.4). He argues that competence is associated with the mastery of grammatical rules or linguistic competence; as a result, performance acts as a sole system which has no association with competence. This dichotomy has been discussed by many researchers in the field of linguistics, such as Berns (1990), Brown (2007), Brumfit and Johnson (1979), Canale and Swain (1980), Richards and Rodgers(1986) and Trosborg (1986) who opposed the ideas proposed by Chomsky (1965) and who then give credit to the idea of communicative competence. They argue that there is a necessity to go beyond the narrow notion of linguistic competence to have real life communication, as the nature of life is to interact with others.

The more current notion of communicative competence itself was first introduced by Hymes in the mid 1960s (Berns, 1990; Brown, 2007; Trosborg, 1986) and subsequently greatly influenced language teaching.

Hymes (1979) states that communicative competence is interrelated with the knowledge of language and the ability to use that knowledge appropriately. He proposed the idea that “there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless” (1979, p.15). By this, he emphasised that there are other important elements to be mastered besides grammatical rules. Communicative competence sees language as a whole, not as an isolated system. It connects the language to the “nature of communication” (Trosborg, 1986, p.7). In addition, Canale (1983) stresses that “communicative competence refers both to knowledge and skills using this knowledge when interacting in actual communication” (p.5). In other words, competence does not only include grammatical competence but also social competence to interact with the community or culture.

From the above discussion, it is argued that communicative competence is as essential as linguistic competence, and these two elements are interconnected; to communicate effectively we need linguistic rules and so context is necessary to maintain the communication flow logically and effectively. However, when it comes into classroom practice, this concept must be analysed carefully, and this is one of the foci of this thesis.

Communicative competence has several components. These components were first specified by Canale and Swain (1980), later to be revised by Canale (1983). The first component is *grammatical competence*; this competence deals with the ability to know the form and meaning of the language, which involves the knowledge of grammar, spelling,

pronunciation and vocabulary. Second, the component of *sociolinguistic competence* includes the ability to use the linguistic competence properly in communication in different sociolinguistic contexts. The third component, *discourse competence* comprises the ability to integrate grammatical competence and meanings into oral and written form. *Strategic competence*, the fourth component is the ability to sustain conversation by using communication strategies such as risk taking, negotiating and reduction strategy.

All of the aforementioned competences are essential elements in communication. By knowing the context and the culture of the interlocutor, it would be easier to get into a conversation and to minimise misunderstandings during the conversation.

2.3. A Review on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

The application of communicative competence in language teaching is known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The idea of putting communicative competence into classroom practice was introduced by Savignon in the 1960s-70s (Berns, 1985; Brown, 2007; Trosborg, 1986). She explores the concept of communicative competence in her work in teaching English as a second and foreign language in Canada (M. S. Berns, 1985). Savignon (2005) maintains that CLT focuses mainly on how learners are involved in communication and how they maintain and develop their communicative competence. In addition, Richards (2005) states that CLT is

“a set of principles” (p.1) which cover aspects of teaching, such as the purposes of language teaching, classroom activities and teachers and learners’ roles in the classroom.

Below are the characteristics of CLT synthesised from Brown (2007), Canale and Swain (1980), Hedge (2007), Larsen-Freeman (2000), Richards (2005), Richards and Rodgers (1986) and Savignon (2005):

1. Meaning is paramount
2. Appropriateness is important
3. Various activities are used in teaching, such as games and role-play
4. Students’ experience in using language is emphasised
5. Meaning is negotiated through discussion
6. The four language skills are integrated
7. Authentic materials are used
8. Fun and relaxed situations for learning are created
9. The use of English in the classroom is maximised and the students’ native language is minimised
10. Teacher acts a facilitator and monitor

Meaningful communication is an important goal of CLT. Here, language functions to support students’ learning process as it is needed by the learners to express themselves. The learners are expected to “know how to use the language of different purpose and function” (Richards, 2005, p.2). This aim can be achieved through various activities and the use of authentic materials. The activities in CLT classrooms are design to accommodate the integration of the four language skills, in order to facilitate the students to produce the language appropriately. Common activities in CLT’s classroom are games, role-plays and competitions. Thus, language learning is seen to be fun and is done in a relaxed environment. In doing the activities, the students are expected to use the target language

and minimise their native language. The teachers in this context function as facilitators and monitors who are responsible to help the students produce “error free sentences” (Richards, 2005, p.4).

Even though at the conceptual level communicative competence suggests the integration of sociolinguistic and linguistic competence, in practice this concept is often overlooked. As Thomson (1996) reports, there are some misconceptions among teachers about communicative language teaching: (1) not teaching grammar, (2) teaching only speaking, (3) the notion that pair work always means role play, and (4) the sense that CLT expects too much from the teachers (p.10-13). These misconceptions often create problems at the practical level, as has been reported by many researchers (Han, et al., 1997; Hoa Hiep, 2007; Li, 2000). Nonetheless, I would argue that these misconceptions have also emerged from the concept of CLT itself; the concept does not give a clear understanding to the teachers on how to apply CLT in the classroom. The nature of CLT as a Western concept also contributes to the misconceptions. When EFL teachers try to implement the concept into their own context, it may be that a ‘clash’ emerges between the concept and the actual practice in the classroom (Li, 2000).

In addition, though CLT is widely known and is claimed to be a solution to many problems related to teaching - learning processes and, at the theoretical level, it seems to have reasonable goals, the use of CLT worldwide has resulted in several issues. Some problems are related to the readiness of the teacher and the students in the teaching - learning

processes using the concepts of CLT, while other problems are related to materials and the culture of the country, as reported in various studies. A number of these studies highlight the difficulties teachers and students face as they apply CLT in the classroom. Sakui (2004), for example, reports that teachers in Japan faced serious challenges in integrating grammar instruction and CLT. They were also reported as struggling in implementing the concept of CLT, because of their lack of confidence in conducting CLT, the grammar-oriented examination and time constraints. A study in China by Yu (2004) identified that teacher-centeredness and cultural values are among the problems encountered in the application of CLT in that country.

2.4. English Language Teaching (ELT) in Indonesia

Indonesia, which has about 669 local languages and dialects (Lie, 2007), has decided to use *Bahasa Indonesia* as a unifying language - the national and official language as well as the language used for medium of instruction at schools. In addition, English was chosen as the first foreign language in the early 1950s, due to the need to keep up with both information and technology as well as to communicate with other countries. The choices at that time had been either Dutch or English, but English was chosen as it served the criteria better. Furthermore, because the Dutch had previously colonised Indonesia for three and a half centuries, the leaders at that time decided that it was not appropriate to choose Dutch as the country's first foreign language (Dardjowidjojo, 2000; Mistar, 2005; Musthafa, 2002).

The government, however, issued an affirmative action that English is “not and will never be a social language in Indonesian community. Neither is it nor will it be the second official language of administration of this country” (Sadtono, 1976, as cited in Mistar, 2005, p.35). Needless to say, English is given a special position in the country and is taught from primary to tertiary level of education. English is also tested in the final examination in secondary schools.

Based on the National Education Law No.2 of 1989 (Ministry of National Education Republic of Indonesia, 2003), the educational streaming in Indonesia is divided into three levels: (1) nine years of basic compulsory education (six years of elementary school and three years of junior secondary school), (2) Three years of senior secondary school and (3) higher education (university level).

English at the Elementary Level

At the elementary level, English is taught 70 minutes a week for grades 1-3 and 90 minutes a week for grades 4-6. English at this level is taught as a “local content”. That is, a particular subject that is chosen based on a particular region. The function of the local content is to assist and support the students with the skills that are needed in their region or province (Kismadi, 2004; Sugiharto, 2007; Sutarsyah, 2004). Previously, English at the elementary level was taught from fourth grade to the sixth grade, but starting from 2006, the government has given schools the freedom to have

English from the first grade to the sixth grade as long as they can afford the expenses.

The main objective of teaching English at such an early stage is to introduce the students to simple oral and written English language, which emphasises the mastery of certain vocabulary (Ministry of National Education Republic of Indonesia, 2006). The government maintains that primary school students need to be introduced to basic English, considering that the students at this stage are presumed to be able to acquire language with ease (Sugiharto, 2007).

English teaching at this level is very complex. Most English teachers at the primary level of education, for example, do not have English teaching background; they are asked to teach English not because they are capable of teaching the language, but because they can “speak” English (Sutarsyah, 2004). As a result, a lot of concerns regarding English proficiency among English teachers at this level have been raised. The curriculum has, thus, also contributed to the complexity of English teaching at this level.

Another concern relates to the students’ readiness. Some argue that it would be too burdensome if the students have to learn three different languages at the same time: the national language (*Bahasa Indonesia*), the local language (mother tongue) and the foreign language (English) (Kismadi, 2004; Kuswandini, 2008). The students may mix up these three languages both in speaking and writing and find difficulties in differentiating the

languages. For this reason, it would be better if a foreign language was introduced in the fourth grade after the students have a good grasp of their *Bahasa Indonesia* and mother tongue.

English at the Secondary Level

At the secondary level, English is a compulsory subject and is tested in the final examination, together with *Bahasa Indonesia* and Maths (the marks of these three subjects determine the continuation to the next level of education). English at this level is taught four times a week (45 minutes each time) for junior secondary school students as well as those in the first and second years of senior secondary school. For the third year of senior secondary school, it is taught five times for social and science majors, and 11 times a week for the language major (Musthafa, 2002). The objective of English teaching is to develop the students' English skills so they are at the 1,000 words level (junior high school) and 2,500 words level (senior high school) and using appropriate structures for these levels of vocabulary (2002).

English at the University Level

At the university level, each university has the autonomy to decide the time and the status of English. For non-English majors, English is usually taught once a week (100 minutes) within two semesters. The main objective of English teaching at this level is to enable students to understand English instruction and produce both oral and written texts with correct usage of grammar (Musthafa, 2002). It is also aimed at increasing students' cultural

and intercultural awareness (Ministry of National Education Republic of Indonesia, 2006).

English teaching in Indonesia aims primarily to serve the “instrumental function” (Nababan, 1991, p.123), that is, to serve as future orientations - to obtain jobs, to gain knowledge in the fields of science and technology, and most importantly, to build an open-minded attitude toward culture differences.

Even though English is taught from primary to university level in Indonesia, research studies indicate that many students still have low English competence (Dardjowidjojo, 2002; Mantiri, 2004). A seminar held in Indonesia was reported to reveal that many high school teachers were dissatisfied with the teaching method and syllabus, which in turn affected their students’ grades (The Jakarta Post, 2001). Lie’s (2007) study argues that students from medium to high economic classes may be advantaged in achieving higher levels of English proficiency. Their greater economic resources allow them to more easily access English sources, such as English movie channels, foreign movies and music. They also have the opportunity to be enrolled English courses to improve their English skills

2.5. The English Language Teaching (ELT) Curriculum in Indonesia

Indonesia has experienced changes in relation to its national curriculum. The school curriculum is designed and developed centrally by the Ministry of National Education-Curriculum Centre of the Ministry's Office of Research and Development (Ministry of National Education Republic of Indonesia, 2003).

Since its independence, Indonesia has changed its curriculum seven times using three different approaches. Lie (2007) summarises the curriculum applied in Indonesia as follows:

Table 1. Indonesian ELT Curriculum

Starting year	Name of curriculum	Approach
1945	Unknown	Grammar-Translation
1968	Oral Approach	Audio-Lingual
1975	Oral Approach	Audio-Lingual
1984	Communicative Approach	Communicative
1994	Meaning-Based Curriculum	Communicative
2004	Competence-Based Curriculum	Communicative
2006	<i>KTSP (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan-The School Level Curriculum)</i>	Communicative

The first curriculum was grammar-translation based, and was introduced in 1945. The main reason for choosing this approach was related to the fact that in 1945 Indonesia attained its independence after being colonised by the Dutch. At that time, the Dutch educational system used in the country

was grammar-translation based. When Dutch teachers who had taught both Dutch and English were forced to leave the country, Indonesia had a very limited number of English teachers. The remaining Indonesian English teachers who mostly had low proficiency in English, kept teaching English using the old approach, because it was considered as the most suitable approach for the conditions at that time - big classes, limited materials and lack of human resources (Dardjowidjojo, 2000).

In 1968, the government introduced the audio-lingual-based curriculum as the second curriculum. This curriculum was funded by the Ford Foundation of the United States. The Ford Foundation built teacher training institutions called STC (Standard Training Course) in Yogyakarta (Central Java) and Bukittinggi (West Sumatra). The program trained 50 students who were selected each year using the STC's requirements. Native speakers and language laboratories were used in the program in the hope that it would increase the English teaching quality in the country. However, the number of English teachers needed was higher throughout the nation than the number of teachers available through the program. As a result, grammar-translation based continued to be used by most teachers in the country (Dardjowidjojo, 2000; Jazadi, 2004; Mistar, 2005).

The audio-lingual approach was revised in 1975. The issuance of this curriculum was also followed by the issuance of text books to be used at schools. The government published two textbook series; *English for the SLTP* (English for junior high school) and *English for the SLTA* (English for senior

high school). This curriculum was systematised through the provision of guidelines for objectives, materials, approaches and evaluation (Jazadi, 2004). The aim of this curriculum was that English teaching should emphasise the linguistic skills through habit-formation drills (Mistar, 2005).

The other three curricula were published in 1984, 1994 and 2004. They were deemed communicative in nature (Lie, 2007). These three curricula had different names due to changes in the Ministry of Education, even though they were based on the same approach. Bambang Sudibyo (the former Indonesian Minister of Education) stated “the change of curriculum was due to the change of the education minister” (Kuswandini, 2008). These curricula were introduced because of the failure of the previous approaches in achieving the English learning goal, which was meaningful communication. Although these curricula were claimed to be communicative, in fact the main focus was still language structure, focusing on reading, vocabulary memorisation and grammatical rules (Jazadi, 2004). This is attributed to two main factors: the final examination emphasising grammar mastery and the syllabus emphasising mechanical structural language components (Huda, 1992, as cited in Mistar, 2005; Lie, 2007).

The latest curriculum is *KTSP (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan - The School Level Curriculum)*, issued in 2006. Its roots lie in the CBC (Competence Based Curriculum). The use of *KTSP* gives teachers the opportunity to develop their own teaching materials under the following principles:

1. Language is an instrument to express meaning
 2. Meaning is determined by both linguistic and situational contexts
 3. Learning a language is learning to use the language in communicative activities in the target language
 4. Mastery of the language components is needed to support the mastery of communicative competence
 5. The teaching of the language components can be done when necessary
- (Musthafa, 2002, p.29)

KTSP is claimed to be different from the previous curricula, as it gives teachers the freedom to develop their own syllabus and thus take into account the strengths and needs of their regions and the local cultural values. In practice, however, it appears that the government still ‘dictates’ the teaching and learning processes in the classroom as it sets the curriculum from primary to secondary level of education and designs the final examination. Teachers have no choice but to follow the curriculum, since it will be used in the final examination, which focuses more on language form, and thus is-form-oriented - rather than skills/competencies-oriented.

The implementation of this centralised curriculum is problematic for some teachers. A research study conducted by Suparman (2007) in one secondary school in Lampung, Indonesia, reveals that the teachers in his research encountered a number of challenges in implementing the competence-based curriculum. These challenges relate to (1) teachers’ qualifications (some of the teachers had not graduated from an English education major), (2) teachers’ understandings and knowledge of CBC (Competence Based Curriculum), and (3) the teacher-student ratio, with

only four teachers for 24 classes with 45-50 students in each class. In addition, Lie (2007, p.6-7) argues that “a one-size-fits-all curriculum would simply not work for the Indonesian setting”. Indonesia is a big country with many different cultures. Therefore, one centralised curriculum will not fit all regions of Indonesia.

2.6. A Review on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the Indonesian Context

In Indonesia, CLT is deemed an appropriate respond to the dissatisfaction of the previous methods, such as the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and Audio-Lingual Method (ALM). This approach has been a part of the Indonesian curriculum for about 26 years. However, it appears that in practice the communicative approach has never really been applied. This is because the “guidelines given by the government were very structural” (Dardjowidjojo, 2000, p.25). A research study on English teachers in secondary schools in Java Island by Hamied (1997, as cited in Rudianto, 2007) indicates that only 19.6% teachers stated that they used the communicative approach. This is because the teachers encountered some constraints in the implementation, such as lack of facilities, students’ ability and authentic materials.

I believe some research have been conducted in Indonesia under the topic of CLT. However, I found it difficult to find these research studies, especially at the primary and university levels. This might be because research publication in Indonesia is still limited; on-line journals are also difficult to

get. For this reason, I do not have any data related to the implementation of CLT at the primary and university levels.

A number of obstacles in implementing CLT in Indonesian classrooms have been identified as I describe below. These constraints will be further explored in Chapter Four.

2.6.1. Different Expected Roles of the Teachers

CLT highlights native-like fluency as one of its goals (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). For ESL countries where there is a condition of required use of English for daily needs and abundant native-like speakers, this goal seems reasonable. But for EFL countries where it is difficult to find teachers with native-like language and fluency, the goal seems impossible. This condition challenges most Indonesian EFL teachers. Lie (2007) reveals in her research that almost 55% English teachers at Junior high schools in Indonesia do not feel comfortable either in writing or talking in English. Moreover, based on the data from Strategic Plan of The Ministry of National Education 2007, 46.9% of the English teachers in Indonesian schools are under-qualified for they are not able to fulfil the requirements, such as having competencies, teaching experience and appropriate educational background.

CLT suggests that the teacher acts as a facilitator in the teaching learning process. As a facilitator, the teacher is expected to help the students in the communication process, for example, by encouraging the students to speak, to ask questions, to make comments or to negotiate the topic or situation

(Richards, 2005). Building an environment conducive to communication in the classroom is also a responsibility of the teacher. The teacher should ensure that the students work in a class environment that motivates them to learn (Hedge, 2000; Richards, 2005).

The idea of a 'good' motivating and conducive classroom environment, however, may vary in different contexts. CLT suggests that a *good* classroom is one where the students actively share their ideas and collaborate with friends in completing the task (Richards, 2005). In contrast in my Indonesian context, a *good* classroom is generally where the students sit properly, listen to the teachers' explanation and ask questions when they are asked to. Therefore, the quiet students will be the ones who earn the teachers' respect, because it is taken for granted that teachers are the authority figures (Han, et al., 1997; Kameo, 2007; The Jakarta Post, 1999a). Ellis (1996), in addition, states that in ESL settings, the teacher acts as a facilitator. This is possible because the students have English-speaking environments that impose a greater need to communicate in English and which provide more exposure in the target language. In EFL settings, however, the teacher is probably the only source of English, and thus acts as an English 'environment' for the students and also as a source of cultural information.

The communicative approach also encourages the use of authentic materials. It follows that students should be introduced to materials that reflect the real world situation to build students' confidence in interacting

with the larger community (Clark & Silberstein, 1997, as cited in Richards, 2005, p.22). Examples of authentic materials are TV or radio programs, weather forecasts, announcements, letters, doctor's prescriptions, instructions, newspapers, magazines, emails, websites, brochures, CVs, timetables, maps, directions, signs, etc. Teachers need to be creative in searching and using appropriate authentic materials to support their teaching. Yet, Lie (2007) notes that finding authentic materials is problematic in some contexts. In Indonesia, for example, for teachers who teach in big cities, such as Jakarta, Bandung or Surabaya, accessing such materials is probably not a problem. But for those who teach in rural areas, finding authentic materials is really a major challenge (Musthafa, 2001).

2.6.2. Different expected Roles of the Students

CLT is claimed to be a model for classroom teaching because it sees language learning not only as the mastery of grammatical structures and habit formation through a set of processes, but also engages learners in interaction and meaningful communication (Brumfit & Johnson, 1979; Richards, 2005). At the practical level, CLT suggests various activities such as role-plays, group work discussion or problem solving in which students practise to speak and negotiate meanings. These activities aim to keep the conversation flowing through skilled turn taking and to give learners chances to ascertain how well they can understand and make themselves understood (Hedge, 2000; Richards, 2005). However, I have witnessed how some of the activities proposed by CLT are difficult to implement in my context. In group work discussion, for example, since the students share

the same language, they tend to use *Bahasa Indonesia* in the discussion. This is probably because they seem not to have any immediate need to use English in and outside the classroom (Musthafa, 2001). In addition, a class in Indonesian schools usually consists of 40-50 students; thus it is very difficult to create an environment where the students are expected to have group discussions and be independent learners. Moreover, according to Fietchner and Davies (1992), big classes potentially create conditions in which the students do not participate in group discussions.

In addition, Dardjowidjojo (2002, p.123) reports that “many Indonesian students learn English not because they want to, but because they have to”. Indeed many of them, especially those who live in remote areas, do not have any idea why they have to learn English, and thus have low motivation to learn the language.

Culture also influences the students’ learning styles. DelliCarpini (2008) states that in some cultures, students are passive learners and need teachers’ authority to transmit the knowledge. Research by Hofstede (1986, as cited in Kameo, 2007) studied the dimension of collectiveness in Indonesian culture. The results revealed that Indonesia is among those considered as group-oriented, along with South Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines and Japan. As a result, “children from collective culture are taught that their personal identity is based on the group’s identity and that they should conform to the group” (Kameo, 2007, p.8). Thus, the children are taught to be reliant on the teachers. For this reason, most Indonesian students are mainly shy and quiet, and to encourage them

to speak is a challenging task. Most of them are also afraid to speak because of their relatively low speaking skills (Mantiri, 2004).

Although I am fully aware of the need to avoid cultural stereotypes, I found many of my own students indicated similar attitudes to the ones mentioned above. Based on my experiences as a teacher, the students often saw English as 'an alien'; many students were afraid of English and it was considered as a very difficult subject. When it came to discussion sessions, only one or two students spoke. They were usually the ones who took an additional English course after school.

As a concept promoted by the West, CLT seems to be more suitable for ESL not EFL settings (The Jakarta Post, 1999b). This is because CLT demands an English-speaking environment in both the classroom and society. Ellis (1996, p.215) explains that EFL classrooms rely on "the teachers' language proficiency, teaching resources, the availability of suitable materials, and may or may not test communicative competence, depending on national curriculum goals". Thus, CLT seems to be more appropriate to implement in ESL rather than EFL settings.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that Indonesia faces many challenges in implementing the concept of communicative competence. Even though this approach has been adopted for almost 26 years in Indonesian education system, at the practical level it almost never takes effect in classrooms. What are the real factors contributing to its failure? It

is, therefore, worthwhile exploring the teachers' perceptions of this concept and the challenges that they face in implementing the communicative curriculum. In addition, because previous research studies have focused on the application of CLT at only one level of education, I believe it will be insightful to compare and investigate the application of this concept at different levels of education: primary, secondary and university. It is hoped that this study will provide a more comprehensive insight into teachers' understanding and practice of CLT.

2.7. Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed the theories on communicative competence and communicative language teaching as well as provided a brief description of school curriculum, ELT and the application of CLT in the Indonesian context. These ideas serve as a basis for analysing the collected data. The next chapter discusses the methodological framework employed in this research which is qualitative in nature.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Overview

This chapter provides a description of the research methodology. It begins with the rationale for the research design, followed by a description of the participants in this research. The next section discusses the methods used in collecting and analysing data.

3.2. A Qualitative Research Design

Creswell (2009) emphasises the importance in qualitative research of the participants, on whom the researcher depends very much for information. The objective of my study is to investigate the participants' experiences and perspectives in their interactions with their students in implementing the concepts of CLT. As qualitative research seeks to understand human interaction by giving an in-depth description of the context (Lichtman, 2010), qualitative research is therefore considered to be the most appropriate research design for this study.

Creswell (2009) also maintains that qualitative research enables the researcher to interpret the gathered data using his/her own backgrounds, history, context, and existing knowledge. Since it is the researcher himself/herself who is interpreting the collected data, this has raised the issue of subjectivity. This aspect of qualitative research may thus be seen as a limitation of the study, as subjectivity and bias may emerge. Since all of

my participants are Indonesian and are English teachers, I, then, share similar culture and English teaching experiences with my participants. This familiarity of the context of the study helps me to interpret the data using my own background. Nevertheless, I am aware that I may bring some biases to this study. Even though I have tried to ensure objectivity, these biases might affect the way I collect and interpret the data.

Lichtman (2010), however, argues that the effort to gain objectivity by minimising bias is not necessary in a qualitative study, because background knowledge of the researcher is beneficial for conducting the research. According to Lichtman, background knowledge can, in fact, help the researcher to be familiar with the topic and enables him/her to make meaningful data. Moreover, in qualitative research the researcher plays a primary role in the research, thus, the researcher's experiences and understanding about the issues and the procedures involved are crucial (2010).

3.3. Case Study

As a form of research design, the case study aims to explore the specific characteristics of individuals or groups (Bassegy, 1999). Yin (1994) also contends that a case study is an ideal method when the researcher works in particular contextual conditions. Stake (1995, as cited in Creswell 2009, p.13) defines a case study as “a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores an in-depth program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals”. He provides characteristics of case studies, which differentiate

them from other studies, they include multiple methods, source of data and consider context. In line with Stake's conceptions of case study, I have chosen a case study as a method of inquiry. My case is the implementation of CLT in Indonesian education context and the reasons for choosing a case study are as follows:

1. My study was conducted in the Indonesian context, where I explore the teachers' experiences of ELT at three different levels of education, i.e. primary, secondary and university. These levels and Indonesian education constitute the context for my participants' views.
2. My study investigates the teachers' perceptions of the application of CLT in their classrooms. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995, as cited in Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000) argue that one of the features of case study is its ability to focus on individual or groups in understanding their perceptions of events.
3. By employing case study, I could explore my participants' experiences in relation to the application of CLT (as a policy in the current Indonesian curriculum) in their classes. In relation to this Yin (1994) states that case study aims to investigate the effect of policy on practice.
4. Case study has allowed me to describe and to use narrative to reveal the complexity of the English teaching practices at the three different levels of education in Indonesia.
5. This study was conducted for the purpose of writing a minor thesis in which I had only four months to finish. Bell (1999) points out that case study is a suitable method to employ as it enables the researcher to focus on one aspect to gain in-depth data within a limited time scale.

Doing case study, however, invites criticism in relation to the notion of generalisability. Regarding this issue, Yin (1994, p.10), develops two kinds of generalisation, i.e. “statistical generalisation” and “analytic generalisation”. Statistical generalisation relies on the size and nature of the sample in the data, while analytic generalisation involves the use of “a previously developed theory as a template with which to compare the empirical results of the case study” (Yin, 1994, p.31). For a case study, statistical generalisation is not suitable, because a case is not a representative sample. Therefore, the notion of generalisation in this case study can only be related to the study’s “theoretical stance and not ... [its] populations” (1994, p.10).

3.4. Selection of Participants

The participants discussed in this study were six Indonesian EFL teachers from primary, secondary and university levels (five females and one male). Two English teachers from each level were chosen. They teach at school or university in Jakarta, Banten, Medan (North Sumatera), Yogyakarta and Subang (West Java).

The criteria for choosing the participants were:

- a. The teachers should have at least two years experience of teaching EFL at school or university, with the assumption that they are familiar with CLT
- b. They have indicated that they have experiences dealing with CLT in their classrooms.

- c. They should have the willingness to be involved in my study, which was shown by signing the consent form.
- d. They came from five different schools in Indonesia:
 - 1. One is from a public primary school (*SDN*) in Tangerang, Banten
 - 2. One is from a private primary school (*SDS*) in Yogyakarta
 - 3. One is from a public secondary school (*SMAN*) in Jakarta
 - 4. One is from a public secondary school (*SMAN*) in Subang, West Java
 - 5. One is from a public university in Jakarta
 - 6. One is from a private university in Medan, North Sumatra

Of these six participants, three came from urban areas of Indonesia (Jakarta, Medan and Yogyakarta) and the rest came from rural areas (Tangerang and Subang). I deliberately chose participants from different areas and different types of schools (private and public) in order to get more varied voices from the teachers.

However, I could not find a participant from a private secondary school who fulfilled my criteria. Thus, I had two secondary school teachers from public schools. Nonetheless, these two teachers came from different areas in Indonesia (Jakarta and Subang), thus contributing to the diversity of voices of the teachers.

3.5. Methods for Data Collection

In conducting the research, the qualitative researcher is eager to gain data directly from the source (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). For this purpose,

Creswell (2005, 2009) identifies several types of data collection in qualitative research, i.e. observation, interviews, questionnaires, documents, and audio-visual materials. I chose a questionnaire and interviews as methods of collecting data.

3.5.1. Questionnaire

The questionnaire is a form of data collection which is used widely in the education field, particularly if the information cannot be observed directly (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996; McDonough & McDonough, 1997). There are several reasons for choosing a questionnaire as a method to collect data. Firstly, the questionnaire is easy to analyse as the information needed can be controlled by the questions (McDonough & McDonough, 1997). This potentially also limits the content and focus of responses. However, even though I used a rating scale in Part 2 of my questionnaire (see appendix 1), I still provided some space for the participants to express their opinions and to elaborate their answers, in order to reduce this potential limitation. Secondly, the questionnaire is economical (Bell, 1999), because it “can be used on a small-scale, in-house, and on a large scale”, (McDonough & McDonough, 1997, p.171). It is also a suitable method for a single researcher who has no or limited funds and has to prepare the project report in a short time (Bell, 1999, p. 116). The questionnaire was used to gain a general understanding from the teachers about English teaching in Indonesia and the concept of CLT as well as to develop the interview questions.

The questionnaire was divided into three parts with sixteen questions in total. Part 1 sought personal information. It consisted of six questions and was designed to gain general information about the participants' personal and educational background. Part 2 was designed to obtain the participants' perceptions toward CLT. The participants were asked to put a tick(s) in the appropriate column(s) that corresponded to their answers and to write comments regarding the answers. Part 3 contains open-ended questions and was designed to further explore the participants' perceptions of ELT and the concept of CLT.

The questionnaire was distributed to the participants: via email to those who were in Indonesia (the four EFL school teachers) and through direct contact to those who were in Australia (the two EFL university teachers). The questionnaire was sent back to me within a week and was used to develop the in-depth interviews.

3.5.2. Interviews

The interview was another method employed to collect data in this study. Interviews are useful when the researcher cannot get access to observation. In case study research, interviews are an important source of information. This is because in case study, rich data can be gathered directly from participants through interviews (Yin, 1994). As my study sought information regarding the application of CLT through the eyes of English teachers in Indonesia, interviews are therefore, crucial in obtaining useful information.

In this research study, I employed semi-structured, in-depth interviews to collect data because they enabled me to explore the participants' experiences and perceptions toward the application of CLT. The explanation of this type of interview will be covered in the next section.

3.5.3. In-depth Interviewing

In-depth interviews consider participants' points of view to be highly important. Therefore, open-response questions are usually used in such interviews (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). For my research, in-depth interviewing was used because it is was judged the most appropriate method in collecting data from my participants; in-depth interviews gave me room to develop questions based on the responses of the participants. Thus, there was flexibility regarding the sequence of questions during the interviews (2010).

Another reason for choosing in-depth interviews is because this method also has been proven effective in investigating teachers' thinking (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988). It gave participants the opportunity to articulate their voices and, at the same time, it enabled me to explore further the participants' perspectives on the topic.

In conducting in-depth interviews, several issues, however, should be taken into account. First, there are ethical concerns (Fontana & Frey, 2000), because the objects of interviewing are human beings. Therefore, the researcher must ensure that the research is not harmful to the participants

either physically or mentally. Consequently, the researcher must obtain consent from the participants before conducting the interviews (Fontana & Frey, 2000). For this research, I had already obtained consent from my participants before conducting the interviews; I informed them about the research, the privacy and my intention to protect them from harm. Another issue that need to be taken into account in interviewing is the power relations that may exist between the interviewer and the interviewee (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). This concern also raises an issue related to the validity of the data; unequal power relationships can affect the answers to the questions raised during the interview. However, I do not believe that this was the case in my research, since, even though my participants and I shared similar experiences as English teachers, we do not teach at the same institutions. Such unequal relationships then did not exist.

Reliability and validity are two other issues that may arise in interviews (Cohen, et al., 2007; Creswell, 2005). The interviewer is likely to bring his/her own background knowledge and experiences to the interview, which, in turn, may affect the process of the interview. In relation to this, Hitchcock and Hughes (1989, as cited in Cohen, et al., 2007) argue that the influence of the researcher on the data is inevitable. In addition, Lichtman (2010) states that in qualitative interviewing the researcher is not expected to be objective; rather, it is important to take account of how the researcher becomes critically reflective through and about his/her own lens. To minimise bias in interpreting the data, I used triangulation.

In my study, the face-to-face interviews were conducted at different times. I conducted the interviews in two different places: Indonesia and Australia. In Indonesia, I interviewed four of my participants; two primary school teachers and two secondary schools teachers. Three of these interviews were done face-to-face with the participants who teach in Jakarta, Tangerang and Subang. The other one, due to the distance barrier, was conducted via telephone (with the participant who teaches in Yogyakarta). In Australia, the interviews with the two university teachers were carried out face-to-face.

Nineteen questions were generated for the interviews. All of the interviews were then transcribed in preparation for identifying descriptive data and conducting analysis. The places of interviews were chosen by the participants themselves, and the interviews were audio-taped. Each interview took about one hour per-participant. In these interviews, I allowed my participants to choose whether the interviews would be conducted in English or in *Bahasa Indonesia*. The main reasons I gave them this choice were to give the participants the freedom to choose the language they felt most comfortable with and to reduce the language barrier in conveying the meaning. The two EFL primary teachers chose to have the interviews in *Bahasa Indonesia*, while the other participants chose to have the interviews in English. All six interviews were transcribed for data analysis. The two interviews conducted in *Bahasa Indonesia* were transcribed in *Bahasa Indonesia* and were then translated into English by myself. The data from the interviews conducted in English were presented without grammar corrections.

One of the challenges I faced in doing in-depth interviews was to generate a set of non-leading questions that ensured the validity and richness of the data in exploring the teachers' practices in implementing CLT. The following key points were set as topics for the interviews: CLT, English teaching in Indonesia, curriculum, authentic materials, the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction, classroom activities, difficulties in applying CLT and cultural issues.

3.5.4. Triangulation

Qualitative research uses triangulation to validate the findings. Triangulation is “the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspects of human behaviour” (Cohen, et al., 2007, p.141). In this study, I used two different types of methods in the data collection, i.e. a questionnaire and interviews. I also used member checking as a strategy to validate the accuracy of the findings (Creswell, 2005, 2009). In doing this, I sent the transcripts to the participants to check the accuracy. The participants were given a week to read and confirm the transcripts of the interview. A number of them clarified what they had said during the interviews.

3.6 Methods for Data Analysis

Qualitative research employs inductive data analysis. The process of such an analysis involves identifying data into categories and classifying the categories into themes (Creswell, 2005; Lichtman, 2010; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

In this study, after in-depth interviews had been conducted, all data were transcribed for analysis. After that I used member checking with the participants, as a part of both data collection and analysis. At this stage, I sent the transcripts to each participant to clarify the data. After they sent back the transcripts, the next stage was reading the transcriptions several times and highlighting the main points that corresponded to the questionnaire and interview questions. While reading, I also wrote down the names of subthemes that I created, which corresponded to the research questions. I repeated this process until I found possible subthemes. I went on to compare the data from the questionnaire and interviews. In this process, I modified and reduced the potential subthemes until I found similar general subthemes that conformed to the research questions. The data from the questionnaire and interviews were used to triangulate the findings. In addition, extracts from the questionnaire and interviews were used to support the findings.

3.7. Ethical Considerations

Ethical practice is another issue that has to deal with in qualitative research, since much qualitative research involves humans in the research process, particularly in gathering the data. Therefore, researchers need to be aware of what is appropriate and inappropriate research practice (Babbie, 2008). It is important to respect and to protect the participants from both physical and psychological harm (Babbie, 2008; Creswell, 2009; Lichtman, 2010). In addition, researchers need to obtain permission from the International Review Board (IRB) at their university (Creswell, 2009;

McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In this case, I applied for ethics approval from Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC) and my submission was approved on 9 March 2010. I also wrote an explanatory statement and sought consent from the participants. In the explanatory statement I explained about myself and my research: the purpose of the study, confidentiality, methods for collecting data (questionnaire and in-depth interviews) and the nature of the participation (voluntary). I also used pseudonyms for all of my participants. These pseudonyms were created by the participants themselves. Confidentiality and anonymity were therefore maintained in this study.

3.8. Limitations

In conducting the research, I found some challenges which I believe became the limitations of this study. Finding the participants who are of different cultural backgrounds was not easy. Initially, I planned to recruit each participant from different provinces in Indonesia, so that I could make a comparison between those six provinces. However, I was only able to recruit participants from five different regions in Indonesia: Jakarta, Tangerang (Banten), Medan (North Sumatera), Yogyakarta and Subang (West Java). Therefore, there were two participants who come from Jakarta. In addition, as this is a small-scale study, involving only six participants, I cannot claim that the findings of the study apply to all areas of Indonesia.

Finding related research studies conducted in the Indonesian context was another challenge for me. I found it hard to locate existing literature in the

Indonesian context to support my theoretical framework. I believe some studies have been conducted in Indonesia under the topic of CLT; unfortunately I had difficulty accessing them. This might be because the forums for publishing research in Indonesia are still limited, and online Indonesian journals are also still difficult to access.

3.9. Chapter Summary

This chapter provides information about the methodology used in this study, explaining the reasons for choosing qualitative research as an approach and case study as a research design. This chapter also provides a description of how the data were collected and analysed. In addition, the chapter includes a discussion of ethical issues and the limitations of this study. The next chapter provides a discussion of the research findings.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Overview

This chapter begins with a brief description of the participants. It then presents the findings of the research. Two major themes were generated based on the research questions, i.e. the participants' perceptions of communicative language teaching and the participants' perceptions of the implementation of CLT in their classrooms.

4.2. Description of Participants

This study involved six participants who are EFL teachers in Indonesia: five females and one male. Two of them, Savanna and Rasty, teach at primary schools. Donny and Taty teach at secondary schools, while Erly and Virginne teach at universities. The names of the participants are pseudonyms created by the participants themselves. The interviews with the primary school teachers were conducted in *Bahasa Indonesia*, while the rest were in English. The data from the interviews conducted in English have been presented without grammar correction.

a. Rasty

Rasty is an EFL teacher at a primary school in a rural area in Tangerang, Banten. She attained her bachelor degree from a private religious university in Central Java, majoring in social science. She has been teaching at this school for about seven years. Although her educational

background is not English education, she was asked to teach English at school.

b. Savanna

Savanna is an EFL teacher at an international-standard primary school in an urban area in Yogyakarta. She attained her bachelor degree from a state religious university in Jakarta, majoring in English education. She has approximately 6 years of EFL teaching experience. In her current school, she teaches three classes with about 30 students in each class.

c. Donny

Donny is an EFL teacher at a public secondary school in Jakarta. He attained his bachelor degree from a state university in Jakarta, majoring in English education. He started teaching English at this school in 2006; he teaches eight classes with about 40 students in each class.

d. Taty

Taty is an EFL teacher at a public secondary school in Subang, West Java. She attained her bachelor degree in one of the public universities in Jakarta, majoring in English education. She has been teaching English for about 8 years.

e. Erly

Erly is an EFL teacher at a public university in Jakarta. She attained her bachelor degree from a public university in Jakarta. She teaches two classes with 40-50 students in each class. In total, she has 3.5 years of EFL teaching experience. She is currently a master student at an Australian university, majoring in Education with a specialisation in TESOL International.

f. Virginne

Virginne is an EFL teacher at an international-standard private university in a rural area in Medan, North Sumatera. She graduated from the same university where she teaches at the moment, majoring in English education. She has been teaching English for four years at this college. Currently, she is studying at an Australian university, gaining her master degree specialising in TESOL International.

4.3. The Participants' Perceptions of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

The first research question in this study seeks to explore the participants' perceptions of CLT. Their perceptions and understandings of CLT are important, as they determine the way the teachers apply the concepts in their daily teaching practices.

4.3.1. The Participants' Definitions of CLT

The data indicate that the teachers viewed CLT in different ways; some of them provided a definition to illustrate the concept of CLT, while some others described the characteristics of CLT in understanding this concept. Despite these differences, the participants from the three levels of education highlighted the idea of “communication” when defining CLT, as indicated below:

It emphasises communication... Communication is more important, so that the students will understand more... grammar without communication is useless. (Rasty, a primary school teacher)

CLT suggests us to use English as the English native speakers use it. (Donny, a secondary school teacher)

The ultimate goal of CLT is fluency in using language. CLT means meaningful communication through negotiation of meaning. (Erly, a university teacher)

This perception is congruent with the many theories found in the field of CLT, that is, communication is the intended aim when teaching using CLT (Harmer, 2001; Richards & Rodgers, 1986). Savignon (2005) states that CLT involves learners in communication and the learners have the opportunity to develop their communicative competence. Having this concept, it appears that all of the participants had a basic understanding of CLT.

When asked further about the concept of CLT, the two primary school teachers, however, seemed to place emphasis on speaking only- they spoke of communication as an oral process.

For me the most important thing is communication, because grammar is too theoretical. (Savanna)

According to me, the most important thing is communication and the next one is grammar. (Rasty)

This perception does not seem to match with the existing literature on CLT. Thomson (1996) calls this phenomenon as a misconception of CLT because teaching using CLT does not mean avoiding other skills. CLT is promoting the integration of the four macro skills, which means that this concept does not disregard the importance of the other skills (Canale, 1983; Richards, 2005; Savignon, 2005). All macro and micro skills are needed in teaching English as they help the students to achieve the language competencies.

In comparison, the secondary school teachers and the university teachers showed that they had more comprehensive understanding of CLT. They remarked that CLT used various integrated activities to provide students with the opportunity to negotiate meaning and achieve meaningful communication. These activities, according to the teachers, were intended to help students become fluent in communication.

[CLT] Means that we invite the students to join the activities... CLT asks the students to be more active, active in speaking, in listening, in writing, and in reading. (Taty, a secondary school teacher)

This perception conforms to the concept of CLT, which states that one of the main assumptions of CLT is meaningful communication, obtained from relevant activities (Richards, 2005). CLT recommends the use of various

activities that integrate all language skills to help students practise and develop their communication.

Furthermore, the two university teachers (Erly and Virginne) identified a number of the characteristics of CLT, which were similar to what those discussed in Chapter Two, such as the use of authentic materials, student-centred orientation, teacher as a facilitator and a focus on negotiation of meaning. In addition, among all of the participants, Virginne, the university teacher, was the only one to point out the importance of creating an atmosphere in the communicative class where students can be “relaxed” and “not under pressure”:

It gives more relaxed situation, not under pressure, varied activities and more group work, more communication among students. (Virginne)

Her perception indicates that she had a good grasp of CLT as she touched broader aspects of the concept.

From the perceptions given by these university teachers, it appears that their perceptions have been influenced by their educational background. These two university teachers are now doing their masters degree majoring in TESOL International in a university in Australia. I assume this condition positions the teachers to have a deeper understanding of the concept of CLT, as they have learnt the theory of teaching English as a second language.

Even though the teachers in this study understood the concept of CLT differently, the teachers from the three levels of education acknowledged that CLT was important and, therefore, should be used as an approach in teaching English. They believed that CLT covered aspects needed in learning a foreign language, such as communication and authenticity, which could help students achieve the learning objectives.

4.3.2. The Participants' Perceptions of the Teaching of Grammar

Table 2: The teachers' perceptions of the teaching of grammar

Statement	Primary Teachers		Secondary Teachers		University Teachers	
	Rasty	Savanna	Donny	Taty	Erly	Virginne
Grammar teaching should be minimised	A	A	A	A	D	D

SA: Strongly agree A: Agree D: Disagree

From the questionnaire, the teachers at primary and secondary schools mentioned that the teaching of grammar should be minimised, because according to them, communication was more important than grammar. Furthermore, they contended that, based on their experiences in learning English, focusing too much on grammar was boring. They believed it would discourage students to speak in English.

When I was a student, the English teaching system was trial and error; my teacher focused too much on grammar. I think learning English with too much focus on grammar is not fun.
(Savanna, a primary school teacher)

I learnt from my friends and also when I was a student, we were little bit afraid of English because it is a kind of a boring lesson. We had to learn a lot of formulas. (Taty, a secondary school teacher)

It appears that these primary and secondary school teachers' views on the teaching of grammar have been shaped by their past experiences. They also seem to believe that grammar does not support the speaking ability.

When asked further about the teaching of grammar, these primary and secondary school teachers looked guilty as they admitted that they also taught grammar; it was seen as 'a sin'. They reluctantly explained that grammar was important. This view is in contrast to what is discussed in the literature on CLT, which states that grammatical knowledge establishes the foundation of communication (Brumfit & Johnson, 1979; Canale, 1983; Hymes, 1979). Furthermore, such a perception corresponds to the misconceptions developed by Thomson (1996), who states that the avoidance of teaching grammar is the most damaging misconception in teaching using CLT. The 'not' teaching grammar is often associated with CLT.

However, the interviews with the school teachers revealed that all of them, in fact, believed that grammar should still be taught to the students:

*Grammar is important and must be taught to the students.
(Rasty, a primary school teacher)*

*There some parts of English [grammar] that I need to explain.
(Donny, a secondary school teacher)*

In this context, the teachers appeared to be aware that grammatical competence was also an important element when learning a foreign language, as they indicated that it helped students acquire other skills.

The inconsistency in the teachers' answers indicated in the questionnaire and the interviews might have been affected by the situation whereby the students must sit a final examination, which tends to be grammar-oriented. As a consequence, grammar must be taught to the students. Additionally, it might also indicate the limitations of the questionnaire as a method of data collection, as it failed to identify the tensions that these teachers had with regard to the issue of grammar teaching.

Similar to the school teachers' answers in the interviews, the two university teachers seemed to be aware of the importance of grammar in learning English. Grammar, according to them, was the basic skill that supports other skills so learners could become proficient users of English. Furthermore, these two university teachers argued that grammar teaching could be introduced through media, such as songs, newspapers or magazines or by using various activities, such as games, pair work or group work. Again, their views on the importance of grammar seem to have been affected by the policy of their universities. These teachers explained that the focus of English teaching at their universities was TOEFL; the students were expected to pass a TOEFL test as a requirement for graduating. Because of this, I assume that grammatical knowledge is given a priority in the classroom. Therefore, there is a necessity for them to teach grammar. It

also appears that the teachers' own educational background influenced their perceptions. As previously mentioned, these university teachers are pursuing their master degree in the area of English teaching; thus, it is likely that their views reflected what they have attained through their studies abroad.

Even though all of the teachers in this study were aware that grammar was important, Rasty, who taught in a primary school, argued that the most important skill in English teaching at the primary education level was vocabulary.

For primary students, vocabulary is more important. Because the students' ability is very low, they will get confused if I teach them grammar. (Rasty, a primary school teacher)

Her perception sits in line with the policy issued by the government regarding the objectives of ELT at the primary school level, that is, introducing students to simple oral and written language, with an emphasis on vocabulary mastery (Ministry of National Education Republic of Indonesia, 2006).

4.3.3. The Participants' Perceptions of the Use of *Bahasa Indonesia*

From the questionnaire, the teachers in this study responded to the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* as follows:

Table 3: The teachers' perceptions of the use of *Bahasa Indonesia*

Statement	Primary Teachers		Secondary Teachers		University Teachers	
	Rasty	Savanna	Donny	Taty	Erly	Virginne
The use of <i>Bahasa Indonesia</i> should be minimised	D	A	A	A	A	A

SA: Strongly agree

A: Agree

D: Disagree

The data from the questionnaire show that almost all of the teachers *agree* that the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* should be minimised in the English classroom. Only one teacher, Rasty, said that the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* should not be minimised.

The data indicated that opposing views regarding the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* were expressed by the two primary school teachers. Savanna argued that the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* should be minimised in the English classroom. In the interview, she explained that the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* in English lessons would discourage students from speaking in English. She also mentioned that at first the students had difficulties in understanding her speak in English, but later on they became used to it. Rasty, on the other hand, stated that *Bahasa Indonesia* played a significant role in helping her students understand the materials. She added that

teaching completely in English would make the students confused, because her students' proficiency in English was low.

It seems that the status of the school determines the way these two primary teachers expressed their perceptions. Savanna taught in a prestigious private school in an urban area in Yogyakarta, which she claimed to be an international school, where the majority of students came from high-level society:

We have good media and facilities... we have audio facilities, LCD, computer or TV... Because the students come from high-level of society, they have good facilities both at home and at school. (Savanna, a primary school teacher)

In the interview, Savanna stated that since the students were from a high socio-economic class, it was easy for them to access English materials. This condition, then, affected the students' performance in English, which the teacher claimed to be better than those studying in less-privileged public schools. In contrast, in most less-privileged public schools, such as the school where Rasty taught, the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* was potentially beneficial, because not only did it help the students understand the materials better but it also built their self-confidence (Zacharias, 2004).

From the interview, Rasty showed she was aware that her students were not very good in English; therefore, teaching them completely in English would probably detach the students from the lesson, they would have difficulty in

understanding the materials. This view is similar to what has been reported by *The Jakarta Post* (2001) and Mantiri (2004); most Indonesian students have low proficiency of English, which can be seen through their ability in speaking English and their low marks in the English lesson.

In addition, Rasty admitted that she did not graduate from an English education background. Her major in her undergraduate study was social science. She also admitted that her English skills were low:

I realize that I do not have good English; therefore teaching at primary school is the most possible profession for me. (Rasty, a primary school teacher)

For this reason, she rarely taught using English to her students. Rasty's case represents the 'mismatch' that can often be found in Indonesia's education system, especially in primary schools, as reported by Sutarsyah (2004). In his study, Sutarsyah explains that most English teachers in primary schools do not have English teaching background.

Nevertheless, the data revealed that the secondary school teachers and the university teachers had the same perceptions regarding the use of *Bahasa Indonesia*. Even though in the questionnaire the teachers stated that the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* should be minimised, from the interviews it was revealed that these teachers used both *Bahasa Indonesia* and English when teaching English.

I used both Bahasa Indonesia and English to teach my students. Because they cannot understand if I use English all the time. (Taty, a secondary school teacher)

Moreover, the data also show that these teachers allowed their students to discuss in *Bahasa Indonesia*, as they believed it would motivate the students in learning English.

I also allowed them to discuss in both Bahasa Indonesia and English. Because, if I force them to talk in English, nobody will talk. (Donny, a secondary school teacher)

Their perception is quite the contrary to the theory related to the use of the native language in the communicative classroom. In Chapter Two, it is stated that one of the characteristics of CLT is maximising the use of English and minimising the students' native language (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). The concept, however, needs to be questioned for the data revealed that most teachers argued that *Bahasa Indonesia* is important and should be used to explain complex materials.

When the sentences or the materials consist of many difficult words or hard to understand, I need to help them by translating the words. (Donny)

In addition, these teachers' perceptions of the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* are also supported by the Act of the Republic of Indonesia number 20, 2003 on National Education System chapter VII article 33 verse 1, which states, "*Bahasa Indonesia* as the language of the nation shall be the medium of instruction in the national education" (Ministry of National Education Republic of Indonesia, 2003).

Having expressed two different opinions, these secondary and university teachers seem to be inconsistent in their perceptions in relation to the use of *Bahasa Indonesia*. This inconsistency might be affected by two conditions. First, the pressure of creating an English classroom environment appears to have led the teachers to think of minimising the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* in the classroom. As one university teacher, Erly, argued, English lessons should be seen as an opportunity to practise English for both teachers and students.

But, I think it is important for both teachers and students to see the English lesson in class as an opportunity to practice their English. (Erly)

Erly's perception is similar to that of Ellis (1996), who states that in the EFL context, the classroom is the only English environment for students. Therefore, the students should optimise their time in the classroom to improve their English skills. The second reason may relate to the students' level competence. As the students are not proficient users of English, it is much easier for the teachers to explain particular materials in *Bahasa Indonesia*. Also the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* is considered to motivate the students to learn English, as they would be less likely to be afraid of giving opinions.

4.3.4. The Participants' Perceptions of Authentic Materials

The issue of the importance of authentic materials was also explored in this research. The teachers were asked about their perceptions toward authentic materials. From the questionnaire, all teachers *strongly agree* that authentic materials are important.

Table 4: The teachers' perceptions of the authentic materials

Statement	Primary Teachers		Secondary Teachers		University Teachers	
	Rasty	Savanna	Donny	Taty	Erlly	Virginne
Authentic materials are important	SA	SA	SA	SA	SA	SA

SA: Strongly agree

A: Agree

D: Disagree

The perceptions of all the teachers in this study reflect their understanding that authentic materials are important, confirming the principle formulated by Richards (2005) that authentic materials are important to achieve meaningful communication.

However, with regard to the issue of access to these (authentic) materials, the teachers had contrasting perceptions. Rasty, a primary school teacher in a rural area, was the only teacher who stated that finding authentic materials is problematic. In the interview, she explained that her school did not have funding to provide authentic materials, such as English newspapers, TV and Radio.

I realize that the authentic materials are important to help students to understand the lesson, but, generally these materials are hard to find, because we do not have enough funds to buy them. (Rasty, a public primary school teacher in a rural area)

This fact is similar to what has been discussed in the Literature Review. Lie (2007) argues that finding authentic materials is problematic in some contexts. Furthermore, Musthafa (2001) explains that for those who teach in rural areas, finding authentic materials is really a big challenge. To overcome this problem, Rasty explained that she usually made her own materials, such as pictures. Her view confirms the idea of “created materials” suggested by Richards (2005, p.22), who believes that creating our own materials is a good way of fulfilling a sense of authenticity in themes for communication, as created materials are likely to be relevant to our own cultures and interests.

By contrast, the rest of the teachers explained that they did not have any difficulties in finding authentic materials as their schools provided them with these materials. As explained in the previous discussion, Savanna taught at an international-standard school, which had support facilities for the teachers to use in their teaching, such as TV, DVD, radio, newspapers, magazines and internet access. Donny taught at a public school in Jakarta. Jakarta is the capital city of Indonesia; thus, getting authentic materials was not likely to be an issue. Moreover, he explained that his school was equipped with internet access. This facility enabled him to search for relevant authentic materials for his students. In the interview, he added that he had some brochures and postcards, which he usually used in his teaching. Meanwhile, Taty taught at a school that she claimed as an international-based school. Having this status, the school was also equipped with good facilities which support the learning processes. Therefore, she did not encounter any problems in finding authentic

materials. The interview revealed that she used TV programs, the internet, newspapers and magazines in her teaching.

Similarly, at the university level, the two teachers, Erly and Virginne, mentioned that it was easy for them to find authentic materials, because of the internet access provided by their universities. In addition, their universities also subscribed to newspapers written in English, such as *Jakarta Post* and *Herald Tribune*. This easy access might be because they teach at universities that had sufficient facilities to support their teaching. Erly taught at a public university in Jakarta. Public universities in Indonesia are commonly known to provide good quality education with good support facilities. Virginne taught at a private university which she claimed to be international-standard; such universities had good facilities for both teachers and students. Virginne, however, explained that problems would emerge if she could not access teaching materials online, such as puppets. It seems that most teachers, be they from primary, secondary and university levels, tend to associate “authentic materials” with “online resources.” The scope of authentic materials, however, is much broader, ranging from paper-based materials to realia (Richards, 2005).

4.3.5. The Participants' Perceptions of the Current Communicative Curriculum (KTSP)

The current school curriculum applied in Indonesia is *KTSP (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan-The School Level Curriculum)*. Universities have the freedom to design their own curricula. The school curriculum adopts communicative competence as its approach, yet teachers may have different understandings of this and are expected to develop the approach to suit their classes. Therefore, when discussing CLT, the teachers' perceptions of the communicative curriculum become important.

As the data indicate, all of the primary and secondary school teachers understood that according to the current curriculum the schools had the authority to create their own syllabi.

The school is given freedom to make our own syllabus within the parameters from the current curriculum. (Savanna, a primary school teacher)

Thus, the teachers also had the freedom to choose their own materials. This perception is similar to what has been explained about the nature of this curriculum in Chapter Two. However, the teachers in this study responded differently with regard to the implementation of the communicative curriculum in their classrooms.

At the primary school level, Rasty emphasised the problem of the school finances. She stated that the communicative curriculum asked the teachers

to find and develop their own teaching materials. However, she stated that her school did not have enough financial resources to support the teachers to find these materials.

I experience some difficulties in understanding and applying this new curriculum in our school. For example, the ability of the schools [financial], the ability of the students, the facilities.
(Rasty, a public primary school teacher)

Her perceptions support the research on English teachers in secondary schools in Java by Hamied (1997, as cited in Rudianto, 2007), which indicates that only 19.6% teachers stated that they used the communicative approach in their classroom due to lack of facilities. Savanna, on the other hand, found that the current curriculum was somewhat confusing, especially because the new curriculum required her to understand many new terms and concepts to be used in the syllabus, such as “basic competencies” and “indicators.”

KTSP is full of new terms. I, myself, even have not yet fully understood this curriculum (laughing). (Savanna, a private primary school teacher)

Savanna’s difficulties in implementing the communicative curriculum emerged from the concepts of *KTSP* itself. Sugiharto (2007) explains that *KTSP* might be difficult for teachers as it appears to have “unclear” guidance, such as how to assess students’ language performance. However, the confusion might also emerge from the teachers themselves. *KTSP* enables teachers to design and develop their own syllabi and materials. This freedom may challenge teachers in Indonesia, as some of them might not be

prepared through their prior experiences and training to take advantage of this opportunity. A research study by Suparman (2007) in one secondary school in Indonesia reported that many of the teachers had no real understanding of *KTSP*. This is because the current curriculum has significant differences from the previous ones. The previous curricula had details and structural guidance for the teachers, while the current one has only general guidelines. It appears that most teachers in Indonesia have been used to the 'detailed curriculum', so that when they are given the opportunity to design and develop their own syllabi and materials, many of them face difficulties.

Additionally, the interviews with the two primary teachers indicated that they were concerned about the centralised curriculum. This concern has been discussed in some literatures. First, Indonesia is a multicultural country; thus, such a curriculum does not fit all students in all regions of Indonesia. Second, there is still a big gap between urban and rural areas in Indonesia in terms of education and area development (Yuwono, 2005). Students who live far from big cities, for example, may experience going to school by walking a very long distance, going to school bare foot, or going to school without uniforms. They may not even be familiar with the computer or internet. In such conditions, it is likely that the centralised curriculum will fail to meet the needs of every student in every region in Indonesia.

The secondary school teachers also had a different view of the current communicative curriculum. Even though they understood that the current

curriculum gave them the freedom to develop their own syllabi, they considered it to be the same as the previous ones. According to them, the curriculum had only changed its name and terms, but they did not think it affected the implementation in the classroom. This perception, in fact, indicates that these teachers had not understood the quite different nature of the current curriculum, *KTSP*. Thus, it appears that they had limited understandings of the new curriculum. In terms of assessment, for instance, the previous curriculum had placed an emphasis on students' mastery of materials given within a period of time (one semester) and the result of each student was compared to those of other students. This is known as *a norm referenced test*. In contrast, the current curriculum focuses on students' competences, seeking to ascertain how well the students master several competencies in the English language. The achievement is not compared to those of other students, rather to the student him/herself. It is known as a *criterion referenced test* (Suparman, 2007). Furthermore, in the previous curriculum, classroom activities tended to focus on students' cognitive mastery of the teaching materials, whereas in the current curriculum the activities place emphasis on assisting students to acquire real-life competencies (Suparman, 2007).

These secondary school teachers also considered the national examination in secondary school to be a real challenge to the implementation of *KTSP* it should be noted that the national examination is not conducted at the primary education level, but the school holds a final school examination. In this examination, the school makes its own test items. It can be seen from the interviews that they seem to be disappointed with this policy (the

national examination), remarking that the national examination was not congruent with the current curriculum. They argued that *KTSP* gave teachers the freedom to choose their own materials, but on the other hand they had to teach their students materials that would be assessed in the final examination, which is designed and centralised by the government.

Actually, if we use KTSP or school's curriculum... it has no relation with ujian nasional or national exam. If we use school's curriculum, the one who has authority to decide whether the students passed the test, or graduated or did not graduate is not the government but the school instead. (Donny, a public secondary school teacher)

They also suggested that the final examination should be designed by the school, as the school or the teachers were the ones who knew the real situation and the conditions of the students.

The teachers also asked why they should teach writing, listening and speaking if the national examination only focuses on grammar and reading. Their perception reflects the classic problem in the Indonesian educational system with regard to the national examination, which focuses only on grammar and reading (Huda, 1992, as cited in Mistar, 2005; Lie, 2007). The mismatch between such high-stakes examinations and the curriculum is also reported by researchers from other countries as one of the issues when implementing CLT (Hoa Hiep, 2007; Li, 2000).

The pressure of the final examination appears to affect the policy in the teachers' schools. As a result, for the final year students, the teaching tends

to focus on grammar and reading only, because the main aim is to help students pass the final examination. At this stage, there appears to be a misinterpretation of *KTSP* among the teachers. *KTSP* actually enables teachers to integrate the four macro skills without neglecting the micro skills. If *KTSP* were properly understood and implemented, teachers may not have to be worried about the final examination, as *KTSP* is integral in nature, requiring students to learn the four macro skills as well as the micro skills.

According to the university teachers, the focus of English teaching at their universities is to help students pass the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) at the end of the students' study. They added that TOEFL was compulsory for each student as it was one of the requirements for graduation. With regard to the university curriculum, Erly, a public university teacher, admitted that she did not understand much about the English curriculum in her university. At this point, she explained that the curriculum, textbooks, and the test items for examination were designed by the faculty. She just accepted these and implemented what the curriculum stated. However, she said that she sometimes developed her own materials to support her teaching.

I don't know much about university curriculum for English lesson... our head of department at the faculty designs curriculum for us... So, the topics of the lesson are defined by the faculty. (Erly, a public university teacher)

It seems that she operated under similar conditions to the secondary school teachers, as she had to teach based on what was prescribed by the faculty (the curriculum, the textbook and the materials).

In contrast, Virginne, a private university teacher, mentioned that she was given the freedom by her university to create her own syllabus as well as the examination. Regarding the communicative curriculum, she explained that her perception changed after she attended a short course in TESOL. This course made her apply the communicative concepts in her teaching. She claimed to use various activities and authentic materials in her teaching, which focus on speaking ability. It seems her 'new' knowledge in English teaching influenced her decisions on the way she taught English. However, she confessed that she had difficulty in designing test items that were in accordance with the principles of the communicative curriculum.

4.4. The Participants' Perceptions of the Implementation of CLT in Their Classrooms

The data revealed that the teachers in this study found some difficulties in implementing the concepts of CLT in their classrooms. In discussing the challenges faced by the teachers, I grouped these challenges into two major subthemes, i.e. the challenges that emerged across all levels of education and the challenges that emerged from the different status of the schools.

4.4.1. Challenges Emerging across all Levels of Education when Implementing CLT

4.4.1.1. Students' Motivation

The data revealed that the teachers from all levels of education were concerned with their students' motivation in learning English. They mentioned that the students often had low motivation in learning English.

The students are not motivated to memorise the vocabulary and to learn English... (Rasty, a primary school teacher)

It is really hard to give them motivation... most of them come to the English class because there is a schedule for that. (Donny, a secondary school teacher)

They do not participate [in the discussion] because some of them have low motivation to learn English. (Erly, a university teacher)

The teachers explained that most students seem to lack the awareness of the importance of English. This might be caused by the status of English as a foreign language in the country. They stated that, as a foreign language, English was a compulsory subject and was tested in the examination; it appears that the students learnt English for these purposes only. Additionally, the two university teachers mentioned that they taught at non-English major departments, and, therefore, the students were likely to think that English was not important because it was not their major. This perception is similar to what has been explained by some researchers (Li, 2000; Segovia & Hardison, 2009; Yu, 2004), who contend that their students lack interest in learning English as it is not their language.

Furthermore, Dardjowidjojo (2002, p.123) identifies the reason for some Indonesian students having low motivation in learning English as being because “they learn English because they have to, not because they want to”. In fact, in most areas in Indonesia, English is considered as a difficult subject – even more difficult than Maths. Due to the above reasons, many students tend to lack the motivation to learn English.

As a consequence of being a foreign language in Indonesia, English is rarely used for daily needs (Musthafa, 2001). *Bahasa Indonesia* has a strong position as it is used as a national and official language; therefore, the students tend to prefer using *Bahasa Indonesia* to English in class activities.

Nevertheless, all of the teachers in this study contended that the students needed to be introduced to English, as it is the language commonly used in the global arena. At this point, it appears that the teachers were aware of the status of English as a global language, where English acts as the language of business, information and technology.

I acknowledge there may be some other factors that cause students’ low motivation to learn English, which could be related to the teachers themselves. However, I do not have any data regarding this, as I only sought the perceptions of the teachers.

4.4.1.2. Limited time-allotment

As a compulsory subject, English is taught 70-90 minutes a week at the primary level, 180 minutes per week at the secondary level and 100 minutes per week at the university level. This amount of time was considered very short by all of the participants.

I think the government should increase the time allotment. I have only 70 minutes a week with very much material to teach, the time is not enough. (Savanna, a private primary teacher)

The teachers noted that several activities suggested by CLT took excessive time in the implementation, such as role-plays, presentations and discussions. They added that organising students also took some time, curtailing the available teaching time. Moreover they explained that they had to teach all of the materials in the curriculum, which required 12 meetings for 12 different topics, each with their own activities and language foci. For this reason, they admitted that they seldom applied role-plays, discussions and individual presentations in their classrooms (see Appendix 4).

The teachers suggested that the students needed more time to learn English at school, as it was students' only opportunity to practice English. They explained that as an EFL country, Indonesia has a very limited number of TV programs run in English. In addition, the government also dubs most movies spoken in English into *Bahasa Indonesia*. It is thus clear that the teachers were aware of the students' insufficient exposure to English. Their view is similar to Ellis' (1996), who states that in an EFL setting, the

students are rarely exposed to English outside the schools; the classroom becomes the only environment they have to practice their speaking skills. The teachers in my study realised the importance of English for the students, as they explained that the students need English to access information or literature written in English. Additionally, in Indonesia, by knowing English people tend to be respected more and earn more, as English is usually one of the requirements when people apply for jobs (Dardjowidjojo, 2002).

4.4.1.3. Class Size

The sitting arrangement in our schools, it is hard moving the chairs. So, it is bit difficult... too many students here... I have around 40 students in one class, it is really hard, I prefer having 15-20 students in a class. (Donny, a public secondary teacher)

All of the participants explained that working in groups was not always a good idea, since Indonesia still had a common problem, which were big classes. The average number of students in most Indonesian schools is 40 students in each class. The seats are arranged so that students sit in rows and the teacher sits at the front of the class. This condition causes difficulty in making small groups, because the benches or the chairs are difficult to move. I assume that this situation influences the teachers' choices of activity to apply in their classrooms. From the questionnaire and interview, the teachers mentioned that *pair-works*, *teacher-questions and student-answers* and *lectures* were the types of activities that were most commonly

applied in the classroom (see Appendix 4). According to them, these activities were considered as the most possible and easiest ones to apply.

The teachers also added that because there were too many students in the class, it was hard for them to monitor the students. Sometimes, they assumed that all of the students understood the lesson by just asking questions to one or two students as representatives to check their understandings. Dardjowidjojo (1997, as cited in Jazadi 2004; 2002) calls this a “pragmatic constraint” where big classes potentially restrict the teacher from performing well in the classroom.

All of the teachers in this study also admitted that cheating and depending on one participant only arose when students did the classroom activities.

There are always only few students who give active participations in class, that's why I often have to ask them to participate in the class activities. (Erly, a public university teacher)

The teachers stated that this was because they could not check each student individually, due to the large number of students in the class. It seems that the teachers were fully aware that big classes potentially caused problems for them in managing their classrooms. This problem is similar to what Fietchner and Davies (1992) state, namely that a large class which allows six or more students in a group will create a situation where students do not participate fully.

However, the teachers realised that they could not do anything regarding the classroom size. I assume this is because Indonesia is the third most populous country in the world, hence, many young people study at school. A governmental report in 2008 revealed that there were 52,188,520 students in total studying at primary, secondary and university levels in Indonesia with the average number of 38 students in one class (*Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan – Research and Development Department, 2008*). This statistic reflects that it is very difficult for both the government and the schools to reduce the number of students in one class.

4.4.1.4. The Teachers' Role

The participants shared a similar view regarding the role of the teacher in the classroom. They confirmed that in their classes, the teacher was seen as a 'god', the one who knows everything. As a figure, they felt that teachers were treated as very special; everything they said would directly be accepted by the students. These conditions, they said, happened across all levels of education in Indonesia², even at the university level, where the students are paradoxically expected to be critical and analytical.

Indonesia is one of the countries that has high levels of power distance and collectivism (Kameo, 2007). In this type of country, the students are normally taught to be dependent on others, especially on older people or people with a higher position, such as parents and teachers. Parents and

² I am not claiming that all schools in Indonesia have the same condition that the teacher is the only source of information. Rather, I am making this claim based on the data I had from the participants of this study.

teachers are seen as the most respected people in the community, children or students have been taught to obey them. Due to the high status of the teacher, students are often seen as having a lack of initiative in the class activities (Kameo, 2007). The teachers also added that being quiet is a part of being polite in the students' local culture. As a result, many students considered being quiet as a sign of respect for the teacher.

Some students are shy and quiet. I think... it is a part from the national culture in which the teacher teaches while the students obey everything [what the teacher says], keep silent, only listen and rarely ask question. (Virginne, a private university teacher)

From the interviews, the teachers in this study seem to agree with the above notion of cultural values. They indicated that good students were those who were quiet and respectful toward the teacher. Additionally, they stated that the students tended to depend on the teacher to provide them with the English materials and English environment/exposure. The first component of this view is quite the contrary to the concept on the role of the teacher in CLT developed by many researchers. CLT suggests the teacher performs as a facilitator (Harmer, 2001; Richards, 2005), rather than the source of information, to assist students in the learning processes.

These teachers' perceptions, however, corroborates Ellis' (1996) view that, in EFL settings, teachers act as a source of information as they provide the English environment for the students. In addition, a study in Bangladesh by Chowdhury and Phan Le Ha (2008) reveals that, in this context, some teachers are more comfortable with their role as source of information and

enjoy gaining respect from the students. Furthermore, in Indonesia, “a *guru* (teacher) is culturally to be *digugu* (trusted) and *ditiru* (imitated)” (Dardjowidjojo, 2002, p.122). Therefore, shifting the role to a facilitator may be seen negatively by many teachers.

4.4.2. Challenges Emerging from the Different Status of the School when Implementing CLT

4.4.2.1. ‘Foreign’ Content

With regard to the ‘foreign’ content in the textbooks, the teachers from international-standard schools and university levels concurred that they should use materials containing aspects of western cultures to teach their students. The international-standard school teachers agreed that using imported materials which contained western culture might provide an added value for students. They argued that by being exposed to other cultures, the students could learn about other cultures and get an idea of how English is used in real-life situations (in western contexts).

Learning another country’s culture is positive... extra value... However, sometimes it is hard for the students to understand the reading about other cultures, because it does not belong to their own culture. (Taty, an international-standard public school teacher)

However, these international-standard school teachers found that some of these cultural values were not easily understood by their students. Their second perception tends to support the theory that foreign cultures may

result in a 'clash' with the local culture. As Canagarajah (1999) and Phan Le Ha (2008) argue, foreign materials might create conflicts with the local culture. Using foreign materials also mean imposing an 'alien' culture on the students, which may result in hindering them from understanding the materials. One teacher who teaches in a rural area (Virginne) gave the example of the difficulty she had in explaining about *winter*. She said that she was never able to explain the concept of winter, as she did not have any experience in feeling what winter was like. It could further be argued that the use of foreign materials might also affect the students' learning strategies. Teachers should not risk the students' success in learning by imposing new cultural values, because different cultures value different learning behaviors (Harmer, 2002 as cited in Lengkanawati, 2004).

The teachers' inconsistency with regard to the foreign cultures might be influenced by the status of their school. As an international-standard school, the school usually has two curricula; a national and an international curriculum. Therefore, the need to maintain an international-standard status prompts the school to use both national and imported books for its students.

The university teachers contended that they tried to also provide materials about the local cultures to strike a balance in their teaching. It seems that at this point the two university teachers were aware that foreign materials potentially create problems as they might disengage students in the learning processes. The reason for using foreign materials might be because

at the university level one of the aims of English teaching is to develop students' cultural/intercultural awareness, which is expected to increase understandings among different cultures (Ministry of National Education Republic of Indonesia, 2006). For this reason, the university has an obligation to introduce aspects of other cultures, which in this case is western culture, as English is originally considered to belong to the West and to have a strong position in global communication.

Unlike the university teachers and those teaching in an international-standard school, the teachers who teach at public non-international-standard schools stated that they did not find any constraints in relation to the 'foreign' contents. They stated that they used the textbooks which contained materials that were culturally appropriate for the students. When I was having interviews with these teachers, I had the opportunity to examine the textbooks they used for teaching. They used national publications in which almost all of the themes and materials in the textbooks were about Indonesian culture, such as Indonesian tourist destinations, flag ceremony, national heroes, religious events, etc. The choices of the topics in those textbooks indicate that the government is aware that western culture may cause difficulties for the students, therefore, they design textbooks which are culturally suitable for these learners.

4.4.2.2. Availability of English Resources

All of the teachers from public schools (Rasty, Donny and Taty) complained about the lack of English resources in their schools.

We don't have a lot of English reading materials in this school. Most students in Indonesia come from medium to low level society, so the price of the books is too expensive for them.
(Donny, a public secondary school teacher)

In the interview, these public school teachers indicated that they relied on particular textbooks for teaching, those prescribed by the government. However, the textbooks cost the students a large amount of money, thus, not all of the students could afford them. As a consequence, a number of students studied without textbooks. This condition, according to these public teachers, caused difficulty for them in delivering the materials, because these students would disturb other students to share their books or allow them to borrow the textbooks.

While some students did not have access to textbooks, the teachers and the students, in general, also had difficulty obtaining books written in English. They added that their libraries were not equipped with sufficient English reading books and cassettes for listening activities. This might be because it is very difficult to find books written in English by local publishers. Imported books, on the other hand, are usually available only in big cities, and with high prices; thus, only schools with sufficient funding resources

can obtain them. This problem resembles Lie's (2000) account of how insufficient funding brings problems in implementing CLT.

Another concern remarked by the teachers is the absence of a language laboratory. Rasty, who teaches at a primary school, admitted that her school did not even have this facility, though the rest of the public school teachers said that they did have a language laboratory. However, these teachers stated that the language laboratory did not function well. When I interviewed the secondary school teacher at the public school, I had the opportunity to observe their facilities, including the language laboratory. I found that the school had only one language laboratory to be used for 32 classes. It follows that not all of the students had the opportunity to have listening activities in the laboratory.

It should be acknowledged that such facilities significantly help both teachers and students to achieve the learning aims. I believe having these facilities would make it easier for the teachers to implement the concepts of CLT and to have effective and efficient teaching and learning processes. The language lab or audio-visual devices will likely help students practise their English skills. The library should provide students with information related to the teaching materials, the use of which is expected to improve their language skills. This perspective, the importance of facilities, is often neglected when talking about CLT. It might be because theories of CLT emerged from developed countries, where sufficient facilities are taken for granted in their schools. Because of the quality and scarcity of

teaching/learning facilities, in developing countries, such as Indonesia, CLT seems very hard to implement.

These problems, by contrast, were not found in the private schools or at the university level. Savanna, Erly and Virginne explained that their schools had more than one library and language laboratories, which can be used any time they wanted. Savanna, who teaches at a private primary school, stated that her school has sufficient reading materials in English and good support facilities. As for Erly and Virginne, their universities also had adequate English resources and facilities.

In the case study presented, there seems to be a gap between private and public schools. This might be because private institutions are allowed to request funding from students/parents to cover their expenditures. In contrast, public schools mostly depend on the national governmental budget.

4.4.2.3. The Teachers' Income

Another concern found from the public institution teachers (Rasty, Donny, Taty and Erly) is their income. The teachers mentioned that their salary was not enough to earn a living. This fact has been one of the problems in Indonesia's education system. Generally, teaching is still regarded to be a poorly paid profession compared to other government employees' professions. Therefore, they explicitly suggested that the government provide a higher salary to the teachers:

The government should give higher salary to the teachers to motivate them; if you can motivate the teachers then the teachers can motivate the students... (laughing). (Erly, a public university teacher)

Salaries for public teachers and lecturers appointed by the government are allocated in the national budget; therefore, their salaries depend heavily on the country's financial resources. As for private teachers, the salary is managed by the institutions themselves, and is usually higher than the salary of the public teachers.

It seems that the insufficient salary affected the teachers' teaching performance, as they said that to overcome this problem they had to teach at two or three different places. The teachers admitted that working in more than one place requires much energy, which influenced the preparation for teaching, such as preparing the materials. Dardjowidjojo (2002) states that by working in more than one place, the teachers have little time to do academic and extracurricular work, such as preparing the materials and giving attention to each individual student.

4.4. Chapter Summary

The data revealed that all of the school teachers in this study tend to have limited views about the concepts of CLT, as they confirmed the misconceptions of CLT: the teaching – "only' of"- speaking and the – "not"-teaching grammar. In contrast, the university teachers seem to have a better understanding of the concepts of CLT. This study also shows that all

of the teachers refuted the idea of minimising the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* in the English classroom. Even though, initially, they supported the idea of minimising the use of mother tongue as one of the principles of CLT, the interviews revealed that *Bahasa Indonesia* was actually useful in helping the students understand the materials better and increase their self-confidence.

Additionally, the teachers had various perceptions regarding the implementation of the communicative curriculum. The primary school teachers were mainly concerned about the centralised curriculum; the secondary school teachers were worried about the mismatch between the communicative curriculum and the assessment, while the university teachers emphasised different aspects of the curriculum implementation, such as the centralised curriculum and the test items.

The data revealed that all of the teachers in this study encountered some difficulties in implementing the concepts of CLT in their classrooms. There are similarities and differences with regard to the difficulties. In terms of similarities, the teachers from all levels of education indicated that they encountered challenges in the following aspects: *students' motivation, time allotment, classroom size and the role of the teacher*. In terms of differences, *the foreign content* was perceived as problem by the teachers who teach at international-standard schools and at the university level. On the other hand, *availability of the English resources and teachers' income* were

problems that were mentioned only by the teachers who teach at public institutions.

This study revealed that problems encountered by the teachers in implementing CLT did not actually emerge because of the different levels of education, but because of the different status of the institutions: public and international-based private institutions. In spite of the challenges and difficulties the data show that all of the teachers supported the use of CLT in the classroom, as they felt the concepts were important in helping students achieve the learning objectives.

To respond to the challenges faced by the teachers when implementing CLT, some recommendations are given in the next chapter with a summary of the findings and conclusion.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Overview

This chapter presents a summary of the study, followed by some recommendations for input to improve English education in Indonesia. The direction for future study is also given in this chapter.

5.2. Results

This case study investigated Indonesian teachers' perceptions with regard to the implementation of CLT at three levels of education: primary, secondary, and university. The data revealed that students' motivation, big classes, time allotment, foreign materials, availability of English resources, the final national examination and teachers' income were among the challenges faced by the teachers in this study. A number of teachers in this study also confirmed some of the misconceptions reported by Thomson (1996), namely that CLT means *teaching only speaking* and *the not teaching grammar*.

The data, however, revealed three elements that are contradictory to the concepts of CLT, as theorised by many researchers. They are: *the use of Bahasa Indonesia*, *the role of the teacher* and *facilities*. CLT suggests the extensive use of the target language and restricts the use of mother tongue. However, the participants argued that the use of *Bahasa Indonesia* was important both in helping the students understand the materials and in building their self-confidence.

The concept of the teacher as a facilitator has also been challenged by the primary school teachers in this study. They argued that the role of the teacher in the classroom was a source of information, as in EFL settings the teacher was the only one to provide an English environment for the students. Meanwhile, facilities are one aspect that tends to be overlooked in CLT. The participants of the study argued that facilities are a crucial component for ensuring the effectiveness of teaching and learning process.

5.3. Recommendations

This study has revealed some critiques of the implementation of CLT in Indonesian education. While the study can only represent the participants' views, it may indeed reflect the views of many other teachers, whose experiences would need to be addressed through professional development. Whether or not these perceptions are widespread would need to be tested in a larger-scaled study. On the basis of the many constraints potentially faced by English teachers in implementing CLT, I suggest some recommendations to apply in ELT in Indonesia.

5.3.1. Providing In-service Training for the Teachers in the Areas of Knowledge on the Teaching Approach and the Communicative Curriculum

This research indicates that teachers may have a limited understanding of the communicative approach and communicative curriculum. The government should, therefore, provide support to the teachers to understand the concepts, for example by providing training for teachers.

The training can be arranged both by the central and local government. At the central level, the training should focus on the knowledge of curriculum, teaching approach and assessment guidelines. Meanwhile, at the local level, the training can aim specifically to maximise the local potencies or strengths of each region or area to support teaching and learning processes. Hence, the schools can integrate the local culture into their curriculum and promote *adaptation* rather than adoption of the concepts of CLT into their teaching. The training would also aim at increasing the teachers' knowledge on the communicative approach, so that teachers gain a more comprehensive understanding of the concept, which would enable them to implement the concept better at the practical level.

5.3.2. Establishing Chances for Teachers for Self-improvement

Some research studies in the Indonesian context revealed that there is a large number of unqualified teachers (Dardjowidjojo, 2002; Lie, 2007; Sutarsyah, 2004). One way of improving the teachers' competence is by providing them chances to attend seminars and workshops. This can be done by involving tertiary educational institutions in Indonesia. The universities in Indonesia that have English education as one of their majors could, for example, conduct workshops and seminars for English teachers in order to improve their skills and self-confidence. This has been done in some universities, for example at the university where I work; we have annual programs that conduct four seminars for English teachers as a way of assisting them to improve their skills. The responses of the teachers toward these programs are good; the teachers find them very helpful.

Another way is by joining the teachers' association. One teachers' association in Indonesia is TEFLIN (The Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia). This association runs a conference every year to hear the voices of the teachers around Indonesia. It also aims to share and to recommend some solutions to the problems emerging in the English language teaching in Indonesia. TEFLIN is concerned with the ELT concepts, teaching methodology and with establishing and maintaining the network of ELT researchers and educators (Lie, 2007). Therefore, TEFLIN has the position to influence curriculum development and policies.

5.3.3. Building Relationships with Higher Institutions

Exposure to English is also an issue in English teaching in Indonesia. This study also showed that the students had very limited exposure to English. Therefore, one way of ensuring that students have sufficient exposure to the language is by creating various English programs for the students. One example is forming an 'English Corner' at school; this program would help students improve their skills. The schools could collaborate with the university nearby to help provide an English environment, such as having university students majoring in English education conduct the program. This is a kind of mentoring program where the university students help school students to get in touch with English through various activities. It could be done after school or on Saturday as an additional day for the students to learn English.

5.3.4. Promoting a Locally - Based Final Examination

One classic problem in Indonesian education is the final examination. This issue has also been mentioned in this study. The secondary school teachers were concerned with the mismatch between the final examination and the communicative curriculum. The final examination is not only centralised by the government but is also compulsory for secondary schools. In the current curriculum, the government gives schools the freedom to develop their own syllabi, but the government still designs the final examination for all schools all over Indonesia. I suggest that this policy be reviewed. The central government should allow the local administration to develop both the curriculum and the final examination. The central government can monitor the process but delegate the development to the local government. Creating and developing a locally based final examination could be carried out through the *MGMP (Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran)* – The Council of Teachers of English, the regional English teachers’ forum.

5.3.5. Promoting Locally - Based Materials

The data from this study revealed that many schools and universities in Indonesia use imported ELT materials to teach their students. The use of imported materials can cause a ‘clash of cultures’, and the teachers need to be aware of this issue. *MGMP* (for schools) and the teachers’ consortium (for universities) can also function as media in which the teachers share ideas and offer mutual assistance among members – to modify and to create materials which are culturally appropriate for the Indonesian context.

5.4. Directions for Future Study

This study involved only teachers' perceptions of the implementation of CLT. Therefore, to balance the findings, voices of the students are also worth listening to. A future study could explore the students' perceptions toward the implementation of CLT. Their perceptions are important to examine, as they can provide useful input to both the government and the schools with regard to the students' needs in teaching and learning processes. For this research, given the insights gained from such qualitative studies, which nevertheless cannot be generalised, surveys of the wider population can be undertaken to provide evidence of teachers' and students' perceptions as a foundation for professional development.

5.5. Conclusion

Although the concept of CLT has been a part of the Indonesian curriculum for about 26 years, the concept is difficult to implement. This study reveals that the Indonesian teachers - from primary, secondary to university levels - in this study perceived some difficulties toward the implementation of CLT in their classrooms. The teachers mentioned that CLT is interesting and important to implement in Indonesia, however, there should be careful considerations in implementing it. To overcome these problems, support from the government, stakeholders, and parents is necessary. The schools should maximize the facilities or programs to support their teaching. School managements bodies also need to take the initiative to improve their schools and human resources by actively collaborating with other higher institutions or the government. Students, on the other hand, should be

encouraged to speak more and to participate in classroom activities. Teachers and schools need to support them in this by providing them an enjoyable and interesting classroom environment.

CLT seems to offer a solution to the complexity of English education in Indonesia. Indeed, it can be an enriching approach. However, the implementation of CLT in Indonesian classrooms does take time. Therefore, the country should *adapt* rather than adopt CLT in the classroom. This does not mean that GTM (Grammar Translation Method) or other 'traditional' methods should be neglected; they have their own strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, a combination of several methods might be the most appropriate way to teach English in Indonesian classrooms.

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