

**Bangladeshi Secondary Teacher Educators' Experiences
and Understandings of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)**

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Abstract

This study explores Bangladeshi secondary teacher educators' experiences and understandings of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) at secondary level in Bangladesh. It also aims to find out what the opportunities and challenges are for teacher educators who are preparing secondary English teachers to implement CLT in Bangladesh. The study adopts a qualitative case study methodology. Participants in the project are three teacher educators of English from three different government teacher training colleges situated in three different districts in Bangladesh. The teacher educators' who were part of the study support an ongoing emphasis on communication in English teaching. They understand CLT in ways that reflect the literature and theory of CLT. However, they also acknowledge challenges in the ways CLT is implemented, in particular a disconnection between secondary teacher education and realities of practice in secondary schools, the relevance of textbooks used, and relationships between teacher educators and trainee teachers and between teachers and students. The study concludes with recommendations for practice and pedagogy in secondary teacher education in Bangladesh to address these challenges.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my father, whose love, blessing and wisdom greatly influence my personal life at home and abroad, but he is no more in the world to see the completion of my Masters study.

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Abbreviations

B.Ed	Bachelor of Education
CLT	Communicative language teaching
EFL	English as a foreign language
ESL	English as a second language
MOE	Ministry of Education (Bangladesh)
NCTB	National Curriculum and Textbook Board (Bangladesh)
TE	Teacher education
TTC	Teacher training college

Chapter One: Introduction

This research focuses on teacher educators' understanding of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) at the secondary level in Bangladesh. This is a topical and pertinent area of investigation in the current educational context in Bangladesh. Teacher education (TE) in relation to CLT in Bangladesh is an area where very little research has been done to date. Whilst CLT has been adopted in Bangladesh for the school sector, and the expectation is that teachers are prepared for this, there is very little research on the nature of teacher education and challenges for preparing teachers to implement CLT. This project attempts to address this gap.

I am drawn to this topic because of my experience as a teacher educator involved in preparing teachers for English language education in Bangladesh. My experience and concern about this is echoed in the literature relating to the introduction and implementation of a CLT approach in Bangladesh and a range of other English as foreign language (EFL) contexts. The outcome of the research will be an interpretation of participants' reports of their experiences and practices of teacher educators in using and implementing CLT principles in teacher education and what they think is the 'way ahead' for English teaching in Bangladesh in relation to CLT and English language teaching more generally.

1.1 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Communicative English is that English which is used to communicate in real life situations. Communicative competence is not only the ability to apply the grammatical rules of a language in order to form grammatically correct sentences, but also to know when and where to use these sentences appropriately. In communicative language teaching, teachers set up

situations that students are likely to encounter in real life. Communicative language teaching and learning puts emphasis on 'meaning' rather than 'form' (Celce-Murcia, 2001). 'Meaning' is defined as what the speaker wants to say or what message s/he wants to convey. In communicative English, situation is most important. It is important to consider to whom the speaker is talking and what the situation is. Some of the researchers claim that CLT highlights both on function and accuracy. One of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language, combining these into a more fully communicative view (Savignon, 2002). Teachers in communicative classrooms act as guides, rather than as lecturers and create maximum opportunities for students to practise language. A communicative classroom is always busy with different activities like pair work, group work, role play, presentation, debate, discussion, and dramatisation. Classroom activities and materials are selected according to real-life needs or an authentic situation (Littlewood, 1981). The CLT approach has the following characteristics:

CLT aims to use the language accurately and communicatively (Savignon, 2002). The main focus is on the learner. The role of the teacher is just a facilitator who helps students become autonomous learners (Brown, 2007). The tasks in a CLT classroom are designed to use the language in purposeful and meaningful ways and thus a communicative syllabus emphasises the functions of language rather than the rules (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). As CLT is not limited to any one textbook or a set of curricular materials (Savignon, 2002), only using the prescribed texts cannot ensure the attainment of the aims of CLT.

1.2 Overview of CLT in Bangladesh education

1.2.1. Introduction of CLT in Bangladeshi schools

Bangladesh is a monolingual country in which the majority of people speak the dominant and official language, Bangla. The reality is that, even after studying English for 10 to 12 years, most learners in Bangladesh cannot communicate well in English in real life situations.

Concerns about communication in English have precipitated government policy changes regarding English language teaching and learning in Bangladesh.

The status of English in Bangladesh changed from English as a Second Language (ESL) to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) after 1971 when Bangladesh got her independence from Pakistan. Before that English was studied as a second language. As a global medium of communication, the importance of English has increased considerably in social, political and commercial contexts of Bangladesh. It has been argued that the impact of Information Technology (IT) has contributed to English being regarded by many as arguably the predominant lingua franca for world citizens (Podder, 2007). It is English which helps the developing countries like Bangladesh to keep pace with developed ones as English is the main communication media among the latter. In these changing circumstances, the philosophy and practice of English teaching and learning in developing countries, including Bangladesh, needs to be considered.

In Bangladesh before 1996, English was long taught as a compulsory subject from class 1 to class 12 using the Grammar Translation Method. In this method, maximum emphasis is put on reading and writing and little emphasis is placed on developing speaking and listening skills. Moreover, this traditional system of teaching in Bangladesh encourages memorization and does not encourage or support the development of speaking skills (Podder, 2007).

Increasingly though in Bangladesh, and in many other countries where English is taught as a foreign language, consideration has been given to developing communication and fluency to prepare learners to be able to participate in an increasingly globalised society. The CLT approach to teaching and learning English was introduced into the Bangladesh syllabus in 1996 (National Curriculum and Textbook Board [NCTB], 1996). To support the introduction of the new syllabus, new textbooks were developed which included a focus on all the major language skills (including speaking and listening) rather than just the traditional focus on reading and grammar. The *English for Today (EfT)* books which are currently the prescribed English textbooks for grades 6 to 12 support the intentions of using CLT through the types of learning activities that are described in the texts.

Communicative English was introduced in grade 6 in 1996, and has been introduced up to grade 12 on an incremental basis since then. However, the effectiveness of policy changes regarding the communicative competence of learners of English is questionable. As already indicated, even twelve years after the introduction of CLT in the syllabus, students' communication skills in English have not improved to the expected level. There are possibly a number of reasons for this. For example, it might be a matter of pedagogy and a problem with teachers' practice or with English teacher education and/or training, or might it be an issue more broadly with the construction of CLT within the Bangladeshi education context or the wash back effect of the exam system, or implementation procedures, or a combination of all these factors. From my own experience as a teacher educator the reasons behind this are not clear. Ongoing concerns about English language proficiency and the teaching of English in Bangladesh schools suggest that there are difficulties and challenges in the implementation of CLT in practice.

1.2.2 Secondary English curriculum and English text books

In secondary teacher education, the focus of teaching and learning is designed by both the secondary English curriculum and the textbooks for schools (a series of English texts *English for Today* from grade 6 to 10). Therefore it is necessary to look at the aims and intentions for CLT that are communicated in these documents. In the secondary English curriculum, the values of culture and society of Bangladesh are stated in relation to CLT:

The language syllabus seeks to realize the larger goals that are envisaged in the national educational system and reinforce the social, cultural and moral values of the country as a whole. Language is presented within contexts that are appropriate to the society and culture of Bangladesh and which embody its moral and spiritual values. In this way English is primarily introduced within contexts that are familiar to students as a language for their own self-expression, rather than as a foreign language associated with other societies and cultures. (NCTB, 1996, p. 148)

In the preface of *English for Today* (2001) for grade 9-10, it is also stated that the book follows the communicative approach to teaching and learning English in the Bangladesh situation. In keeping with the communicative language teaching (CLT) principles, the book includes topics from both national and global contexts that focus on learners' interests and related to their cultural context.

The preface of the English textbooks suggests that the topics in the texts are selected in accordance with the contexts of Bangladesh. But still there is tension around teaching and learning of English through learning about foreign culture and retaining the values of one's own culture at the same time. The cultural contradiction depicted in the texts, for example, contexts portrayed in the books have a western orientation, e.g. portrayal of a student with different gesture and dress from Bangladeshi culture, coming to Bangladesh to participate in the International Scout Jamboree which is very unfamiliar to rural situation in Bangladesh. This reflected to me as ignorance of the traditional culture of Bangladesh, which also makes

me interested to find out what the secondary teacher educators think about the prescribed CLT based secondary textbooks.

Again the main objectives expressed in the revised *English for Today* (NCTB, 2001) for grades 6, 7 and 8 are:

- to introduce effective communicative techniques, integrated with existing well-tried traditional methods.
 - to provide adequate practice in language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
 - to include adequate elements of grammar.
 - to suggest a clear teaching methodology within the framework of actual lessons.
 - to create more opportunities for interaction (between teachers and students, and students and students).
 - to adapt the existing topics so as to make them both more interesting and acceptable.
- (The preface, *English for Today*, 2001)

As the preface shows, the integration of “effective techniques” with “the existing well-tried traditional methods” is one of the objectives as intended in the textbooks. It also raises confusion around implementing the textbooks, because CLT principles are not mixed with the traditional practices. CLT is different from traditional grammar-translation methods. This concern around CLT based texts further makes me interested in researching teacher educators’ understanding of CLT, to see how they prepare teachers to follow a communicative curriculum.

1.3 Teacher preparation and training for CLT

Teacher preparation for CLT is done in Bangladesh in two ways: in-service and pre-service.

1.3.1 In-service preparation

The Bangladesh Government started providing in-service training to English teachers in 1999 because the English teachers are responsible for implementing the communicative English curriculum. By March 2007, a total of 28,886 secondary school English teachers nationwide had received training as part of the English Language Teaching Improvement

Project (ELTIP) (Podder, 2007). Since 2007, ELTIP has continued to provide training to the remaining secondary English teachers through its seven Regional Resource Centres (RRCs) and twenty-seven Satellite Resource Centres (SRCs) throughout the country. The Female Secondary School Assistance Project (FSSAP) reported that despite the potential benefits of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), the teaching and learning activities undertaken in classrooms have remained much the same, owing to a lack of competent and well trained teachers in English (Podder, 2007). Eight thousand English teachers from selected schools are being trained by FSSAP-II in an attempt to improve the situation. By March 2007, FSSAP-II was able to train 5494 English teachers countrywide (Podder, 2007). The Teaching Quality Improvement in Secondary Education Project (TQI-SEP) has been in progress since 2005 and is ongoing and the Enhancement Project (SEQAEP) began in 2009. All of these programmes are providing training to secondary English teachers for their professional development based on CLT.

Current practice is for the in-service preparation of English teachers through short term secondary English education programmes. In government teacher training colleges, in-service teachers are trained through government projects. In in-service training programmes, English teachers from different government and non government schools are trained for 14 to 21 days for their professional development in subject teaching. They are recognised as the English teachers who warrant training on the basis of the head teachers' authorization and also the letter from the district education officer (DEO). They are all existing secondary English teachers. This short term training does not contribute towards a B.Ed qualification. The training manual was prepared for them by foreign and national experts on CLT, in collaboration. The manuals form the foundation for the training of existing English teachers in how to teach English language at secondary level using communicative methods. Teacher

educators in in-service programmes model CLT based teaching methods, techniques and skills. The aim is to increase teachers' awareness and confidence through workshops, simulations, micro-teaching, feedback and exchanging views with each other.

1.3.2 Pre-service preparation

There are 14 government teacher training colleges (TTC) including one for women, as well as 68 non-government TTCs, the Bangladesh Open University, and some private universities which provide Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) degrees. Bangladesh Open University conducts B.Ed and M.Ed degrees through distance teaching and learning programmes. Although it is not mandatory to gain the B.Ed degree to be a teacher at the secondary level in Bangladesh, it is expected that teachers should have this degree and some financial benefits are given by the government for achieving it. This type of degree may be regarded as a post-graduate diploma according to many other countries' qualifications structures, because one is enrolled in this course after graduating, in any discipline. One cannot enrol until gaining a prior degree. A B.Ed degree is preferred when teachers are recruited in secondary schools, but it is not mandatory. A secondary teacher in government secondary schools must complete a B.Ed within five years of teaching. In non government schools this rule is flexible. However, all teachers are financially benefitted when they have gained their B.Ed degree.

The 14 TTCs as well as private TTCs are run by the National University of Bangladesh. All these government and non-government training institutes follow the B.Ed curriculum implemented by the National University. On the other hand, the Institute for Educational Research (IER), University of Dhaka and that of Rajshahi, Bangladesh along with other private universities are autonomous and conduct the B.Ed (Diploma in Education) and M.Ed degrees according to their own curriculum, which is different from that of the National

University. In addition, there are a number of other projects which are working under relevant TTCs to train in-service secondary teachers: the Secondary Education Development Project (SEDP), the Female Student Stipend Assistance Project (FSSAP), and the Teaching Quality Improvement in Secondary Education Project (TQI-SEP).

The regular B.Ed English courses are organised around some major developmental themes. The objectives state that trainees will have a clear understanding of the secondary English curriculum (grade 6-10) (Ministry of Education (MOE), 2006). The B.Ed curriculum aims to enable trainees to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and practices to function effectively in the language classroom (MOE, 2006). This B.Ed English curriculum is based on two parts, theoretical and practical. The theoretical parts help future English teachers to understand English teaching approaches, methods and techniques in diverse situations. In practical parts, teacher educators teach students through lectures, activities and by sharing ideas and discussion.

In Bangladesh, from the National University the regular B.Ed degree is a 12-month, full-time course and is the most common one for teacher education. The other institutions confer a B.Ed degree that can be studied on a full-time or part-time basis. During one year courses or programmes, student teachers are sent to practise teaching for two months in a school, to get practical experience of teaching. During this practice time they learn how to use English text books effectively, prepare lesson plans, engage students in participatory activities, and use teaching aids to support language teaching as they are instructed in teacher education classrooms. Student teachers use CLT based English textbooks for instruction and teaching in teaching practise. Also during this teaching practice, teacher educators visit and observe the student teachers in classroom teaching, evaluate their teaching and give feedback to them by

demonstrating simulation classes. During the 12-month course, there are two internal assessments while external assessment is done by a formal examination set by the National University, Bangladesh.

Throughout the year all student teachers have to do a variety of tasks in relation to the teaching of English as a part of the curriculum. These include records of performance, written reports and presentations. During the teaching practice, the trainee teachers are instructed in how to teach in English classes effectively through CLT, the challenges they may face in the classrooms and how these challenges can be minimised. Teacher educators along with peer teachers observe their classes and give feedback to student teachers.

1.4 Research questions

In Bangladesh, teacher education in support of the communicative curriculum for language teaching might be done by teacher educators who may have or may not have had personal teaching experience in school. Government policy has established CLT as the mandatory method for English teachers, and teacher education programmes have had to prepare students to follow a new government directive. Preparing teachers to teach English using the CLT method has been underway now for more than one decade through government trainings. What is not known, though, is what the teacher educators' personal experiences are of CLT and their attitudes and ideas about CLT. This idea leads me to my research, which focuses on teacher educators' experiences and understandings of CLT at the secondary level in Bangladesh.

From the above discussion and review of the literature, I have formulated the following research questions:

Main question

What are Bangladeshi teacher educators' experiences and understandings of CLT in teacher education for secondary level in Bangladesh?

Sub-questions

Sub questions that will guide the development of the research instruments for the collection of data are:

1. Where and how have the participants engaged with CLT (as students, teachers and teacher educators)?
2. What do Bangladeshi teacher educators understand to be the key features of CLT?
3. What do the participants think are the issues, opportunities and challenges for teacher education in relation to CLT?
4. How effective do the participants think secondary teacher education is in preparing teachers to use CLT?
5. What do the participants think is the 'way ahead' for English language teaching in Bangladesh in relation to CLT and its alternatives?

My research is an exploratory study. I am not looking to find an answer or an absolute solution, but rather to explore ideas, possibilities, and challenges within secondary English language teaching and the preparation of English teachers in Bangladesh for implementing a communicative approach. The study may also raise questions that could be the subject of further research about Foreign Language Teaching (FLT) or Second Language Teaching (SLT) in teacher education.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

A literature review was undertaken first of all to define CLT and to identify the key characteristics of CLT. In particular, I wanted to find out what the literature says about the potential for CLT to bring about positive results in terms of English language learning. Secondly, the focus of the literature review was on the appropriateness of CLT in the Bangladeshi and broader Asian contexts, and the strengths and limitations of CLT as an approach to language teaching in these contexts. Thirdly, I wanted to find variations and alternatives to CLT, which might be different, better or appropriate ways of teaching English in particular contexts, as this might be an important direction to find out how teacher educators can implement CLT in an appropriate way in the Bangladeshi context.

2.1 Communicative language teaching (CLT)

Though CLT was first introduced in the early 1970s as an approach to teaching and learning a second or foreign language, it has more recently been become popular as an innovative way of teaching English in many Asian countries. CLT is seen as the system for communication (Hymes, 1971); the core concept in CLT is “communicative competence,” a term Hymes (1971) represents as the ability of a learner to use language in a social context. According to Savignon (2002), the theoretical framework proposed and developed by Canale and Swain (1980) and Savignon (1983), and later modified by Canale (1983) includes four components of communicative competence: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence and discourse competence. Savignon (1983) presents a classroom model, known as the ‘inverted pyramid’ which integrates these four components. She states that all components are interrelated and cannot be separated from each other: “when an

increase occurs in one area, that component interacts with other components to produce a corresponding increase in overall communicative competence” (Savignon, 2002, p.8).

As CLT is interpreted by many proponents and scholars in different times and different places in the world, it is difficult to identify CLT in a single definition. Berns (1990) provides the following principles of CLT:

1. Language teaching is based on a view of language as communication that is, language is seen as a social tool that speakers use to make meaning; speakers communicate about something to someone for some purpose, either orally or in writing.
2. Diversity is recognized and accepted as part of language development and use in second language learners and users, as it is with first language users.
3. A learner’s competence is considered in relative, not in absolute, terms.
4. More than one variety of language is recognized as a viable model for learning and teaching.
5. Culture is recognized as instrumental in shaping speakers’ communicative competence, in both their first and subsequent languages.
6. No single methodology or fixed set of techniques is prescribed.
7. Language use is recognized as serving ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions and is related to the development of learners’ competence in each.
8. It is essential that learners be engaged in doing things with language - that is, that they use language for a variety of purposes in all phases of learning. (p. 104)

These are some common characteristics of CLT that are accepted by most scholars.

The aim of learning a language using CLT is communication. Communication involves the integration of different language skills (Richards and Rodgers, 2001; Savignon, 2002).

However, a communicative curriculum focuses not only on learners learning grammatically correct statements, but also on developing their ability to use language in the real-world (Nunan, 1988). Nunan makes a distinction between accuracy and fluency of English. In addition, he believes that learners should not be engaged in practising language drills or controlled practice, but in those classroom activities which make them able to do things outside the classroom. The literature suggests that a key characteristic of CLT is that it assumes that students will be able to apply language learning in authentic (real-life) and

practical situations. Therefore, CLT is often seen to prioritise communication over theoretical learning about the language.

2.1.1 Fluency versus accuracy

Fluency and accuracy are two major components of CLT which concern researchers.

Brumfit (1984) explains the distinction between accuracy and fluency. He maintains that it is essentially a methodological distinction, which involves the teachers in decision-making about the content of the lesson and the distribution of time between various types of activity. He also recognizes the distinction is not absolutely tidy.

The distinction is not one between what is good and bad in language teaching; it will be argued that there is a definite role for accuracy work in language teaching, but that its function is quite different from that of fluency work, and its over-use will impede successful language development. (p. 52)

Brown (2007) focuses on both fluency and accuracy, maintaining that, “a focus on students’ flow of comprehension and production and a focus on the formal accuracy of production are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques” (p. 46). In relation to focusing on form and function, Littlewood (1981) stresses the value of developing the communicative competence of the learner beyond the mastery of language form, though he does not ignore the value of linguistic competence. Savignon (2002), likewise, stresses the importance of teaching grammar, saying, “focus on form... provides a rich opportunity for focus on meaning; but focus on form cannot replace the practice of communication” (p. 22). Belchamber (2010) reinforces the importance of both fluency and accuracy to conduct communicative activities in a language classroom.

2.1.2 Theory versus practice

There is a concern that arises around theory versus practice in CLT implementation. Though it is believed that practise is done following theory, Stern (1983) claims that, “It’s all very well in theory, but it won’t work in practice” (p. 23). Similarly, Lawton (1973) finds gaps between theory and practice, between what should be and what is happening really. Though the teachers’ attitude is considered as an important factor in language teaching, this cannot give an assurance as to whether they practice what they think. A study by Mowlaie and Rahimi (2010) in Iran which was conducted with one hundred EFL teachers shows discrepancies between what the teachers believe about different CLT principles and what they practically do in the classroom. The study also tried to find the reasons for this, where Mowlaie and Rahimi state those include teachers’ inadequate professionalism and lack of updated teaching skills, and, most importantly, the teachers who have some familiarity with CLT and hold a positive attitude towards CLT face difficulty in teaching in a real classroom context, because they do not really know how to put their theoretical knowledge into practice.

Fairley and Fathelbab (2011) report that teachers’ beliefs and commitment to CLT principles are often mismatched by practice. This study also discusses what they claim to be the six most common challenges in a CLT writing and reading classroom; lack of enthusiasm, an idle audience, one group finishing before another, shortage of materials, unequal student participation, and lack of teachers’ feedback. The article aims to meet the challenges by empowering teachers through a better understanding of CLT principles. Kleinsasser and Sato (1999) identify an inconsistency between teachers’ understanding of CLT and their practice, which impact on teachers’ choice to avoid implementing CLT. The qualitative study conducted in Turkey by Coskun (2011) reports that there is a discrepancy between teachers’ attitude towards an EFL classroom and what they really practice in the classroom. The

findings about the challenges of implementing CLT derived from the teachers' perspectives in Coskun's study are: large classes, traditional grammar-oriented examinations and lack of time for preparing CLT materials.

A study by Shavelson and Stern (1981) revealed that the curriculum was not implemented as proposed. Shavelson and Stern observe that the model given in teacher education programmes is not consistently used by teachers' in schools. Obviously there is a mismatch between the demands of the classroom and the prescriptive planning. The questions raised by Shavelson and Stern and other authors about the mismatch between classroom practice and the ideal curriculum can be asked about a range of contexts, including CLT teaching and learning in Bangladesh. The discussion in literature relating to theory versus practice focuses on the idea that what really happens may be quite different to what theoretically should happen in CLT classrooms.

2.1.3 Role of teachers and students

Researchers have identified that the role of students and teachers in a communicative classroom as a very important issue. The goal of CLT is to communicate. The role of learners in CLT methodologies is a joint responsibility of both the listener and speaker, which leads to being able to communicate in the target language. Therefore, the learner's role within CLT is that of a negotiator, one who "interacts within the group, and within the classroom procedure and the activities which the group undertakes... he (the learner) should contribute as much as he gains, and there by learn in an interdependent way" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.166). CLT aims to develop learner autonomy through different activities, and thereby supports student centredness (Liu, 2007; Savignon, 2002; Littlewood, 1981).

Sung (2010) suggests that the information about students' needs in a particular teaching context is important when designing a CLT based programme, because a CLT based curriculum focuses on learner needs. Nunan (1988) also states that the learner centred curriculum focuses on subjective learner needs, as well as establishing a relationship between teachers and learners. He believes that learner needs should dictate the selection of content and methodology. He also points out that the potential conflict between teacher and students in relation to learning activities and materials are included in the methodology. Whereas conflicts are created on the basis of the teacher's superiority in a teacher centred classroom, the conflicts are negotiated through discussion and consultation between the two parties in a CLT classroom (Nunan, 1988). Liu (2007) also favours students' autonomous roles in the CLT based classroom, questioning the meaning of autonomous.

To identify the role of a teacher in a communicative classroom, Brown (2007) defines the teacher's role as a facilitator, rather than a transmitter of knowledge, who values the learners' linguistic development. Breen and Cadlin (1980) state that a teacher is an independent participant within the large learning group in the classroom. In relation to the use of language in a communicative classroom, Littlewood, (1981) maintains that the communicative language teacher favours the use of the target language, thinking that learners' mother tongue use tends to devalue the target language learning. Similarly, Richards and Rodgers, (2001) claim that teacher should use the target language from the very beginning of the language teaching to help students to communicate in a meaningful way.

Deckert (2004) highlights the reduced role of language teachers for authentic classroom communication. He believes that teachers should talk less than students and make opportunities for the students to engage in different activities. He also finds that too much

control of the teachers by school authorities and the higher administration are problems for successful CLT implementation. He indicates that teachers' autonomous role in the classroom will have a positive effect on CLT practice. Thus, in a CLT supported student centred language classroom, where students are the independent learners, the teacher facilitates their learning of the target language by integrating all language skills and focusing on both fluency and accuracy.

2.1.4 Assessment of student performance

Assessment is another major issue while practising any method. One of the purposes of assessment is to determine whether the objective of a course of instruction has been achieved or not. When it is identified that the objective of the course has not been achieved, it is necessary to evaluate this to establish the reasons behind it. In a traditional curriculum, assessment is often done by testing or an examination which happens at the end of the learning process. In a student centred curriculum, in contrast, assessment often takes place in the form of informal monitoring of participants' involvement in the teaching learning process. In other words, while a traditional curriculum focuses on summative assessment, a student-centred curriculum often depends on formative assessment (Nunan, 1988). The literature suggests that as CLT supports the student centred classroom, formative assessment is recommended.

2.2 Challenges for implementation of CLT in an Asian context

Although there is a lot of literature about CLT and related issues, few articles have been written about the south Asian context or about Bangladesh in particular. Much of the literature in relation to this topic focuses on East Asia such as China, South Korea, Japan, and Vietnam. In one of the few articles that are written specifically in relation to the Bangladeshi

situation, Chowdhury (2003) discusses the issues relating to the match and mismatch of communicative language teaching to the learners of Bangladesh and other Asian countries where an EFL situation exists. He explains the importance of culture in language teaching and learning, and how this factor affects both locally and foreign trained teachers. Chowdhury considers that a conflict between the newly acquired foreign ideas that come with the training abroad and the strategies for communicative teaching of language still firmly followed by local English teachers and trainers hamper the CLT atmosphere in Bangladesh. He suggests that language teaching materials should be redesigned in a new post-colonial framework acknowledging the reality of the Bangladesh context.

Hamid and Baldauf (2008) put forward the idea that when the new national language policy of English became effective after 1996, requiring the implementation of a communicative approach, it was hoped that CLT would work as a corrective intervention to develop the learners' poor communicative competence and thus improve the general standard of English education in Bangladesh. But they claim that the achievement of English language largely depends on a student's family, socio-economic and cultural factors. In that case, there is a large difference between urban and rural area students. Moreover, they point out that private investment is an added influence in learning English in Bangladesh, where wealthy parents can afford private tutoring for their children. Hamid and Baldauf argue that the present English curriculum is not appropriate in the Bangladesh context as rural education is partially neglected, while urban schools and teachers are given special priority and resource allocations.

Chowdhury and Le Ha (2008) discuss Bangladeshi teachers' perceptions of the pedagogical appropriateness of CLT in relation to power and westernised commercial based politics. They

investigate the CLT principles that challenge students' and teachers' roles in the classroom. The issue of respect between teacher and student is reported as one of the challenging factors in implementing CLT, while in Bangladesh, "hierarchy determines the nature of teacher-student interactions, which is facilitated by mutual respect" (Chowdhury and Le Ha, 2008, p. 308). This article also includes the teachers' perception of factors of cultural appropriateness in relation to CLT. The most common strategies for dealing with culturally inappropriate materials are negotiation through explanation that is "adapt rather than adopt" (p. 311). Furthermore, it is identified that cultural contradictions come because CLT is based on the values of cultural traditions different from Bangladesh.

Howard and Millar (2009) investigate Ellis's principles in relation to the implementation of CLT in the South Korean context. The findings indicate that contextual constraints have a negative impact on the application of some of Ellis's principles. They also identify challenges reported in many Asian countries, including learners' passivity and unwillingness to engage in group activities, large classes, lack of effective oral language testing tools and insufficient support from institutions for implementing CLT. Howard and Millar suggest that these problems may stem from the failure of teacher training programmes to provide adequate coverage of second language acquisition theories or sufficient opportunities to gain competence in implementing a communicative approach. In addition, the washback effect of exams is identified as another vital factor affecting the implementation of CLT. Howard and Millar suggest that contextual constraints need to be considered in research relating to CLT in a range of national contexts, including research relating to CLT teaching and learning in Bangladesh.

Christ and Makarani (2009) believe that inconsistencies exist between the theoretical conception of CLT as a methodology and the practical implementation of CLT as classroom practice. Their study around an Indian context indicates that teachers have a positive attitude towards a policy mandated CLT approach and they have a general understanding of the nature of a CLT approach. However, they focus on a number of challenges that are related to the implementation of CLT: class size, class time, unavailability of resources, and level of verbal proficiency of teachers and students.

An important issue in relation to the communicative classroom is the relationship between teacher's beliefs and practice. Li and Walsh (2011) focus on the complexity of the relationship between the EFL teachers' beliefs and what they actually practise with their students in Chinese language classes. According to them, the decision to choose a particular teaching methodology comes from the teacher's beliefs. Gupta (2004) responds to the relationship between methodology and context in a language teaching situation. The findings of their study reveal that CLT was not successfully implemented in an Indian tertiary institution for many reasons. They found that the implementation of CLT was too hurried for the students and teachers to get used to. Other reasons were the teachers' unfamiliarity with the concept of CLT, the limited exposure to English for the majority of learners, a sudden change in the evaluation set-up, and the issue of irrelevant context for applying CLT.

There is a concern arising about teacher's understanding of CLT. Nazari (2007) reveals that despite EFL teachers' definitions of communicative competence combining broader and narrower views, they tend towards the narrower concept in classroom activities. He conducted his research with a hundred teachers in a language school in Iran. According to him, teachers feel that the narrower view is sufficient whereas a broader view should consider

the spirit of CLT - how it relates to real communication. He also identifies the reasons for these views, which include institutional constraints and EFL teachers' lack of awareness between the broader and narrower concepts of communicative competence on their teaching activities.

Local condition is considered as factor for unsuccessful implementation of CLT.

Kumaravadivelu (1993) reflects on the teacher trainers' failure to prepare teachers with the skills and techniques they really need for classroom implementation of CLT, as observed in India in an ESL setting. He indicates the reasons around this are local conditions such as cultural values, social use of language, lack of authentic materials, domination by traditional exams, and the absence of forms of assessment to match CLT priorities. Larsen-Freeman (2007) suggests "contextualizing Communicative Competence is an ongoing and iterative process" (p.43). Prioritizing grammar teaching in the Chinese context, Larsen-Freeman thinks that not only form and meaning are important for successful communication but also use must be taken into consideration because 'use' governs its appropriateness in a given context. Therefore she claims, grammar must be taught in the context of real life English as it is used by English speakers. In trying to apply any method or approach, it is important to consider the context in which teaching and learning occurs, including "the cultural contexts, the political context, the local institutional context, and the contexts constituted by the teachers and learners in the classroom" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.248).

In discussing the dimension of contexts and sub contexts, Liu (2007) mentions that teaching in an EFL setting is a totally different activity from teaching in an ESL setting. In the same way, one EFL setting is entirely different from another EFL setting. Considering the different setting, he suggests that one methodology developed and effective in one context will not

necessarily be efficient and effective in another context. To explain the reasons behind the issues, he explains that the choice of methods in any given context is dependent on multiple factors, such as societal, instructional, educational and individual. He believes that these multiple factors are related to many sub factors. For example, in a particular teaching context, a teacher's instruction is determined by different individual factors, such as learners' styles of learning, individual differences in knowledge, psychology and effectiveness. Therefore, he prioritizes the consideration of multiple factors at the planning stage when implementing methods or approaches.

The importance of context has also been highlighted by Littlewood (2007), Ellis (1996), and Liu (2007). Littlewood mentions some issues in the East Asian contexts that are similar to Bangladesh, such as the role of students and teachers, avoidance of English, excessive dependence on mother tongue for communication, students' lack of engagement to acquire minimal language competence, inconsistency between public assessment system and communicative curriculum, and contradiction between existing values in education and tradition. However his study is concerned with more developed countries such as Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea.

Ellis (1996) points out that use of CLT causes cultural conflicts, because he thinks that CLT is a predominantly western concept which can fit into an eastern context, but the different culture has to be taken into consideration. To make CLT culturally accepted, he suggests that the teacher should adopt a role as a mediator between the western and eastern traditions. Liu (2009) identifies some of the problems when context and methodology do not fit together, textbooks do not match with the culture, teachers' and students' unfamiliarity with CLT

principles tends to result in avoidance of CLT. He also indicates that the cultural difference between ESL and EFL sometimes causes problems in acceptance of CLT by EFL students.

As Chowdhury (2003) points out, “ with the EFL setting in Bangladesh, the home culture and the EFL classroom/textbook cultures are very often at odds, and the values and teaching methods presented in class are alien and therefore often unappreciated” (p.1). Liu also finds that very few opportunities to use English outside the classroom, the exact opposite situation in ESL countries, is also responsible for the poor implementation in EFL contexts. Ogeyik (2011) focuses on teachers’ and students’ lack of awareness of the socio-cultural differences between the learners’ own language and the target language, which impacts on learning a foreign language. As he states,

In culture teaching, learners may disrupt their own world views and self-identity as well as ways of acting, thinking and evaluating. As every culture has its own cultural norms and these norms differ from one culture to another, some of the norms can be completely dissimilar and conflicting with other cultural norms. While dealing with such dissimilar norms, some problems may arise among learners who do not know or share the norms of the other culture. It may also force learners to develop prejudices about otherness. (p. 241)

To overcome the potential challenges, he suggests the choice of using authentic materials and discussing the different cultural norms. Furthermore, he suggests that teachers should be sensitive about the positive or negative attitudes of the learners to the cultural components they are learning through cultural education and motivate the learners to overcome the odd beliefs or prejudices they hold. In relation to this, he highlights the integration of culture-specific components into the teacher education curriculum so that prospective language teachers can be conscious of cultural issues when teaching the target language.

The literature suggests that context is very important while teaching a foreign language. The context is different not only between the western and the eastern countries, but also between

the Asian countries. Therefore, it is important to explore or understand the context when discussing the experience and understanding of CLT.

2.3 Different approaches and variations on CLT

CLT is a broad, philosophical approach to the language curriculum. Within this sit a number of related approaches; these include task-based language teaching (TBLT), and alongside this is content-based instruction, text-based syllabus, and problem-based learning (Nunan, 2005). Each of these approaches that have been practised in different times and contexts, are fully dependent on a set of theories, nature of language learning, and derived set of principles (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

2.3.1 Task based language teaching (TBLT)

TBLT is an approach based on the use of tasks which are considered as the unit of language instruction in language teaching (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Some proponents present it as the logical development of CLT, because some of its basic principles are derived from part of the CLT movement in 1980s (Littlewood, 2007). Among those, some of the principles and practices are:

- A needs-based approach to content selection.
- An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
- The provision of opportunities for learners to focus not only on language but also on the learning process itself.
- An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
- The linking of classroom language learning with language use outside the classroom. (quoted in Nunan, 2004, p.1)

TBLT is not new. It was introduced by Prabhu in the Bangalore project, in India in 1979 (Shehadeh, 2005). TBLT proposes the use of tasks as the central component in the language

classroom, because the learner's second language acquisition process is developed in context through tasks. "Tasks are believed to foster processes of negotiation, modification, rephrasing, and experimentation that are at the heart of second language learning" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 228).

Though there are variations in the definition of tasks, there is a common understanding of tasks that leads to the use of language in the real world. So task-based instruction shows a strong similarity to CLT (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Nunan (2004) identifies five key characteristics of a task:

- meaning is primary
- learners are not given other people's meaning to regurgitate
- there is some sort of relationship to comparable real-world activities
- task completion has some priority
- the assessment of the task is in terms of outcome. (p. 3)

While definitions vary to some extent, TBLT emphasizes fluency in communication, rather than accuracy and complexity (Shehadeh, 2005). This position is challenged by Nunan (2004) who states that meaning and form are inter-related and grammar is valuable for using language communicatively. He suggests that tasks are designed to increase learner motivation to improve learning and teaching by authentic language use, collaborative work, incorporating learners' experiences, and nurturing a variety of communication styles. To find the relationship between CLT and TBLT, Nunan (2004) argues that while CLT is an umbrella term which includes linguistics, anthropology, psychology and sociology of language acquisition theory, TBLT is the realization of CLT at the level of methodology and syllabus design. According to Nunan (2005), TBLT can meet a wide range of EFL needs in an Asian context. He argues that it "provides a flexible, functionally compatible and contextually sensitive approach for many learners, as well as teachers" (p. 2). In addition to this, Nunan focuses on task development which gives less emphasis to an 'exam-oriented' syllabus which

he identifies as a common feature in Asian countries. He favours tasks which are designed on the basis of student centredness and fun.

Littlewood (2007) suggests that some East Asian countries have introduced task-based language teaching (TBLT) in primary and secondary schools, moving on from an earlier form of CLT. Littlewood focuses on teachers' responses to the challenges of adopting new ideas in methodological developments suited to their own contexts.

2.3.2 Fusion model

Though CLT is thought to be the 'best way' of teaching languages, this notion is challenged by some scholars who believe that there is some deficiency in the CLT model. Bjorning-Gyde, Doogan and East, (2008), for example, believe that the assumption that CLT, an essentially western model of language teaching, would eventually fit into a variety of contexts needs to be examined. In relation to this, Canagarajah (2002) raises questions about the cultural relevance and appropriateness of CLT methodology in local contexts and feels the necessity to develop methods of teaching based on indigenous pedagogical traditions. Canagarajah is concerned about the dichotomous view of East versus West, local versus foreign, which sometimes affects methodological choices for language learning and teaching in a complex way. To minimise this contradiction, Bjorning-Gyde et al., (2008) claim that there is arguably a need "for a fusion between western and other teaching methods and pedagogical paradigms, and the consequent development of new paradigms for language teaching methodology in specific contexts" (p.78).

Fusion is defined as "a synergy of selected and evolving contemporary theory and teaching techniques, predicated on the needs of Chinese teachers and learners" (Bjorning-Gyde and

Doogan, 2004, p.1). It is based on the belief that this combination leads to a higher level of teaching and learning proficiency which is not dependent on a single approach, either a Chinese approach or the communicative approach. They claim that this model is more analytical, integrated and effective communicatively in the sense that it keeps a combination of traditional educational values, at the same time developing communicative competence.

2.3.3 Beyond method and approaches

Contexts change rapidly these days. In addition, there is more complexity and diversity around contexts. We have moved beyond methods to a post method condition (Savignon, 2007). Therefore, it is necessary to find a better method of teaching in which local needs and experiences are reflected, where roles of the teachers should be revalued as decision-makers and theory-builders. Savignon highlights the empowerment of language teachers who take both roles of practitioners and theory-builders to address the pragmatic issues of language teaching and learning. Moreover, Savignon suggests that a more interactive, learner centred CLT conception of language teaching and learning is dependent on, not only the teachers, but also “the ability of applied linguists, practitioners and policy makers to work together” (p. 218). He argues that though ‘no one size fits all’, it is necessary to aim to build theoretical principles that can function in a wide range of contexts in the real world. In a method era, a theoriser devises a theory and develops a method based on it, whereas in a post method era, teachers who are sufficiently skilled, knowledgeable and autonomous can design their own methods based on practice which is coherent and meaningful to what they theorise (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). He also comments on teacher education. He believes that teacher educators should pay heed to what student teachers reveal in their reflections on their teaching, rather than just giving them the model lesson. Richards and Rodgers (2007) suggest that teachers should be encouraged to formulate their methods of teaching in which their

values, beliefs, and experiences will be reflected. The authors state that it is the teachers' responsibility to add, deduct or adjust the approach and methods in relation to their classroom situation.

Although some researchers such as Nunan (2005), Bax (2003), kumaravadivelu (2006) believe that there is an end to the method era, Rodgers (2000) claims that it is still essential for novice teachers to depend on a method or approach to teaching practice. Depending on the current contextual challenges, Nunan (2005) also highlights that the single centred approach is no longer useful and should be substituted by a more eclectic one.

2.4 Summary

At the beginning the literature discusses about some characteristics and challenges that have arisen in the implementation of CLT including the dichotomy between theory and practice, dichotomy between fluency and accuracy, and roles of teachers and students in a CLT classroom. There are a limited number of research articles found in relation to CLT practice and its limitations in Bangladesh. Most of the literature that has been taken into consideration represents the EFL contexts in Bangladesh, India, Iran, Turkey, South Korea, China, and East Asian context in general. They may have little relevance to the socio-economic-cultural context of Bangladesh. Some features that influence the implementation of CLT in Bangladesh is somehow relevant to some extent while many things may be different from other country contexts. Only three articles discuss some factors like classroom context, socio-cultural contexts, traditional and educational values and the policy-practice tension around CLT implementation in Bangladesh. The literature indicates contextual differences from one country to another. Therefore 'one size fits all' does not work in all the Asian contexts. In

some countries there are similarities but there is much dissimilarity in relation to economy, aims, political views and socio-cultural perspectives.

The findings from the literature suggest that understanding contextual differences is very important in the teacher education level to make English teachers prepared for teaching English in appropriate ways for the context. In addition, some alternatives to a CLT approach that are being practised in different Asian contexts are also discussed in order to find whether those alternatives have any use in the Bangladesh context. These are task-based, fusion, post-methods and beyond methods approaches.

Chapter Three: Methodology

The aim of this project is to explore Bangladeshi teacher educators' understanding of the CLT approach. To do that, I have used a qualitative research approach where case studies of teacher educators are analysed.

3.1 Qualitative Approach

Qualitative research is a generic term in the area of educational research. There are many approaches in qualitative research such as ethnography, narrative research, case studies, and interpretive research. These approaches use different methodologies, but there are some common characteristics which are typical of qualitative research.

Qualitative research tends to take place often, but not always, in a natural setting like an entire school, in a classroom, a playground, or in a community. The researcher goes to the people, talks directly with them, or observes their behaviour within their real-life context; these are the major characteristics of qualitative research. The researchers are the key instruments, who collect data themselves by observation, interviewing participants or analysing documents. Lincoln and Guba (1985) introduced the concept of 'human as instrument' as the qualitative researcher's role. The researchers are ones who gather the data themselves rather than relying on instruments developed by others. Then they analyse the data, organising the ideas into categories or themes. From the very first interview or observation, the qualitative researcher begins to interpret the data on the basis of what information they have identified, develop hunches as to its meaning and seek to justify those hunches in the following interviews or observations. It is a process of inductive data analysis (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010).

In qualitative studies the research process is emergent. This means that the early plan for the research is not prescribed strictly (Cresswell, 2009). Researchers can even change or shift the methods or ways of designing research. The key concern of qualitative research is to explore information deeply of the research related issues. Qualitative researchers often use theoretical lenses to see through their studies (Creswell, 2009). In qualitative research, inquirers make an interpretation of what they see, hear or understand which is inseparable from their own context or backgrounds (Ary, et al., 2010). Qualitative researchers seek to promote a holistic picture of an issue under study. I have designed my study as qualitative research, with an emphasis on qualitative interviewing, as a way to explore deeply human feelings, emotions and beliefs. This is something that Creswell (1998) says is a strength of qualitative research over quantitative research.

3.2 Case study design

A case study is a type of ethnographic research which focuses on a single unit, for example one individual, one group, or one programme (Ary, et.al, 2010). It explores a detailed description or holistic picture and understanding of the case (Stake, 1995). Moreover, a case study can result in data from which generalisations to theory may be possible (Ary, et al., 2010; Silverman, 2005). Considering the problems relating to CLT and my interest in teacher educators' experiences and understandings, I choose the case study as an appropriate approach, within a qualitative paradigm.

3.2.1 Case study theory

The goal of a case study in research design is to arrive at a detailed study of the 'case'. The case study is a particularly good means of interpretation, description and evaluation in the

field of education because it is able to explain the links in real life interventions which are difficult through other researches such as quantitative research. (Merriam, 1998). Moreover, the aim of the case study “is not to find the correct or true interpretation of the facts, but rather to eliminate erroneous conclusions so that one is left with the best possible, the most compelling, interpretations” (Bromley, 1986, p.38). Case study has proved particularly useful where the “studies reveal not static attributes but understanding of humans as they engage in action and interaction within the context of situations and settings” (Collins & Noblit, 1978, p.26).

A case study may be single or multiple and may use multiple methods, such as interviews, observation and archives, to gather data. In educational research, the case study is widely used. A case study tries to investigate an individual or unit in depth. Different writers give different categorisations about case studies. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) discuss different types of case studies: historical case studies, organizational case studies, observational case studies, and life history. “Each type has special consideration for determining its feasibility for study as well as the procedures to employ” (p. 62). Stake (1995) identifies three different types of case study. The intrinsic case study is conducted to understand a particular case which may be unusual, unique or different in some way. For example, it happens when a teacher decides to study a student having difficulty or takes the responsibility of evaluating a programme. It does not necessarily represent a broader problem for investigation. In an instrumental case study, the researcher selects the case because it represents some other issue under investigation and he believes this particular case can help provide insights or help to understand that issue. The multiple or collective case study uses several cases selected to understand and examine a phenomenon, population or general condition (Stake, 1995).

Case studies are related to real life and provide detailed accounts of circumstances. It allows an in-depth examination of factors that explain and may impact on real lives. Case studies may apply more than one method of data collection and do not depend on a single technique. Interviewing, observation, testing, and document analysis can be used. Whatever technique is used, all are focused on a single entity (the case). Two kinds of analysis that are appropriate for case studies have been described by Stake (2006) as holistic analysis of the entire case and embedded analysis that focuses on specific aspects of the case. Multiple case studies require analysis across a site or sites.

Like other methods, case study has its weaknesses too. Although it can have depth, it inevitably lacks breadth (Ary et al., 2010). Qualitative case studies may have limitations relating to the sensitivity and integrity of the investigator (Merriam, 1998). Sometimes, “case studies can over simplify or exaggerate a situation, leading the reader to erroneous about the actual state of affairs” (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, p.377). People argue, however, that what is learnt in a particular case can be applied to a similar situation to the context of the case. The necessity of observation of participants’ behaviours as well as the way in which the observations are interpreted is dependent on the researcher in a case study (Stake, 2006). However, case studies have strengths. The following qualities are reflected in the nature of the case studies (Merriam, 1988):

- It can explain the reasons for a problem, the background of a situation, what happened and why.
- It can explain why an innovation worked or failed to work.
- It can discuss and evaluate alternatives not chosen.
- It can evaluate, summarize and conclude thus increasing its potential applicability.

(p. 14)

3.2.2 Why case study is an appropriate methodology for this research

Among the different types of case studies, my case study is instrumental in character because it can shed light on the issues or concerns or broader questions relating to CLT. People can learn from the cases about something wider or broader, beyond the cases themselves. My case study relates to the experiences and understandings of teacher educators. In particular, I have explored the experiences and understandings of three teacher educators. Each of my participants is seen as a case in the study. They are individual and particular cases. They are not representative of all teacher educators, because they are such a small number of cases. However they describe experiences and understandings of CLT that might shed light on issues and questions around CLT and teacher education relating to CLT more broadly. In that sense, they are instrumental.

I have adopted a qualitative approach and case study structure in my research because it supports an exploratory approach, enabling me to look in depth at the experiences and understandings of a small group of teacher educators. I have focused on the qualitative case study because a case study is designed in order to gain an in depth understanding of the situation and its meaning for the participants who are involved in research. My interest, as a researcher is in process rather than outcomes, and in discovery rather than confirmation (Merriam, 1998). My research is an exploratory one, not to find any absolute solution to the problem or issues of understandings and practices relating to CLT in teacher education, but to find insights into the understandings of teacher educators of CLT and strengths or challenges they perceive in its implementation. Such insights into aspects of education practice can have an influence on policy, practice and future research. The qualitative case study is a particularly suitable methodology for dealing with critical problems of practice and extending

the knowledge of practice (Yin, 1994). Thus it would be appropriate for my exploration of teacher educators' experiences and understandings of CLT.

As a researcher, I am interested in teacher educators' experiences and understanding of CLT, including their opinions on the effectiveness of the approaches of secondary English teaching and the training problems. Of crucial importance here is the individual teacher educator's perspective, not how 'true' or 'accurate' (by some standards) their accounts are. Thus, case studies are my preferred research strategy. Case study is appropriate for research such as mine, where I (the researcher) have little control over events (teacher educators' practices) and the focus is on contemporary issues (CLT) within a real-life context, and the purpose is in-depth understanding of individuals' experiences and of ideas about CLT.

3.3 Participants and selection

Participants in my project are three teacher-educators of English from three different government teacher training colleges situated in three different districts in Bangladesh. The participants are studying for a Master of Education at the University of Canterbury. They are leading teacher educators who deal with CLT in pre-service and in-service teacher education. The participants were chosen for a variety of reasons. They were available to take part in my project. All three are in the age group of 35-45 years, which in Bangladesh is the mid career age range when people are actively involved in work. Their teaching experiences in schools and/or in teacher education range from 10 years to over 15 years. They are experienced teacher educators, and as such are able to explore the history of English teacher education along with present practices of English in secondary level in Bangladesh. They have expertise in CLT because they have been supported by the government to receive education and training in relation to CLT, both in Bangladesh and the abroad. Moreover, as leading CLT

experts, they can potentially offer a range and depth of understanding and information about CLT, based on their knowledge and personal experience. They will be considered as three single cases in my research.

When I was looking for the potential participants for my research, I contacted the participants directly, without depending on any third party. I believe that direct communication between the researcher and the participants is a way to help developing a positive relationship between myself, the researcher and the participants. I met with the participants and talked about my project prior to the administration of the questionnaire and interview meetings. My intention was to give them the opportunity to ask questions relating to research ethics. I, as a researcher, believe in mutual respect with participants. I also decided on the times, places and dates of interviews on the basis of the discussion with participants. In addition, I considered it to be important that the place of interview was convenient for both the interviewer and the interviewee, which is an idea advocated by (Seidman, 2006).

3.4 Data collection tools and procedures

Data was collected in the form of a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. These were the main forms of data collection. The adequacy of a research method depends on the purpose of the research and the questions being asked (Seidman, 2006). In some cases, and multiple methods are useful for that demand of the research. A literature review, that includes consideration of policy documents, provides background and context for the study (see Chapter Two).

3.4.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was used to gather background information relating to participants' experiences of CLT and their understandings of CLT. The questionnaire may be regarded as a form of interview on paper. Procedures for the construction of a questionnaire follow a pattern similar to that of an interview schedule (Nisbet and Entwistle, 1970). As the questionnaire is impersonal, it should be prepared carefully just to avoid misunderstanding or ambiguities in its wording. In preparing the questionnaire it is important to define the population to whom the questionnaire is to be directed and to decide the nature of the sample to be drawn, because it might influence the drafting of the questionnaire. Simplicity and brevity are qualities of a good questionnaire (Nisbet and Entwistle, 1970). The authors also claim that questionnaires should begin with simple factual questions, and complex or open-ended general questions are given toward the end.

Sometimes framing of questions may bias the result or influence the answer given (Borg, 1963). On the other hand, the advantages in using questionnaires are economy in cost, time and labour. The inherent defects in questionnaire methods can be minimised by taking great care in designing the questionnaire, checking the wording meticulously, using pilot studies and reminder letters, and finally identifying the non-responders (Flexner, 1930), which is useful for mainly large scale questionnaires. Mine is a small scale questionnaire being used for a qualitative purpose within case study research.

After getting my ethical approval from the University of Canterbury, I talked to the participants about how they would like to fill in the questionnaire and send in it to me. Consequently I prepared it as an electronic document. The questionnaire was piloted prior to being sent to participants. It was checked by a Bangladeshi English teacher educator with

experience in CLT, a senior colleague of mine who is not one of the three participants in the study. The questions for the questionnaire were selected finally with my supervisors' advice. I made minor changes in a few questions of the questionnaire as a result of the pilot. The questions in the questionnaire asked participants to explain a) their experiences of CLT teaching and learning and b) their opinions about and attitudes towards CLT.

Within this time the participants went to Bangladesh for about three months for their own research. After being piloted, I sent the participants the electronic version of the questionnaire, and consulted with them about how long they would take to send their responses to the questionnaire. They responded that they thought it would take longer than I had initially expected. Considering the circumstances, I talked with the supervisors and extended the time within which the participants were asked to return the questionnaire from fifteen days to one month. I received the questionnaire after the scheduled time and all three questionnaires were returned in hand-written form. This is because the participants are used to writing on paper rather than to use a computer. See Appendix 2 for the questionnaire.

The questionnaire proved useful for providing demographic information and background information relating to the participants' experiences of learning and teaching in a CLT environment. It also suggested the challenges or opportunities related to CLT that had been experienced by the participants. I used the interview to prompt and probe for deeper explanations and understandings of ideas that were presented in the questionnaire responses.

3.4.2 Interview

Interviewing participants was the main form of data collection for my study, providing the more detailed data for analysis. Interviewing is one of the most widely used and basic

methods of qualitative research. The purpose of in-depth interviewing is to understand the lived experience of people and the meaning they make of that experience, rather than to get answers to questions (Seidman, 2006). This is one reason why researchers use interviewing to collect data expressed in people's own words about their opinions, beliefs, and feelings about situations and experiences which go beyond the information obtained through other methods (for example, questionnaire, observation) in qualitative inquiry (Seidman, 2006). Interviewing provides entry to the content of people's behaviour and thereby gives a path for the researcher to understanding the meaning of that behaviour. "If the researcher's goal, however, is to understand the meaning people involved in education make of their experience, then interviewing provides a necessary, if not always completely sufficient, avenue of inquiry" (Seidman, 2006, p.11). Trow (1957) argues that for some purposes interviewing is preferable.

I, as a researcher, used in-depth interviewing in the project for a variety of reasons. Firstly, it is a powerful way to gain insight into educational and other important social issues through understanding the experience of the participants whose lives reflect those issues (Seidman, 2006). Moreover, interviewing is useful because it allows me to influence the line of questioning (Creswell, 2009) and prompt and probe for deeper understanding. I think the advantage of an interview is that the researcher can respond to what people say, following ideas that they present. Finally, as a researcher I am deeply interested in the stories of teacher educators that may give new insights into the conditions and problems relating to my research questions.

For my study, I chose the semi-structured interview because it provides the possibility to go deeper into the participant's views, and at the same time, the data becomes comparable across

participants (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007). The format of the interview schedule was open-ended so that the respondents were not restricted from developing issues during the interview. These interview questions are based on the participants' understandings of CLT in teacher education (see Appendix 3). A time constraint around the proposal, ethics applications, and the availability of participants for interviews, meant that I planned for two contingencies:

- 1) Questionnaire and two interviews or
- 2) Questionnaire and one interview

Although time and practical constraints restricted me to undertake only one interview with each participant, the focus was still on providing opportunities for participants to expand on their questionnaire response and to bridge gaps of the uncovered issues in the questionnaire. Schuman (1982) used a 90-minute format for each of the three interviews in his study. I did not use an exact time frame for an interview. The time varied depending on the participant's way of responding to the elaboration of discussion. I undertook one face-to-face interview consisting of more than one hour with each participant.

I also piloted the interview questions. This assisted me to find out if the questions made sense and would be interpreted by participants. To do that, I interviewed the same person with whom I piloted the questionnaire. After completing the pilot, I stepped back, and discussed feedback with my supervisors, and the interview schedule was kept unchanged on the basis of pilot experience.

3.5 Data analysis

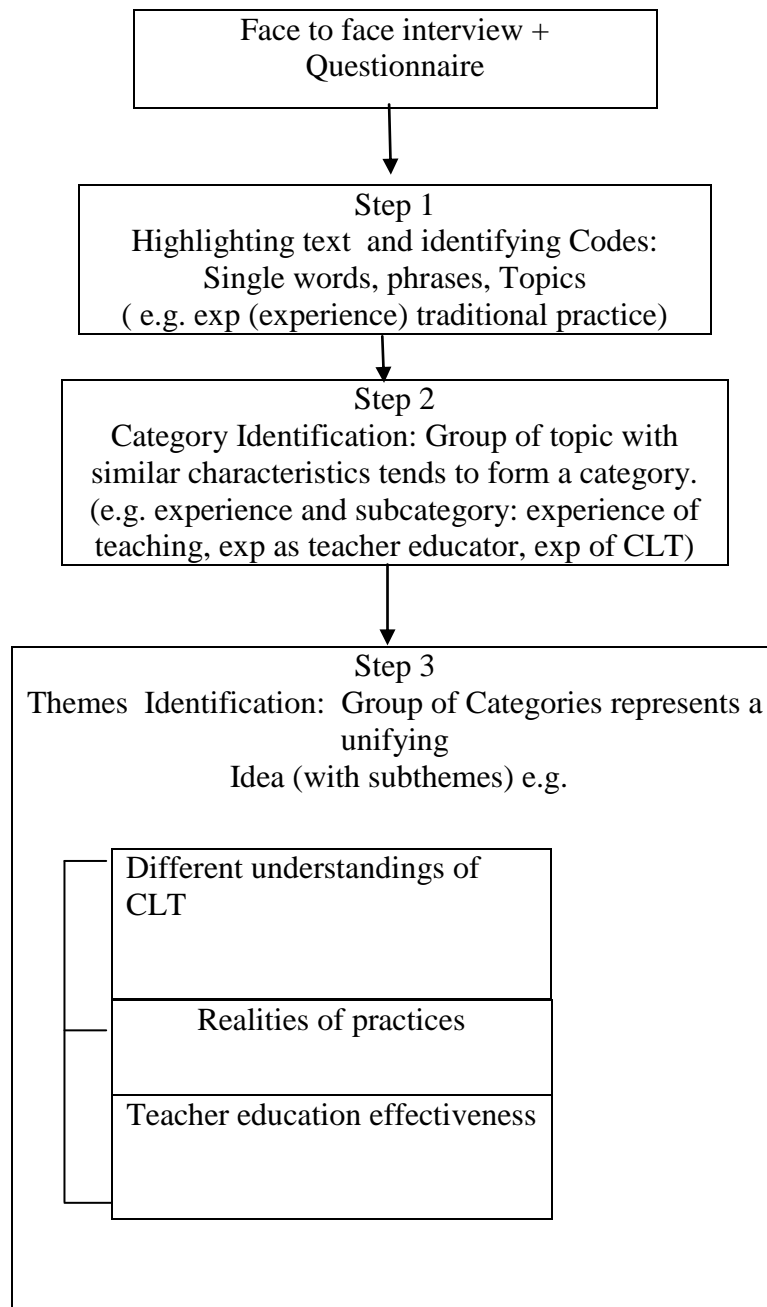
This portion explains how I analysed the data. Once the completed questionnaires had been received, I initially read through the questionnaire responses and identified some of the points

or ideas which I thought needed explanation to follow up in the interview. Then I conducted the interviews. I asked questions to participants from the interview schedule and sought clarification and expansion on points made in the questionnaire responses. This resulted in two field texts: one is the questionnaire and the other is the interview transcript. I recorded the interview with a voice recorder and I transcribed this by hand, word for word, myself. I did not engage anyone else to transcribe the interviews because doing this myself helped me to understand the language and the references the participants made. I could easily interpret their voices, accents and meaning, especially if they slipped into Bangla. I also knew their tone or what the emphasis was, and this helped my interpretation of the data. I also reflected on my own experiences of CLT and of teaching English in teacher education. This was done to help me be self-reflective. By engaging with the topic myself through reflection on the questionnaire and interview question, I was made more aware of my own lenses and perspectives and how those might influence how I interpreted the participants' experiences.

I then analysed the questionnaires and interview transcripts together. I read the transcripts several times and highlighted important ideas (such as issues, feelings, classroom practices) that seemed to have some connection to the questions. That gave me clues about the participants' own experiences, and about their understandings, and what they thought or said about CLT. Then I went through and coded the transcripts by hand into emerging categories and themes. These categories included experiences and understanding of CLT in more detail. For example, one of the categories was experiences: as teacher trainers, experiences of teaching in schools, and of CLT. This process resulted in different types of summaries of information. One summary type was grids that related participants' responses to the research questions (see Appendix 4). Another was the organisation of responses into categories and

themes (see Appendix 5). I then further refined the themes that were identified and used these to present ideas in the findings. Figure 1 provides a summary of the data analysis process.

Figure 1: Data Analysis



In this study, three major themes have been identified. The first one is concerned with “Different understandings of CLT”, which shows a variety of views about CLT practice. The second theme is titled “Realities of practice” which highlights the issues related to problems with the implementation of CLT in the Bangladeshi context. The final theme, entitled “Teacher education effectiveness” examines the inconsistency between the policy mandated CLT curriculum and the way of preparing teachers for using the CLT approach. The findings that emerged from this analysis are presented in the findings chapter (Chapter four).

3.6 Ethical issues

In this research, there are four ethical issues which needed to be considered and addressed. These ethical issues are: permission and access, informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality, and relationships and power relationships. The permission and access issue is related to obtaining the permission to actually conduct the research. The research proposal was approved by the Educational Research Human Ethics Committee (ERHEC) of the University of Canterbury in Christchurch. I also obtained approval from the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) and Ministry of Education (MOE) in Bangladesh.

To do a research in an educational institution in Bangladesh, a researcher needs the permission of the Ministry of Education, Bangladesh. Because of my position as an employee of the government, I needed to get that permission. General permission was sought and granted for the group of Bangladeshi educators at the University Of Canterbury College Of Education to have access to educational institutions and records in Bangladesh. It applied en masse and allowed me access to the participants without them needing to be specifically identified to the Ministry as participants in my study.

The informed consent issue relates to ensuring the participants are fully aware of what the research will entail for them and any potential risks to them as a result of their participation. It also relates to ensuring that participation is voluntary, and the participants being fully aware that they have the right to withdraw at any time. In this regard, I described the research project purposes and procedures to prospective participants and requested them to take part in my research. I explained to the participants that I am a teacher educator of a government teacher training college in Bangladesh. I also had the consent form signed by the teacher educator participants. I gave participants access to the audiotapes and to the transcripts of their interviews. Their participation in my research was voluntary. Participants were assured that they were allowed to withdraw from this research at any time without any penalty for that.

In order to maintain anonymity and confidentiality in a trustful and honest way, in writing this thesis I did not mention the particular names of the institutions where the participants worked and studied in Bangladesh, to protect the identities of my participants. To further maintain the anonymity of the participants, pseudonyms have been used. Participants were given the option of choosing their own pseudonyms so that they could easily identify the data they presented, but at the same time remain unidentified by other participants and the readers. This is important because participants, being government employees, might have the chance to work at the policy-making level. It is important that their identities are protected, so that their career paths are not influenced by their participation in the study. Records have remained confidential and access to data has been restricted to me and my supervisors. The fact that I am the sole researcher and the only person to take interviews and to transcribe the interview data also helps to maintain the participants' anonymity and confidentiality of the data.

Maintaining power relationships is another important issue in doing research. As I have interviewed people who are my colleagues and friends in different government teacher training colleges in Bangladesh, I was aware about power relationships between us. I believe they would not be adversely affected by me since they are my senior colleagues and they are working in different places to me. As they are government employees, they may be afraid of giving data that might go against the government policy or be contrary to the position of a specific authority. For that reason, I have endeavoured to protect the participants from authorities by keeping confidentiality and anonymity. At the same time, I have managed to protect myself from adverse influence by the participants as they are not in positions of higher authority over me and we are not working under same principal (college authority). I was always careful to respect the participants by doing no harm and maintaining positive relationships with the participants.

3.7 Methodological Limitations

Patton (1990) maintains that there is no perfect research design. My current study is no exception to that. It has a number of limitations. First of all, the number of cases in my research is small. I have interviewed only three participants and the data collected from this sample is not sufficient to generalise the result. I recognise the limitation of the generalisability of my study considering the participants are not representative of all secondary teacher educators in Bangladesh. Though all teacher educators in Bangladesh are not saying or thinking the same things, the participants raise some issues that others may share and these are worth exploring for other teacher educators. In addition, the findings generated can be seen as illustrative, rather than predictive. They are illustrative which means that they suggest experiences that may be shared and issues that may warrant further

explanation. Thus with this intention of my study, the methodology is appropriate or fit for its purposes.

As I have conducted my research in New Zealand and participants are studying in New Zealand, I have not been able to observe the participants' classroom teaching to identify whether what they practice in a classroom situation in Bangladesh is consistent with what they say or believe. Therefore, I had to be fully dependent on the self-reports of what they say about their practice in a B.Ed classroom and their understanding of CLT through practice. There might be a mismatch between their beliefs and practice.

Another limitation is the timeframe. The participants were in Bangladesh for more than three months during the research period, which impacted on my planned interview schedule. This was further affected by the big earthquake events in New Zealand along with thousands of aftershocks. As a result, I was only able to conduct one interview with each participant, rather than the two I had initially planned. If I had taken more interviews, there could have been more opportunities to get more information. Other potential limitations in this study include factors relating to the gender, age, geographical and demographic profile of the participants. They are all male, of similar age and career position. This is a potential limitation because people may have different experiences related to whether they are male or female, young or old, living in a particular place or in a specific institution. However, though the sample is small, the data is descriptive enough to get participants' views about CLT and the related issues.

Chapter Four: Analysis and Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the participants' understanding of CLT as an approach to English language (EFL) teaching and learning. This is based on an interpretative analysis of three case studies. The findings indicate that the participating teacher educators possess certain views and beliefs about Communicative Language Teaching in relation to their experiences of teaching and learning English. The participants' interpretations of CLT are described below under the broad theme headings: different understandings of CLT; realities of practice; and teacher education effectiveness.

First, this chapter begins with profiles of each research participant, as well as my own position as the researcher. The participant profiles and reflection on my own position provide an outline to help the reader to interpret the participants' understanding in relation to CLT. It also helps to understand the participants' views in relation to their context, their experiences of CLT and to understand how their background may have influenced their opinions. Moreover, by presenting my own position, I hope to help the reader better understand my interpretation of the data.

The participant profiles have been developed from the questionnaire in which the participants presented their background information and knowledge about CLT. Interview data has also been used to develop the profiles. The participants were given an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of their profiles, and to make suggestions about masking of details to preserve their anonymity. According to their suggestions, some details have been altered, where necessary, to maintain anonymity.

4.1 Profiles of research participants

All three research participants, as well as the researcher, are Bangladeshi teacher educators of English. All of them teach English to pre-service and in-service secondary English teachers in different government teacher training colleges in Bangladesh. They are CLT experts in relation to their personal training and experiences in teaching through CLT. They are all currently completing a Master of Education (M.Ed) at a New Zealand university under a scholarship funded by the government of Bangladesh and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

4.1.1. Participant 1: Robin

Participant 1, Robin is a 45 year old, male Bangladeshi teacher educator. Before coming to New Zealand he was an assistant professor of English in a government Teacher Training College (TTC) in a far Eastern part of Bangladesh. He has been working as a teacher educator of English for approximately twelve years. Prior to this, he worked as an assistant teacher in EFL in a non-government secondary school and government secondary schools for approximately seven years.

Robin graduated with a BA (Honours) in English in 1988, an MA in English Literature in 1989, and in 2007 completed an M.Phil in English language teaching (ELT). All of these qualifications were gained from universities in Bangladesh. In 1994 he graduated with a teaching qualification (secondary) from an educational research institute in Bangladesh. In addition to these qualifications, Robin has received professional development training, including curriculum dissemination training from the National and Curriculum Textbook Board (NCTB), Bangladesh, CLT training from a project which worked for the improvement

of English in Bangladesh, and four months training in CLT methodology, ICT and teacher education from a New Zealand teacher education provider in 2003.

Robin thinks that he has a good command of the four major skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) of two languages: Bengali, his mother tongue, and English. He has studied for two years in an English speaking country. He describes his proficiency in written English as near-native on the basis of achieving grade 'A' in written English in an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course at a university in New Zealand. He rates his spoken English as excellent, as he scored 7 in the English standardized test, IELTS. In listening to English, Robin grades himself as excellent, as he thinks he understands more than ninety percent of native speakers and feels he communicates with them easily. He claims his only weaknesses is reading English as he finds that it takes longer than usual to finish a text and his IELTS reading score was 5.5.

As a school teacher, Robin was aware of CLT, because he had attended a couple of training sessions on CLT while he was working in schools. When he was studying for his diploma in education, he also studied communicative methodology and techniques. This study and training encouraged him to try to use CLT methods in teaching English, although he says that he tried to implement them in his own way.

Robin learnt English at school, college and university as a part of his courses of study, and also through personal efforts, which included reading English books, newspapers, novels and poetry, and also practising speaking English. He was greatly influenced by one particular English teacher at college level to learn English. During the twelve years he has been

teaching in teacher training colleges, Robin has had on average 10 to 15 students only each year who have taken English as an elective subject.

4.1.2. Participant 2: Ananda

Participant 2, Ananda, is a 44 year old, male Bangladeshi teacher educator. Ananda was an assistant professor of English in a government TTC situated in the eastern part of Bangladesh before he went to New Zealand to study. He has been working as a teacher educator in English for approximately thirteen years. Prior to this, he worked as a lecturer of English in a non-government college in a district in Bangladesh for about five years from 1993, where he mostly taught at the higher secondary level (grades 11 and 12).

Ananda graduated with a BA (Honours) in English in 1988, and an MA in English Literature in 1989. Both these qualifications were gained from universities in Bangladesh. In 1993, he graduated with a secondary teaching qualification from an educational research institute in Bangladesh. Like Robin, Ananda has also received professional development training, including curriculum dissemination training from the NCTB, Bangladesh, CLT training from English Language Teaching Improvement project (ELTIP) in Bangladesh, and training in CLT methodology, ICT and teacher education for approximately four months in 2003 at a tertiary teacher education institution in New Zealand.

According to Ananda, the four months training in New Zealand was very helpful for his professional development. With regard to the teaching-learning environment and the New Zealand curriculum, he states:

In New Zealand the total teaching-learning system was student centred. Teachers mainly focus on activity-based learning and involve the students into different activities in the classes. So the curriculum is very much related to CLT.

He related that his ideas of classroom practice for CLT developed in New Zealand during this training period. Ananda has also attended a number of national seminars and short workshops which were organized by the British Council, Bangladesh, and some educational development projects, most of which focused predominantly on English teaching and learning in relation to CLT in Bangladesh.

Ananda thinks that he has very good command of the four major skills in Bangla, his mother tongue, and English. Besides Bangla and English, he is also able to read and write Arabic. Ananda has spent more than two years studying in an English speaking country. In support of his claim to have an excellent level of proficiency in each of the four major English skills, he states:

I have studied English in more than four to five years at least to get my Honours and Master degrees in English and other professional degrees. After joining in my job as an English teacher, I always taught my students in English as a classroom language. In this way I have gained a good command on English. And when I came here in New Zealand, my study and communication with people are mostly going through English.

He also notes that the English environment while he has been studying in New Zealand has influenced him to learn excellent English. Ananda studied English diligently because he felt English was essential for academic purposes. He realized that he needed success in English in all levels from his primary to tertiary education. He was ambitious to get a very good job which demanded a good command of English. Ananda noted that not only his own efforts, but the classroom learning he experienced as a student, as well as teachers and family, have helped to motivate him and to develop his English language skills. He claimed that he had a good environment for learning English in his family situation, because his parents and elders encouraged him to exchange ideas with them in English. This contributed to him being

motivated to learn English. He also watched some news and other programmes in English on television. English teachers in his academic life also inspired him to learn English.

4.1.3. Participant 3: Sabuz

Participant 3, Sabuz, is a 40 year old, male Bangladeshi teacher educator. Sabuz was a lecturer in English in a teacher training institute in the southern part of Bangladesh before he started his study in New Zealand. He has been working as a teacher educator in English for about ten years. Prior to this, he worked as a lecturer in English as a foreign language (EFL) in a non-government college for approximately two years.

Sabuz graduated with a BA (Honours) in English in 1991, and an MA in English Literature in 1992. Both of these qualifications were gained from universities in Bangladesh. In 1998, he graduated with a teaching qualification (secondary) from a teacher training institution in Bangladesh. In addition to these qualifications, Sabuz has received professional development training in Bangladesh and abroad. He experienced intensive CLT training for teacher educators from a project which aimed to improve English use in Bangladesh, from 2002 to 2004. He also participated in English teacher training in Malaysia for a month in 2005 and had ICT training in India for four months in 2007. Sabuz believes that he is proficient in using two languages, Bengali, his mother tongue, and English, across the four major skills. He has studied for two years in an English speaking country. He rates his proficiency level in speaking as excellent, and feels he can communicate well with native English speakers.

As a teacher educator, Sabuz became aware of CLT in 2002. He knew almost nothing about CLT before that, because there was no CLT in his academic courses prior to tertiary level. His first exposure to CLT was when he became a teacher educator:

But when I joined, in that time, government took some initiatives to make this approach to be learnt by all the English teacher educators. At that moment, I got that opportunity to join that courses from where I learned about CLT.

In describing his personal learning of English, Sabuz highlighted the fact that his family environment was very supportive of English use among his family members, reading English books and magazines. He admitted that watching English movies has been really motivating for him: “I have seen so many of them in that time - 35 years ago in late 70’s. My family had no such restriction to watch English movies which many families do not. This is the way I became fascinated with the English language.” Along with the family influence and support, Sabuz felt he had very good English teachers in his school life that also motivated him to learn English.

4.2. Researcher position: how the participants’ backgrounds and experiences compare with that of the researcher

I am a 36 year old male teacher educator in Bangladesh. Like each of the three participants in this study, I am also currently studying for a two year Master of Education at a New Zealand university. Similarly, prior to this, I was a teacher educator in a government TTC in Bangladesh, though I am less experienced in relation to years of teaching in TTC than the other participants. I began this position as a lecturer in English in 2006. I taught student teachers about the strategies for teaching English in B.Ed sessions. In addition, my teaching included improving students’ personal English in the context of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) teaching. Like the other participants, I also work as an in-service English teacher trainer at the secondary level.

Like Robin, I also had experience as a high school teacher of English for five years prior to becoming a teacher educator. As with the other participants' experiences of CLT curriculum at secondary, higher secondary and B.Ed levels, I have had similar teaching experiences in English for a decade. Like the other participants, I gained Honours and Master degrees in English literature and language from a university in Bangladesh. Unlike the other participants, I got my secondary teacher qualification while I was working as a teacher in a school. In Bangladesh, it is mandatory for unqualified teachers to get a secondary teacher qualification (B.Ed, Diploma in Education and/or a similar degree) within five years of obtaining a position in a government secondary school.

Like the three participants, I think that I have a very good command of all four skills of the English language. However, as a student of EFL, I find some difficulties in listening to native English speakers' accents and understanding their colloquial use of language. I also find writing in a formal academic style challenging. My confidence in English comes through my academic study (getting between 6 and 7 in listening and speaking skill areas of the IELTS test), and my current two year period of study in an English speaking country. Though I have shared similar experiences of spending time in a mostly English speaking country like the other participants, they individually reported that they have different strengths and competencies in different areas of English. Besides my mother tongue Bangla, I have acquired reading and writing ability in another language, Sanskrit. I had not spent any time in an English speaking country before my time in New Zealand.

Unlike the participants, I grew up in the capital city of Bangladesh, which gave me an opportunity to keep in touch with a society attuned to English from a young age. I started my childhood education in an English medium kindergarten, which I believe had an influence on

my desire to learn English and resulted in me getting very good scores in English in primary and secondary schools. The participants did not specifically mention any institutional influence relating to the quality of their schools and students on their learning English, though they said the teacher was very motivating. In addition to my early schooling influence, I come from an educated family background; most of my family members were taught through the medium of English in their academic lives. My father, who is a college teacher and principal and has a good collection of English books, motivated me to read in English. I learnt English sitting at my father's feet. This was particularly influential in learning English which the other participants have not talked about. Later, in my schooling, I had a few very good English teachers as model teachers at different levels of my academic life. In addition to this, my experience is different to the other participants in a sense that I had a small number of good friends with whom I practiced speaking English.

Though I was interested in English from an early age, I was first introduced to CLT when I began working as an English teacher in a government secondary school. Although I gained some familiarity with CLT, I did not have a deep understanding of it at when I worked in secondary school, because I had no training in secondary English teaching until I undertook my B.Ed. In relation to my teaching practice, I used to teach secondary classes mostly following the traditional way which other secondary English teachers usually did then. However, my practice changed when I started teaching students at the B.Ed level when I explored a communicative approach at times in my own teaching. As part of studying my B.Ed course, I learned about approaches to teaching in general, as well as teaching English in particular. This included the characteristics of CLT. This aspect of my training aligns closely with the experiences of the three participants.

Like the participants, my ideas about CLT were also generated through my experiences as a teacher educator in B.Ed English classrooms. I also attended a few workshops of short duration for English teacher educators organized by CLT experts in Bangladesh in 2006. Above all, even though there are some differences in backgrounds, all three participants as well as myself share the belief that English is valued highly for academic success and a future career. All participants encountered CLT in their professional life rather than their academic life. They all use CLT as a method of English Language Teaching, though they have different understandings and experiences of CLT.

These profiles provide a background and context for the views that are expressed by the participants, and which are the foundation of the subsequent interpretative analysis. I have also explored how the participants' experiences compare with my own in order to help the reader to make sense of the interpretations that I place on the data in the findings which follow.

4.3 Participants' understandings: Themes

4.3.1 Different understandings of CLT

This section presents the findings of the participants' understandings of CLT as an approach in an EFL setting. The findings indicate that the teacher educators possess certain views and beliefs about language teaching in relation to their experiences of teaching and learning English as a foreign language. The participants' understandings of CLT are reported in the following seven categories:

- CLT means communicating in the target language
- CLT is skill-based language teaching
- CLT emphasizes fluency, rather than accuracy

- CLT is student-oriented teaching and learning
- CLT focuses on teaching grammar contextually
- CLT emphasises on different assessments
- Variety and simplicity of teaching resources

4.3.1.1 CLT means communicating in the target language

All participants in this study show a positive attitude towards the learning of English, as they regard English as the main medium of communication all over the world. Three of the participants agree that in CLT learners are to be able to communicate using their target language. Ananda states, “ Whatever the language is, Bangla, English or any other language and how long one is attending any course on that target language, the main focus is to make the learner able to communicate in that target language.” All participants focus on the importance of oral communication for various reasons, such as to get a good job, higher studies either abroad or inside the country, for business, and travelling in foreign countries. They feel oral skills are essential in all these fields for effective communication.

Two of the participants report that the purpose of any language is communication and oral communication is the primary skill, by which they mean speaking is prioritized for expressing oneself, over other major language skills. They claim that unfortunately speaking in English is ignored in Bangladesh. Robin states, “Though, it is suggested to practice English orally in the new curriculum through CLT practice, it is not practically practiced in the schools yet. It has been or being neglected still.” Though Robin believes that all four skills are important for English language learning as advocate in a communicative curriculum, he emphasizes oral communication in English, rather than other skills: “So I mostly used to practice speaking with students.”

Sabuz thinks that using English as the language of instruction in the classroom is important, though he disagreed with using English for classroom instruction in the earlier stages in an EFL classroom: “If the teacher goes to the classroom and speaks English whole the class time, students will not understand a single word.” He comments that if the teachers have a positive attitude towards CLT, the trainees would gradually adjust to use English among themselves to follow English instructions. Robin and Ananda, in turn, report that it is not actually prohibited to use mother language in a CLT classroom but they feel it is better to speak English as much as possible. They believe practising English orally will lead to learners’ confidence in using English in their practical lives. Sabuz adds that “if students cannot follow English instruction due to their poor level of understanding English, it is allowed to use mother language to help student learning.”

According to the participants, as most of the teachers in Bangladesh are used to traditional practices, for example the Grammar-Translation (GT) method, even though they think they are adopting a CLT approach. They allow students to have little chance to practise English speaking in the classroom. The students normally answer questions asked by the teacher, translated from English to Bangla and vice versa, read the text aloud, and individually, write answers. Participants report that this is not enough for developing oral English skills. They indicate students must be given opportunities to practise English orally inside the classroom.

4.3.1.2 CLT is skill-based language teaching

According to participants, learning a language means learning four basic language skills, i.e listening, speaking, reading and writing. They share a similar idea that one can acquire any skill only through repeated practice. Robin explains this with the example,

If anyone wants to learn biking or swimming, he/she must have to ride a bicycle or must swim. Unless one practises themselves, surely they cannot learn to bike or swim. This is the nature of every skill-based work.

The participants report that they are used to following different techniques, including group work, pair work, and role-play to involve students in practising those language skills, so that the students share ideas and do things collaboratively. Thus, they believe, the maximum amount of possible English practice in the classroom enables students to use English confidently and freely.

The participants report that secondary English textbook series *English for Today* and the B.Ed English teaching manuals have been developed using a practice-based, 'learning by doing' approach. All participants highlight the interconnectedness of all four language skills. Ananda notes that "communication does not take place if the listener does not understand the speech of the speaker." He also indicates that a good listener can be a good speaker when he says, "if one is able to listen well, he or she will also be able to speak well. Without understanding of listening, one cannot express well." To him, listening and speaking skills are interdependent.

Though Robin stresses speaking skill practice, Ananda thinks that as all four language skills are inter-related, other skills will develop automatically when the learner is competent in oral language. Sabuz comments that "the very name reflects the nature of CLT; that is communication, which is not limited to acquiring one or two language skills." He therefore also emphasizes the importance of the four major skills of English language. In addition, he compares CLT with the audio-lingual method, indicating that the audio-lingual method stresses only speaking and listening skills through lots of repetition of language drills, rather

than communication, whereas CLT focuses on the development of all four skills in real-life situations.

4.3.1.3 CLT emphasizes fluency, rather than accuracy

All participants are of the same opinion that CLT emphasizes fluency rather than accuracy. They agree that although the ultimate goal of language learning is to use language accurately, in the beginning stage learners need to be able to communicate simply, not accurately. Robin feels that “if correction is given all the time, students will be discouraged from using the target language spontaneously.” In addition, participants claim that students need to be taught in an encouraging environment where they can use the language without worrying about whether the sentences they deliver are right or wrong. Robin reinforces this point: “Learners’ fluency will be disrupted if they become more conscious about grammatically correct sentences”.

Ananda maintains that “while using our mother language, we are not always following the grammatical accuracy in conversation.” He claims that at the early stages of writing, teachers should pay less attention to the accuracy of students’ work rather they need to be encouraged to write something freely but not accurately. Robin claims that students would correct themselves “gradually and slowly when they are engaged in group or peer checking activities.” He also believes that “if the teacher always criticizes or abuses the student for making mistakes in speaking or writing, s/he would be demoralized, which may lead to students’ reluctance to use English naturally.”

Participants report that making mistakes is a part of learning. Robin reports that he corrects student teachers’ spoken language, and he claims that he “corrects their writing by giving

them every possible alternative form of correct-writing.” He thinks teachers should be supportive to make learners correct their own work “through involving pair checking or pair-group checking.” Similarly, Sabuz emphasises the value of interaction between students through conversation in English, without thinking about grammar, to stimulate natural language use. He does not mention writing. None of the participants mentioned correction in relation to listening and reading.

4.3.1.4 CLT is student-oriented teaching and learning

According to the participants, a classroom is a place where two parties play their respective roles: students and teacher. It is a question to them of who dominates the class. All participants think that in terms of classroom instruction, English language teaching needs to be student-centered, but that the role of a teacher is very important. They think that a student-oriented language classroom should be based on learner needs, the aims and objectives of students’ learning, the background of the learners, students’ prior knowledge of English and their interest in learning English. Participants report that teachers still play a dominating role in the Bangladeshi classrooms, for example, the “teacher read out the text for students and students listen to their teacher” (Robin). According to Robin, instead of talking all the time, the teacher should support and encourage the students to talk and engage in learning activities. He further believes the role of a teacher in a learner centred classroom is to watch all students participating in activities and to monitor learners’ progress closely giving effective feedback to them.

Again, Ananda claims that interaction between students and a teacher is very important: “The teacher selects a variety of activities as well as the teaching materials for involving learners to promote learning”. He feels that group work, especially drama, is very helpful to encourage

interaction between a teacher and students, and to do so, activities and teaching materials should be adopted according to learners' ability and choice. Ananda express the view that "language class must be a noisy one, because students are engaged in language practices. Consequently sound is created which is mistaken as noise making or chaos". The participants explain this is a part of language teaching and learning, even though it may be claimed by the secondary English teachers that making noise is a problem. They state that teachers may fear that if the students are allowed to do the activities freely, there would be some noise-making and discipline problems. Participants feel that making noise is very common to language classes.

In addition, Ananda thinks that CLT encourages student centred classrooms through a focus on formative tests for language assessment. Participants agreed that the format of assessment should not be limited to on-paper exams; and that a change is needed in assessment to promote CLT. The participants feel a student centred classroom will help with student motivation, in the sense that students feel free to work with language activities under the guidance of a teacher as a facilitator or guide, rather than the transmitter of knowledge or a translator of language. As Robin says, "When a teacher lectures, students quietly hear him. But when they are engaged in pair work or group work, they discuss, argue and give their own opinions."

4.3.1.5 CLT focuses on teaching grammar contextually

All three participants express the view that it is important to teach grammar in a communicative classroom in an EFL situation. Ananda notes that grammar is very important in order to use language perfectly. He believes that if anyone wants to develop her/his language skills, particularly writing skills, s/he needs to learn grammar. He considers CLT

does not de-emphasize grammar, but he advocates a contextualized way of teaching grammar. He explains that eliciting examples from real-life situations would be a helpful way to get the idea of grammatical items. He also believes ‘rules automatically come through understanding’. Robin claims for example,

I tell the same story using different tenses or make students write their daily activities using different tenses. Trainees then understand how the same occurrence or same story can be useful to teach tenses without memorizing grammatical rules.

Similarly, Sabuz points out that a learner does not need to know all the grammatical rules; he claims “only basic rules are important for constructing sentences or expressing ideas.” His examples: “I need to know only ‘He goes to school,’ or ‘I go to school,’ but not the rules of using and definition of third person singular number.” He supports this with references to the native speakers’ ignorance of grammatical correctness of their oral language. He also indicates that “grammars are there in CLT, but not in-depth grammar.” Sabuz reports that he teaches student teachers how to teach grammar through real-life examples. Participants are of the view that CLT highlights teaching grammatical rules are not very important for oral communication. Participants think that grammar may be helpful for the learner to be expert in a language, but absolutely perfect grammar is not necessary for the ordinary speakers.

Although Sabuz shows reluctance for students to learn grammatical rules, he regards grammar as an important component of learning English. In this regard, he mentions his experiences of learning grammar; “in my school life English grammar book was very difficult and horrifying to me.” He favours *English for Today* books in which grammar items are arranged to teach them communicatively as he thinks. His experience is that when learners are compelled to memorize the rules through reading mechanically, the learners feel bored. For example, Sabuz says, “In a traditional class the teacher enters into the classroom and gives some grammatical rules to memorize. But in CLT, grammar is taught indirectly

through examples”, which he claims, is one of the major reasons for his interest in and support for teaching grammar using CLT. All participants agree that in CLT, learners learn grammar from real life examples and rote memorization is discouraged.

4.3.1.6 CLT emphasizes different assessments

According to the participants, assessment is a very important issue while teaching a language using a particular methodology. All three of the participants identify different types of assessment practices which they think can benefit the students’ progress in a CLT classroom. They report that students’ progress in Bangladeshi secondary schools is usually measured by term examinations and final examinations. They think most schools and teachers depend on summative assessment which shows a snapshot of all the students’ achievements relative to one another, but they question the point and value of terminal or final examinations as the sole or main form of assessment.

In relation to this, Ananda maintains that formative assessment gives an indication of students’ performance in a range of classroom activities, including class presentation and attendance in every class, and that it measures students’ level of ability in four different skills of language, rather than depending only on some selected questions to prepare for exams. He, therefore considers that formative assessment gives a fairer picture of individual students’ progress, and allows students to get necessary feedback from their teacher. Robin claims that a student is assessed only by exam performance at the end of the semester rather than on the basis of records of students’ performance during the classroom activities. He adds that no mark is allocated for that. Robin further mentions that students are assessed or tested three times a year in different terminal exams as happens in the secondary school. He finds this present practice of assessment to be faulty, because “assessment involves students’

performance in every activity inside and outside the classroom, which is ignored present examination system.” Thus, Robin supports a form of formative assessment that relates to a wider range of skills including listening and speaking, and thereby, recognizes and values the oral and written communicative aspects of learning English.

All the participants express in the same vein that students’ performance within classroom activities, which they consider as formative assessment, is more important than exam-based students’ performance, which is viewed as summative assessment, for CLT implementation in Bangladesh. Participants declare that English question-papers have been moderated recently in the school final public examinations in order to reflect a communicative approach. However, they point out that there is no speaking and listening tests in the school or public exams. The participants favour formative assessment as they think it gives a fair picture of students’ achievements in language proficiency (four language skills). Each participant sees value in assessing speaking and listening skills as a CLT requirement. Thus, all the participants agree that testing regimes impact largely in determining the methodology of English teaching, and feel that a different assessment system is required to support CLT.

4.3.1.7 Variety and simplicity of teaching resources

The participants think that the use of teaching resources help teachers to stimulate classroom practices effectively. They indicate that the purpose of using CLT resources and visual aids in teaching is to provide a concrete expression of the abstract text in an attractive way. They all state that the text books, teacher’s guide (TG) and blackboard are very important resources for the teachers to teach effectively. Participants report that teacher and students are the biggest resources in the class. Sabuz explains, “Low cost, simple teaching resources around classroom such as blackboard, the visual world beyond the classroom window and the small

reusable handouts can be the good resources for CLT teaching”. Though participants agree that it is important to use visual aids to help make students’ learning interesting and vivid, they think that the biggest resources in the classroom are “both teacher and students with their experience of the world, ideas, memories and imagination. These experiences can be useful to facilitate learning” (Robin).

Participants note that without teaching aids it is difficult to make the student understand effectively. However, Robin shares his experiences of using only textbook and activities (for example, group work/pair work) as an alternative to using teaching aids, maintaining that the “teacher can be the best teaching aid; his voice, his performance and relationship with students.” The participants agree that CLT can be implemented without technological teaching aids. They recognize an economic reality where technological devices and ICT may not be available. They support the use of simple teaching aids (for example, board, marker and poster-paper) instead of electronic audio-visual aids.

The participants note that in the B.Ed course, trainee teachers are taught how to make the best use of all available resources in the secondary English classroom in order to make teaching learning effective and learning permanent. They claim that they use television, videos or computers very rarely in the classroom, but they try to use available resources to meet communicative goals. For example, Sabuz reports that “the B.Ed teacher engages participants in role playing, puzzle games and other activities.” Ananda, in contrast, feels that “a lot of teaching aids are essential for involving students in a communicative approach such as printed piece of papers, newspaper cuttings, and pictures.” He reports that no television, video or even computer is available in his B.Ed classroom, though he sometimes uses the over head projector as a teaching aid. He emphasises the use of technological devices such as

television, computer, and other audio-visual devices as important for the development of English language in a communicative way of teaching. He argues, “When students are allowed to listen to audio cassette or to watch a movie or video clips on television, they can explore how authentically native speakers use English in their real-lives”. By the term authenticity he means the presentation of materials relevant to real-life English.

Ananda thinks that language laboratory is very suitable for students to practice English communicatively. He claims that a language laboratory can provide facilities for students including audio-visual, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and other resources for language practice. He also reports that almost all urban schools have computer facilities and the government has already taken initiatives to supply computers even in rural schools. Robin, in contrast, believes that although using computers (technical and electrical devices) is a desired situation for CLT practice in Bangladesh, it is difficult to do this right now. As Robin explains, it is “difficult for teachers to use it because of many reasons such as unavailability of electricity in all rural areas, cuts of power many times, lack of ICT skills of language teachers.” However, the participants are positive about the idea of using technology to practice CLT, mostly for speaking and listening, and for enhancing the language capabilities of students. Thus, although they revealed those participants feel that using computers is potentially beneficial, their experience is that it is not always possible or realistic in the context of schools and tertiary institutions in Bangladesh; hence a pragmatic emphasis is given to the use of simple teaching aids.

4.3.2 Realities of practice

The findings for the theme “realities of practice” are organized in a similar pattern to the previous theme. Categories were developed out of the analysis, and then compiled and

grouped under unifying ideas. I am reporting this theme in 7 categories, which were developed out of the analysis, and these 7 categories are:

- Waste of time
- Exam accountability
- Lack of monitoring for CLT
- Tension around class time and size
- Lack of relationship
- Monolingual reality
- Ineffective use of text books

4.3.2.1 Waste of time

All participants agree that in spite of lessons on the four language skills being contained in the secondary English textbooks *English for Today*, only two skills, reading and writing, are being practised and assessed in schools and in the school final (SSC) examinations. The other two skills, listening and speaking, are ignored even after 15 years of CLT introduction in Bangladesh. They claim that teachers do not need to assess the listening and speaking skills because no instruction is given from a higher authority for assessing these two skills and no marks are allotted for listening and speaking in school examinations or in SSC examinations. The participants want to know why teachers would waste their time practicing them when there are no marks attributed to these and when students do not need to face any test in listening and speaking skills. Robin's experiences in schools have led him to question the realities of practice for teachers and the pragmatic value for them of practising speaking and listening activities. He says that:

[a] visit to schools reveals that English classes are taught in Bangla. When asked, some English teachers informed that they face resistance from the students, guardians, colleagues, and sometimes from the head teachers if they spend time on listening and speaking. Sometimes they are warned for doing worthless activities other than finishing the syllabus. Then the proactive and motivated teachers who recognise the value of listening and speaking skills find no other alternative but to retreat. It is not such that some teachers are not involving students in aural-oral

practices, what can be said that the number is too insignificant to bring any tangible change in the English teaching-learning situation.

Sabuz maintains the same opinions; “Without stressing all those skills together, it is difficult to acquire students’ communicative competences in using English well. Teachers feel no interest of speaking or listening in the English classroom.” Participants’ observations recognise a pragmatic reality for teachers, while revealing personal frustration that CLT will not be implemented as long as the listening and speaking practises are not practically implemented.

4.3.2.2 Exam accountability

All participants report that the school examination regimes affect teacher’s everyday classroom practices. They all think that the implementation of CLT based secondary curriculum is closely linked to secondary school certificate (SSC) examination which occurs at the end of grade 10. As exam-questions are set on the basis of reading and writing skills, teachers concentrate on teaching mostly these exam-oriented items and skills rather than speaking and listening skills. They add that teachers are under pressure by the school authorities and by the guardians of the students to make students prepared for exams and to do well in the exams. As Ananda explains, “[the] exam system is placed as barrier to implement CLT because exams are based on only reading and writing skills”. This is why there is a reluctance to adopt a CLT approach and particularly the speaking and listening components of CLT. Robin states that, “as the curriculum focuses mainly on exams, teachers are also interested to finishing the syllabus in time, at any cost.” According to the participants, a teacher will be accountable to the authority for not completing the syllabus within the limited timeframe available. Sabuz adds that, “guardians also concern about their student’s getting good score in the exams, rather than developing their English competence,” which leads to a negative impact on implementing CLT at secondary level.

4.3.2.3 Lack of monitoring for CLT

All of the participants are agreed that almost all secondary teachers go back to their traditional way of teaching as they did before their training, thinking that there is no regular monitoring of their classes in relation to whether they are enacting the approaches from the pre-service or in-service trainings. They also declare that simply training teachers about CLT cannot ensure CLT practice in the classroom. They favour the idea that teacher educators should go to visit secondary schools to monitor or supervise the English teachers in relation to whether they are teaching students using communicative approaches. They identify a lack of English teacher educators to visit a large number of schools as a problem : “Suppose, among fifty teaching staffs, only two or three are English teacher educators who are not enough to run a lot of programs held in our college, including regular classes” (Robin). In a similar vein, Ananda explains that teacher-educators with no English background visit English classes and that with their “limited understanding of CLT knowledge and English teachers do not get useful feedback from them what they need really.” In relation to this, Ananda states that in the TTC where he teaches, there is no specific rule that English teacher must visit English classes. Robin, in contrast, notes that, “it was introduced in our college that if there is even a single English teacher-educator available, he will observe all English students and will observe the English classes of the schools he assigned.” From the opposite experiences of the two participants, they explain there is no hard and fast rule in TTCs about monitoring secondary English classes.

In relation to this issue of monitoring, Ananda is quite different from the others’ point of view. He thinks that monitoring should come from inside of school administration, rather than from outside observers, believing that if the teachers are informed earlier about the

schedule of class-visit by the teacher educator or by government officials, this would be “artificial monitoring” as teachers would be well prepared with CLT activities to show their best performances, which is not the reflection of their everyday classroom practices. He claims, if the monitoring is done by the school authority including head teacher, there would be continuous observation of the teachers of how they are exploring their pedagogical knowledge of CLT training, which would result in teachers more actively implementing CLT. He emphasises regular monitoring of the teachers from school management itself, rather than occasional supervision of teachers, by the authority beyond school. The participants’ experiences are that without monitoring secondary English classes, it is difficult to implement CLT and to have change in the traditional classroom practices.

4.3.2.4 Tension around class-time and class size

The participants highlight insufficient instructional time and class size as barriers to effective CLT implementation. They report that the contact time for a class is not enough to focus on individual student’s needs in a large class (more than 50 students). For example, Sabuz notes:

From my experiences in visiting schools, every class-period is only forty minutes, except for the first period, which is forty five minutes, might be the biggest session in a day. Most English classes are held as beginning session in secondary school schools. Attendance of the students is taken in the first session by the teacher, which takes more than ten minutes if it is a large class consisting of about seventy students. Another five to ten minutes are taken as ‘warm-up’ to go into the text.

He wants to know how it is possible for teachers to teach all the students in this limited (30 minutes approximately) time via a CLT approach. All participants make similar criticisms about class time and size. However, while secondary teachers may be seen to suffer from limited time to conduct CLT activities, the participants’ experiences are different as teachers in a B.Ed. programme. They feel that they have sufficient contact time for every English session, which consists of 90 minutes, giving many opportunities to teach in a communicative manner. For example, Sabuz explains that he can do “a lot of activities such as, group work

or pair work, language games, puzzles, acting, dramatization, role-playing etc, as offered by CLT, to make the English classroom more interesting, more enjoyable.” In a similar way, Ananda reports that the “B.Ed English class size is good enough for limited number of students, class time is 90 minutes per session, and the physical environment is supportive enough to involve trainee teachers into different activities, though there are some limitations.” Participants recognise a disjunction between TTC and secondary schooling contexts.

Robin claims that there should be a requirement for extended class time in English classes. He argues that “as a foreign or second language, more time should be allotted for practicing English, rather than Bangla as mother tongue, though same time has been allotted (class period) for both Bangla and English in the curriculum.” He puts forward examples from his experience showing that a few schools have been joining two 35 or 40 minute classes together, though this is very isolated scenario in secondary schools in Bangladesh. Robin raises questions about having the same contact time allotted for both English and Bangla as languages in the secondary school curriculum in Bangladesh.

All participants express similar concern about class time for teachers and students in schools. They claim that secondary teachers do not have sufficient time for CLT activities including involving students in interactive tasks and getting responses from all of them. Ananda, for example, says that “existing class time is not enough for an effective language classroom.” That is why he thinks that secondary English class time should be extended to “one hour at least, 90 minutes if possible.” He further suggests that the number of classes should be reduced and the duration of classes should be extended, so that “both students and teachers can be developed” through performing CLT activities.

4.3.2.5 Gaps in relationships

The participants believe that the lack of a good relationship between parents and teachers is a barrier to implementing CLT. Sabuz states that, “If parents are brought into classrooms, they will find what the teacher and students are doing in English classes. Then they will be motivated towards CLT.” Participants feel that it is essential to take parents to English classrooms, which will create awareness for the parents and help them to understand the advantages of CLT. In addition, participants express the idea that power relationships prevailing between teacher educators and secondary teachers are similar to those between head teachers and teacher. They identify that there exists a communication gap among them. As Ananda states, “School teachers are bound to do what the head teacher or school administration want them to do. Head teachers do not bother the teachers’ concern about teaching methodology, because head teachers are lack of CLT knowledge.” From their experiences in schools, participants note that teacher preparation is still ineffective as there exists a relationship gap.

4.3.2.6 Monolingual reality

Participants indicate that because Bangladesh is a monolingual country, there is little scope to use English outside the classroom in Bangladesh, because students can satisfy all their real life needs by using their mother tongue, Bangla. Robin explains that people feel shy to use English and that even “while speaking English, they are befooled by others, looking at them in a circustic way.” In this situation, they note that the classroom is the only place where students can practise learning English. As Sabuz explains, “if you want to follow CLT, you have to ensure the maximum practice in the classroom. And also you have to use all the techniques by which you can involve the students in communication; they will speak, write,

listen and read in the target language.” Ananda, likewise, describes CLT as activity oriented approaches that create “good opportunities for students to practise in the classroom situation.” They mention that the classroom is the place where the teacher can organize a variety of activities to develop the language skills of the students. According to the participants, the classroom may be the only place where students use English and can learn to communicate in English.

4.3.2.7 Ineffective use of textbooks

The participants have identified that most of the trainee teachers do not know how to constructively use the recommended *English for Today* books which they consider as a hindrance to effective CLT implementation. Sabuz reports’ “trainees do not know about the contents texts, how to introduce lessons in the classroom according to the instruction given, or/and even the basic things such as spider gram.” They highlight the ignorance of the teachers about how to use the text books in ways that are intended by the writer, such as for incorporating productive and receptive tasks. Similarly, Robin points out with examples:

In every lesson, there is instruction for the students to talk about the pictures for few minutes and to ask and answer the questions following those pictures. The reasons behind those pictures given are thinking and imagining about pictures and giving opportunities to students for speaking practices. But unfortunately, teachers switch straight way to another section, leaving pictures’, thinking that those are useless. The reading section is also implemented in a wrong way that the teacher read out the text loudly for the students instead of doing reading activities by the students themselves.

Participants indicate that teachers do not follow the teachers’ guide in which instruction is given on how to conduct communicative English using text books effectively. Thus, the participants think that ineffective practice relating to the use of text books is a barrier and a challenge for CLT implementation in Bangladesh.

Being concerned about the effectiveness of *English for Today* textbooks, Sabuz identifies problems with the content of the books. He explains that “the contents of the textbook ignored the experiences and demands of the rural students.” The participants claim that some topics incorporated in the text are unfamiliar to students and have no relevance with the background knowledge of rural students. Therefore, they consider those topics to be irrelevant for rural contexts. As a result, the English texts are not accepted by the rural students which become a big challenge for CLT implementation in Bangladesh. Similarly, in the light of experience, Robin feels that there is a necessity to revise the secondary textbooks to make them more acceptable and useful for all students. He considers that “without literature, no language can be rich, so some more literary topics need to be included as a modification of textbook content, such as poems, short stories, dramas.” Thus, participants feel the necessity of rectifying texts to enhance students’ knowledge of literature as well as of language.

4.3.3 Teacher education effectiveness

Participants expressed their concern about teacher education effectiveness. The participants think that there are some inconsistencies between secondary teacher education and secondary school contexts in relation to preparing English teachers to use communicative teaching methods. As Ananda reports, “Problems lie in the root level”, observing that the teaching and learning environment in TTCs is different from the school context where teachers apply techniques of CLT that they have learnt from teacher preparation institutions.

Participants also focus on an inconsistency between the communicative curriculum in the B.Ed and the practical implementation of it. Participants believe that their style of teaching is student oriented and that this should be used in secondary classrooms. It appears though, that

that they do not necessarily practise exactly what they believe and they are aware of this. For example, though Ananda claims that he follows the CLT based B.Ed. curriculum in classrooms, there is a question around his role as a teacher in a communicative classroom and the extent to which his classes are interactive and student centred. He says, “student teachers are very much obedient to obey the teacher educator’s command.” This may show that his classrooms are more teacher centred than student centred. Participants feel that this unequal power relationship might have a negative impact on practising CLT, because they believe CLT is highly associated with a mutual relationship between students and teacher.

When asked about the B.Ed English curriculum, participants note that it is too extensive to complete within the scheduled time. For example, “ the B.Ed teaching English manual consisting of five modules, needs to be completed within 22 weeks, which have three 90 minute sessions each week” (Sabuz). He reports that teachers can not complete the courses in the scheduled time frame as there are some unexpected interruptions, for example strikes for political reasons sometimes hampers the normal schedule of classes, therefore it becomes a burden for students to follow the course. Consequently, participants indicate that there are gaps between curriculum design and the implementation of it. Sabuz feels that the content in the B.Ed curriculum needs to be redesigned. Ananda, supporting him, explains that there is a need to reshape the existing curriculum to fit appropriately into the available time frame, complaining that it is “ difficult to complete and I feel the need to include more practical teaching techniques rather than theoretical explanations in the B.Ed curriculum.”

Ananda and Sabuz, furthermore, highlight the inconsistency between the English curriculum for pre-service teachers and the training course-schedule for short term in-service teacher training. They mention that TQI-SEP and ELTIP are two Government of Bangladesh teacher

education projects working collaboratively to support improvement in the quality of English language teaching at the secondary level. The programme consists of 21 days in-service continuous professional development courses, conducted by TTCs. They report that almost all items from the B.Ed curriculum have been included in the 21- day short training programme. According to them, it is too difficult for trainees to digest all the contents within a very limited time frame, becoming a “burden for trainee English teachers”. That is why “in-service teachers lose interest to continue the English training programs” (Ananda). They maintain that the inconsistency is not in the content, but in the time frame available to develop an understanding of CLT and to enhance the learning through repeated, ongoing engagement with activities.

The participants also indicate that there is a lack of resources for effective English teaching in teacher education. They claim that there is no specific reading material developed to support teacher education, or other helpful sources prescribed in the curriculum, except secondary *English for today* books and teachers’ guides. For that reason, participants think that student teachers have to depend on the note books with selected questions and answers available in the market for their exam preparation. They also indicate that teacher educators face difficulty in collecting the resources from different sources. They focus on the unavailability of valuable and authentic reading resources for teacher educators and trainees, and see this as a major challenge for teacher education.

Participants also report that, like in school, there is a lack of monitoring for effective English teaching in teacher education. They agree that the selected master trainers and language experts should visit all TTCs regularly to make sure whether teacher educators do the “same CLT practices that they learnt from trainings or practice differently in the classroom from

their own understanding” (Sabuz). In relation to this, he feels that if their perception differs from each other about how to implement CLT, secondary teachers will also be affected as a reflection of the very idea they have developed at the training sessions. He reports, “I have found in a TTC that teacher educators are teaching how to teach English applying CLT in a different way, totally different from basic CLT approaches as I believe.” Thus, he indicates that TEs’ varied ideas and different understandings of CLT reflect tension around teacher preparation.

Robin links the partial effectiveness of teacher education to assessment in teacher education. He says, “There is almost no lesson on listening and speaking assessment and these skills are not assessed in B.Ed.” He is supported by Ananda who states that as the assessment system determines the classroom practice, and listening and speaking are not practised in TTCs. Participants further report that insufficient funding and lack of government initiative for establishing a language laboratory in TTCs is affecting language practices for the existing and future English teachers.

A further challenge to teacher education effectiveness in CLT is seen to relate to trainee teachers’ practicum experiences. Participants state that the student trainees are sent for a 12 week teaching practice in schools in two different phases, in which they are supervised and assessed through classroom-observation of lessons which provides feedback and evaluation in teaching. The participants doubt the effectiveness of teaching practice. For example, Ananda maintains that trainee teachers face new environments on teaching practice in which they suffer from non-cooperation from existing teachers of the school or school authority, and school students’ resistance towards different techniques followed by trainees. He also reports

that trainees are also affected by events such as, closure of schools for exams, which impact the completion of their teaching practice in a scheduled time.

Participants note that there are gaps in policy for the running of private TTCs to bring them into line with government TTCs. They believe that though both of those are under a similar curriculum, private TTCs do not maintain the same quality of teacher preparation as government TTCs. They perceive different practices in different types of institutions. They all feel that it is required to follow the same teacher education curriculum both in government and private TTCs. The participants indicate a policy-practice tension that they perceive as a reason for ineffective teacher education. As Robin says:

Private Teacher training colleges are not following the main trend of teaching and learning as the Government teacher training colleges. The teacher educators are not as trained as those of Government Teacher Training Colleges. The trainees of private TTCs do not need to go for practice teaching to other schools and they can get the B.Ed degree easily, which makes difference of gaining quality between private and Government Teacher Training Institutions.

Participants also highlight a top-down dilemma which they think is responsible for not successfully implementing CLT in Bangladesh in teacher education institutions and in schools. They are of the same opinion that policy is imposed on schools and teacher education institutions from higher levels, while policy makers are not fully aware of the reality of the context. Participants note that teacher educators are not independent to do everything what they feel as necessary for effective teaching, because they are to follow the guidelines determined by the higher authority. As Ananda states, “Authority imposes everything on teacher to implement, ignoring teacher opinions.” Participants note that the implementation of CLT in the grass-root level will not be successful as long as the teacher educators’ as well as the teachers’ voices are unheard in to policy making.

4.4 Summary

In this chapter, the participants have raised some major issues in relation to CLT education and teacher education in the context of Bangladesh. From the thematic analysis of the participants' views, the key issues are different understandings of CLT, different realities and challenges in practising CLT in secondary schools, and limitations in teacher education for the preparation of teachers. The profiles of the participants with their background and experiences clearly indicate that they are personally successful as English language learners. They also show that the participants are all highly qualified and experienced in teaching a CLT approach. They also have positive attitude towards CLT as an approach to teaching English as a foreign language. However, in spite of their positive experiences and attitudes towards CLT, the participants reveal that they perceive a number of issues and challenges relating to CLT and the implementation of communicative approach to teaching and learning English in Bangladesh. The findings revealed in this chapter will help readers to follow the interpretations in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: Discussion

This chapter presents the summary of findings in relation to the research questions, discussion in relation to the literature, and the implications at the teacher education level in relation to CLT recommendations, limitations, and directions for further studies.

5.1 Summary of findings

5.1.1 Research question 1

Where and how have the participants engaged with CLT (as students, teachers and teacher educators)?

The findings reveal that participants have different but similar experiences with CLT as students, as teachers in schools, and as teacher educators. They all came into contact with CLT when they were adult learners at the tertiary level and while they were gaining their secondary teacher education qualification. As teachers, they felt that it was important for students to gain communicative competence and they tried to implement the communicative approach in the classroom, though they faced some challenges in their schools and classroom contexts. As teacher educators, the participants are knowledgeable about CLT because they are engaged in secondary teacher education programmes to prepare English teachers for using CLT as an approach to secondary English teaching. Participants' different understandings have been developed through their different experiences and backgrounds of learning and teaching English.

5.1.2 Research question 2

What do Bangladeshi teacher educators understand to be the key features of CLT?

All of the participants show positive attitudes towards CLT as they feel it focuses on students' ability to use English in real life situations. Participants note that they and the students feel bored with grammar translation methods as they emphasise memorisation of the grammatical rules rather than focusing on communication skills. The findings reveal that the participants emphasise oral fluency in the target language, rather than grammatical accuracy, so that students can use English for exchanging information through oral communication. Although they believe that CLT aims at an integrated skills practice, they consider it to be most useful for developing oral communication skill. The participants believe that learners should not give too much attention to grammatically correct sentences when expressing ideas orally or in writing, because they feel this hampers the development of students' fluency in English. However, this attention to fluency is tempered by beliefs that basic grammar is still important. All of the participants claim to emphasise the use of target language in the classroom, though they allow the use of mother tongue for beginners when learning a foreign language.

5.1.3 Research question 3

What do the participants think are the issues, opportunities and challenges for teacher education in relation to CLT?

The findings reveal a number of issues and challenges that affect teacher education as well as secondary education in relation to CLT in Bangladesh. Although the teacher educators have positive experiences and attitudes towards CLT in relation to their background and training,

they find some challenges and issues around CLT that directly or indirectly hinder the implementation of CLT in secondary schools in Bangladesh and thereby present challenges for teacher education. These issues or challenges include disconnections between teacher education and realities of practice in schools, the monolingual reality of Bangladesh and issues around topics in the English textbooks. They feel that there is a conservatism which deters teachers from making changes. Although the new communicative curriculum requires a change from traditional practices, participants report that there is broad resistance to a CLT approach in the secondary school context in Bangladesh. This impacts on trainee teachers' interest in CLT, and teacher educators feel resistance to learning and implementing CLT approach among trainee teachers.

5.1.4 Research question 4

How effective do the participants think secondary teacher education is in preparing teachers to use CLT?

The participants report limitations of CLT practice, and policy-practice tensions as reasons for significant problems with teacher education in Bangladesh. The participants highlighted a discrepancy between government TTCs and private TTCs, revealing that different teacher training institutions are preparing secondary teachers in different ways. An idea shared by two of the participants is that it is necessary to establish a language laboratory. Participants mention that a language laboratory is needed to support CLT in teacher education.

According to participants, a language laboratory is provided with some equipment such as audio-visual materials, computers and listening devices, by which students can practise language. The students (in this case trainee teachers) can get feedback from the computer programmes as to whether or not they pronounce the words correctly in a computer assisted

language laboratory. This shows that there is a misconception with the participants' idea about what a language laboratory can do to enhance students' communicative competence. A language laboratory situation is not really communicative language practice, because a language laboratory is totally teacher created and students deal with machines, rather than practise in a real life situation. The participants feel there are insufficient government funding and a lack of government initiatives and support to establish an environment to encourage CLT practice.

Although the participants acknowledge that the socio-economic conditions make it difficult to establish language laboratories in all schools in Bangladesh, especially in rural areas, the participants still think that it is necessary in the TTCs. They think it could be a model practice in teacher education so that trainees can understand the value of practising speaking and listening skills.

It is important that participants have identified that practising language in a language laboratory is a way of giving the students more confidence in practising listening and speaking skills more competently. Students do not have the opportunities to go out of the classrooms for English language practice. The language laboratory can provide some of the opportunities of language practice with the assistance of information and communication technology (ICT). Participants express the view that to engage actively in communicative activities, language laboratories can prove very useful. Therefore participants feel that teacher education with the CLT approach (limited scope of listening and speaking practice) is not enough and is only partially effective. Participants express a belief in the ability of teacher education to motivate and effect some changes, despite a disconnection between teacher education and the realities of practice in schools.

5.1.5 Research question 5

What do the participants think is the ‘way ahead’ for English language teaching in Bangladesh in relation to CLT and alternatives?

The findings indicate that despite the efforts of the government of Bangladesh to promote CLT at the secondary level, the participating teacher educators think that it is still not implemented successfully in Bangladesh. This research indicates that teachers are likely using CLT partially, not fully as it is suggested in the core CLT principles. In addition to this, CLT practice is not done accurately. The participants indicated some issues which are related to the lack of successful CLT practice in Bangladesh. The participants are not sure about any alternative way of English teaching suitable for Bangladesh, other than CLT, as each of them has limited knowledge about teaching English in other countries gathered from reading literature. Nevertheless, the participants feel that some changes are needed either to address the related issues or issues that significantly impact on implementing CLT at the secondary level, or addressing the problems with CLT itself. Some of the potential solutions proposed by the participants are now discussed in relation to the relevant literature.

5.2 Discussion in relation to literature

The theory of CLT suggests that real life use of language practice is important in learning a language, as advocated by writers such as Savignon, (2002) and Littlewood, (1981).

However, my research suggests that expert teacher educators feel that a language laboratory may be useful in the Bangladeshi context, even though it is not a part of CLT practice. There is literature that supports the idea that a language laboratory with ICT facilities and with software can help to develop students’ listening and speaking skills. Language software is useful to analyse nonstandard English sounds and diagnose pronunciation problems

(Boswood, 1997). There is a gap in literature about whether a computer assisted language laboratory can be useful or not in the Bangladeshi context, but this research suggests that CLT and mastery style learning at language laboratories may be complementary in the Bangladeshi context where learners do not often hear English spoken and need pronunciation support.

The findings focus on another challenging issue of CLT implementation which is the selection of topics in English textbooks. This concern was raised by two of the research participants. Some topics that are presented in secondary English textbooks are irrelevant for students as those topics do not reflect the daily life and experience in Bangladesh. Therefore, the CLT materials are not accepted by the majority of the Bangladeshi students who live in rural areas. Topics that are unrelated to the students' known context may limit the reader's understanding of the text, because relevant cultural background knowledge is important for second language learners to facilitate understanding (Mclean, 1998). Moreover, if the text books fail to bridge the gaps between the own culture of the students and the target culture, an effective CLT approach is hampered (Liu, 2009). Consequently CLT should be culturally sensitive so that students can easily identify with the socio-cultural context (Liu, 2007) and textbooks contribute to this sensitivity. If the students of Bangladesh cannot identify with the topics related to a foreign culture, the students are not motivated to use the language as suggested by Chowdhury (2003). The ideas expressed by participants in the study are consistent with and support these arguments in literature.

The research findings reveal that participants think that CLT as an English teaching approach is working in the context of Bangladesh, but it is working partially and inaccurately.

Contextual difficulties are reported by participants to act as barriers to implementing CLT

properly. The difficulties include physical factors such as class time, class size, teachers' and students' roles in the classroom, along with other issues. For example, Bjorning-Gyde et al, (2008) have attempted to create an alternative version of CLT, for the reason that CLT is working partially or does not work in the Chinese context. The participants did not advocate other models, but their support for approaches that are not necessarily communicative, is consistent with the call by some theorists for different or mixed approaches for teaching English. The participants did not reject CLT in the Bangladeshi context but they advocated some changes in order to implement CLT more effectively.

Participants raised another issue around the implementation of CLT in secondary schools in Bangladesh. The findings show that there is a disconnection between teacher education and the realities of practice in schools. The participants emphasise inconsistency of class time in relation to classroom practice between teacher education and secondary school. In TTCs, teacher educators model how CLT can be used in secondary classrooms. Participants note that trainee teachers show positive attitudes towards CLT, but when the teachers go back to their schools they find it too challenging to adopt CLT activities. In addition to challenges due to time, participants also reported challenges due to other challenges that include class size and class time, facilities or oral skill practices in school, and relationship with head teachers. These discourage many teachers from using CLT in English classes. This is an idea that has emerged from my study and is not addressed directly in literature.

The findings also reveal that there is a disconnection in the relationship between teacher educators and trainee teachers. The participants feel that if the relationship is sympathetic and the teacher educators are open-minded to help the trainee teachers, a feeling of trustworthiness will be formed between trainers and trainees, and trainees can easily express

their difficulties and experiences and beliefs. Otherwise, student teachers will be more cautious about expressing their real perceptions of the challenges they face. When a good relationship exists, discussion between teachers and students about practice is considered to be more reliable and students feel comfortable to agree or disagree with the opinions of teachers and respond with criticism. This idea is advocated by Calderhead and Shorrock (1997). However in Bangladesh, the teacher educators maintain a certain distance from the trainee teachers and play a traditional dominant role in classroom teaching. Teacher educators tend not to involve student teachers in honest discussion about the teacher educators' practice. This lack of an honest relationship hampers the teaching and learning of English. This is also a challenge for teacher education in Bangladesh more broadly than just in CLT.

5.3 Recommendations

1) Teacher educators should give attention to overcoming this problem of disconnection between what is happening in teacher education in Bangladesh and the experiences of teachers in secondary classrooms. When the trainee teachers go back to school, the reality they find is restricted resources and restricted time, which causes them to avoid implementing CLT in the way they have been taught. Teacher educators need to model CLT throughout the programmes in teacher education and demonstrate methods of implementing communicative strategies that take account of the repeated challenges.

2) Although the participants have not rejected CLT, they highlight concerns and challenges with present CLT practices in secondary schools. There is a need to look more carefully at variations of CLT that may be currently practised in other EFL situations and which could be

trialled in Bangladesh. Teacher education in Bangladesh can lead to investigate whether any change is needed in existing CLT practice.

3) Other barriers for implementation of CLT need to be addressed. One of the issues highlighted in the findings is the need to give the same attention to listening and speaking assessments as reading and writing assessments. Introducing a greater level of speaking and listening assessment into critical and high stake assessments in both teacher education and in secondary examinations may help increase CLT practice.

4) As some of the topics in the secondary English text books are identified as unrelated to Bangladeshi students' socio-cultural contexts particular attention should be paid to preparing English language text books with topics that relate to the context of Bangladesh that students can easily identify with. The textbooks that exist also should be revised. The teacher educators should use the text books that exist more critically to encourage secondary teachers to draw on local context and topics. In relation to this, it is important to integrate the culture-specific components into the teacher education curriculum so that future language teachers can be aware of cultural issues when teaching the target language. This might motivate the student teachers to overcome some odd beliefs or prejudices they may hold against others' cultural norms and beliefs.

5) Language labs should be provided in teacher education contexts to facilitate mechanical language practice for trainee teachers, even though using the computer for individualised language practice is not a feature of CLT. Some use of software to develop speaking and listening skills could provide a local solution for those student teachers who do not get the

opportunity to practise their oral language. This could help trainee teachers' gain confidence in speaking in a CLT context.

6) It would be beneficial to develop a community of practice (conversation group) among Bangladeshi English teachers and teacher educators, so that they can share knowledge about their practice in the classroom and beyond. Opportunities for sharing different language activities and experiences would provide teachers themselves with an opportunity to use English more regularly in an authentic context outside the classroom, which might be useful to overcome shyness in using English outside the classroom. Teachers as well as teacher educators could also form groups which can communicate online and share ideas.

5.4 Limitations and further research

In addition to the methodological limitations already discussed in chapter three, including issues of generalisability, this study has other limitations. I was not able to observe the participants' practice, and therefore I had to depend on what they reported about how they taught in a CLT classroom. As a result, I was unable to see the connection between their view of CLT and practical classroom use of it, or compare about what they said and what they really did. A study of how teacher educators' pedagogical beliefs affect real practice in Bangladesh would be helpful.

As teacher education has a direct influence on secondary teaching practices by teaching the secondary teachers, it is important to know what the secondary teachers believe about CLT and how this aligns with their practice. Moreover it is important to know how the challenges vary in relation to urban and rural school contexts. As the participants highlighted the need to rearrange assessment in a CLT classroom for successful CLT implementation in Bangladesh,

further investigation should be done in this field. Further research could also focus on any alternative and complementary approaches to CLT in relation to the Bangladeshi classroom context.

5.5 Conclusion

This research was designed with the purpose of finding out about teacher educators' understanding of CLT and how they negotiate this with the government mandated CLT curriculum. This study also investigated the teacher educators' attitudes and reaction in relation to CLT adoption and implementation at the secondary level in Bangladesh. The findings contribute to the field by focusing specifically on issues relating to teacher education in Bangladesh, which is a context that has received little attention in literature relating to CLT. It also highlights the particular social and institutional contexts of Bangladesh which impact on the nature of CLT in Bangladesh classrooms, and more specifically within secondary teacher education. On the basis of findings, some implications for teacher education have been raised. The disconnection between teacher educators and secondary school teachers is a major idea that has emerged and warrants attention from administrators of teacher education and also warrants further research.

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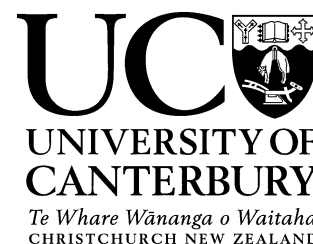
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Appendices



Appendix 1

Information letter and consent form

Telephone: +64 0226196816

Email: skm76@uclive.ac.nz; sanjoy_bsl@yahoo.com

DATE

Bangladeshi Secondary Teacher Educators' Experiences and Understandings of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Information Letter for Teacher Educators

Dear PARTICIPANT

My name is Sanjoy Mazumder (Lecturer, Officer on Special Duty, Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Bangladesh). I am currently studying for my Masters of Education at the College of Education, University of Canterbury, New Zealand. As part of my study, I am undertaking a project to investigate Bangladeshi secondary teacher educators' experiences and understandings of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). My supervisors for this research are Dr. Jane Abbiss, Principal Lecturer, and Jocelyn Howard, Senior Lecturer, College of Education, University of Canterbury.

I would like to invite you to participate in this study. This will include the following:

- Completion of a questionnaire for demographic information and background information relating to your experiences of learning and teaching in a CLT environment. This will take approximately 20 minutes. You can send it to me by email or by post.
- An initial interview to find out your experiences and understandings of CLT. This will be conducted via Skype or telephone and will take approximately 45 minutes.
- A second interview approximately one - two months after the initial interview. This will be conducted when you return to New Zealand to follow up on some of the things discussed in the first interview. This follow-up interview will take approximately 30 minutes.

Both of the interviews will be recorded, and you will be given a copy of the written transcripts, so you can add further comments or delete comments if you wish to.

I am interested in working with you because you are a leading secondary English teacher educator and you have experience with CLT. I hope that the national and international English teaching communities will benefit from your contributions to this project.

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you do participate, you have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. If you withdraw, I will do my best to remove any information relating to you, provided this is practically achievable.

I will take care to ensure the confidentiality of all data gathered for this study. The results of this research may be reported nationally and internationally at conferences and in English language teaching journals. I will take care to ensure your anonymity and that of your institution in all reports and publications of the findings. All participants will receive a report on the study.

All the data gathered during this study will be securely stored in a password protected computer and/or locked storage for five years following the study. It will then be destroyed.

If you have any questions about the study, you can contact me (details above), or my supervisors (jane.abbis@canterbury.ac.nz or jocelyn.howard@canterbury.ac.nz). Complaints may be addressed to The Chair, Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, University of Canterbury, Private Bag 4800, Christchurch, New Zealand. Email: human-ethics@canterbury.ac.nz. Alternatively, you may contact Mr Md. Nazrul Islam, Joint Secretary & Project Director, TQI-SEP (Ph: 9562228, nazrul@tqi-sep.org).

If you agree to participate in this study, please complete the attached consent form and return it to me in the addressed envelope provided.

I am looking forward to working with you and thank you in advance for your contributions.

With kind regards

Sanjoy Mazumder

Telephone: +64 0226196816

Email: skm76@uclive.ac.nz; sanjoy_bsl@yahoo.com

DATE

**Bangladeshi Secondary Teacher Educators' Experiences and Understandings of
Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)**

Consent Form for Teacher Educators

I have been given a full explanation of this project and I understand what will be required of me if I agree to take part.

I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any stage without penalty.

I understand that any information or opinions I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and that any published or reported results will not identify me or the institution in which I am working.

I understand that all data collected for this study will be kept in locked and secure facilities and will be destroyed after five years.

I understand that I will receive a report on the findings of this study. I have provided my email details below for this.

I understand that if I require further information I can contact the researcher, Sanjoy Mazumder or his supervisors. I have been given contact details for this purpose. If I have any complaints, I can contact the Chair of the University of Canterbury Educational Research Human Ethics Committee, or Mr Md. Nazrul Islam (details on the information letter).

By signing below, I agree to participate in this research project.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Cell/phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Please return this completed consent form to Sanjoy Mazumder in the addressed envelope provided by (date).

Appendix 2

Questionnaire for teacher educators

Bangladeshi teacher educators' experiences and understandings of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT): Questionnaire and written reflections

Instructions/Guidance (e.g. how to fill it in, where to return it)

Please complete all questions and return it to me by 31/01/2011. Responses should be emailed to skm76@uclive.ac.nz or sanjoy_bsl@yahoo.com

The questionnaire is an electronic word (.doc) file, so please insert your response immediately underneath each question. Please write elaborated responses in sentences to explain your ideas. I am interested in your experiences and thinking about CLT. Many of the questions are open and I invite your personal responses. You may like to think about this as a written interview.

Section A:

Biographical information (for Teacher Educators)

Name.....

Date.....

Gender: M/F

Age.....

1. Work history: (e.g. where, work position, length of tenure).
2. What is your qualification in English? (e.g., B.A. Majoring in English etc.)
3. What are your academic and professional qualifications? (e.g. B.Ed etc.)

4. Where (name and place of institutions) and when did you obtain these qualifications?
5. Have you received any other teacher training or professional development? Yes/No (please circle). If so, please specify.

Section B:

Personal experiences of learning and teaching English

1. How many languages do you speak? Please specify.
2. Have you spent time in a country where English is widely spoken? Yes/ No (please circle). If yes, where and how long?
3. (a) If English is not your mother tongue, how would you describe your proficiency in English? Please circle your choice.

Spoken English	Low.....Good.....Fair.....Excellent.....Near native
Written English	Low.....Good.....Fair.....Excellent.....Near native
Reading English	Low.....Good.....Fair.....Excellent.....Near native
Listening English	Low.....Good.....Fair.....Excellent.....Near native

- (b) What experiences have you had that lead you to describe your proficiency this way?

4. How did you personally learn English? (Please indicate where, when and the approaches to teaching and learning English you experienced as a student. You may need to write ½ a page or more to answer this question.)

5. When and how were you first introduced to CLT (e.g. as a learner/student or as a teacher/lecturer)? Please describe events or episodes whereby you learnt about CLT? You may need to write ½ a page or more to answer this question.

6. How would you describe your experience of learning about CLT? Please write one or two paragraphs about it? (e.g. was it enjoyable?, challenging?, or difficult? Please use your own words.)

7. What courses do you teach that incorporate CLT? How is CLT incorporated in this course? (e.g. as content (teaching about CLT); as an approach (using CLT methods in the class). Please explain your answer.

8. (a) How would you describe your general teaching approaches to teaching others about CLT?

- (b) (i). Which activities do you use that you think are more communicative?
(ii). Which activities do you use that you think are less communicative?

9. (a) In teaching CLT, do you use the syllabus (text books etc.)? Yes/ No (please circle.)
If yes, what do you use?

How closely do you follow this syllabus?

Why and how do or don't you follow the syllabus closely? Please explain your answer.

- (b) Do you use or think about anything (e.g. other approaches to teaching and learning English, other authorities (e.g. books) which is beyond communicative syllabus? Please explain your answer.

10. (a) What are the teaching aids you use in the classroom for teaching CLT?

- (b) Please choose the teaching aid you use most regularly from those you have identified and describe how you use this?

- (c) What teaching aid or approach do you think is most effective for you in teaching with or about CLT? Why is this effective?

11. How would you describe your experience of teaching about CLT? (e.g. enjoyable, challenging, difficult, easy etc.)
12. How successful do you think you are at teaching in relation to CLT? Why do you think you are this successful?

Section C:

Understanding about CLT

1. Define what you think CLT is about. Please write approximately ½ a page about it.
2. What do you think are the CLT's aims within the secondary level curriculum on English?
3. What do you think are the advantages of CLT compared to traditional teaching methods?
4. What do you think are the benefits or advantages of CLT approaches to English language teaching a) in schools in Bangladesh?

b) in teacher education classroom?

5. What do you think are the challenges or disadvantages of using CLT in the classroom environment
- (a) in schools in Bangladesh?
- (b) in teacher education classroom?
6. What do you think are ways of overcoming those challenges around CLT?
7. Are there alternative ways of teaching and learning English that you think might be helpful in the Bangladeshi context? Please explain your answer.

Section D:

Teacher education effectiveness

1. How effective do you think secondary teacher education is in preparing teachers to use CLT?

Please explain your answer.

Additional:

Confusions: If you found anything confusing about this questionnaire please indicates which questions and what it was about the question that was confusing.

Thank you very much for responding to these questions. Your contribution is highly valued.

Appendix 3

Interview questions

1. (a) How did you feel when CLT was introduced to you for the first time? (b) How do you think about CLT now in response to your first experience of it?
2. Could you briefly comment on the students of your B.Ed classes?
3. Can you define for me a “communicative task”?
4. (a) To what extent do you use communicative tasks in your teaching? (b) Which activities do you think are more/less communicative?
5. (a) How important do you think to teach grammar to students? (b) How do you teach grammar?
6. Do you teach grammar/vocabulary in the context of some communicative activity?
7. How do you deal with students’ errors during the communicative activity, at the end or don’t you bother?
8. How far do you think speaking or listening should be the priority of learning a language?
9. What is your idea about developing reading skill in a communicative way of teaching?
10. What opportunities do you give your students to produce (relatively extended) pieces of writing?
11. Do you use group work/pair work much in your English class? Why/why not?
12. What according to you is the role of a teacher in the classroom?
13. How important do you think to try to use English in the classroom as much as possible?
14. Do you do anything to help your students to have plentiful chance of practicing English outside the classroom?
15. (a) Do your students make an effort to try to talk in English or feel interest in using English more? (b) What do you do to try to encourage this?
16. What are the barriers you think or face in classroom teaching?
17. Do you think your history, culture, tradition, belief or any other issue stand as barrier or as privilege to teaching and learning English?
18. What are your ideas about overcoming those barriers?

19. (a)How important you think your students find English learning fun? (b)What do you do to make learning fun?
20. The way students' proficiency in English is assessed; do you think is the best way to assess them? If not, why not?
21. Could you explain how effective do you think secondary teacher education is in preparing teachers to use CLT?
22. Do you think CLT is appropriate in the context of teaching and learning English in Bangladesh?
23. Do you think about any alternative way of teaching and learning English which is beyond communicative curriculum in the Bangladesh context?
24. Do you think students are learning English as much as expectation of introducing CLT in curriculum?
25. How successful do you think as a teacher educator to teach secondary English teachers (pre service and in-service) using CLT?
26. Do you find any gap between policy and practice in teacher education in relation to CLT?
27. What is your idea about future English teaching in Bangladesh?

Appendix 4

Grids for mapping interview and questionnaire questions against the research questions

<u>Grid for interview question</u>						
Interview Questions	Research Questions (a)	b)	c)	d)	e)	f)
1(a)	√					
(b)			√			
2			√			
3		√				
4(a)			√			
(b)		√	√			
5(a)		√				
(b)			√			
6		√	√			
7		√	√			
8		√			√	
9		√				
10		√	√			
11		√				
12		√				
13		√	√			
14		√	√		√	

15(a)		√	√			
(b)			√			
16				√	√	
17				√	√	
18				√	√	√
19(a)		√				
(b)			√			
20		√		√	√	
21				√		
22						√
23						√
24					√	
25				√		
26				√	√	
27						√

<u>Grid for questionnaire</u>						
Questionnire	Research Questions (a)	b)	c)	d)	e)	f)
SECTION-A						
1			√			
1	√					
2	√					
3	√					
4	√					
5	√					
SECTION-B						
1	√					
2	√					
3 (a)	√					
(b)	√					
4	√					
5	√					
6	√					
7	√					
8(a)	√					
(b) 1.		√	√			
2		√	√			
9(a)			√			
1			√			

2			√			
(b)		√	√			
10(a)		√	√			
(b)			√			
©			√	√		
11			√			
12					√	
SECTION-C						
1		√				
2				√		
3		√				√
4(a)					√	
(b)				√		
5(a)					√	
(b)				√		
6					√	
7						√
SECTION-D						
1				√		

Appendix 5

Example of theme generation process

