

4-2016

# English Teachers' Perceptions Toward The Effectiveness of Using Communicative Language Teaching (Clt) In Teaching Grammar at Al Ain Public Schools

Ahmad Salamah Issa Bani Taha

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جامعة الإمارات العربية المتحدة  
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ENGLISH TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARD THE  
EFFECTIVENESS OF USING COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE  
TEACHING (CLT) IN TEACHING GRAMMAR AT AL AIN PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS

Ahmad Salamah Issa Bani Taha

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Education (Curriculum and Instruction)

Under the Supervision of Dr. Sadiq Abdulwahed Ismail

April 2016

### **Declaration of Original Work**

I, Ahmad Salameh Issa Bani Taha, the undersigned, a graduate student at the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU), and the author of this thesis entitled “*English Teachers' Perceptions toward the Effectiveness of Using Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in Teaching Grammar at Al Ain Public Schools*”, hereby, solemnly declare that this thesis is my own original research work that has been done and prepared by me under the supervision of Dr. Sadiq Abdulwahed Ismail in the College of Education at UAEU. This work has not previously been presented or published, or formed the basis for the award of any academic degree, diploma or a similar title at this or any other university. Any materials borrowed from other sources (whether published or unpublished) and relied upon or included in my thesis have been properly cited and acknowledged in accordance with appropriate academic conventions. I further declare that there is no potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, data collection, authorship, presentation and/or publication of this thesis.

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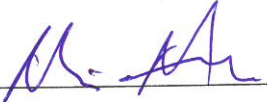
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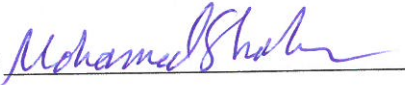
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## Abstract

This study investigates English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools. This study was conducted using a questionnaire to collect the required data from the participants ( $n=180$ ) regarding their perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar. The results of this study revealed that English teachers at Al Ain public schools perceived CLT as an effective approach in teaching grammar ( $m= 3.83$ ). The results have also shown that the participants prefer using communicative activities in teaching grammar when using CLT ( $m=3.69$ ). As for the challenges, the teachers indicated that students' low English proficiency especially in grammar, large classes, and heavy teaching load are among the most common challenges that they face. These results provide schools and other education authorities with the required information that they need about the effectiveness of CLT in teaching grammar in terms of three key areas: teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of this approach in teaching grammar, the activities that English teachers prefer to use, and the challenges that they face in CLT implementation. Finally, this study was conducted at Al Ain public schools, United Arab Emirates; however, more studies are still required in other contexts to further investigate this approach and its effectiveness from different perspectives.

**Keywords:** Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), English teachers' perceptions, Communicative Competence (CC), Grammatical Competence (GC), CLT activities, CLT challenges.



## Title and Abstract (in Arabic)

توجّهاتٌ مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية تجاه فاعلية استخدام منهج التواصل اللغوي في  
تدريس قواعد اللغة الإنجليزية في المدارس الحكومية في مدينة العين – دولة الإمارات  
العربية المتحدة

### المُلخَص

تُرَكِّزُ هذه الدراسةُ على مدى فاعلية تطبيق منهج التواصل اللغوي في تدريس قواعد اللغة الإنجليزية في مدارس مدينة العين. وقد استخدم الباحثُ في هذه الدراسة استبانةً تم إعدادها لجمع البيانات المطلوبة من المشاركين حول توجهاتهم تجاه مدى فاعلية تطبيق هذا المنهج في تدريس قواعد اللغة الإنجليزية. وقد بيّنت نتائج هذه الدراسة أن المشاركين يعتبرون منهج التواصل اللغوي منهجاً فعّالاً حيث كانت قيمة المتوسط الحسابي (٣.٨٣) ، إضافة إلى ذلك بيّن المشاركون أنهم يفضلون استخدام أنشطة التواصل اللغوي عند تطبيق هذا المنهج في تدريس قواعد اللغة الإنجليزية حيث كانت قيمة المتوسط الحسابي (٣.٦٩). أما فيما يتعلق بالصعوبات والتحديات التي تواجه هؤلاء المدرسين كان المستوى المتدني لكفاءة الطلبة في اللغة الإنجليزية وخصوصاً الجوانب المتعلقة بالقواعد والصفوف التي تحتوي أعداد كبيرة من الطلبة وارتفاع أنصبة حصص المدرسين من أكثر التحديات شيوعاً وفقاً لما جاء في إجابات المشاركين في الدراسة. وتوفّر نتائج هذه الدراسة للمدارس والجهات المختصة المعلومات اللازمة والمتعلقة بتطبيق هذا المنهج وتحديداً من خلال توجهات المدرسين حول فاعليته والأنشطة التي يفضلون تطبيقها والتحديات التي يواجهها هؤلاء المدرسين عند تطبيقهم لمنهج التواصل اللغوي. وأخيراً فقد تم إجراء هذه الدراسة في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة وتحديداً في مدينة العين ولكن ما زالت الحاجة قائمة لإجراء المزيد من الدراسات في سياقات مختلفة وذلك لدراسة هذا المنهج ومدى فاعليته من جوانب أخرى متعددة.

**الكلمات الدالّة :** منهج التواصل اللغوي، توجهات المدرسين ، كفاءة التواصل اللغوي، الكفاءة النحويّة (القواعديّة)، أنشطة التواصل اللغوي ، التحديات والصعوبات التي تواجه تطبيق منهج التواصل اللغوي.

## **Acknowledgement**

After the praises and thanks to Allah, I would like to express my appreciation to many people without whom this work would not have come into being. My greatest gratitude goes to my supervisor, Dr. Sadiq Abdulwahed Ismail, for his valuable and constructive suggestions during the planning and development of this research. His willingness to allocate his time so generously has been very much appreciated. Without his continuous assistance, I could never have completed this work.

I would like to thank the members of my examining committee: Dr. Negmeldin Alsheikh and Dr. Mohamed Shaban for their contributive and insightful comments and suggestions, which improved the quality of this thesis.

I would also like to thank all my professors at the Department of Curriculum and Methods of Instruction at United Arab Emirates University for their teaching and assistance. I have benefited greatly from their teaching and lectures. Thanks to them all for sharing their knowledge and expertise with me through the past years.

My deepest appreciation goes to my colleagues: Aziz ElGouzouli and Ali AlSharifeen for their support through proofreading and critically commenting on many of the ideas presented in this study.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to my family. My deepest thanks, of course, go to my parents. Their trust, support and patience have always inspired me to work harder. To all the members of my family, I would like to say thank you very much for your endless support.

## Dedication

*To my beloved parents who have been always supporting and encouraging me to go on every adventure especially this one, without their continuous support and encouragement, it was impossible for me to complete this work*

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### **List of Abbreviations**

UAE	United Arab Emirates
UAEU	United Arab Emirates University
ELL	English Language Learners
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
ADEC	Abu Dhabi Education Council
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
CC	Communicative Competence
GC	Grammatical Competence
GT	Grammar Translation
DM	Direct Method
TBLT	Task-based Language Teaching
CCA	Conversation Card Activity
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Overview**

The growing need for good command of communication in spoken and written English is the main reason for the huge and unprecedented demand for quality English language teaching and learning that our world witnesses today. Following the advent of globalization, English has become the second language of many countries around the world where people use English not only for communication, but also for a variety of other purposes such as education, economy, and politics etc.... Also, English has become an important language in the 21<sup>st</sup> century because people in many countries depend on this language in a number of their business, social, and academic activities; in addition to the fact that most of internet websites publish its content in English (Joshi & Kaur, 2011). Therefore, millions of people want to improve their performance in English and try to provide their children with good opportunities to have good command of English language because they consider English proficiency as an important factor for their children's future success as it can provide them with more opportunities in getting better education and jobs. English language learners (ELL) seek two important elements in their language learning journey: fluency and accuracy (Richards, 2006), and in order to achieve one of these goals or the two of them together, a number of language teaching methods and approaches were badly needed to help language learners achieve their learning goals as successfully as possible.

Many language teaching approaches were introduced, adopted, and implemented in the field of language teaching and learning during the last few decades such as Grammar-Translation Approach, Direct Approach, Silent Approach, Community Language Teaching, and finally Communicative Language Teaching



(CLT) which appeared as a reaction to the previous approaches because language teachers and specialists started to feel that the previous approaches were not as successful as they expected them to be in terms of assisting language learners with developing their communication and language skills to enable them to use language for a variety of communicative acts outside their classrooms (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Therefore, a more practical approach was needed to meet teachers and learners' requirements in language classes.

Historically speaking, Richards (2006) categorized the phases of these approaches development as follows: Classical Language Teaching Approaches (up to the late 1960s), and the focus of that period was mainly on developing students' grammatical and linguistic competences. Second, Classical Communicative Language Teaching (1970s-1990s), during that period, language teachers' attention started to move toward a new approach, i.e., "Fluency First" and according to this approach, learners' grammatical needs are met based on their performance while doing fluency tasks (Brumfit, 1984), and finally the Current Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (1990s-Present), and according to this approach, communicative competence has started to be the focal point as well as the priority of this approach because when applying CLT teachers try to help their students establish communicative competence which helps them use language for a variety of purposes.

The main purpose of introducing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the 1970s was to help learners establish good communication skills and competences and improve their communicative abilities (Littlewood, 1981; Savignon, 2001). In addition, teachers' understanding of language teaching process has completely changed in the last three decades as they used to purely focus on the grammatical

aspects of language by helping students form mechanical linguistic habits through memorizing dialogs and practicing them; however, their attention has recently shifted to focus more on the communicative aspects of language (Richards, 2006).

Littlewood (1981) stated that the communicative language teaching approach started to materialize in the field of language teaching during the 1970s. CLT has proved its effectiveness in second and foreign language teaching and learning because this approach depends primarily on open discussion methods that allow learners to keenly and meaningfully participate in classroom activities, and it increases learners' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation towards language learning process as a whole. The primary goal of CLT is to help students develop their communicative competence rather than developing their grammatical competence only (Richards, 2006).

Language teachers usually tend to describe the language teaching approach they apply as communicative whenever they are asked to identify their teaching approach, but when they are requested to further define and explain the word communicative, their definitions and explanations seem to be quite different based on their personal understanding of the word as well as their educational backgrounds. Therefore, there are different existing definitions of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). For example, Spada (2007) defined CLT as a meaning-based and learner-centered approach to second language (L2) teaching where the priority is given to fluency more than accuracy, i.e., this approach focuses more on producing and understanding the message than the correctness of the form. Therefore, the main focus of this approach is to help learners produce comprehensible messages rather than merely focusing on correct grammatical forms in the sentences or utterances they produce. Similarly, Wu (2008) defined CLT as an approach to second or foreign language

teaching that focuses on communication as the main use of language; therefore, in order to achieve that purpose, this approach aims at engaging learners in authentic and meaningful learning tasks and activities.

There are two versions of CLT. Howatt (1984) explained that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has two versions: Weak Version and Strong Version. The CLT Weak Version is based on the assumption that communicative competence components can be identified and taught, so this version does not completely ignore teaching structural aspects of language. However, the CLT Strong Version is based on the assumption that language is acquired through communication which means that learners do not start language acquisition by learning grammatical structures, but actually they discover these structures by themselves.

Grammar teaching is one of the main aspects in the multifaceted process of language teaching. Also, teaching grammar has been a controversial issue in the field of language teaching. Krashan (1982) stated that grammar teaching does not play a significant role in L2 acquisition; however, Ellis (2002) explained that grammar teaching is important in language acquisition though grammar teaching may not have an immediate impact on students' language skills and performance. Grammar teaching is generally defined as a teaching activity that involves presenting and practicing the targeted grammatical structures which the language teacher tries to explain to his students (Ellis, 2006). In the same context, Ur (1996) and Hedge (2000) agreed that grammar teaching consists of two main elements: presentation and practice, where teachers start their lessons with a presentation of the grammatical structure they intend to teach and then engage their students with activities to practice the material they have already presented to make sure that the students understood it, and they are able to use it properly. On the other hand, Ellis (2006)

explained that grammar teaching can take place inductively when learners identify grammatical rules by themselves through exposing them to a wide variety of examples related to the lesson being taught in addition to providing learners with corrective feedback while doing communicative tasks and activities.

## **1.2 Teaching English in the UAE**

Education in the UAE has started to develop since the 1960s with a very limited number of schools and students. However, the UAE education sector has witnessed a dramatic development following the foundation of the union in 1971 and the discovery of oil. This development was clear through building the infrastructure required for education such as schools and institutes (UAE Ministry of Education Web page, 2016).

The United Arab Emirates has paid special attention to all aspects of life and particularly to education due to its impact on the individuals and the overall country's development. The UAE education system aims at equipping learners with all the basic and necessary skills they need to help them meet their life demands and job requirements; this can be accomplished through teaching those learners a number of core subjects. English language is considered one of these core subjects; therefore, the government of UAE represented by both Ministry of Education and ADEC have started to focus on teaching this language especially in the last few years because of its widespread in education, media, and social life in general. There are different types of English syllabi used in the UAE such as Ministry of Education syllabus, ADEC syllabus, and the British and American syllabi that are used at some international private schools. Most of these syllabi focus on the basic skills that help students in language acquisition such as grammar, reading, writing, and little

speaking and listening. These syllabi differ in its contents and the way its content is presented and explained.

English teachers in the UAE at both public and private schools can be categorized into two main categories: Native Speakers English Teachers (NSET) and Non-native Speakers English Teachers (NNSET). Those teachers belong to different teaching backgrounds; hence, their teaching practices and approaches vary, and that results in having negative effects on their students' levels and performance. Teaching methods used in language teaching are generally traditional and based on memorization which is considered inadequate (Banna, 1997). For example, Suwaidi (1997) explained that the UAE teachers depend on two main teaching techniques: explanation and discussion with little use of small groups or role playing. In addition, teaching staff turnover is one of the main challenges that face English language teaching in the UAE because this factor does not allow the country to adopt a clear policy concerning English language teaching.

As a result of traditional language teaching approaches lack of productivity such as Grammar Translation and Audio-Lingual where students first language is still clearly present in teaching, it was decided to develop and use a more communicative approach to improve English teaching in the UAE in order to produce a generation of students' who are qualified enough to achieve the goals of English teaching through the acquisition of communicative competence. Traditional approaches have not helped students achieve the goals set for language programs because they allow teachers to use students' first language in teaching.

In order to tackle these challenges facing English language teaching in the UAE, Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) has taken a number of measures such as reconsidering English curriculum delivered at ADEC schools and initiating a plan to

recruit native speakers of English to work in language teaching field at ADEC schools in an attempt to reduce the use of students' first language in teaching and help those students better develop their language skills.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) aims to help learners use language communicatively outside their classrooms, and that requires their language competence to be beyond memorizing grammatical structures and linguistic forms (Hymes, 1972). This CLT principle reflects the approach's importance as an effective tool in language teaching, and this aspect of CLT was a stimulant for further investigation to this approach in a different context and from different perspectives to measure how effective it is particularly in grammar teaching. Also, this approach develops learners' communicative competence by helping them know how to use language for communication. Moreover, CLT is considered a shift from the previous approaches that used to solely focus on grammatical structures and forms to a more important aspect of language teaching that is communicative competence which helps learners better use language for a variety of communicative purposes, i.e., it makes language use more authentic and realistic than merely teaching grammatical and structural forms in isolation (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Furthermore, adopting a new teaching approach or strategy is an important decision education authorities regularly make; therefore, different factors are to be taken into consideration before making such crucial decisions which affect students, teachers, and curriculum because these factors may hinder or facilitate the adoption and implementation of the new approach, strategy, or policy, and among these essential factors are teachers' perceptions toward any educational issue; hence, it is recommended to take this

particular factor into account before the implementation of any approach or strategy (Rao, 1996). After reviewing the related literature of grammar teaching in the UAE, it was clear that no studies have tackled the use of CLT in grammar teaching as far as the researcher knows to provide a better understanding of English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of CLT in grammar teaching, the activities that English teachers prefer to use, and the challenges they face when implementing CLT. Thus, a study was required to investigate these three key areas related to CLT to provide us with a better understanding of this approach effectiveness in grammar teaching especially in the context of the UAE.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the study**

The overall purpose of this study is to investigate English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools.

#### **1.5 Study Objectives**

This study aims at investigating English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools, identifying the activities that English teachers prefer to use when implementing CLT in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools, and the challenges that they face in CLT implementation in grammar classes.

#### **1.6 Research Questions**

This study aims at answering the following three questions:

1. What are English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools?

2. What activities do English teachers prefer to use in teaching grammar when implementing CLT?
3. What challenges do English teachers face when implementing CLT in grammar classes?

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

This study investigates English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools. In addition, it explores the activities that English teachers prefer to use, and the challenges that face them in CLT implementation. The effectiveness of CLT in teaching grammar has not previously been investigated in the UAE context as no previous studies related to the use of CLT in grammar teaching were found in the literature review as far as the researcher knows. Through the careful investigation of this approach, a better understanding of teachers' perceptions toward this approach effectiveness will be found, and that will provide a sort of guidance to schools about their teachers' perceptions. A good understanding of language teachers' perceptions of this particular approach can contribute to ease its adoption and implementation in teaching grammar (Rao, 1996). According to Borg (2003), teachers' perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes play a very significant role that affects their teaching practices; therefore, a good understanding of their perceptions toward the effectiveness of CLT in grammar teaching can provide the relevant schools with the required information to make the appropriate decisions regarding the implementation and adoption of CLT in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools in particular and the UAE schools in general. Therefore, based on the findings of this study, schools can consider this



approach if the majority of the English teachers participating in this study believe that CLT is an effective teaching approach to be used in grammar classes.

Furthermore, the greater demand for English justifies the need for the adoption and implementation of a more effective approach like CLT especially in grammar which language learners find somehow difficult to understand and use if taught conventionally and out of the right context. Thus, if schools apply the recommended approach derived from the results of this study, that will contribute to the improvement of the quality of grammar teaching.

Moreover, the findings of this study will provide English teachers with a better understanding of the activities that suit the use of CLT in grammar teaching. This will enable them to use the right activities and teaching practices when implementing CLT in grammar classes. Besides, the findings of this study will identify the main challenges that hinder the implementation of CLT in teaching grammar. Identifying these challenges can help schools provide their teachers with the support they need to tackle these challenges and overcome them.

### **1.8 Definition of Terms**

1. Language: a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication (Bloch & Trager, 1942). Also, it is defined as a system of communication in speech and writing used by people of a particular country or area (Oxford Dictionary, 2010).
2. Communicative Competence (CC): this form of competence is usually achieved when learners are able to use language for a variety of communicative purposes (Shu & Zhuang, 2008).

3. Grammatical Competence (GC): this term refers to a learner's knowledge of language that enables him/her to produce grammatically correct sentences. It also includes knowledge of sentence structure, verb tenses, passive and active voice, phrases, and clauses etc... (Richards, 2006)
4. Grammar: the process of describing the structure of phrases, clauses, and sentences to explain grammatical sequences in language and decide what is grammatical and what is ungrammatical (Yule, 2010).
5. L1 (First Language): a language that learners speak as their mother tongue or native language (Oxford Dictionary, 2010).
6. L2 (Second Language): language that learners learn in addition to their native language (Oxford Dictionary, 2010).
7. Second Language Acquisition (SLA): the process of acquiring (learning) another language in addition to the learner's native language (Scheffler & Cinciata, 2012).
8. Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC): the authority that administers and supervises all schools and educational institutes in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi: Abu Dhabi City, Al Ain City, and the Western Region. This council aims to develop education in Abu Dhabi and implement plans and policies to improve the quality of education in the emirate (ADEC Web Page, 2014).
9. Learner-centered methods: methods that are primarily concerned with learners' needs, wants, and situations such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), and teachers are only facilitators in such methods (Kumaravedivelu, 2006); on the other hand, a teacher-centered method is a method where teachers almost do everything.

10. Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT): a teaching method that focuses on authentic language use by asking learners to do meaningful and authentic tasks (Ellis, 2003).

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has become one of the mainstream approaches in language teaching since the 1970s because of the good impact this approach can have on the development of students' communicative abilities (Petkute, 2010). The main purpose of introducing CLT was to help language learners develop their communicative competence. This chapter presents a number of studies related to teachers' perceptions toward the use of CLT in language teaching in general and in grammar in particular. Also, it discusses some of the main communicative activities language teachers use when implementing CLT in their grammar classes. Furthermore, this chapter identifies and discusses some of the challenges English teachers encounter in CLT implementation in their language classes through looking at some of the previous studies. In addition to these three key areas, this review will include other sections to discuss some additional topics and issues related to CLT such as CLT definitions, theoretical framework, CLT basic assumptions, and advantages.

### **2.2 Defining Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)**

Definitions of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) are as numerous and various as the persons who have discussed or practiced this approach. Defining CLT depends on the person's experience, background, and teaching practices; therefore, there are different definitions of CLT. As defined in Dictionary of Language and Applied Linguistics (1992), CLT is an approach used to teach second or foreign language where the main focus is directed to help learners develop communicative

competence. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), CLT is an approach that aims at developing learners' communicative competence because it is considered the focal point and the main goal of language learning process through providing them with a wide variety of communicative tasks and activities. Also, Breen and Candlin (1980) defined CLT as an approach in which language teachers play the roles of facilitators to provide learners with appropriate and sufficient opportunities to help them practice language and consequently develop their communicative competence. Moreover, Wong and Barrea-Marlys (2012) defined CLT as an umbrella term that indicates all other approaches that teach language in a communicative manner. Similarly, Wu (2008) defined CLT as an approach to second or foreign language teaching that focuses on communication as the main function of language; therefore, this approach aims at engaging learners in authentic and meaningful learning tasks and activities to develop their communicative abilities. Despite having a plethora of CLT definitions, there is a general consensus among these definitions because they are all related to communicative competence and its development.

### **2.3 Grammatical Competence vs. Communicative Competence**

The main goal of CLT is to achieve communicative competence. The term Communicative Competence (CC) was first introduced by Hyme (1972), and this term consists of two words that semantically mean “competence to communicate” (Bagaric, 2007). According to Hyme (1972), communicative competence does not only mean the inherent grammatical competence, but it also implies the ability to use grammatical competence in a variety of communicative situations, contexts, and settings.

Communicative Competence (CC) consists of the following elements: language use for a variety of communicative purposes where learners are able to use language to communicate in real life situations, knowledge of language use in different settings to achieve several language functions such as formal and informal speech, invitation, public speaking, presentation, expressing opinions, polite requests, and asking questions etc..., production and comprehension of different kinds of texts whether descriptive, narrative, persuasive, expository, or argumentative, and sustainment of communication with others despite of having linguistic limitations (Richards, 2006).

Speakers' linguistic knowledge permits them to produce an infinite number of sentences, and this reflects language creativity aspect (Yule, 2010). There is a difference between having the knowledge and applying it, and that is the difference between what people know about their language which is known as competence, and it is unconscious, and how they actually use it which is known as performance (Fromkin & Rodman, 1988). Grammatical Competence (GC) refers to the knowledge learners have about the grammatical structures such as sentence structure, parts of speech, phrases, and clauses etc.... This kind of knowledge is widely used in grammar textbooks and practice books where students are given a brief explanation or presentation of the grammar lesson and then provided with a number of exercises and activities for further practice (Richards, 2006).

## **2.4 CLT Theoretical Framework**

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) was established based on many theories that explain and justify its main principles. When CLT was first introduced, it started with a theory which states that language is communication (Richards &

Rodgers, 2001). Therefore, the main goal of CLT is to help learners have access to different aspects of language to develop their communicative competence.

Piaget's theory of constructivism had a great deal of influence on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). His theory of constructivism is based on the hypotheses that children are active and motivated learners by learning how to live and adapt to their environments, and their ability to construct their knowledge not absorb it by pulling their experiences together to understand how the world around them works (Ormrod, 2011). In Communicative Language Teaching, L2 learners are provided with meaningful and comprehensible input implicitly through communicative tasks and activities to naturally grasp new language skills and develop their communicative competence.

Sociocultural Theory (SCT) is a theoretical framework that emphasizes the importance of both culture and society in helping learners achieve cognitive as well as linguistic development (Ormrod, 2011). This theory was developed by the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky. The core idea of Sociocultural Theory (SCT) is that human mental functioning is developed through the involvement in cultural and social activities. According to this theory, language development is perceived as the ability to increasingly participate in social and cultural activities (Ganem-Gutierrez, 2013). In his book "Thought and Language", Vygotsky (1986) explained that informal conversations, formal schooling, and adults' assistance contribute to children's linguistic development. According to Vygotsky, when adults interact with children, they share meanings that are attached to objects and events. Also, informal conversation is one of the many ways adults share ideas and concepts with children, and this will contribute to help children develop their communicative abilities naturally by making their own discoveries. This method can facilitate language

acquisition process and help learners develop their communicative competence through the use of language.

Krashan's Monitor Model played a significant role in the development of CLT. According to Krashan, language acquisition depends on learners' linguistic competence which can be accomplished through real communication when learners have exposure to and experience with different aspects of language. In Krashan's Input Model, L2 learning depends on the provision of comprehensible and meaningful input where no explicit grammar teaching takes place. According to Krashan L2 acquisition model, through exposure to and experience with L2, learners develop a form of intuitive correctness; however, researchers believe that this exposure is not sufficient because some advanced speaking and writing academic skills require formal instruction to ease a quicker acquisition because these skills cannot be learned through the provision of comprehensible input only (Hinkel & Fotos, 2002).

Krashan's theory of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) offers some explanations to this approach. In his book, "Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition", Krashan (1982) discussed the five major hypotheses about SLA. The first hypothesis is the distinction between language acquisition and language learning. According to Krashan, language acquisition is similar to the way children develop their first language which means that language acquisition takes place unconsciously, and language learners are not usually aware of the fact that language acquisition happens, but the only thing they are aware of is their ability to use language for communication which is the ultimate goal of CLT. Language learning, according to Krashan's hypothesis, is the second way through which competence in second language can be developed. By learning, Krashan means



conscious knowledge of second language and knowing the rules and being able to use them and explain them; this refers to grammatical knowledge. Secondly, the natural order hypothesis states that second language learners tend to acquire certain grammatical structures at early stages and some other structures at later stages. The third hypothesis is the monitor hypothesis where acquisition starts with utterances in second language. Learning, however, acts as a monitor to make some changes in the utterances' forms and correct any mistakes (self-correction). In the fourth hypothesis, Krashan discussed how second language learners move from one stage to another, and this is the idea that the natural order hypothesis focuses on. For example, when a learner moves from one stage to another that means he/she understood the input of that stage. In this context, "understand" means that the learner's main focus is on meaning not form. Finally, the affective filter hypothesis explains how affective factors can impact second language acquisition. The first affective factor is motivation because learners with high motivation do a better job in second language learning. Also, self-confidence is the second affective factor that plays a pivotal role in second language acquisition because learners with high self-confidence usually achieve good results in SLA. The last factor is anxiety which usually affects second language acquisition in a negative way.

## **2.5 Language Teaching Approaches**

English language teaching has a long history during which many teaching approaches have appeared and disappeared. Some of these popular approaches are Grammar Translation (GT), Direct Method (DM), Audio-lingual Method, and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). First of all, as the name suggests, grammar translation is an approach that emphasizes the role of students' native

language in second language teaching. In this method, reading and writing are the major focus; however, little attention is paid to speaking and listening. At any time during teaching, students' first language is used as a reference. Educators and linguists criticize this approach because it minimizes learners' roles and does not engage them in communicative tasks and activities. Secondly, direct method uses the target language as a medium of instruction and communication in language classrooms and avoids using students' native language. This method represents a shift from the literary and formal language to everyday spoken language where learning is seen as language acquisition process. On the other hand, this method requires teacher's creativity to come up with new interesting techniques and activities to grab students' attention. The third teaching method is the Audio-lingual that basically assumes that learning any language requires mastering the building blocks of the language concerned, and then learning the rules by which these elements are combined together. The Audio-lingual approach uses dialogues as a primary teaching technique for presenting language while emphasizing some areas. Also, drills and mimicry are among the other techniques the Audio-lingual method uses. Nowadays, listening and speaking have been brought to the fore because of the available tape recordings and language laboratories. On the contrary, the Audio-lingual method has been criticized as being based on invalid theoretical foundations whether in terms of language theory or learning theory. Finally, communicative language teaching (CLT) focuses on developing students' communicative competence more than learning and mastering grammatical structures. CLT encourages activities that focus on communication and meaningful tasks, and it makes language learning more engaging and authentic (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

## **2.6 CLT Basic Assumptions**

According to Richards (2006), there is a number of basic and key assumptions that support CLT. First of all, the core assumption is facilitating language learning and making it easier to all students. In addition, providing students with effective and communicative tasks and exercises is another key assumption in CLT, and that aims to improve their communicative abilities and enhance their language skills. Moreover, CLT increases cooperation among students as it provides them with cooperative tasks to be done by a group of learners. Furthermore, language teachers in CLT are only facilitators who create a suitable classroom climate that helps students learn language better. Finally, this approach aims at achieving meaningful and successful learning to all learners through establishing a community where they learn through collaboration and interaction to enhance their overall communicative performance.

## **2.7 Teacher's Role in CLT**

English language teachers' roles are in constant change depending on the approach or method they follow. In traditional language teaching, teachers are the dominant players, and they direct everything in their classrooms because they present the content of the lesson in a direct and analyzed way in an environment that lacks communication and interaction. However, according to modern teaching theories, teachers are just facilitators, and their main responsibility is to help students learn better. English language teachers are expected to fulfill three roles to be successful in achieving their ultimate goal which is helping their students communicate in the target language. To pursue this goal, teachers need to diagnose their students' needs and interests (diagnosis), plan and choose their materials (treatment), and manage

the activities during the class time (monitoring) (Brown, 2002). These roles are very essential for successful language teaching and learning to take place. Regarding teacher's role as a facilitator, CLT helps teachers play this role successfully. In CLT classes, learners participate in classroom activities cooperatively within groups of learners not individually because students listen to their peers and communicate with them. Therefore, in CLT, teachers are expected to take the role of facilitators and monitors rather than a model to correct mistakes; teachers try to help students produce sentences in the target language without errors, so they can develop an idea about their students' common errors and treat them later. As facilitators, language teachers in CLT are expected to create an interesting and attractive classroom environment and provide opportunities for language learners to use and practice the language and provide feedback on their use (Richards, 2006).

In task-based language teaching (TBLT) which is considered a method used in CLT, language teachers play the role of facilitators especially in the pre-task phase because they present the task to students and ask them to fulfill their tasks under their guidance. In TBLT, teachers' roles as facilitators can also be observed while reflecting on students' works and giving them feedback (Ellis, 2003).

CLT is a learner-centered method; therefore, in communicative classrooms teachers' roles are very limited, while students' roles are managed and facilitated by their teachers but not only controlled. In a study conducted to investigate teachers' knowledge about their roles in communicative language teaching, Woods and Cakir (2011) stated that what forms teachers' methodology in communicative language teaching is their knowledge and beliefs. This reflects the importance of studying and investigating teachers' perceptions toward the use of CLT because language teachers' attitudes can contribute to the effective implementation of this approach. Also, this

study explains that teachers' teaching practices in CLT are based on their knowledge and experiences.

## **2.8 Teachers' Perceptions toward CLT**

Many studies have been conducted to investigate teachers' perceptions toward CLT. The perceptions of 29 native-English-speaker teachers at Japanese universities about using English language as a medium of instruction in teaching English, and this study suggested that the optimal way of teaching a certain language is using the target language as a medium of instruction. The study also suggested that L1 teaching should be used in communicative language teaching to ease and enhance L2 learning , but the method that needs to be chosen depends mainly on the context where and how students learn (McMillan & Rivers, 2011).

In addition, a study was conducted in Jordan to survey EFL teachers' perceptions of communicative language evaluation, the researchers surveyed the perceptions of 76 Jordanian EFL teachers of whom 51 teachers responded to the questionnaire. The analysis of the data collected showed that Jordanian EFL teachers have positive attitudes toward communicative language evaluation. It was also recommended that EFL teachers' awareness of communicative language assessments should be raised (Al Shara'h, Abu Nabaah, & Khzouz, 2011).

Furthermore, in a study conducted at a Taiwanese College to investigate EFL teachers' attitudes toward CLT, it was concluded that the participants agree with the main principles of CLT, and they apply these principles in their teaching practices. In addition, this study revealed the positive impact CLT can have on language teaching (Chang, 2011). Also, Jafari, Shokrpour, and Gutterman (2015) carried out a study at Iranian high schools to investigate teachers' perceptions toward the use of CLT. This

study indicated that the participants have good perceptions toward CLT whether it is implemented at group or pair level.

Moreover, a study conducted at Universidad Nacional to investigate the advantages of CLT implementation in grammar classes. The results of this study revealed that CLT helps English teachers present their grammar classes in a better way if implemented properly (Badilla & Chacon, 2013). This indicates that if teachers implement CLT in their grammar lessons, this will improve the quality of their teaching practices.

Zeeshan (2013) carried out a study to explore both teachers and students' perceptions toward two of the language teaching approaches: CLT and grammar translation approach (GT) at Pakistani government secondary schools in the province of Quetta in Baluchistan. The final results of the study indicated that the thirteen teachers who participated in this study showed positive perceptions toward the use of CLT in language teaching; however, the results showed the participants' negative or neutral views toward GT approach. They have also recommended the adoption of CLT in language teaching at the schools where the study was carried out.

Furthermore, another qualitative study was conducted in Bangladesh to investigate secondary level English teachers' perceptions toward the use of CLT in language teaching. The perceptions of nineteen teachers were collected through interviewing those teachers. The results of analyzing these interviews qualitatively revealed that the participants have both favorable and less favorable perceptions toward CLT; therefore, this study suggested the adoption of some policies to raise teachers' awareness of CLT (Hossen, 2008).

In addition, El-Kelani (2011) conducted a study to explore the perceptions of EFL teachers toward the implementation of CLT at Kingdom of Saudi Arabia private

and public schools. The total number of participants in this study was 36 EFL teachers. Public schools' teachers showed differences in their perceptions from those working at private schools. According to the study's results, teachers at private schools showed more favorable perceptions in comparison with their peers at public schools. However, teachers at both public and private schools did not show a very good and clear understanding of CLT.

To further investigate EFL teachers' perceptions toward CLT in Chile, Sanderson (2013) carried out a study in Iquique, Chile. The study's results revealed that the teachers who participated in that study showed positive perceptions toward CLT; however, the results were not generalizable because the participants did not show full agreement with all the items and because of not taking teachers' role in CLT into account. Also, another study was conducted in Bangladesh to explore EFL teachers' perceptions toward CLT in post-secondary education. This study revealed that the participants have a good understanding of CLT, and their teaching practices reflect their good awareness of the approach as they apply communicative activities in their classes (Karim, 2004).

## **2.9 Teachers and Learners' Perceptions toward Grammar in the UAE**

Despite the plethora of studies conducted to investigate the situation of English language teaching in the UAE, the number of studies conducted to investigate grammar teaching in general and the role of CLT in teaching grammar in particular in the UAE context is very limited. For example, Landolsi (2011) conducted a study to investigate teachers and students' perceptions toward the role of grammar instruction. The results of this study revealed that the majority of teachers have appreciated the role of grammar in language teaching. According to this study,

teachers believe that grammar is important. Furthermore, Mohammed (2012) carried out a study to investigate native speaker English teachers and nonnative speaker English teachers' beliefs toward grammar teaching in the UAE and compare their beliefs with their teaching practices. The quantitative data of this study showed that the teachers' beliefs are similar to their teaching practices; however, the qualitative data revealed that there are some differences between their beliefs and practices due to some other factors such as class size, time, and textbooks.

Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) is an approach to language teaching that aims at engaging learners through having them performing tasks. Jasim (2011) conducted a study to investigate teachers' perceptions toward TBLT in a vocational school in the UAE. The results revealed that the participants have positive attitudes toward TBLT because of its several benefits. They also consider TBLT as a more interesting approach than the other traditional approaches.

Eltantawi (2012) conducted an exploratory study to investigate teachers' beliefs toward grammar teaching in UAE EFL classes. The results of Eltantawi's study revealed that the teachers who participated in the study have shown appreciation to the role grammar can play in assisting students to master language skills. The participants have also shown their preference toward the use of contextualization in grammar teaching. Eltantawi's study also highlighted that the participants perceive the use of a combination of explicit and implicit teaching as an effective approach in grammar teaching.

Learners' perceptions are significant in grammar teaching as that can indicate the way students perceive grammar and identify the way they prefer to learn grammar through. For example, Ismail (2010) conducted a study to survey ESP students' perceptions of ESL grammar learning. The results have shown that students



had positive perceptions toward the use of grammar especially in terms of using a new model in grammar teaching that consists of four stages: Confrontation, Clarification, Confirmation, and Consolidation (CCCC). The results have also revealed that explicit grammar teaching can have a positive impact on learning grammar specifically in the areas related to sentences and utterances production.

### **2.10 CLT and Grammar Teaching**

Grammar teaching in language classrooms has been a debatable and controversial issue. In a qualitative study conducted at a university in the United States to study language teachers' perceptions and teaching practices of explicit grammar with relation to CLT. The participants in this study were six teachers of college level who teach Spanish. The data of this study was collected using classroom observations and interviews. The findings of this study showed that the participants had a combination of perceptions toward using explicit grammar instruction. Also, it was concluded that teachers' perceptions were affected by their experiences and backgrounds. Finally, through classroom observations the researchers made sure that teachers' perceptions were reflected in their teaching practices (Wong and Barrea-Marlys, 2012).

Moreover, a survey study was conducted in Taiwan to investigate students and teachers' perceptions toward teaching English grammar and CLT. This study also examined students and teachers' perceptions to identify the variations and differences among them. The participants in this study were 754 post-secondary students and 34 EFL teachers. The results of the study indicated that 59% of the students and 32% of the teachers showed positive attitude toward grammar instruction. Regarding the importance of teaching grammar, 73% of the teachers and

53% of the students stated that teaching grammar is essential to achieve foreign language mastery. As for teachers' knowledge about CLT, the study showed that 82% of the teachers have knowledge about CLT, while only 44% of the teachers' sample supported using CLT in teaching (Huong, 2004).

### **2.11 CLT Activities**

Language teachers use a variety of teaching activities when implementing CLT. In his book "Communicative Language Teaching Today", Richards (2006) discussed a number of the main activities teachers use in their CLT classes. First of all, information-gap which focuses on the idea that learning takes place as a result of real communication when learners communicate with each other to get information they do not really know. This kind of activities helps learners use language in a more authentic manner, and it requires them to apply their knowledge about language to complete such tasks. In addition, jigsaw activities are usually implemented in CLT classes where learners are divided into several groups and each group possesses part of the answer. They all need to communicate and cooperate to find the final answer. In jigsaw activities, learners need to communicate and use language vocabulary and grammar to communicate with each other. Moreover, language teachers use other activities such as task-completion (puzzles and games), information gathering (surveys and interviews conducted by students), information transfer, and opinion sharing activities.

Furthermore, Ando (2003) investigated Conversation Card Activity (CCA) which is a student-centered communicative activity used by English language teachers in Japan to help learners develop their communicative competence and skills. The study revealed that CCA has helped learners improve their

communicative competence through the communication and interaction opportunities they are provided with. Moreover, Barret (2003) studied reciprocal reading as a communicative activity in secondary foreign language classes where students are put into groups and asked to read a text and then answer a number of questions about it, then they are regrouped into groups of listeners to tell each other a different story. Through narration, scaffolding, and collaboration, students can develop their communicative competence.

According to Qinghong (2009), there are typical and recommended activities when a teacher decides to use communicative language teaching (CLT) in his / her class such as group discussion, simulation and role play. For example in role play, a couple of students exchange ideas and discuss a certain idea proposed by their teacher or class, and the application of these strategies will help students participate in class discussion and improve their communicative competence.

### **2.12 Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT)**

Task-based instruction (TBI) is a method of instruction that focuses on making meaning-centered tasks the central and main tool of teaching. This approach has many characteristics. First of all, language learning takes place in a naturalistic and authentic way. Secondly, it does not focus on accuracy, but intervention is important to support language acquisition by focusing on some linguistic elements. Finally, this approach uses communicative and meaningful tasks (Ellis, 2003).

### **2.13 Challenges Facing CLT Implementation**

Many studies have been conducted to identify the main challenges language teacher face when implementing CLT in their classes. Maryslessor, Barasa, and

Omulando (2012) conducted a study to investigate the challenges teachers face when implementing CLT in teaching listening and speaking in Kenya. The study revealed that the major challenges are represented in the time required for preparing communicative activities, broad curriculum, and formal and standardized exams that contain a certain type of questions which tests the skills in curriculum only. Therefore, teachers focus only on teaching students how to pass these exams, and this negatively affects the implementation of CLT.

Moreover, a study conducted in Bangladesh using a mixed method of questionnaires and interviews to investigate EFL teachers' perceptions toward CLT revealed that even though EFL teachers have good understanding of CLT, they still face a number of challenges that hinder the good adoption and implementation of CLT. These challenges are teachers, students, educational system, and the approach itself, i.e., CLT. The study recommended that as long as these four challenges are not handled well, the adoption and implementation of CLT will not be successful (Ansarey, 2012).

Furthermore, Aleixo (2003) conducted a study to investigate Brazilian teachers' perceptions of CLT use. This study showed that CLT implementation is hindered by two main challenges: the differences among teaching and learning environments and teachers' level of understanding and awareness of CLT as they are not sufficiently trained and instructed to properly implement this approach. Therefore, teachers need to receive further CLT training by attending workshops to familiarize them with CLT activities and the proper way of its implementation.

## 2.14 Misconceptions of CLT

Since the advent of CLT in the 1970s, many misconceptions were associated with it. First of all, CLT means focusing mainly on meaning while ignoring form; CLT focuses on communication, it does not completely ignore form (Wu, 2008). According to Savignon (1972) it is significant to add communicative language teaching to structure-based teaching because this can help learners better develop their linguistic knowledge and more importantly communicative competence. Also, Spada (1997) explained that combining CLT with form-focused instruction can help learners have a higher level of accuracy which reflects the benefits of having a combination of focus on meaning and focus on form teaching. Second, some language teachers believe that CLT does not allow teachers to provide corrective feedback to their students (Wu, 2008). Brandl (2008) stated that corrective feedback is an important principle of CLT; feedback does not necessarily mean that teachers explicitly correct learners' errors; however, they can just draw their students' attention to their errors using RECAST where the teacher repeats the sentence or utterance where the error took place correctly to indirectly draw the learner's attention to his/her error and to avoid explicit error correction.

Moreover, Thompson (1996) identified and discussed a number of misconceptions. First, CLT does not permit any form of grammar teaching; this is not completely true as it allows focusing on some advance grammatical structure to enhance students' knowledge and accuracy. The second misconception is that CLT focuses on speaking and ignores the other language skills. In CLT, communication takes place through both speaking and writing activities. Also, learners still have the opportunity to read a variety of texts, analyze them, and respond to questions about

these texts. Third, CLT is all about pair work. CLT uses pair or group work to help learners work collaboratively to solve grammar exercises, and sometimes pairing is not suitable if the situation does not require it. Finally, when applying CLT, teachers are expected to do lots of things; however, according to CLT, teachers play the roles of facilitators to make learning process easier.

### **2.15 Advantages of CLT**

There are six major advantages of applying Communicative Language Teaching. First of all, this approach creates a setting of real communication. In addition, CLT provides students with good opportunities to apply what they know and reveal their knowledge. Furthermore, CLT develops accuracy and fluency in speaking. This approach also enhances students' self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. Moreover, CLT provides a great chance to link all the skills together in one context. Finally, CLT helps students discover and correct their mistakes (Richards, 2006).

### **2.16 Summary**

This chapter includes a number of studies that have tackled Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) from different perspectives such as CLT definition and teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using this approach. It has also discussed CLT theoretical framework. Most of the studies that have been conducted to investigate CLT have revealed the positive impact this approach can have on learners' communicative competence development. Also, this chapter has briefly discussed language teachers' roles in CLT, some of the common communicative activities they use in language

teaching, CLT basic assumptions, challenges facing CLT implementation, and some of CLT advantages.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the methodology used in conducting the current study, and that will include the study's participants, instruments, and procedures. This study was conducted using a questionnaire to survey English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools, the activities that English teachers prefer to use when implementing CLT in grammar classes, and the challenges that they face in CLT implementation.

### **3.2 Research Questions**

This study aims at answering the following three questions:

1. What are English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools?
2. What activities do English teachers prefer to use in teaching grammar when implementing CLT?
3. What challenges do English teachers face when implementing CLT in grammar classes?

### **3.3 Research Design**

This study used a survey design to collect English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools. In addition, the same questionnaire was used to collect the data related to the activities that English teachers prefer to use when implementing CLT in teaching grammar,



and the challenges that they face in CLT implementation particularly in grammar classes.

The following steps were followed to analyze the collected data:

1. Frequency analysis which focuses on teachers' demographics in terms of first language, gender, years of experience, and qualifications.
2. Descriptive statistical analysis which shows the mean, the standard deviation (SD), and the rank of the questionnaire items in both questions 1 and 2.
3. As for the third research question that is related to the challenges that English teachers face when implementing CLT, frequency analysis was used to identify the number of responses for each one of the items.
4. Cronbach's Alpha test which is a tool used to ensure the reliability and steadiness of the study instrument.

### **3.4 Sampling Procedures**

Before conducting this study, it was important to select a representative sample from Al Ain public schools. The study sample included 20 schools that have been randomly selected from the total population of Al Ain public schools. These 20 schools were both male and female schools and belonged to all grade levels. Three hundred questionnaires were distributed at the randomly selected 20 schools by 15 questionnaires at each one of them. 180 questionnaires were only collected. The teachers' population was multilingual and multicultural; therefore, selecting a representative sample was very essential to ensure the success of this study implementation and guarantee its results' generalizability.

### 3.5 Participants

This study was conducted at 20 of Al Ain public schools to survey English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar. These schools were of all grade levels, and they were both male and female schools in order to have a representative study sample. Three hundred surveys were distributed to be completed by the English teachers at the participating schools of which only 180 surveys were collected. The participants were native and non-native speakers, male and female English teachers with different teaching experiences and qualifications.

The study collected sample consists of 180 English teachers. The demographics of the English teachers who participated in this study are shown in the following tables (3.1), (3.2), (3.3), and (3.4). Most of the teachers who participated in the study were English teachers whose first language is English ( $n=102$ ) teachers with a percentage of (57%), followed by those whose native language is Arabic ( $n=71$ ) teachers with a percentage of (39%), and the teachers who speak other languages were just ( $n=7$ ) teachers, and they represented only (4%) of the total number of the participants. For more information, refer to table (3.1).

Table (3.1): Teachers' First Language

Language	Frequency	Percentage (%)
English (native speakers)	102	57%
Arabic (native speakers)	71	39%
Other languages (Sotho, Turkish, Spanish, Amazigh, Kurdish, and Afrikaans)	7	4%
Total	180	100%

The majority of the teachers who participated in the current study were ( $n= 95$ ) female teachers with a percentage of (53%); however, the male teachers' percentage was (47%) ( $n= 85$ ) teachers. For more information, refer to table (3.2).

Table (3.2): Teachers' Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	95	53%
Male	85	47%
Total	180	100%

According to table (3.3), the distribution of the teachers who participated in this study in terms of their years of experience is as follows: most of the teachers who participated in this study have 6-10 years of experience ( $n=73$ ) teachers with a percentage of (41%), followed by those teachers with more than 10 years of experience, and they were ( $n= 65$ ) teachers with a percentage of (36%), and finally the least number of teachers are those between 0 to 5 years of experience, and they were ( $n= 42$ ) teachers with a percentage of (23%). For more information, refer to table (3.3).

Table (3.3): Years of Experience

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0-5 years	42	23%
6-10 years	73	41%
More than 10 years	65	36%
Total	180	100%

Finally, table (3.4) shows the distribution of the teachers according to their qualifications which is as follows: the teachers who have BA degree are ( $n= 109$ ) teachers with a percentage of (61%), then ( $n= 65$ ) MA holders with a percentage of (36%), followed by those teachers with other qualifications such as PhD and diploma, and they represent 3% ( $n= 6$ ). For more information, refer to table (3.4).

Table (3.4): Teachers' Qualifications

Qualifications	Frequency	Percentage (%)
BA	109	61%
MA	65	36%
Other qualifications (PhD holders about 4, one diploma and one specialist)	6	3%
Total	180	100%

### 3.6 Data Collection

The data of this study was collected using a questionnaire. After acquiring a letter of permission issued by Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) to conduct the study, the questionnaires were distributed to 20 of Al Ain public schools to be completed by English teachers. The participants were given a period of two weeks in order to have sufficient time to complete the questionnaires due to their other teaching commitments. At the participating schools, English coordinators were contacted to give them copies of the questionnaire, and they were given a briefing about the main sections of the questionnaire and its rationale. In addition, data confidentiality was clearly explained to encourage teachers to participate in the study especially as their responses will be only used for academic purposes. English coordinators at the selected schools were contacted to arrange visits to these schools to collect the distributed and completed questionnaires where 180 only were collected.

### 3.7 Study Instruments

This study used a questionnaire that consists of four sections to collect the required data. These sections were produced and developed to collect the data of this study about English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in

teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools, the activities they prefer to use, and the challenges they face when implementing CLT. The four sections were developed based on the study three main research questions.

**Background Information:** The first section of the questionnaire includes 4 items about teachers' demographics: their first language, gender, years of experience, and qualifications. For more information, see appendix (A).

**Teachers' Perceptions toward CLT Effectiveness:** this section consists of 12 items to investigate English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools. This section was developed using Likert Scale, i.e., Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). English teachers were requested to tick the box that best represents their views toward each one of the 12 statements. For more information, see appendix (B).

**CLT Activities:** this section consists of 15 items to investigate the activities that English teachers prefer to use when implementing CLT. It was also developed using Likert Scale, i.e., Often (1), Usually (2), Sometimes (3), Rarely (2), and Never (1). Also, a space was provided at the end of section 2 to give the participants the opportunity to add any other relevant activities they usually use. For more information, see appendix (C).

**Challenges Facing the Effective Use of CLT:** this section consists of 10 items to investigate the challenges that English teachers face when implementing CLT. This section was developed by listing a number of challenges that English teachers usually face in CLT implementation. The participants were requested to answer this section by ticking all the relevant items that they perceive as challenges. Also, a

space was provided at the end of section 3 to give the participants the opportunity to add any other challenges they usually face. For more information, see appendix (D).

### **3.8 Instrument Validity and Reliability**

The instrument of this study was developed to investigate English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools. Before conducting the study and distributing the questionnaire, it was necessary to validate the survey's content. Therefore, the study's questionnaire was given to 5 university professors at UAEU along with one academic advisor, and one English teacher and coordinator at ADEC to review and evaluate it in order to ensure its content validity. The reviewers suggested the omission of any item that affects the questionnaire data confidentiality such as the school's name. They have also requested the deletion of a number of irrelevant items such as "CLT helps teachers in time management". In addition, it was requested to change the heading of section 2 from "CLT teaching strategies" to "CLT teaching activities" as the items included in the second section are more activities than strategies. The initial version of the questionnaire included a free response question at the end; the purpose of that question was to provide the participants with the opportunity to freely express their views about CLT implementation in teaching grammar; however, this item was deleted based on the recommendations provided by the questionnaire's reviewers because of its ambiguity. The first few versions of the study's questionnaire were very long and included many irrelevant items. However, after reviewing and refining those items, the survey was amended to cover the relevant research areas only.

The Cronbach's Alpha value was measured for the 37 items in the questionnaire to ensure its internal stability. Table (3.5) shows that the Cronbach's alpha value is

(0.88) which exceeds (0.60), and this value indicates that the study instrument is stable (Sekaran, 2013). For more information, refer to table (3.5).

Table (3.5): Cronbach's Alpha Value (Questionnaire Stability)

Cronbach's Alpha Value	Number of Items
0.88	37

### 3.9 Data Analysis

After collecting the data by the study's questionnaire, it was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to answer the study's three main questions through providing the required data. This analysis aimed at measuring English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar, the activities they prefer to use, and the challenges they face in CLT implementation. As for this study, Mean, Standard Deviation (SD), and Rank values were calculated for all the items in both sections 1 and 2 in the questionnaire; however, frequency of responses was calculated to the items in the question related to the challenges. The tables provided in chapter 4 present the results and values of this analysis.

### 3.10 Ethical Considerations

During conducting this study, several ethical considerations were taken into account. First of all, the participants should not be harmed in any way whether mentally, physically, or socially because of their participation in this study. This was explained to the participants during the questionnaire distribution stage, and it was stated that no personal information will be revealed to anybody or for any reason. Secondly, the survey's purpose, duration, and procedures were clearly explained to all the participants, and they were also informed that their participation is voluntary,

so they may accept or decline participation if they wish. These two points were highlighted to facilitate the conduct of this study and increase the participants' interaction and cooperation.

### **3.11 Summary**

This chapter briefly sheds light on the methodology used in the implementation of this study by presenting the research design, participants, sampling procedures, data collection process, brief description of the study instrument, data analysis procedures, and some of the ethical considerations the researcher took into account during conducting this study.



## **Chapter 4 : Results**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the results of the data that was collected using the study's questionnaire to provide adequate answers to the study's questions concerning English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools. As for the study's results, they will be categorized and presented according to the three main research questions that cover the following areas: English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools, the communicative activities that English teachers prefer to use when implementing CLT, and the challenges those teachers face when using CLT respectively. The mean, standard deviation (SD), and rank of the collected data are presented in this chapter to provide a better understanding of the results of both questions 1 and 2; in addition to presenting the frequency of responses of the third question items.

Sekaran (2013) stated that there is a scale for questionnaire analysis, and that scale is divided into three sub-scales: the first one is from 1 to 2.33 which represents a weak agreement, the second scale is from 2.34 to 3.66 which represents a good agreement, and finally the third scale which is from 3.67 to 5, and this value represents a strong agreement.

### **4.2 English Teachers' Perceptions toward CLT Effectiveness**

The study questionnaire included 12 items in the first research question about English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching

grammar at Al Ain public schools, and how can that particular aspect support the implementation of CLT in teaching grammar. The purpose of including these items is to measure the level of English teachers' agreement and satisfaction with the effectiveness of CLT in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools.

Table (4.1) shows the overall mean of the items related to English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar ( $M= 3.83$ ). Also, the total of standard deviation values ( $SD= 0.56$ ) represents an ordinary value and indicates a conflict in the participants' responses ( $M= 3.83, SD= 0.56$ ). As for the mean values of the other items, they are all satisfactory where the highest value is for this item "CLT helps students use grammatical rules in speaking and writing" ( $M= 4.00, SD= 0.75$ ). Similarly, the mean of this item "CLT helps students improve their communicative abilities" is also high ( $M= 3.96, SD= 0.84$ ). In addition, many teachers manifested good agreement with the following item "CLT helps teachers assess students' understanding of grammar rules" ( $M= 3.88, SD= 0.75$ ). However, the least mean value is for this item "CLT helps students obtain higher scores in grammar exams" ( $M=3.59, SD= 0.87$ ). In addition, table (4.1) shows the rank of each item in the first question.

In general, table (4.1) includes the results of the teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar. The highest mean value is for "CLT helps students use grammatical rules in speaking and writing" where the recorded mean value is ( $M= 4.00$ ); however, the least mean value is for "CLT helps students obtain higher scores in grammar exams" where the obtained mean value is ( $M= 3.59$ ). For more information, refer to table (4.1) below.

Table (4.1): English Teachers' Perceptions toward CLT Effectiveness

	Statements	Mean	SD	Rank
1	helps students use grammatical rules in speaking and writing.	4.00	0.75	1
2	helps students improve their communicative abilities.	3.96	0.84	2
3	turns grammar into a more practical and interactive subject.	3.92	0.88	3
4	helps teachers explain grammar lessons effectively.	3.92	0.80	3
5	helps teachers assess students' understanding of grammar rules.	3.88	0.75	4
6	improves students' fluency.	3.84	0.87	5
7	helps teachers meet students' different grammar learning needs.	3.83	0.71	6
8	enhances cooperative learning in grammar classes.	3.79	0.84	7
9	provides students with a suitable learning environment to better understand grammar.	3.77	0.81	8
10	helps students learn grammar rules inductively	3.72	0.86	9
11	can be easily applied in teaching grammar.	3.72	0.86	9
12	helps students obtain higher scores in grammar exams.	3.59	0.87	10
	Average Mean and SD	3.83	0.56	6

### 4.3 CLT Activities

The second question focuses on the activities that English teachers prefer to use when implementing CLT in teaching grammar, and how can that support the idea of CLT implementation in grammar classes at Al Ain public schools. Table (4.2) shows English teachers' level of agreement and satisfaction with these communicative activities.

Table (4.2) shows the overall mean of all the items related to the communicative activities that English teachers prefer to use in teaching grammar when implementing CLT which is ( $M= 3.69$ ) for all the second question items. In addition, the total of

standard deviation values is ( $SD= 0.56$ ) which represents an ordinary value and indicates a conflict in the participants' responses ( $M= 3.69, SD= 0.56$ ). All the mean values are satisfactory where the highest value is for "Sentence writing applying a grammatical rule" ( $M= 3.99, SD= 0.90$ ). In addition, the mean value of "Describing people, places, or things" is ( $M=3.89, SD=0.95$ ). On the other hand, some other items' mean values were low. For example, the mean value of "Listening to dialogs that focus on certain grammatical rules" is ( $M= 3.40, SD= 1.11$ ). However, the least recorded mean value is for "Interviews" ( $M= 3.30, SD= 1.04$ ). In addition, table (4.2) shows the rank of each item in the second question.

Overall, table (4.2) shows the activities that English teachers use when implementing CLT in their grammar classes. The highest mean value is "Sentence writing applying a grammatical rule" ( $M= 3.99$ ); however, the least mean value is "Interviews" ( $M= 3.30$ ). For more information, refer to table (4.2) below.

As for the second part of section (2) in the questionnaire, the participants gave different answers when they were asked about the other activities they usually use when teaching grammar using CLT. For example, English teachers usually use public speaking, short conversations that include communicative situations, short story writing, sentence building, writing sentences using a specific tense, theatre activities, debates and open discussions, presentations, and improvisation etc..

Table (4.2): CLT Activities

	Statement	Mean	SD	Rank
1	Sentence writing applying a grammatical rule	3.99	0.90	1
2	Describing people, places, or things	3.89	0.95	2
3	Speaking about personal experiences	3.87	0.89	3
4	Task-completion activities	3.85	0.82	4
5	Asking & answering questions spontaneously	3.84	0.98	5
6	Reading texts that focus on certain grammatical rules	3.76	0.92	6

7	Information-gap activities	3.74	0.89	7
8	Opinion sharing activities	3.72	0.94	8
9	Information-gathering activities	3.68	0.92	9
10	Tasks, such as project-based tasks	3.67	0.89	10
11	Information-transfer activities	3.60	0.90	11
12	Role playing	3.52	0.90	12
13	Jig-saw activities	3.44	0.97	13
14	Listening to dialogs that focus on certain grammatical rules	3.40	1.11	14
15	Interviews	3.30	1.04	15
Average Mean and SD		3.69	0.56	8

#### 4.4 Challenges Facing CLT Implementation

The third research question investigates the challenges that English teachers face when implementing CLT in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools, and how can that particular aspect affect the issue of using CLT in grammar classes effectively. Table (4.3) shows the frequency of teachers' responses to the items in the third question. According to the results given in table (4.3), "Students' low English proficiency, especially in grammar" is the most common challenge as ( $n=171$ ) teachers have considered this item as a challenge that hinders their efforts when applying CLT in grammar classes. Additionally, "large classes" is another common challenge English teachers face ( $n= 126$ ). Moreover, according to the participants, "heavy teaching workload" is another challenge that limits the effective use of CLT in grammar classes ( $n= 120$ ). However, only ( $n= 71$ ) teachers perceived "Lack of appreciation for communicative activities" as a challenge that faces the effective use of CLT in teaching grammar. The least number of responses was to the item related to professional development "Lack of professional development sessions" ( $n= 52$ ). For more information, refer to table (4.3).

As for the second part of section (3) in the questionnaire, the participants gave different answers when they were asked about the challenges they usually face in CLT implementation. According to the answers, the main challenges the participants face are the following: curriculum change, not having a dedicated classroom for English to keep all teaching resources in the same place, large classes (too many students), lack of experience, students with learning disabilities, the noise that happens when many students talk to each other, lack of interest in grammar lessons because this part is no longer included in exams, grammar books with traditional approaches, students' tendency to learn grammar separately not integrated with other skills, and learners' perceptions toward grammar as a boring subject.

Table (4.3): Challenges Facing CLT Implementation

	Statement	Frequency of Responses	Rank
1	Students' low English proficiency, especially in grammar	171	1
2	Large classes	126	2
3	Heavy teaching workload	120	3
4	Resistance to class participation: some students tend not to participate	107	4
5	Insufficient communicative grammar exercises included in the textbooks	92	5
6	Time spent to prepare communicative activities	85	6
7	Difficulty in assessing grammar communicatively	77	7
8	Lack of authentic / appropriate teaching materials and resources	74	8
9	Lack of appreciation for communicative activities	71	9
10	Lack of professional development sessions	52	10
	Average of Responses	97.5	5.5

#### 4.5 Summary

This chapter presents the results of the data that was collected by the study's questionnaire. The results are presented in this chapter according to the research three main areas: English teachers' perceptions of implementing CLT in teaching grammar, the communicative activities that they prefer to use, and the challenges they face respectively. As for teachers' perceptions, the mean values of all the items are generally satisfactory where the highest value is ( $M= 4.00$ ) for the item related to the effective role that the use of CLT can play in helping students use grammatical rules in speaking and writing; however, the least mean value is ( $M= 3.59$ ) for "CLT helps students obtain higher scores in grammar exams". The recorded mean values of the second question items are also satisfactory as the highest value is ( $M= 3.99$ ) for "Sentence writing applying a grammatical rule", whereas the least mean value is ( $M= 3.30$ ) for "Interviews". Finally, the results of question number (3) varied where the highest frequency of responses was "Students' low English proficiency, especially in grammar" ( $n= 171$ ); however, the least frequency was ( $n= 52$ ) "Lack of professional development sessions".

## Chapter 5: Discussion

### 5.1 Introduction

The main aim of conducting this study is to investigate English language teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools. In order to answer the study's three main questions, a questionnaire was developed and distributed at the participating schools to collect the required data. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS to find the mean, the standard deviation (SD), and the rank of all the items in questions 1 and 2; in addition to find the frequency of responses for the items in question number 3. This chapter presents the discussion of the study's results and findings. Also, this chapter compares the results of the current study with some other studies that have already been conducted to investigate the same topic to add more credibility to the results of this study. Finally, this chapter presents some recommendations to be adopted as well as implications for further research.

### 5.2 English Teachers' Perceptions toward CLT Effectiveness

The first research question is about English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in grammar classes. The analysis of the teacher's responses to the items of this question revealed that the overall mean value of the items in the first question is ( $M= 3.83$ ) which is an acceptable value. Therefore, it can be concluded that the teachers who participated in this study demonstrated a good agreement with all the items. In addition, the total of the standard deviation values reflects an ordinary value and shows the conflict among the participants' responses. All mean values are satisfactory where the highest value is ( $M= 4.00$ ) for



"CLT helps students use grammatical rules in speaking and writing", and this value reflects that the teachers who participated in the study strongly agree with the idea that the implementation of CLT in teaching grammar can help students use grammatical rules in speaking and writing better. On the other hand, the least mean value is ( $M= 3.59$ ) for "CLT helps students obtain higher scores in grammar exams" which means that the participants showed a good agreement with this item. In general, it can be concluded that teachers' perceptions toward the statements in the first question were positive; therefore, the participants are satisfied with the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools.

This study agreed with a large number of the previous studies that were conducted to investigate similar topics related to CLT. The results of this study agree with the findings of Al Shara'h, Abu Nabaah, AlKhzouz's study (2011) which revealed that EFL Jordanian teachers showed positive perceptions toward the use of CLT particularly in evaluation. In addition, the current study agrees with the results of Chang's study (2011) that was conducted at a Taiwanese College to investigate EFL teachers' attitudes toward CLT; Chang's study concluded that the participants agree with the main principles of CLT, and they apply these principles in their teaching practices. Moreover, the results of this study agreed with Jafari, Shokrpour, and Gutterman's study (2015) that was conducted to investigate Iranian high school teachers' perceptions toward the use of CLT, and the results of this study revealed that Iranian high school teachers have positive perceptions toward the use of CLT. Furthermore, this study's findings matched with the results found by Badilla and Chacon's study (2013) that was conducted to investigate the advantages of CLT implementation in grammar classes; their study revealed that CLT helps English teachers present their grammar classes in a better way when CLT is properly

implemented. Moreover, Eltantawi's (2012) study revealed that EFL university teachers in the UAE have positive perceptions toward grammar teaching which is similar to the results of the current study as the majority of the participants indicated in their responses the role grammar can play in developing learners' language skills.

However, some other studies have not fully agreed with the results of this study. For example, a qualitative study was conducted to investigate secondary level English teachers' perceptions toward the use of CLT in language teaching in Bangladesh; the results of this study revealed that the participants were not in favor of CLT (Hossen, 2008). Also, the results of El-Kelani's study (2011) were different from this study's results, El-Kelani's study aimed at investigating the perceptions of EFL teachers toward the implementation of CLT in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's public and private schools. The results showed that Saudi English teachers at private schools have more positive perceptions toward CLT than those at public schools. However, the current study showed that the participants at Al Ain public schools have positive perceptions of CLT. Finally, what made this study different from the other studies discussed earlier is the topic it investigated and the context where it was conducted as the teachers who participated in this study perceived CLT differently and particularly in grammar classes.

### **5.3 CLT Activities**

The second question focuses on the activities that English teachers prefer to use when implementing CLT. The analysis of the teachers' responses to the items of this question revealed that the overall mean of all the items is ( $M= 3.69$ ), and this represents an acceptable value. This indicates that the English teachers who participated in the study showed a good agreement with all the items. In addition,

the total of standard deviation values reflects an ordinary value, and it shows the conflict among the participants' responses ( $SD= 0.56$ ). In addition, all mean values are satisfactory where the highest value is ( $M= 3.99$ ) for “Sentence writing applying a grammatical rule” which means that the teachers strongly agree with using activities that include writing sentences applying a certain grammatical rule, and they consider this activity as a useful and effective one in grammar teaching. However, the least mean value is ( $M= 3.30$ ) for this item “Interviews”, which means that the teachers showed a good agreement with this item. Generally, it can be concluded that teachers' perceptions toward all the statements in the second question were positive; therefore, they are satisfied with using these activities when applying CLT in their grammar classes.

The results of this study show that English teachers have positive perceptions toward CLT activities. According to Ando (2003), public speaking activities such as Conversation Card Activity (CCA) can play a significant role in developing and improving students' communicative competence through communication and interaction. This study has also revealed that English teachers at Al Ain public schools are in favor of speaking activities to help their students develop their communication skills. In addition, Qinghong (2009) identified group activities, discussion, and role play as some of the communicative activities that language teachers can use in their classes. In the same context, the current study has revealed that English teachers at Al Ain schools tend to use similar activities when implementing CLT.

The activities this study investigated are also similar to the activities discussed in Richards' book "Communicative Language Teaching Today" (2006). For example, information-gap activities, jigsaw activities, task completion, information gathering,

and information transfer, and opinion sharing. In information-gap activities, students are provided with a number of activities through which they communicate information with each other. The results of the current study show that teachers have positive perceptions toward CLT activities especially the one pertaining writing sentence using a grammatical rule. In this activity, students practice grammatical rules in addition to communicate information with each other which turn learning into a more engaging and authentic activity.

#### **5.4 Challenges Facing CLT Implementation**

There are many challenges that face English teachers when they implement CLT in their grammar classes. The most common challenge that English teachers face is their students' low English proficiency especially in grammar as the participants indicated in their responses to the third question ( $n= 171$ ). This shows that the majority of the participants perceived this aspect as the main challenge that makes implementing CLT more difficult to them. In addition, ( $n= 126$ ) of the English teachers who responded to the third question believed that large classes is one of the challenges that hinders CLT effective application in grammar teaching due to the big number of students studying in the same class. Therefore, teachers find it difficult to apply communicative activities in their teaching practices and tend to use traditional ways of grammar teaching. The participants have also perceived the insufficiency of communicative activities as a challenge because ( $n= 92$ ) selected that item as a challenge that faces their efforts in teaching grammar using CLT. This indicates that grammar books still present grammatical rules in a traditional way where a short explanation is given to a certain rule followed by a number of practice exercises with no communicative activities.

On the other hand, the frequency of participants' responses to the third question has also shown that ( $n= 71$ ) teachers have perceived lack of appreciation of communicative activities as a challenge that faces their efforts to effectively apply CLT. This indicates that the appreciation of communicative activities is perceived as a challenge by approximately (39%) of the total number of population. The least number of responses was given to the item related to lack of professional development sessions because only ( $n= 52$ ) perceived that as a challenge that may affect the effective use of CLT in grammar teaching.

The third research question focuses on the challenges English teachers face when implementing CLT in grammar classes. The results of this study disagree with the findings of many previous studies that have identified a number of challenges that English teachers face when implementing CLT because the current study's results indicate that the participants strongly disagree with most of the challenges that hinder CLT implementation in grammar classes. In a study conducted in Kenya, Maryslessor, Barasa, and Omulando (2012) found out that English teachers face challenges because of the time required for preparing communicative activities, the very broad curriculum, and formal and standardized exams that contain a certain type of questions which assess the skills taught in the curriculum. Moreover, another study that was conducted in Bangladesh pointed out that the four major challenges that face CLT successful implementation are teachers, students, educational system, and the approach itself (Ansarey, 2012). The current study's findings disagree with Ansarey's study as none of these four challenges have been identified as a major challenge that face CLT implementation in grammar classes. Also, the results of this study disagree with the findings of Aleixo's study (2003) that has identified two main challenges facing CLT implementation represented by the differences among

teaching and learning environments and teachers' level of understanding and awareness of CLT. These two challenges were not identified by a large number of the participating teachers because they do not consider them as challenges. The previous studies identified a number of challenges English teachers encounter when implementing CLT in their classes; however, the teachers who participated in this study strongly disagree with all the challenges given in the questionnaire where the overall mean value was very low 1.54.

### **5.5 Recommendations**

After conducting this study, analyzing the collected data, and discussing it from different perspectives, the following recommendations were made to be presented to the relevant educational authorities and curriculum planners:

1. Based on the positive perceptions English language teachers have toward implementing CLT in grammar classes, curriculum planners are advised to officially adopt this approach in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools in particular and UAE schools in general by including its principles and activities in grammar lessons.
2. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) should be implemented in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools because it enhances and facilitates cooperative learning in grammar classes. This perception changes the way students look at grammar from a boring subject into a more engaging and interactive one.
3. English teachers should be encouraged to use CLT in teaching grammatical rules as that helps their students use those rules in speaking and writing.

4. Al Ain public schools should raise their teachers' awareness of CLT implementation to help the teachers apply CLT properly and effectively. This can happen by providing those teachers with a training program that includes a number of workshops about CLT principles and implementation. This also aims at improving teachers' existing knowledge of CLT through providing them with more CLT activities, techniques, and strategies to apply them in their classes.
5. Al Ain public schools should encourage their teachers to use "writing sentences using a certain grammatical rule" when implementing CLT in their grammar classes because most of the teachers consider this activity as an effective and productive one as per the study's results.
6. English teachers should work on improving their students' proficiency in English in general and in grammar in particular in order to facilitate their learning and CLT implementation.
7. Al Ain public schools should provide their teachers with whatever they need such as materials, resources, and books to successfully implement CLT in their grammar classes.
8. English teachers should have less teaching periods to enable them to have sufficient time to prepare communicative activities. The number of students should also be less to help teachers apply effective communicative teaching activities.

## **5.6 Limitations of the Study**

Although the current study has achieved its main objectives, there were some limitations in the implementation of the study. First of all, due to time limitations, the

study was conducted on 300 English teachers only by distributing questionnaires; however, 180 questionnaires were collected only. Therefore, this might have affected the study's level of generalizability because it should have involved more English teachers participating in it. Also, teachers' large workload might have affected the level and the amount of their contributions to the study because they probably could not have sufficient time to complete the study's questionnaire. Moreover, this study was conducted at Al Ain public schools only, so that may affect the generalizability of this study's results as its scope was limited to Al Ain public schools only. Finally, some teachers were unable to complete the study's questionnaire due to lack of knowledge about CLT.

### **5.7 Recommendations for Further Studies**

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended to conduct a number of additional studies to further investigate the implementation of CLT in teaching grammar:

1. The current study is a quantitative study that investigated English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools. Other future studies can be conducted to investigate the relationship between teachers' first language, gender, years of experience, and educational qualifications and their perceptions toward CLT through having interviews with them.
2. Further experimental studies can be conducted to investigate the effect CLT can have on students' performance in English grammar.
3. This study identified English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using CLT in teaching grammar, the activities English teachers use when



implementing CLT, and the challenges they face in CLT implementation in grammar classes at Al Ain public schools. This study was specifically conducted in Al Ain City, and this affects the level of its results generalizability. Therefore, additional studies can be conducted to further investigate the use of CLT in other cities in the UAE to make the results more accurate and generalizable. Studies in other Arab countries are also required to investigate CLT implementation in other educational contexts.

4. This study used a quantitative methodology to collect the required information. Further studies can use qualitative methodology to collect more data and better understand the topic.

## **5.8 Conclusion**

This study aimed at investigating English teachers' perceptions toward the effectiveness of using Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools. CLT use in teaching grammar at Al Ain public schools was investigated through looking at three relevant key areas: teachers' perceptions toward this approach, the activities they use, and the challenges they encounter in CLT implementation. In order to achieve the study's three main objectives and meet its requirements, a questionnaire covering the study's three main areas was developed to gather the required data from the participants.

After analyzing the collected data using SPSS, the results revealed that English teachers at Al Ain public schools are in favor of CLT use in teaching grammar especially as the majority of them believe that CLT helps learners use grammar in speaking and writing; in addition, the majority of the participants believe that CLT plays a significant role in developing and improving students' communicative

competence. However, the teachers who participated in this study did not fully agree with the role CLT can play to help students learn grammar rules inductively and obtain higher scores in grammar exams.

English teachers use a variety of activities when implementing CLT in their grammar classes. According to the results of this study, English teachers prefer to use sentence writing applying a grammatical rule in their grammar classes when implementing CLT; moreover, the participants showed their preference toward using activities that involve describing people, places, or objects. On the contrary, the participants showed less agreement with some other activities such as information-gathering activities and project-based tasks and assignments.

The third question in this study aimed at identifying the main challenges that English teachers face when implementing CLT at Al Ain public schools. The results showed that the teachers have perceived students' low English proficiency, large classes, and heavy teaching load as the most common challenges according to the frequency of their responses. This requires schools to find solutions to these challenges to mitigate their impact on teachers' efforts to implement CLT in grammar classes.

The results of this study provide educators and curriculum planners and developers with a sort of guidance in CLT implementation. First of all, this study identified English teachers' perceptions toward CLT use in grammar teaching. This identification can effectively contribute to help stakeholders take decisions regarding the adoption and implementation of CLT depending on the fact that teachers' perceptions play a pivotal role in the success of any approach or method adoption. In addition, highlighting the key activities English teachers use in their grammar classes can help curriculum planners, designers, and developers better select the

communicative activities they intend to include in grammar syllabi because the proper selection of such activities can clearly affect students' performance in grammar positively. Finally, the contribution of this study in identifying the challenges facing CLT implementation is one of this study's important outcomes because this can help in designing programs and producing plans that specifically tackle these challenges to ease CLT implementation in language classes in general and in grammar classes in particular in the future. To sum up the main findings of this study, the participants have generally shown positive perceptions toward CLT use and its relevant activities; however, they did not fully agree with the challenges associated to its implementation.

This study was conducted at Al Ain public schools to investigate CLT use from three main perspectives: teachers' perceptions, CLT activities, and CLT implementation challenges. However, it leaves the door open for further investigation of CLT in other contexts and from different perspectives such the ways these challenges can be tackled and the relationship between teachers' qualifications, years of teaching experience, and first language and their perceptions toward CLT. Furthermore, additional qualitative studies may be required to deeply investigate this approach through conducting interviews with teachers and practitioners to identify their understanding and perceptions toward this approach in detail.

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## Appendix A

### **Teachers' Perceptions toward the Effectiveness of Using Communicative Language Approach (CLT) in Teaching Grammar at Al Ain Public Schools**

The purpose of this survey is to explore English language teachers' perceptions at Al Ain Public Schools toward the Effectiveness of Using Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in grammar classes. All data collected by this questionnaire will be confidential and will only be used for research purposes.

**TEACHER'S FIRST LANGUAGE:**  English  Arabic  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**GENDER:**  Male  Female

**YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE:**  0-5 Years  6-10 Years

More than 10 Years

**QUALIFICATIONS:**  Bachelor  MA  Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

**Please circle the number that best represents your view.**

No.	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)					
1.	helps teachers explain grammar lessons effectively.	5	4	3	2	1
2.	helps teachers meet students' different grammar learning needs.	5	4	3	2	1
3.	helps teachers assess students' understanding of grammar rules.	5	4	3	2	1
4.	can be easily applied in teaching grammar.	5	4	3	2	1
5.	provides students with a suitable learning environment to better understand grammar.	5	4	3	2	1
6.	improves students' fluency.	5	4	3	2	1
7.	helps students learn grammar rules inductively.	5	4	3	2	1
8.	helps students improve their communicative abilities.	5	4	3	2	1
9.	turns grammar into a more practical and interactive subject.	5	4	3	2	1
10.	helps students use grammatical rules in speaking and writing.	5	4	3	2	1
11.	helps students obtain higher scores in grammar exams.	5	4	3	2	1
12.	enhances cooperative learning in grammar classes.	5	4	3	2	1

### Appendix C

No.	I use the following activities when teaching grammar using CLT	Often	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1.	Information-gap activities	5	4	3	2	1
2.	Information-transfer activities	5	4	3	2	1
3.	Jig-saw activities	5	4	3	2	1
4.	Task-completion activities	5	4	3	2	1
5.	Information-gathering activities	5	4	3	2	1
6.	Opinion sharing activities	5	4	3	2	1
7.	Speaking about personal experiences	5	4	3	2	1
8.	Interviews	5	4	3	2	1
9.	Describing people, places, or things	5	4	3	2	1
10.	Sentence writing applying a grammatical rule	5	4	3	2	1
11.	Role playing	5	4	3	2	1
12.	Asking & answering questions spontaneously	5	4	3	2	1
13.	Tasks, such as project-based tasks	5	4	3	2	1
14.	Listening to dialogs that focus on certain grammatical rules	5	4	3	2	1
15.	Reading texts that focus on certain grammatical rules	5	4	3	2	1
Other Activities ( <i>Please Specify</i> ):						
_____						
_____						

## Appendix D

Please put a tick (✓) next to all the relevant challenges that you may face when using CLT to teach grammar.

- 1)  Students' low English proficiency, especially in grammar
- 2)  Resistance to class participation: some students tend not to participate
- 3)  Insufficient communicative grammar exercises included in the textbooks
- 4)  Time spent to prepare communicative activities
- 5)  Lack of professional development sessions
- 6)  Lack of authentic / appropriate teaching materials and resources
- 7)  Lack of appreciation for communicative activities
- 8)  Difficulty in assessing grammar communicatively
- 9)  Large classes
- 10)  Heavy teaching workload

- Other challenges (*please specify*):

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