

Investigating the Degree into which CLT is Implemented in Twenty-three EFL Classes in an East-European Post-communist Country.

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DEDICATION

To Lord,
Thanks.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is an investigation into the extent to which CLT (Communicative Language Training) is being used in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classes in Albania. As shown below, the Albanian education system – similar to that of many other East European post-communist countries - was heavily influenced by the Soviet models of education. As a result, Albanian students have been taught their L2 (second language) for more than five decades by memorising grammatical rules and isolated words, as well as by translating sentences from English into Albanian and vice-versa. However, the Western teaching ideology has interfered with that of Albania since the country changed its governing political ideology in 1992 and, thus, the process of (English language) learning/teaching should have changed. This study aims to assess whether and how the teaching practice of twenty-one Albanian EFL teachers is affected by these changes.

Reviewing the beliefs that underlie traditional and modern English language teaching approaches/methodologies, I was able to design a theoretical framework for the study. Indeed, emphasising the link between language teaching philosophies and their respective classroom teaching behaviours helped me to design a Tally Sheet that was used during my observation sessions. Additionally, the literature review provided the foundations by which to clarify observation events that were ambiguous. One-on-one after lesson interviews were also used for this purpose as well as to investigate the cognitive/professional/contextual factors that might have influenced the communicative teaching practice of the twenty-one participating teachers.

Class observations and interviews were the main sources from which empirical information was obtained. The data gathered was organised into patterns and interpreted statistically based on Excel 2007 interpretive techniques.

The results showed that English language teaching is changing in Albania. Indeed, most participants did not approach the teaching of English in a rigid traditional way; the following 'Western' activities quite often took place in the observed classes:

- The use of referential questions
- Prompting self/peer error corrections
- The use of reading/listening for gist activities

Nevertheless, a considerable number of the researched classes were still teacher-centred and, thus, a regular occurrence of certain conventional class activities was observed, e.g.:

- Translating sentences/isolated words in Albanian
- The use of L1 (native language) to perform different communicative actions
- Emphasising conscious learning practices

Interestingly, the study found that the participation in a course that emphasises the use of CLT but does not feature practical teaching elements might have a limited influence over what participants teach in their classes. That is to say, teachers who had attended short teacher training courses held in Tirana by foreign agencies did not teach very differently from the teachers who had never had a Western training experience. Additionally, the data gathered indicated that the teachers who had used a communicative course-book for more than five years in their EFL classes are likely to be more communicative in their teaching than other subjects.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BA	Bachelor of Arts
BCT	British Council Tirana (Albania)
CELTA	Cambridge Certificate in English Language Teaching
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
TEFL	The Teaching of English as a Foreign Language
EGI	Explicit Grammar Instruction
ELT	English Language Teaching
GKSHA	National Education Advisory Group of Albania
GT	Grammar Translation Method
L1	Native Language
L2	Second Language
MASH	Albanian Ministry of Education
NNS	Non Native Speaker (of English)
PPP	Presentation-Practice-Production Method
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
UT	University of Tirana, Albania.
UoV	University of Vlore, Albania.
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Chapter I - General Introduction to the Study

1.1. From Socialism to Capitalism

1.1.a. Traditions

During the communist period, drastic changes in the education sector were introduced in the countries of the former Soviet block in Eastern Europe. Mirroring the Soviet educational policies, these communist countries implemented various reforms, which sought to provide free education for everyone, raise their national literacy level, expand the school systems inherited from the past, improve the quality of their educational services and link education with the new socialist market and economy.

Despite the structural, demographic and cultural differences, the educational sectors of East European communist countries essentially developed in a similar way according to Webber and Liikanen, 2001. They were all highly centralised and, among others, featured the following two common elements: a tight ideological control in educational settings and the concept of social labour. The latter - in line with Marxist ideology about the role of the school - instituted the engagement of students in manual labour in order to suit the needs of large state companies; whereas the former imposed tight control over the teachers as well as students. Indeed, all textbooks and curricula were institutionally prescribed to heavily reflect the communist ideological propaganda. Little freedom of speech was allowed in East European communist classes/societies. Particularly in social science classes, strict roles were given to both teachers and students, i.e. instructors were to teach the content specified through the tightly-controlled syllabus and learners were to learn the Marxist-Leninist principles taught by the teacher.

As far as the teaching of L2 was concerned, Russian was the main foreign language studied in the secondary/high schools of most communist countries, except in Russia. Similar to the way other subjects were taught in Eastern European schools, L2 teachers adopted a traditional, rigid, teacher-centered methodology in their everyday teaching practice. In my view, their choice appears to be determined by three essential conditions. Firstly, due to the severe problems the communist countries faced at the very beginning (e.g. lack of specialists, resources, materials, etc.), the first generations of teachers particularly were not thoroughly prepared for their subject matter. Hence, a "fixed view of knowledge" model of teaching better suited their teaching capacities, as they felt *unsafe about using the language they had to teach*, Medgyes 1983:2. Secondly, a didactic approach – that greatly reduced learners' critical/analytical thinking and heavily emphasised technical concerns - was highly promoted by the communist regime(s) because it was a perfect way to impose tight control over the educational system. Lastly, the insufficient interaction between the capitalist and socialist camps during the Cold War years gave virtually no possibilities to EFL teachers in East European countries to be in contact with new, modern teaching approaches.

1.1.b. Changes

A different picture was observed in the educational sector in the USA and other West European countries in the late seventies. In reaction to traditional teaching methodologies, the world's most industrialised countries began to adopt different teaching/learning approaches that emphasised the social importance of education as opposed to the benefits to the individuals. The new flexible methodologies viewed learners as active participants of their own learning progress who - by taking part in interesting, dynamic and challenging classroom tasks - will be able to improve their creative thinking and, thus, further develop their own democratic societies. Under this paradigm, teaching professionals are given a new role as well—that of “*the knower*” who is no longer seen as the authority that has control of the answers students are expected to give in the class. Instead, the ideal Western teacher provides an opportunity for the learners to express their views, helps them to elaborate their ideas and, lastly, conforms their answers to the standard knowledge. However, it is not clear yet whether or not the “*knower*” has become the norm in Western countries. Indeed, in a book bringing together the past, present and future of the education system in Britain, Gordon and Lawton (1999) argue that communicative teaching methods are not widely used in Britain, despite the fact that most school teachers claim to be following a communicative approach.

By 1990, most of the East European countries had abandoned communism in favour of capitalism. The winds of change - blowing worldwide – affected the educational systems of these countries once again. This time, inspired by the above-mentioned models of Western cultures, new democratic East European governments have been implementing various reforms that seek to develop new national decentralised curricula and change the philosophical orientation of teachers/students. Underlying all these institutional initiatives, there is the perception that the post-communist system of education is neither efficient, nor appropriate for application in the new democratic epoch. Indeed, many scholars have criticised the traditional method of teaching, the authoritative role of the teachers, as well as the formal class interaction inherited from the communist period (see Safr and Woodhouse, 1999; De Simone, 1996.).

Those who are in favour of using Western approaches in Eastern L2 classes also argue for ‘*a shift of emphasis to communication aims*’ (Byram, 2003:64). While carrying out communicative activities, learners are said to improve their level of proficiency (see Krashen 1982). This teaching approach is widely known as CLT (Communicative Language Teaching). The ideology of CLT is firmly grounded on different SLA theories and language teaching research - carried out mainly in L2 immersion programs in several West European and North American countries – and strongly supports the role of communication in the acquisition of second languages. However, little research has been done in East European classes, focusing on learners who are studying L2 in their own post-communist context. These learners are unfamiliar with Western approaches and, on top of everything else, they are taught by teachers who were qualified to approach the teaching of English in a traditional manner. Therefore, the place, the role and the degree to

which CLT is being implemented in East European ex-communist countries are still to be investigated.

1.2. ELT in Albania

While the other countries of the former Soviet block in Eastern Europe were dominated by the Soviet presence until the late eighties, Albania openly sided with China during the Soviet-Chinese tensions in the year 1960. Moscow responded by cutting the promised economic aids, as well as by breaking diplomatic relations with Albania in the early sixties. After this, the communist regime in Albania was totally allied with China; major changes encompassed all aspects of life in the country. In the education sector, different reforms purged the schools and textbooks of the Soviet influence; Russian was no longer the dominant L2 taught in the country's secondary/high schools. Albanian students also began to be instructed in English and French in the early seventies. However, my own learning/teaching experience suggests that the Soviet methods of pedagogy and psychology continued to influence the teaching norm in Albania.

As a pupil/student, educated in the communist Albania of the eighties, I was taught English as an L2 mainly by memorising grammar rules/English words and drilling linguistic items in translation/grammar exercises. I still remember my first English teacher, Miss Zamira, who typically started her classes either by giving a long grammar explanation or by having us translate a long English text. Afterwards, she routinely employed three types of strategies to test our understanding/knowledge: 1-discrete-item grammar exercises; 2-lists of words to translate from Albanian into English; 3-the use of display questions. In her English classes, as well as the classes of the other EFL teachers in which I was taught, there was little room for genuine communication. The only L2 speaking activity we did was translation drills (from L1 to L2 or vice-versa); whereas, the only language production we experienced was the homework. Typically, Miss Zamira would ask us to use the discrete grammatical item just encountered in our own sentence in order to reinforce it. The next class the homework copybooks would be collected and each grammar error would be marked.

As an EFL teacher graduating in one of the country's state universities in the early nineties, I remember that few changes occurred in the way English was taught in the post-communist Albania during the nineties. Indeed, similar to the way most of my colleagues were teaching, I was the centre of my classes, conducted my English classes mostly in Albanian and gave a primary focus to grammar in my teaching by presenting the material outlined in the book as well as asking my students to do related grammar/vocabulary exercises. In approaching the teaching in this way, I was highly influenced by my previous learning experiences and the model of the teacher-expert I was exposed to during my undergraduate studies. Additionally, this teacher-centred approach was highly attractive to me for, as a novice teacher, I knew by heart thousands of English words and hundreds of grammar rules, but had little teaching experience and inadequate linguistic preparation.

Most Albanian teachers have had learning and education practices that are remarkably similar to my own experiences. Therefore, the above-mentioned factors should have modelled the way the majority of EFL Albanian teachers have approached their everyday practice, at least during their first years of teaching.

Recently, collaborative learning and new learner-centred methods have been strongly emphasised by Albanian democratic governments. After the implementation in the mid-nineties of a non-highly successful reform in the vocational education, experts have now recognised that Albanian teachers/students will not readily embrace the process of decentralisation, unless they are prepared for it beforehand. To this end, Albanian authorities are trying to enable the changes within the system by gradually shifting responsibilities to teachers/schools, reviewing syllabi and textbooks to accommodate new teaching ideologies, piloting new learner-centred approaches throughout the country, etc. Moreover, several agreements with international partners have been reached to train Albanian EFL teachers free of charge.

Furthermore, institutional attempts have been made to change Albanian EFL practitioners' teaching practice and philosophy. Indeed, Albanian teachers are officially required to develop a new Western-style Daily Lesson Plan, which includes details about students' learning goals (not only teaching objectives), minimal and maximal learning objectives (to involve a greater number of students in the process of learning), lesson procedures (including real-world materials to accompany the material presented in the text in order to generate students' interest), lesson descriptions (focusing on the level of the class and teacher's previous experiences), means of evaluation, etc. In so doing, authorities hope that Albanian teachers will move from the traditional teaching methodology to the Western one by reflecting on what they do and how they do it.

Controversially, in my view, little is done to help Albanian EFL teachers understand why they do what they do. Indeed, as the majority of Albanian EFL practitioners have neither studied CLT theory during their university program, nor attended any CLT teacher-training practice courses, they scarcely know the rationale behind this new approach to teaching. Therefore, one might argue that Albanian teachers of English might find it hard to move from their initial Grammar Teaching approach (firmly based on their learning/teaching beliefs) to a newer Western approach if adequate support and training opportunities are not institutionally provided.

1.3. A Rationale for the Study

Albania, similarly to the majority of the East European communist countries, is currently reforming its educational system. The reforms are intended to improve and westernise the post-communist status of the educational services in the country by modernising the content of education, decentralising the system, developing a new curriculum, etc. Although the reforms were carefully planned with the involvement of foreign experts, the Albanian Ministry of Education (MASH) is now being faced with the need to work with the public to gain acceptance of these reforms. Among several financial, organisational and dissent challenges, the authorities admit that *the change of philosophical orientation is a particular problem, notably with some teachers* (Qano, 2005:6).

As seen above, different attempts are being made to mainstream the philosophical orientation of Albanian teachers. Yet, to the best of my knowledge, no previous studies have investigated whether and how ELT has changed in post-communist Albania. Therefore, through this study, I would like to produce some transferable results that along with other future research studies might fulfil this research gap.

1.4. Focus and Aims of the Study

The **main focus** of this study is on Albanian teachers of English as a Second Language and their everyday teaching practices. After approaching the teaching of English in a traditional way for decades, are EFL teachers in Albania changing their teaching style to cope with the new institutional requirements? If yes, to what degree and are there any salient factors underlying the change? These issues arouse the curiosity of the investigator of this study, who has been an EFL instructor for over ten years and is currently a member of the National Education Advisory Group (GKSHA) that monitors the implementation of educational reforms in Albania. Therefore, this research work was carried out to serve the following **main aims**:

- 1) to investigate the extent to which CLT is being implemented in twenty-three EFL classes in Albania
- 2) to identify any interior/exterior variables that can be associated with communicative teaching behaviours
- 3) to propose implications of my research findings for future institutional reforms in Albania

1.5. A Brief Outline of the Dissertation

The current chapter serves as a general introduction and provides most of the context to the study. In chapter II, I will create the background for my study by reviewing the literature on traditional and modern ELT methods. Additionally, a sub-section of this chapter will briefly discuss published research on teacher cognition and content/contextual factors that might inform/shape/impact the teaching of English as an L2. In chapter III a detailed description of my research methods and procedures will be presented. Moreover, I will refer to studies that have used observation as the principle data collection technique in order to set my study within the research tradition. I will then present the findings of my study in chapter IV. Lastly, I will present concluding remarks (e.g. implications and suggestions, future research, limitations of this study, potential relevance of my study beyond its immediate context, etc.) in chapter V.

Chapter II - Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the field of study by conceptualising teaching in terms of teaching methods. It basically attempts to answer the following fundamental questions:

- What constitutes the traditional Grammar Translation (GT) teaching method?
- What do PPP and TBL - the weak and the strong version of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) - stand for?
- Which class activities/techniques best represent each method and what are the rationales behind them?
- In the Albanian context, what are the explanatory variables that can be associated with communicative teaching behaviours?

As a whole, this section will discuss different issues, such as: the typical teaching patterns of each approach, the distinguishing class activities for each teaching method, the role of the teacher/learners and the typical classroom interactions within each paradigm, the way errors are corrected, the strengths and weaknesses of each approach, etc. The discussion will help the researcher to decide which questions should be included on the observation sheet, as well as enable the analysing and commenting of the data gathered. Additionally, the last part of this section will give a brief overview of the main cognitions EFL teachers have about learning/teaching and how they and other external factors influence the teaching practice. Additionally, in relation to the Albanian teaching context, it will put forth two potential agents that are worth investigating.

2.1.a. Terminology, Organisation and Rationale

Different theories about the nature of language and how languages are learned (the approach) imply different ways of teaching (the method), and different methods make use of different kinds of classroom activities (techniques).

Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics, 1985:15.

The terms "method", "approach" and "techniques" are often used in different ways in the field of SLA. The present paper will follow the above-mentioned standardization to discuss GT, PPP and TBL in terms of three main parameters: History and Conception of Language, Conception of Teaching and Further Considerations.

As mentioned elsewhere, the teaching approach of EFL Albanian teachers has not been studied from an empirical perspective. Therefore, no previous research could act as a guide to what teaching theory and teaching approach has mostly influenced the teaching of foreign languages in Albania. However, in line with reasonable expectations, it is assumed in this paper, that institutional attempts to

change the methods of EFL teaching in Albania might be/have been fruitful, partially successful or fruitless. This means that there is now a probability that the current teaching approach of Albanian EFL teachers is found anywhere along the continuum from GT to TBL. PPP is a very popular teaching method, said to be a variation of structuralist approaches as well as a weak form of CLT (Howatt, 1984a) and, hence, situated between the two extremes. As it accordingly fits the learning expectations of Albanian teachers/students (i.e. a teacher-centred approach, the content mainly centred around grammatical structures, etc. – see Seferaj and Dyrnishaj, 2006.), PPP is likely to recently have been adopted by Albanian EFL teachers.

Additionally, the author took into consideration the following three factors in deciding to revise the three teaching approaches mentioned above:

- a) The fact that few Western approaches were allowed to penetrate in self-isolating communist Albania for several decades, from 1944 to 1992
- b) His ten-year EFL teaching experience in Albania, as well his learning experience in the country
- c) The popularity of each teaching method in other (East) European countries

2.2. Grammar Translation Method

2.2.a. *History and Conception of the Language*

Stern (1983) argues that no full and comprehensive documented history of the Grammar Translation method exists. However, it is well known that GT started out as the principal technique of L2 teaching in German schools towards the end of the eighteenth century. German students were taught to acquire a reading knowledge of French as a foreign language by mainly focusing on French grammar and applying their grammatical knowledge to the translation of French texts. Hence, GT was derived from the traditional scholastic approach and was further developed by different German scholars.

GT was promptly used as the only L2 teaching method in other European countries as well. The rapid spread of this method throughout the old continent was enabled by a variety of reasons. In my view, the following three appear to be the principal ones: Firstly, teachers and pupils were already accustomed to this way of learning/teaching from their classical studies. Secondly, GT had high academic status as '*...it was regarded as an educationally valid mental discipline in its own right*', Stern 1983:456. Lastly, it was seen as a means of improving students' awareness of their own language too.

However, the method was neither research-based, nor firmly theoretically-grounded. Mackey (2006) states that the methodology was founded on the premise that the main purpose for studying a foreign language was to be an arduous intellectual exercise in logic and deduction. According to Larsen-Freeman (2000:14) the rationale for using this method was: *Literary language is superior to spoken language*. Others go further and claim that it merely operated/operates on the untrue belief: '*what is taught is learnt*'.

Yet, GT is a method that is principally constituted by the analysis/study of the grammatical rules of the L2 and the reinforcement of the learned grammatical/lexical knowledge through fill-in-the-blank type exercises, dictations or sentence translations. It follows that it views language learning as a process that includes some mentalistic features (e.g. memorisation, logical thinking, development of mental discipline through learning, etc.), as well as some behavioristic aspects (e.g. the notion of habit formation through reinforcement). Consequently, it can be argued that its theoretical base partially lies in two well-known concepts: faculty-psychology and behaviourism - although the latter was not known yet as a theory when GT started to be employed as an L2 teaching method.

2.2.b. Conception of the Teaching Process

The following is a typical example of a teaching plan in the sixteenth century:

1. *Reading it over to the children;*
2. *Shewing the plaine meaning in as few words as you can;*
3. *Propounding every piece of it in a short question, following the words of the booke, & answering it yourself out of the words of the book;*
4. *Asking the same questions of them & trying how themselves can answer them, still looking upon their books. Then let them goe in hand with getting it amongst themselves.*
Brisnley 1627 (cited in Kelly, 1969:50).

Because GT considers language as a collection of grammar rules, it is very much based on codifying the L2 into frozen syntax rules and eventually memorising the grammar structures one after the other, from the easiest to the most complicated ones. This results in a continuous focus on form in GT classes. Indeed, a GT teacher typically starts the class by deductively teaching some new grammar rules. After that, students are given some time to read the in-depth grammatical explanation(s) and the examples provided in the book or on the blackboard. Then, they are asked to reinforce the new language by completing discrete item grammar exercises (e.g. *Write the regular form of the following verbs*). Having finished this task, students are called upon one by one to read aloud their answers and the teacher is supposed to promptly correct every single mistake made.

Alternatively, as illustrated in appendix I, the teacher might first present the students with an authentic text. Then, in a sequence that matches the traditional Brinsley pattern, the teacher explains the meaning of the new language and provides opportunities for learners to practise and eventually memorise the target construction. To achieve this, he/she may ask one of the students to read the first sentence and translate it word-for-word into his/her mother-tongue language. Further, another student can be called on to do exactly the same with the second sentence, and the procedure goes on like this. While helping with the translation of new words, the teacher also corrects/improves the student's version in case the sentences are not perfectly syntactically and/or semantically translated into the L1. *The result is that students are more often focused on the L1 end-product than on **vocabulary** and **meaning** of L2*, Gorsuch 1998 – cited in Hinkel, 2005:666.

However, one might contradict Gorsuch and claim that there is some vocabulary training taking place in a GT class as well. Indeed, as demonstrated in appendix I, students might learn L2 words through direct translations and/or GT teachers might use different activities (e.g. bilingual word lists, dictionary study and memorisation by rote learning of all the new lexical items used in the text, etc.) to promote students' vocabulary growth. Additionally, it can be argued that students are taught how to spell words correctly, as they are continuously asked to write down the answers of most questions. Nevertheless, little is done to improve their communicative writing skills, because the above-mentioned written "exercises" (see Ellis, 2000:195) are activities that entail no communicative writing purpose.

Likewise, little attention is given to speaking and listening skills in a typical GT class, *because the main goal for learning a language is not for speaking and/or communication* – Ariza, 2002:86. Admittedly, most of the speaking is done in L1 and few opportunities are given to learners to practise their L2. For this reason, students often produce unnatural language on the rare occasions they are asked to create their own sentences. To give an illustration, the students in one of the classes I observed wrote the following examples after being asked to make their own sentences with the grammatical structure '*there is*':

There is a mother, a father and a daughter in my family. ("The daughter" herself speaking).

A bathroom in the school there is.

There is my willingness to get a ten in English. (The word "willingness" was translated from Albanian into English by the teacher when the student asked for it).

The teacher reordered the words in the second sentence and emphasised/repeated the other two sentences. This behaviour indicates that she judged the other two sentences 'grammatically' correct, because the teacher – being given the role of 'the expert' under this paradigm – has to correct every incorrect answer, as errors are never tolerated in GT classes.

Indeed, this teaching method operates on the belief that once the student is made conscious of the grammar rule and thoroughly understands and memorises it, he/she is intellectually able to properly apply it in his/her translation drills. A failure to give the accurate answers would imply that a student has low intelligence. Consequently, students attending GT classes are said to experience very high levels of stress, as they are merely seen as absorbers who are expected to satisfy the teacher by producing accurate answers in immediate translation/ fill-in-the-gap exercises.

Conceptualizing the roles of the teacher and the students in such a way leads to a very teacher-centred teaching approach.

2.2.c. **Further Considerations**

"In the past, the prevalence of grammar-translation method led to an extraordinary phenomenon: students were unable to speak fluently after having studied the language for a long time. For this reason, translation has been defined as 'uncommunicative, boring, difficult, and irrelevant'".
Polio and Duff, 1994:314.

In line with the above statement, some linguistics (e.g. Long, 1991; McCarthy, 2000; etc.) share the view that the grammar translation approach is an inappropriate teaching method for the needs of the twenty-first century learner that is likely to use his/her English in everyday business communications, during his/her holidays abroad, or even for immigration purposes. Others (e.g. Holliday, 1994; Pennington, 1995; Canagarajah, 1996, etc) criticise the fact that students are hardly seen as individuals who bring their own learning history into a GT class and see this feature more like a hindrance because students cannot personalise/develop their own individual learning style, if teachers do not encourage them to produce their own language. Other criticisms apply to learners' anxiety. As Krashen (1982:129) points out, anxiety is particularly raised for the students who are "*under-users – not inclined towards grammar study*".

Obviously, there are also inevitable challenges and comments coming from the camp that supports the communicative teaching approach. Krashen (1982), for instance, argues that explicit grammar teaching is fruitless in that the insufficient language input – typically provided in a GT class by reading selections that are far more challenging than the learners' current level of development – enables little L2 acquisition. Johnson (1999:389) claims that

"the emphasis on analyzing every word in a text in terms of grammar not only fails to help, it positively hinders development of another important communicative skill – that of understanding message in a linguistic context which is only partially understood".

Terrell (1991) goes even further and argues that not only does EGI - Explicit Grammar Instruction – do little in increasing fluency, but there is evidence that it does not lead to an immediate improvement of accuracy, either.

Yet, the grammar translation method – far from being dead - is still a dominant method of learning/teaching foreign languages around the world. Reflecting on what makes this approach so resistant, some modern ELT experts are quick to find some practical reasons, e.g. it is practical for use in large classes - Johnson and Johnson (1999); or it is easy to use because it requires few teaching skills and not-thorough L2 linguistic competence on the part of the teacher – as claimed by Medgyes, 1983 and Brown, 2001. On the contrary, other linguists associate its success with the valuable points grammar translation has, e.g.: it can increase reading comprehension – Byram (2003); or it can facilitate L2 learning as it uses L1 as a reference system and *“hence, cross-lingual techniques such as translation can be a ‘natural’ learning strategy”* – Stern, 1990:472.

Lastly, it is worth mentioning different studies (e.g. Lapkin et al., 1991; Harley 1993) that have found that high levels of grammatical accuracy are hardly obtained in communicative language classes.

2.2.d. **Other early Structuralist Approaches**

“All the early reformers were essentially ‘loners’. Each of them produced a ‘method’, and each wrote a background thesis to justify the ideas which it represented. None of them, however, attracted a following or founded a school of thought with a potential for further development”,

Howatt and Widdowson, (2004:166).

New teaching approaches appeared in Europe as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century. The Direct Method, The Series Method, The Oral Approach, etc. tried to innovate the way foreign languages were taught by emphasising the use of the target language in L2 classrooms, separating the four skills, introducing the teaching of phonetics into language teaching pedagogy, etc. Nonetheless, as Howatt and Widdowson argue, only a few of these methods succeeded in influencing the way English was/is taught in Europe.

Informed by the same structuralist beliefs, Behaviourism appeared in the 1940-ies as a major theory of language acquisition/learning. American structuralists (Bloomfieldians) argued that L2 learning is a process similar to L1 acquisition that needs frequent practice, positive reinforcement (like rewards and success) and clear objectives to help learning (e.g.: *by the end of the lesson the students will be able to...* – as highlighted by Hartley, 1998). Additionally, they claimed that language learning is a system of rule-governed forms that is learned through habits (e.g. dialogues, imitations, repetitions, drills, memorisation, etc). Using this behaviourist-psychologist theory, the audio-lingual method expanded quickly during the early Cold War years. The backbone of it was: *“the emphasis on the audio-lingual skills over the reading/writing skills”*, Encyclopaedia of Language and Education, 1999:96.

In addressing the limitations of audio-lingualism, Williams and Burden (1997:10) argue that the following five drawbacks are the chief ones:

1. *The passive role of the learners.*
2. Cognitive processes involved in learning are neglected.
3. Emphasis is on drills and little attention is given to the meaning they carry.
4. *Little interaction and negotiation of meaning takes place in the classroom.*
5. *Making mistakes is seen as a negative behaviour.*

Regardless of its Western origin, audio-lingualism also had a certain impact in the way foreign languages were taught in Albania. Indeed, a number of high schools in the capital city were equipped with language laboratories and repetition techniques were introduced in L2 teaching in Albania during the late seventies. However, as a student educated during the eighties in Albania, I remember that the grammar-translation method was still the main teaching pattern in the country – occasionally enriched by memorisation of dialogues, or choral repetitions.

2.2.e. **PPP**

The three-P teaching approach can be described as a "*variation on audio-lingualism*" (Harmer, 2001), as well as "*a weak CLT form*" (Gower and Walters, 1983). According to Howatt (1984b:16), one of the main features of the weak version of CLT is "*to practice using the foreign language*". Other characteristics of this teaching approach are mentioned below.

The Presentation-Practice-Production method, similar to the classic audio-lingual approach, seeks to train learners to obtain control over the L2 sounds, structures and forms through habit formation. Nevertheless, PPP replaced substitution drills with cue-response ones and contextualised repetitions that carry meaning. Another innovative feature of PPP is the stimulation/creation of realistic situations that place learners in a position where they feel a need to use the target language. Other PPP class activities and techniques are detailed below, while a PPP lesson plan for presenting new language with activities for improving language skills is included in Appendix II.

Presentation: At this stage teachers typically involve the students in a situation that contains natural examples of the target language. It is believed that enhancing students' involvement increases their recognition and comprehension of the new language – hence, educators most often make use of different creative resources (e.g. pictures, dialogues, actual/imaginative classroom situations, written or recorded texts, etc.) to present the target language in context. Additionally, in order to help the students form a conceptual understanding of the meaning behind the situation, the teacher might use other teaching techniques like elicitation, body language, recycling chunks of language already known by the students, etc. During this stage, the teacher also checks for

comprehension, helps the students guess the rule and/or tells the students the explicit rules of the new language. Characteristically, L2 educators explain/teach meaning, sound and full forms (e.g. inflectional or affirmative, interrogative, negative verb forms) in a PPP lesson. Moreover, the teacher might even use coral drills to model the language.

As seen above, the teacher plays a very active role during the introduction stage. By contrast, the learners are given the passive role of the 'recipients of information' at this early stage.

Practice: The teacher still directs the learning process, but the focus in the class is not entirely centred on him/her. Indeed, after asking several students to mechanically repeat the grammatical item just encountered and readily correcting any accuracy mistakes, the teacher might step a bit aside to give the class more time to create familiarity with the new language. Still under his/her supervision, the students might be asked to work on their own (e.g. to drill the form in written exercises) or to repeat orally the target language to fellow students organised into pairs/groups. In both cases the teacher uses clue-response activities to contextualise the drills (i.e. either he/she points out to one picture and asks "*What is the man carrying?*", or the students are given out the picture and are asked to write down the answer of the same question). Additionally, other more communicative activities can be used to provide controlled practices for the learners, e.g. gap activities, semi-controlled/controlled role-plays, dialogue creations, etc.

Production: Once the target language is presented and practised until it sticks, the PPP learning culminates with the free production stage – during which the learners are asked to use the new language in their free speaking/writing. This stage is very learner-centred; the only thing the teacher has to do is to choose tasks that place the learners in positions where they need to use the linguistics items they have been drilling. It is believed that when the learner does not know the answer beforehand, he/she genuinely says/asks for something and, thus, the following 'realistic' communicative activities are most used at this stage: interviews, problem solving, games, information gaps, free role-plays, etc.

However, while applying PPP in my L2 classes, I have encountered two main drawbacks. Firstly, quite often my students use previously seen structures (instead of the target language) to accomplish their speaking task(s). After being asked, they do manipulate the target form in their "free" speaking activity. Nevertheless, one can claim that genuine communication is not taking part in this case as students are not using the language to achieve an outcome, but simply to demonstrate their control of the target structure. A language-focused activity that incorporates similar elements is defined by Johnson, 1999:339 as a *pseudo communication task*.

Secondly, reflecting on my own L2 learning experience, I have realised that each 'learned' structure needs to be revised several times in order to be part of a student's L2 communicative performance. Given the fact that there are so many linguistic items to be presented/drilled/practised and a limited amount of time (on average about eight years) for L2 classes in Albania – equal to eight hundred contact hours - it is obvious that there is not enough time to teach learners all the rules of a language. Some scholars have noticed this pedagogical concern and have readily suggested that the teaching of marked grammatical items can account for the acquisition of one or many unmarked structures. For examples, Ellis (1997) provides research evidence about how the teaching of indirect objects can trigger the acquisition of direct objects. However, the universality of this claim, as well as the durability of the triggered effect is still to be explored and researched.

Many other concerns have been expressed about the PPP limitations. In Lewis' eyes (Lewis, 1996:9) '*the PPP paradigm is, and always was, nonsense*', because it reflects neither the nature of language nor the way of L2 learning. Students do not learn only what they are taught and languages are not learnt in a linear way. On the contrary, it is believed (see Krashen, 1982) that L2 learners 'pick up' the language they are ready to acquire once they receive input that is comprehensible. As PPP features a limited one-item linguistic presentation, it does not offer the learners the possibility to enhance their knowledge of English by noticing and acquiring other linguistic structures they might be ready to obtain. According to Scrivener (1996), the latter is probably the most worrying feature of PPP.

Nevertheless, classroom-based research (e.g. Pienemann, 1987; Ellis, 1997, 2003; Mitchell, 2000, etc.) shows that learners do not obtain a high level of grammar accuracy in L2 when the teaching approach emphasises fluency at the expense of a focus on form. In addition, PPP seems to be widely used around the world (see Edwards, 1996) because it readily fits the learning/teaching beliefs of millions of EFL students/teachers residing in different continents (including the East-European communist countries). Indeed, studying the appropriateness of the communicative approaches in an Asian country, Hofstede (1986) found that Japanese learners are used to studying in a structured learning process and, thus, feel better in "*structured learning situations*", Hofstede, 1986:314.

2.3. Communicative Language Teaching

2.3.a. *History and Conception of the Language*

Communicative Language Teaching emerged from the growing dissatisfaction of L2 instructors/linguists. By the end of the nineteen sixties, it was obvious that traditional methods tended to produce grammatically prepared students, but communicatively incompetent L2 speakers. Educators felt that students were not learning how to use the L2 in a real context in order to communicate. Therefore, interest in the use of real-life situations in communicative class activities grew; this movement was institutionalised by the Council of Europe that took research steps forward to study and meet the needs of L2 European learners/speakers. As a result, CLT appeared and developed during the seventies.

It is generally accepted that the appearance and development of CLT is closely linked to the development of sociolinguistics as a discipline. Hymes' notion of Communicative Competence laid the basis of the theory of CLT. In a paper he wrote in 1972, D. Hymes argued that not only the knowledge of linguistic rules (Chomsky's concept of "linguistic competence" – see Chomsky 1965:4), but even other socio-cultural properties, can account for successful L2 communication. According to Hymes, within the context of a particular discourse, the L2 speaker must use his/her behavioural speech (learned by the study of linguistic rules), as well as other appropriate utterances of speech connected with the context contour – chosen by the speakers to indicate their attitude, culture, background, social position, etc. This linguistic/non-linguistic context-related speech, that he called "competence for use" – Hymes, 1972:279, has to be appropriate for the place and time of use, but not necessarily be grammatically correct. The competence for use is acquired through authentic language use in L2 classrooms when students engage in real-life communicative activities. Therefore, the backbone of the CLT is *you learn to talk to people by actually talking to them* (Cook, 2001:215).

Hymes' concept of Communicative Competence was further elaborated by other linguists. Canale (1983) provides a set of three components that are involved in natural communication: Linguistic/Grammatical Competence, Sociolinguistic Competence (Socio-cultural and Discourse Competence) and Strategic Skills – a schematic representation is included in appendix III. Based on this framework, the CLT continues to expand in different perspectives and several pedagogical approaches have grown around it. The main ones are functional, notional and task-based approaches/syllabi (see appendix IV for more details).

Although Communicative Competence is mainly a theory about language use, more recently linguists have looked to social interactionism to provide a language learning theory for it. Social interactionism is very much grounded on the research and the writings of Vygotsky (1978) who suggested that, while guided by an expert, a child has the potential to reach beyond his present cognitive level within a developmental zone, which he called the *Zone of Proximal Development*.

At the very heart of this learning theory is the premise that learning is achieved in a context with significant others, as Williams and Burden (1997:39) suggest:

"From the time we are born we interact with each others in our day-to-day lives, and through these interactions we make our own sense of the world. ... We learn a language through using the language to interact meaningfully with other people".

There are two other linguistic theories that include communicative functions and pragmatics and focus on the use of language in communication. Consequently, they have influenced the growth of CLT. They include Krashen's SLA theory and Speech Act theory and Grice's Implicature. The latter is mainly concerned with the way the language forms (i.e. communicated messages) and language users interrelate with each other (see Schmitt 2002), whereas the former is a multi-faceted theory that postulates five main hypotheses. The Acquisition/Learning Hypothesis explains that learning and acquisition are two different processes. In Krashen's view only acquired language is readily available for natural/spontaneous use. Furthermore, he adds that the only way of acquiring language is by using it, because the process of language acquisition is a subconscious process and *"language acquirers are not usually aware of the fact that they are acquiring language, but are only aware of the fact that they are using language for communication"*, (Krashen, 1982:10).

2.3.b. Conception of the Teaching Process

Having explored a weak CLT version (PPP), this section will present a close-up view of Task Based Learning (TBL) – said to be a 'strong' CLT framework. Holliday (1994) uses the word 'strong CLT' to define a culture-sensitive approach that engages learners in the language itself (i.e. functions of language, components of meaning, etc.) through the functional account of language use (i.e. descriptions of texts, speech acts, etc). This definition seems to be in line with the version of TBL described by Willis (1996) and further elaborated by Willis and Willis (2001:176) who argue that this approach rests on two main principles.

Firstly, it is organised around **tasks**, rather than linguistic items. There are various definitions for the word 'task'. However, given the focus of this paper, it is sufficient to say that a task is any meaning-focused activity that generates a genuine need to use the language. It can be any productive/receptive activity with a clear purpose and a final product. Unlike GT exercises, TBL tasks emphasise fluency rather than accuracy. Furthermore, TBL tasks are different from PPP activities in that the former are the focus of learning, whereas the latter are the objectives of learning.

As regards the use of receptive tasks, plenty of intensive/extensive reading/listening activities are used in communicative classes, in order to shift students' attention from form-focus to message-focus and/or enrich input. Indeed, TBL practitioners are persuaded that the more students listen/read, the better their L2 proficiency becomes. This builds a case for the use of lengthy receptive class exercises (e.g. listening to a song/anecdote, reading a newspaper article with emphasis on a general understanding, etc.) that "*aim to develop a top-down, global understanding of spoken/written language*", Brown, 2001. Whereas activities like: reading notices for details, following instructions, etc. that focus on the parts of the language using 'bottom-up' processing strategies are typically used in communicative approaches to enhance learners' intensive reading/listening skills and develop their listening/reading strategies.

Secondly, while the focus is on the process (tasks), Richards and Rogers (1986) argue that learning will take place only if there is some kind of communicative purpose that involves form and meaning. To this end, L2 students are expected to practise their productive skills quite often in a TBL class. To make them say/write something in the target language, the teacher uses various spontaneous, relevant and life-like, productive tasks (e.g. surveys, role-plays, debates, problem-solving, quizzes, games, etc.) in which students feel compelled to speak and have a genuine reason to do so. By taking part in production activities L2 learners are encouraged to "*develop towards the creation of a meaning-system*" – Willis and Willis, 2001:174. The linguistic form they will employ to convey the message is not essential. Likewise, grammar instruction and error correction are generally ignored during a TBL class.

In relation to vocabulary teaching/studying, Schmitt (2000:14) argues that "*TBL gives little guidance about how to handle vocabulary, other than as support vocabulary for the functional language use*". This approach assumes that L2 vocabulary, like L1 vocabulary would take care of itself, once learners are emerged in the L2 reading/listening processes. Hence, learning words in context is the most common vocabulary teaching exercise. However, teachers might use other class activities to provide opportunities for revision, e.g. (snake-word) games; vocabulary-building puzzles; categorising word exercises; highlighting collocations; matching definitions to words; etc.

To conclude, TBL is a learner-centred teaching approach that involves the use of communicative tasks as the main teaching unit in L2 classes. "*Tasks are to be carried out in the target language*" (Willis and Willis, 2001:173) and pair/group interactions¹⁾ are often used to maximise learners' speaking time in the class (see Burrows, 2008). Under this paradigm, the teachers' role changes from stage to

Note1: This would be not necessary true in Holliday's version of the strong version of CLT. For him the use of group work is one of the features of the weak version.

stage. During the pre-task phase, the major task of the teacher is to select learning materials that are both appropriate (in terms of linguistic difficulty) and appealing (in terms of content/topic) to his/her students. During the task cycle, he/she has to react promptly when asked for help and ease the learning process by motivating learners to engage with the task and encouraging them to perform the task. Finally, teachers might do some language input or delayed correction at the end of the lesson.

2.3.c. **Further Considerations**

While putting learners at ease, CLT does make the L2 teacher's life more difficult for a variety of reasons. First of all, as there are several variations of CLT, the methodology itself is not very explicit. For example, there is little agreement among CLT adherents to whether or not errors need to be treated in a CLT class (see Lightbown, 2002; Brown, 2007, Spada, 2007, etc.). To stretch the point even further, those who agree that the treatment of certain errors accelerates learners' L2 acquisition, still disagree on the following: "when" – on the spot, or delayed feedback; "how" – explanation, correction, repetition, or paraphrase; and "who" – the teacher, the partner or the learner himself/herself (see Mishra, 2005; Spada, 2007, etc.). Therefore, teachers find it difficult to make an informed choice for a variety of pedagogical principles. Secondly, CLT seems to require teachers to have a native-like English language proficiency. This can be a hindrance, if we take into consideration the fact that an overwhelming number of EFL teachers around the world are NNS (non-native speakers) teachers. Additionally, many NNS teachers have experienced a GT learning approach themselves and are not properly trained to teach CLT classes because of the lack of appropriate CLT teacher-training courses, lack of effective CLT class strategies, etc. Thirdly, EFL teachers are concerned about the efficiency of CLT activities when this approach is implemented in big classes (see Anderson, 1993). They argue that it is difficult to motivate, encourage and get to perform the task with as many as forty students at the same time. Fourthly, many CLT practitioners feel that excessive time is needed on the part of the teacher to prepare effective CLT activities. In addition, a lack of authentic materials can exist in many parts of the world. Fifthly, as Skehan (1996:30) argues, because too much emphasis is placed on fluency, L2 learners run the risk of "*becoming confined to the strategic solutions they develop, without sufficient focus for structural change or accuracy*". Lastly, many EFL teachers seem not to be convinced themselves of the supremacy and immediacy of CLT. Indeed, one might as well raise the question: Why should Albanian EFL instructors teach their learners communicative language skills if institutional tests (including the Matura State Exam in English) in the country measure students' knowledge of grammar? After all, teachers in Albania are often evaluated on the basis of their students' test scores.

Yet, many educators are forced to use this approach simply because their school administrators, or MASH in the case of Albanian EFL teachers, insist. Nevertheless, what they do once they close their classroom door is still to be discovered.

2.4. Summary of Typical Teaching Behaviours

Table I provides a summary of the class activities and pedagogical principles that are central to each teaching method/approach reviewed above.

Class activities, techniques, behaviours	Teaching Method	Rationale
Teacher asks students to translate isolated words, whole sentences from L1 to L2 and vice-versa.	GT	Translation is the main learning outcome. Consequently, better learners are at translation exercises, more successful they are. Additionally, translation exercises are used in a GT class to improve learners' L1 knowledge and to provide opportunities for students to practise/drill and eventually memorise the target grammar point.
Teacher asks a display question (i.e. he/she knows the answer beforehand)	GT	Students are asked display questions in order to reinforce/drill the new linguistic item they have been explained. In addition, a GT teacher might use display questions to check his/her students' preparation.
Teacher (Students) use L1 to perform communicative acts.	GT	There is no need to practice listening/speaking skills in a GT class. Additionally, students can comprehend grammar rules stated in their own language better than in L2.
Teacher gets students to explain the grammar rules they follow.	GT	Language learning is regarded as an educationally valid mental discipline. Therefore, it is believed that the knowledge of grammar can be acquired through the memorization of rules.
Teacher/students analyse words in a text and find syntax or morphology similarities between L1 and L2.	GT	The process of learning is facilitated through conscious learning practices (e.g. grammar rules and similarities between L1 and L2).
Teacher-Students interaction.	GT	The teacher is 'the expert' who explains the grammar, corrects students' errors and gives them a mark. Therefore, every activity is organised around the teacher in a GT class.
Teacher explains a grammar point.	GT PPP	From the perspective of GT practitioners, grammar is at the heart of learning a foreign language. Likewise, in a PPP approach, conscious and systematic study of rules is seen as essential - as languages are seen as collections of linguistic items.
Students do an accuracy-based activity (e.g. fill-in—the-blank; discrete-item grammar/vocabulary exercises, etc).	GT PPP	These exercises are typically used during a GT class in order to maximise learning through repetitions, as well as check learners' understanding/preparation of discrete grammar/vocabulary items. Serving the same purpose, these class activities might be used during the Practice phase of the PPP approach.
Teacher corrects errors on the spot.	GT PPP	As seen above, the GT operates on the belief that once the student understands the rule, he/she is intellectually able to get the right answer immediately. Therefore, errors are barely tolerated in a GT class. Likewise, errors are readily corrected during the Practice phase (PPP) because students need to form 'the right' habits.
Students drill language forms.	PPP	Particularly during the second phase of the PPP, students might be required to drill the target language in order to make it stick onto their intralanguage.
Teacher asks a referential question (i.e. he/she doesn't know the answer beforehand).	PPP TBL	Referential/personalised questions are used to create a link between the teacher and the student, as well as to foster genuine speaking in communicative classes.
Teacher (Students) use L2 to perform communicative acts.	PPP TBL	More students use the L2, better users they become. Therefore, both approaches emphasise the use of the L2 as the main language of instruction/interaction in the class.
Students do a fluency-based communicative activity.	PPP TBL	In a TBL view, learners acquire new language mainly through communicative use. Therefore, using plenty of fluency activities during the lesson is vital. Likewise, fluency-based tasks are used as examples of real

		communication during the third phase of the PPP approach. Nevertheless, the PPP uses real-life speaking activities in order to help learners activate the language just learned, not as a means of scaffolding/acquiring new language.
Student- Student interaction.	TBL (PPP)	The TBL often takes the role of group work, as it operates on the belief that learners learn through use and exposure. Therefore, more students feel the target language in use and experiment with it themselves, more their L2 competency improves. Likewise, learners are engaged in Student-student interactions during the Practice phase and/or the Production phase of the PPP.
Teacher gives delayed feedback.	TBL	This is typically done to provide language input and/or delayed correction, as well as to give a closing sense to the lesson.
Students report on what they have done.	TBL	There are two reasons why students are asked to report on what they have done: To maintain students' motivation and to give a sense of task outcome.

2.5. **ELT Teachers and Classroom Teaching – Two Important Factors Involved in ELT Change**

"Teachers are likely to use 'old' teaching techniques and approaches that are not consistent with the principles of the new education policy if the educational curriculum changes do not fit and reflect the teaching/learning situation realities in the country" – Fullan, 2001:178.

This section will first establish a working basis by reviewing research findings in three key areas (i.e. Teacher Cognition and Prior Learning, Teacher Training and Changes, as well as External Factors and Changes). Then, it will describe their relevance in the Albanian context and put forth two research cause-effect associations to be tested.

Research on teacher cognition suggests that teachers' mental lives play an important role in what they do in their classes (see Fullan, 2001; Williams and Burden, 1997, etc). What teachers know, think and believe and the impact of these mental factors in the way in which teachers exercise their practice is defined by Borg (1998a) as "*teacher cognition*". Given the focus of this study, conducting a review of teachers' minds and their professional lives might be helpful in highlighting common features that Albanian EFL teachers share and identifying possible interior/external factors that vary from one teacher to another.

2.5.a. Teacher cognition and Prior Learning Experiences

Research on teacher education has shown that EFL teachers have their own cognition about how languages are learnt/taught. Borg (2006) notices that there is ample evidence that teachers' experiences as learners can form cognitions about teaching and learning. Nisbett and Ross (1980) go even further and claim that the teaching model a teacher has been exposed to plays a crucial role in the way an instructor approaches the process of teaching, because "*beliefs established early on in life are resistant to change*", *ibid.*, 1980:32.

As argued above, the majority of in-service Albanian EFL teachers were taught English as an L2 in a conventional way. Being one of them, I formulated my very first ideas about English and ELT while attending Miss Zamira's classes. Her image of English teaching/learning was further consolidated during my university studies. Indeed, the BA in ELT program I attended at the UoV during the years 1995-1999 included several modules that took an in-depth deductive look at different components of both Albanian and English language/literature. The seminars were merely conceptualised as a transmission of knowledge from the lecturer to the students and language/non-language classes were mainly conducted in Albanian.

There is research evidence that little has changed in the way university teaching is approached in post-communist Albania (see Peçi 2001). Consequently, it can be argued that the beliefs of most Albanian EFL teachers - formulated during the

time they were secondary school students and then further cemented during their ELT university courses – are deeply rooted in the transmission learning route.

2.5.b. Teacher Training and Changes

There is little agreement among researchers and scholars about the impact teacher training programmes have on **teacher cognition**. On one hand, several studies indicate that certain teachers' beliefs are static (e.g. the conception of good teachers – see Weinstein, 1990; teachers' concerns about teaching – see Cohen, 1983; trainees' image of teaching – see Calderhead and Robson, 1991; etc) and, thus, education programmes only play a minor role in changing teacher cognition about teaching/learning. On the topic, Kagan (1992:162) adds the following:

“...beliefs are a particularly provocative form of personal knowledge ... and university courses place too much emphasis on theoretical issues”.

On the other hand, there is a growing body of educators and researchers who strongly oppose Kagan's claims. The former were quick to reject the set of “unjustified” allegations against the relevance of teacher training courses made in her book, whereas the latter posed serious concerns about Kagan's conclusions after reviewing her work and finding a number of methodological inadequacies (see Dunkin 1995). In addition, different studies have tried to provide research evidence that shows how certain elements of a trainee's cognition (e.g. the conception of teacher's role in the class – see Richards et. at, 1996; teacher's understanding of his/her knowledge of professional discourse - see Freeman, 1993 and Richards et. at, 1996; developments in trainee's way of thinking, at least at the structural level – see Sendan and Roberts, 1998; etc.) can change during an education course after he/she has grasped the principles and practices underlying the training course.

Likewise, research studies indicate controversial results on the role teacher education/training courses play in promoting changes in in-service **teachers' behaviours**. Some researchers (e.g. Johnson, 1994; da Silva, 2005; etc.) are of the opinion that teacher training programmes can question and challenge teachers' previous beliefs. Some others go further and claim that these educational events can even change trainees' teaching approaches if they encourage participants to confront their old beliefs with the current ones and become cognizant of *the contradictions between what they themselves experienced and what they want their students to experience*, Tedick (2005:163).

On the contrary, others (e.g. Britzman, 1991; Kagan, 1992; Cortazzi, 1993; etc.) strongly disagree and offer empirical evidence to support the view that teachers' understandings of how to teach are tenacious, resistant to change and serve “as the framework of reference for prospective teachers' self-images”, Britzman – 1991:443.

The writer of this paper agrees with the former group of researchers and argues that teacher education/training can still induce behavioural teaching changes. Indeed, my own teaching/learning case seems to suggest that in-service teachers who approach the teaching of English traditionally and have their teaching/learning beliefs deeply rooted in their prior traditional learning experiences can still adopt alternative teaching approaches when they are offered the opportunity to reflect on their own teaching. More precisely, after teaching in the way I was taught for several years, I felt I needed to extend my professional experience and made the decision to attend a teacher-training course in a Western country. While living the Trinity CertTESOL experience, I very often felt frustrated as I had considerable difficulties communicating with my course-mates (native English speakers) and quite often they were unable to comprehend my unnatural English. Yet, I knew by memory almost every grammar rule and long lists of words... This bitter experience as a learner made me realise that translation and learning words by heart would never enable any students of mine to master the language. Therefore, I decided to approach my teaching differently. Being given a new alternative while attending the training course, I switched to the "friendly" teaching model my tutors were providing/promoting, despite the fact that I knew very little about CLT at the time.

Similarly, many Albanian EFL practitioners are offered the possibility to take part, for free, in several training events that are run by outside agencies (e.g.: British Council Albania, USAID, etc.) in the capital city. Most of these quality training activities are delivered in the form of seminars or short teacher training courses and seek to teach Albanian EFL teachers modern communicative approaches to L2 teaching, focusing on the 'why', 'what' and 'how' of teaching.

One might argue that these events might have influenced the way English language is taught by the teachers who have attended them.

2.5.c. External Factors and Changes

Internal factors (i.e. teachers' prior learning experiences, education and training) seem not to be the only factors that shape the minds of teachers and influence what they do in their classes. Different studies (e.g. Nunan, 1992; Johnson, 1996; Borg, 1998b, etc.) report several occasions when language teachers, constrained by external factors, used teaching activities/techniques that did not necessarily reflect their beliefs and/or pedagogical principles. For example, Richards and Pennington (1998) shed light on the case of several novice teachers in Hong Kong who did not use the communicative approach they had been exposed to during their teacher training course/practice. Instead, they adopted a '*safe teaching strategy*' – relying on the set syllabus and practicing teaching methodologies that met their students' expectation/beliefs – in order to deal successfully with discipline and motivation in their big classes.

Husbands et al. (2003) divides external factors in two main groups: contextual and content. The latter features the curriculum, the state and school education policy, syllabus, etc.; the former includes attitudinal factors (i.e. students' level of proficiency in English, their needs, interests; parents', colleagues and school principal's expectations and support, etc.).

The analysis and research of all these factors is beyond the scope of the present paper. However, based upon the historical, demographic and geographical context of the country - that takes up an area of 28,000 square kilometres and is home to 3.4 million people who lived under a brutal communist dictatorship until 1992 – one might argue that there should not be large differences among students' beliefs, school policies, parents' support and other contextual factors that might account for the support or hindrance of teacher development. Indeed, as argued above, Albanian students share traditional learning beliefs, the majority of Albanian parents have high expectations for their children and current state legislation does not allow elementary/high schools in Albania to have enough autonomy to make their own policies.

Yet, the teaching reality in the country – which is briefly mentioned below – features a unique content factor that might cater to the varied ways in which teachers approach the teaching of English in Albania: **the course-book**.

According to Sinclair and Renouf (1988) a course-book/syllabus is basically a set of instructions concerning operations in the classroom. It can be organised analytically and synthetically. Synthetic course-books rely on 'the what' of teaching, whereas analytic ones focus on 'the why'. The former are widely used in the ELT world and the three most-known synthetic syllabi are defined in the table below:

	<i>Structural or grammatical syllabi</i>	<i>Functional-notional syllabi</i>	<i>Situational/topic syllabi</i>
<i>Objectives listed:</i>	<i>grammatical items, rules for students to master</i>	<i>functions and notions</i>	<i>situations or topics</i>
<i>Focus:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>on form</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>the communicative purposes for which we use the language (functions)</i> • <i>notions - the conceptual meanings (objects, entities, states of affairs, logical relationship, and so on) expressed through language</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>graded structures</i>
<i>As defined by:</i>	<i>Long and Crookes, 1993:13</i>	<i>Nunan, 1988:35.</i>	<i>Long and Crookes, 1993:18.</i>

Table II gives a breakdown of the main synthetic syllabi used in EFLT.

2.5.d. Teaching Context in Albania

Originally devised simultaneously with the official language syllabus in 2000, *“English for You”* was the only officially prescribed course-book in Albania until recently. It is a four-level general English course that emphasises a deductive teaching/learning process. Its content is mainly centred around grammatical items, featuring a strong morphological emphasis, e.g. determiners, prepositions, singular/plural markings, etc. Moreover, it proceeds from simple structures to more complicated ones – reflecting the notion that languages are primarily learnt by building a solid *“grammatical stock of knowledge”* (Nunan 1991), through assimilation of each item and gradual exposure. Based on this evidence, one might argue that the course-book *“English for you”* is a typical **structural syllabus**. Nevertheless, the speaking section adheres to a **functional syllabus**. Indeed, there is a functional activity included in every lesson that covers the learning/practice of some functional language.

Yet, *“English for you”* was not the only textbook used in Albania in the years 1992-2007. A study (Kamberaj, 2003) that monitored the sales of English course-books in twelve bookshops in the capital city during a two-month period found that the series *“Easy English”* and *“Headway Series”* were the two most bought course-books, sharing respectively 62% and 29% of the sales. These numbers are reflective of both the state and private education market and show that while the series *“English for you”* was the set textbooks in all state schools, the *“Headway Series”* seemed to have been the favourite course-books for most Albanian private schools and/or private language schools/courses.

This implies that a large number of EFL Albanian teachers who were hired to teach afternoon classes in private language schools and/or delivered their own English training courses in their own place/house after working for six hours in state schools, used the course-book *“Headway”* as the main textbook for their teaching. Claimed to be based on a communicative methodology (See Soars and Soars 1986), this course-book is a grammatical/lexical/writing/situational syllabus that differs from the *“Easy English Series”* in some respects. Firstly, it places considerable emphasis on writing/speaking activities and gives due importance to both accuracy and fluency. Accordingly, it features exercises that use language for display purposes or drills, as well as communicative tasks that seek to make learners practise the language in meaningful ways. Secondly, an attempt has been made, in all the *“Headway Series”*, to incorporate grammar teaching/learning as part of the lesson, instead of being the focus of the whole lesson – as in the case of the textbook *“English for You”*. Thirdly, throughout the *“Headway Series”*, the learners are given an active role and the authors seem to have been sensitive to issues like what learners like, need and how/when they learn the most. In this regard, it features a section that teaches potential students/tourists how to survive in everyday situations, as well as includes sentence-based exercises that prepare students to do well in grammar/vocabulary progress tests – the most widely used type of progress test around the world.

To conclude, despite the fact that it does not reflect the teaching/learning beliefs of Albanian teachers, the "*Headway Series*" have been used for more than ten years as the main learning resource in many Albanian EFL classes. Textbooks play a significant part in the professional lives of EFL instructors; Richards (1993:253) argues that "*for new or inexperienced teachers, a course-book works with the teacher's book as a 'medium of initial teacher training'*". Based on this, one might speculate that the use of a communicative syllabus might have had an impact on the way English teaching is taught in Albania.

Yet, the possible association between the use of a course-book based on a communicative methodology and the teaching of L2 communicatively is an association to be tested.

2.5.e. Summary of Key Factors Involved in ELT Change in the Country

To this point, subsection 2.5 has briefly reviewed the theoretical framework upon which after-lesson interview questions will be based. More precisely, I have looked at various salient factors that inform us of the teaching of English as an L2. I have presented results from different studies showing how the teaching approach of EFL teachers can be shaped by their learning/teaching beliefs, as well as other internal and external factors. These previous research findings, my own teaching experience and my own knowledge of the ELT teaching reality in the country have been used as grounds for stating the following two associations to be investigated during this research:

- the relationship between the use of communicative course-books²⁾ and the presence of communicative teaching behaviours
- the relationship between the attendance at teacher training courses that emphasise CLT teaching approaches and the presence of communicative teaching behaviours

However, as this study is an exploratory one, a variety of above-mentioned factors involved in ELT change will be explored during the interviews.

Note2: As stated elsewhere, "Easy English" is no longer used in the country and from September 2007 Albanian EFL teachers have been allowed to decide themselves on the EFL textbook to use in their classes. However, this fact is of little relevance to this study as it explores EFL textbooks used in Albania during the years 1992-2007.

Chapter III - Methodology and Design of the Study

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the design of the study will be described by giving insight into how my observation schedule was developed and piloted before the main study. Additionally, I will justify the use of observation and interviews as main research tools and will mention several validity concerns that were taken into consideration during the preparatory phase. Lastly, I will try to set the study within the research tradition by referring to other studies that have used observation as the principal data collection technique.

3.2. Research Questions, Data Collection Instrument and Procedure

The research questions for this study are as follows:

- 1) How communicative are the classes of twenty-one Albanian EFL teachers in terms of certain observable behaviours?
- 2) Are there any internal/external factors that can be associated with communicative teaching behaviours of Albanian EFL teachers? If yes, which one(s)?

To fulfil the quantitative and qualitative aims of this small-scale research study, twenty-three Albanian EFL classes were observed during the period from October to November 2008. In addition, interviews were conducted after each observation session. Prior to observations/interviews, all participating teachers were asked to sign a Consent Form (see appendix V) that invited them to participate in the study, described the research procedure and took into consideration the participants' confidentiality and other voluntary issues. Following this agreement, no teacher's proper name appears in this study; instead, a four-figure code was used during the data collection procedure, e.g. TRO4 – the first two figures indicate the city/town/village (i.e. Tirane), and the last two the order of the observations in that place (i.e. the fourth).

Each observation session lasted forty-five minutes and involved a standardization procedure: an Albanian EFL teacher was observed by the researcher (me) while teaching one of his/her EFL classes, in his/her own place of work. A standard observation sheet was used to count the frequency of twelve class behaviours central to GT, PPP and TBL - summarised in section 2.4. As shown in appendix VI, observable behaviours were grouped conceptually – the first six represented traditional teaching activities. These were followed by six communicative items written in red. Every time a behaviour occurred, I recorded one tally mark under the appropriate category situated next to it. Additionally, a column titled "Odd Behaviours" appeared on the tally sheet. The term "Odd teaching Behaviours" is used throughout this study to refer to ambiguous activities that were not easily understood/classified, e.g. the teacher asked the students to do a fluency-based

activity, but did not intervene when virtually all students were making use of their L1 to perform the activity. As seen above, Willis and Willis (2001) argue that tasks should not be carried out in L1 in a communicative class.

Interviews were conceptualised in two parts (see appendix VII). Part II consisted of asking a set of four confirmation questions for accuracy purposes; Part I featured several specifying “wh”-questions that were generated from the observation sessions and were prepared to test the truth/falseness of the two assumptions made in chapter II. Firstly, if appropriate, the subject was asked direct question(s) to clarify the rationale behind her/his “odd” teaching behaviours. For example, there was a case when a teacher interrupted her chat with the class in L2 and unexpectedly asked a student to translate a whole sentence from English into Albanian. After being asked during the interview, the teacher claimed that she did that because she thought the student’s attention was wandering. Thus, this “odd” behaviour was not regarded as a GT teaching pattern because translation was not used on this occasion as a means of improving the student’s L2 competence. Secondly, the teachers were asked to provide the rationale behind their communicative teaching behaviours whenever a communicative teaching pattern was observed in the class. Explicit questions (e.g. *Why did you ask your students to work in their pairs?*) were used to fulfil this purpose. Lastly, in order to better understand why certain errors were left uncorrected, the observer kept notes of one or two uncorrected students’ mistakes and the teachers were asked direct questions during the interviews (e.g. *Why did you not correct X students when he/she made X error?*).

Interviews were conducted in Albanian, so that the participants could easily express their own thoughts. All teachers were interviewed by the researcher (me) and each session was designed to last approximately five-to-ten minutes. However, a Consent to Tape-record/Transcribe Form handed out prior to the interview encouraged teachers to expand on the issues and talk as long as they wished. Additionally, it informed the participants about the possibility to end the interview – should they wish to do so - at any time without any penalty and it asked teachers to give their written consent to record or to transcribe the interview/observation - see appendix VIII for more details.

Privacy seems to be a sensitive issue in Albania, as the majority of teachers expressed their concerns about the use of any recording device during the observations/interviews. Indeed, only three observations and four interviews were recorded, as a high percentage of participants did not give their permission to tape-record research sessions. The transcription of one of the recorded interviews is included in appendix IX.

In the cases when the interview was not recorded, verbatim notes were taken for each answer.

3.3. Pilot Study

I was able to pilot the observation practice on two EFL Albanian colleagues who are currently teaching English at a private ESL school in Vlore. The main reason for piloting was to make sure that the study featured inter-observer reliability. In order to address this issue, both classes were observed by two different raters: the researcher (me) and Dr. Kamberaj – a senior lecturer in Linguistics at the UoV. After counting the tallies for each observable behaviour, it was found that there was not an exact agreement between the two raters on the frequency of certain behaviours (e.g. Nr.2, Nr. 4 and Nr. 11). This was due to the difference between topographical and functional conceptualisation of the same observable phenomenon. That is to say, why I marked a tally for any single behaviour as it occurred, Dr. Kamberaj only marked the “obvious” phenomenon that readily fit their underlying function or purpose. The variation among observers experienced during the pilot study spurred me to add an appropriate column on the tally sheet titled “Odd Behaviours”.

Additionally, the categorization of B5/B7 was found to not be very suitable for the aims of this research. Originally, Brown’s (2001) classification of display and referential questions was used to count the questioning behaviours of the participating teachers. Brown (ibid:172) defines the former as “artificial” as they feature no communicative acts in themselves. By contrast, referential ones are questions for which the teacher does not know the answers in advance and, as such, typically stimulate longer responses.

However, during the pilot observation one of the teachers demanded to know why a student had not done his homework. Although this was an open-ended question readily classified in Brown’s referential category, it generated little communication and, thus, it was not appropriate to classify it as a stimulator of L2 class communication. Based on this evidence, it was agreed to classify, as display questions, all open-ended questions that stimulated short/very short responses (shorter than seven seconds). Likewise, all YES/NO questions were listed under the same category.

Lastly, problems were experienced during the pre-testing of interview questions too. Designed to get information on the reasons why ESL teachers approach the teaching of English communicatively, originally interviews featured only informal discovery questions. More precisely, while observing a communicative event taking place in the class (e.g. the teacher asking students to do activity X on page X in pairs of students), the observer would explicitly ask the teacher why he/she behaved in that way. By so doing, it was hoped that the real factor that informed teachers’ communicative teaching approaches would be detected (i.e. the use of communicative textbooks, their previous training experiences, their beliefs, or other reasons). Nevertheless, it was realised during the pilot study that teachers might sometimes not provide adequate data by giving answers like “*That’s the way I teach*”, or even “*I don’t know*”. To overcome this limitation, it was decided to add a second part in the interview during which all interviewees would be asked a set of four formal questions (see appendix VII).

The number of behaviours included in the observation sheet was found to be manageable.

3.4. Justification of Research Tools

“As the actions and behaviour of people are central aspects in virtually any enquiry, a natural and obvious technique is to watch what they do, to record this in some way and then to describe, analyse and interpret what we have observed”.

Robson, 1992:309.

Observation is largely used as the main research tool to investigate what happens in a class, as it directly observes different class behaviours/actions. Robson (1992) identifies two main types of observation research: Participant Observation and Structured Observation. The latter is the type of research that uses pre-determined designs and is typically conducted by a detached observer, whereas the former is carried out by a participatory observer (i.e. a teacher/tutor).

Given the aims of this study, watching and listening to what happens in the class seems to be an appropriate research technique for getting a general view of how communicative the classes are. Therefore, Structured Observation was chosen as the main research method. In addition, interviews – defined by Scott and Morison (2006:81) as *the preferred tool to obtain authentic accounts of subjective or lived experiences* – were also used in this study to better understand whether the textbook, “Western-style” teacher-training experiences, or any other interior/exterior factor can correlate significantly with the communicative teaching behaviours of Albanian teachers of English as an L2.

According to Flick (Flick, 1998:230), the use of mixed methods to collect data can add validity to the research as it offers the possibility to validate the findings of one approach using data gathered by the other method.

3.5. Validity and Reliability of the Study

As with all research, objectivity seems to be a key factor in observation too. Cohen et al. (2003) claims that reliable observation needs to have internal and external validity. Fears that the data analysed might be erroneous because the observer’s judgements are influenced by his/her own interests/biases, the participants’ behaviours are affected by the presence of the observer, or that informants are not the best representatives of the sample in the study relate to external validity concerns. The following threats interfere with internal validity issues:

1) Concerns about the applicability of the results of this one piece of research to other situations.
2) Concerns about the subjective and idiosyncratic nature of the observation study.
3) The concern that the results of this research study might not represent the real thing, the genuine product.

Table III outlines the main internal validity concerns – extracted from Cohen et al., 2003:129.

The above-mentioned validity concerns were taken into consideration during the preparatory phase. Firstly, due consideration was given to the observer's influence and the notion of objective behaviour interpretations. Thus, to have a realistic view of the degree to which teacher's behaviours were affected by the presence of the observer, two teachers (TR04 and VL02) were observed during two different teaching sessions. Afterwards, data obtained during the first observation was compared with that generated by the second one to identify any behavioural distortions. It was found that both teachers featured similar behaviours during each observation as there were almost the same number of tallies for each category (e.g. TR04 incorporated twenty-seven GT behaviours into her teaching during the first class and twenty-six GT ones during the second observation; while VL02 featured fourteen B7-B12 behaviours during each observation session). Therefore, it was concluded that reactivity towards the presence of the observer was not a serious hindrance to the external validity of the study.

Secondly, attempts were made to minimise the potential threat of observer's personal interpretations by developing a topography-based observation sheet. That is to say, the twelve observable behaviours included in the tally sheet were formulated as clearly as possible. For example, as explained above, **only** referential questions that prompted answers **longer than seven seconds** were tallied under the category "Teacher asks a display question". By clearly defining observable behaviours, there was little room left for personal interpretations. In addition, interviews were employed as a vehicle for collecting additional information about the underlying function and purpose of "odd" teaching patterns.

Thirdly, with respect to the sample size, an effort was made to meet the minimum desirable number of participants in correlation/observation studies, calculated by Cochran (1977) at around 30 subjects. However, because there were only twenty-one EFL teachers observed, the nature and the scope of the claims made in section IV will be limited to the participants of this study.

Lastly, in order to add internal validity to the project, a pilot study of the observation sheet and the interviews was conducted before the real research work.

3.6. Participants

The teachers chosen to participate in this study were sampled to be a reasonable representation of Albanian EFL teachers – estimated to be round 3,200 subjects, 2,000 of whom work in public schools. In accordance with the geographic dispersion of secondary and high schools in the country, a questionnaire was mailed to more than 150 EFL instructors teaching in private/public schools in the capital city, two main cities, three towns and five villages. The questionnaire (see appendix X) aimed to gather basic information about the English instructors who were willing to participate in this project.

Forty-eight subjects mailed back the completed questionnaire to the home address of the researcher and twenty-one of them were selected by using a random selection approach. In order to have a better general overview of EFL teaching in Albania and to prevent sample bias, the teachers' answers to the following two questionnaire items "Participation in Western-style teacher-training events" and "The use of the Headway Series as the main textbook for teaching English as an L2" were not used as selection criteria. However, the participants were selected to fairly represent the geographic dispersion of EFL teachers within Albania. Thus, eight participants were chosen from the capital city, four of them from each north/south city, two teachers worked in two town secondary/high schools and the other three in three village schools.

Among the twenty-one EFL Albanian teachers, there were nineteen females and two males. All the participants have taught English for over five years and six of them have attended teacher-training events organised by the British Council or USAID in Tirana. Five of the trained teachers were from the capital city and the other one was from a big southern city. Only two subjects (TR01 and VL02) were working as ESL teachers in private secondary schools/language schools at the time of the study.

Forty-three percent of the participants claimed that they have used another course-book, in addition to "English for you". Interestingly, all the teachers who shared this characteristic were working either in Tirana, or in a big city. More precisely, six of them were residing in the capital city, two in Vlore and the other one in a big northern city. Among all the participating teachers, there were three from Tirana who met the two criteria mentioned above: participating in teacher training courses and the use of the "Headway Series" in their classes during the years 1992 – 1997. More details about the participants' teaching/training experiences and their age are given in the table below.

Teacher	Age	Headway use (in years)	Training Course (in weeks)	Teacher	Age	Headway use (in years)	Training Course (in weeks)
1=TR01	32	15	2	12=VL02b	56	7	0
2=TR02	55	12	3	13=VL03	38	0	0
3=TR03	28	7	0	14=VL04	44	6	0
4=TR04a	44	0	2	15=SH01	38	0	0
5=TR04b	44	0	2	16=SH02	58	8	0
6=TR05	28	15	0	17=SH03	30	0	0
7=TR06	52	0	0	18=SH04	43	0	0
8=TR07	37	9	0	19=TO01	49	0	0
9=TR08	43	13	2	20=TO02	59	0	0
10=VL01	38	0	2	21=CO01	53	0	0
11=VL02a	56	7	0	22=CO02	34	0	0
				23=CO03	29	0	0

Table IV gives a breakdown of participants' age, teaching/training experiences.

3.7. Data Analysis

3.7.1. Research Question I

The first research question was addressed by hand counting the number of tallies for each category (behaviour) and summing up the number of tallies for GT teaching patterns (B1+B2+B3+B4+B5+B6) and CLT teaching behaviours (B7+B8+B9+B10+B11+B12) in order to have a GT/CLT raw score for each class observed. Then, for purposes of giving meaning to raw scores, the average score for each subject was calculated by using a simple technique. As shown below, the percentage formula used best suits the quantitative aims of this project because it shows in numbers the weight of CLT patterns compared to the total number of tallies marked in each class.

$$X \text{ (in \%)} = \frac{A \times 100}{B}$$

[X = Percentage of CLT teaching patterns; A = Sum of CLT tallies; B = Sum of total tallies (CLT +GT)]

Additionally, frequency distribution graphs were used to represent and compare the data collected. Mean percents were computed for each of the twelve class behaviours observed.

Prior to this statistical procedure, qualitative data gathered by interview questions was used to draw conclusions related to the proper classification of "odd" teaching behaviours. The following table was used to classify the behaviours properly:

Description of "odd" teaching behaviours	Rationale provided by teacher	Rationale provided in section 2.4.

Table V was used to classify "odd" teaching behaviour under the appropriate category.

The rationale behind the "odd" teaching behaviour – provided by the subject during the interview - was compared with the rationale behind the typical behaviour, outlined in section 2.4. If they matched, the "odd" behaviour was regarded and counted as a typical one; otherwise, no tally was marked at all.

3.7.2. Research Question II

Qualitative and quantitative methods were also employed to address the second research question. Thus, once the CLT percentage for each class was determined, subjects were grouped into five different categories (see table VI below) and mean percents were computed for each aggregation. Then, the mean percent of each group for each teaching pattern (e.g. B1, B5, etc.) was compared to the grand mean (i.e. GTA percentage) in order to highlight any possible relationship between the consistency of an interior/exterior factor and the frequency of a CLT/GT teaching behaviour. For example, we will see in the next chapter that the mean percent of GH for B1 is 0.9%. This signifies that translation represents 0.9% of the total teaching behaviours observed in classes taught by teachers who have used the Headway/Inside Out in their classes. This figure is considerably low compared to the mean percent of GT (3.7%), GN (5%) and GTA (3.5%) for B1. Therefore, one might argue that the use of a communicative course-book might account for the low incidence of translation teaching behaviours in ELT classes.

Abbreviation	Group Name	Group Description
GH	Group Headway	Group of Albanian EFL teachers who had used Headway/Inside Out as the main learning resource in their classes.
GT	Trained Group	Group of Albanian EFL teachers who had participated in a Western-style training event.
GTH	Trained Group Headway	Group of Albanian EFL teachers who had used a communicative syllabus and had participated in a Western-style training event.
GN	Group Training, No No Headway	Group of Albanian EFL teachers who were untrained and had used the "Easy English" series.
GTA	Group of All Teachers	Group of all twenty-one participating Albanian EFL teachers.

Table VI: A list of group abbreviations used during the analysis of data.

The use of an EXCEL spreadsheet program allowed me to calculate mean percents and grand means, as well as assemble observation/interview data into meaningful visual formats.

3.8. Referring to Previous Similar Studies

A large number of studies have used observation as the principal data collection technique to examine various class behaviours. Some of these studies, briefly mentioned in section 2.5., and others will be described in more detail below.

Johnson (1994) undertook a 15-week study to examine the role that teachers' prior beliefs play in second language instructions. She observed the teaching of a pre-service ESL teacher during her TESOL practicum and conducted interviews after each teaching session. Johnson described the mismatch between Maja's vision of teaching and classroom realities of teaching. She concluded that the latter can shape the way teachers conceive of themselves as ESL teachers.

Further evidence of the influence of teacher-training programmes on trainees is shown in work by da Silva (2005), who investigated the teaching of three Brazilian undergraduate students and compared their behaviours to ideas prompted in the programme. Observation was used in this study as the major data source to investigate the participants' perception of speaking, listening, reading and writing. However, self-evaluation reports, stimulated interviews and lesson plans produced by the participants were also used as research tools. Detailed analysis of the data gathered identified communicative tenets in the participants' teaching. Additionally, the researcher found that the programme communicative framework was also reflected in the way the three pre-service teachers had planned their lessons. Given the traditional learning/teaching beliefs of the three participants, this study makes a strong claim about the manner in which trainees' teaching behaviours do change during teacher training programmes.

A third researcher in this area, who has conducted a number of studies in teachers' practices and cognitions in grammar teaching, is Borg (e.g. Borg 1998b, 1999, 2001 and 2006). Through observations and interviews Borg has provided new insights into the understanding of the teaching of grammar and the way teacher cognition and practice relate with each other in formal EFL instructions. Among others, a study that is worth mentioning is the research conducted by Borg (1998b) in Malta to find out what contributes to teachers' decisions in the teaching of grammar. Borg observed an experienced teacher while he taught fifteen EFL classes for European adults and kept notes of the subject's approach to the teaching of grammar (i.e. grammar explanation, students' error correction and the use of particular grammar activities). After each observation session Borg used post-observation discussions to get specific in-depth data regarding certain teaching behaviours (e.g. why did he correct/did not correct a student's error, why did he ask his students to do X activity in X page, etc.). In addition, a pre-observation interview was conducted to gather background information about the subject (i.e. his education and training history, his teaching philosophy and the school policy). This study is of particular interest to the present research work because it shows how to use interview data to support observation findings by looking for similar patterns, returning to and review the data several times and developing new categories to accommodate new insights.

Chapter IV - Exploring the Changes: Reporting and Analysing

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the frequency of each of the twelve teaching behaviours and interview findings will be presented and interpreted. Research data will be shown in EXCEL representation charts and some brief quotes, extrapolated from the interview recordings/notes, will be mentioned for support. Additionally, the following three abbreviations will be used to avoid repetitions:

Abbreviation	Factor	Group Description
FA	Factor Age	The age of the teacher seen as a potential influencing factor in EFL teaching.
FH	Factor Headway	The use of a communicative textbook seen as a potential influencing factor in EFL teaching.
FT	Factor Training	The participation in Western-style teacher training courses seen as a potential influencing factor in EFL teaching.

Table VII: A list of factor abbreviations used during the analysis of data.

4.2. Observation Results

4.2.a. Frequency of Teacher Behaviours

Seven hundred and eleven teacher behaviours were observed in twenty-three classes, approximating an average of thirty-one teacher behaviours per class. As shown in the chart below, the frequency of behaviours varied considerably from one subject to another, reaching a peak of forty-four cases in CO01 and a bottom of twenty-one in CO03. However, a low number of class behaviours does not necessarily mean that the class is learner-centred because certain repeated teaching patterns were not marked every single time they occurred. This choice was made to ensure that each teaching behaviour contributed equally to the determination of the final CLT percentage. Said in other words, if one tally was marked for every single occurrence of B12 (T asks Ss to do the activity in their pairs/groups), marking one tally for each time the teacher asked different students to translate the same text/exercise would give the following result: B1 [seven or more tallies], while B12 [one tally]. This way of marking the behaviours would not produce realistic results, because it would allocate different weights to B1 and B12 - two teaching behaviours that prompt two similar (in terms of duration) class activities. Therefore, in order to give the same importance to GT/CLT teaching behaviours that prompted long-lasting class activities one tally for each activity was marked for certain teaching behaviours (as indicated in appendix VI).

Additionally, the frequency of teacher behaviours can tell very little about the communicative teaching habits of the participating subjects because it represents the total number of both conventional and communicative teaching patterns. It is for this reason that a formula was used to calculate the CLT percentage per class.

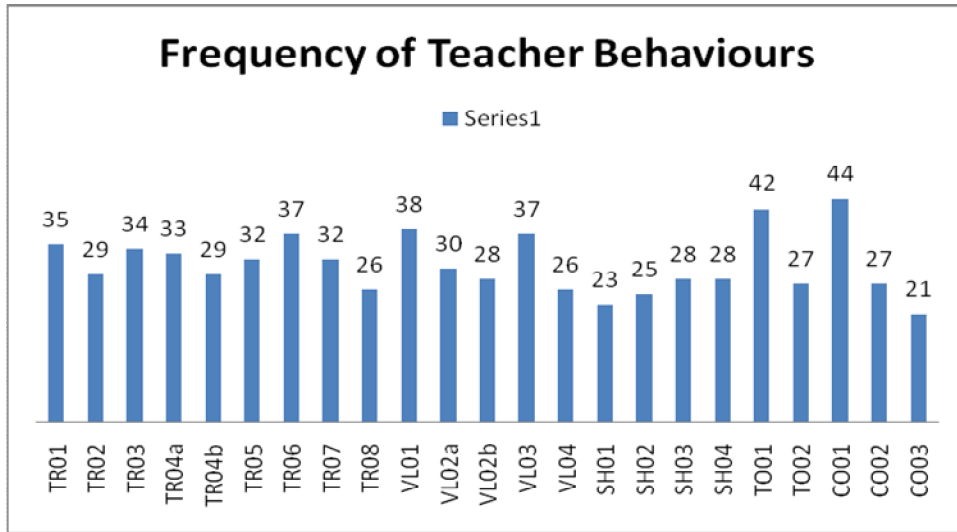


Table VIII shows the frequency of teacher behaviours.

4.2.b. Frequency of Translation Patterns

Behaviour One (B1)

B1 was intended to measure the extent to which the participating teachers used translation from L2 to L1 (or vice versa) as a means of improving students' awareness/proficiency of L2. As the reader can see from the chart below, this behaviour was not observed at all in seven classes, occasionally occurred in seven classes and was the main (or one of the main) teaching patterns in the following three classes: TO01, TO02 and TR04b. The first two teachers each worked in rural zones, while the other was working in the capital city. All three of them had been teaching English as an L2 for over twenty years. However, the first two were classified as GN subjects; the third one had participated in a two-week training event organised by Western institutions in Tirana and, thus, the subject is considered a GT subject.

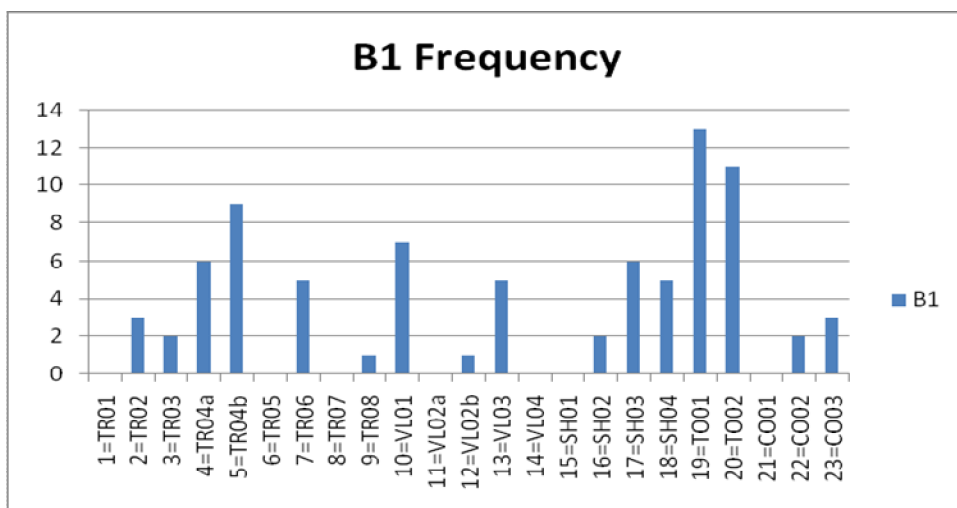


Table IX shows the Frequency of B1.

It is remarkable that none of the subjects had ever used a communicative teaching course-book in their previous teaching experiences. In order to further investigate the possible impact of FH on the use of translation patterns in L2 classes, the occurrences of B1 in GH classes is captured below.

Teacher	B1 cases	Headway use (in years)	Teacher	B1 cases	Headway use (in years)
1=TR01	0	15	6=TR05	0	15
2=TR02	3	12	8=TR07	0	9
3=TR03	2	7	9=TR08	1	13
11=VL02a	0	7	14=VL04	0	6
12=VL02b	1	7	16=SH02	2	8

Table X shows the frequency of B1 in GH classes.

We can see from Table X that there is a low incidence of B1 in the classes taught by GH teachers. Indeed, on the average, these subjects used translation³⁾ as a strategy to improve L2 learners' proficiency in only 0.9 occasions. On the contrary, GT and GN teachers featured a higher average of B1, respectively 3.7 and 5. The figures seem to suggest that, in the Albanian setting, the use of a communicative course-book for over five years might reduce the number of translation patterns used in L2 classes. There is a reason to believe that this finding might be true, because – as Duff (1989) argues - English course book authors have left translation out of consideration under the assumption that it is out of style. One might even go further and raise the question whether translation is left out because book authors do not want to limit the market in the case of international textbooks.

On the whole, for the total of eighty-one patterns, B1 compromises 11.3. of the total teaching patterns.

4.2.c. Frequency of GT Patterns

Behaviour Two (B2).

By asking students to explain the rules they followed when they said/wrote something in L2, sixteen of the teachers tried to facilitate the process of L2 learning through conscious learning practices. As shown in Table XI, consistent patterns are not easily discerned in the data. Indeed, B2 seems to have occurred at least twice in classes taught by teachers of:

- different ages [e.g. B2 occurred twelve times in CO01's class (53 years old) and seven times in VL03's class (38 years old)].

Note3: Utterances in L1 were not counted as translation behaviours when they were used as communicative acts (e.g. the teacher translated a sentence or a word to help students understand the listening/reading/grammar activity they were doing).

- different training backgrounds [e.g. TR04 (trained at the BCT) asked her students five questions like: “When do we use the simple past in English?”, “How do we form the simple past of irregular/regular verbs in English?”, etc. and VL03 (never trained) asked seven similar questions.]
- different teaching experiences [TR07 and SH03 each featured three B2 occurrences, in spite of the fact that the former had used the course-book “Headway” for seven years, whereas the latter had only used the text-book “Easy English”].

Additionally, there seems to be no consistency in the frequency of B1 and B2 (e.g. there were no occurrences of the former in the CO01’s class, but she featured twelve occurrences of the later). This might suggest that Translation Approach and Grammar Theory are practised as two separate teaching approaches in Albania. However, I am not aware of any previous study that supports this claim.

On the whole, there were fifty-seven grammar rule-consolidation questions asked, equal to 7.8 % of the total behaviours. B2 occurrences were not noticed in seven classes. Two of these classes were taught by GT teachers and the other five by GH ones. The relationship between FH, FT and the frequency of B2 is illustrated in Table XI. However, as seen below, it is difficult to obtain much information about the impact that these factors have on the teaching of conscious learning practices (i.e. B2), because figures are inconsistent. Thus, B2 was not observed at all in classes taught by instructors of different teaching and training experiences, e.g. TR02 (a GTH teacher), TR05 and VL02 (GT teachers), SH01 and CO03 (a GNA teachers); while, teachers of different backgrounds equally featured a high incidence of B2, e.g. TR04 (a GT teacher), VL03 (a GN teacher) and TR07 (a GH teacher).

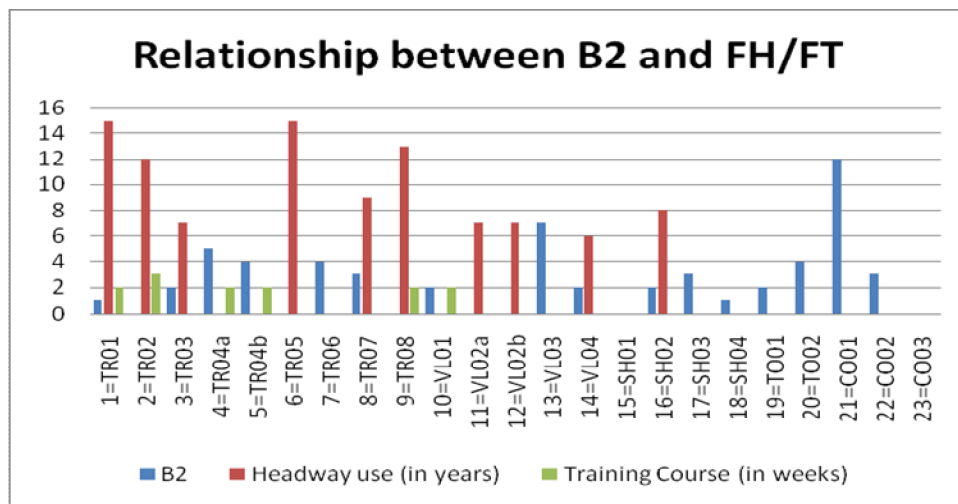


Table XI shows the relationship between the frequency of B2 and FH/FT.

Nevertheless, there is a noticeable low frequency of B2 in classes taught by the three subjects who featured both FT and FH. This might possibly indicate that teachers who have learnt about communicative teaching – by attending a theoretic CLT course – are less likely to supply course-book materials with their own conscious-learning strategies/questions. However, given the limited size (three subjects) and the lack of research in this area, more empirical data is needed to validate this claim.

Behaviour Three (B3)

The discussion in section 2.4. suggests that the use of reading aloud activities in L2 classes is a typical feature of GT classes. In order to capture the frequency of this behaviour in Albanian EFL classes, B3 was designed; I marked a tally for activity – not a tally for each time the teacher asked different students to read aloud the same lesson/grammar exercise.

B3 was observed virtually in every single class and it represents 9.5% of the total seven-hundred and eleven teaching patterns. The statistical representation of data in Table XII suggests that Teacher Age has little influence on the frequency of B3 - as it seems to have occurred erratically in classes taught by young/old subjects.

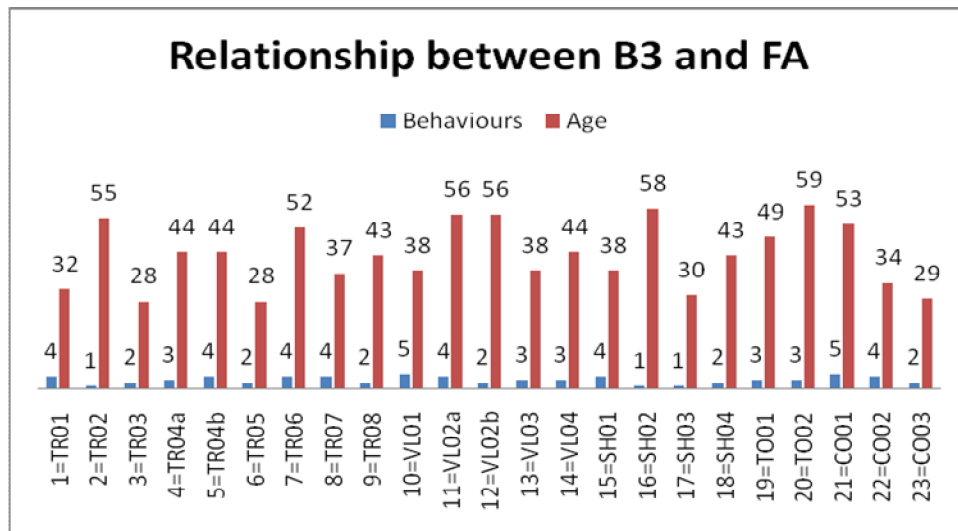


Table XII shows the relationship between B3 and FA.

Likewise, there does not seem to be a direct link between FT/FH and the incidences of B3. Indeed, GT teachers featured an average of 4 one-by-one reading out activities per class. This figure does not considerably differ from the average number of B3 behaviours observed in the other three groups (GTH instructors featured 2.2. B3 per class, GH teachers 2.6. and GN subjects 3.2.).

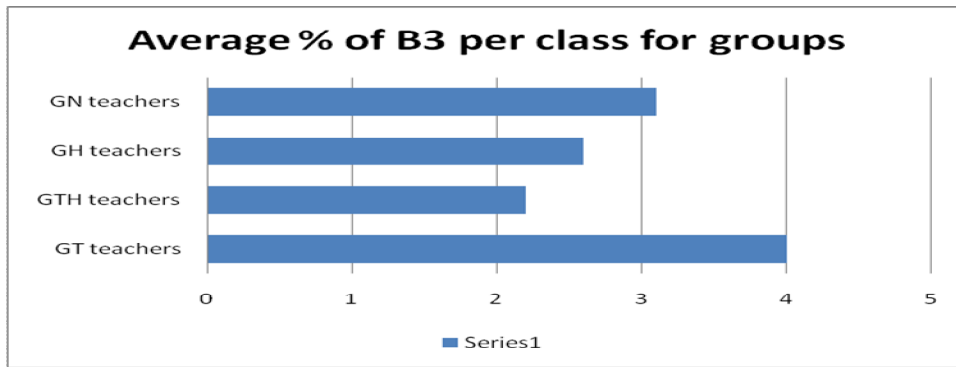


Table XIII shows the relationship between B3 and FH/FT.

Behaviour Four (B4)

The fourth behaviour examined the attitudes of the twenty-one participating subjects towards grammar errors and marked the frequency of on-the-spot correction of grammar mistakes. B4 occurred in every single class, during different lesson stages (i.e. during form-focused activities, translation drills, meaning-focused interaction, etc.). The participating subjects used different types of corrective feedback (e.g. clearly indicating the error and providing the correct form, reformulating the student's sentence without directly indicating the error, asking questions like *"Is this correct?"* and repeating/stressing the student's error).

On the whole, two-hundred and seventeen incidences were noticed and the frequency of the behaviour varied considerably from one subject to another (e.g. TR01 featured three B4, whereas CO01 twenty-three). However, it was noticed during the observations that many errors were left uncorrected. Therefore, in order to have a better understanding of B4 occurrences, the number of errors that occurred in each of the three tape-recorded sessions was summed up and the Average Number of Errors (ANE) per class was calculated. Then ANE was compared to the frequency of B4 for each of the twenty-three classes – see the table below.

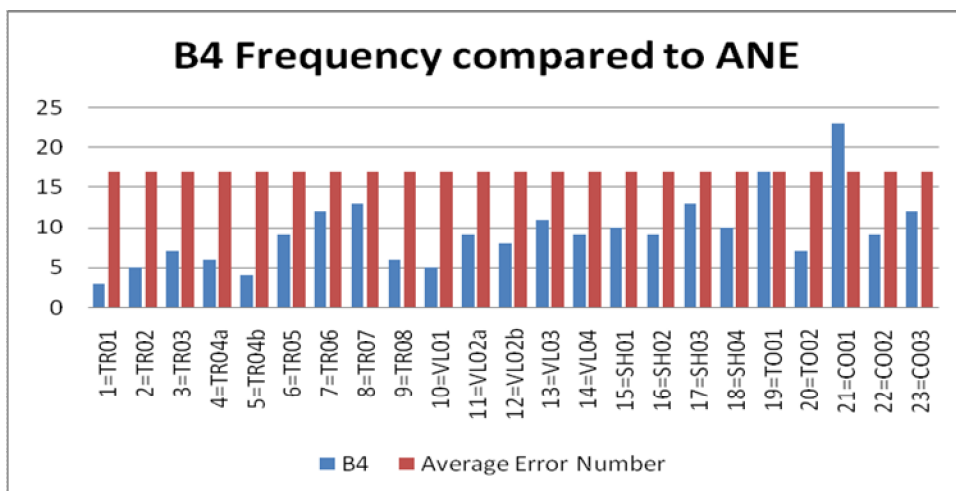


Table XIV captures the relationship between B4 and ANE (average number of errors).

Table XIV shows that subjects of different training/teaching experiences equally might have left a number of errors uncorrected in their classes. Indeed, B4 occurrences were below the average (ANE) in classes taught by GH teachers (TR01, TR02 and TR08), GT ones (TR04, VL01), as well as GN subjects (SH02, TO02 and CO02). Porte (1999) emphasises that a low incidence of error correction might be an indicator of CLT teaching patterns, or be associated with the fact that (non-native) EFL teachers are unaware that errors are being made because they have a limited foreign language competence of L2 themselves. To find out whether this was or was not the case for the participating teachers, this issue was discussed during the interviews (see section 4.4.b for more details).

Interestingly, a pattern of consistency between participating in Western-style teacher training courses and a moderate tolerance to error correction is indicated by statistical data. Indeed, it was found that GT teachers corrected on the average five errors per class, while ignored or did not notice eleven. In sharp contrast to this tendency, the average GH teacher corrected almost twice as many errors in his/her class (9.1. errors corrected per class), while the average GN teacher only left 3.6. errors per class uncorrected – noting a high average of error correction per class (12.4.)

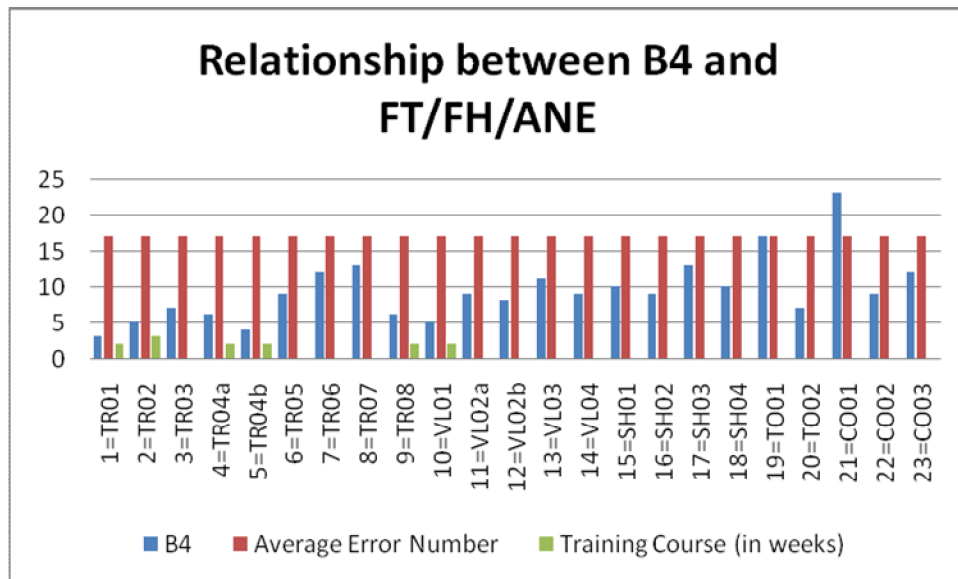


Table XV shows the relationship between B4 and FT/FH/ANE.

All this evidence could possibly affirm Mishra (2005) research findings that through a training course (Indian) EFL teachers can broaden their awareness of when, why and how to correct their students' errors.

Behaviour Five (B5) and Behaviour Seven (B7)

B5: Teacher asks a display question in L2.

B7: Teacher asks a referential question in L2.

Based on readings from Nunan (1989), Savignon (1997), Swain (1998) and other scholars, it is argued in this paper that purposeful communication in the class is a common feature that all CLT approaches share. Referential questions can be classified as purposeful communicative (see Van Patten, 2002:107) activities because they foster the learning of new things about the members of the class, the surrounding world, etc. On the contrary, according to Gaies (1983) display questions make sure learners know a grammatical form and, thus, they are typically associated with GT.

Between the following two questions “What is the ratio of traditional questioning patterns to teacher questions as scaffolding strategies per class?” and “What is the frequency of B5 or B7?”, I believe that the former is likely to give better insights into how communicative a class is. Therefore, research findings for B5 and B7 are reported, analysed and discussed together in this section. In the following table, the frequency of both behaviours in each class is shown.

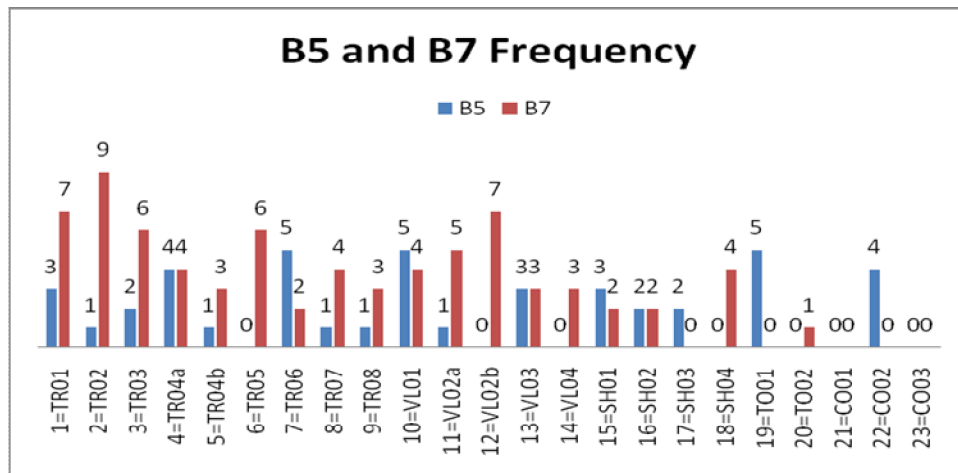


Table XVI shows the frequency of B5 and B7.

At the primary level of analysis, a behaviour with higher frequency might signal a tendency of the participating subjects to use it more often than the behaviour with lower frequency. In our case, B7 occurred 75 times, against 43 occurrences of B5. However, there seems to be some inaccuracies in these figures due to the fact that I did not tally the display questions asked in L1 [As seen above, B5 asked the observer to note “display questions asked in L2”]. Therefore, the above chart can be considered to describe reliably only the number of display questions asked by the following teachers TR01, TR03, TR05, TR07 and VL02a/VL02b – whose classes were mostly taught in L2 and, hence, their B5 were asked in L2. As a consequence, the analysis and interpretation of observation data for B5 is limited to these five subjects; further investigation into their past training/teaching experiences was made and illustrated below.

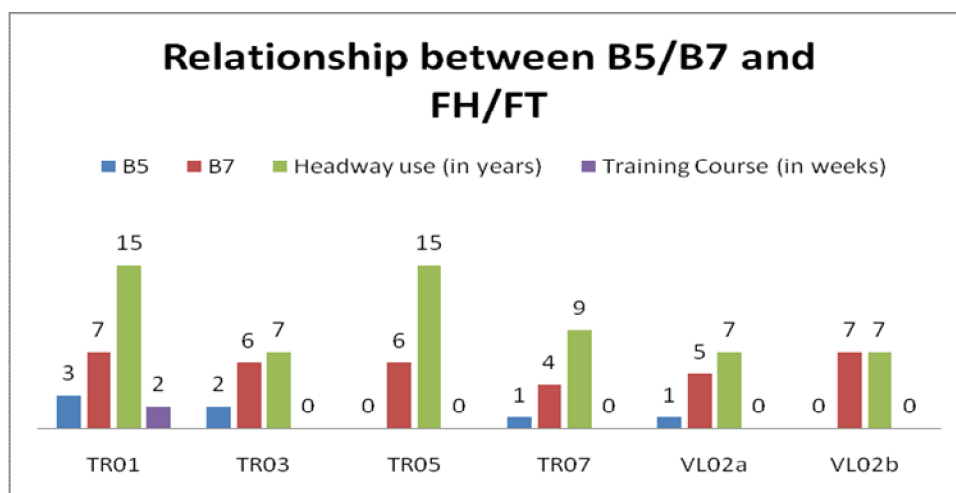


Table XVII shows the relationship between B5, B7 and FH/FT.

We see on Table XVII that all teachers who used L2 as the main language of interaction in their classrooms belong to GH. The analyses of B7 occurrences in classes taught by teachers of different past training/teaching background seems to make even more meaningful the relationship between the use of a communicative syllabus and the practice of communicative questioning strategies in the class. Thus, as shown in the table below, GH teachers featured a high incidence of referential questions (5.4%). However, the four GTH teachers who had both participated in Western-style teacher training courses and used the “Headway”/“Inside out” in their classes were found to have the higher incidence of B7 (6.2%).

Groups	Total Occurrences	Average Group %
B7 occurrences in GTA classes.	75	3.2%
B7 occurrences in GH classes.	52	5.4%
B7 occurrences in GT classes.	36	5.1%
B7 occurrences in GTH classes.	25	6.2%
B7 occurrences in GN classes.	12	1.2%

Table XVIII shows the frequency of B7 in classes taught by teachers of different training/teacher experiences.

In concluding B5 and B7 interpretation, teachers who had either used a communicative course-book in their past or had participated in a training course that emphasised communicative teaching approaches were the ones who asked more referential questions in their classes. However, given the limited sample size of five teachers for B5, this should not be taken to mean that FT and FH have necessarily affected the way Albanian EFL teachers (who belong to GH, GT or GTH) are approaching the teaching of English. In this regard, it would take further qualitative/quantitative investigations to validate these interpretations.

While the fact that some display questions were not tallied, might affect the significance of B5 interpretations, it is estimated that it will have little influence in the overall findings of this study. This is because most of the display questions asked in Albanian were marked under the category of B2 [T gets Ss to explain the grammar rules they followed]. Indeed, as Lynch (1991) claims, display questions are usually used for 1) comprehension check (e.g. *Did you understand?*), 2) confirmation check (e.g. *Why did you use the past in this sentence?*), or 3) clarification request (e.g. *When do we use the past in English?*). Therefore, display questions of Type2 and Type3 asked in Albanian readily fit the description of B2.

Given the fact that B2 and B5 belong to the same traditional teaching pattern category, it is assumed that the swapping over of these two behaviours will not affect the overall ratio of CLT teaching behaviours/traditional teaching patterns.

Behaviour 6 (B6)

The frequency of traditional grammar-focused activities was also targeted in this study. Indeed, any written/spoken grammar activity that either drew students' attention to the form/use of a specific grammar item or tested/consolidated the grammar knowledge was captured by B6.

Table XIX gives a breakdown of the occurrences of B6 in all twenty-three classes. The numbers are fairly close down at the bottom line for four subjects of different ages: TR02 (a GTH teacher aged 55), TR07 (a GH teacher 37), T0o2 and COo3 (both GN teachers aged respectively 59 and 29). A glance at the top line does not show any meaningful results either. Again, teachers of different ages and training/experience backgrounds seem to have exhibited the highest occurrences of B6. Thus, the subjects TR01 and TR03 (GTH teachers aged respectively 32 and 28), TR04a (a GT teacher aged 44), VL2b (a GH teacher aged 56), SH04 and CO01 (GN teachers aged respectively 43 and 53) all asked their students to do either three or four grammar-related exercises in their classes.

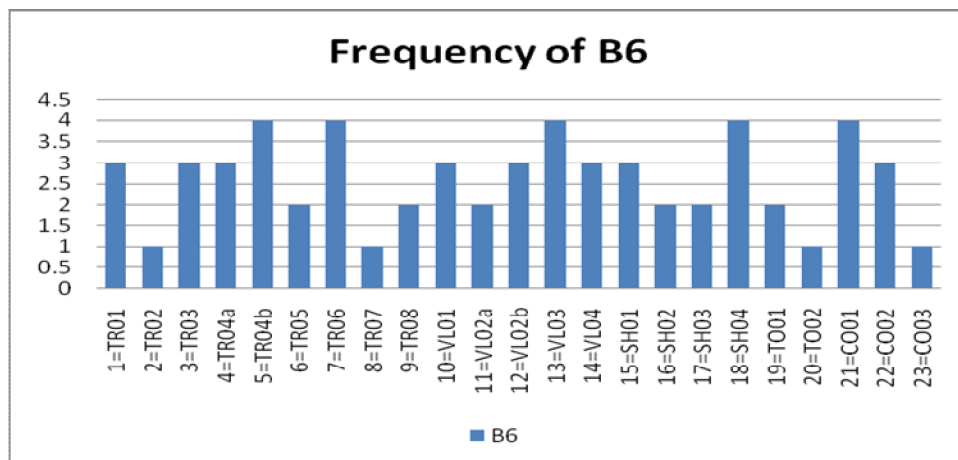


Table XIX shows the frequency of B6.

Nevertheless, the high incidence of B6 in all twenty-three classes seems to suggest that the approach to grammar teaching of the twenty-one subjects who participated in this study is oriented towards the use of repetition of model exercises, transformation sentences, fill-in-the-gap tasks, etc. Indeed, a high average of 2.60 focus-on-grammar exercises per class was observed. Converted⁴ in time, this average would mean almost one third of the class time is spent to drill/reinforce grammar knowledge.

4.2.d. Summary of GT Behaviours

It was shown above that the participating subjects featured a high frequency of grammar teaching patterns such as conscious learning (B2), (B5), teacher-centred classes (B3) and the provision of immediate corrective feedback (B4). On the whole, four-hundred and twenty-five grammar teaching behaviours were observed, representing 61% of the total teacher behaviours. All participating teachers focused on grammar learning/teaching, with TR02 displaying the lowest number (8) and CO01 featuring a high concentration of grammar patterns in her teaching (44). The table below illustrates the frequency of grammar teaching behaviours in all of the twenty-three classes.

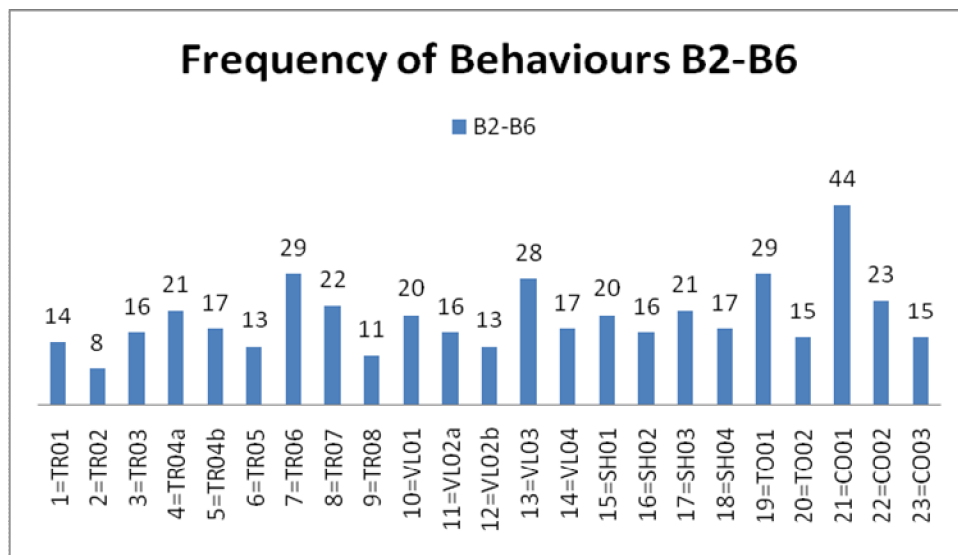


Table XX shows the frequency of behaviours B2-B6.

Note4: In converting grammar exercises into class time, I calculated the time I allowed my students to complete and pair-check an average-length grammar-focused exercise (composed of five-seven incomplete/transformation sentences). It took them three to four minutes to complete the task and two minutes to give feedback to each other. However, further studies need to be conducted to measure the exact time it would take to complete and check the same exercise in a more teacher-centred class.

Following the analysis of grammar teaching patterns, the percentage of average behaviours for teachers of different training/teaching experiences was calculated. As shown in table XXI, teachers who belonged to the GH category used an average of 14.6. grammar behaviours per class, followed closely by GT teachers who scored slightly higher (14.8). Teachers who featured both FH and FT were the group that had the lowest number of grammar behaviours in their classes: 11.5. Compared to an average of 21.5. grammar teaching behaviours observed in GN classes, these figures might indicate that there is a relationship between the use of communicative course-books/participating in Western-style teaching courses and a moderate use of grammar teaching patterns in Albanian EFL classes.

It seems nonetheless plausible to assume that FT and FH are not the only factors that exercise an external influence on the extent to which grammar and translation are taught in the country. Indeed, many GN subjects displayed a complete absence of certain grammar behaviours [e.g. CO03(B2=0), SH01(B2=0), SH04(B5=0), CO01(B5=0), TO02(B5=0)] and three of them (SH01, VL04 and CO01) never asked their learners to exercise translation in their classes. Therefore, further research investigation is needed in this aspect.

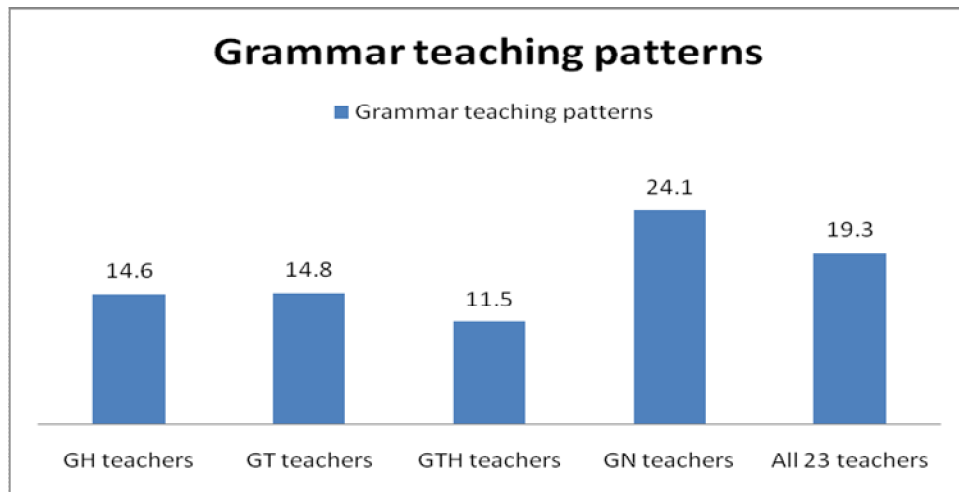


Table XXI shows the average percentage of B2-B6 for different groups.

4.3. Frequency of Communicative Patterns

The occurrences of six communicative teaching behaviours were investigated to provide new insight into the importance attributed to communicative teaching patterns in Albanian EFL classes as well as to detect any significant association between various influencing factors (e.g. past training/experience and the age of the participating subjects, etc) and the high percentage of CLT teaching coefficient. The incidence of Referential Questions (B7) was already considered and reported above. The findings of the study for the frequency of the other five behaviours will be given below.

The Use of Communicative Tasks (B8)

Limited to eight occurrences in twenty-three classes, equal to 1.1 % of all teaching patterns, tasks were rarely used as meaning-based communicative activities that support the learning process and aid in acquisition. On the whole, six subjects made use of pictures and jigsaw puzzles to make their students use their L2 productively, whereas TR01 engaged her students in two short role-play situations. All seven subjects were GH teachers. Yet, the subjects TR07, TR08 and VLO2b who had also used the “Headway” for over five years in their past, featured no B8 incidence in their classes and, hence, a direct correlation between FH and the tendency to incorporate communicative tasks in one’s teaching practice is not readily inferred.

Figures also show wide variation in the extent to which instructors of different ages and different training experiences incorporated communicative tasks into their teaching. Thus, similar teaching patterns were detected in classes taught by teachers of different ages [TR05 (aged 28) and SH02 (aged 58) each featured one B8 in their classes] and with different training histories [VLO1 (trained for two weeks at British Council Albania) and TO01 (never trained) never asked his/her students to do a communicative task]. More details are shown in the table below.

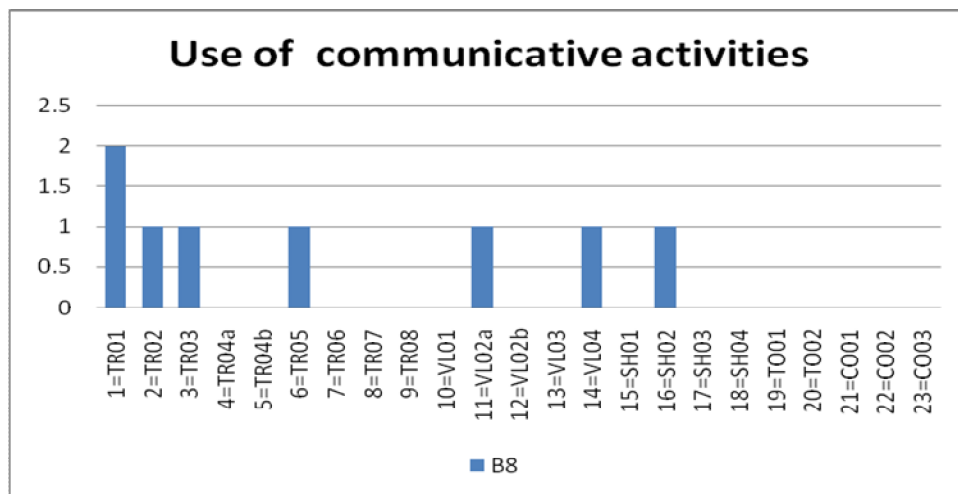


Table XXII shows the frequency of B8.

The Use of Listening/Reading for Gist Activities (B9)

As argued in section 2.3.b., activities that emphasise global understanding of spoken/written language are typically employed in CLT classes to engage learners in the process of learning, to provide roughly-tuned input and to ensure that learners encounter the new linguistic elements of the text before they go on to practise them.

It is for these reasons that almost all best-selling international course-books embody a number of listening/reading for gist activities. As stated elsewhere, at the time of the observation, all twenty-one participants were using modern course-books, most of them published in the UK. Consequently, there was/should have been a place for listening/reading skills in these resources. Yet, during my five-year experience as a DoS, I realised that **traditional** teachers have a tendency to change the use of such activities from general understanding to detailed understanding/translation exercises. In order to investigate if the participating subjects did the same thing, B9 was included in the tally sheet.

A total number of twenty-seven B9 was tallied in twenty-three classes; the behaviour occurred in eighteen classes and the tendency to use reading texts as translation exercises was observed in three classes (TR03, TO01 and CO01). The average number of B9 per class was 1.1. These figures suggest that most teachers did not change the form and the purpose of the reading/listening for general understanding activities. However, asked during the interviews for the rationale behind the B9, the majority of teachers seemed to be clueless and gave vague answers like "This is the way I teach", "I had to do it", "My students need to see what spoken language sounds like", etc. These answers support the claim made by Sato and Kleinsaaser (1999:509) about the contradiction between teachers' beliefs (what teachers say they do) and their teaching practice (what they actually do in their classes).

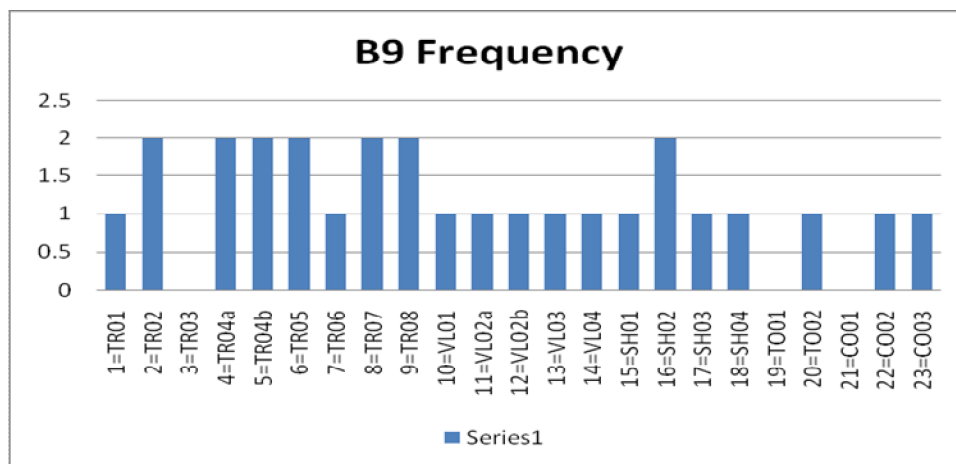


Table XXIII shows the frequency of B9.

Despite the fact that only four subjects directly related their teaching behaviour (B9) with the use of a communicative course-book, it seems logical to speculate that the teacher's decision to use a class activity that shifts students' attention from form to meaning depends to some degree on the course-book a teacher is using. Indeed, eight GN teachers of different ages asked their students to do at least one listening/reading for gist activity in this study, despite their traditional teaching/learning beliefs. One might argue that they merely did that because the activity was pre-packaged in the textbook.

However, FH seems to have had little influence in this regard on two GN subjects (TO01 and CO01) who asked their students to translate the reading exercises although they were meant to be skimming exercises. Therefore, further investigation is needed to clarify the reasons why different GN teachers showed different ways of approaching their teaching, despite the fact that they were all using contemporary teaching textbooks.

Peer Correction (B10) and Pair/Group Interaction (B12)

The high frequency of peer correction and group interaction patterns in an L2 class can be seen as indicators of communicative and learner-centred approaches. Indeed, Lantolf (2000:118) claims that from a CLT perspective the terms pair/group work refer not merely to the size of the group, but to a value decision on how best to teach and learn languages. Therefore, the opportunity given to learners to spend more time speaking/listening in their groups/pairs shows that the class is oriented towards communication.

In Howatt's view, corrective feedback has no room in a "strong" CLT class. However, Howatt (1984 – in Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 155) further argues that it can be accommodated in a more standard "weak" CLT approach – particularly during the focus-on-form activities. Nevertheless, according to De Oliveria (2004:236) peer-correction can be used as a natural error-correction strategy in a TBL class as well – while students are completing tasks. In addition, the role that the teacher plays during a peer-feedback activity perfectly fits the role given to the teacher in a TBL class – that one of "the knower" - because the teacher basically relegates his/her traditional feedback duties to another actor (a peer) .

Behaviours B10 and B12 are grouped together because they share a common truth: peer correction/group interaction can not occur if the learners are not trained to work in their pairs/groups, because "*untrained learners experience a lack of trusting the accuracy, sincerity and specificity of the comments of their peers*", Rollinson 2005;24. Said in other words, if learners are trained to work in their pairs, they can carry out both tasks; otherwise, the likelihood of observing either B10 or B12 is small.

Table XXIV shows the occurrences of both behaviours in all twenty-three classes. Contrary to what was expected, singular occurrences of either B10 or B12 were observed in six classes. One possible explanation for this might be the fact that two different B10 behaviours were encountered: on-the-spot peer correction (students corrected their friend's oral mistake(s) after being prompted by the teacher) and pair feedback (students exchanged their grammar-based classwork/homework, corrected their friends' written mistakes and gave feedback afterwards). The former did not involve student-student(s) interaction, while the latter did. Forty examples of on-the-spot peer correction and seven occurrences of pair feedback were tallied. Additionally, TRO3 once asked her

students to exchange their fluency-based written homework and correct it in their groups. Corrective behaviours (B10) that involved student-student interaction were also counted as B12.

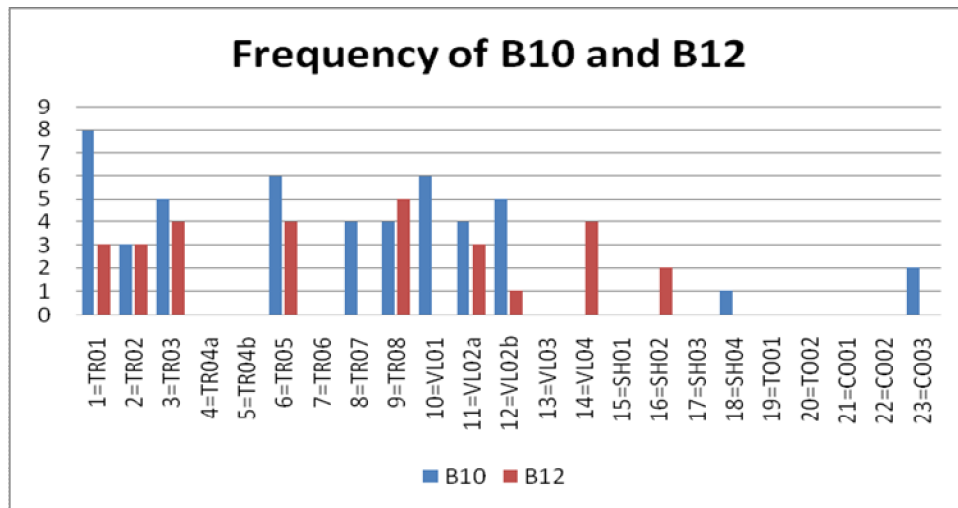


Table XXIV shows the frequency of B10 and B12.

As shown above, forty-eight B10 and twenty-nine B12 were observed. Among different B12 activities, students were mostly asked to drill the new language in their pairs and to ask each other questions based on a given text. Interestingly, VL02a had her students use their own words to explain the meaning of five words extracted from the text and ask each other to guess the word(s) afterwards. This activity took place in both classes she taught. None of the teachers asked his/her students to do a close grammar-based activity (e.g. a fill-in-the-gap activity or sentence transformation exercises) in their groups/pairs. Such avoidance could lead one to believe that perhaps Albanian EFL teachers regard grammar learning as a mental discipline that is best done on ones own.

Neither B10 nor B12 occurred in ten classes taught by nine teachers of different ages, the youngest aged 28 (TR07) and the oldest 59 (TO02). None of the ten teachers had used a communicative textbook in the past and only one of them (TR04) had attended a two-week training course. In addition, two GH subjects (VLo4 and SHo2) incorporated no B10 patterns in their teaching, whereas two GN teachers (SH04 and CO03) prompted, at least once, peer-correction in their classes. Furthermore, one GH teacher (TR07) and two GT teachers (TR04 and VL01) featured no B12 in their classes.

As seen above, figures bear little statistical significance and it is not clear the impact that FH and FT have on the use of pair-corrections and group-interaction teaching patterns. Yet, it is remarkable that B12 was not observed at all in classes taught by GN teachers, while B10 was occasionally noticed in these classes. This might suggest that traditional teachers will never incorporate B10 and B12 in their teaching practice, if they are not exposed to the new ways of teaching beforehand. Different agents might work as exposing factors, e.g. participation in

teacher training course (GT group featured an average use of two B10 per class), the use of a communicative textbook (GH group scored an average of 3.4 B10 and 2.5 B12 per class), as well as other factors not captured by this study (e.g. teachers' awareness of methodology, the influence of colleagues, etc.). One or some/all of these factors might have influenced the behaviour of GN subjects SH04 and CO03 who asked their students to correct their friend's error(s).

The use of delayed feedback

The use of delayed error correction is typically linked with TBL, because "knowers" often provide form-focused feedback during the post-task session of a TBL cycle. Thus, to investigate whether or not Albanian EFL teachers use this approach in their classes, the occurrence of B11 was targeted. It was found that, although one teacher concluded the lesson by giving a summary of the most-frequently made mistakes during the class, none of the twenty-one participating subjects gave a late feedback, as most errors were either corrected on the spot, or left uncorrected.

The total absence of B11 suggests that either the participating teachers have little familiarity with the TBL approach, or they simply rejected it.

4.3.a. Summary of Communicative Behaviours

The use of referential questions was the most often occurring communicative teaching behaviour (at seventy-seven tallies), followed by the use of peer-correction teaching patterns (at forty-eight tallies). Two other behaviours occurred at a moderate rate: the use of for gist listening/reading activities and group/pair interaction - respectively twenty-seven and twenty-nine times. Lastly, B11 was not observed at all.

Twenty-one was the highest number of CLT teaching patterns observed in the class taught by TR01, whereas TR02 approached the teaching of English quite communicatively, scoring the highest percentage of CLT patterns (62%). On the contrary, TO01 and CO01 manifested no communicative teaching behaviours at all. The table below gives the percentage of CLT teaching patterns for each class.

Teacher Background	CLT teaching patterns in %	Teacher Background	CLT teaching patterns in %
TR01 (GTH Teacher)	60	VL02B (GH Teacher)	50
TR02 (GTH Teacher)	62	VL03 (GN Teacher)	10.8
TR03 (GH Teacher)	47	VL04 (GH Teacher)	34.6
TR04A (GT Teacher)	18.1	SH01 (GN Teacher)	13
TR04B (GT Teacher)	16.1	SH02 (GH Teacher)	28
TR05 (GTH Teacher)	59.3	SH03 (GN Teacher)	3.5
TR06 (GN Teacher)	8.1	SH04 (GN Teacher)	21.4
TR07 (GH Teacher)	35.2	TO01 (GN Teacher)	0
TR08 (GTH Teacher)	66.6	TO02 (GN Teacher)	3.7
VL01 (GT Teacher)	28.9	CO01 (GN Teacher)	0
VL02A (GH Teacher)	46.6	CO02 (GN Teacher)	3.7
		CO03 (GN Teacher)	14.2

Table XXV gives the percentage of CLT teaching patterns for each class.

At an average of 27.4. CLT teaching behaviours per class, the numbers seem to suggest that the teaching approach of the twenty-one participating subjects is far from communicative. However, the fact that six teachers (highlighted in red) used a considerable number of communicative teaching behaviours in their classes can be interpreted as a sign of change. This claim appears to be further supported by some other evidence: three GT behaviours (i.e. B1, B2 and B5) were not observed at all in 1/3 of the observed classes. The avoidance of certain typical GT behaviours might be a sign of the appreciation of a modern approach of teaching grammar that views grammar differently from the conventional Murray definition: "*grammar is the art of speaking and writing English with propriety*" (Murray 1795, cited in Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of English use, 1994: 54).

The results shown in Table XXV reveal a tendency for GH teachers to incorporate more CLT teaching behaviours in their teaching practice, and would appear to confirm the association between the use of a course-book based on a communicative methodology and the teaching of L2 communicatively. Clearly, FH seems to be an agent of significant importance as GH teachers used an average of 40.2. CLT behaviours per class – meaningfully higher than the average CLT percentage of the other three groups. However, figures pinpoint that other factors might be involved in this process. Thus, VL02 and SH02 taught significantly differently (the average CLT pattern per class was respectively 50% and 28%), in spite of the fact that they had both used the "Headway Series" for almost the same amount of time.

On the contrary, GT teachers used a low percentage of CLT teaching patterns, only 21%. This might indicate that the participation in a course that emphasises the use of CLT but does not feature practical teaching elements might have a limited influence over what participants teach in their classes. Indeed, the subjects TR04 and VLo1 incorporated respectively 28.9. and 16.1. CLT teaching patterns into their teaching approaches. Researching courses based on entirely theoretical frameworks, Tickle (1987) found that *it is practical knowledge the key to professional credibility, not theoretical one* – Tackle 1987, cited in Tisher and Wideen, 1990:130.

Yet, trained EFL teachers taught more communicatively than GN subjects. The latter displayed an average number of 7.8. communicative behaviours per class and it was noticed that the percentage of CLT teaching patterns varied considerably in this group, from 0% (TO01, CO01) to 21% (SH04). It is interesting to note that the subjects SH04, SH01 and CO03 – that approached the teaching most communicatively within this group - were under forty years old. Yet, correlational data does not fully support this speculation, as the subjects CO02 (aged 32) and SH03 (aged 30) were found to not be very communicative in their teaching style, featuring respectively 3.7.% and 3.5.% CLT patterns.

Likewise, in the context of this particular study, the teaching location of GN subjects seems to have little effect on the way the participants are practising their teaching. Indeed, among subjects who incorporated less than 10% CLT teaching patterns into their teaching approach, there are participants teaching in school cities (e.g. SH03 and TR06) as well as in town/village schools (e.g. CO02 and TO01).

4.4. Interview Findings

4.4.a. Part I

More than fifty questions were asked during this part of the interview. All questions were open-ended items that served three main purposes. Firstly, they sought to gain new insight into several communicative teachers' behaviours. More precisely, all teachers who featured one or more B7-B12 behaviours were explicitly asked why they had behaved in that way. Secondly, Part I questions were used as a means of gaining a better understanding of teachers' corrective behaviours. Thirdly, clarifying questions were asked to help the researcher classify properly ambiguous teaching behaviours, referred to elsewhere as "odd".

4.4.b. Communicative Teaching Behaviours

By having the subjects answer questions related to their communicative teaching behaviours (B7-B12), it was hoped to gain some empirical evidence to answer Research Question II.

Part I interview data suggest that most subjects were either unable to find a valid interpretation for most of their teaching behaviours, or there were other underlying factors that seem to have affected their class behaviours to a considerable extent. Indeed, interviewers gave a total of thirty-three no answers, or replies of little relevance to the research questions (e.g. "*Why not?*", "*No particular purpose for it*", "*That's the way I teach*", etc). Thirteen teachers believed that they were influenced by other factors in their teaching approach. Among different answers, "*students need it/like it*" and "*to break the monotony*" were the two most frequently cited. Only one subject claimed that FT had impacted the way she was teaching, as she "*had realised the importance of 'pair-correction' during her teacher-training experience*".

The frequency of no answers is particularly high for B7 and B10. Obviously, valid reasons why the participating subjects featured these behaviours do exist; this finding should be interpreted either as teachers' lack of awareness of the rationale behind their classroom choices, or as participants' unwillingness to provide appropriate answers.

Furthermore, as the table below shows, the factor "Headway" was mentioned sixteen times during the interviews. FH seems to have underlined the performance of B9 (twelve out of twenty subjects claimed to have used a

listening/reading for gist activity because "*it was incorporated in the textbook*") and B2 (four out of nine teachers argued that they asked their students to do an activity in their pairs because "*it was a text-book requirement*"). In addition, it seems that FH might have influenced, to a certain degree, the instructors' decisions regarding B12 - because no pair-interaction was observed in classes taught by GN teachers and a high incidence was noticed in GH teachers' classes. Yet, there is apparently little ground to claim that FH has a substantial impact on the use of reading/listening for gist activities in the class for the mere reason that B9 was observed in mass in classes taught by GN teachers too.

Questions	Total Number of Questions	Answers			
		FH	FT	Other	No answers
B7 - Why did you ask a referential question? (Precise questions were asked, e.g. Why did you ask student X to talk about his dream house?)	18	0	0	7	11
B8 - Why did you ask your students to do a role-play/debate/etc ?	7	2	0	2	3
B9 – Why did you ask your students to do a reading/listening for gist activity?	20	12	0	1	7
B10 – Why did you prompt/allow your students to check each other's mistakes?	11	0	1	1	9
B12 - Why did you ask your students to do an activity in their pairs?	9	4	0	2	3

Table XXVI - Responses to CLT behaviour-related Interview questions.

B7 was observed in eighteen classes and, thus, eighteen clarifying questions were asked. The teachers were asked only one clarifying questions per behaviour, inspite of the fact that B7 might have occurred more than once in the same class. In other words, the subject TR01 was asked one B7 clarifying question only, regardless of the fact that there were seven incidences of B7 in her class.

4.4.c. Error Correction

The analysis of the answers given by the teachers led to the realization that most subjects left errors uncorrected because they "*did not hear/notice*" the error. However, GT teachers admitted on three occasions that the mistake was "*not the focus of the lesson*", or "*was not important*" (see table below). Another GN teacher claimed that "*checking every mistake can be humiliating for the students*".

Question	Total Number Of Questions	Answers	
		Deliberate Behaviour	Accidental Behaviour
B4 - Why did you not check X mistake made by X students? (Questions were made as precisely as possible)	23	4	19

Table XXVII - Responses to B4-related Interview question.

The answers given seem to support the claim made in section 4.2.c. that participation in CLT training-courses might have an impact on the way EFL teachers correct students' errors in their classes. However, I am not aware of any previous studies that have targeted the analysis of error correction behaviours in classes taught by GT teachers before and after the attendance of a CLT teacher-training course and, thus, further research is needed in this field.

4.4.d. Odd Behaviours

As shown below, nine "odd" teaching behaviours were encountered during the observations. After discussing the issue with the teachers, behaviours 3, 5, 6, 9. were classified as typical ones, whereas the items 1, 2, 4, 7 and 8 were regarded as not representative. The table given in section 3.7.d. was used to classify the behaviours.

Nr	Description of the Odd Behaviour	Rationale
01	The teacher interrupted her chat in L2 with the class and asked a student to translate a whole sentence from English into Albanian.	The teacher claimed that she did that because she believed that the attention of the student was wandering.
02	The teacher used mainly L2 in her class, but she did explain the grammar in Albanian.	According to the teacher, the rationale behind this action was " <i>when you teach a mixed-level class, you have to make sure all students understand key issues</i> "
03	CO02 – a teacher that approached the teaching in a traditional manner – asked her students to work on their own and complete a grammar-based exercise, instead of asking them to do the exercise in their pairs, as required by the textbook.	The teacher said that the students are very noisy and can cheat on each other if she allows them to work in their pairs.
04	The teacher used mainly L1 in her class. However, she used English to tell off a student who came late.	The reason: " <i>Because I am an English teacher and this is an English class. So, it's normal that I speak English in the class!</i> "
05	While explaining the use of Present Perfect in English, the teacher gave her students plenty examples when not to use this tense and only	The teacher's exact words: " <i>Based on my teaching experience, I can claim that</i>

	few words were said about the use of this tense in English.	<i>students arrive faster at the use of a grammar item, when they are first taught when not to use this structure"</i>
06	The teacher asked his students to say the rules for the use of present perfect in L1 and L2.	The teacher claimed that by so doing he helped her students understand better the use of present perfect in English.
07	TO02 – a subject that approached the teaching in a very traditional manner – corrected only seven errors in her class and left uncorrect a considerable number of errors.	<i>"When I was a pupil I hated it when my teacher kept correcting my errors. So, I don't want to humiliate my students in the same way".</i>
08	Again, the subject TO02 that rarely spoke L2 in her class, asked one of her students the following referential question in L2: <i>"So, is your mother doing better? How is she now?"</i>	The teacher claimed that she did that because she didn't want the girl to feel bad. Interpreting her words, the student would have felt worse if the teacher had asked the question in Albanian.
09	The teacher asked her students to check each other's essay.	Asked whether or not her students would be able to spot each other's errors, the teacher answered: <i>"For sure they will correct the errors they recognise"</i> .

Table XXVIII shows the nine "odd" teaching behaviour encountered during the observations.

Item o3 was classified as B6, Item O5 was classified as B2, item O6 was classified as B2, item O9 was classified as B10. The other items were regarded as "odd" behaviours and, thus, were left unclassified.

4.4.e. Part II

Four standard questions were asked during the second part of the interview. As shown in appendix VII, all the four questions were asked to check/confirm questionnaire data.

Research findings for Part II were discussed above.

Chapter V - Concluding Remarks

5.1. Introduction

Chapter V will address some concluding issues. Firstly, it will discuss several implications and suggestions for future education reforms in the country, as well as possible future research directions. Then, it will mention some methodological concerns and theoretical/epistemological limitations of the present study. Lastly, it will discuss the relevance of this research beyond its immediate context.

5.2. Implications and Suggestions

As GH teachers taking part in this small-scale study research were found to teach more communicatively than the other participants, the first implication for future institutional reforms in Albania would be to officially require EFL teachers to use in their classes course-books and other teaching materials that provide learners with some communicative functional habits. According to Celce-Murcia (1991) the communicative practice of functional exponents can contribute not only to prepare more communicative learners, but also to the development of a communicative approach to the teaching of foreign languages. The functional communication can naturally be emphasised by ESL teachers, as the majority of contemporary course-books include some functional activities. Therefore, I would tend to agree with Hutchinson and Torres (1994) who advise that contemporary text-books can be seen as agents of changes, in that they provide classroom materials, as well as *"a level of structure that appears to be necessary for teachers to fully understand and routinize changes"* - Hutchinson and Torres, 1994:323.

The use of communicative course-books, however, will only be of practical impact if Albanian EFL teachers organise their teaching of "the what" and "the how" in accordance with the communicative course-book content/methodology. That is, among other "don'ts", ESL teachers should not swerve the focus of an activity (e.g. from fluency to accuracy, or from gist reading to translation exercise). On the contrary, instructors should be encouraged "to stick" with the content and methodological procedures clearly described in the textbooks they are using. One might argue that this approach can deskill teachers as little freedom will be given to them to exploit materials in a variety of ways. However, it was seen above that the process of the deskilling of GT teachers can be accompanied by the re-skilling of CLT instructors and, thus, Albanian EFL teachers might be likely to approach their teaching of English more communicatively in the near future.

Yet, the crucial question is how to motivate GT teachers to accommodate, in their teaching, some patterns (e.g. using group/pair interaction, shifting the focus on meaning, etc.) that do not match their learning/teaching beliefs. One answer might be to argue that change is inevitable: if the teaching of eight participating GH subjects seems to have been influenced by FH, there is no valid reason why the same factor cannot affect other subjects who share similar properties (e.g. teaching background, training experiences and learning beliefs). The alternative

solution is to devise a scheme to evaluate the teaching approach of Albanian EFL teachers through communicative tests given to students periodically. At present, the majority of national tests (including the National Matura Exam of English) are designed to assess the students' knowledge of grammatical competence. Should MASH adopt a new test-making policy that seeks to measure the communicative abilities of Albanian students, this would have a considerable impact on the way the majority of EFL teachers would approach their teaching. Indeed, because ESL teachers would like their students to do well in national exams, they would be willing to incorporate more communicative activities in their teaching.

It is not clear, yet, whether or not the use of communicative textbooks can trigger certain communicative teaching behaviours, e.g.: giving delayed feedback, prompting students to check each other's errors, pair/group interaction, etc. Moreover, certain teaching properties (e.g. the tendency to ask the students to explain the grammar rules they follow and teachers' tolerance to error correction) seem to be connected with the participation in Western-style teacher-training courses. Therefore, as a number of second language researchers have suggested (e.g. Dörnyei, 1997; Borg, 2006; etc.), it may be that certain types of teaching behaviours can only be acquired if teachers' cognitions are acknowledged, discussed and challenged during teacher-training courses. I would therefore make the recommendation to the national/foreign training agencies that a greater number of EFL teachers be invited to attend these events. In addition, alternative training-sites need to be established in the south/north of the country, so that the distance from the capital city does not become an obstacle to participation. Indeed, this study found that almost all GT subjects were from the capital city, revealing a remarkable association between residing in Tirana and the likelihood of attending a CLT teacher training-course held in this city.

The third implication would be to confirm the need for national MASH experts to take a more active role in teacher-training policies. As seen above, most of the teacher-training service in Albania is currently provided by British/American organizations that are currently working in the country. While this might be "inevitable" (Toh, 2003) for many developing countries, one has to question the effect that "imported" materials and methods are likely to have on local ESL teachers. In this context, government-funded research might provide answers for many critical issues, such as:

1. Do British/American trainers fully understand the cultural and educational needs of Albanian EFL teachers?
2. Are imported teacher-training materials tailored to meet the linguistic, educational and cultural needs of Albanian EFL teachers? As argued above, Holliday (1994) claims that BANA (Britain, Australasia, North America) specialists and materials might not take into account local teaching realities and, thus, their efficiency is questionable.
3. Which is the teaching approach that best suits the teaching/learning beliefs of Albanian students/teachers?

Researchers might want to start by reviewing case studies carried out in other East-European ex-socialist countries and validating these research findings in the Albanian context. To mention but one example, studying the teaching practice of her thirty-five students - who were attending a BA course in a Polish university at the time of the study – Wiścicka (2006) found that a supportive training environment might contribute to novices' professional development. She emphasises the need for an in-site supportive atmosphere where teachers/pre-service teachers feel free to express their own points of view, discuss their beliefs and accept/reject/discuss new ideas. How free does an Albanian EFL in-service teacher feel to manifest the above-mentioned behaviours in a course organised by foreign agencies and attended by co-trainees that he/she has never met before?

5.3. Future Research Directions

While a considerable number of ex-communist East European countries are spending large sums of money to mirror the Western-style educational systems, applied linguists need to undertake further research on teacher-training aspects that will fill the gap of our knowledge in several main directions, as well as cut the cost of the reforms.

Firstly, more research should be conducted on the role that the use of communicative textbooks plays in the process of teacher-training. Two main key-issues are to be clarified in this area:

1. Whether the following claim is true or false: "The more an ESL teacher uses a communicative text-book in his/her class, the more communicative his/her approach becomes with the passing of time during which the communicative syllabus is used".
2. Further insights are needed into the reasons why some GH subjects were quite communicative in their teaching, whereas the other GH teachers that participated in this study approached the teaching of English less communicatively.

Johnson (1994) claims that the majority of teachers develop their own teaching in their own habitat (classroom/school) and not by participating in teacher development courses. It follows that certain potential factors (e.g. the teachers' awareness of their students' needs, the influence that a teacher's colleagues can have on his/her own teaching, etc) - along with the use of a communicative syllabus - might considerably impact the teaching approach of EFL teachers. Therefore, possible association between the use of a course-book based on a communicative methodology and the above-mentioned external factors are to be tested in the future.

Secondly, the relevance of the use of communicative teaching approaches in the context of Albania should be further investigated. Future studies in this area may provide insight into the needs of Albanian learners for a weak/strong communicative teaching approach, as well as into the existence of resistant factors (e.g. teachers'/learners' beliefs, the lack of CLT awareness, the lack of

awareness of GT limitation, the inappropriate use of communicative EFL textbooks, etc.) that might challenge the adoption of communicative teaching approaches in the country. The examination of these issues will help authorities to better address constraints, as well as develop educational reforms that best suit the teaching/learning reality in the country.

Thirdly, the notion of “odd teaching behaviours” might be a new future area of research. It is an area of interest to follow up because it studies teaching patterns that are not easily interpreted. For a long period research on teacher education/training/cognition has observed and tallied instructional behaviours that are easily classified (e.g. grammar teaching patterns, error correction, etc.) but we are still far from understanding the way the mind of a teacher works. Trying to have insight into the rationale behind irrational teaching patterns might help solve the enigma. After all, it is by comprehending chaos that humankind will ever make sense of the universe.

5.4. Limitations of the Study

In spite of the fact that due attention was given to certain critical validity/reliability issues [e.g. the selection of a representative sample participation, the observer’s influence and the notion of objective behaviour interpretations (odd behaviours), the procedures in administration and data collection/analyses, etc.], the study has had its own limitations.

Starting with the following methodological concerns:

1. Certain observable behaviours were not properly formulated (e.g. B5: “Teacher asks a display question in L2 (i.e. he/she knows the answer beforehand”). As display questions are typical instructional behaviours of GT teachers – that make a limited use of L2 in their classes – the outcome would have been more reliable if display questions asked in L1 were tallied as well.
2. The occurrence of twelve teaching behaviours were observed and little importance was given to the notion of time (i.e. how long each behaviour lasted). One might argue that, despite the fact that the communicative teaching percentage of the following two classes is the same (at 50%), Class 1 (that features a forty-minute grammar explanation and a five-minute pair speaking activity) is more oriented towards the grammar approach than Class 2 (that features a thirty-minute grammar explanation and a fifteen-minute pair speaking activity). While this is true, the duration of a single activity cannot be seen as a potential threat to the final result of this study because attempts were made to keep the overall dynamic of the class balanced by including an equal number of GT long-lasting activities (e.g. B1, B3, B6), CLT long-lasting activities (e.g. B8, B9, B10), GT short-running activities (B2, B4, B6) and CLT short-running activities (B7, B11, B12).

3. Due attention was paid to include in the tally sheet the most representative teaching behaviours for each approach. However, the question Rogosa et al. (1984:1000) raises "*Is the behaviour of an individual teacher consistent over time*" is only partly asked, because the majority of the participating subjects were observed only once – apart from TR04 and VL02. In addition, another problem regarding the representativeness of the behaviours was encountered during the observations: I realised that a few teaching patterns that occurred at a moderate frequency in the classes (e.g. Teacher asks students to retell the lesson, dictations, etc.) were left unclassified as they did not readily fit the description of any of the twelve chosen behaviours.
4. Because most of the observation and interview sessions were not tape-recorded, it was impossible to lead a detailed review/examination of the research data. However, hand-written notes were used to fill this gap.

Continuing with sample size and representativeness limitations

Due to the categorization of the participating subjects in representative groups (e.g. GH, GT, etc.), certain research findings were generated from a relatively small size sample group (e.g. the correlation between the participation in a Western-style teacher-training course and the low incidence of B2, the tendency to ask more referential questions in classes taught by GT, GH teachers, etc). Therefore, certain claims made in section IV are limited to the participants of this study only. In addition, one might argue that the outcomes of the study would differ if more EFL private school teachers participated in the study. Indeed, most Albanian private school classes feature small class sizes and classroom-based research (e.g. Tomlinson, 1990; Anderson, 1993; etc.) seems to suggest that communicative approaches work better in small classes as they are more easily managed.

Concluding with theoretical/epistemological criticisms

Many limitations of classroom observation research have been identified. For example, Popkewitz et al. (1979) criticises the narrow focus on "*isolated teaching behaviours*" that are seen as actions that are not connected with the curricular context within which they are observed. Additionally, the validity of observational systems has been called into question (see Ornstein, 1991) because this method cannot be used to measure complex teaching behaviours. However, there are other researchers (e.g. Cohen et al., 2003; Smith, 2006; etc.) who argue that these limitations are not serious validity/reliability concerns.

5.5. Conclusion

Despite the above-mentioned limitations of the study, the findings of this research still make a valuable contribution to the field of teacher-training and may provide further impetus for educational reform implementation in East-European ex-communist countries.

The implications of the current research in the field of the teacher-training domain are:

1. It provides an understanding of the impacts of two external factors – namely, participation in theoretical teacher-training courses that emphasise the use of CLT and the use of a course-book based on communicative approaches – on the teaching approach of Albanian EFL teachers.
2. It indicates that Albanian EFL instructors who have used a communicative course-book for more than five years in their EFL classes are likely to be more communicative in their teaching than other teachers – who have either attended a short-course “Western-style” teacher-training course, or have neither used a CLT course-book, nor participated in any CLT teacher-training course.
3. It proposes the studying of “odd teaching behaviours” as a new research area within the teacher cognition discipline.

The practical implications of the current research for future institutional policies in the country/East-European ex-communist countries are:

1. Possibly, on-going educational reforms can be accelerated by the implementation of other low-cost training strategies (e.g. the use of a communicative course-book laid down centrally, the preparation of national communicative tests, the encouragement of in-site debates about the strengths and weaknesses of GT, etc).
2. Other research studies that have to investigate the external/internal factors that impede/foster the progress of the educational reforms in the country, need to be financed.
3. With reference to the impact that educational reforms are having/will have in the teaching approach of Albanian EFL teachers, the current study suggests that MASH experts need to have clear view as to how communicative they want Albanian EFL teachers to be and how possible this aim is within the teaching/learning context of the country.

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Appendix I

An example of a typical grammar-translation class. (Extracted from Nagaraj, 1996:4,5,6,7)

In the classroom – a simulation

The input, given below, is taken from George Orwell's *The Decline of English Murder and Other essays*:

George Orwell served the Imperial Police in Burma during the 1920s. Below is an account of a hanging he witnessed:

It was in Burma, a sodden morning of the rains. A sickly light, like yellow tinfoil, was slanting over the high walls into the jail yard. We were waiting outside the condemned cells, a row of sheds fronted with double bars, like small animal cages. Each cell measured about ten feet by ten and was quite bare within except for a plank bed and a pot for drinking water. In some of them brown, silent men were squatting at the inner bars, with their blankets draped round them. These were the condemned men, due to be hanged within the next week or two.

Step One

(Learners read the passage)

Teacher: Nimish, read the next two lines.

Learner: "Each cell measured about ten feet by ten and was quite bare within except for a plank bed and a pot for drinking water".

Teacher: Now translate the sentence.

Learner: (in mother tongue) What does "cell" mean?

Teacher: (gives translation in mother tongue)

Learner: (translates)

Teacher: (help with "expect for" and "measured").

(This activity continues till the passage is done)

Step Two

Teacher: Any questions?

Learner: What does "sodden" mean?

Teacher: (translates into the mother tongue. Gives explanations and illustrations in mother tongue)

Learner: (in mother tongue) What is the meaning of "fronted with double bars"?

Teacher: (gives a corresponding phrase in mother tongue).

Step Three

Teacher: Now let's do the questions.

Radhinka and Kamal do the first question.

Learner 1: What sort of morning was it?

Learner 2: It was a sodden morning.

(Learners work out all the questions. The answers are then given by the learners and checked by the teacher for correctness).

Step Four

(The next activity involves vocabulary work)
Teacher: Study the list of words given. Can you give the mother tongue words for these:
sodden cells condemned cages

(Learners give the mother tongue equivalents. The teacher helps if necessary).

Teacher: Look at the words below. Each of this has a word with the opposite meaning in the text: crowded big low dry

Step Five

Teacher:

(The next part of the lesson deals with the teaching of grammar deductively.)

A noun is a name. it may be the name of a person like Mary, or of a place like Dehli. These nouns are **proper nouns**. They begin with a capital letter.

The noun can also be the name of something we can see or touch, like a table or a pot. These are **concrete nouns**.

There are other nouns that we can neither touch nor see, like truth, beauty, honor. These are **abstract nouns**.

Collective nouns refer to group, like team, crowd, committee.

From this paragraph of the passage find three things that can be found in the cell. What kind of nouns are these? What kind of noun is Bruma?

Most noun form their plural by adding an 's'. find two nouns from the first paragraph which form the plural in this way.

There is one noun in the passage which does not form the plural in this way. Find it.

Step Six

(The next part is an exercise.)

Identify the nouns in the following sentences and say whether they are **concrete**, **abstract** or **collective** nouns.

1 – The crowd was very big.

2 – We all love honesty.

3 – He gave me some grapes.

4 – Our team is better than theirs.

5 – Solomon was famous for his wisdom.

Reference:

Nagaraj, Geetha (1996) English Language Teaching: Approaches, Methods, Techniques. India: Orient Blackswan.

Appendix II

A PPP lesson plan for presenting new language, with activities for improving language skills. Extracted from Baker and Westrup (2003:35,36).

Objective

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to use the present continuous to describe present actions.

Example of target language

"What's she doing?" "She's writing on the board"

Presentation Phase

Explain new language with action pictures, then check meaning, use and pronunciation.

Practice Phase

Class drills, using word prompts and then picture word prompts.

[**Optional skills improvement activity:** The teacher asks students to make sentences which they would hear in a sports commentary or a race or a football match. The students work in pairs to write two sentences and then each pair reads out their sentences. The teacher writes the sentences on the blackboard. More advanced students can be asked to suggest sentences, without writing them down first. The teacher then writes these on the blackboard.]

Production Phase

In pairs or groups, students mime various activities and the others have to guess what they are doing.

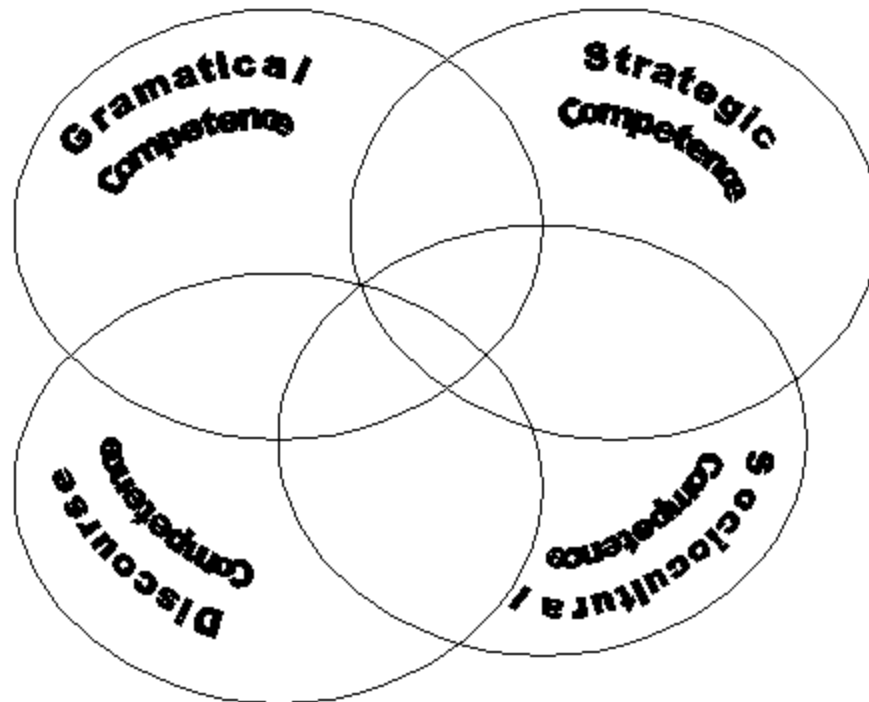
[**Optional skills improvement activity:** Act out a mobile phone call, telling someone what you are doing while you are walking around and talking to them. For example: I am walking out of the room and now I'm going upstairs. Now I'm looking out of the window.]

Reference:

Baker, Joanna and Heather Westrup (2003) The English Language Teacher's Handbook: How to Teach Large Classes with Few Resources. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Appendix III

A graphical representation of the four Communicative Competence properties involved in natural speech, adapted from Canale 1983.



Reference:

Canale, Michael (1983) 'From communicative competence to Language Pedagogy in Language and communication' Richards and Schmidt, 2-27.

Richards, Jack C., and Richard W. Schmidt (1983) Language and Communication. London: Longman.

Appendix IV

The table below summarises the main approaches grown around CLT.

Approaches/Syllabus	Founders/Authors
Structural/functional	Wilkins (1976)
Functional/structural (around a structural core)	Brumfit (1980)
Functional	Jupp and Hodlin (1975)
Notional	Wilkins (1976)
Task-based	Prabhu (1983)
Interactional	Widdowson (1979)
Learner based	Candlin (1976)

Extracted from Richards and Rogers (1986:64-75).

Reference:

Richards, Jack C., and Theodore S. Rogers (1986) Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching: A Description and Analysis. Cambridge: CUP.

Appendix V - Research Consent Form (Page I)

Dear Colleague,

As you recall, I am currently enrolled in an MA in Applied Linguistics and TESOL program at School of Education, University of Leicester - UK. As part of my MA program, I am required to conduct a research dissertation and the title of my research is:

Investigating the degree into which CLT is implemented in twenty-three EFL classes in an East-European post-communist country.

To conduct my research, I must observe the teaching of more than twenty Albanian EFL teachers of different backgrounds (i.e. age, sex, teaching location, etc). In order to identify teachers who meet the above-mentioned criteria, a questionnaire was mailed to more than one hundred state and private secondary/high school teachers. As you kindly sent the completed form to the home address of the researcher, you are probably willing to participate in this project. Given the fact that you satisfy the criteria for selecting this study's research participants, *You are being invited to take part in this research study.*

Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand that it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

The research consists of **two** stages: observations and interviews. If you decide to take part, the researcher will observe a forty-five minute English class taught by you. Following that, a short interview – focused on the observed lesson - will be conducted. The date and the time for the observation/interview have to be mutually arranged before. All information obtained by the study will be kept strictly confidential and your proper name will appear nowhere in the study.

Data gathered by the class observations will be organised into categories and themes and analysed statistically based on a quantitative method. The results of the research are likely to be published on the official journal of University of Vlora, January 2010 issue.

Appendix V - CONSENT FORM – (Page II).

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.
3. I agree to take part in the above study.
4. I agree to my English teaching being observed.
5. I agree to be interviewed after the observation.
6. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications .

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Contacts for further information:

Researcher: Kristjan Seferaj MA in Applied Linguistics and TESOL Candidate kristjan@londonschoolsofalbania.com	Supervisor: Dr Glenn Fulcher University of Leicester School of Education Telephone: +44 (0) 116 2297508 E-mail: gf39@le.ac.uk
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Appendix VII

The following sheet was used to take verbatim notes during the interviews.

Teacher's code

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Part I

N#	Questions	Rationale
1	Odd Behaviours	
2	Odd Behaviours	
3	Communicative Teaching Behaviours	
4	Communicative Teaching Behaviours	
5	Errors not corrected/corrected	
6	Errors not corrected/corrected	

Part II

N#		Yes	No	Details (if needed)
1	Years of teaching English (see questionnaire sheet)– to be confirmed.			
2	Place of teaching English (see questionnaire sheet)– to be confirmed.			
3	Attended any “western style” teacher-training courses. (see questionnaire sheet)– to be confirmed.			
4	Used any other course-book during the years 1992-2006, apart from “English for you”. If yes, for how long and which one. (see questionnaire sheet)– to be confirmed.			

Appendix VIII
Consent to tape-record/transcribe the observation

I, _____, hereby allow the researcher to:

tape-record

transcribe or take notes during

(tick as appropriate)

the observation session

Participant's signature

Date

Consent to tape-record/transcribe the interview

I, _____, hereby allow the researcher to:

tape-record

transcribe or take notes during

(tick as appropriate)

the interview session

This interview is designed to last approximately five-to-ten minutes. However, you are encouraged to expand on the issues and **talk as long as you wish**. Likewise, if there is any questions you would rather not answer or you wish to stop the interview, you are free to do so without having to give an explanation.

Participant's signature

Date

Appendix IX

The transcription of one of the interviews tape recorded:

- Observer:** Another time “thank you” for welcoming me to your class.
- Teacher:** You welcome. So, what is it like to be a student in my class?
- Observer:** Eeee... I can't really tell you that, I was a guest...
- Teacher:** (Laughing) You are right!
- Observer:** As a guest, you kept me busy, though, as you worked hard and I had to take a lot of notes (laughing).
- Teacher:** Yes, a class loaded with grammar this one.
- Observer:** It was quite an interesting class, though, and I think your students enjoyed it.
- Teacher (laughing):** So, you are saying that to make me feel flattered, aren't you?
- Observer:** Not at all. I really think you know how to keep your students focussed...
- Teacher:** Sounds good, thanks!
- Observer:** Coming back to the interview, did you have time to have a look through the sheet I handed you before the class started?
- Teacher:** Yes, I did.
- Observer:** Any questions?
- Teacher:** Everything is clear.
- Observer:** OK. Let's start with the observation questions. Most of the time you spoke in L2 in your class (e.g. you asked different questions in English to activate your students' schemata about the Titanic, explained the new words you were asked for with other English words, etc). However, you used your L1 to explain the use of the simple past in English. Why did you do that?
- Teacher:** Simple past is very much used in English and I want my students to grasp it and, eventually, use it accurately. As you might have noticed, three or four students in this class are at a low beginner level and, thus, I felt like I had to teach it in Albanian, so that it was clear for all of them. You know, when you teach a mixed-level class, you have to make sure all students understand key issues...
- Observer:** Definitely, you are right. As a matter of curiosity, the teaching of grammar and the teaching of what else would you list under the category “key issues”?
- Teacher:** I don't know, depends... a grammar item, vocabulary drills, pronunciation, etc.
- Observer:** Right! Was this the first time the students were encouraging the simple past in English?
- Teacher:** Yes.
- Observer:** The blonde girl sitting at one desk on the right row (I think you called her “Elda”) said a couple of times “singed” instead of “sunk”. Why didn't you correct her?
- Teacher:** I didn't notice the error.
- Observer:** If you had noticed the error, would you have corrected it?
- Teacher:** Of course.

Observer: Once only or every time the student did not say it right?

Teacher: Every single time, until she got it right.

Observer: You asked your students to check each-other's mistakes – more than five times to be precise. Why did you do that?

Teacher: As you said, it is a way to keep students focused.

Observer: Interesting. Not a very used strategy in Albania though. How did you come to know it? I mean, where did you first see it used?

Teacher: Let me think. Probably from a colleague of mine. However, I am not very sure whether I got it from her, or she got it from me. I will have to ask her.

Observer: Great. Even this is clarified. So, the next thing to talk about is ... Yes. At the beginning of the class you chatted for several minutes with your students in English. Why did you do that?

Teacher (laughing): Although this is the second time, I am still not getting used to the idea of "being watched". You know, it does not happen often to have observers in my classes. The only one who sometimes comes to check my teaching is the headmaster who is not particularly welcomed (laughing). So, I was simply a bit confused and I forgot to bring the register with me. As you saw, I sent a student to fetch it. While waiting for the register, I chatted a bit with my students probably to make myself feel at ease.

Observer: Right. OK. Sorry about that. I do see the point. It's a bit like Big Brother is watching you, isn't it (laughing)? And ... a last question here: Why did you ask your students to work in their pairs and find out three things they did last weekend?

Teacher: Because it was a way to practise the use of simple past.

Observer: There was a similar exercise in the text-book, exercise five, if I am not wrong, is that right?

Teacher: Yes, probably exercise five.

Observer: If there was no exercise five, would you have asked your students to work in their pairs and find out three things they did last weekend?

Teacher: I don't know, depends by what activities I would have planned.

Observer: Right. Thanks. Now I will ask you some questions about your previous teaching practice. So, for how long have you been teaching English?

Teacher: For ages, since I finished my university studies.

Observer: In the year?

Teacher: 1974.

Observer: You are currently teaching in Vlore. Have you always worked in this city, in this school?

Teacher: No. My first teaching job was in a village school in Orikum (a village near Vlore – observer's note). I taught there for four years. After that I got married and I moved to Tirana where I found a teaching position in a secondary-school. I taught there for something like seventeen or eighteen years. Then, I was hired by the Lincoln English Center. It was when they first opened their language school in Tirana in 1995. And finally in 2004 I turned back in Vlora because I was offered a teaching position in this private school.

Observer: Have you ever attended any teacher-training course organised by foreign agencies (like British Council, or USAID)?

Teacher: No, never.

Observer: During the years 1992-2006, which textbook did you use as the main textbook for your teaching?

Teacher: Until 1995, it was the course-book "Easy English". Then, The "Headway Series" was used in the Lincoln Center.

Observer: Thank you very much for your time.

Appendix X

The following questionnaire – written in Albanian - was sent out to more than 150 high EFL instructors teaching in the capital city, in a southern and a northern city, in three towns and five village schools.

Dear English Language Teacher,

I am an English language teacher currently enrolled in an MA in Applied Linguistics and TESOL program at School of Education, University of Leicester - UK. As part of my MA program, I am required to conduct a research dissertation and the title of my research is:

Investigating the degree into which CLT is implemented in twenty-three EFL classes in an East-European post-communist country.

To conduct my research, I must observe the teaching of more than twenty Albanian EFL teachers of different backgrounds (i.e. age, sex, teaching location, etc). In case you are willing to participate in this project, please answer the questions given below and kindly sent the completed form to the following address:

Kristjan Seferaj

Lagja "Rilindja". Pallati 1050. Rruga "Sadik Zotaj". H2K2. Vlore. 9401.

Questionnaire:

Please fill in the following gaps:

Your name: _____.

Your age: _____ .

Contact number: _____ .

Best time to call: _____ .

How many years have you taught English? _____ .

Have you ever participated in any teacher-training events organised by British Council or USAID in Tirana? YES NO (please circle)

Have you ever used "Headway series" or "New Headway series" as the main textbook for teaching English as an L2? YES NO (please circle)

In which school are you currently teaching? (please write the full address, including the city, town or village)

Note: It is important for you to understand that it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you, the researcher will observe a forty-five minute English class taught by you. Additionally, there will be a short after-lesson discussion between you and the observer. All information obtained by the class observation and interviews will be kept strictly confidential and your proper name will appear nowhere in the study.
