



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In chapter 1, the background of the study truly indicates that large class size is indeed a significant problem which adversely affects learning. One major factor that makes large EFL classes truly less effective is that most teachers rely on the traditional lecture mode (Macdonald, 2000) which does not promote active learning (Fink, 2003) and optimal environment conditions for successful language learners (Egbert and others, 1999: 4). To be a successful language learner, social interaction plays a fundamental role in the process of cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978).

In order to synthesize and develop an Active Learning Instructional Model for enhancing secondary school students' English communicative abilities in large classes, the review of literature in various conceptual and theoretical frameworks touches on the following topics:

1. Large class concept
2. Active learning
3. Communicative language teaching
4. Constructivism
5. Group dynamics in the language classroom

1. LARGE CLASS CONCEPT

Large class sizes currently seem to be common in most ESL/EFL classes in many countries. There are several studies on this topic, such as the Lancaster-Leeds Project (1989), which views a 'large class' as a challenging idea. Although parents and educators almost universally identify small classes as a desirable attribute of a successful school system and class size reduction initiatives have been implemented widely (Averett & McLennan, 2006) throughout the world, and especially in developing countries, teachers are faced with classes larger than that which they believe facilitates effective teaching and learning (Watson Todd, 2006). For many teachers, large class size is regarded as one of the biggest, (if not the biggest) challenges they face in their work. Despite this, the issue of large classes has been ignored (Allwright, 1989).

In this section, definitions of a large class, problems in large classes, the eleven principles of coping in large multilevel classes, and using of different models of teaching in large classes are presented (in that order).

1.1 How large is a large class?

When one hears the word '*large class*,' the first issue that comes to mind is how large a class should one be for it to be considered a large class. Atkinson (2003: 1) believes it to be any class size that forces teachers to use different teaching techniques other than that which they are used to implementing. Meanwhile, Gedalof (2002) does not believe that the "magic number", the great divide between large and less-than-large, is fixed or constant. He (2002: 1) explains that "a large class is one in which I cannot make individual, protracted eye contact with each student in the room over the course of a standard 50-minute class." He concludes that "In a 50-minute class, I can engage or make a connection with about one student per minute, so for me, a large class is more than fifty individuals." In addition, Brown (2001: 196) claims that language classes should ideally have no more than approximately a dozen people. Classes should be large enough to give diversity as well as student interaction, and small enough to provide students a lot of opportunity to participate and get individual attention.

According to several scholars, there is no exact number of students for a large class. In "*How large are large classes?*," Nolasco and Arthur (1988: 4) suggest that the answer can vary. Teachers who are accustomed to groups of 12-14 students may find a group of 20 to be rather threatening. Others, on the other hand, may be relieved when they have merely 40. Alternatively, Hess (2001) claims that the answer to this question is "it depends." For some instructors, anything over a seminar of a dozen students is considered large; yet others do not call a class large until it is a lecture hall of 300 students.

To give an example: A Social Science lecturer who works alone with a class of 45-55 students and who grades students on coursework assignments and essay examinations may find his class to be a large one; while on the other hand, an English lecturer may not think that 55 students makes for a large class at all. In other words, one person's large class is another's bread and butter. There is no agreed definition of a large class, nor should there be. According to an electronic article from the Office of Instructional Development and Technology at Dalhousie University

(<http://www.dal.ca/~clt/teachtips.html>), a large class is one that “feels” large. Signs that a class is a large class are suggested as follows:

1. the class is significantly larger than that in which the teacher himself/herself has been taught in;
2. a teacher feels that he/she no longer knows the students; and
3. the grading load is getting out of control.

However, it is important to note that the signs that indicate a large class may vary as well. For example, Gedalof (2002: 1), apart from individual protracted eye contact with each student in the room over the course, also adds that there are two other measures, which are taken into consideration. The first is purely practical, and relates simply to the number of hours in a day and days in a school year; it is the number of students for whom the teacher can do all of the marking, and give careful and extensive comments on essays and other assignments; which are extremely important in the teaching process. The second is perhaps a function of the teacher’s mental capacity, but most probably more of a psychological barrier; it is the number of names with which the teacher feels comfortable teaching. He explains, “In my experience, I seem to be daunted by the prospect of learning the names of members of a group of more than about fifty.”

To support the mentioned ideas, Cloeman (1989: 4-5) conducted a research entitled ‘*How large are large classes?*’ One of his findings evidently shows that there are very great variations in respondents’ experience regarding class size; and moreover, how large language classes actually are in different types of institutions in different parts of the world. In other words, ‘large’ means different things to different people.

Finally, in the Teaching Large Classes Project 2001: Final Report (2003), a different aspect is proposed. It is said that the size of class group does not directly link to the quality of the teaching and learning experience. Rather, it is the interaction between several factors and how they interact that is the key issue in whether or not a large class is perceived as ‘large’. Three major factors are identified: (1) the number of students in the group, (2) the teaching and learning activities (TALs), and (3) the facilities and physical environment. The interaction among these factors impacts on both the teacher’s and the students’ perception of whether the class is ‘large’. If one of these dimensions changes, then the perception of class size is more likely to change. If

a teacher, for instance, wants to involve 350 students in interactive discussions in small groups in the tiered lecture theater, then the class will most likely be perceived as ‘large’; and managing the interactive discussions in such a setting would be challenging. If the physical environment, however, was changed to a large flat-floor room with moveable chairs, interactive discussion becomes easier to achieve; but of course, managing the movement of the 350 students and the TLAs becomes an important factor in whether this will or will not be a quality teaching and learning experience.

Moreover, Gedalof (2002: 1) also mentions three ranges of class size: 50-125 for large classes, 125-400 for very large classes, and over 400 for “superclasses”.

All in all, based on the literature previously mentioned, it can be concluded that there is no exact number of students in a large class. One teacher’s large class may be a small class for another. Therefore, the concept of a large class may be individually varied, which depends upon considerable factors such as teaching experience and perception, teaching and learning activities, content of the course, etc. Table 1.1 (Watson Todd, 2006: 2) summarizes the numbers of students mentioned in articles about large classes for English language teaching. It is clear that all the authors agree that large classes have between 40 to 60 students. Although other teachers may have considerably different ideas, these figures give an idea of the general consensus among scholars on the definition of a large class.

Table 2.1: Minimum sizes of large classes

Author (Year)	Minimum size of large class
Barker (1976)	55
Long (1977)	60
Samuda & Bruton (1981)	40
Hubbard et al. (1983)	45
Chimombo (1986)	50
Dixon (1986)	40
Nolasco & Arthur (1986)	40
Finocchiaro (1989)	65
George (1991)	60
Safnil (1991)	60
Holliday (1996)	50
Hayes (1997)	50
Li (1998)	50
Touba (1999)	60

In the background study (Appendix A) conducted by the researcher to find out teachers' experiences and perceptions about large English class size, one finding shows that the average starting point at which the respondents begin to think of English classes as being large is 42.57. In other words, the starting point at which they think a class is large is when it contains 43 students.

1.2 Is Class Size a Problem?

The Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching at Pennsylvania State University (http://www.psu.edu/celt/newsletter/ID_Oct92.html, 1997) says that "...because the special problem scale imposes on the teaching-learning process, faculty in very different disciplines find it useful to talk with one another to share effective solutions to the often vexsome problems of large class sections..."

Generally, the literature reviews reveal that the issues important in large classes are the same issues important in classes of any size, such as being systematic and organized, motivating students, maintaining quality of learning, and developing authentic assessment. However, many of these issues and challenges are magnified with large groups. Most of the research on class size variations suggests that large classes lead to increased diversity and complexity. Diversity and complexity mean that, in many cases, the situation changes qualitatively. Much of the literature proposes that it is not favorable or sufficient to simply amplify what teachers do for smaller classes (<http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/largeclasses/>).

Allwright (1989) also mentions that large classes indeed make classroom language teaching more difficult, or less effective. Additionally, Brown (2001: 196-197) raises some issues about large classes and presents certain problems arising in large classes such as that proficiency and ability vary widely across students, individual teacher-student attention is minimized, student opportunities to speak are lessened, and teacher's feedback on students' written work is limited.

Michaelsen (2004: 153) presents two typically problematic conditions of large classes: student anonymity and passivity that foster negative student attitudes and inhibit learning. He explains that in small classes, teachers generally know the majority of their students by name and students can interact with the teachers as well as with each other on a regular basis. As the classes become larger, individual students are lost in a sea of faces, and a smaller proportion of students are capable of engaging in discussion and interaction with both the teachers and each other.

Consequently, plenty of research studies about large classes have been conducted to find out the solutions and possible instructional strategies for large classes. Here are some examples.

Coleman (1989) studied large classes and summarized in a report named “*How large are large classes?*” that the phenomenon of large classes is widespread. He found that there is a consensus that large classes are of particular concern to the teachers who must teach in such classrooms. However, he also adds that there is little theoretical attention given towards language learning and teaching in large classes since EFL teacher training programs are not generally concerned with language teaching under difficult circumstances. There is evidence, furthermore, that ELT development projects fail to take into consideration the existence of large classes.

On another note, the Teaching and Educational Development Institute at The University of Queensland (<http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/largeclasses/>) presented a series paper about teaching large classes in 2001. According to the study, the research into the impact of increased class size on the learning experience of students shows that the quality of teaching and assessment provided are more important than class size. However, increasing class sizes unavoidably generates further problems because it increases the complexity of teaching. Finally, it concluded that academics must cope with a more diverse population of students, have more problems communicating with other members of staff as well as students, suffer under a greater administrative burden, and face more difficulties in promoting active participation and monitoring student progress.

In 2003, the Teaching and Educational Development Institute conducted a research study named “*Teaching large classes project 2001: Final report*” and raised two main problems that arise in large classes: teaching methodology, and classroom management (<http://www.autc.gov.au/pr/sessional/tlc.pdf>).

Based on the vast majority of the literature regarding large classes, Watson Todd (2006: 3-4) summarizes the problems of large classes typically mentioned in the literature and categorizes these into the following groups:

1. Learning
 - Less effective learning
2. Management / Activities
 - Discipline
 - Absentee students

- Organizing activities
- Reliance on lectures and drills
- Avoidance of some activities

3. Physical / Practical

- Space
- Discomfort
- Students' can't see / hear
- Noise
- Timing
- Time for student presentation
- Provision of materials

4. Affective factors

- Achievement rapport
- Impersonalization
- No sense of community
- Teacher discomfort
- Intimidating atmosphere
- Learning names

5. Interaction

- Few opportunities to speak
- Giving attention to individuals
- Focus on the action zone
- Increased use of the mother tongue
- Less interesting lessons

6. Feedback and evaluation

- Monitoring
- Giving feedback
- Assessment
- Marking load

7. Miscellaneous

- More mixed abilities
- Getting feedback from students

Moreover, Allwright (1989: 5-7) proposes four alternative interpretations about large classes in his research study entitled “*Is class size a problem?*,” as follows:

1. Perhaps class size is really not a problem, just a convenient excuse.
2. Perhaps class size really is a problem, but not an interesting one for article writers or researchers.
3. Perhaps class size really is a problem, but it is seen generally as a hopeless one, insoluble except by elimination.
4. Perhaps class size really is a problem, but one that is in fact dangerous ‘politically’ to solve ‘pedagogically’.

Due to what is written in the aforementioned literature, it is sagacious to conclude that the literature reviewed cites many descriptive papers and case studies that identify or describe ways in which colossal class size creates problems for staff and students; and that such literature also describes successful strategies in terms of classroom management and administration, teaching methodology, as well as assessment and evaluation.

1.3 Eleven Principles of Coping in Large Multilevel Classes

Hess (2001: 7) claims that although the problems in large classes are formidable, they are surmountable. Therefore, he proposes eleven functional principles of coping in large multilevel classes that can turn a struggle into a challenging trial.

Principle one is “Scarlett O’ Hara”. This principle’s wording comes from a heroine in a novel ‘*Gone with the Wind*’ by Margaret Mitchell. Scarlett O’ Hara had a special mantra when things got too tense: ‘*I will think about it tomorrow,*’ she said. This idea may be helpful in dealing with the frustrations that accompany teaching large multilevel classes. The irritants in teaching can happen to any classroom practitioner. Nevertheless, as a result of the large class size, teachers are subject to greater stress and feel more vulnerable; and the teachers should avoid and minimize the frustrations occurring during teaching large multilevel classes or at least do as Scarlett O’ Hara did: think about them “tomorrow”. By the next day, the scalding water may have evaporated into steam.

Principle two is variety. Because there are so many styles of learning and attention spans to relate to, a variety of activities and techniques is very important in

the teaching. Especially for large multilevel classes, a variety of tasks can accommodate different levels in the class. Moreover, students have a limited length of time for their concentration. If an activity goes on too long, their minds begin to wander, no matter how fascinating the subject. In large classes, lack of attention can be disastrous; thus, various techniques and approaches should be presented to students in order to constantly provoke their interest. Some students who do not like one phase of activity may well like the next. This does not mean that the same subject matter cannot be pursued for a long period of time, but it means that teachers must vary the way in which things are done. For instance, if students have been working on something very challenging, perhaps it is time to switch to something lighter.

Principle three is pace. Doing an activity too fast or too slowly can ruin the process, so correct pacing means that a teacher should handle each activity and phase of activity at the tempo and momentum suitable for it. This is important in a large class; without correct pacing, the teacher can lose control, and can bore or frustrate the students. Each class has different demands for pacing, and simple careful observation may give the teacher hints as to what kind of pace is best to set for the students. As a rule, drills should proceed briskly; and discussions that involve thought, reflection and introspection must move at a more leisurely pace.

Principle four is interest. In a large class, as soon as a group of students loses interest, they are likely to either cause trouble or create the kind of distraction that will cause them to focus on themselves rather than on the lesson. There are three fundamental characteristic aspects of topics that bring about student interest. An interesting topic should (1) arouse student curiosity, (2) tap into meaningful existential questions, and (3) touch students' lives. Nonetheless, an interesting topic cannot automatically generate appeal for students. To create real student interest requires many factors such as creation of game-like activities, activities that convey and receive meaning, problem-solving activities, role-play, and thoughtful use of attractive visuals. Creating interest will help the teacher with both control and class management, and will ensure that as many students as possible stay involved.

Principle five is collaboration. Collaboration means working together and cooperating. It is good to use collaborative learning in all classes: students participate more, they learn how to compromise, they negotiate meaning, and they become better risk-takers and more efficient self-monitors and self-evaluators; thus, classroom atmosphere and efficiency improve as does student self-esteem. Nevertheless, in large

multilevel classes, collaboration is a must because a teacher cannot be everywhere to service the immediate needs of all students. At the same time, students must learn to use one another as language resources. There are many strategies that help students collaborate such as

- Group work in which students complete a task together,
- Pair work in which students share ideas or quiz and drill each other,
- Peer review in which students analyze and comment on one another's written work,
- Brainstorming in which students contribute ideas on a single topic, and
- Jigsaw activities in which each student contributes different aspects of knowledge to create a whole.

Principle six is individualization. Individualizing student work helps teachers to deal with the problem of "finding the person in the crowd" and to keep everyone challenged, interested, and occupied with tasks that are neither too difficult nor too easy. All students produce infinitely better results when they work on projects that are of genuine interest to them rather than just fulfilling the teacher assigned work. In a large class, it is important to provide opportunities for students to work at their own pace, in their own style, and on topics of their own choice. There are many ways of promoting individualization: portfolio projects, self-access centers, individual writing, etc.

Principle seven is personalization. It is important that students feel they are related to each other as individuals and are not simply numbers on a list. It is easy for students feeling impersonalized to be overwhelmed by a large class. Students quickly begin to feel that there is really no point in expressing their opinions because their ideas are of no interest to anyone. Thus, it is important in a large class for teachers to provide opportunities in which students may share opinions, relate to their own future plans, explore their ideas on important issues, take stands on controversial topics, and apply their special knowledge to current concerns. For example, after reading about a controversial topic, students can write letters to the editor.

Principle eight is choice and open-endedness. Many kinds of exercises provided in language textbooks require very specific answers; and such exercises are the so-called closed-ended exercises. On the other hand, open-ended exercises allow students many possibilities for choosing appropriate language items; and also allow the gearing of exercises to their respective levels of competence. Because they truly

work well in all classes, open-ended exercises are truly a boon in the large multilevel classes as they put everyone to work with the new language. For example, the teacher may ask students to brainstorm and provide some questions that can be answered in many different ways.

Principle nine is setting up routines. In the large classes, where so many personalities interact and so much human energy is expended, both the instructor and students need the comfort and stability of established routines. The class operates much more smoothly if certain conventions are established early in the term. The following are some classroom procedures that are easily made routine: the way attendance is checked and tardiness is handled; and the way students are notified of test dates, deadlines, and special events. However, if some routines do not work, it is always possible to reexamine the procedure; to adjust, change, or eliminate it.

Principle ten is enlarging the circle. In the large multilevel classes, the teacher wants to involve as many students as possible, even during the teacher-fronted phases of the lessons. Thus, enlarging the circle can avoid many of the problems associated with classroom control and interest. For instance, the teacher should not call on the first student whose hand goes up; and should instead wait until many hands are raised. As the hands go up, an instructor should encourage greater participation by saying '*I see five hands up, aren't there more?*'

Principle eleven is question and the kind of questioning used. During part of the teacher-fronted lessons, the teacher always uses questioning. In large multilevel classes, it is important to ask the kinds of questions that arouse interest, create maximum student involvement, bring about the liveliest responses, and keep the entire class awake; by using questions such as those beginning with '*Why,*' those initiated by students, those moved on to the whole class by the teacher, etc.

In summary, the eleven principles suggest that teachers should get students' interest and involvement into the lessons via individualization and collaboration by using various activities and teaching strategies.

1.4 Different Models of Teaching in Large Classes

The following table is a summary of the various models of teaching put forth by Joyce and others (2000). Joyce and others stress the importance of adopting a *multiple-models approach* to teaching students with a range of skills and backgrounds. Given that large classes usually mean a wide range of student

backgrounds and abilities, it would seem imperative that teachers of large classes endeavor to somehow incorporate each of the following teaching models into their courses. However, these models vary in their suitability with large groups; and whereas some methods of instruction are ideal in large lecture situations, others are virtually impossible to implement and should therefore be employed in smaller group sessions such as tutorials, laboratories, and peer assisted study sessions. The following table provides an outline of the various models and comments on their suitability with varying class sizes (Teaching and Educational Development Institute, 2002; Allen, 1996).

Table 2.2: Outline of the various models and their suitability with varying class sizes

Teaching Models (from Joyce et al., 2000)	Suitability for Large Classes	Methods for Implementation
<p>The social models</p> <p>These models emphasize our social nature and how social interactions can enhance academic learning. The social contexts in which knowledge is constructed is emphasized. The focus is on developing a community of learners, resolving conflicts, negotiating meanings and cooperating to complete set tasks.</p>	<p>Some of these methods may be difficult to implement practically in large lectures, although the use of these methods can be demonstrated.</p> <p>Better suited to small group sessions (lab, tutorial etc.).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • group investigations / discussions • cooperative learning • role plays • jurisprudential inquiry • social science inquiry • case studies • utilizing learning styles • cooperative learning
<p>The information processing models</p> <p>The information processing (IP) models emphasize the development of the mind: namely reasoning and problem-solving skills. Teaching students how to think and learn is seen as a major goal. Students are encouraged to reason causally and master complex bodies of concepts by generating, analyzing, applying and evaluating information. The generation and use of analogies and metaphors is also common.</p>	<p>Some IP methods are difficult to implement in large lectures and are more suited to smaller groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • induction (data collection and hypotheses testing) • inferential/Socratic method
	<p>Other IP methods can be used equally well with large groups as with smaller ones.</p> <p>They may need to be modified or simplified for larger groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concept attainment • mnemonics & metacognition • synectics • advanced organizers

Teaching Models (from Joyce et al., 2000)	Suitability for large classes	Methods for implementation
<p>The personal models</p> <p>These models see the student as central to his or her learning process. They emphasize the ways in which individuals create their own internal environment. Personality, self-esteem and self-concept are seen as crucial influences on learning. The goal is to enhance the mental and emotional health of students in order to generate learning needs and aspirations. The teacher is seen as a facilitator.</p>	<p>Impossible to fully implement in large lectures, however may be demonstrated in a modified or incomplete way; for example, the use of divergent and creative thinking exercises.</p> <p>Best suited to smaller groups (tutorials, etc) where one-to-one relationships can develop and activities can be monitored closely and followed through.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student-teacher partnerships • brainstorming • classroom meeting • mind mapping • non-directive work contracts • student-defined problem solving • modelling growth (and self-actualizing behaviors)
<p>The behavioral models</p> <p>These models see students as a collection of learned behaviors. As such, behaviors can be learned and behaviors that don't work well can be 'unlearned'. These models also emphasize reinforcement schedules. Desired responses and behaviors need to be rewarded if they are to re-occur in students. Learning goals are generally individualized and discrete. Self-paced learning is valued and encouraged. Criteria for assessment and standards are rigid and objective.</p>	<p>Most suitable (and common) of all the models for large classes including large lectures.</p> <p>Excessive use of these models in small group work (tutorials, etc) is probably wasteful since it is important to use small group sessions to apply the other models.</p> <p>However, small group work may require some amount of direct instruction and training etc., especially in lab and practical situations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • direct instruction • training & simulations • programmed instruction • self-instruction (e.g. self-paced study kits or workbooks) • drills • mastery learning

In a large authentic classroom, there is no single best way of teaching. Therefore, with the eclectic approach (Brown, 2001), a number of basic principles of learning and teaching can be implemented to this model to suit students' levels, needs, and motivation; instructor's expertise and styles, subject matter, etc.

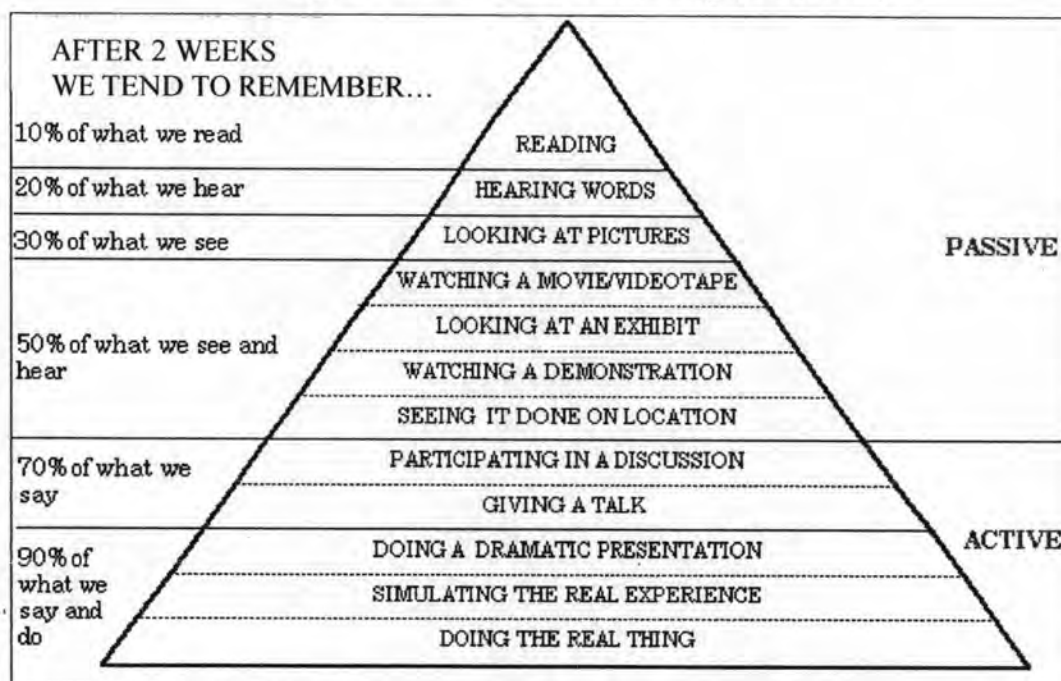
2. THE CONCEPT OF ACTIVE LEARNING

“Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just sitting in classes listening to teachers, memorizing prepackaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write reflectively about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves.”

(Chickering & Gamson, 1987: 1)

Research and anecdotal evidence overwhelmingly support Chickering and Gamson's claim that students learn best when they engage with course materials and actively participate in their learning (Ausubel, 1968; Ausubel et al., 1978; Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Meyers & Jones, 1993; Bean, 1996; Sutherland & Bonwell, 1996; Fink, 2003). This is because active learning increases motivation and attendance and reduces competition and isolation in the classroom by involving all students—including marginalized ones—and having everyone learn to work together cooperatively (Fink, 2003). Therefore, many teachers today want to move past passive learning to active learning; to find better ways of engaging students in the learning process (Fink, 1999) since such a passive involvement generally leads to a limited retention of knowledge by students (Krivickas, 2005), as indicated in the cone of learning (Dale, 1969) shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: The Cone of Learning (Dale, 1969)



Due to the highly interactive nature of this kind of learning, students are constantly giving and receiving immediate feedback. As a result, they feel their contributions are valued (Meyers & Jones, 1993). Active learning also seeks to tie in students' own life experiences; an excellent way of linking to prior learning, which in turn helps to increase long-term retention of the material (Bransford, 1979). It is also very effective at developing higher-order thinking skills like analysis, synthesis and

evaluation. By developing students' critical thinking skills in this way, it enables students to apply the information they are learning in new settings (Meyers & Jones, 1993). Ultimately, it can even inspire and motivate students to become self-directed, life-long learners (Bonwell & Eison, 1991).

2.1 Definitions

Based on the idea of active learning by Bonwell and Eison (1991: 5) describing active learning as engaging students in such higher order thinking tasks as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation; Fink (2003: 107) expands such definition by proposing three components of active learning: getting information and ideas, experiencing by doing and observing, and reflecting. All components can be done through direct and indirect ways.

McKeachie (1998) defines active learning as engaging students in doing something besides listening to a lecture and taking notes; in order to help them learn and apply course material. Instead of simply receiving information verbally and visually, students are receiving, participating and doing. Students may be involved in talking and listening to one another, or writing, reading and reflecting individually.

Meyers and Jones (1993: 6) claim that active learning involves providing opportunities for students to meaningfully talk and listen, write, read and reflect on the content, ideas, issues and concern of an academic subject.

Chickering and Gamson (1987: 4) claim that active learning is active and social, and requires students to "talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves".

Schomberg (1986) also describes active learning in what students do: students acquire information, interpret, and transform it. This requires analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and some form of reflection.

It can be concluded that in active learning, the learner is actively processing and interpreting content in context, creating personal meaning, integrating learning with life experiences, and developing an understanding of content that enables them to do something with it. Active learning implies a level of knowledge and comprehension that leads to application, synthesis, and critical evaluation (Bloom, 1956). As a consequence, it is recognized that the mind is more than an information storage facility and learning is more than responding to external stimuli.

2.2 Components for Active Learning: Past and Present Influences

Current thinking regarding the necessary components for active learning is a result of a synthesis of the work of a number of education theorists and learning psychologists; it represents a confluence of thought regarding the elements of active learning developed over the last four decades (Bonwell & Eison, 1991). For instance, Ausubel (1968) and Ausubel and others (1978) claim that learning must be "meaningful," that is, related to what is already known or experienced. In addition, active learning is taken into account by Bruner (1961) and Piaget (1976) as a process of continual discovery; learners actively construct knowledge as they explore, interact with, and discover the world around them. Vygotsky (1978) proposes that social interaction and resulting reflection are the key components of learning; he also adds that learning must be situated in authentic tasks (i.e., emphasizes the role of context in learning) for knowledge to be useful. According to Rogers (1969), active learning involves the whole person, intellect, and emotions; and Bonwell and Eison (1991) add that various sensory inputs (e.g., reading, writing, talking, listening, etc.) are necessary for active learning. Meyers and Jones (1993) confirm Bonwell and Eison's idea by claiming that the elements of active learning are talking and listening, writing, reading, and reflecting. Wilson and others (1995: 139) state that learning is "collaborative with meaning negotiated from multiple perspectives." Fink (2003) presents three components of active learning: getting information and ideas, experiencing through doing and observing, as well as reflecting. All can be done through such direct and indirect ways of learning.

These are all components of what various scholars have attempted to create with regard to active learning. The end goal, the underlying intent, of any of these active learning strategies should be to develop autonomous learners; learners who are self-directed and take responsibility for their own learning processes and make what they have learned part of themselves (Chickering & Gamson, 1987: 3).

2.3 A Holistic View of Active Learning

Three components of active learning (Fink, 2003) combine to form an enlarged and more holistic view of the topic: getting information and ideas, experiencing through doing and observing, as well as reflecting. To illustrate, students can *get information and ideas* through two modes: direct mode—the information from original sources, that is, data and ideas that have not yet been fully analyzed and

interpreted by others; and indirect mode—the information and ideas that have been organized and interpreted by the textbook writer or the lecturer. Secondly, students can *do* and *observe* experiences both directly—students’ engaging in real action in an authentic setting—and indirectly—consisting of case studies, gaming, simulations and role-playing. Lastly, teachers commonly employ two activities that encourage students to *reflect* on the subject of the course: participating in classroom discussion, and writing term papers by keeping a journal for a course or developing a learning portfolio.

Fink also remarks that in this new view of active learning, there are two principles for guiding the choices of learning activities. First, all three components of active learning must be included in an effective set of learning activities. Second, direct ways of providing these three forms of learning are preferable whenever possible. However, indirect, or vicarious, forms may be necessary at times.

Figure 2.2: The concept of active learning (Fink, 2003: 108)

The concept of active learning				
	Getting information and ideas	Experiencing		Reflecting (on what one is learning & how one is learning)
		Doing	Observing	
Direct	- Original data - Original sources	- Real doing, in authentic settings	- Direct observation of phenomena	- Classroom discussions - Term papers
Indirect	- Secondary data and sources - Lectures, textbooks	- Case studies - Simulations - Role-play	- Stories (can be accessed via literature, film, oral history)	- In-depth reflective dialogue and writing on the learning process

Stearns (1994 cited in Tepvorachai, 2000: 35) proposes four steps for active learning. The first step is lecture. The teacher gives a lecture to inform the topic or theme, explain the definitions, and provide some tips for learning. The second step is individual learning. Students are required to do an assignment individually, such as read a case study, and eventually answer the questions or do some exercises provided by the teacher. The purpose of this step is to prepare students to be ready for the next step. Small group learning is the third step. Students are asked to work in small groups and some principles are set up. For example, everyone must participate in the group discussions. The teacher in this step acts as an initiator. In other words, the

teacher tries to initiate students' ideas and challenge students themselves to find out the solution or answer in the discussion. Lastly, the students are to participate in the large group learning. By the end of the course, when the teacher accords that the students have some extent of development and progress, a large-group discussion of a seminar will be provided to the students. The students will have an opportunity to invest their four skills of English in the large-group discussion while the teacher acts as a facilitator of the activity.

According to Baldwin and William's viewpoint (1988 cited in Tepvorachai, 2000: 36), there are six stages of active learning in a workshop. First of all, the instructor must provide a warm-up activity to the learners in order to create a favorable atmosphere and provide some general information to the learners. Second, the instructor provides the learners with a group-forming system. The learners are grouped and assigned to support their own groups with their ideas. Next, some group-activities are provided to every group and every member in a group must help one another in order to find out the best solution. Each group is then made to apply what it has learned to the challenging situations provided by the teachers. Afterwards, every member in a group is asked to express his or her opinions towards what they have jointly done and what can be applied in other situations. The last stage is winding-down. The learners' reflective ideas are magnified and applied to create models or frameworks for permanent operations.

Based on the aforementioned ideas of active learning, it can be concluded that active learning is composed of four main stages. The first stage is warm-up. At the beginning of the class, students are provided with a warm-up activity in order to be introduced to some general information and create an intriguing atmosphere for learning. Afterwards, the learners are individually exposed to the tasks. Third, the students have some opportunities to participate in small-group activities; and finally, some large-group activities can be provided to the students as wrap-up tasks. Each stage of the active learning process can be conducted via direct and indirect modes of getting information, experiencing by observing and doing, and reflecting as well as sharing students' ideas towards the tasks.

2.4 How can Active Learning be Incorporated in the Classroom?

Research suggests that the use of active learning techniques may have a positive impact upon students' learning. For example, several studies have shown that

students prefer strategies that promote active learning rather than traditional lectures (Johnson et al., 1991). Other research evaluating students' achievement has demonstrated that many strategies promoting active learning are comparable to lectures in promoting the mastery of content but superior to lectures in promoting the development of students' skills in thinking and writing (Samiullah, 1996). Furthermore, some cognitive research has shown that a significant number of individuals have learning styles best served by pedagogical techniques other than lecturing (McKeachie et al., 1986)

The modification of traditional lectures (Penner, 1984) is one way to incorporate active learning in the classroom. Research has demonstrated, for example, that if a faculty member allows students to consolidate their notes by pausing three times for two minutes each during a lecture, students will learn significantly more information (Ruhl et al., 1987).

Discussion in class is one of the most common strategies promoting active learning, and with good reasons. If the objectives of a course are to promote long-term retention of information, to motivate students toward further learning, to allow students to apply information in new settings, or to develop students' thinking skills, then discussion is preferable to lecture (McKeachie et al., 1986). Research has suggested, however, that to achieve these goals, faculty must be knowledgeable of alternative techniques and strategies for questioning and discussion (Hyman, 1980) and must create a supportive intellectual and emotional environment that encourages students to take risks (Lowman, 1984).

Bonwell and Eison (1991) suggest several additional strategies promoting active learning that have been similarly shown to favorably influence students' attitudes and achievement. Visual-based instruction, for example, can provide a helpful focal point for other interactive techniques. In-class writing across the disciplines is another productive way to involve students in doing things and thinking about the things they are doing. Two popular instructional strategies based on the problem-solving model include the case study method of instruction and guided design. Other active learning pedagogies worthy of instructors' use include cooperative learning, debates, drama, role-playing and simulation, and peer teaching. In short, the published literature on alternatives to traditional classroom presentations provides a rich menu of different approaches which faculty can readily add to their repertoire of instructional skills.

Paulson and Faust (2000) introduce various techniques of active learning, which are categorized into six groups: exercises for individual students; questions and answers; immediate feedback; critical thinking motivator; share/pair; and cooperative learning exercises. The techniques are presented as follows:

2.4.1 Exercises for Individual Students

Because these techniques are aimed at individual students, they can very easily be used without interrupting the flow of the class. These exercises are particularly useful in providing the instructor with feedback concerning student understanding and retention of material. Some techniques, such as affective response and daily journal keeping, are especially designed to encourage students' exploration of their own attitudes and values. Some techniques, like daily journal keeping, reading quizzes, and clarification pauses, are designed to increase retention of material presented in lectures and texts. The techniques of exercises for individual students are:

- The "One Minute Paper"
- Muddiest (or Clearest) Point
- Affective Response
- Daily Journal
- Reading Quiz
- Clarification Pauses
- Response to a demonstration or other teacher-centered activity

2.4.2 Questions and Answers

While most of the teachers use questions as a way of prodding students and instantly testing comprehension, there are simple ways of tweaking the questioning techniques, which increase student involvement and comprehension.

- The "Socratic Method"
- Wait Time
- Student Summary of Another Student's Answer
- The Fish Bowl
- Quiz/Test Questions

2.4.3 Immediate Feedback

These techniques are designed to give the instructor some indication of student understanding of the material presented during the lecture itself. These activities provide formative assessment rather than summative assessment of student

understanding. Formative assessment is the evaluation of the class as a whole in order to provide information for the benefit of the students and the instructor, but where the information is not used as part of the course grade; summative assessment is any evaluation of student performance which becomes part of the course grade. For each feedback method, the instructor stops at appropriate points to give quick tests of the material; in this way, the instructor can adjust the lecture mid-course, slowing down to spend more time on the concepts students have difficulty with or moving more quickly to applications of concepts in which students have a good understanding. Here are some techniques in obtaining immediate feedback:

- Finger Signals
- Flash Cards
- Quotations

2.4.4 Critical Thinking Motivators

Sometimes it is helpful to get students involved in discussion of or thinking about course material either before any theory is presented in lecture or after several conflicting theories have been presented. The idea in the first case is to generate data or questions prior to mapping out the theoretical landscape; in the second case, the students learn to assess the relative merits of several approaches. The techniques are:

- The Pre-Theoretic Intuitions Quiz
- Puzzles/Paradoxes

2.4.5 Share/Pair

Grouping students in pairs allows many of the advantages of group work; students have the opportunity to state their own views, to hear from others, to hone their argumentative skills, and so forth without the administrative costs of group work (time spent assigning people to groups, class time used just for "getting in groups", and so on). Furthermore, pairs make it virtually impossible for students to avoid participating, thus making each person accountable. The techniques of Share/Pair are:

- Discussion
- Note Comparison/Sharing
- Evaluation of Another Student's Work

2.4.6 Cooperative Learning Exercises

For more complex projects, where many heads are better than one or two, you may want to have students work in groups of three or more. As the term

"cooperative learning" suggests, students working in groups will help each other to learn. Generally, it is better to form heterogeneous groups (with regard to gender, ethnicity, and academic performance), particularly when the groups will be working together over time or on complex projects; however, some of these techniques work well with spontaneously formed groups. Cooperative groups encourage discussion of problem solving techniques ("Should we try this?", etc.), and avoid the embarrassment of students who have not yet mastered all of the skills required. The techniques for cooperative learning exercises are:

- Cooperative Groups in Class
- Active Review Sessions
- Work at the Blackboard
- Concept Mapping
- Visual Lists
- Jigsaw Group Projects
- Role Playing
- Panel Discussions
- Debates
- Games

These techniques can be applied in any EFL class to promote active learning. Both individual and group works can be used as well. To select the techniques to be employed in the class, course objectives, teacher and learner styles, and learning outcome should be taken into account.

3. COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

Communicative language teaching (CLT) has been an influential approach for at least two decades now. The very term 'communicative' carries an obvious ring of truth: we 'learn to communicate by communicating' (Lasen-Freeman 1986: 131).

3.1 Communicative Competence

According to Ellis (1994: 696), communicative competence is "the knowledge that users of a language have internalized to enable them to understand and produce messages in the language".

The concept of communicative competence was originally developed thirty years ago by the sociolinguist Hymes (1971), as a response to perceived limitations in Chomsky (1965)'s competence/performance model of language. Hymes coined the term 'communicative competence' emphasizing the social, interactive, and negotiating process of language and expanding Chomsky's notion of competence into communicative competence by including both grammatical rules and rules of language use (Hymes, 1971; Taylor, 1983). The idea of Hymes' communicative competence was then further developed in the early 1980s by Canale and Swain (1980) who identified three distinctive components of communicative competence, including grammatical competence (referring to one's knowledge of lexical items, morphology, syntax, semantics, and phonology in a language), sociolinguistic competence (encompassing the knowledge of rules governing the production and interpretation of language in different sociolinguistic contexts), and strategic competence (defined as one's capability to sustain communication using various verbal or nonverbal strategies when communication breakdowns occur).

According to Canale (1983: 5), communicative competence refers to 'the underlining systems' of knowledge and skill required for communication. He proposes a four-dimensional model of communicative competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence. Grammatical competence refers to the ability to produce a structured comprehensible utterance (including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and spelling). Sociolinguistic competence refers to the knowledge of using socially-determined cultural codes in meaningful ways, often termed 'appropriacy' (e.g. formal or informal ways of greeting). Discourse competence refers to the ability to shape language and communicating purposefully in different genres (text types), using cohesion (structural linking) and coherence (meaningful relationships in language). Lastly, strategic competence refers to the ability to enhance the effectiveness of communication (e.g. deliberate speech), and to compensate for breakdowns in communication (e.g. comprehension checks, paraphrase, conversation fillers).

In 1990, Bachman introduced a theoretical framework for communicative language ability. According to this framework, language ability focuses on organizational and pragmatic competences. Organizational competence is composed of grammatical competence—consisting of a number of relatively independent competencies such as the knowledge of vocabulary, morphology, syntax, and

phonology or graphology—and textual competence—including the knowledge of the conventions for joining utterances or sentences that are structured according to rules of cohesion and rhetorical organization. On the other hand, pragmatic competence consists of illocutionary competence—which can be introduced with reference to the theory of speech acts dealing with ideational functions, manipulative functions, heuristic functions, and imaginative functions—and sociolinguistic competence—consisting of sensitivity to differences in dialect or variety, sensitivity to differences in register, and sensitivity to naturalness; as well as the ability to interpret cultural references and figures of speech. According to Bachman, the model is composed of both knowledge—what he calls competence—and the capacity for implementing—or executing that competence—in appropriate, contextualized, communicative language. In his schematization of language competence, Bachman (1900) takes a broader view of the role of strategic competence than Canale and Swain do. Bachman separates strategic competence from what he calls ‘language competence’.

To conclude, agreement on what should be included in a model of communicative competence is never unanimous (Weir, 1993). Despite many disputes by applied linguists (Lluda, 2000), this notion of communicative competence outlined above has been proven useful in suggesting specifications for content, formats, and scoring criteria in communication-oriented language proficiency assessment (Bachman & Palmer, 1984). However, “it must be emphasized that they are still themselves in need of validation” (Weir, 1990: 8).

3.2 Communicative Language Teaching

According to Richards and Rodgers (1986), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) starts with a theory of language as communication. The classroom goal of instruction is emphasized on developing learners’ communicative competence. Consequently, learners are encouraged to communicate with the target language through interaction from the onset of instruction.

In CLT, meaning is important. Larsen-Freeman (2001: 129) maintains that “almost everything that is done is done with a communicative intent”. Accordingly, the process of meaning negotiation is essential in CLT (Paulston, 1974). So as to encourage learners to communicate better, errors should be tolerated with little explicit instruction on language rules (Larsen-Freeman, 2001). Naturally, CLT favors small group activities by students to maximize the time each student has to negotiate

meaning. CLT employs information-gap activities, problem-solving tasks, and role-plays through pair and group work (Larsen-Freeman, 2001).

Another feature of CLT is its 'learner-centeredness view of second language teaching' (Richards & Rodgers, 1986: 69). According to Savignon (1991), every individual student possesses unique interests, styles, needs, and goals. Thus, it is recommended that teachers develop materials based on students' demonstrated needs of a particular class.

CLT focuses on the implementation of authentic materials in teaching language (Widdowson, 1996). It also encourages giving students the opportunity to respond to genuine communicative needs in real-life situations. This is to help students develop strategies for understanding language as actually used by native speakers (Canale & Swain, 1980).

The various pedagogical principles of a communicative approach to language teaching can be expressed in more or less detail. For example, Finocchiaro and Brumfit's detailed discussion (1983: 91-3) can be summarized as follows:

1. Teaching is learner-centered and responsive to learners' needs and interests.
2. The target language is acquired through interactive communicative use that encourages the negotiation of meaning.
3. Genuinely meaningful language use is emphasized, along with unpredictability, risk-taking and choice-making.
4. There is exposure to examples of authentic language from the target language community.
5. The formal properties of language are never treated in isolation from use; language forms are always addressed within a communicative context.
6. Learners are encouraged to discover the forms and structures of language for themselves.
7. There is a whole-language approach in which the four traditional language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) are integrated.

Alternatively, Brown (2001: 43) offers the following six interconnected characteristics as a description of CLT.

1. Classroom goals are focused on all of the components (grammatical, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic) of communicative competence. Goals, thus, must intertwine the organizational aspects of language with the pragmatic.
2. Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus, but rather aspects of language that enable the learner to accomplish those purposes.
3. Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles of underlying communicative techniques. At times, fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.
4. Students in a communicative class ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts outside the classroom. Classroom tasks must therefore equip students with the skills necessary for communication in those contexts.
5. Students are given opportunities to focus on their own learning process through an understanding of their own styles of learning and through the development of appropriate strategies for autonomous learning.
6. The role of the teacher is that of facilitator and guide, not an all-knowing bestower of knowledge. Students are thus encouraged to construct meaning through genuine linguistic interaction with others.

According to Finocchiaro and Brumfit's detailed discussion and Brown's description of CLT, it is obvious that both share the main concepts of CLT. Common to all versions of CLT is a theory of language teaching that starts from a communicative model of language and language use, and that seeks to translate this into a design for an instruction system, for materials, for teacher and learner roles and behaviors, and for classroom activities and techniques (Richards & Rodgers, 2001: 158).

3.3 Aspects of the Learning Process

Using conversational interaction as the main means for developing communicative competence has been called an indirect approach (Celce-Murcia et al.,

1997: 141). It relies heavily on the learners' own abilities to interactively negotiate meaning with each other. In the process, unfamiliar language forms and rules are made comprehensible to the learners, and presumably integrated into their developing language systems. The importance of comprehensible input which challenges learners to stretch their understanding was expressed by Krashen and Terrell (1983: 32) as the 'input hypothesis'. More recently, emphasis has also been placed on the importance of language production in this acquisition process (Kumaravadivelu, 1994: 34).

There is some evidence that such a learner-centered process of language-making is influenced by certain innate or natural constraints. Research into morpheme acquisition in the 1970s suggested there was a natural, universal order of acquisition. The idea that language learners somehow create their own internal language system is a keystone of CLT, and has been called the 'creative construct hypothesis' (Sanders 1987: 211-7).

Such a theory of learning is needed for communicative practice to be based on more than a loose collection of techniques. But this does not mean it is possible to base teaching practice simply on research findings. It appears that second language acquisition (SLA) research is limited by the very unpredictability of language learning itself. For example, a recent guide to TESOL (Willis & Willis, 2001: 179) states that "SLA research suggests overwhelmingly that language learning is a developmental process, which cannot be consciously controlled or predicted by teachers or learners".

3.4 The Role of Teachers and Students in CLT Classrooms

The role of the instructor in CLT is quite different from traditional teaching methods (Larsen-Freeman, 2001). In the traditional classroom, the teacher is in charge and "controls" the learning. In CLT, the teacher serves as more of a facilitator, allowing students to be in charge of their own learning (Finocchario & Brumfit, 1983). At other times, the teacher might be a co-communicator engaged in the communicative activity along with students (Littlewood, 1981).

The teacher still sets up exercises and gives direction to the class, but the students do much more speaking than in a traditional classroom (Lee & VanPatten, 1995). They are communicators. They are actively engaged in negotiating meaning—in trying to make themselves understood and in understanding others—even when their knowledge of the target language is incomplete (Larsen-Freeman, 2001). This responsibility to participate can often lead to an increased sense of confidence in

using the language (Lee & VanPatten, 1995). Brown (2001) also adds that students are given opportunities to focus on their own learning process through an understanding of their own styles of learning and through the development of appropriate strategies for autonomous learning while the teacher acts as a facilitator and guide, not an all-knowing bestower of knowledge. Students are thus encouraged to construct meaning through genuine linguistic interaction with others and are encouraged to discover the forms and structures of language for themselves (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983).

In conclusion, several roles are assumed for teachers and students in CLT, and the importance of particular roles being determined by the view of CLT are adopted. Breed and Candlin describe the teacher's roles and the student's roles in the following terms:

The teacher has two main roles: the first is to facilitate the communication process between all participants in the classroom, and between these participants and the various activities and texts. The second role is to act as an independent participant within the learning-teaching group. The latter role is closely related to the objectives of the first roles and arises from it. These roles imply a set of secondary roles for the teacher; first, as an organizer of resources and as a resource himself, second as a guide within the classroom procedures and activities ... A third role for the teacher is that of researcher and learner, with much to contribute in terms of appropriate knowledge and abilities, actual and observed experience of the nature of learning, and organizational capacities. (1980: 99)

The role of learner as negotiator—between the self, the learning process, and the object of learning—emerges from and interacts with the role of joint negotiator within the group and within the classroom procedures and activities which the group undertakes. The implication for the learner is that he should contribute as much as he gains, and thereby learn in an interdependent way. (1980: 110)

Richards and Rogers (2001: 167) also add other roles assumed for CLT teachers. Those are needs analyst, counselor, and group process manager.

3.5 A Review of PPP

One example of such an approach to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is what is known as the PPP lesson. The PPP stands for presentation, practice, and production (Harmer, 2001: 80). Nunan (1991: 282) described what a PPP lesson structure basically is, in which 'learners are given a model of the target language behavior, as well as specific practice in manipulating key language items'.

The purpose of the presentation stage is to "help the learner acquire new linguistic knowledge or to restructure knowledge that has been wrongly represented" (Ellis, 1988:21). The belief is that the students' interlanguage will instantly develop as new language is explained to them. In subsequent lessons, new language will 'build' on top of what was taught previously, or as Skehan (1996:17) says "There is a belief that learners will learn what is taught in the order in which it is taught."

The practice stage is typically divided into two sections, controlled and freer. In controlled practice, the student is involved in mechanical production; simply repeating the target, without needing to think about when to use it. In freer practice, the student decides how the target is used and may be required to manipulate the form. The assumption here is that the learner understands the forms of the target language, but needs practice to internalize the structure. This is a behaviorist view of learning; that practice leads to mastery. The teacher still directs and corrects at this stage, but the classroom is beginning to become more learner-centered.

The production stage is when the student must decide if and when to use the structure that has been learnt. It is a question of great debate whether this part of the class is communicative; but to the PPP teacher, this stage of the lesson should illustrate if the student has learnt the 'language item' by using it in a 'natural' context or activity. The teacher's role here is to somehow facilitate a realistic situation or activity where the students instinctively feel the need to actively apply the language they have been practicing. The teacher does not correct or become involved unless students directly appeal to him/her to do so.

In conclusion, the PPP approach is relatively straightforward; structured enough to be easily understood by both students and new or emerging teachers, and has cherry-picked appealing techniques from other approaches (Evans, 1999:9). It is a good place to start in terms of applying good communicative language teaching in the classroom. However, some researchers argue that the PPP approach only creates the illusion of learning because, for any lasting learning to occur, learners need much more communicative experience. The disadvantages with PPP that are raised include: (1) too simplified an approach to learning a language—assuming it consists of

rudimentary blocks and is manipulated by grammar rules, (2) overuse of the target structure, (3) usage of existing language resources, and (4) failure to produce the language correctly or failure to produce anything at all (Kavaliauskiene, 2005). Willis (1994) concludes that the PPP structure is explicitly rejected as being a highly rigid model with very little opportunity for learner involvement.

4. CONSTRUCTIVISM

Lev Vygotsky, born in the U.S.S.R. in 1896, is responsible for the social development theory of learning. He proposed that social interaction profoundly influences cognitive development. Central to Vygotsky's theory is his belief that biological and cultural development do not occur in isolation (Driscoll, 1994).

4.1 Overview of Social Development Theory

The constructivism is primarily based on the significant theme of Vygotsky's theory (1978) which is that social interaction acts with a fundamental role in the process of cognitive development. Vygotsky proposed that social learning precedes development and development is a process that should be analyzed, instead of a product to be obtained. Vygotsky (1978) states: "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological)." According to Vygotsky, the development process that begins at birth and continues until death is too complex to be defined by stages (Driscoll, 1994; Hausfather, 1996).

Vygotsky's Social Development Theory rests on two main principles: the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The MKO refers to anyone who has a better understanding or a higher ability level than the learner, with respect to a particular task, process, or concept. The MKO is normally thought of as being a teacher, coach, or older adult; but the MKO could also be peers, a younger person, or even computers.

The Zone of Proximal Development is the place where a student can perform a task under adult guidance or with peer collaboration that cannot be achieved alone. Vygotsky believed that this life-long process of development was dependent on social interaction and that social learning actually leads to cognitive development. This

phenomenon is called the Zone of Proximal Development. Vygotsky (1978) describes it as "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers". In other words, a student can perform a task under adult guidance or with peer collaboration that cannot be achieved alone. The Zone of Proximal Development bridges that gap between what is known and what can be known. Vygotsky claimed that learning occurred in this zone.

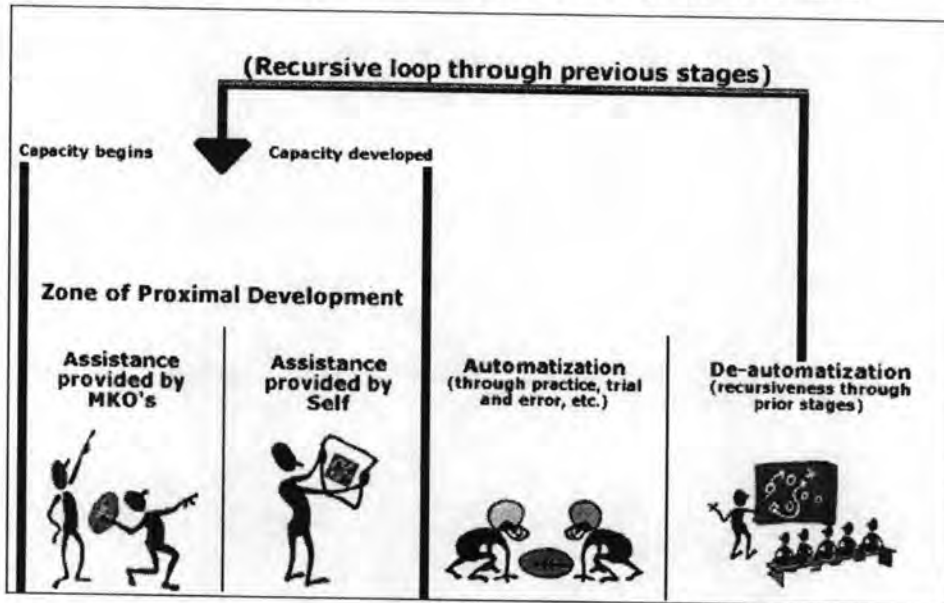
Therefore, Vygotsky focused on the connections between people and the cultural context in which they act and interact in shared experiences (Crawford, 1996). According to Vygotsky, humans use tools that develop from a culture, such as speech and writing, to mediate their social environments. Initially, children develop these tools to serve solely as social functions; as ways to communicate needs. Vygotsky believed that the internalization of these tools led to higher thinking skills. When Vygotsky observed young children participating in egocentric speech in their preoperational stage, he viewed this egocentric speech as a transition from social speech to internalized thoughts (Driscoll, 1994). Thus, Vygotsky believed that thought and language could not exist without each other.

4.2 Four-Stage Process of ZPD

Vygotsky (1978) believed that "what the child (or learner) is able to do in collaboration today, he will be able to do independently tomorrow." Tharp and Gallimore (1988: 35) have developed a four-stage model (Figure 2.2) describing learners' progression through their zones. The first stage begins with complete dependence on the teacher, and then the learner moves to the second stage when the he begins to perform a task alone. In the third stage, the learner can perform the task easily and with complete independence. The final stage allows for return to a learning state in order to perfect the task.



Figure 2.3: Tharp & Gallimore's Four-Stage Model of ZPD



Stage 1: Assistance provided by more knowledgeable others (MKO's): Before children can function as independent agents, they must rely on adults or more capable peers for outside regulation of task performance. The amount and kind of outside regulation a child requires depend on the child's age and the nature of the task; that is, the breadth and progression through the ZPD for the activity at hand.

Stage 2: Assistance provided by self: If we look carefully at the child's statements during this transition, we see that the child has taken over the rules and responsibilities of both participants in the language-game. These responsibilities were formerly divided between the adult and child, but they have now been taken over completely by the child. The definitions of situation and the patterns of activity which formerly allowed the child to participate in the problem-solving effort on the interpsychological plane now allow him/her to carry out the task on the intrapsychological plane (Wertsch, 1979: 18). Thus, in Stage 2, the child carries out a task without assistance from others. This does not mean, however, that the performance is fully developed or automatized.

Stage 3: Automatization through practice: Once all evidence of self-regulation has vanished, the child has emerged from the ZPD into the developmental stage for that task. The task execution is smooth and integrated. It has been internalized and "automatized." Assistance, from the adult or the self, is no longer needed. Indeed, "assistance" would now be disruptive. It is in this condition that instructions from others are disruptive and irritating; and it is at this stage that self-consciousness itself is detrimental to the smooth integration of all task

components. This is a stage beyond self-control and social control. Performance here is no longer developing; it is already developed. Vygotsky (1978) described it as the “fruits” of development, but he also described it as “fossilized,” emphasizing its fixity and distance from the social and mental forces of change.

Stage 4: De-automatization; recursiveness through previous three stages: The lifelong learning by an individual is made up of these same regulated ZPD sequences—from other-assistance to self-assistance—recurring over and over again for the development of new capacities. For every individual, at any point in time, there will be a mix of other-regulation, self-regulation, and automatized processes. The child who can now do many of the steps in finding a lost object might still be in the ZPD for the activities of reading, or any of the many skills and processes remaining to be developed in the immature organism.

The successful application of Vygotsky's theories requires a learning environment dedicated to these principles. Those acting as MKO's must be highly involved, must work in collaboration with their students to facilitate learning, and must be familiar with the students' individual ZPD's. This is in contrast to some traditional teaching methods which require that students simply regurgitate recited material. As discussed in Constructivist learning theory, a more collaborative environment may encourage students to create their own meanings and apply them to learned material (Hausfather, 1996).

4.3 Application of the Social Development Theory to Instructional Design

Traditionally, schools have not promoted environments in which the students play an active role in their own education as well as their peers'. Vygotsky's theory, nevertheless, requires the teacher and students to play untraditional roles as they collaborate with each other. Instead of a teacher dictating his/her meaning to students for future recitation, a teacher should collaborate with his/her students in order to create meaning in ways that students can make their own (Hausfather, 1996). Learning becomes a reciprocal experience for the students and teacher.

The physical classroom, based on Vygotsky's theory, would provide clustered desks or tables and work space for peer instruction, collaboration, and small group instruction. Like the environment, the instructional design of material to be learned would be structured to promote and encourage student interaction and collaboration. Thus the classroom becomes a community of learning.

Because Vygotsky asserts that cognitive change occurs within the zone of proximal development, instruction would be designed to reach a developmental level that is just above the student's current developmental level. Vygotsky proclaims, "learning which is oriented toward developmental levels that have already been reached is ineffective from the view point of the child's overall development. It does not aim for a new stage of the developmental process but rather lags behind this process" (Vygotsky, 1978).

Appropriation is necessary for cognitive development within the zone of proximal development. Individuals participating in peer collaboration or guided teacher instruction must share the same focus in order to access the zone of proximal development. "Joint attention and shared problem solving is needed to create a process of cognitive, social, and emotional interchange" (Hausfather, 1996). Furthermore, it is essential that the partners be on different developmental levels and the higher level partner be aware of the lower's level. If this does not occur, or if one partner dominates, the interaction is less successful (Driscoll, 1994; Hausfather, 1996).

4.4 Instructional Strategies and Their Implementation in Instruction

Scaffolding and reciprocal teaching are effective strategies to access the zone of proximal development. Scaffolding requires the teacher to provide students the opportunity to extend their current skills and knowledge. The teacher must engage students' interest, simplify tasks so they are manageable, and motivate students to pursue the instructional goal. In addition, the teacher must look for discrepancies between students' efforts and the solution, control for frustration and risk, and model an idealized version of the act (Hausfather, 1996).

Reciprocal teaching allows for the creation of a dialogue between students and teachers. This two way communication becomes an instructional strategy by encouraging students to go beyond answering questions and engaging in the discourse (Driscoll, 1994; Hausfather, 1996). A study conducted by Brown and Palincsar (1989) demonstrated the Vygotskian approach with reciprocal teaching methods in their successful program to teach reading strategies. The teacher and students alternated in taking turns in leading small group discussions on a reading. After modeling four reading strategies, students began to assume the teaching role. Results of this study showed significant gains over other instructional strategies (Driscoll, 1994;

Hausfather, 1996). Cognitively Guided Instruction is another strategy to implement Vygotsky's theory. This strategy involves the teacher and students exploring math problems and then sharing their different problem solving strategies in an open dialogue (Hausfather, 1996).

4.5 The Effectiveness of the Social Development Theory in Achieving Its Goals

Vygotsky's social development theory challenges traditional teaching methods. Historically, schools have been organized around recitation teaching. The teacher disseminates knowledge to be memorized by the students, who in turn recite the information back to the teacher (Hausfather, 1996). However, the studies described above offer empirical evidence that learning based on the social development theory facilitates cognitive development over other instructional strategies.

To sum up, a constructivist teacher creates a context for learning in which students can become engaged in interesting activities that encourage and facilitate learning. The teacher does not simply stand by, however, and watch children explore and discover. Instead, the teacher may often guide students as they approach problems, may encourage them to work in groups to think about issues and questions, and support them with encouragement and advice as they tackle problems, adventures, and challenges that are rooted in real life situations that are both interesting to the students and satisfying in terms of the result of their work. Teachers thus facilitate cognitive growth and learning as do peers and other members of the child's community.

All classrooms in which instructional strategies compatible with Vygotsky's social constructivist approach are used do not necessarily look alike. The activities and the format can considerably vary. However, four principles are applied in any Vygotskian classroom (Maddux et al., 1997).

1. Learning and development is a social, collaborative activity.
2. The Zone of Proximal Development can serve as a guide for curricular and lesson planning.
3. School learning should occur in a meaningful context and not be separated from learning and knowledge children develop in the "real world."
4. Out-of-school experiences should be related to the child's school experience.

5. GROUP DYNAMICS IN THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Cooperative Language Learning (CLL) is an approach to teaching that makes maximum use of cooperative activities involving pairs and small groups of learners in the classroom (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Cooperative learning has been defined as “group learning activities organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others” (Olsen & Kagan, 1992: 8).

Cooperative Learning has antecedents in proposals for peer-tutoring and peer-monitoring that go back hundreds of years and longer (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). The early twentieth century U.S. educator John Dewey is usually credited with promoting the idea of building cooperation in learning into regular classrooms on a regular and systematic basis (Rogers, 1988). It was more generally promoted and developed in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s as a response to the forced integration of public schools and has been substantially refined and developed since then. Educators were concerned that traditional models of classroom learning were teacher-fronted, fostered competition rather than cooperation, and favored majority students. They believed that minority students might fall behind higher-achieving students in this kind of learning environment. Cooperative Learning in this context sought to do the following:

- raise the achievement of all students, including those who are gifted or academically handicapped
- help the teacher build positive relationships among students
- give students the experiences they need for healthy social, psychological, and cognitive development
- replace the competitive organizational structure of most classrooms and schools with a team-based, high-performance organizational structure

In second language teaching, CLL has been embraced as a way of promoting communicative interaction in the classroom and is seen as an extension of the principles of CLT. It is viewed as a learner-centered approach to teaching held to offer advantages over teacher-fronted classroom methods. In language teaching, its goals are (Richards & Rodgers, 2001: 193):

- to provide opportunities for naturalistic second language acquisition through the use of interactive pair and group activities

- to provide teachers with a methodology to enable them to achieve this goal and one that can be applied in a variety of curriculum settings (e.g., content-based, foreign language classrooms, mainstreaming)
- to enable focused attention to particular lexical items; language structures, and communicative functions through the use of interactive tasks
- to provide opportunities for learners to develop successful learning and communication strategies
- to enhance learner motivation and reduce learner stress and to create a positive affective classroom climate

5.1 Cooperative and Collaborative Language Learning

Cooperative learning does not merely imply collaboration. Admittedly, in a cooperative classroom, the students and teachers work together to pursue goals and objectives. However, cooperative learning is more structured, more prescriptive to teachers about classroom techniques, and more directive to students about how to work together in groups than collaborative learning (Oxford 1997: 443). In cooperative learning models, a group learning activity is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners. In collaborative learning, the learner engages with more capable others (e.g. teachers, advanced peers, etc.) who provide assistance and guidance (Oxford 1997: 444). Collaborative learning models have been developed within social constructivist schools of thought to promote communities of learners that cut across the usual hierarchies of students and teachers.

5.2 Theory of Learning

Cooperative learning advocates draw heavily on the theoretical work of developmental psychologists Jean Piaget (1965) and Lev Vygotsky (1978), both of whom stress the central role of social interaction in learning. CLL provides learners a chance to develop communicative competence in language by conversing in socially or pedagogically structured situations. CLL advocates have proposed certain interactive structures that are considered optimal for learning the appropriate rules and practices in conversing in a new language. CLL also seeks to develop learners' critical thinking skills, which are seen as central to learning of any sort. Some authors have even elevated critical thinking to the same level of focus as that of the basic language skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Kagan, 1992). One approach to

integrating the teaching of critical thinking adopted by CLL advocates is called the Question Matrix (Wiederhold, 1995), which is based on the well-known Taxonomy of Educational Objectives devised by Bloom (1956). Wiederhold has developed a battery of cooperative activities built on the matrix that encourages learners to ask and respond to a deeper array of alternative question types. Activities of this kind are believed to foster the development of critical thinking (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Kagan and other CL theorists have adopted this framework as an underlying learning theory for Cooperative Learning.

A curriculum or classroom that is cooperative usually involves the learner-centered characteristics. As students work together in pairs and groups, they share information and come to each others' aid. They are a "team" whose players must work together in order to achieve goals successfully. Research has shown an advantage for cooperative learning on such factors as "promoting intrinsic motivation, heightening self-esteem, creating caring and altruistic relationships, and lowering anxiety and prejudice" (Oxford, 1997: 445). Included among some of the challenges of cooperative learning are accounting for varied cultural expectations, individual learning styles, personality differences, and over-reliance on the first language (Crandall, 1999).

Cooperative learning essentially involves students learning from each other in groups. However, it is not the group configuration that makes cooperative learning distinctive; it is the way the students and teachers work together that is important. With learning strategy training, teachers help students learn how to learn more effectively. In cooperative learning, teachers teach students collaborative or social skills so that they can work together more effectively. Indeed, cooperation is not only a way of learning, but also a theme to be communicated about and studied (Jacobs, 1998).

The word *cooperative* in Cooperative Learning emphasizes another important dimension of CLL: it seeks to develop classrooms that foster cooperation rather than competition in learning. Advocates of CLL in general education stress the benefits of cooperation in promoting learning:

Cooperation is working together to accomplish shared goals. Within cooperative situations, individuals seek outcomes beneficial to themselves and all other group members. Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups through which students work together

to maximize their own and each other's learning. It may be contrasted with competitive learning in which students work against each other to achieve an academic goal such as a grade of "A" (Johnson et. al., 1994: 4).

From the perspective of second language teaching, McGroarty (1989) offers six learning advantages for ESL students in CLL classrooms:

- increased frequency and variety of second language practice through different types of interaction
- possibility for development or use of language in ways that support cognitive development and increased language skills
- opportunities to integrate language with content-based instruction
- opportunities to include a greater variety of curricular materials to stimulate language as well as concept learning
- freedom for teachers to master new professional skills, particularly those emphasizing communication
- opportunities for students to act as resources for each other, thus assuming a more active role in their learning

5.3 Learner and Teacher Roles in CLL

The primary role of the learner is that of a member of a group who must work cooperatively on tasks with other group members. Learners have to learn teamwork skills. Learners are also directors of their own learning. They are taught to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning, which is viewed as a compilation of lifelong learning skills. Thus, learning is something that requires students' direct and active involvement and participation. In a task, learners alternate roles and involve group members in the role of tutors, checkers, recorders, and information sharers (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

The role of teacher in CLL differs considerably from the role of teachers in traditional teacher-fronted lesson. The teacher has to create a highly structured and well-organized learning environment in the classroom, setting goals, planning and structuring tasks, establishing the physical arrangement of the classroom, assigning students to groups and roles, and selecting materials and time (Johnson et al, 1994). An important role for the teacher is that of facilitator of learning. The teacher must move around the class helping students and groups as needs arise (Harel, 1992).

Harel also adds that teachers in CLL speak less than in teacher-fronted classes. They provide broad questions to challenge thinking, prepare students for the tasks they will carry out, assist students with the learning tasks, and give few commands imposing less disciplinary controls. The teacher may also have the task of restructuring lessons so that students can work on them cooperatively. This involves the following steps, according to Johnson et al. (1994: 9):

- Take your existing lessons, curriculum, and sources and structure them cooperatively.
- Tailor cooperative learning lessons to your unique instructional needs, circumstances, curricula, subject areas, and students.
- Diagnose the problems some students may have in working together and intervene to increase learning groups' effectiveness.

6. GAP FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

From the literature in this chapter, it can be inferred that the several studies as previously mentioned are likely to highlight one important problem, which is that large classes adversely affect learning in many aspects such as students' motivation, teaching methodology and techniques, classroom participation and interaction, etc. (Watson Todd, 2006). Moreover, teaching in a large class is primarily based on the traditional lecture format, which does not promote active independent learning (Macdonald, 2000), though there are many other possible teaching techniques promoting active learning that can enhance students' interaction, proficiency and motivation.

The present study of the researcher then attempts to fill such a critical gap. The eclectic approach (Brown, 2001), a number of basic principles of learning and teaching, are implemented to synthesize various theories and principles into an Active Learning Instructional (ALI) Model for enhancing secondary school students' English communicative abilities in large classes. Four stages of active learning introduced by Stearns (1994) serve as stages for teaching all through the lesson, starting from a warm-up stage, an individual learning stage, a small-group learning stage, and a large-group learning stage; respectively. In each stage, three components introduced by Fink (2003), getting information, observing by learning and doing, and reflecting, serve as strategies.