A Comparative Study of Novice and Experienced Iranian EFL Teachers with Respect to Classroom Interactional Competence and Development of Communicative Language Teaching

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
    KEYWORDS 	Communicative language teaching (CLT), as an approach of English language teaching (ELT), has been evidenced to provide opportunities for learners' participation through putting interaction at the center of language teaching and learning. However, few studies to date have investigated how EFL teachers' capability in applying CLT can be developed in the classroom contexts. To fill up this gap, a teacher education program (TEP), based on the strategies of classroom interactional competence (CIC), was implemented with two experienced and two novice EFL teachers serving as participants. To do this, initially sixteen hours of video- and audio-recorded data of the participants were analyzed to identify the samples in which they neglected the opportunity for CLT. Then, instructional sessions according to CIC strategies were dialogically held by the teacher educator with each of the teachers, during which the teacher educator attempted to expand teachers' insight into the strategies they adopted to apply CLT. After instructional sessions, the analysis of the recorded data demonstrated novice and experienced EFL teachers' noticeable progress in CLT implementation at different levels. Moreover, the findings indicated that EFL teachers applied a variety of CIC strategies in the classroom contexts.

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1. Introduction

Over the past few decades, advocates inside the field of teacher development and classroom discourse research have empowered examination into classroom interaction as a way of revealing what really happens within the course of classroom conversation between instructors and L2 learners amid teaching and learning activities, with the purpose of developing a deeper understanding of the process of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). A developing body of literature presently recognizes the significance of the teacher's part in improving learners' interest and participation and cultivating learning through classroom interaction (Cullen, 1998; Walsh, 2006, as cited in Walsh, 2013). Taken together, these studies have significantly advanced our understanding of how languages are learnt, while also proposing and offering suggestions for teachers' enhancement with respect to their Interactional Competence (IC).

To date, be that as it may, few studies of classroom discourse have been done within the Iranian setting, in spite of the fact that there have been a number of faultfinders of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and the 'learner-centered' approach presented over the final few decades in pursuit of the change of educational curriculum (Annani Sarab, Monfared & Safarzadeh; 2016; Kardoust & Saeidian; 2021; Mahdizadeh, Maghsoudi & Mall-Miri, 2022). Concerns have been raised around whether applying this approach has in reality resulted in furnishing learners with opportunities to develop their Communicative Competence (CC).

Walsh (2013) has observed that whereas CC has contributed essentially to advances in language teaching methodologies, particularly with respect to the teaching of speaking, it centers overwhelmingly on person (individual) competence instead of joint (common) competence, while communication is in fact a joint activity that includes the collective competence by all parties, and should not be seen to function as it were at the level of the individual. Concerns of this sort have hence led to calls for more noteworthy consideration to be paid to IC since whereas "CC focuses on how speakers employ linguistic, semantic, discourse, pragmatic and strategic resources to convey meaning (Walsh, 2013, p. 46)", "IC is characterized as the capability to utilize diverse collaboration assets and interactional resources, such as turn-taking devices and repair mechanisms in managing problems in speaking, hearing, and understanding" (Teng & Sinwongsuwat, 2015, p. 15).

Based on the idea of CC and IC, Walsh (2006) proposes a conceptualization of "Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC)". By putting interaction at the center of language learning and embracing "Conversation Analysis" (CA) as a research methodology to look at particular characteristics of CIC in relation to how spaces for interaction/learning are made and how learner commitments are molded, we are ready to gain more noteworthy understanding into L2 classroom

practices. The richer understandings picked up from an examination of these may therefore highlight the need for classroom exercises that are centered upon spoken interaction, and this sort of conceptualization may then suggest some alternative technique and approaches in teaching that improve learning and learning opportunities (Walsh, 2012).

In Iran, even though some research on classroom discourse has been conducted utilizing CA (e.g. Jafarigohar, Rouhi, & Rahimi Kazerouni, 2021; Ramazani, Behnam, & Ahangari, 2019), more evidence of teacher's pedagogic talk is required to abundantly recognize these extremely context-specific classroom practices in order to scrutinize naturally-occurring classroom interactions co-constructed by EFL teachers and learners. This conceptualization will consequently be the basis for teacher development in terms of our roles as the facilitator and classroom manager and the one who is responsible for the learners' improvements in speaking English, and in this study, CIC, which is located within classroom discourse, is therefore the subject of investigation.

Communicative language teaching emerged as a result of fundamental changes in the British language teaching method in the late 1960s. It was a reaction to the language teaching styles of the 1970s, which emphasized grammar rules and linguistic structures, not communication skills (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). In fact, the importance of communication skills and learners' ability to communicate in L2 classroom were always in the focus attention of teaching methods in ESL and EFL contexts (Hymes, 1972; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Liao, 2000; Liping, Hsin & Freddie, 2018; Littlewood, 2007; Nunan, 2003; Rao, 2002; Richards & Rodgers, 1986; Vanessa et al., 2019). The majority of literature on CLT has conducted on a range of issues, such as teachers' attitude towards CLT, learners' attitude towards CLT and teachers' difficulties in applying CLT. To illustrate, the results of these studies (Chang, 2000, 2011; Hawkey, 2006; Karim, 2004; Liao, 2003; Razmjoo & Riazi, 2006) demonstrated teachers' positive and desirable attitude towards CLT method.

Some other studies on learners' attitude towards main features of CLT, such as error correction, the role of teacher, the role of learner, pair and group activities and the importance of grammar also indicated learners' favorable attitude towards CLT to develop their communicative skills (e.g., Asassfeh et al., 2012; Gamble et al., 2013; Khatib & Tootkaboni, 2017; Ngoc & Iwashita, 2012; Raissi et al., 2013; Savignon & Wang, 2003). Furthermore, the large number of students in the class, grammar-based examinations and the limited time to provide communicative materials is found to be the main difficulties in applying CLT from teachers' attitude (Coskun, 2011; Koosha & Yakhabi, 2013). Against this backdrop, the need to explore how teachers' capability to CLT can be developed is strongly felt. Accordingly, the current study is organized to find answers to the following question:

- How is CLT developed among novice and experienced Iranian EFL teachers through CIC strategies?

2. Research Method

Two experienced and two novice Iranian EFL teachers (three females and one male) were selected from two language institutes based on their willingness to participate in the study and their teaching experience. All the participants were informed that the data obtained of this study would be only used for conducting a research. Furthermore, the teachers were unaware of the precise purpose of the study in order that they would not intentionally control or modify their performance. Typical classes were organized as six hours per week, in the range of elementary to advanced level. Three language teachers were instructing adult male learners of either elementary or intermediate level and one of the classes included female teenagers. In this study, teachers had a range of experience from one to seventeen years. Novice teachers in the current study had two or less than two years of teaching experience and experienced teachers had five or more than five years of classroom experience (Gatbonton, 1999, 2008). Furthermore, two of teachers had passed (TTC) courses, so they were familiar with various methods of language teaching and learning for applying proper strategies for a more efficient teaching. Moreover, one of the researchers of the current study, acting as the teacher educator, was an M.A. student in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), and had also passed (TTC) course. Pseudonyms were used to show participants' names; for instance, T-A refers to teacher A and so forth.

Table 1 Teachers' Biographical Data

No	Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Academic Major	Teaching Experience	Any special language teaching & learning experience	Level of Students' Proficiency
1	T-A	F	31	M.A. degree in English Teaching	Novice	TTC	Pre-intermediate
2	T-B	F	28	M.A. degree in English Teaching	Experienced	TTC	Elementary
3	T-C	F	23	B.A. degree in English Literature	Novice	……	Elementary

4	T-D	M	38	M.A. student in English Literature	Experienced	......	Intermediate

Data of this study were collected from audio- and video-recording of natural classroom interactions. Initially, to increase the validity and reliability of the current study, a non-participant observation was chosen to minimize obtrusive effects of the observer on participants' natural behaviors in the class. In addition, to reduce the side effect of the camera presence on both the teachers and learners' performance, it was placed on a tripod in the back of the class before the participants' entrance. Video-stimulated recall, as another tool for gathering data, was applied to develop teacher cognitive capability by providing the opportunity to revise their actual classroom performance in mediation sessions. In fact, stimulated recall can assist teacher to identify and replace appropriate strategies and actions during instruction (Calderhead, 1981; Johnson, 1999). In this study, the total recordings included sixteen hours before the mediation (pre-M), twelve hours of mediation sessions, and another sixteen hours captured after the mediation (post-M).

An observation checklist adopted from Coskun (2011) was also used to evaluate the teachers' performance in applying CLT (Appendix 1). The checklist included the main features of CLT focused upon by different researchers (e.g., Chang, 2000; Hawkey, 2006; Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Karim, 2004; Liao, 2003; Razmjoo & Riazi, 2006). In addition, another observation checklist adopted from Walsh (2006b) was applied to document interactional strategies of each participant performance (Appendix 2). The checklist incorporated almost all main interactional patterns of CIC indicated in the related literature (Daskin, 2014; Moradian, Miri & Qassemi, 2015; Walsh, 2006 b, 2011, 2012, & 2013).

A qualitative approach was applied in this study to analyze data step by step. Firstly, once the gathered data were analyzed for multiple times by the researchers, the teacher educator closely identified the exchanges including CLT. Then, the samples of CLT features' application taken by each teacher was assessed on the basis of the checklist. These samples were taken to accredit the teachers' development and considered as a criterion to compare novice and experienced teachers in different phases of the study. In addition, the variety of interactional patterns of CIC applied by each participant was also narrowly examined through conversation analysis transcription based on Hutchby and Wooffitt (2008) conventions (Appendix 3).

The study comprised a three phase research design. In the first phase (i.e., pre-M), two typical class sessions of each teacher were video-and audio-recorded through camera without the presence of observer in the class. Then, the recorded data were narrowly analyzed to identify the samples in which teachers neglected the opportunity for CLT that were supposed to be the proper matters for mediation. In addition, the teachers' performance in applying CLT was checked and recorded in the observation checklist.

In the second phase (i.e., Mediation), a week after the last recording, the teacher educator held an instructional session of nearly three hours long with each of the teachers privately in their own office or working place. Teachers were provided the opportunity to stop or replay the films whenever required. All CIC instructions were performed in L1 to prevent any misunderstanding of teacher educator intermediation. The instructional interactions with the teachers were conducted based on strategies of CIC. In this phase, teachers were engaged to interpret and understand their actual classroom performance. Mediation sessions were also video recorded.

In the third phase (i.e., post-M), two weeks after mediation sessions, another two typical class sessions of each teacher was audio- and video-recorded and analyzed moment-to-moment. Then, all the recorded and gathered data of three phases were closely analyzed and compared through conversation analysis (CA) methodology. In brief, the main focus of this study was only on samples of the teachers' failure in CLT method among novice and experienced Iranian EFL teachers. Subsequently, some samples of pre-mediation, mediation sessions and post-mediation are presented to show teachers' problematic points and signs of CLT development.

3. Findings

Among the features of CLT focused upon by various researchers, some common features, such as pair and group work, error correction, fluency and accuracy and the role of the teacher make up the focus of this study. (Coksun, 2011.Appendix 1)

Error Correction

This extract is taken from novice T-A's pre-Mediation data. A group of nine pre-intermediate adult male learners ranging in age from 20 to 22 were asked to talk about dream houses. In this extract, turn completion, teacher interruption, and the teacher over-reliance on error correction impeded learners to participate and obstructed learning opportunities.

Extract 1: T-A

> 1 **T:** *can you imagine a house made of chocolate, can it be in reality?*
> *it's really hard to make a house made of chocolate*

*2 **S1:** no [laugh]*

*3 **T:** I have heard a hotel or some things like that in Canada, it's made of ice only for winter, it's one of the most exciting hotels, it's very cold*

*4 **S2:** it's like...er.....(.)*

*5 **T:** [glass house], do you know any houses like that, in the stories or in the real world? (repetition)*

*6 **S2:** I see a ......strange*

*7 **T:** ° see° ? you saw a strange house*

*8 **S2:** I saw a strange house, it was a mountain top (0.1)*

*9 **T:** it was on top of the mountain, mountain top isn't correct*

*10 **T:** how about you ((name))?*

*11 **S3:** I saw a house in the internet, it has much... er... form... and...shape*

*12 **T:** it has many forms (forms is countable) we use many, many forms and shapes (write it on the board)*

The way of teacher's feedback to learners' errors is the most obvious feature of this extract. In this interaction, the teacher is constantly interrupting learners to correct their grammatical errors immediately and explicitly (7, 9, 12). Instead of tolerating learners' errors or correcting them randomly, she prefers to correct all of them without providing the opportunity for learners to correct each other's errors or self-repair. This type of feedback makes the learner to be quiet in the class. Furthermore, the teacher in lines (1, 3, 4, 5, 8) completes the learners' response immediately (turn completion). This type of interaction provides limited learning opportunities for learners to produce or formulate full and long responses. In this way, novice teacher obstructed learners' participation through direct repair and preferring form to content.

The Teacher's Role

The following extract is taken from experienced T-B's pre-Mediation data. A group of eleven elementary adult male learners ranging in age from 23 to 26 are asked to talk about the title of new lesson. In this extract, turn completion, teacher interruption, extended teacher turn and teacher echo created a teacher-dominated situation with limited interaction of learners.

Extract 2: T-B

*1 **T:** do you use microblogs? (0.1) do you know what microblog is? (Repetition)*

*2 **S1:** no*

*3 **T:** no, ah... do you remember weblogs ((name))?*

*4 **S1:** yes :: weblogs were pages...uh::... (.)*

5 T: = weblogs were pages that people wrote stories, poems and everything, they sent pictures, sometimes they wrote about themselves = but you use microblogs these days

6 S2: like Instagram, Twitter = (0.1)

7 T: = yeah, Instagram, twitter, so what do they write about in these pages? (repetition)

8 S2: actors, sports, er, they write about [uh::] (0.1)

9 T: = [other people], they write about their friends, sometimes they share their foods on Instagram.

10 S: (laugh) yes, er, I share pictures of our dinner on Instagram last night=

11 T: = we shared ↑

A teacher-dominated context is the most prominent feature of this extract. In this interaction, experienced teacher initiates by posing a closed-ended question and repeats her utterances in lines (1, 7). As Walsh (2002) argues, teacher-teacher echo has no actual function; it obstructs learning opportunities since teacher occupies learners' space in the conversation. She applies no interactional strategy in line (4) to provide space for further learner involvement, such as seeking clarification to produce longer response. In line (5) teacher's turn is more than one clause. In this way, extended teacher turn has limited learners' participation opportunities. In lines (5, 7, 9) we have a kind of turn completion in which teacher responses the question immediately without providing wait-time for learner and hence interrupts interaction. As Walsh (2002) asserts, teachers' completion of learner turns wherein learners are not needed to elucidate their meaning or reformulate their contribution obstacles learning. Teacher waits less than one second after asking a question, leaving learners inadequate time to answer (1, 4, 6, 8). In addition, teacher's direct repair with little time (line 11), hinders learner to promote his oral fluency.

Fluency and Accuracy

The following extract is taken from novice T-C's pre-Mediation data. A group of ten elementary female teenagers ranging in age from 13 to 15 are invited to talk about the new words. In this extract, direct repair, teacher interruption, form-focused feedback, contrived forms (out of context), and maximal use of L1 obstructed learners' oral fluency and participation.

Extract 3: T-C

1 T: Adele is a good-looking celebrity and her voice is amazing

2 S1: What is celebrity?

3 T: Celebrity means (honarmand in Persian), like Enrique, he is an interesting celebrity, too.

4 S1: I likes to be a celebrity, (hm), (.)

5 T: - I like not likes…

*6 **S2:** Interesting?*

*7 **T:** It means very good (jaleb in Persian)*

*8 **S2:** Some of they are not much famous…I can name…*

*9 **T:** some of them are not very famous (write it on the board)*

*10 **S1:** Aha…Adele and Enrique…(.)*

*11 **T:** They are celebrities*

*12 **S3:** I like Enrique a lot (.hh), he is my…favorite singer.*

*13 **T:** Yeah, they are very nice and smart*

*14 **S2:** Smart means?*

*15 **T:** It means (bahoosh in Persian)*

*16 **S3:** Ah…Enrique…songs…er… smart…*

*17 **T:** = Enrique is a smart singer…*

One of the most striking features of this extract is teacher's maximal use of L1 in her dialogues (3, 7, 15). As we see, novice teacher explains new words in contrived forms without providing meaningful context in lines (3, 7, 15). In this way, she has obstructed learners' engagement to practice new words in real situations. In fact, teacher applies no interactional strategies such as referential questions, confirmation check and seeking clarification to push learners for producing full and long response. In lines (10, 12), teacher interrupts learners' contribution without giving them enough time to have more extended turn; In addition, teacher's direct repair with little time in lines (5, 9, 17), obstacles learners' promotion of oral fluency. Indeed, she interrupts learners by giving feedback on form not meaning. In brief, she has limited learners' participation opportunities by preferring form to content.

Pair and Group work

This extract is taken from experienced T-D's pre-Mediation data. A group of ten intermediate adult male learners ranging in age from 18 to 21 were working on the reading part in which some pictures are included, and learners are required to work in pairs to respond related questions. However, the classroom situation is dominated through teacher extended turn, teacher's echo, and teacher completion. No pair or group work has been conducted by the learners.

Extract 4: T-D

*1 **T:** you have three phrases in the chart (A, B), financially independent, financial is related to money, independent is opposite of dependent (repetition). For example, if a person is*

financially independent means a person who has a lot of money and doesn't depend on his parents for money (repetition). live in the country side, can you say what country side means?

*2 **S1:** it's in the village*

*3 **T:** journalist, a person who writes news reports for magazines, or newspaper (repetition), ok now, be financially independent, which picture shows it? (repetition)*

*4 **S1:** F*

*5 **T:** the first picture f, thanks, the second picture?*

*6 **S2:** D*

*7 **T:** the third picture?*

*8 **S3:** B*

*9 **T:** ok, now talk about your opinion, your goals, what do you want to be? What are your purposes? (repetition)*

*10 **S2:** I want to be a doctor,….er…*

*11 **T:** he's going to be a doctor (point to another student and say), I know Hamid wants to be a pilot, that's his career, can you say some jobs that are important now, but in the future they will not exist (repetition)*

*12 **S3:** in the future there are a lot of robots and cars and do a lot of works=*

*13 **T:** = Farmers won't need to work in the farm, they use special equipment*

It has been observed that teacher's extended turn without any pause or silence creates little space for learners' participation in pair-work. In this extract, teacher holds the floor personally and doesn't allow learners to participate in the conversation. Instead, he prefers a teacher-initiated ask and answer format without involving learners in pair and group work (lines 1, 3, 11). In turns (3, 5, 7) teacher attempts to elicit more learner contributions by posing closed-ended questions which lead to short responses. In this interaction, through turn interruption (11, 13) teacher occupied the opportunity for learner's participation. In fact, learner cannot express himself since teacher interrupts him to complete sentence. In addition, extended teacher turn in lines (1, 3, 9, 11) impedes learners' contribution for further pair and group work.

A Sample of Mediation Sessions

To exemplify how instructional sessions were like and how teacher educator and the teachers dialogically interact to establish intersubjectivity, a sample drawn from mediation sessions is also included. The T-A missed the opportunities to apply CLT, and in turn hindered learners'

participation through teacher completion, excessive use of direct repair, and less wait-time. The focus of mediation here is on the function of teacher-correction versus learner-correction aligned with pedagogical purpose of the moment. However, all instructions in mediation sessions were held in Persian (the participants' L1), for readers' convenience, their verbatim translation into English is given.

Extract 5: T-A

> 1 **E:** *Why do you ask this question?*
> 2 **T:** *uh :: to elicit answer (.) questions make learners talk…*
> 3 **E:** *that's fine. But has your question made them talk?*
> 4 **T:** *uh:: uhm…. I think somehow*
> 5 **E:** *I mean are the quality and quantity of the answers satisfactory?*
> 6 **T:** *I just want to prepare students for the subject of the lesson and….*

> 7 **E:** *what is your goal here? ((replayed the film)) why do you complete student, don't you think you decrease student's participation?*
> 8 **T:** *uhm … I tried to provide him with opportunity for improving his speaking ability*
> 9 **E:** *any problem you can notice?*
> 10 **T:** *uhm…you mean error correction? (.) they should be corrected in the class while teaching*
> 11 **E:** *uhm*
> 12 **T:** *they expect to learn in the class and in cases like this situation you see although they are pre-intermediate, they have some problems with the tenses so I (.) I did what I supposed to do as a teacher and [uh] that is teaching correct forms and helping them to speak more precisely*
> 13 **E:** *so by correcting you aimed to enable them to [talk better*
> 14 **T:** *[or it is better to say talk more truly and then step by step they gain a proper … I mean error free and fluent speaking*
> 15 **E:** *uhm…… what is the goal of teaching here?*
> 16 **T:** *= the goal of teaching and learners' participation is to receive feedback on what they produce… if they don't be corrected, they will keep using wrong structures and pronunciations … they need to get right answers*
> 17 **E:** *yes… the notion of repair is not limited to error correction, they need to receive feedback on their contributions but here despite your stated intention to produce speaking opportunity, the flow of interaction is interrupted by over-correction*
> 18 **T:** *((nodding)) but this over-correction was due to their inability to express themselves correctly*

> *19 **E:** yeah... the organization of repair is a complex system that avoids miscommunication.... appropriate type of error correction strategy should be used based on your intended goal in that moment... I mean whether you want to enhance oral fluency or valuate or check their linguistic knowledge... as language teachers we should be able to match doing corrections or allowing wait-time to our pedagogical goal of the moment.*

From the process of mediation, it can be concluded that novice T-A is actively engaged in dialogic interaction (lines, 2, 4, 6, 8, 12, 16, 18). The educator started to direct novice T-A's attention to inappropriate use of elicitation and questioning strategies, wherein this type of question did not fulfill her intention to develop learner contribution (lines, 1, 3, 5, 7). On the other hand, the educator's elaboration on the way of error correction that has resulted in a limited learner participation, and following few seconds of silence on teacher's part (10) indicates that the teacher has not noticed the impact of direct repair (lines, 14, 16, 18). For this reason, a more explicit level of mediation is offered through explaining error correction strategy by the educator (15, 17, 19). Moreover, from the type of responsiveness that moves on the part of the teacher in collaboration, questions aiming at seeking the educator's support, it can be inferred that novice T-A is open and willing to receive mediation. In other words, through explanation on how more genuine responses can be elicited, she demonstrates gaining a new level of development. This can imply creation of new levels of understanding or transformation of knowledge from the social level to cognitive level. During mediation, the novice teacher expressed her aim to create a classroom atmosphere with more engaged and active learner participation. At the end, she was able to talk about the other samples wherein she repeatedly smoothed learners' turn and minimized learning opportunities. This ability of diagnosing and revising of verbal behavior under prompting can be considered as developing a new level of understanding; Walsh (2006b) correctly asserts that there must be metalanguage to assist reflection and enable teachers to evaluate their interactive actions and attain new levels of understanding. During mediation, the educator's attempt was at guiding the teacher to use an appropriate metalanguage so as to describe interactional processes and in turn to help them engage in mediation more actively.

Post-Mediation Samples

Error Correction

In this extract, the novice T-A development regarding CLT is evident by providing a favorable situation for learners' participation through less direct repair and applying some types of interactional strategies such as open-ended or referential questions.

Extract 6: T-A

> 1 **T:** *look at this picture, "he feels happy", I'm happy, too. how do you feel?*
>
> 2 **S1:** *I'm happy*
>
> 3 **T:** *why are you happy? (4)*
>
> 4 **S1:** *I go to restaurant, go to park with some friends this morning.*
>
> 5 **T:** *oh, how was your work, how did you feel about your work? Point to the class (5)*
>
> 6 **S2:** *one of students point to another sticker and another S says boring*
>
> 7 **T:** *aha, ...boring… how is work for you ((Amir))?*
>
> 8 **S:** *quiet*
>
> 9 **T:** *Is it quiet? ↑*
>
> 10 **S3:** *no, its not, its ….er …noisy*
>
> 11 **T:** *oh, well:: describe your English class, (3) how do you feel?=*
>
> 12 **S4:** *=student points to another sticker and says its nice*
>
> 13 **S5:** *another students says it :: is great*
>
> 14 **T:** *talk about sleep, how was your sleep? (points to class)(4)*
>
> 15 **S3:** *I have very well sleep, it was good*
>
> 16 **T:** *point to class, how is sleep for you?*
>
> 17 **S4:** *I sleep late, wake up early, I sleep hard*

It is evident that teacher tries to provide opportunity for learners' turn taking through referential questions (1, 3, 7, 14) and bringing stickers. That is an effective way of elicitation and collaboration since learners express their personal meanings through verbal and nonverbal actions. In fact, novice teacher encouraged them to participate in the conversation by applying physical objects at hand which is in coordination with the stream of the speech. So, she attempts to avoid offering the meaning of word herself and instead uses pictures in her vocabulary explanation and successfully elicits the word from the learners. Successful elicitation is an integral part of CIC (Walsh, 2006a). Regarding learners' error, teacher prefers to ignore them (lines 4, 15, 17). Because error correction is not conductive to create further space for learners to express themselves, they do not hinder communication, and provide more learners' participation. In addition, seeking clarification, content feedback and more learners' engagement are the result of teacher's rising intonation (line 9). In fact, teachers' saying 'aha' 'oh' (7, 11) demonstrate interest in the learners' answer and emphasis on the content rather than form (Walsh, 2006a). Moreover, teacher's more extended wait-time is obvious in lines (3, 5, 11, 14) to provide more opportunities for learners to participate and

formulate a response. These successful interactions (4, 15) and more turn takings can be regarded as result of 'teacher's questioning strategy' (Walsh, 2012). In brief, the novice teacher shows a new level of understanding and CLT development through less error correction and applying some interactional strategies.

The Teacher's Role

In the following extract, the experienced T-B development regarding CLT is evident through providing a learner-centered context, less teacher's interruption and applying interactional strategies in post-mediation data.

Extract 7: T-B

*1 **T:** look at the picture of your books, what do you think about this man, how does he feel? (3min) is he tired, happy or sad? (4min)*

*2 **S1:** the man is tired*

*3 **S2:** I:: (.) I think (.) he works a lot*

*4 **T:** aha (3) why ↑ is he tired? Point to class*

*5 **S3:** uh:: he exercises ….er…*

*6 **T:** well, what about the woman? What do you think about her? (3min)*

*7 **S2:** no, not so :: tired , not :: :: as tired as man*

*8 **T:** so, you think man exercises a lot, yeah, ok, what else can be?*

*9 **S1:** walking*

*10 **T:** aha, ok, now listen and check your answers, what is the problem? (Ss listen to the CD about 6min)*

*11 **S1:** sleep*

*12 **T:** now, share your idea, and say (.) what's the problem? (4min)*

*14 **S2:** because :: of too much :: sleep, he is tired*

*15 **T:** right, very good, now listen to the rest of conversation and write the question that "Laura" ask, ↑what other questions does Laura ask? (students listen again) (6min)*

*16 **S1:** do you eat breakfast?*

*17 **S3:** do you have a cap and sunscreen?*

*18 **T:** now, listen again, share your ideas, then say the question (6min)*

*19 **S1:** do you protect your skin from the sun? do you eat breakfast=*

*20 **S2:** = every day*

*21 **S3:** do you have a cap? do you wear sunscreen?*

From the process of interaction, it is obvious that experienced teacher provides space for learners' interaction through extended wait-time, invitation for contribution, and elaboration question. She tries to sustain and increase learner participation through using the wh-question strategy (lines 1, 4, 6) that frequently serves as seeking clarification. The learner's participation is followed by the request for expansion through a question in rising intonation (line 4). Teacher's extension of the wait time in lines (1, 6, 12, 18) ultimately results in learner participation as learners come up with an alternative response. In addition, teacher's pauses are used to invite learners for more interaction and take a turn at the time of conversation. Teacher indicates her perception of the learner's participation through the words 'aha' and 'right' (4, 15) in the interaction. Application of these interactional strategies resulted in longer interactions, more negotiation of meaning, and increasing quality and quantity of learner's turns to formulate a response without teacher's interruption. In brief, experienced T-B demonstrates the signs of CLT development by providing a learner-centered context and maximizing learners' interaction.

Fluency and Accuracy

In the following extract, the novice T-C development regarding CLT is evident through focusing meaning and fluency rather than form and accuracy, less teacher's interruption and direct repair as well as maximal use of interactional strategies such as content feedback and referential questions.

Extract 8: T-C

      1 ***T:*** *Which food did you eat for lunch yesterday?*

      2 ***S1: =*** *I eat rice and bread.*

      3 ***S2:*** *I ate fish and rice*

      4 ***S3: >*** *I ate potatoes and vegetable, I don't like fish<*

      5 ***T: =*** *Are you allergic to fish?*

      6 ***S3: =*** *No, I don't like some foods like fish,…(hm) eggplants*

      7 ***T:*** *[Oh, you are picky eater], picky eaters like special things, foods and they don't like other*

      8 ***S2: =*** *My brother is picky eater, (hm), he not like eggplant*

      9 ***S3:*** *Yeah, I am picky eater*

      10 ***T:*** *What do you eat for breakfast?*

      11 ***S1: =*** *I eat eggs and milk.*

      12 ***S2:*** *I don't eat breakfast*

      13 ***T: =*** *You mean, you skip breakfast*

      14 ***S3: =*** *Skip?*

*15 **T:** Yeah, skip means to not do something that you usually do, for example sometimes, I don't eat breakfast or I skip breakfast*

*16 **S2:** [Yeah, I skip history class], and I go shopping*

One of the most prominent features of this extract is teacher's use of referential questions in lines (1, 5, 10). In this way, teacher tries to engage learners in a meaningful context in which they can negotiate meaning, and produce full and long responses. In fact, teacher provides opportunity for learners to contextualize what they learned and maintain their oral fluency all the time. In line (1) teacher asks question to the whole class to elicit a range of responses. In this extract, there is certain logic in keeping error correction to a minimum in oral fluency practice activities to reduce interruption and maintain the flow (lines, 2, 4, 8, 16). Teacher also allows more extended learner turn through content feedback (4, 6, 8, 16). In addition, the minimal use of participants' L1 is obvious in lines (7, 15). In fact, she applies L1 in limited and selective form and L2 as the primary medium of communication in the classroom context. In this way, teacher attempts to explain the meaning of new words in context and through examples. All in all, novice teacher has provided more learning opportunities through preferring content on form.

Pair and Group work

In this extract, after teaching grammar part about past tense, learners are preparing to talk about their activities. The experienced T-D development regarding CLT is evident through using some interactional strategies to provide opportunities for learners' participation in pair or group work.

Extract 9: T-D

*1 **T:** tell your friends what activities did or did not do yesterday? (4)*

*2 **S1** (Aref): I listened to music, er… I washed my car last night*

*3 **S2** (Ali): I go to the cinema, I cooked dinner yesterday*

*4 **S3** (Reza): I listen to news, I study English*

*5 **T:** ok, Aref, now TELL me about your friends, what did they do yesterday? (6)*

*6 **S1** (Aref): Ali go to the cinema, he cooked dinner*

*7 **T:** Ali (GO), looking at him,*

*8 **S1** (Aref): Ali went to the cinema, he cooked dinner, Reza listened to news, he study English*

*9 **T:** good, now Ali tell the class about your friends (4)*

*10 **S2** (Ali): Aref listened to music, wash … car, Reza listen to news, study English*

*11 **T:** Ali wash ↑ his car? Looking at students*

12 **SS:** *Ali WASHED his car*

13 **T:** *ok, now Reza TELL me about your friend's activities*

14 **S3** *(Reza): Aref listened music, washed car, er, Ali went to the cinema, cook food*

Group-work strategy that experienced teacher applies, facilitates interactional space. The group work task provided learner's space to represent, mobilize, put to test, and in due course, develop their CIC (Escobar Urmeneta &Walsh, 2017). One of the most prominent features of the extract is the turn-taking strategy. As the conversation progresses, the teacher takes more and more of a 'back-seat' and 'hands-over' to the learners, who successfully manage their own-taking with no teacher intervention. It is obvious that learners can manage turn-taking very well and are able to interrupt, hold and pass their turns, although it is managed by the teacher. In fact, teacher is performing a more central role in the interaction, while, at the same time, maintaining a learner-centered, decentralized approach to teaching. Interruptions occur, but naturally and in a supportive way. In addition, learners' use of non-verbal behaviors such as gaze, provide them more opportunities to take part in the discourse (Mortensen, 2008). More extended-time (lines 1, 5, 9) allows learners to take turn without any stress. Moreover, teacher feedback changes from form to content and less error correction (lines 3, 4, 10). Briefly, experienced T-D applied a kind of group-work strategy as a development of CLT through extended-learner turn and more learners' participation.

4. Discussion

A scrutinized analysis of the current study's pre-mediation data, regarding CLT, supported the findings of the literature such as those of Walsh (2006b, 2011, & 2012) who asserted that teachers through increased wait time, reduced teacher echo and further learners' turn provide learning opportunities. However, the current study aimed at identifying the problematic areas through which learners' contribution are provided by teachers but they fail in CLT such as teachers' limited time for pair-work, more focus on accuracy and form than fluency and meaning, teachers' explicit and immediate correction and a teacher-centered context (Coskun, 2011; Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Karim, 2004; Razmjoo & Riazi, 2006) to name a few. So, initially the study reported on these detected strategies in pre-mediation data. Among these teachers' problematic interactional strategies, turn completion, teacher interruption, teacher over-reliance on error correction, extended teacher turn, teacher echo, inappropriate use of closed-ended questions, limited wait-time, inappropriate use of L1 and form-focused feedback were typical in most of the teachers' natural classroom interactions in the collected data.

The conversation analysis of collected data indicates a rise in applying CLT features and variety of CIC strategies each of the teacher participants employed in post-mediation phase. One of the main findings of the conversation analysis of the four observed experienced and novice teachers is their different levels of development. As it is shown in the extracts, there are promotions in implementation of CLT features almost in all four contexts. The post-mediation of T-A displayed a noticeable development in CLT implementation, yet she applied just some CIC strategies such as seeking clarification, content feedback and extended wait-time and the least use of direct repair. T-D also showed a noticeable progress in making use of pair or group work through extended wait-time, extended learner turn and turn completion strategies, and the least use of extended teacher turn. T-B and T-C also demonstrated evidences of a moderate improvement in applying CLT features. For example, they developed implementation of meaning and fluency and learner-centered context through the minimum use of extended teacher turn, teacher interruption, teacher echo, and form-focused feedback strategies, on the other hand, maximum use of extended learner turn in T-B and content feedback and referential question with T-C. These varying types of progress can be as the result of the quantities and qualities of teachers' engagement to mediation sessions.

Moreover, data analysis indicated that EFL teachers used a variety of interactional strategies in L2 classroom contexts. For instance, interactional strategies such as extended wait time, extended learner turn and turn completion were frequently applied in pair and group work context, wherein learners are encouraged to perform a group task with a focus on collective learning. Referential questions, content feedback and seeking clarification were frequently used in meaning and fluency context where the focus is on producing meaning not form. In such dialogic context, the slightest use of direct repair, teacher echo, teacher interruption and form-focused feedback created the opportunity for more learners' participation.

To sum, in pre-mediation phase the teachers mostly controlled both content and way of the interaction and determined who can take part, when and speak about what (Walsh, 2006a). The important feature of almost all pre-mediation data was a traditional style of teaching in which the teacher holds the floor personally after each learner turn without learner-initiated turn or learner-learner dialogues. On the other hand, post-mediation data demonstrated different level of changes in teachers' classroom natural discourse. Subsequently, post-mediation data indicated that teachers can provide more learning opportunities by applying CLT features and CIC strategies.

5. Conclusion

Using a pre-mediation, mediation, and post-mediation format, the current study aimed at tracing an empirical account of novice and experienced Iranian EFL teachers' development in terms of CLT. Through an in-depth analysis of the collected data mentioned in the preceding section, the present study evidenced that involving teachers in CIC informed analysis of their own classroom performance could assist them expand a deeper understanding into their capability to CLT utilization. Moreover, it was found that, after instructional sessions, almost all four teachers managed to apply CLT features and a wider range of CIC strategies. Nonetheless, novice and experienced teachers differed in terms of the CLT features they adopted. Actually, this could be due to the fact that each teacher's different level of existing knowledge, the way they respond to instructional interactions, and the way of interpretation of their own classroom performance led to creating different types of learning opportunities.

The current study demonstrated that experience alone should not be regarded as a criterion to determine the professional development of teachers. As we see, both novice and experienced teachers gained noticeable progress in understanding and applying CLT. Therefore, experience should not equate with education. Dewey (1938) supported this fact that not "all experiences are genuinely or equally educative" (p. 25). In fact, it is possible to have the experienced teachers without having expertise in their profession (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). This study implies that those teachers who had fewer teaching experiences had good performance. The findings of this study showed that experience did not hinder the development of novice teachers compared to experienced teachers in applying CLT.

The study provided evidence that aligns the Vygotskian sociocultural theory (SCT) that the essence of all types of learning is situated in the social context; according to this theory, learning is a collaborative and dynamic process that is acquired from interaction with others. In this study, the teacher educator through interaction in a dialogic form could assist teachers to gain a deeper insight into their adopted strategies to CLT, which they were unable to obtain individually. The T-A and T-C's use of CIC strategies such as seeking clarification, referential question, content feedback, extended wait-time, and discarding direct repair and form-focused feedback, and also the T-B and T-D's use of extended learner turn, extended wait-time, and the minimum use of extended teacher turn, teacher interruption and teacher echo could be ascribed to the dialogic feedbacks in instructional sessions.

In light of the abovementioned findings, a number of directions for further research can be suggested. First, other studies are required to investigate teachers' attitudes, beliefs and

perceptions toward CIC strategies in a particular context, Iran. Another area which evidences more attention is the discrepancy between teachers' attitudes towards CIC strategies and their practice in the classroom context. Last but not least, the role of language used in mediation can be the aim of future researches. Put it precisely, whether the use of L1 or L2 in instructional sessions can affect teachers' understanding of CLT features.

The current study suggested that teacher educators can profit from encouraging teachers to more classroom interaction to provide more learning opportunities. However, it should be acknowledged that the present study was done on a very small sample of second language teachers within a specific setting. This matter requires other studies to survey this issue using a larger sample, so that the results should be generalized with some caution.

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Appendix 1
CLT observation checklist adopted from Coskun (2011)

	Yes	No	Field notes (related comments)
1. Provides learners with activities that have to be carried out in pairs or groups.			
2. Provides contrived forms.			
3. Provides forms in context.			
4. Minimal use of L1			
5. Corrects selected errors.			
6. Tolerates learners' errors.			

7. Encourages learners to correct
each other's errors.
8. Encourages learners to self-correct
themselves
9. Dominates classroom situations

10. Monitors classroom situations.

Appendix 2
CIC observation checklist adopted from Walsh (2006b)

CIC Patterns	Yes	No
Direct repair		
Extended wait-time		
Content feedback		
Referential question		
Scaffolding		
Seeking clarification		
Extended learner turn		
Teacher echo		
Teacher interruption		
Extended teacher turn		
Turn completion		
Display question		
Form-focused feedback		

Appendix 3
Transcription key (Adopted from Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008)

(1.8)   Numbers enclosed in parentheses indicate a pause. The number represents the number of seconds of duration of the pause, to one decimal place. A pause of less than 0.2 s is marked by (.)

[ ]   Brackets around portions of utterances show that those portions overlap with a portion of another speaker's utterance.

J   An equal sign is used to show that there is no time lapse between the portions connected by the equal signs. This is used where a second speaker begins their utterance just at the moment when the first speaker finishes.

::   A colon after a vowel or a word is used to show that the sound is extended. The number of colons shows the length of the extension.

(hm, hh)   These are onomatopoetic representations of the audible exhalation of air)

hh   This indicates an audible inhalation of air, for example, as a gasp. The more h's, the longer the in-breath.

?   A question mark indicates that there is slightly rising intonation.

.   A period indicates that there is slightly falling intonation.

,   A comma indicates a continuation of tone.

-   A dash indicates an abrupt cut off, where the speaker stopped speaking suddenly.

Zb   Up or down arrows are used to indicate that there is sharply rising or falling intonation. The arrow is placed just before the syllable in which the change in intonation occurs.

Under   Underlines indicate speaker emphasis on the underlined portion of the word.

CAPS   Capital letters indicate that the speaker spoke the capitalized portion of the utterance at a higher volume than the speaker's normal volume.

°   This indicates an utterance that is much softer than the normal speech of the speaker. This symbol will appear at the beginning and at the end of the utterance in question.

> <, < >   'Greater than' and 'less than' signs indicate that the talk they surround was noticeably faster, or slower than the surrounding talk.

(would)   When a word appears in parentheses, it indicates that the transcriber has guessed as to what was said, because it was indecipherable on the tape. If the transcriber was unable to guess what was said, nothing appears within the parentheses.

£C'mon£   Sterling signs are used to indicate a smiley or jokey voice.