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**A CASE STUDY ON INCREASING EFL STUDENTS' LEVEL OF
CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION THROUGH THE USE OF
COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITIES**

THESIS BY

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Şeyma ÇANLIOĞLU

ÖZET

İLETİŞİMSEL YÖNTEM AKTİVİTELERİ KULLANARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRENEN ÖĞRENCİLERİN DERSE KATILIM DÜZEYİNİ ARTIRMA VAKA ÇALIŞMASI

Şeyma ÇANLIOĞLU

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Çalışmanın amacı, iletişime yönelik aktivitelerin öğrencilerin derse katılım düzeyini nasıl artıracakını öğrenmektir. Bu çalışma tanımlayıcı bir vaka çalışması olarak tasarlanmıştır. Bu yöntemi iletişime yönelik aktiviteleri kullandığım zaman öğrencilerimin derse katılım düzeylerini gözlemlerken bana yardımcı olacağı için tercih ettim.

Çalışmanın katılımcıları Gaziantep Hasan Kalyoncu Üniversitesi 12 alt orta düzey Hazırlık Sınıfı öğrencisidir. Bu çalışmada, veri toplamak amacıyla üç tip araç kullanılmıştır. Bunlar öğrenci röportajları, öğrenci öz değerlendirme formları ve ders raporlarıdır. Çalışmanın bulguları iletişime yönelik aktivitelerin İngilizce öğrenmekte olan öğrencilerin İngilizce dersine katılım düzeyini geliştirmeye katkı sağladığını göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İletişime Yönelik Aktiviteler; Öğrencinin Derse Katılımı.

ABSTRACT

A CASE STUDY ON INCREASING EFL STUDENTS' LEVEL OF CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION THROUGH THE USE OF COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITIES

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The purpose of this study was to learn how to increase EFL students' participation level through the use of communicative activities. This study was designed as a descriptive case study. I preferred this method because it would be a great help to observe my students' participation level when the communicative activities were conducted.

The participants of the study were 12 pre-intermediate level students who were attending the preparatory school of Hasan Kalyoncu University in Gaziantep, Turkey. In this study, three types of instruments were used in order to collect data. These were student interviews, student reflection sheets and lesson reports. The findings of this study revealed that communicative activities help to increase EFL students' level of participation in English lessons.

Keywords: Communicative Activities, Student Participation.

ABBREVIATIONS

CLT : Communicative Language Teaching

EFL : English as a Foreign Language

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CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Participation is one of the most important elements in language classes. Language teachers often complain about the lack of student participation and we generally consider that participation shows students' level of motivation and this also shows their success rate. Cohen (1991) defines participation as “a way of bringing students actively into the educational process and assisting in enhancing our teaching and bringing life to the classroom” (as cited in Rocca, 2010, p.188).

Language teachers need to find ways to increase students' motivation, as increasing the level of student participation during the lessons is one of their primary responsibilities. Students' motivation to learn comes from their need to communicate, therefore; when they encounter some situations which they are likely to experience in their real lives, they become motivated to communicate, which results in active participation. According to Shastri (2010) “communication is not restricted to isolated sentences but to participate in a discourse (p.40). Also, Willis (1996) raises four optimal conditions for language acquisition: “exposure to the target language”, “opportunities for learners to use the target language for real communication”, “motivation for learners to engage in the learning process” and “instruction for drawing learners' attention to language form” (p.19). Similarly, Berns (1990) suggests that “as teaching language is based on a view of language as communication, language is seen as a social means that speakers use to make meaning and speakers communicate about something to someone for some purpose” (as cited in Savignon, 2002, p.6).

It is known that the main aim of all teaching methods is to make students communicate in the target language. According to Savignon (1991), “when language use is viewed as social behaviour, learner identity and motivation are seen to interact with language status, use, and contexts of learning to influence the development of competence” (p.273). In the 1970s, educators started to question whether these methods were meeting the goal in the right way as they observed that students could

not use sentences appropriately when communicating outside the classroom even if they could produce sentences accurately in a lesson and also noted that “communicating required more than knowing linguistic structures” (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p.121). Therefore, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emerged as a response to the judgement, which emphasizes that the old methods produced structurally competent, but communicatively incompetent students. Several features characterize this approach. According to Nunan (1991), the following are those features:

1. An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language
2. The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation
3. The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language, but also on the learning process itself
4. An enhancement of the learner’s own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning
5. An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom (p.279).

1.2.Statement of the Problem

The students at Hasan Kalyoncu University Preparatory School have some participation problems during the lessons. For example, the students seem unwilling to participate in the practice part of language lessons. They look unmotivated when they are asked questions about the new topics and they are reluctant to answer these questions. Also there seems to be no interaction among the students during the lessons because they do not communicate in the target language. The reason of this situation can be their old habits, as they weren’t used to communicate in the target language even if they had been learning it for a long time. Similarly, Spada (2013) believes that sometimes students try to learn a new language to pass an exam, but not to use it for daily communication. According to Zhang (2006), the teachers can create a need for communication, interaction and negotiation of meaning through the use of CLT classroom activities. Also Wang (2010) states that “CLT develops learners’ communicative competence as it exposes them rich and comprehensible

input and involves them communicating and participating actively by using the target language” (p.127). With the help of communicative activities, there can be a good environment for students so that they can interact with each other, as they are provided with a purpose to communicate.

Accordingly, the main purpose of this study is to investigate how to increase the students’ level of participation at Hasan Kalyoncu University Preparatory School through the use of communicative activities.

1.3.Aim of the Study

The aim in CLT should be creating real-life situations to make students communicate while developing communicative competence. Sun and Cheng (2002) point out “CLT emphasizes authentic language input, real-life language practice and creative generation of language output, so it is dependent on the situational context and it requires a language setting to provide authentic input for language use and opportunity for students to use the language in a realistic way” (p.68). Similarly the aim of CLT is to apply Communicative Approach by making communicative competence the purpose of language teaching and by acknowledging the interdependence of language and communication (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Therefore communication is the crucial part of language teaching as it is the best way to use the language.

We also believe that participation is valuable as it helps facilitate learning. However, it has more benefits in learning process. Providing the students authentic language input, which requires them situational contexts, can be useful to increase their participation level to communicate. Therefore the aim of this study is to learn how I could increase my students’ level of participation through the use of communicative activities in my English lessons.

1.4. Research Question

The present study is an attempt to find an answer to the following exploratory research question:

1. How can I increase my students’ level of participation through the use of communicative activities?

1.5. Significance of the Study

Savignon (2002) points out that Communicative Language Teaching derives from linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology and educational research and the focus is the elaboration and integration of programs and methodologies, which increase the development of functional language ability through learners' participation in communicative events. Also Savignon (2007) believes that the aim of natural language learning has been the development of communication skills for social interaction. Therefore, the aim of language teaching should be communication. In addition, according to Larsen-Freeman (2000), by learning to communicate students feel more motivated to study a foreign language since they feel that they are learning to do something useful with language, which is one of the basic assumptions of CLT. Therefore, it can be important to use communicative activities as CLT suggests making the students participate actively in the class.

1.6. Operational Definitions

Student Participation: Turner and Patrick (2004) point out that “it provides students with opportunities to learn and practice new knowledge and strategies, to explain their reasoning, and to examine their thinking processes and recognize the need to revise thinking. It also allows teachers a window into student thinking processes and learning, allows them to diagnose learning problems or evaluate student progress, and provides teachers an opportunity to scaffold, or provide cognitive and affective supports, for students' understanding” (p.1760).

Communicative Language Teaching: Richards (2006) defines it as “a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom” (p.2).

Communicative Activity: Richards and Rodgers (1986) state, “classroom activities are designed to focus on completing tasks that are mediated through language or involve negotiation of information and information sharing” (p.76).

Communicative Task: According to Nunan (1993), “communicative task is a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehension, manipulation, production

or interaction processes in the target language and whole their attention is focused on meaning rather than form” (as cited in Qinghong, 2009, p.51).

Communicative Competence: Hymes (1972) defines the term as “a language user’s grammatical and social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately” (as cited in Xue, 2013, p.2).

CHAPTER II

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical basis of the study. First, it discusses Communicative Language Teaching and then it discusses communicative competence and communicative activities. And finally, it presents the roles of teachers and learners.

2.2. Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative language teaching is generally considered as one of the most popular approaches to language teaching. Dörnyei (2009) states that British and American scholars introduced communicative language teaching at the beginning of the 1970s to promote the teaching of usable communicative skills in L2 instruction. In addition, according to Richards (2006), in the last 30 years our understanding of the processes of second language learning has changed and CLT is partly a response to these changes as the earlier views gave importance to grammatical competence and language learning was viewed as a process of mechanical habit formation. Therefore, in recent years language learning has been viewed from a very different perspective. Communicative approach introduced many new aspects in language teaching by challenging main structural views in 1960 (McDonough et al., 2013). Savignon (1991) states “communicative language teaching (CLT) has become a term for methods and curricula that embrace both the goals and the processes of classroom learning, for teaching practice that views competence in terms of social interaction and looks to further language acquisition research to account for its development” (p.263). Ansarey (2012) believes that main function of CLT is to permit interaction and communication. Also according to Richards (2006), CLT results from processes as follows:

1. Interaction between the learner and users of the language
2. Collaborative creation of meaning
3. Creating meaningful and purposeful interaction through language
4. Negotiation of meaning as the learner and his or her interlocutor arrive at understanding

5. Learning through attending to the feedback learners get when they use the language
6. Paying attention to the language one hears (the input) and trying to incorporate new forms into one's developing communicative competence
7. Trying out and experimenting with different ways of saying things (p. 4).

The important point in CLT is teaching all skills to communicate. Richards and Rodgers (1986) also believe that both American and British proponents see CLT as an approach, which makes communicative competence the goal of teaching, and develop procedures for the teaching of four skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication. They also view some of the characteristics of communicative approach as follows:

1. Language is a system for the expression of meaning.
2. The primary function of language is for interaction and communication.
3. The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses.
4. The primary units of language are not merely grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning as exemplified in discourse (Richards and Rodgers 1986, p.71).

Teaching structure is not enough while teaching language. According to Littlewood (1981), a communicative approach opens a wider perspective on language by making us consider language in terms of both its structures and communicative functions that it performs. It makes us look at language forms and what people do with these forms as well and it makes us aware that it is not enough to teach learners how to manipulate the structures of the foreign language and develop strategies for relating these structures to their communicative functions in real situations and real time. Similarly, Alcon (2004) states "CLT suggests that communication is both an end and a means to language learning" (p. 175).

Brown (2007) offers the following interconnected characteristics as a definition of CLT:

1. Classroom goals are focused on all of the components of communicative competence and not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence.
2. Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational forms of language are not the central focus but rather aspects of language that enable the learners to accomplish those purposes.
3. Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles 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. In the communicative classroom, students ultimately have to use the language productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts (p.241).

Likewise, Richards (2006) underlines ten core assumptions of current Communicative Language Teaching:

1. Second language learning is facilitated when learners are engaged in interaction and meaningful communication.
2. Effective classroom learning tasks and exercises provide opportunities for students to negotiate meaning, expand their language resources, notice how language is used, and take part in meaningful interpersonal exchange.
3. Meaningful communication results from students processing content that is relevant, purposeful, interesting, and engaging.
4. Communication is a holistic process that often calls upon the use of several language skills or modalities.
5. Language learning is facilitated both by activities that involve inductive or discovery learning of underlying rules of language use

and organization, as well as by those involving language analysis and reflection.

6. Language learning is a gradual process that involves creative use of language, and trial and error. Although errors are a normal product of learning, the ultimate goal of learning is to be able to use the new language both accurately and fluently.
7. Learners develop their own routes to language learning, progress at different rates, and have different needs and motivations for language learning.
8. Successful language learning involves the use of effective learning and communication strategies.
9. The role of the teacher in the language classroom is that of a facilitator, who creates a classroom climate conducive to language learning and provides opportunities for students to use and practice the language and to reflect on language use and language learning.
10. The classroom is a community where learners learn through collaboration and sharing (p.22).

By the help of CLT, some other aspects of language were also given importance. Swan (1985) emphasizes that function of CLT as stated in the following:

The Communicative Approach has directed our attention to the importance of other aspects of language besides propositional meaning, and helped us to analyse and teach the language of interaction. At the same time, it has encouraged a methodology, which relies less on mechanical teacher-centred practice and more on the simulation of real-life exchanges (p.87).

2.3. Communicative Competence

Developing communicative competence is the main goal of CLT. Hymes (1972) believes that linguistic theory needs to be seen as part of a general theory incorporating communication and culture. His theory of communicative competence was a definition of what a speaker needs to know in order to be communicatively competent in a speech community. Also his view shows that a person who acquires

communicative competence acquires both knowledge and ability for language use with respect to several things. These can be sorted as follows:

1. Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible;
2. Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available;
3. Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated;
4. Whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doing entails (as cited in Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p.70).

However, according to Widdowson (1990) “communicative competence has two concepts: competence which is described as linguistic and sociolinguistic knowledge and capacity which is defined as the ability of creating meaning of language knowledge” (as cited in Costin, 2011, p.17). For Canale and Swain (1980) “four elements of communicative competence are: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence” (as cited in Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1995, p.7). Savignon (2002) states that all the components are interrelated and they cannot be developed or measured in isolation. One cannot go from one component to the other as when stringing beads on a necklace.

Richards (2006) also states that communicative competence includes the following aspects of language learning:

- Knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions
- Knowing how to vary our use of language according to the setting and the participants (e.g., knowing when to use formal and informal speech or when to use language appropriately for written as opposed to spoken communication)
- Knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g., narratives, reports, interviews, conversations)

- Knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge (e.g., through using different kinds of communication strategies) (p.3).

2.4. Communicative Activities

As CLT emerged as a reaction to the traditional methods that focus on structures and accuracy, activities used in the class have also changed and the use of activities like role-plays, group work activities and project work has been focused. According to Swan (1985) "the boring and mechanical exercise types which were so common ten or fifteen years ago have virtually disappeared, to be replaced by a splendid variety of exciting and engaging practice activities" (p.2).

Littlewood (1981) underlines the importance of communicative activities and he believes that they provide whole-task practice, improve motivation, allow natural learning and creates a context, which supports learning.

After CLT was introduced, a crucial change in lesson formats and activities was also noticed. Richards (2006) emphasizes this change as stated in the following:

With CLT began a movement away from traditional lesson formats where the focus was on mastery of different items of grammar and practice through controlled activities such as memorization of dialogs and drills, and toward the use of pair work activities, role plays, group work activities and project work" (p.4).

He also indicates that developing fluency is one of the goals of CLT and it is developed by creating activities in which students must negotiate meaning, use strategies for communication, correct misunderstanding and try to avoid communication breakdowns. He also emphasizes the importance of information-gap activities and jigsaw activities. As in real life, we communicate to get information, more authentic communication between students occurs when we use information-gap activities. In jigsaw activities, the class is generally divided into two and each group has different parts of the information, which is needed to complete an activity. The students use their language resource to communicate meaningfully. This type of activity is also based on information-gap principle. Task-completion, information-

gap, opinion sharing, information transfer, reasoning-gap and role plays are the other types of activities which have been used in CLT (Richards, 2006).

Littlewood (1981, p.86) classifies communicative activities into two as in the following:

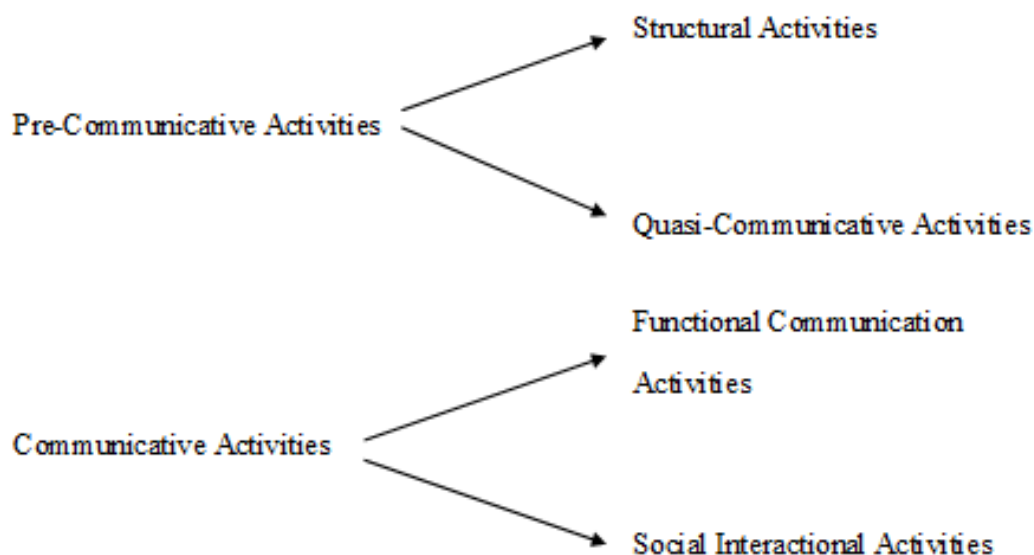


Figure 1: Communicative Activities

Students are required to use language resources to overcome an information gap and solve a problem in functional communication activities, therefore; they use language to share information and to process information. Four main groups are indicated: “(a) sharing information with restricted cooperation, (b) sharing information with unrestricted cooperation, (c) sharing and processing information and (d) processing information” (Littlewood, 1981, p.22)

Students are required to pay attention to the context and the roles of the people involved in social interactional activities. There are four approaches which exploit the classroom environment as a social context: (a) using the foreign language for classroom management, (b) using the foreign language as a teaching medium, (c) conversation or discussion sessions and (d) basic dialogues and role-plays on school experience (Littlewood, 1981, p.45).

2.5. The Roles of Teachers and Learners

With CLT the focus has become communication rather than structure, so there should be new roles of teachers and learners in the classroom. Richards and Rodgers (1986) believe that teachers should be needs analysts who determine and respond to learner needs, counsellors who exemplify an effective communicator and a group process manager who monitors and encourages. Likewise, Littlewood (1981) also believes that the teacher should be the source of guidance and help, monitor the students' strengths and weaknesses and also take part as a co-communicator. As the main focus in CLT is different from traditional methods, the roles of learners are also different. Savignon (2002) states "learners who are accustomed to being taught exclusively in their first language may at first be uncomfortable if the teacher speaks to them in the second, expecting them not only to understand but, perhaps, to respond" (p.12). Larsen-Freeman (200) also believes that, the speaker has a right to decide what she will say and how she will say it in communication. Richards (2006) emphasizes the learners' role as stated in the following:

Learners now had to participate in classroom activities that were based on a cooperative rather than individualistic approach to learning. Students had to become comfortable with listening to their peers in group work or pair work tasks, rather than relying on the teacher for a model. They were expected to take on a greater degree of responsibility for their own learning (p.5).

2.6. Aim of Learning a Language in Communicative Language Teaching

Jacobs and Farrell (2003) believe that learning is a social activity that depends upon interaction with others, but it is not an individual and private activity. According to Larsen-Freeman (2000), there are several aims of learning in CLT. Main aims in CLT are as follows:

- The main goal is to be able to communicate in the target language.
- Vocabulary and grammar is learnt from functional and situational context.
- Students work on all four skills from the beginning.
- Communicative activities and authentic material are used.

- Students interact a great deal with one another.
- Teacher interacts with students but for short time. He mainly facilitates communication and sometimes acts as communicator.
- Authentic and real-life language (language from newspaper, magazines, movies, songs etc.) is used.
- Judicious use of student's native language is permitted in CLT. Target language is a vehicle of communication not only an object to be studied.
- Teacher evaluates students' accuracy and fluency. He informally evaluates as an adviser or co-communicator and formally evaluates by giving an integrative test, which has a real communication function.
- Errors are tolerated.

CHAPTER III

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology applied in this study. It describes how the study was designed and how the research was conducted. It begins with an overview of a case study. It also gives information about the participants and the setting, the data collection tools, data collection procedure and data analysis methods.

3.2. Research Design

The aim of this research was to learn how I could increase my students' level of participation through the use of communicative activities in my English lessons. This research was designed as a case study. Sturman (1994) defines case study as “a term for the investigation of an individual, group or phenomenon, which is held to understand a case, to explain why things happen, and to generalise or predict from a single example by case study researchers” (as cited in Bassey, 1999, p.26). I decided to conduct my research as a case study as I wanted to focus on a small group of students. Qualitative research methods were used to find an answer to my research question. According to Walliman (2006) “qualitative research does not involve counting and dealing with numbers but is based more on information expressed in words – descriptions, accounts, opinions, feelings, etc.” (p.129).

Among the qualitative research methods to collect data, I used lesson reports after each lesson during which I used communicative activities, structured interviews with students both at the beginning and at the end of the study. Moreover, I used reflection sheets completed by randomly selected 12 students.

3.3. Participants of the Study

This study was conducted at Hasan Kalyoncu University in Gaziantep, Turkey during 2014-2015 academic year. The participants of the study were 12 students studying at Hasan Kalyoncu University Preparatory School. I used the

convenience sampling strategy while selecting the participants, as they were the easiest to reach. Convenience sampling includes whoever happens to be available at the time (Gay et al., 2000). The participants' age ranged between 17-19. Out of 12 students 2 of them were males and 10 of them were females. The language proficiency level of the students was pre-intermediate. They took a total of 192 hours of English language course this term at the preparatory school. The researcher taught 10 hours of 24 courses each week.

3.4. Data Collection Tools

I used communicative activities the aim of which was determined according to the topic of the unit each week. Therefore, three types of data collection tools were used in order to collect data. The first data collection tool was lesson reports, which were written by the researcher after each lesson. By this way, I was able to explain the lesson briefly and reflect on the strengths and the weaknesses of the communicative activities that I had used each week. I also used student interviews, which reflected the students' attitudes towards the communicative activities in the first week before I used the communicative activities and in the last week after I used all the communicative activities. The third data collection tool was the student reflection sheet to learn how the activities worked in students' point of view.

3.4.1. Lesson Report

I used lesson report after each lesson during which I used a communicative activity to record what happened during the lesson. I tried to complete them shortly after the lessons and I described the details of my lesson observations together with my reflections on specific events. According to Richards and Farrell (2005) "a lesson report should include the extent to which activities were successful, departures the teacher made from the lesson plan, the sequence of activities, difficulties the learners experienced, aspects of the lessons which were successful according to the teacher and the words, expressions or grammatical items the students needed during the lesson" (p.38).

3.4.2. Interviews

The second data collection tool was the interviews conducted with the students twice. Interview is a way to understand the world from the subjects' points of view by allowing them to present their life situations freely in their own words and this creates an interaction between the researchers and their subjects (Kvale, 2006). I interviewed 5 students in the first week of my study. The aim was to learn the students' opinions about the communicative activities before the study had started. I also conducted the same interview in the last week after I used all the communicative activities. The aim was to learn whether the students' opinions about the use of the communicative activities changed or not. I had 4 questions in the interview and I asked the questions in students' own language. The interview consisted of the following questions:

- Do you like / dislike communicative activities? Why?
- What do you think are the benefits of communicative activities?
- How do you feel during the communicative activities? Why?
- Would you like to participate in communicative activities in every English class you have? Why?

3.4.3. Student Reflection Sheets

According to Burns (2010) "reflection includes exploring and expanding our understanding of how the roles of teachers and learners interact, how to develop and experiment with classroom tasks, texts and activities and also how to test out ideas" (p.142). I decided to use reflection sheets as the last data collection tool.

I gave the same reflection sheets to the students every week after I employed the communicative activities. The students were asked to complete the incomplete sentences on the sheets. The following are the sentences from the weekly reflection sheets:

- What I liked most about this activity is....
- What I liked least about this activity is....

- What I learnt by participating in this activity is....
- During the activity I felt....
- I would like / wouldn't like to participate in this activity again because....

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

The study, which I conducted to learn whether I could increase my students' participation through the use of communicative activities started at the beginning of 2014-2015 academic-year. I started the study with releasing permission from Hasan Kalyoncu University, Head of School of Foreign Languages in Gaziantep. After receiving the permission, I started the study with a preparation class of mine, which consisted of 12 pre-intermediate level learners. The study was conducted during a five- week period.

As a first step, I interviewed the students before I used the communicative activities in the first week. The students were asked questions such as: whether they liked or disliked communicative activities and the reason of this, the benefits of communicative activities, how they felt during the communicative activities and the reason of this, whether they would like to participate in communicative activities in every English class they had and the reason of this.

After each lesson, I wrote lesson report as I wanted to take notes about the students' level of participation, the students' reactions towards the activities and whether the activities worked or not.

I also gave a reflection sheet to each student after each lesson the communicative activities were used. Each week the students filled in these sheets. In the reflection sheets, they commented on what they liked most about the activity, what they liked least about the activity, what they learnt by participating in this activity, how they felt during the activity, whether they want to participate in this activity again and the reasons behind their opinions.

As a last step, at the end of week 5, I conducted interviews with the students the second time to learn their reaction to the communicative activities. By this way, I

compared the results of the interviews at the end of the study. The following section describes how I conducted the study in details.

3.5.1. Week 1

The Aim: The first aim was to understand the students' opinions about the communicative activities through interviews. Secondly, I wanted the students to question each other by asking some questions so that they would get some information about their partners.

The Materials Used: An interview and a communicative activity.

The Procedures Followed:

-At first I conducted interviews with 5 students before the lesson.

The Lesson:

First I asked my students to look at the photo on their course book and we discussed the photo. They made some predictions about when and where it was taken. Then I asked them to read the paragraph about the photo to answer the comprehension questions about the paragraph. Simple past and past continuous tenses were used in the paragraph. I presented the new grammar topic 'past continuous tense' by comparing simple past tense and past continuous tense with the sentences taken from the paragraph. After presenting the grammar point, we did some mechanical and meaningful exercises. Then we practiced sentence stress in past continuous sentences. After that we did a listening activity. The students answered multiple-choice questions after they listened to a text in past continuous. I also asked them to write what they were doing at specific times the previous day. At the end of the lesson, I applied the communicative activity that I prepared.

The Communicative Activity:

The following presents the stages that we went through with the students:

-At the beginning of the application, I taught the words 'robbery, interrogation and suspect' as the students were not familiar with them.

-Next, I asked the students to work in pairs. One of them was a suspect and the other was the detective. The students chose their roles.

-Then I gave their role cards and explained what they were supposed to do.

The suspect has just been arrested in Las Vegas. He is accused of stealing \$ 1,000,000 from Caesar's Palace Hotel and Casino. The detective on the case does not believe that he and his friend won the money. He needs to convince him that he did win the money. He has to explain the events leading up to his win and the eventual arrest. He has to be sure to use a lot of detail because he does not want to go to prison.

The detective is the lead for the Las Vegas Police Department. He needs to interrogate a suspect that has "won" \$ 1,000,000 from the Caesar's Palace Hotel and Casino. He believes that he stole the money with the help of a hotel employee. He will find out how! He has to be sure to ask the suspect questions about the timeline of his day, starting from the moment he got up, until he was arrested.

-I gave the students some example sentences and wanted to be sure whether everything was clear. I gave them 15 minutes to finish the interrogation. I asked them, which tense they had to use during the interrogation and they told simple past and past continuous. I also reminded them not to use Turkish during the activity.

-During the activity, I walked around the class to make sure the students were doing the activity and speaking in English. When the time was over, I asked each pair whether they found the robber and what the possible motives were. Each pair explained the process and we completed the activity.

-At the end of the activity, I gave the students reflection sheets and asked them to fill in the sheets considering the activity that they were involved in.

3.5.2. Week 2

The Aim: The first aim of the second activity was to help the students to practice explaining or defining some words by using relative clauses. Secondly, the students

were encouraged to predict the meanings of the words using the contextual clues as reported by their friends.

The Material Used: A Word Game.

The Procedures Followed:

The Lesson:

First I asked the students some questions about word games as I wanted to know whether they knew any word games or whether they liked them or not. And then as a warm up activity, I gave them 26 letters and asked them to make words of four or more in three minutes. After the students told me the words that they had made, we listened to the introduction to a TV game show called “What’s the word.” I asked them to tell me how the game was played. Then we listened to the show and I asked them to write down the six words from the show that they had listened to. When the students told me the words and their definitions, I wrote them on the board. Then I presented the grammatical structure, relative clauses, by asking them some questions to help them to discover and to articulate the form of the structure. Then, we did some mechanical and meaningful exercises and we practiced paraphrasing some sentences by using indefinite pronouns with relative clauses. Next, we read a text about new words in English. We did some vocabulary and pronunciation exercises after reading the text.

The Communicative Activity:

The following presents the stages that we went through with the students:

-Firstly, I asked the students whether they wanted to be a contestant in a quiz show and almost all of them said yes, so when I told them that they would play a word game, they all seemed very eager.

-Next, I asked the students to work in pairs. I reminded them to listen to their partners very carefully as both of the students would be the contestants.

-Then I gave their word cards and explained what they were supposed to do:

They were in a quiz show. One would be the contestant who would explain a word by using relative clauses and the other would be another contestant who would try to find out what the word was and would ask some questions to find it. When the first contestant finished the words, they changed the roles and did the same again.

-I gave them some example sentences and wanted to be sure whether everything was clear. I gave 10 minutes for each pair; I told them to use relative clauses and indefinite pronouns while explaining the words. I also reminded them not to use Turkish.

-During the activity, I walked around the class to make sure that the students were doing the activity and speaking in English. When the time was over, I asked each pair how many words they were able to find. I also asked some volunteers to share their definitions with the whole class.

-At the end of the activity, I gave the students reflection sheets and asked them to fill in the sheets according to the activity we did.

3.5.3. Week 3

The Aim: The aim of the third activity was to encourage students to make comments and predictions on different situations. I wanted the students to tell their partners some situations about their lives to elicit some comments from their partners.

The Material Used: A communicative activity.

The Procedures Followed:

The Lesson:

First I started my lesson by asking the students whether were pessimist or optimist. When they gave their answers to the question, I showed them a cartoon about being pessimist or optimist. After I learned their opinions about this cartoon, I showed them a pessimist phrase book and I wrote some examples on the board such as: *You say we're having the party in the garden. A pessimist says it'll rain and you say I'm doing my driving test this afternoon. A pessimist says you won't pass.* I wrote

more situations on for *you say part*, but I did not write anything for *a pessimist say part*. When they read my examples, they started to give some examples similar to mine. Then I presented the grammatical structure *will/won't* by using their examples on the board. We elicited the rules together and we did some mechanical and meaningful exercises. We practiced some sentences with will contractions. Then we read a text about an actor who is pessimist both in his movies and his real life and we did a true-false activity about the text. After that we listened to a radio programme about positive thinking. We listened to it twice and did the fill in the blanks activity about the radio program. Then I asked the students several questions about future to learn whether they are positive thinkers or not.

The Communicative Activity:

The following presents the stages that we went through with the students:

-At the beginning of the application, I asked the students whether they always listened to their friends' problems and how they made comments.

-Next, I asked the students to work in pairs.

-Then I gave their word cards and explained to them what they were supposed to do.

They were close friends and they were chatting. One was a pessimist and he/she would talk about some negative things and the other was an optimist and he/she would talk about some positive things. They would make some predictions about the things their friends talk about using will/won't.

-I gave them some example sentences and wanted to be sure whether everything was clear. I gave 10 minutes for each pair and I told them to use will or won't while making predictions. I also reminded them not to use Turkish.

-During the activity, I walked around the class to make sure that the students were doing the activity and speaking in English. When the time was over, I asked each pair what the comments were.

-At the end of the activity, I gave the students the reflection sheets and asked them to fill in the sheets considering the activity we did.

3.5.4. Week 4

The Aim: The aim of the fourth activity was to help my students to practice giving advice. I wanted the students to tell their problems to each other so as to give and receive advice.

The Material Used: A communicative activity.

The Procedures Followed:

The Lesson:

First I asked the students several questions such as: “If you have a problem that you need to talk about, do you talk to a friend or to a family member? Why? Do you think that men find it more difficult than women to talk about their problems? Why?” After they answered my questions, I asked them to read three problems from a weekly article in a British newspaper. Then, they were guided to read several advices to each of those problems. Next, they matched the problems with appropriate advices. After that, I moved on to the presentation stage of the grammatical structure “should / shouldn’t” using the examples from the text that they had read. I guided the students to discover the grammatical rule and we did some mechanical and meaningful exercises. Finally, we listened to an extract on someone phoning a radio program. In the program, a man talked about a problem and an expert gave him advice. We talked about the problem and I asked them what advice they would give if they were the experts and we repeated the same procedure for one more caller.

The Communicative Activity:

The following presents the stages that we went through with the students:

-At the beginning, I asked the students whether they had any problems or wanted to change anything in their lives.

-Next, I asked the students to work in pairs.

-Then I gave their word cards and explained to them what they were supposed to do.

The pairs were close friends. One had a lot of problems and felt depressed as he/she could not solve them on his/her own. The other was getting bored of the things he/she did every day and wanted to do some changes in his/her life. Then they decided to meet and try to solve their friends' problems by using should / shouldn't.

-I gave them some example sentences to make sure whether everything was clear. I gave 10 minutes for each pair. I told them to use should or shouldn't while giving advices. I also reminded them not to use Turkish.

-During the activity, I monitored the students to make sure that the students were doing the activity and speaking in English. When the time was over, I asked each pair to share with their classmates the problems they had and the advices they received from their partners.

-At the end of the activity, I gave the students the reflection sheets and asked them to fill in the sheets considering the activity we did in the session.

3.5.5. Week 5

The Aim: The first aim of the fifth week was to encourage the students to practice asking and giving directions.

The Materials Used: An interview and a communicative activity.

The Procedures Followed:

The Lesson:

I started the lesson by showing some pictures of different kinds of sports and then I asked the students to name the sports presented in each picture. After practising the pronunciations of several kinds of sports, we made a mini quiz named sport – you love it or hate it. I asked the students some questions about sports to learn whether they liked sports or not. Then we did a vocabulary activity to learn some terms about sports as a pre-listening activity. Next we listened to 4 sports commentaries. In the first listening, the students tried to match them with four sports.

In the second listening, the students filled in the blanks in four sentences with prepositions of movements that they heard. After that I presented the grammar structure “prepositions of movement” with the examples in the listening activity and we did some mechanical and meaningful exercises. Finally, we read a text named Bad Losers, answered the comprehension questions and filled in the blanks in the text with prepositions of movement.

The Communicative Activity:

The following presents the stages that we went through with the students:

-At the beginning, I asked the students whether they were good at giving directions.

-Next, I asked the students to work in pairs.

-Then I gave their map cards and explained to them what they were supposed to do in the activity.

Both of the students had two maps. One of the maps had the routes and the other did not have the routes. Student A would describe the map which had routes to student B and he/she would draw the routes. And then they would take turns and student A would draw the routes. The student who would describe the routes had to use prepositions of movement and the other would ask questions if he/she could not understand. After drawing the routes, they would compare the maps they had and see whether they made any mistake or not.

-I gave 10 minutes for each pair. I told them to use prepositions of movement and imperatives while giving directions. I also reminded them not to use Turkish.

-During the activity, I walked around the class to make sure that the students were doing the activity and speaking in English. When the time was over, I asked each pair whether they could draw the maps. At the end of the activity, we compared the maps.

-At the end of the activity, I gave the students the reflection sheets and asked them to fill in the sheets considering the activity we did.

-When the lesson was over, I conducted an interview with randomly selected students to learn their opinions about communicative activities that they had completed.

3.6. Data Analysis

Descriptive accounts of each student's reactions to the use of communicative activities were presented in the form of descriptive accounts.

CHAPTER IV

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Introduction

The aim of this study was to learn how I could increase my students' level of participation through the use of communicative activities in my English lessons. In order to achieve this aim, I designed a program within which I tried to involve my reserved preparatory school students use English through communicative activities. During the study, I kept lesson reports. In the lesson reports, I recorded what we did during the lessons and my observations on the effectiveness of the materials used. I also used student reflection sheets, which were filled in by them after the lessons. The aim of the reflection sheets was to understand my students' opinions and feelings about each communicative activity. I also conducted interviews in the first week just before the study had started and in the last week after all the communicative activities were used. The aim of the interviews was to learn the students' opinions about the communicative activities before and after the study. The following section presents the findings gathered from the reflection sheets, the lesson reports and the student interviews.

4.2. Findings from the Interviews at the Beginning of the Study

In the first week of the study, I conducted an interview with 5 students and I asked them the following questions:

- Do you like / dislike communicative activities? Why?
- What do you think are the benefits of communicative activities?
- How do you feel during the communicative activities? Why?
- Would you like to participate in communicative activities in every English class you have? Why?

For the first question, the majority of the students said, "I like communicative activities." Only one student (Student 5) stated that she did not like communicative activities because she was afraid of people's opinions and the teacher's reaction to

what he said. Students 1 and 2 pointed out that they liked the communicative activities, but they stated they had difficulties in making sentences and they were afraid of making mistakes. Student 3 mentioned she liked the activities because she liked communicating in English. Student 4 reported she liked the activities because she was a foreigner and when she came to Turkey, she learned Turkish in two months by the help of communicative activities.

For the second question, Students 1 and 5 pointed out that they believed they could speak fluently when they went abroad by the help of these activities. Students 3 and 4 thought that such activities would give them courage, and they would feel more comfortable while speaking as they could be faster and more fluent. Student 2 stated that by the help of these activities, she would speak English in daily life and she would use it when she needed.

The third question aimed to learn how the students felt during the communicative activities. To this question, most of the students said that they felt shy and tense when they tried to speak English. When they were asked the reason why, all of the students said that they were afraid of making mistakes. Student 1 also added that he would feel nervous because of the presence of their friends and the teacher in class. Student 4 was afraid that her friend would laugh at her if she made a mistake and Student 5 would feel tense as she believed that she had limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge, which would create problems while communicating.

The common answer to the last questions was I would like to participate in communicative activities in every English class you have. All of the students believed that such kind of activities would be useful for them and they would improve their English with these activities. Almost all of the students liked the communicative activities for several reasons, and they believed that these activities would help them a lot to communicate with other people. However, all of them stated that they felt tense or shy during these activities because they were afraid of making mistakes when they were with other people. As they all thought that these activities

were useful, they wanted to participate in these activities in all English lessons with the aim of improving their English.

4.3. Findings from Week One

4.3.1. Findings from Lesson Reports

While covering the new unit, doing some reading and listening practice and doing some exercises about past continuous tense, I noticed that most of the students were silent, passive and reluctant during the lesson. Also a few of them were daydreaming. Then I asked the students whether they liked detective stories. Most of them said no, but when I asked them whether they wanted to be a detective, they all seemed very excited and they said yes. When I asked the reason, I understood that they believed they would have had a more exciting and adventurous life if they had been detectives. When I asked them whether they wanted to be a detective or a robber for a few minutes, they were all eager. I was also excited when I saw their enthusiasm. First, I asked the students to work in pairs and explained them what they were supposed to do during the activity. Few of them asked some questions about what to do in Turkish instead I paraphrased the instructions in English.

After that we started the activity. I monitored them when they were completing the task and provided help when they needed. Meanwhile, I noticed that several students were doing nothing. Then I guided them by asking questions like a detective and answering like a suspect and wanted them to do the same. I also warned some students using Turkish. When I saw few of them using simple present tense, I reminded them that the robbery was two days ago and I also made example sentences in past continuous tense, so they also started using past continuous tense. After ten minutes, I told them that they had five minutes to complete the interrogation but some of them asked for extra time.

When the activity finished, some of the students complained about the time limit. I asked them whether they found the robber and what kind of questions they asked and answers they gave. During the activity, I observed that the students were active and they all participated in the activity although some of them did not

participate in the first part of the lesson. After I got the oral feedback about the activity, I gave them the reflection sheets to be filled in.

4.3.2. Findings from Reflection Sheets

Student 1 felt that she would succeed in learning English after she had realized that she could communicate in English. She also pointed out that she wanted to participate in the activity again as she believed that it was a useful activity for her. She liked asking questions, as she believed that she realized she was good at interrogation. One thing she did not like about the activity was the time limit.

Student 2 believed that the activities used in week 1 helped her to communicate in English. She stated communicative activities were like chatting, but she was bored of using the same tense. In addition, Student 2 felt that by practicing more she could be more fluent.

For Student 3, the activity was enjoyable, however; she was not as fluent as she expected. She believed that she learnt past continuous tense better by asking questions in past continuous tense, she also wanted to improve her speaking skill with the help of communicative activities.

Student 4 noticed that she had some difficulties in speaking during the activity. Despite the difficulties, she believed that she practiced past continuous tense by asking questions. She also stated she enjoyed the activity.

Similar to Student 1, 2 and 3, Student 5 mentioned that by participating in this activity, she managed to communicate with her friends and that she learnt some new words. However, she stated that it could have been better if she had more time during the activity.

Although she felt tense, Student 6 enjoyed the activity and she wanted to participate it again as the activity made her feel that she was getting better as she managed to make sentences in English.

Student 7 noticed the aim of the activity as she mentioned that she spoke during the activity and she wanted to speak more. She also had fun and learned some new vocabulary.

Student 8 had fun while communicating with her friend. She liked the activity a lot as it was fun. She also learned some new vocabulary and how to make sentences. Moreover, she believed that this type of activities would help her improve her speaking skill.

Even though she could make sentences while talking to her partner, Student 9 also noticed that she had some difficulties in asking questions. She also wanted to participate in the activity again as she wanted to improve her English and be more fluent.

Student 10 stated that she felt shy while speaking, but the activity encouraged her to speak. She also believed that besides being fun, the activity was a good one as she had the chance to practice past tense.

Student 11 believed that the activity helped him communicate and this led him to feel happy. He also had fun because he was able to ask questions with past continuous tense and he also wanted to participate in the activity again.

The activity made Student 12 feel that he was successful while speaking English. That's why he stated he would participate in the activities as such again to ask and answer some questions in past continuous tense.

4.4 Findings from Week Two

4.4.1. Findings from Lesson Reports

At the beginning of the lesson, all the students seemed active. They especially seemed to enjoy the warm up activity about making words. They also listened to a TV game show and told me the words and the definition that they had heard. Until the grammar part, most of the students actively participated in the activity. However, when I started presenting the new topic, which was relatively difficult than the previous grammar topics, they became more passive. While doing some exercises

with relative clauses, only a few students answered the questions. When it was time to read the text about words in English, most of the students looked reluctant, as they generally did not like reading activity.

After we completed the reading part, I asked the student whether they ever wanted to be contestant in a quiz show. When I told them that they would all be contestants during an activity, they looked so excited and happy. Then I explained what they were supposed to do and gave them the word cards and also reminded them about the time limit, as it was a quiz show. As I knew that relative clauses was one of the structures that the students had difficulties with, I gave them several examples similar to the ones they were going to do during the activity.

As soon as they started, I noticed making sentences with relative clauses was a bit hard for them, but still none of them complained. They all seemed very active, excited and having fun. I helped to the ones who spent I lot of time making sentences.

Towards the end of the activity, when I warned them about time some of them asked for extra time. In contrast, some of them asked for extra words to explain, which surprised me. After I got the oral feedback about the activity, I understood that all of the students enjoyed the activity much. Then I gave the reflection sheets to be filled in and we finished the lesson.

4.4.2. Findings from Reflection Sheets

Student 1 mentioned that even if the time was not enough, she did enough exercises with relative clauses by using relative pronouns, asking questions and making sentences. She also stated that she enjoyed the activity.

Student 2 felt that she was like in a real quiz show during the activity. The time was not enough, but she still learnt some new words and liked the activity because she did not get bored.

Student 3 stated that the activity was useful for her because she learned some new vocabulary during the activity and she felt happy. She communicated with her partner and she would do more if she had enough time.

Student 4 enjoyed guessing and explaining new words and she wanted to continue the activity because she stated that there were only a few words. She wanted to participate in the activity again as she had fun during the activity.

Student 5 also wished there had been more words to guess. She was excited during the activity and she enjoyed explaining the words to her partner using those words to express herself.

For Student 6, the activity was useful because she saw that she was able to make dialogues, which made her very happy. She also stated that this activity would help her to be better at English.

Student 7 noticed that she could have fun while learning new things with the help of this activity even though the time was limited during the activity.

Although Student 8 had some difficulties in explaining the words, she still enjoyed the activity, especially guessing. She also stated that she learned some new vocabulary by the help of this activity.

Student9 mentioned that she felt like a tourist guide during the activity as she explained some words to her partner. She enjoyed the activity and she learned new words and she also complained about the amount of the words in the activity as she thought that there should have been more words.

During the activity, Student 10 was a bit shy because of the difficulties she had. She also stated that she learned new words and made sentences by using relative pronouns during the activity.

Student 11 complained about the unknown words in the activity, but he managed to explain them. Besides, he pointed out that he wanted to participate in the activity again as it made him speak in the target language.

Although Student 12 complained about the unknown vocabulary items in the activity, he learned them by asking questions. He had some difficulties, but he wanted to participate in the activity again.

4.5 Findings from Week Three

4.5.1. Findings from Lesson Reports

I started the lesson by showing the students a cartoon and asking what a pessimist and optimist meant. They all answered my questions and tried to tell me the meanings of the words, as they were familiar with them in Turkish as well. Then I wrote some situations on the board. For example, some pessimistic comments and then they automatically made more comments using the grammar item that I used in my sentences. When I noticed that the students were making sentences by using will, I decided to present the structure in detail. While doing some mechanical and meaningful exercises, the students were not as eager as they were at the beginning of the lesson. After the grammar exercises, we read a text about a famous actor who was a pessimist. Some of the students who knew the actor participated in the lesson more. Then we did a listening activity and I observed that only a few students participated actively.

Before we started the communicative activity, I asked the students whether they listened to their friends' problems and commented on them. Then, I explained what they were supposed to do during the activity. I warned them about their roles of being an optimist or pessimist and gave explanations accordingly.

During the activity, I noticed that none of the students used Turkish and they were making comments as if they were real pessimists or optimists. I observed that they had great fun when they heard their friends' comments. I helped only 2 students to make predictions.

At the end of the activity, they all seemed very happy and they told me the comments that their partners made before I asked them to do so. This showed me that they really enjoyed using English during the activity. Before the end of the lesson, I gave the students the reflection sheets.

4.5.2. Findings from Reflection Sheets

Student 1 stated that the activity helped her to make complex sentences and she enjoyed making them. She also believed that by participating in this activity, she had the opportunity to improve her English.

During the activity, Student 2 learned two different points of views and making comments accordingly. She enjoyed it and wanted to participate in such activities again because she believes she could take the advantage of learning different opinions.

Student 3 stated she enjoyed the activity and learned some new vocabulary. She felt optimistic as she had a role of an optimist in the activity. She also complained about her partner's being too pessimistic.

Student 4 mentioned that she was not satisfied with her level. She also stated that she enjoyed learning some new vocabulary and she wanted to participate in the activity again as it was fun.

Student 5 pointed out that she was glad to be able to communicate with her partner and she noticed that she could also speak easily. She stated that the activity should have been longer and she wanted to learn different opinions.

Student 6 enjoyed making a dialogue with her partner, but she was tense during the activity. She could still make complex sentences and she had fun.

Student 7 also stated that she liked having the role of an optimist like some other students. She learned some new vocabulary and she was happy during the activity. She liked the activity because she had fun.

Student 8 mentioned that while making sentences and dialogues, she enjoyed a lot. Even though she did not like pronouncing new words during the activity, she believed that the activity was a good one.

Student 9 indicated that she felt like an optimist like some other students stated during the activity. She learned making more complex sentences while communicating with her partner and she had fun.

Student 10 was both happy and shy during the activity. She stated that she did not like pronouncing the new words, but she also mentioned that she learnt how to make sentences and she enjoyed it.

Contrary to Student 10, Student 11 learned the pronunciation of some words even though he felt shy. To overcome his shyness, he wanted to participate in the activity again because he believed that he could have self-confidence in speaking by the help of this activity.

Student 12 stated that he learnt new words and enjoyed while talking to his partner. He also had fun during the activity.

4.6 Findings from Week Four

4.6.1. Findings from Lesson Reports

At the beginning of the lesson, we talked about the times when we had problems. I asked the students several questions like: *If you have a problem that you need to talk about, do you talk to a friend or to a family member? Why? Do you think that men find it more difficult than women to talk about their problems? Why.* After that, we read some problems and some solutions and then we tried to match them. Next, I presented the new grammar structure and we did some exercises. The students were too passive during the rest of the activity. We did a listening activity. Although the audio was different, some of the students were not interested.

Then I asked the students whether they knew Aunt Agony. As I could not get any answers, I reminded them of Güzin Abla. When they heard about something that they were already familiar with, they paid more attention to what I would say. I asked them what Güzin Abla did. Then I asked them to give some advice to their friends and I also explained what they were supposed to do during the activity.

When they started the activity, I observed that they were making dialogues fluently with some minor mistakes. They were more comfortable this week compared to the previous one. When I listened to them carefully, I noticed that they were trying to find solutions to their partners' problems instead of giving some suggestions. The only problem with the activity was that the time was not enough for the students, but as the lesson would finish soon, I could not give them extra time. I also noticed that some of them were sad, as they could not tell their complaints about the activity. Before I gave them the reflection sheets, I asked them about their problems and the possible solutions to those problems.

4.6.2. Findings from Reflection Sheets

Student 1 stated that the activity helped her to use should while communicating. She was happy during the activity as she managed to make sentences with should, however; she complained about the time limit. She also mentioned that as she practiced enough, she did not want to participate in this activity again.

Student 2 was happy to find solutions to her partner's problems. What she learnt during the activity was making suggestions. She wanted to give and get more suggestions by participating in this activity again and she also complained about the time limit.

Student 3 believed that this activity would help her to improve her English. She enjoyed making a dialogue with excitement and learnt some new words, but the time was not enough in the activity.

Student 4 was happy to learn new vocabulary during the activity. She stated that she learnt suggesting and she was also curious, as her partner would give her suggestion. She also wanted to participate in the activity again as she liked it.

Student 5 had confidence while communicating as she spoke freely. Even if she complained about the time limit, she liked to give suggestions to her partner and she would like to practice more by participating in the activity again.

Student 6 had great fun during the activity even if she felt a bit tense. She mentioned that she learnt making sentences by the help of this activity.

For Student 7, making sentences and making a dialogue with a partner were the best parts of the activity. She had fun while learning some new vocabulary, however; she also complained about the time limit.

Student 8 felt that she was successful during the activity, so she did not want to participate in this activity again. She enjoyed making a dialogue with her partner and she also learnt asking questions and making suggestions.

Student 9 enjoyed making a dialogue with her partner. She stated that she learnt how to make suggestions and she was successful while doing it. She believed that the activity was useful that's why she would like to participate again.

Student 10 was confident while asking her partner questions during the activity. She learnt the pronunciations of some new words. In addition, she believed that the activity was fun and educational.

Student 11 stated that he learnt some new vocabulary by the help of this activity. Even if the time was not enough, he enjoyed finding solutions to the problems. He felt active and happy during the activity.

Like most of the other students, student 12 complained about the time limit. He enjoyed communicating in English, so he felt successful. He learnt making suggestions and he wanted to do it more.

4.7 Findings from Week Five

4.7.1. Findings from Lesson Reports

When we started the activity, I showed the students some pictures of different kinds of sports and asked which sports they were as a warm up activity. After a vocabulary exercise, we did a listening activity about sports. Next, I presented the grammar structures with the examples in the listening activity. Until this part, the

students participated well, but when we did some mechanical and meaningful exercises and read a text, they seemed reluctant.

Before we started the activity, I asked the students whether they were good at giving directions. They answered my question, but could not guess what kind of an activity we would do. Then I explained what they were supposed to do during the activity. When they learnt that they would draw, they all seemed surprised and excited as it was the first time they would draw during an activity in an English lesson.

When they started, I noticed that they really had fun while giving the directions and drawing the routes. I observed that all of them were in a hurry to finish the activity. When their partners could not make correct sentences, they were asking questions about the routes. None of them seemed reluctant during the activity. At the end of the activity, I asked each pair to compare the maps to see whether they were successful. And then I gave them the reflection sheets.

4.7.2. Findings from Reflection Sheets

Student 1 enjoyed practicing prepositions of movement and she wanted to practice more. She was happy to learn making sentences during the activity.

For Student 2, giving directions was the best part of the activity. She complained about the limited time, but she still learnt how to give directions and she wanted to participate in the activity again as she had fun.

Student 3 was happy to learn how to give directions, and she would like to practice more. The problem about the activity was its being short, but she enjoyed practicing prepositions of movement.

Like most of the students, Student 4 also stated that the activity was fun and she was happy. She learnt and liked giving directions, but she complained about the time limit.

Student 5 stated that she had no difficulty while communicating. That's why she felt very comfortable. However, she stated that the time was limited. She learnt

how to give directions and she would like to participate in the activity again as she wanted to practice more.

As Student 6 believed that this activity helped her to improve her English, she would like to participate in this activity again. She learnt how to give directions and she was excited during the activity.

Contrary to the other students, Student 7 complained about the size of the map that they used during the activity. She enjoyed giving directions, learnt new vocabulary and felt successful during the activity.

Student 8 mentioned that she managed to understand giving directions even though it was a bit difficult for her. She also stated that she wanted to participate in the activity again as it was fun.

Student 9 learnt and enjoyed giving directions. How she felt during the activity was totally different from the other students. She felt that she was like a lost person who was looking for the way. She also wanted to participate in the activity again as she had fun.

Student 10 stated that she was excited, but also had some difficulties during the activity. She enjoyed giving directions, but she wanted to participate in the activity again to feel more confident.

Like most of the students, Student 11 also learnt and enjoyed giving directions. He was excited during the activity and he wanted to participate again for more practice.

Student 12 complained about the size of the map like Student 7. He enjoyed practicing the prepositions of movement and he learnt giving directions by the help of this activity. He also stated that he felt successful while communicating during the activity.

4.8. Findings from the Interviews at the End of the Study

In the last week of the study, I conducted an interview with 5 students and I asked them the following questions:

- Do you like / dislike communicative activities? Why?
- What do you think are the benefits of communicative activities?
- How do you feel during the communicative activities? Why?
- Would you like to participate in communicative activities in every English class you have? Why?

For the first questions, all of the students gave the same answer: *I like them*. Student 1, 4 and 5 pointed out that they believed these activities helped them improve their English. Student 2 stated that he felt he was abroad and chatting with people abroad during the communicative activities. Student 3 mentioned she already liked communicating and when it was in English, she enjoyed a lot.

The third question aimed to learn the benefits of communicative activities and the students gave different answers to this question. Student 1 reported she could speak with foreign people by the help of these activities. Similarly, Student 2 and 5 believed that these activities help them learn English easier and be more fluent. Student 3 compared her level of English with past and she mentioned even though she learned grammar structures and some vocabulary, she was not able to speak, but now she could speak. Student 4 stated she could express herself while speaking and she also added that she had to learn English as it was an international language and these activities would help her a lot.

For the third questions, three of the students, Student 3, 4 and 5 pointed out that they felt comfortable. When they compared, they were very nervous during the first activities they did. Student 1 stated she felt like a foreigner and Student 2 and 3 also reported that they felt very happy during these activities and as a result they were comfortable.

The common answer to the last questions was *I would like to participate in communicative activities in every English class*. All of the students believed that these activities would help them improve their English and they also stated that they would have more chance to practice. Different from the other students, Student 1 believed that English was a common language for them in these activities and they liked using it.

CHAPTER V

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

This chapter first presents the summary of the study. Then, the conclusions and the recommendations for further study are discussed.

5.2. Summary of the Study

This study attempted to learn how to increase the students' level of participation by using communicative activities. Different communicative activities were used to achieve this aim. The participants of the study were 12 pre-intermediate level students studying at the Preparation Classes of Hasan Kalyoncu University, Turkey. Convenience sampling strategy was used while selecting the participants.

The following research question was investigated:

1. How can I increase my students' level of participation through the use of communicative activities?

A case study was designed to investigate the effects of communicative activities in the students' level of participation. Qualitative research methods were used to collect and analyze the data.

Student interviews, student reflection sheets and lesson reports were the instruments, which were used to collect data. Student interviews were conducted in the first and the last weeks of the study. The aim of the student interview conducted at the beginning of the study was to learn the students' opinions about the communicative activities before the study had started. The aim of the student interview conducted at the end of the study was to learn whether the students' opinions about the use of the communicative activities changed or not. Five students were interviewed in both of the interviews and 4 questions were asked to these students. Student reflections were used each week just after the communicative activities were employed in the lesson. Students were asked to complete 5 sentences in the reflection sheets and the aim was to learn how the activities worked in

students' point of view. Lesson reports were also used after each lesson during which a communicative activity was employed. The aim of the lesson reports written by the researcher was to explain the lesson briefly, describe the details of the communicative activities and reflect on the strengths and the weaknesses of them. The data, which were collected from the student reflection sheets, student interviews and lesson reports were analyzed using content analysis.

5.3. Conclusions of the Study

This study attempted to increase students' participation through the use of communicative activities (see Section 3.6.). In other words, a case study was designed to investigate the contribution of the communicative activities on the students' participation level in English lessons.

In this respect, this study suggests that the use of communicative activities encourage the students to participate in lessons and speak even if they make mistakes while communicating. This conclusion is in line with the argument put forward by Savignon (1991). For her "drawing on current understanding of language use as social behaviour, purposeful, and always in context, proponents of communicative language teaching offer a view of the language learner as a partner in learning; they encourage learner participation in communicative events and self-assessment of progress" (p.273). In addition, Dörnyei (2009) points out "CLT methodology was centred around the learner's participatory experience in meaningful L2 interaction in (often simulated) communicative situations, which underscored the significance of less structured and more creative language tasks" (p.34). As stated above, communicative activities increase student participation.

By taking this study into consideration it might be concluded that learners make dialogues naturally by the help of communicative activities. Learning a large number of sentence patterns and words is not possible if you do not know how to put them into communicative use (Widdowson, 1978).

Savignon (1991) states "communication cannot take place in the absence of structure, or grammar, a set of shared assumptions about how language works, along

with a willingness of participants to cooperate in the negotiation of meaning (p.268). In this study, the learners pointed out they had the opportunity to practice the newly presented grammatical structures by the help of communicative activities. Savignon (2002) also points out “materials designed to promote communicative competence can be used as aids to memorization, repetition, and translation, or for grammar exercises” (p.22).

According to the findings of the study, even though the learners felt nervous and tense at the beginning of the interaction process, they felt free and more relaxed when they realized that they were able to communicate in English. For this reason, it might be appropriate to argue that they discovered a new freedom of self-expression in another language (Savignon, 2002). Richards (2006) also states “students had to become comfortable with listening to their peers in group work or pair work tasks, rather than relying on the teacher for a model” (p.5).

Harmer (2001) believes “activities in CLT typically involve students in real or realistic communication where the accuracy of the language they use is less important than successful achievement of the communicative task they are performing” (p.85). This research also shows that learners felt that they were successful in communication despite their mistakes. Similarly, Littlewood (1981) points out “The learners’ ultimate objective is to take part in communication with others and their motivation to learn is more likely to be sustained if they can see how their classroom learning is related to this objective and helps them to achieve it with increasing success” (p.17). Kavanagh (2012) also believes that purposeful communicative activities and principles were introduced to teachers by the help of CLT.

5.4. Recommendations for Further Study

The results of this research showed that using communicative activities had a crucial impact on increasing students’ participation level, which was observed by means of the data collected through student reflection sheets, student interviews and lesson reports analysed through content analysis.

This study was conducted in a time of one semester that took five weeks. The time was not long enough to look into the long-term effects of communicative activities. For further research, time can be lengthened for at least two semesters.

Another suggestion is about the number of the participants and their language proficiency levels. The study could have been done with a large number of participants, as the findings could have been more reliable. Also, further studies can include students with different levels, as the level of the students could be a variable in a study.

This study was carried out at Hasan Kalyoncu University and there was only Preparation Class, further studies can be carried out in some other preparation classes at other universities.

This study was a qualitative study, which obtained the results by student reflection sheets, student interviews and lesson reports. Further studies can also include a questionnaire in which there might be more questions about communicative activities and more detailed quantitative results.

In this study, student reflection sheets and student interviews were conducted to learn the students' feelings and the lesson reports kept by the researcher to reflect on the lesson and activities. However, the opinions or feelings of all the teachers teaching the same students were not included in the study. Farrell and Jacobs (2010) also state "the CLT paradigm shift has not been implemented as widely or as successfully as it might have been because English language educators and other stakeholders have tried to understand and implement the shift in a piecemeal rather than a holistic manner" (p.7). Similarly, Coskun (2007) believes that teachers may have some misunderstanding about CLT. Therefore, further studies can be done to learn the teachers' opinions and feelings about the communicative activities. Also the effectiveness of communicative syllabi can be searched in further studies.

5.5. Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to the data collected from 12 students studying at English preparatory school of Hasan Kalyoncu University. Therefore, it can be said that the study is limited to a small number of students, which makes it hard to generalize the findings in different groups of students in other educational settings.

Also, students' level of the motivation to learn English showed differences even though all the students were pre-intermediate level. This could be resulted from the fact that the students were from different departments and the language of instruction was also different in these departments. That is, while in some of the departments the language of instruction is English, in some others it is Turkish. That's why some of the students were more motivated to learn English as compared to the others and this might have affected their participation level as well.

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7. APPENDICES

7.1. APPENDIX 1: Reflection Sheet

Name of the Student:

Date:

- What I liked most about this activity is _____

- What I liked least about this activity is _____

- What I learnt by participating in this activity is _____

- During the activity I felt _____

- I would like / wouldn't like to participate in this activity again because _____

7.2. APPENDIX 2: Week 1 Activity

Student A

The Interrogation

Detective

You are the lead detective for the Las Vegas Police Department. You need to interrogate a suspect that has “won” \$ 1,000,000 from the Caesar’s Palace Hotel and Casino. You believe that he stole the money with the help of a hotel employee. Find out how!

Be sure to ask him/her questions about the **timeline of his/her day**, starting from the moment he/she got up, until you arrested him/her.

For example: What were you doing at 7:30 am yesterday morning? What was your friend doing while you were playing cards?

Remember to use the interrogatives **who, what, where, when, and why?**

Student B

The Interrogation

Suspect

You have just been arrested in Las Vegas. You are accused of stealing \$ 1,000,000 from Caesar’s Palace Hotel and Casino. The detective on the case does not believe that you and your friend won the money.

You need to convince him that you did win the money. What were the events leading up to your win and eventual arrest?

Be sure to use a lot of detail, you do not want to go to prison!

7.3. APPENDIX 3: Week 2 Activity

Student A

WORD QUIZ SHOW

A thief.....
A musician.....
An airplane.....
An atheist.....
A post office.....
A dictionary.....
A teacher.....
A school.....
A patient.....
A customer.....

Student B

WORD QUIZ SHOW

A butcher.....
An architect.....
A coffee maker.....
A pessimist.....
A library.....
A computer.....
A dentist.....
A hospital.....
A waiter.....
A liar.....

7.4. APPENDIX 4: Week 3 Activity (adapted from English File, 2012)

STUDENT - A

You are a pessimist and you are chatting with one of your friends, who is optimist:

You say something bad about your wallet/purse Your friend says.....
You say something bad about going to the dentist's Your friend says.....
You say something bad about your boyfriend Your friend says.....
You say something bad about your driving test Your friend says.....
You say something bad about your feelings Your friend says.....
You say something bad about your final exams Your friend says.....

STUDENT - B

You are an optimist and you are chatting with one of your friends, who is pessimist:

You say something good about getting married Your friend says.....
You say something good about running a marathon Your friend says.....
You say something good about living abroad Your friend says.....
You say something good about starting yoga Your friend says.....
You say something good about starting a new book Your friend says.....
You say something good about going to a party Your friend says.....

7.5. APPENDIX 5: Week 4 Activity

STUDENT – A

Nowadays you have a lot of problems. You feel depressed as you cannot solve them on your own.

Then you decide to meet one of your best friends because you know that he/she is a smart person and can help you find solutions.

Your problems are about

gaining weight,

having an argument with your partner,

not being able to sleep,

forgetting a friend's birthday,

driving test and

noisy neighbours.

Now tell him/her your problems and ask for some advices.

STUDENT - B

Nowadays you are getting bored of the thing you do every day and you want to do some changes in your life. You have found some new things, but still you are indecisive.

Then you decide to meet one of your best friends because you know that he/she is a smart person and can help you make decision.

The new thing that you are thinking about are

cooking,

going on holiday,

learning another language,

having a pet,

buying a new laptop or mobile and

moving to a new apartment.

Now tell him/her about your choices and ask for some advice.

