

The Effect of Lesson Study on Iranian EFL Teachers' Perception of Teaching Speaking

Shahram Alipour

Education office, Ahar, Iran

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Abstract

The Lesson Study project has gained popularity among teacher training centers and education offices. In the recent years, a new improvement movement has been started to focus on Lesson Study, so a base of secretariat has been founded and it was tried to expand this project in the country (Iran) and share the findings. Following this project, it was tried to study the lesson study's effect on teachers' perception of teaching speaking based on CLT. The present study was a quasi-experimental study with pretest and posttest design. To gather information about teachers' perception of CLT and teaching speaking based on CLT, a questionnaire was designed by the researcher, and a pilot study was done to check its reliability. During lesson study project, the sample did lesson planning for *Prospect* book (English Book from Education Publication of Iran), presented their teaching in the workshops context, presented their teaching in the classroom context (at Allameh Helli school, Ahar), and observed the teaching team's teaching. Then in a workshop, the observer and presenter teams reviewed the observation process and all of the teachers gave their technical and comments about the observation. Later, teaching phase was done in order to see the effectiveness of the suggestions. At the final workshop, teachers presented and documented their findings and conclusion about how to teach speaking based on CLT. Before and after this project, the participants' teachers' perception of teaching speaking were gathered and compared to each by running paired samples t-test. The results of this test lead to the finding that lesson study has positive effect on Iranian EFL teachers' perception of teaching speaking based on CLT. The findings from this project can be very practical and useful for teachers and any whom involved in teacher training.

Keywords: *CLT, Lesson Study, Teaching Speaking*

Introduction

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) has been developed and combined with the theories of learning in order to ease the procedure of teaching and learning English in EFL context. An EFL teacher of the time needs to keep up with the latest research findings, theories, reports etc.

This is because of the reason that sticking to traditional teaching methods could not meet the ends of professional teaching era.

Learning is the ultimate goal of any educational program; however, approaching this aim relies on many factors such as education system, teachers, socio-economic factors, policy, etc. Perhaps the most important part of education is the teacher whose selection and training should be in line with educational goals. Teacher training centers as a part of developing required human power for education office are serving such a task.

Attending at teacher training centers provides the basics for teaching, yet teaching is longitude activity and the problems appear as the teachers attend in class and do teaching in practice. Evaluating the teachers' qualification and competence for teaching the related matter is a crucial factor in professional teaching context. Therefore, the courses of teacher training centers may not be enough for dealing with a real classroom context (Awang, Jindal-Snape, & Barber, 2013).

However, it is obvious that after becoming an English teacher by graduating from teacher training centers, there are few opportunities for teachers to improve their own teaching unless learning from one's own experience. This phenomenon, in combination with many other factors (losing motivation, tiredness, lack of technical support, etc.), halts the teachers' professional development in their career life. Therefore, teachers continue their teaching techniques, and they become conservative about their teaching method (Davari & Aghagolzadeh, 2015). Being unaware of newly adapted methods and emerging techniques or inability to implement such methods and techniques in classroom deprives learners from learning by more suitable methods. In addition, sometimes it is the lack of skill in teaching which can be a negative factor in learning (Orlich, Harder, Callahan, & Gibson; 1998). Either lack of teaching skills or applying unsuitable conventional methods causes a big problem which hinders smooth teaching and learning procedure. The long-lasting effects of such problem on specific generation and society are unavoidable and irreversible.

To deal with teacher's teaching problems during their career, there is a need for a program to improve teaching and learning during the experience. Any suggested program should include teachers' active participation in order to improve their both knowledge in their teaching material and their methods for presenting the material to their learners. In fact, competent teaching demands active participation of teachers (Awang et. al., 2013).

One approach that is considered as effective is Yoshida's "Lesson Study" project. Lesson study traces back to Japan (Fernandez, 2002) and it was a staff development program which was introduced as the Study of Teaching by Yoshida (1999). This Lesson study program involves a comprehensive process of planning, observation, analysis and identifying the best teaching approaches in a class and this program had been made in order to develop teachers' profession in Japan.

Dudley (2014) defines Lesson Study as a procedure in which teams of teachers do planning, teaching, observing, and analyzing learning and teaching collaboratively. Rather than a single shot procedure, it is a cycle of research lessons through which teachers keep the records of their experience. In fact, through this cycle, they seek for a pedagogical approach which fits the learners'

demands in their context. Adaptation and adjustments based on the observations are highly required in this procedure.

Statement of the Problem

The recent years have been very crucial in the educational perspectives in Iran since the textbooks have been changed to newly published ones. Through this publishing movement, not only English books for middle school have been changed but also the time for teaching English has been reduced too. The newly edited books are based on Communicative Learning Method (CLT), and they are very different from the previous ones which were based on Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and Audio Lingual Method (ALM). Through this big shift in English textbooks, several national seminars and workshops have been held to inform the teachers about the new perspective in teaching English at schools. However, these workshops and seminars were far from practice and classroom since the representative and head of the English groups were just familiarized with the new books (namely *Prospect*) and the related underlying theories of teaching. In addition, none of the seminars and workshops included real classes with students; therefore, no real teaching context has been provided for the representative teachers.

The traditional focus on grammar translation and pattern practice drills have been replaced by task-based practices in the new books, and teaching conversation is introduced as a new skill. The new perspective in teaching English for communication based on CLT demands skillful teachers in both speaking and teaching speaking, and this is the main issue that the author has noticed during his class observations as a supervisor of the region. Most of the teachers are less involved in teaching English conversation, so this results in less proficiency of learners in communication skills, specifically speaking (Akbari, 2015; Dolati & Seliman, 2011). Thus, two problems become evident here, lack of knowledge about how to teach conversational skills based on CLT method and unwillingness to adapt their previous teaching methods which is not appropriate for teaching conversation and speaking. As it has been observed, most of the teachers avoid teaching English for communication, and they neglect teaching conversation and related practices based on CLT method because of the mentioned two problems (Safari & Rashidi, 2015). To deal with the problem of teachers' inadequate knowledge of CLT method and more specifically CLT approach of teaching conversation and speaking, lesson study project has been selected. As Noora (2008) holds teaching speaking skills demands a well-structured teacher training program and approach. In fact, the lesson study program requires all teachers together to plan, present, share, discuss, criticize, and adjust their lesson plans in paper and in action. Therefore, this program brings theories into practice on the one hand and provides support from colleagues on the other hand. Therefore, the purpose of present study was to investigate the effects of the Lesson Study program on Iranian EFL teachers' perception of teaching speaking based on CLT. Following this purpose, it was hypothesized that "H₀: Lesson study does not have any effect on Iranian EFL teachers' perception of teaching speaking based on CLT."

Review of the Literature

Lesson Study

Lesson study refers to a Japanese program of developing teachers' profession during their teaching experience. It is a translation from Japanese word *Jugyokenkyo* which literally means study or research (Fernandez & Yshida, 2012). Fernandez and Yushida (2012) define it as "lessons that are object of ones' study". It means that through lesson study, the teachers explore their teaching-based research goals through the several steps which they have defined them earlier. These steps include: collaborative planning, observation, discussion, revising, re-teaching, and sharing reflection. Also, Dudley (2014) defines lesson study as a procedure in which teams of teachers do planning, teaching, observing, and analyzing learning and teaching collaboratively.

What a typical Lesson Study project like? What do teachers do? How does it go? To answer these questions the steps of typical Lesson study project based on Cerbin and Kopp (2011) and Fernandez and Yushida (2012) are explained as follows:

- 1) A team formation: Through which the groups of teachers collaboratively plan. Cerbin and Kopp (2011) add that group members (usually 3 or 4) should have a variety of skills, knowledge, and experience.
- 2) Goal Setting: Teachers select special material or subject in order to put a focus on its teaching method.
- 3) Lesson planning: The team collaboratively designs a lesson plan which fits the subject and the method they want to teach.
- 4) Study planning: The team clarifies the observation and data gathering methods in order to keep the records of students' learning.
- 5) Teaching and observing: While a member of a team teaches, the other members observe and collect data about teaching and learning process.
- 6) Studying and revising: members of the teams study and analyze the teaching and learning process based on the gathered data and observation in order to add comments about how to improve it.
- 7) Documenting and disseminating: Not necessarily the last step, this step refers to the sharing of findings among teams.

Although different authors may combine or separate these steps, the main scheme is the same. For example, Ono and Ferreira, (2010) summarizes these steps in three phase of planning, doing, and seeing. Steps of a typical Lesson Study project can be simply understood from Figure 1 (Figure from Cerbin & Kopp, 2001):

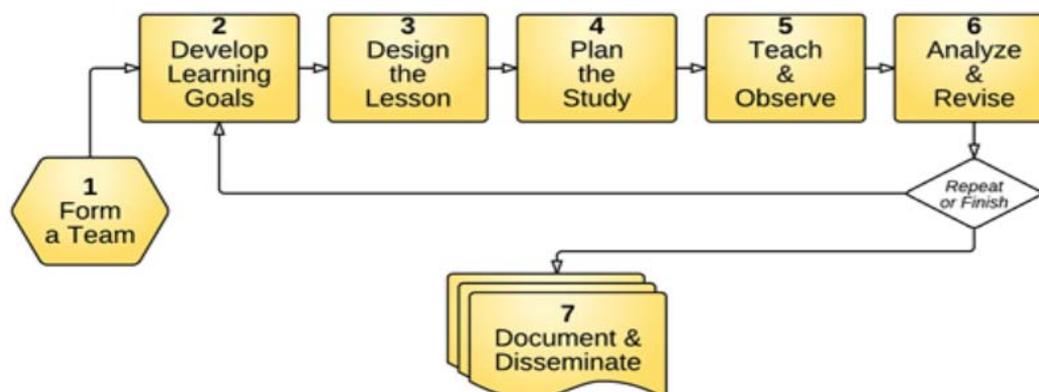


Figure 1. Steps of Lesson Study

Fulfilling the steps does not necessarily mean that the process of Lesson Study is finished as it is depicted in Figure 1. It means that through analyzing and revising the steps might be taken again in order to improve the teaching and learning and consider more factors which might be appeared through the real practice and observation in the classroom. By following these steps, lesson study blends all the features of professional learning and it improves learning and teaching (Cordingley, Bell, Rundell, Evans, & Curtis, 2004). Dudley (2014, p.3) counts the reason for this claim: this is that:

- The professional learning takes place over time
- Lesson Study happens in real classrooms with real pupils
- It involves an element of collaborative inquiry or experiment between teachers who are trying to solve a problem or improve an approach

Robinson et al. (2009) mention that taking part in collaborative inquiries into improving teaching and learning is the single most impactful action a school leader can take to improve educational outcomes for pupils (In Dudely, 2014).

Therefore lesson study provides an opportunity for both experienced and novice teachers because as Dudley maintains, “*through its processes of joint planning, joint observation and joint analysis, they have collectively to imagine learning*” (2014, p.4).

Previous studies have counted that teachers find lesson study helpful (DeLucia, 2007), it is based on monitoring the teaching and publishing the findings (Ono & Ferreira, 2010), it is cost effective (Ono & Ferreira, 2010), it is reflective and critical program (Marble, 2006), it focuses on students’ success (Marble, 2006), and it provides learning opportunity for both trainees and mentors (Cajkler, Wood, Norton, & Pedder, 2013).

However, doing lesson study is time-consuming. Fernandez and Yushida (2012) state that the original lesson study takes place in Japan, and teachers often stay at school (as a rule of the hiring) in order to write their reports, lesson plans, etc. Schools are responsible to gather the reports from lesson studies by the end of the educational year. Thus, a good data base is available at school for novice teachers to study about previous programs at the school. In fact, this is the essence of transmitting treasure of research and knowledge from past generations to the new ones in their

specific context. Fernandez & Yushida, (2012) believe that the reason for the popularity of this program comes from, incentives from the government for researching lesson study. Lesson study may be conducted for preservice teachers, governmental or locally supported school programs (Fernandez & Yushida, 2012). However, in Iran, study lesson project has been only presented as an educational program during recent years for state and in-service teachers.

This program has its own limitations. For example, Ono and Ferreira (2010) reported that running lesson study program relies on allocating appropriate time as working hours, advisors' regular visiting from lesson study program, and sharing the findings regionally and provincially. They have investigated the role of the lesson study program in South Africa, and they have reported that the teachers who were involved in lesson study have improved their lessons.

Reviewing the translated books in Persian indicates that the history of lesson study's arrival to Iran is less than a decade. However, it does not mean that it has been entered into practice during this decade, and only rare published papers can be found about lesson study in the Iranian context. For example, Heidari, M., Azizifar, A., Gowhary, H., & Abbasi, Z. (2015) have compared the male and female teachers' attitude toward lesson study, and they have reported that female teachers are more interested in such programs than male teachers. The mentioned study included participants from both schools and institutions. But the researcher did not mention distribution of gender in those two different settings. In fact, two English language learning setting of schools and institutes are quite different from each other. In fact, most of them are report papers which have been put in the online database of the education offices. The reason for this lack of literature is related to several important issues: (a) studying such programs requires an official movement which can issue the teachers to participate in this program, (b) it has just introduced rather than being observed by a team of Iranian teachers in Japan where this project traces back to, and (c) it demands teacher researchers to initiate these studies.

CLT in Iran

Grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods have been replaced by the communicative language teaching, the term which associates with task-based, process-oriented, inductive-oriented or discovery-oriented learning (Savinton, 2017). Willingness to such a communicative approach has led to reform effort in every place in order to face issues of coordination among language teachers, teacher educators, and language and curriculum developers (Savignon, 2002).

Before reviewing the concept of well-known CLT and its role in Iran, it is better to consider that language teaching not only requires a change in theory but also, in classroom practice, adapting the goals, materials, and assessment (Savinton, 2017). Savinton (2017) also holds that curriculum developers must create opportunities for pre-service and in-service teachers to practice integrating communicative experiences into their lessons.

In Iran, after many years of teaching audio-lingual based English books, national textbooks replacement has started since 2013. New series of English books called *Prospect* (1, 2, and 3) were published for middle school. Teaching the *Prospect* books has required a lot of change in teachers view point and methodology, since the goals shifted from structure-based on CLT-based course.

Teaching the former books (*Right Patch to English*) for many years, most teachers were naturally adapted their GTM based or ALM based teaching techniques. Memorizing of the new vocabularies, grammar rules, and translating the text were of the important activities in the class in order to meet the ends of syllabus and exam needs of the learners. However, CLT introduction in *Prospect* books was a new perspective demanding for a big change in not only the textbooks and syllabus but also in the teachers' vision.

Communicative language teaching as its name shows aims to teach communicative competence (Richards, 2006). He counts following features of communicative competence:

- Knowing how to use language for various functions and purposes,
- Recognizing and applying suitable language (formal or informal) according to the context,
- Recognizing and producing variety of discourse text,
- Knowing language communication strategies for compensating one's lack of knowledge in the language.

According to such features of communicative competence, the language teachers are expected to consider communicative activities for their learners. According to Richards (2006), in CLT, the teachers are expected to play the role of facilitator and monitor the learner's learning. In addition, they tolerate learners' errors and they have a different view about those errors. Learners are expected to participate in cooperative and pair activities, and they need to become more responsible for their own learning.

However moving from theory to practice, is not an easy task. Some difficulties may lie in the initial knowledge of the theory. In fact, the teachers still might be unwilling to adapt their own teaching techniques. Ellis (2012) calls it "*teacher cognition*" which refers to the teacher's tendency toward constructing their own theories of teaching, which obviously results in their performance of teaching as well. In Iran, specifically at school context, teachers have not any role in the textbook development, selection, or adaptation. In fact, as Savignon (2017) points out the deep contextualized essence of communicative language teaching (CLT) is underestimated. Savignon (2017) believes that teachers' tendency toward practice drills, completion of textbook activities, and grammar practice worksheets have been turned to specific instructional rituals which are sometimes the reflection of how teachers themselves have been taught. This strong adherence to specific method or techniques of teaching makes less effective instruction.

Fewer programs have been issued by the education offices to deal with this problem in Iran. Among these very limited ones, lesson study was also suggested just in the recent years. However, the quality of this program is not even evaluated by a supervisor team. In most cases, the responsibility of organizing and observing is on the local or provincial supervisor and head of the teacher groups.

Method

The present study was a quantitative study with pre-test and post-test design. In order to put a suggested national circular in practice, the Lesson Study project has been started in the city of Ahar (in East Azerbaijan, Iran). In so doing, the head of the middle school teachers of English has

informed all of the groups in order to take up this new project. Middle-school teachers' perception of teaching speaking based on CLT was measured prior and after the lesson study procedure to compare any possible effect of lesson study on it.

Participants

All English teachers at middle school level (N = 36) have been invited to be informed and justified about the aims of this project. This sample included 17 male and 19 female teachers. All of the teachers were over their 5th year of teaching experience. These participant teachers were in-service teachers teaching 24-hour per week. The English language course in rural, urban, and special state schools of Ahar have been being taught by these teachers.

Instruments

To gather information about participant teachers' perception of how to teach speaking based on CLT method, a questionnaire was designed by the researcher. The questionnaire included two sections of general statements (15 items) about CLT method and statement about teaching speaking based on CLT (15 items). The questionnaire items were true/false items. In order to check the reliability of the questionnaire, the questionnaire has been sent to middle-school English teacher in other regions of East Azerbaijan. By receiving 23 questionnaires through the researcher's email, analysis of a reliability test was done. The results indicated the reliability of 0.85 based on Cronbach's Alpha. Therefore, the questionnaire has been applied in the study.

Procedure

Information about teachers' perception of teaching speaking based on CLT has been gathered in two steps (i.e. before and after the lesson study program). The lesson study program was applied to teach speaking section of *Prospect 2* and *3*. In order to familiarize participants with lesson study, the workshops have been held; however, there was no obligation for all teachers to participate in the program. The steps of this project are provided in the next subsections.

Step1: Forming a team. The first workshop has been announced by the education office in Ahar to get all of the middle-school English teachers together. So doing the first workshop was held. Through this workshop, teachers were provided with some handouts and slideshows downloaded from the "National Secretariat of Lesson Study" (2017). The volunteer teachers were selected as teams. Each team included 4 teachers (see attachment file 1 for the related pictures and videos). In order to get the members involved in the aims of the program, the copies of Lesson Study checklist provided by the Lesson Study Secretariat were distributed among the teams.

Step 2: Developing learning goals. Through the first workshop, the teachers discussed the newly edited books and they share their opinion about the problems in teaching these books. Most of the teacher participants believed that there is not a general framework to how to teach in the classroom and the shift in teaching method had put them in dilemma for adapting new techniques and methods of teaching. Therefore from among the all sections of the *Prospect* (the textbook),

teachers agreed to work on *conversation and practice* section of the book since this section is very important in CLT and improves the learners speaking and communication skills.

Step 3: Designing the lesson plan. The third step was done in the same first workshop as well. The team designed a lesson plan to achieve the learning goals in teaching *conversation and practice* section of the *Prospect 2* and *3* books. The lesson plan sheets were distributed among the teams to complete the lesson plan sheet. A lesson called *Travel* from *Prospect 3* selected and the teams started to write their own lesson plans. After all teams' accomplishing the given task, the teams started to design a lesson plan which all agrees on that. This lesson plan is as follow:

1. Teaching Goals: The goal of the mentioned lesson was to teach the learners about Travel and taking tourist or native role in conversation to talk in a travel context.
2. The secondary goals: presenting present progressive tense, yes/no questions, and information questions, vocabularies about travel (e.g. talking to receptionist, booking hotel, packing for a trip, etc.).
3. Pre-teaching provisions: visiting the students and paying attention to their wellbeing and appearance, checking the required instruments such as laptops, projectors, etc.
4. Activating Background Knowledge and pre teaching assessment of the Students: The teacher asks a student about their nationality, about other countries, and about what places to see in another city or country (e.g. mosques, palace, measures, etc.). This task activates their previous knowledge of the places and nationalities and countries which they have already studied in *Prospect 2*. So doing the teacher also assesses the learners' current knowledge before teaching the new material.
5. Provision of motivation and introducing new subject: In this phase the teacher introduces the subject of the lesson. So doing the teachers ask them about what they observe in the given pictures, whether they like to go to another country or whether they like to talk to a tourist and help her/him etc.
6. Teaching: Includes plying the conversation audio track, asking general questions from the conversation, listening again and answering the questions, listening for the third time and ask each other questions about the conversation. Then the students check the pronunciation or meaning of the new words in the conversation. Then they listen to the practice audio track and they repeat the sentences. The teachers help them to make pair conversation about travel such as booking hotel, street talk, giving directions.
7. End of the teaching ad final assessment: the teacher asks the students to come to the front of the class and present their conversation to the class. The teacher checks the students' understating of the new subject and there is the likelihood of representing a subject or ask classmates to clarify the subject.
8. Post-teaching activities: teacher ask the students to role play with each other and record their conversations for next session, the students can check the subject again and ask a question from the teacher. Students can find conversation videos about travel and bring it to class for next session.

Step 4: Planning the study. The second workshop has been held in order to plan for study and present a workshop teaching in order to check the teams understanding from the lesson plan and review it before classroom teaching. First, the team decided how to observe and collect evidence of student learning and teachers' presentations. The teachers; anxiety, students' anxiety, teacher's losing face (which is a cultural issue) among the students are some of the cultural issues to be considered here. Therefore the teams decided to review what they are going to do in class. Most of the teachers were uneasy with attending of others in their classrooms; however, a team of 3 teachers accepted to be the teaching team and other teams were observers. The teams decided to record the teaching session and discuss the teaching in the next workshop. Therefore the teaching team were given time to review their lesson plans and to present their teaching in the workshop context. Two members of the same group presented different teaching and the observing teams discussed their teaching method. The teachers were told to follow the lesson plans as much as possible. This workshop teaching was very effective in practicing what to do before classroom observation. A lot of material was dissuaded from following the teachers' guide to even how to recording the observation, checking the teachers' pronunciation, and use of IT for presenting new concepts.

Step 5: Teaching and observing. The voluntary team announced their readiness for hosting the observer team in their class. The teaching team had already selected *MY City* lesson from *Prospect 2* to teach its conversation and practice section.

An observing team including 3 teachers agreed to attend in the teaching team's class and observe and record their teaching. Two Cameras were set to record the teaching process including the teacher's presentation and students' observable behavior.

One of the teaching members started to teach. The teacher himself seemed confident in teaching, however, students had some stress. Teacher warmed up the class by talking about the hometowns of the learners and he asked them "*where are you from?*" To introduce the new subject, then after evaluating the students' previous knowledge, he moved to the next step in which he provided some key words' meanings to the students by PowerPoint slideshows. The teacher introduced the new lesson and he mentioned the goals of this lesson to the learners. Students listened to the audio track for 3 times with different activities such as answering the teacher's general questions, detail questions. Then the teacher wanted to ask for any problem and the learners were asked about pronunciation and meanings. Later the audio files of *practice* section were played and the teacher proved the meanings. The students were asked to make their own conversations by talking about different cities of Iran and present their conversation in front of the classroom. The teaching process finished and the observer teams piled up their notes and records in order to discuss them in the workshop. The teaching team, school staffs, students were all helpful in this process.

Step6: Analyzing and revising. In order to give feedback to the teaching team and analyze the observation, all of the teachers in the city were invited to the third workshop. In the workshop, all of the teachers observed the video of the class observation. Not only the observation team but also all of the attendant teachers gave their comments. The summary of the comments included that:

- The teachers' role was more than learners' role in class. Therefore it's better to consider more time for the learners' pair work.
- The learners' observable anxiety might have been because of the observation team's attending and recording so it is better to repeat the observation.
- Some teachers mentioned that this method may not be effective for other students with lower level (however the teaching team supported themselves that this selection was based on the context and they considered the level of their students, and this was quite enough reason which is supported by the observation team as well).

The pros included that:

- The teacher used enough of IT to present the teaching (e.g. presenting slideshows for new vocabularies, playing the audio track, presenting pictures from different cities and places in Iran).
- Most of the class was in English.

The teaching team accepted to revise some points and to present another teaching. In the next run, the teaching team enhanced pair work and group work among the learners. The observation team reported less observable anxiety among the learners and they asserted that the learners were more relax in this observation.

Step7: Documenting and disseminating. All notes by the teams' members including notes from workshops and observations were gathered and reported through this report paper in order to share the findings with other English teachers.

Data Analysis

In order to analyze the gathered data, statistic-analyzing software namely SPSS (version 20) was applied. Cronbach's alpha method was run for testing the reliability of the questionnaire. Paired sample t-test was run to compare the means of sample's scores. The descriptive and inferential statistics are provided in the next section.

Results

Descriptive statistics related to the gathered data from pre-treatment and post-treatment questionnaire are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Sample's Descriptive Statistics of Perception Questionnaires*

| | | Mean | N | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|--------|----------------|-------|----|----------------|-----------------|
| Pair 1 | Pre-treatment | 22.25 | 36 | 7.18 | 1.19 |
| | Post-treatment | 28.00 | 36 | 5.28 | .88 |

As it is shown in the upper table, the means of the participants' scores in pre-treatment and post-treatment questionnaire were 22.25 (SD = 7.18) and 28 (SD = 5.28) respectively. Therefore the teachers' perception of CLT and teaching speaking based on CLT was increased after lesson study project.

In order to check the normality of scores distribution in pre-treatment and post-treatment questionnaire (perception of teaching speaking based on CLT), the normality tests were run (see Table 2).

Table 2. Normality Tests for Distribution of Data

| | Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a | | | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------|----|-------|--------------|----|------|
| | Statistic | df | Sig. | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| Pre-treatment | .070 | 36 | .200* | .980 | 36 | .743 |
| Post-treatment | .109 | 36 | .200* | .961 | 36 | .233 |

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

As Table 2 indicates, the results from Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk indicated values were greater than 0.05. Therefore, the data distribution was normal in pre-treatment and post-treatment perception questionnaire. Thus, the assumption of normal distribution was met.

To check the hypothesis of the study, paired samples t-test was run to compare the teachers' perception. The results of the comparison of sample's mean in pre-test and post-test is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Paired Samples Test

| | Paired Differences | | | | | t | df | Sig. |
|-----------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|---|-------|-------|----|------|
| | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | | | | |
| | | | | Lower | Upper | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Post- pre | 5.75 | 3.42 | .57 | 4.59 | 6.90 | 10.07 | 35 | .00 |

As the results of paired samples t-test indicates, there was a statistically significant difference between teachers' perception in pre-treatment ($M = 22.25$, $SD = 7.18$) and posttest ($M = 28$, $SD = 5.28$), $t(35) = 10.07$, $p = .0$ since the p value is less than .05. The results suggest that the null hypothesis of the study namely, "lesson study does not have any effect on Iranian EFL teachers' perception of teaching speaking based on CLT" is rejected. Therefore, lesson study had positive effect on Iranian EFL teachers' perception of teaching speaking based on CLT.

Discussion and Conclusion

The finding of the present study is in line with the findings of studies by Cajkler et al. (2013), DeLucia (2007), Ono and Ferreira (2010). As a best of the researcher's knowledge, in the Iranian context, there was no report of any study about the effect of lesson study on teachers' perception of teaching based on CLT. Therefore, this study is considered as the first study about this aspect of lesson study. In studies such as Haghhighifard, and Marzban's (2016) one lesson study has been studied as a dependent variable; however, the present study considered it as an independent variable.

Through the lesson study project, a general framework and method were gained for teaching speaking in conversation and practice sections of the *Prospect* book. Therefore the observation team and teaching team believed that this unanimously accepted method is general and can be adapted for other classrooms even.

The project's steps are quite simple to follow; however, some highly qualified teachers are required in order to give support and advice. Lack of time in English classes is a big complaint of the teachers, and the projects like Lesson Study needs quite a lot of time.

The finding and suggestions of the present study are useful for EFL teachers, supervisors, and head of the teacher training departments. In order to deal with teachers' strong attitude toward their own rules and methods, lesson study can do the trick only if there are official meetings and workshops. Although theoretical seminars and workshops have attempted to remind CLT method to EFL teachers in Iran, the practical and classroom techniques have been taken for granted. The national wide lesson study workshops and seminars are taking place but unfortunately, an only limited number of the teachers (only one member from one province) are attending and this takes place only once a year. As a result, the local and small city teachers are deprived of such seminars. Teacher training centers should make a course of lesson study as a part of the curriculum. This way, this program becomes a trend for novice and experienced EFL teachers to learn from each other for their common teaching goal. The way to successful education is through improving profession and knowledge of the teachers, yet the motivation and financial support play important roles.

Further studies are required to get more about the application of lesson study and its effects on different variables. For example, it is suggested to study the lesson study project's effect on teachers' intrinsic motivation and their teaching skills. In the case of approving its wide positive effect in teaching English, further studies can study the possible effective factors in applying this project.

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