

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

Information on the informants' learning experiences, their views on the role of grammar, and their actual teaching was collected by means of three research instruments: a questionnaire, an observation checklist and an interview. The data analysis is presented in Chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 4 mainly covers information from the questionnaires of 82 Matthayomsuksa 4 English language teachers from Educational Region II. This chapter presents the results of the analysis of the data from the questionnaire including general information about the informants, their learning experiences, their views on the role of grammar, their teaching of grammar and the problems or limitations in teaching grammar using the communicative approach.

Following this, Chapter 5 presents in - depth profiles of four Matthayomsuksa 4 English language teachers participating in the study. The information was obtained from the responses to the questionnaire, the classroom observation and the interviews.

#### 1. General Information

The informants were 82 Matthayomsuksa 4 English language teachers in the government secondary schools in Educational Region II, from four provinces: Narathiwat (37.8%), Pattani (22%), Satun (20%) and Yala (9%). Most of the informants were female (82.9%).

The majority of the informants graduated with a bachelor's degree or equivalent (91.5%), and 74.39% majored in English. 69.51% of the informants graduated after 1979 when the communicative approach was first formally introduced in Thailand.

Regarding their teaching experiences, most of the informants had been teaching for more than 10 years. During their years of teaching, 51.2% of the informants had a chance to attend a seminar (mainly in Thailand) at least once a year. 90.2% of the informants never attended any seminars or training programs overseas. The data are presented in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1 General Information of the Informants**

<b>Information</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1. Gender		
1. Female	68	82.9
2. Male	14	17.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>100</b>
2. Province		
1. Pattani	22	26.8
2. Yala	9	11.0
3. Narathiwat	31	37.8
4. Satun	20	24.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>100</b>
3. Age		
1. Under 30 years old	32	39.0
2. 30-45 years old	36	43.9
3. Over 45 years	14	17.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>100</b>
4. Education		
4.1 Academic degree		
1. Lower than bachelor's degree	5	6.1
2. Bachelor's degree or equivalent	75	91.5
3. Master's degree or higher	2	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.1 (cont.)

Information	Frequency	Percentage
4.2 Year of graduation		
1. 1979 or before	25	30.49
2. After 1979	57	69.51
<b>Total</b>	82	100
4.3 Degree Major		
1. English	61	74.39
2. Others such as French, Education, etc.	21	25.61
<b>Total</b>	82	100
5. Seminar or training experience in Thailand		
1. 1 or more seminars or training programs per year	42	51.2
2. 1 seminar or training program in 2 years	24	29.3
3. 1 seminar or training program in more than 2 years	16	19.5
<b>Total</b>	82	100
6. Overseas seminar or training experience		
1. Yes	8	9.8
2. No	74	90.2
<b>Total</b>	82	100
7. Teaching experience		
1. Less than 5 years	17	20.7
2. 5-10 years	26	31.7
3. More than 10 years	39	47.6
<b>Total</b>	82	100

## 2. Informants' Learning Experiences

The informants were asked to rate the frequency of the classroom activities that they had experienced as language students. Items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10 (Table 4.2) are considered to be traditional teaching and items 4, 9, 11, 12, 13, and 14 (Table 4.2) are considered to be communicative teaching. The informants' rating was scored to compute the mean of the frequency of each activity. The results are presented in Table 4.2. Table 4.3 presents the comparison of the mean scores of the use of grammar teaching activities grouped as traditional and communicative approaches.

**Table 4.2 Informants' Learning Experiences**

No.	Grammar Teaching and Activities Used in the Classroom	Frequency (%)					Mean*	S.D.
		5	4	3	2	1		
		very often	often	some times	not often	rarely		
1.	The teacher teaches grammar through pattern presentation, for example, Subject + Verb + Object.	28.0	43.9	19.5	7.3	1.2	3.90	0.93
2.	The teacher explains all the rules, grammatical structures and exceptions in details.	26.8	40.2	26.8	3.7	2.4	3.85	0.94
3.	After the explanation, the teacher provides sample sentences that present the grammatical structure s/he has taught.	28.0	47.6	20.7	3.7	0	4.00	0.80

Table 4.2 (cont.)

No.	Grammar Teaching and Activities Used in the Classroom	Frequency (%)					Mean*	S.D.
		5	4	3	2	1		
		very often	often	some times	not often	rarely		
4.	Grammar is presented in context through different types of material, for example, reading texts or listening materials. The students learn and deduce grammatical rules from those contexts.  This may be guided by the teacher or the teacher may summarize the rules at the end of the lesson.	12.2	35.4	30.5	14.6	7.3	3.30	1.09
5.	The teacher uses grammatical terms such as gerund and participle to explain some grammatical points.	7.3	34.1	47.6	9.8	1.2	3.36	0.80
6.	The teacher teaches English grammar by comparing with Thai grammar.	2.4	25.6	32.9	26.8	12.2	2.79	1.03

Table 4.2 (cont.)

No.	Grammar Teaching and Activities Used in the Classroom	Frequency (%)					Mean*	S.D.
		5	4	3	2	1		
		very often	often	some times	not often	rarely		
7.	The students translate words or sentences from Thai into English and/or English into Thai.	4.9	48.8	26.8	13.4	6.1	3.32	0.98
8.	The students practice writing sentences using the grammatical items that they have just learned. For example, <u>Transformational drill</u> They walk to school. They don't walk to school. Do they walk to school? <u>Substitutional drill</u> I/We/She went home.	26.8	52.4	17.1	3.7	0	4.02	0.76
9.	The classroom focus is on learning how to use language in a certain situation, for example, greetings and telephone conversations.	23.2	39.0	24.4	8.5	4.9	3.67	1.07
10	The classroom focus is on memorization of grammatical rules.	19.5	34.1	34.1	9.8	2.4	3.58	0.99

Table 4.2 (cont.)

No.	Grammar Teaching and Activities Used in the Classroom	Frequency (%)					Mean*	S.D.
		5	4	3	2	1		
		very often	often	some times	not often	rarely		
11.	There are exercises that provide a chance to practice transferring information, for example, transferring texts into diagrams or tables.	2.4	24.4	40.2	29.3	3.7	2.92	0.88
12.	There are activities using English in exchanging information for communication such as group discussions and role play.	7.3	23.2	35.4	24.4	9.8	2.93	1.08
13.	There are activities that provide a chance to practice asking-answering questions and solving problems.	4.9	23.2	45.1	19.5	7.3	2.98	0.96
14.	The teacher speaks English in the classroom.	3.7	17.1	48.8	22.0	8.5	2.85	0.93

**Table 4.3 Comparison of the Mean Scores of the Use of Grammar Teaching Activities Grouped as Traditional and Communicative Approaches : The Informants' Learning Experiences**

Teaching Approach	Mean*	S.D.	t	Sig (2-tailed)
Traditional (Items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10)	3.60	0.5909	-5.891	.000
Communicative (Items 4, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14)	3.11	0.7576		

**Interpretation\***

- < 1.50 = rarely  
 1.51 - 2.50 = less than often  
 2.51 - 3.50 = sometimes  
 3.51 - 4.50 = often  
 4.51 - 5.00 = very often

\*(Best, John W., 1970 : 90)

It was found that the informants had experienced the traditional teaching approach significantly more often than the communicative teaching approach ( $t = -5.891$ ). They had often learned grammar explicitly through pattern presentation of grammatical structures and detailed explanation of grammatical rules (Items 1 and 2 in Table 4.2). After that, sample sentences were often used to present grammatical structures that they had learned ( $\bar{X} = 4.00$ , S.D. = 0.80).

In practicing, the informants did exercises focusing on form more often than practiced using language for communication. For instance, the informants often did the exercises that focused on transformational drills and substitutional drills ( $\bar{X} = 4.02$ , S.D. = 0.76) whereas they sometimes did communicative activities such as asking and answering questions ( $\bar{X} = 2.98$ , S.D. = 0.96).



### 3. Informants' Views on English Teaching and Learning Using the Communicative Approach

#### 3.1 Informants' Understanding of Communicative Language Teaching

The informants were asked to select, from the questionnaire, the statements that represented their understanding of communicative teaching. The percentage of the informants who selected each statement is displayed in **Table 4.4**.

**Table 4.4 Informants' Understanding of Communicative Language Teaching**

No.	Statements	Percentage
1.	Learning English aims at knowing when to use appropriate language to communicate in a certain situation. And the language must be understandable and acceptable among the English users.	85.4
2.	Students should learn a variety of language style in order to be able to select an appropriate one to use in different situations.	69.5
3.	In studying English, the ability to use appropriate language in different situations is more important than grammatical knowledge.	58.5
4.	The important part of learning English is the memorization of forms or grammatical structures.	12.2
5.	Students should be able to explain grammatical structures that they have learned.	14.6

**Table 4.4** shows that 85.4% of the informants believed that learning English using the communicative approach aims at the use of appropriate language to communicate in a certain situation. In addition, 69.5% thought that the students should learn a variety of language styles in order to be able to select them to use in

different situations, which is considered more important than grammatical knowledge (58.5%). However, few informants felt that communicative teaching involves memorization (12.2%) and detailed explanation of grammatical structures (14.6%).

### 3.2 Informants' Views on the Students' Aims of Learning English

The informants were asked to rank the importance of the students' aims of learning English, which are presented in **Table 4.5**.

**Table 4.5 Informants' Views on the Students' Aims of Learning English**

No.	Aims	Frequency (%)				Mean	S.D.	Rank*
		Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4			
1.	To be able to use grammatically correct English	11	40.2	32.9	14.6	2.52	0.88	2
2.	To be able to communicate appropriately and effectively in a certain situation	67.1	15.9	12.2	4.9	1.55	0.89	1
3.	To understand and gain cultural knowledge of native speakers	7.3	17.1	36.6	39	3.07	0.93	4
4.	For higher education	26.8	17.1	20.7	34.1	2.63	1.22	3

\*1=the most important

There seemed to be a consensus among the informants about the most important aim of learning English. 67.1% believed that the students' most important aim was to be able to communicate appropriately and effectively in a certain situation (Item 2). The mean scores of the second (Item 1,  $\bar{X}=2.52$ ) and third (Item 4,  $\bar{X}=2.63$ ) most important are slightly different. However, it is interesting to point out that 40.2% of the informants ranked "the use of grammatically correct English" (Item 1) as the second most important aim.

**Table 4.5** shows that the informants viewed "For higher education" as the third most important aim and "to understand the native speakers' culture" as the fourth. On examining closely the rating frequency, we can see a conflict on the importance of the aim for higher education. 34.1% of the informants ranked it the least important, whereas 26.8% of the informants ranked it the most important. It shows that even though most informants viewed learning English to attain higher education as the least important, some of the informants see it as the most important.

### **3.3 Importance of the Language Components in Communication**

In order to achieve the aims of learning English for communication, it is worth considering the four language components involved in communication: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and cultural knowledge (Harmer, 1991 : 21-30, Brown, 1994 : 25). Accordingly, the informants were asked to rank the importance of the components in helping students to communicate in English. This would provide some information about their perceptions of communication and the role of grammar. The data are displayed in **Table 4.6**.

**Table 4.6 Importance of the Language Components in Communication**

No.	Language Components in Communication	Frequency (%)				Mean	S.D.	Rank*
		Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4			
1	Grammar	12.2	23.2	36.6	26.8	2.79	0.88	3
2	Vocabulary	67.1	18.3	7.3	6.1	1.52	0.81	1
3	Pronunciation	22	42.7	30.5	3.7	2.16	0.98	2
4	Cultural knowledge	4.9	11	24.4	58.5	3.38	0.87	4

\*1= the most important

Generally, there is an agreement on the importance of the four components. **Table 4.6** shows that vocabulary was considered the most important component in communication and pronunciation was ranked the second most important. Grammar was viewed as the third most important, suggesting that the informants placed the most importance on “vocabulary” or “meaning” in communication rather than on “form” or “grammar”. In other words, grammar does not hold the most important role in communication. In addition, it appears that most of the informants focused on “oral” communication since they saw pronunciation as the second important component after vocabulary.

This perception can also be seen in the practice of CLT in Indonesia. Sunaryo (2001 : 2) stated that there were a number of teachers who felt “CLT means teaching speaking only. ... This is understandable because the word “communicative” leads to the idea of teaching English for developing the students’ ability to communicate in English (speaking ability).”

#### 4. Informants' Views on the Role of Grammar

The informants rated the level of agreement they had on statements representing the role of grammar based on both the traditional (Items 1, 2 and 3 in **Table 4.7**) and the communicative approaches (Items 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 in **Table 4.7**). The percentage of the frequency and the mean scores of each statement are presented in **Table 4.7**. In addition, **Table 4.8** presents an average of the level of agreement in order to compare the agreement level on the role of grammar based on the traditional or the communicative approach.

**Table 4.7 Informants' Views on the Role of Grammar**

No.	Statements	Frequency (%)					Mean*	S.D.
		5	4	3	2	1		
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Moderately Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree		
1.	The students should be able to appropriately use grammar that they have learned in order to do exercises.	22	53.7	24.4	0	0	3.97	0.68
2.	The students should be able to write grammatically correct sentences.	29.3	48.8	22	0	0	4.07	0.71

Table 4.7 (cont.)

No.	Statements	Frequency (%)					Mean*	S.D.
		5	4	3	2	1		
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Moderately Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree		
3.	The students should be able to memorize and explain the grammatical rules that they have learned correctly.	14.6	42.7	39	1.2	2.4	3.65	0.83
4.	The students should be able to use grammatical knowledge to communicate correctly and appropriately.	30.5	43.5	24.4	0	1.2	4.02	0.81
5.	The students should be able to appropriately use English for communication in a certain situation without focusing on the grammatical correctness	35.4	32.9	24.4	6.1	1.2	3.95	0.98
6.	Grammatical knowledge is one important component of language proficiency.	30.5	46.3	20.7	2.4	0	4.04	0.78

Table 4.7 (cont.)

No.	Statements	Frequency (%)					Mean*	S.D.
		5	4	3	2	1		
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Moderately Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree		
7.	The students should learn grammar in order to use it as a tool for effective communication.	23.2	40.2	31.7	2.4	2.4	3.79	0.91
8.	The importance of grammar depends on the situation, for example, grammatically correct sentences are required more in a formal meeting than in talking to friends.	37.8	40.2	19.5	2.4	0	4.13	0.81

Table 4.8 Comparison of the Mean Scores on the Role of Grammar Grouped as Traditional and Communicative Approach

Teaching Approach	Mean*	S.D.	t	Sig (2-tailed)
Traditional (Items 1, 2, 3)	3.9024	0.6489	1.588	0.116
Communicative (Items 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)	3.9902	0.5008		

It can be seen from **Table 4.8** that the mean of the agreement level of the traditional group of statements ( $\bar{X}= 3.9024$ ) is slightly lower than the mean of the communicative group of statements ( $\bar{X}= 3.9902$ ). Statistically, the mean scores of both groups of statements are not significantly different ( $t = 1.588$ ).

The informants appeared to see the importance of grammar and focused on the accuracy of form. All informants agreed that grammar played a major role in doing the exercises and writing grammatically correct sentences (Items 1 and 2 in **Table 4.7**). However, most of the informants agreed that the importance of grammar varied according to the situation.

In communication, grammar tended to have a minor role. For example, some informants agreed that the students should be able to appropriately use English for communication in a certain situation without focusing on the grammatical correctness. This view is in accordance with their views on the importance of the components in communication (**Table 4.6**), where grammar was ranked as the third most important component.

## **5. Grammar Teaching and Activities Used in the Classroom**

In Educational Region II, the books used in the Matthayomsuksa 4 fundamental English classroom are texts such as Blueprint, Active Context, and One World. 74.4% of the informants used BluePrint in their teaching. Some supplementary sheets were also provided for the students (30.5%). 85.4% of the informants viewed the book they were using as appropriate for their students.

Generally, the informants mainly used both Thai and English when they gave instructions, or explained grammar and vocabulary. And Thai was mostly used in explaining grammar.



In order to see how grammar was taught in Educational Region II, the informants were asked to rate the frequency of the activities they used in the classroom. The activities listed in the questionnaire were based on both traditional (Items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10 in **Table 4.9**) and communicative (Items 4, 9, 11, 12, 13, and 14 in **Table 4.9**) approaches. The data are presented in **Table 4.9**. In addition, **Table 4.10** presents a summary of the means of frequency of the two main teaching approaches used in the classroom.

**Table 4.9 Grammar Teaching and Activities Used in the Classroom**

No.	Grammar Teaching and Activities Used in the Classroom	Frequency (%)					Mean*	S.D.
		5	4	3	2	1		
		very often	often	some times	not often	rarely		
1.	Grammar is taught through pattern presentation, for example, Subject + Verb + Object.	23.2	46.3	20.7	7.3	2.4	3.8	0.96
2.	Grammatical rules, grammatical structures and exceptions are presented with detailed explanation.	19.5	37.8	34.1	6.1	2.4	3.65	0.94
3.	Sample sentences which present the target grammar are provided after the grammar explanation.	18.3	58.5	20.7	2.4	0	3.92	0.69

Table 4.9 (cont.)

No.	Grammar Teaching and Activities Used in the Classroom	Frequency (%)					Mean*	S.D.
		5	4	3	2	1		
		very often	often	some times	not often	rarely		
4.	Grammar is presented in context through different types of material, for example, reading texts or listening materials. The students learn and deduce grammatical rules from those contexts. This may be guided by the teacher or the teacher may summarize at the end of the lesson.	8.5	53.7	29.3	7.3	1.2	3.6	0.79
5.	Grammatical terms such as gerund and participle are used to explain grammar.	3.7	35.4	53.7	6.1	1.2	3.34	0.70
6.	English grammar is taught by comparing with Thai grammar.	2.4	26.8	30.5	31.7	8.5	2.82	1.00
7.	The students translate words or sentences from Thai into English and/or English into Thai.	4.9	35.4	43.9	12.2	3.7	3.25	0.87

Table 4.9 (cont.)

No.	Grammar Teaching and Activities Used in the Classroom	Frequency (%)					Mean*	S.D.
		5	4	3	2	1		
		very often	often	some times	not often	rarely		
8.	The students practice writing sentences using the grammatical items that they have just learned. For example. <u>Transformational drill</u> They walk to school. They don't walk to school. Do they walk to school? <u>Substitutional drill</u> I/We/She went home.	14.6	40.2	39.0	4.9	1.2	3.62	0.84
9.	The students practice using appropriate language in a certain situation, for example, the students select the right tense to describe everyday activities such as greetings and telephone conversations.	20.7	58.5	19.5	1.2	0	3.98	0.67
10.	The students memorize grammatical rules.	1.2	22.0	46.3	25.6	4.9	2.89	0.84

**Table 4.9 (cont.)**

No.	Grammar Teaching and Activities Used in the Classroom	Frequency (%)					Mean*	S.D.
		5	4	3	2	1		
		very often	often	some times	not often	rarely		
11.	The students practice transferring information, for example, transferring texts to diagrams or tables.	3.7	20.7	48.8	23.2	3.7	2.97	0.86
12.	The students do activities using English in exchanging information for communication such as group discussions and role play.	12.2	28.0	25.6	32.9	1.2	3.17	1.06
13.	The students practice asking-answering questions and solving problems.	8.5	28.0	48.8	14.6	0	3.30	0.82
14.	The teacher speaks English in the classroom.	3.7	24.4	52.4	17.1	2.4	3.09	0.81

**Table 4.10 Comparison of the Mean Scores of the Use of Grammar Teaching Activities Grouped as Traditional and Communicative Approaches : Informants' Actual Teaching**

Teaching approach	Mean*	S.D.	t	Sig (2-tailed)
Traditional (Items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10)	3.4162	0.5787	-0.916	0.362
Communicative (Items 4, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14)	3.3577	0.5780		

Interpretation\*

< 1.50 = rarely

1.51 - 2.50 = less than often

2.51 - 3.50 = sometimes

3.51 - 4.50 = often

4.51 - 5.00 = very often

\* (Best, John W., 1970)

The informants appeared to conduct traditional teaching slightly more often than communicative teaching (Table 4.10). Even though they felt that the students' most important aim was to communicate appropriately and effectively, their teaching tended to emphasize grammatical structures with few communicative activities.

According to Table 4.9, grammar was taught through pattern presentation ( $\bar{X}=3.8$ , S.D.=0.96) more often than in context through different skills ( $\bar{X}=3.6$ , S.D.=0.79). In addition, grammatical rules were often presented with detailed explanation ( $\bar{X}=3.65$ , S.D.=0.94). The use of translation was relatively less than other traditional activities.

Even though the informants tended to emphasize form, they had the students practice using appropriate language in a certain situation for communication ( $\bar{X}=3.98$ , S.D.=0.67) more often than practicing transformational or substitutional drills ( $\bar{X}=3.62$ , S.D.=0.84). However, other communicative activities such as transferring information, exchanging information and forming questions and solving problems were conducted less.

## **6. Relationship between Informants' Learning Experiences, Their Views on the Role of Grammar and the Activities Used in Their Teaching**

This study aims at investigating the current situation of grammar teaching concentrating on how the teachers view the role of grammar in communicative teaching and how they teach grammar in the classroom. In addition, it is interesting and useful to determine the relationship between their beliefs and their learning experiences and their actual teaching.

The rating of the teachers' responses were scored as explained in Chapter 3 (p.29). The items representing the traditional approach were scored inversely from the items representing the communicative teaching approach. The total scores which presented the tendency of the teaching approach of the informants' learning experiences, their views on the role of grammar, and the activities used in the classroom were calculated and the correlation coefficients were computed by means of SPSS program.

Statistically, there was no significant correlation between the informants' views on the role of grammar and their learning experiences ( $r = 0.043$ ). In addition, there was also no significant correlation between the informants' views on the role of grammar and their actual teaching ( $r = 0.169$ ).

Regarding the relationship between the informants' learning experiences and their actual teaching, they correlated significantly, although rather low ( $r = 0.38$ ). This means that the informants had used some activities that they experienced in the classroom as language students in their teaching. For a close examination, a comparison of the mean scores of each activity used in the informants' learning experiences and their actual teaching as well as pair correlations of each item are presented in **Table 4.11**.

**Table 4.11 Comparison of the Mean Scores between the Informants' Learning Experiences and Their Actual Teaching and Pair Correlations**

<b>Statements of Learning Experiences and Actual Teaching</b>	<b>Informants' Learning Experience (<math>\bar{X}</math>)</b>	<b>Informants' Actual Teaching (<math>\bar{X}</math>)</b>	<b>Correlation (r)</b>
1. The teacher teaches grammar through pattern presentation, for example. Subject + Verb + Object.	3.9024	3.8049	0.609**
2. The teacher explains all the rules, grammatical structures and exceptions in details.	3.8537	3.6586	0.524**
3. After the explanation, the teacher provides sample sentences that present the grammatical structures that s/he has taught.	4.00	3.9268	0.397**
4. Grammar is presented in context through different types of material, for example, reading texts or listening materials. The students learn and deduce grammatical rules from those contexts. This may be guided by the teacher or the teacher may summarize the rules at the end of the lesson.	3.3049	3.6098	0.124
5. The teacher uses grammatical terms such as gerund and participle to explain some grammatical points.	3.3659	3.3415	0.513**
6. The teacher teaches English grammar by comparing with Thai grammar.	2.7927	2.8293	0.569**

Table 4.11 (cont.)

Statements of Learning Experiences and Actual Teaching	Informants' Learning Experience ( $\bar{X}$ )	Informants' Actual Teaching ( $\bar{X}$ )	Correlation (r)
7. The students translate words or sentences from Thai into English and/or English into Thai.	3.3293	3.2561	0.376**
8. The students practice writing sentences using the grammatical items that they have learned. For example, <u>Transformational drill</u> They walk to school. They don't walk to school. Do they walk to school? <u>Substitutional drill</u> I/We/She went home.	4.0244	3.6220	0.243*
9. The classroom focus is on learning how to use language in a certain situation, for example, greetings and telephone conversations.	3.6707	3.9878	0.147
10. The classroom focus is on memorization of grammatical rules.	3.5854	2.8902	0.386**
11. There are exercises that provide a chance to practice transferring information, for example, transferring texts into diagrams or tables.	2.9268	2.9756	0.467**
12. There are activities using English in exchanging information for communication such as group discussions and role play.	2.9390	3.1707	0.449**



Table 4.11 (cont.)

Statements of Learning Experiences and Actual Teaching	Informants' Learning Experience ( $\bar{X}$ )	Informants' Actual Teaching ( $\bar{X}$ )	Correlation (r)
13. There are activities that provide a chance to practice asking-answering questions and solving problems.	2.9878	3.3049	0.486**
14. The teacher speaks English in the classroom.	2.8537	3.0976	0.264**

\* significant at 0.05

\*\*significant at 0.01

It can be noticed that only the traditional activities have moderate correlations between learning and teaching (Table 4.12, Items 1, 2, 5 and 6). The informants use some traditional activities in their teaching roughly as often as what they have experienced. For example, for Item 1, the informants often teach grammar through pattern presentation ( $\bar{X}=3.8$ , S.D.=0.96) as compared to the frequency of the use of pattern in presenting grammar during their learning ( $\bar{X}=3.9$ , S.D.=0.93). This suggests that the informants' learning experiences have an influence on their teaching at a certain level.

The correlations of communicative activities used in learning and teaching experiences range from 0.147 to 0.486, which are relatively low (Table 4.12, Items 4, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, and 14). The informants appeared to use communicative activities in their teaching more often than what they had experienced in their learning. The current curriculum emphasizing communicative aims may be one of the factors involved in the increase of the use of communicative activities in the teaching. The curriculum has been set for communicative purposes to respond to the need of using language for communication and the English teaching teachers are required to teach accordingly.

## 7. Problems and Limitations in Teaching Grammar Using the Communicative Approach

The informants were asked to rank the importance of the problems and limitations in teaching grammar using the communicative approach. The data are presented in Table 4.12.

**Table 4.12 Problems and Limitations in Teaching Grammar Using the Communicative Approach**

Problems and Limitations	Rank*	Mean	S.D.
1. Students	1	2.04	1.51
2. Teaching Aids	3	3.08	1.27
3. School Policy	5	4.48	1.58
4. Curriculum	4	3.37	1.70
5. Teaching Techniques	2	2.76	1.32
6. Evaluation	6	4.57	1.31

\*1= the most important

According to Table 4.13, most of the informants felt that students are the most important problem in teaching English grammar for communicative purposes. According to the informants' responses to the questionnaire, some interesting points concerning this problem can be summed up as follows:

1. Some students refuse to cooperate in certain communicative activities. The reasons are, for example, in the informants' opinion, some students do not realize the importance of learning English and they do not have a positive attitude towards the learning of English.

2. A classroom with students with different background knowledge is difficult to plan and conduct particular activities.

3. A large class of 35 - 50 students makes it difficult to teach, monitor and conduct some activities. And it is not possible to pay close attention to each individual student.

The problem of a large class has been a concern in many EFL teaching situations where CLT is practiced. There is an agreement on a difficulty in conducting any communicative activities in too large a class (Uraiwan Saringkanun, 1984 : 96; Lee, 1996 : 101; Evans, 1996 : 40 and Yu, 2000 : 196).

The second important problem is teaching techniques. According to the questionnaire, most of the informants had pointed out a variety of problems concerning the teaching techniques.

1. Some teachers asked the students to drill or do some exercises without any consideration of what the students would gain from doing such activities. It is a waste of time to let the students drill without any purposes.

2. Some teaching techniques cannot be used with all students. Different students require different teaching techniques.

3. It is difficult to make grammar teaching fun and grammatical rules easy to memorize.

The third problem is teaching aids. Most of the informants stated that most of the teaching materials that they had been using were out-of-date, and not suitable for the present situation. Moreover, in some schools, especially in rural areas, teaching aids such as tape recorders or audio/visual aids are not enough to facilitate good learning.

This agrees with English teaching in Hong Kong. Lee (1996) asserted in the study on "Hong Kong Primary Teachers' Perspectives on ELT" that for Hong Kong English language teachers to follow the communicative curriculum they have to create opportunities for the students to use English. But the lack of appropriate resources is one of the constraints that obstruct teachers from following the curriculum. Similarly, Evans (1996 : 42) pointed out that the lack of stimulating learning materials is one of the reasons for the failure of CLT as practiced in Hong Kong.

The fourth problem is curriculum. Many informants felt that the curriculum had caused some problems in teaching grammar for communicative purposes. According to their responses to the questionnaire, some interesting points are presented as follows:

1. The curriculum is too difficult to follow. Since it focuses on the communicative skills, it is difficult to conduct a communicative activity and pay attention to grammar teaching in the classroom at the same time.

2. Some informants felt that the curriculum had been described too broadly, while some thought that it had been described too narrowly. It appears not to be suitable for every teacher, leading to a confusion in interpreting the curriculum with different teachers interpreting it differently.

3. The curriculum is not appropriate for some local schools.

Problems with the communicative curriculum are also seen in Japan. A number of teachers did not understand the curriculum, and some of them felt that the curriculum description had led to confusion in teaching. Elmore and Skyed (1992 : 198; cited in Gorsch, 2000 : 677) suggested :

...teachers working with a curriculum that specifies content but not instruction may teach certain kinds of knowledge as “immutable truths” and organize their students’ learning experiences as a collection of discrete skills, “best learned through drill work”, a description that seems similar to current accounts of Japanese high school EFL teachers’ instruction.

Fifth, school policy is another problem for many informants.

1. Some informants pointed out that their school policy does not seem to encourage the teacher to attend seminars or training programs. In addition, some schools do not seem to support teachers who have already attended a seminar to apply their knowledge which they have obtained from the seminar to their teaching or to extend their knowledge to other colleagues. This may be one the reasons why there were a small number of informants attending seminars or training programs in Thailand and overseas. According to the survey, 48.8% of the informants attended a

seminar or training program in 2 years or more and 90.2% never attended any seminars overseas.

2. Few schools promoted a new teaching approach that had been introduced without consideration of the needs of the students and the limitations of applying the approach.

Finally, the sixth problem is evaluation. To most of the informants, the university entrance examination is the main purpose of teaching/learning English. Even though there is an attempt to promote communicative teaching in the classroom, traditional grammar teaching cannot be avoided. The informants felt that the university entrance examination, which tends to focus on memorization of grammatical rules, has an effect on their teaching. Accordingly, they mainly plan the lesson towards that goal.

It is interesting to learn that, even though the evaluation is rated the sixth in importance, it seems to have a major effect on some teachers' teaching aims and on their planning of the lessons.

Interestingly, the evaluation focusing on the university entrance examination appears to be an important influence on teaching in many EFL situations other than Thailand. For example, in Japan, English language teachers mainly consider their teaching as preparing the students for the university entrance examination which mainly a grammar based examination (Sano, Takashi and Yoneyama, 1984 : 173 and Gorsuch, 2000 : 681). Likewise, Hong Kong English language teachers have also faced the same situation in preparing the students for the grammar based university entrance examination (Evans, 1996 : 43).

## **8. Discussion**

According to the results from the survey study, most of the informants appeared to understand the general idea of the CLT. They viewed CLT as an approach that aims at knowing when to use an appropriate language to communicate in a certain situation.

They agreed that grammar is just one of the components involved in communication, with its importance depending on the situation. However, there are conflicting ideas concerning the role of grammar in CLT, since some informants saw grammar as an important component that the students should master before using it for communication. Many informants agreed with the explicit teaching of grammar and the memorization of grammatical rules, and appeared to emphasize the practice of writing using transformational and substitutional drills. Their teaching focused more on form or grammatical accuracy, as can be seen from the frequency of the use of traditional activities which was slightly higher than that of the communicative ones.

Surprisingly, the results of the use of CLT in teaching has not changed in the past 20 years. The studies of Uraiwan Saringkanun (1984), Wannee Chaiwipanont (1989), Siriporn Chantanont (1990) and Amporn Sribunruang (1991) have shown the same results. Even though the English curriculum in the Thai situation stresses the communicative purposes, many English language teachers rarely use CLT in the classroom.

It should be pointed out that 30.49% of the informants in this study graduated in 1979 or before. Thus, it is possible that this group of teachers rarely experienced the communicative teaching. Even though the majority of them (69.51%) graduated after 1979, it does not mean that all these teachers had experienced this teaching approach as it usually takes at least 4 years for a curriculum cycle to be completed. This might explain why they practiced the traditional teaching more frequently than the communicative ones.

The next chapter will present the teachers' profiles of four cases of observation. An in-depth information will provide an additional insight picture of the teaching of grammar and its relationship with their views on the role of grammar and their learning experiences. It will also present some problems in teaching grammar in the classroom.