

Turkish EFL Teachers' and Administrators' Perceptions of Short Teacher Training Courses: The Case of CELTA

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to investigate the applicability of Certificate of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA) in the Turkish context and the necessity for Turkish teachers to obtain it. For this qualitative study, the data was collected by means of three tools: A CELTA survey, semi-structured interviews with teachers and the administrators and classroom observations in order to validate the data. The findings suggest that teachers are glad to take it; they admit that it contributed to them in many ways. However, they agree that it is nearly impossible to apply all the CELTA techniques in their classrooms. From the employers' perspectives, it can be inferred that CELTA is an efficient tool for professional development, but it is not must.

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1. Introduction

1.1. The problem

The CELTA “is an initial qualification for people with little or no previous teaching experience” (Green, 2005, p.7). This short teacher training programme combines theory through input sessions and practice through teaching practices of each trainee (Cambridge English, 2013). Upon the successful completion of the course, newly qualified EFL teachers obtain the opportunity to teach English at private language schools around the world. Depending on the countries' regulations, these teachers can teach at various institutions, such as universities. In the Turkish context, it is not recognized as a teaching qualification for Turkish teachers to teach English at public schools, but required for native or native-like teachers to be employed at private K-12 schools or universities. The effectiveness of this certificate in classrooms and in teaching

job applications from Turkish EFL teachers / instructors is a topic to be enlightened, which inspired this study. The purpose of this study is to investigate if a CELTA course is important and effective within Turkish context.

1.2. Importance of the problem

CELTA is considered as an introductory course to teaching for people who have little or no teaching experience prior to the course. The most significant aspect of the CELTA is in fact what makes it appealing to people who consider teaching as career: it is short and practical. The duration of the course varies between 4 to 6 weeks depending on the mode of the course (full-time or part-time) and it is mostly skills-based, promoting communicative language teaching. With the latter feature, it is seen as a ‘survival training’ for teachers (Roberts, 1998). Without a doubt, these two are the concepts that fuel the selling power of this course and it attracts many candidates around the world. Gradually, the demand for this course is rising. In addition to the reputation of this qualification, opportunities it provides its graduates are huge: the qualification is recognized internationally, which entails that CELTA holders can work as EFL teachers around the world. Many candidates see this course as an important investment even solely for this opportunity.

1.3. Relevant scholarship

In the existing literature, one can find studies about the process of CELTA course and its students. There are very reputable studies which take CELTA students, its tutors and its syllabus in the centre (Brandt, 2007; Brandt, 2010; Borg, 2002; Roberts, 1998). However, there are only few studies which take CELTA graduates as the basis: Green’s (2005) study, O’Connor’s (2011) study and Sag’s (2013) study will be focused in this section.

A small study conducted by Green (2005) is the pioneer in this area. The purpose of his study was to track the careers of CELTA graduates when the course was done. He tried to find out what happened to people after CELTA, what impact CELTA had on their careers and what insights their reviews could give the CELTA organizers about the design of the course. 478 CELTA graduates and students from all around the world returned the questionnaire that Green had distributed. Based only on the questionnaire, Green came up with the results that employment rate after the CELTA was very high. 83% of UK and 88% of overseas CELTA graduates found a teaching job after the course. Of these people, 69% of them worked at a private language school as their first workplace. As for the impact of the course, most of the participants agreed that the CELTA played an important role in opening career opportunities. Almost half of the participants stated that “the CELTA gave them confidence in their work” (Green, 2005, p. 10). However, non-native speakers said that CELTA on its own was not adequate to find a teaching job anywhere besides their countries, especially compared to the condition of native speakers. Finally, Green’s study discussed what CELTA graduates thought about the course. Most of the comments made about the course were positive although there were comments about requesting more focus on young learners in the course, which was later introduced in the form of a separate course as Young Learner (YL) Extension to CELTA (Green, 2005).

Participants, native speakers without previous degree in teaching, in O’Connor’s (2011) research shared the same concern about teaching young learners after the CELTA, as well. The aim of the study was to find out how a skills-based training like CELTA functioned in a transition into the teaching profession. The study was conducted with 80 CELTA graduates, who completed

the questionnaire about their personal, educational and professional background as well as their teaching attitudes. Then, 11 of them kept e-mail journal about their experiences in their actual classrooms and their workplaces. O'Connor (2011) reached these conclusions: CELTA graduates were struggling with the teaching context, such as teaching young learners and unfamiliar teaching environment. According to the study, having to work with children caused anxiety in great amount as the training did not equip its students with necessary skills to teach very young learners. Also, CELTA holders mentioned job security issues; they felt insecure in their workplaces, especially in a foreign country. In relation to that, culture shock was one of the problems of those who were teaching in a foreign country. Either having too high expectations or having no expectations whatsoever eventually caused traumatic teaching experiences. On the other hand, the most important possibility that O'Connor (2011) found in her research was that the CELTA course boosted confidence in newly-qualified teachers. Their skills-based training helped them survive in their first teaching job after the CELTA.

As for the main research question of O'Connor's (2011) study, which was about the relationship between the CELTA course and the CELTA holders' transition into teaching, it was proved that as long as newly-qualified teachers were in their comfort zone of context which was quite similar to the one posed by the CELTA course – motivated adult learners, small number of groups, positive teaching and learning environment-, they felt secure and reflected what had been taught at the course. However, when they were thrown into different teaching context, teachers did not know what to do. For O'Connor (2011), this could be attributed to a lack of pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge of teachers.

The only study that was conducted with Turkish EFL teachers who took CELTA belongs to Sag (2013). She took them as subjects to discuss the discrepancies between native English speaker teacher (NEST) and non-native English speaker teacher (NNEST). She studied "the self-perceptions of non-native English speaker teachers on a CELTA in Turkey" (Sag, 2013) as well as how these teachers' experiences of CELTA influenced their self-perception in a NEST and NNEST-mixed teaching atmosphere and if they experienced any strengths and shortcomings of being a non-native EFL teacher. The participants were 4 Turkish EFL teachers who took CELTA in Turkey and worked as EFL teachers in Turkey. This qualitative research was based on the data collected via Facebook messaging. According to the results she obtained by semi-structured interview responses, CELTA graduates were content to be teachers in general, but they complained being less privileged than native English speaker EFL teachers in terms of salary, level of qualification and job opportunities. The participants agreed that collaborative learning and teaching helped them establish self-confidence and eliminate a possible disadvantage of being a non-native speaker EFL teacher.

Other than these studies, Borg (2002) partially dealt with CELTA holder teachers experiences after the course. The study focused on 6 CELTA students and then newly qualified teachers depicting their beliefs, experiences and reflections in and after the course. In the post-course questionnaires and e-mails, among 3 participants, 2 of them admitted that they needed more teaching practice in the course. They both were content about the programme and techniques they learnt.

1.4. Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to investigate if a CELTA course is important and effective within the Turkish context. The following questions have been formed for this research:

1. *Is CELTA applicable to the Turkish context? If so, how do TESOL teachers apply CELTA techniques in their own classrooms?*
2. *Do EFL teachers notice any personal or contextual change in themselves after taking CELTA?*
3. *What is the employers' perspective about CELTA when hiring an EFL teacher?.*

2. Method

This study aimed to find out about the efficiency of the CELTA in the Turkish private K-12 school and university preparation year context. For this purpose, the qualitative data from teacher interviews and observations were evaluated along with the data from a teacher questionnaire to come up with the best answers to the research questions. As a result of searching for the most comprehensive answers, a qualitative case study research design was adopted.

Qualitative research “provides contextual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue”, according to Mack et al. (2005, p. 1). A more in-depth analysis of a specific phenomenon can be possible with qualitative data. Two of the qualitative research methods were applied in this study: in-depth interviews and participation observation. Audio recording and field notes were the forms that generated the qualitative data in this research. The CELTA questionnaire was used to reinforce the data achieved by two means of data collection instruments. For Anderson (as cited in Noor, 2008), case studies deal with how and why things happen, explaining the differences between “contextual plans and what is really occurring”. This study tried to investigate the differences between the teaching practices in CELTA and teaching practices at the CELTA holders' real classrooms. Also, Anderson (as cited in Noor, 2008) defines case studies as methods to explain a particular issue, rather than the functioning of a whole organization. As for this study, the scope of it was restricted to Turkish CELTA holders, specifically Turkish CELTA graduates who worked at private K-12 schools and universities. In terms of both criteria, this research can be defined as a qualitative case study.

This study involved methodological triangulation in that it sought correspondence among the results from three different instruments, particularly from the last section of the survey and classroom observation. Also, the CELTA questionnaire was followed by semi-structured teacher interviews so that the flexible form of the interview could unfold more information where the rigid structured questionnaires could not. Furthermore, classroom observation was expected to illustrate points that interviewees were not willing to share or that were underestimated by the study or the factors that were outside of the scope of this study. Therefore, each method inevitably overlapped but without even one, an accurate picture of the situation could not have been reached.

2.1. Setting

This study took place in the natural settings of the participants. The survey was distributed and completed online. For the next steps of the study, the researcher visited the teachers' and administrators' institutions, which included both K-12 schools and schools of languages at the universities. As for the observation stage, the researcher attended the actual classes of the participant teachers in their workplace. Hence, the researcher had the chances to observe 5th grade classes in 2 different private K-12 schools. Also, in one private university, B1 and B2 level English classes with young adults were observed. The student groupings were based on The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and internal examinations.

2.2. Participants

The participants of this study consisted of 41 Turkish teachers and instructors at Turkish schools and universities who attended a CELTA course in or out of Turkey. No gender and age restrictions were sought. In order to find as many participants as possible, the link of the online questionnaire was emailed to all the CELTA course providers in Turkey. As an example of snowball sampling, the participants of the questionnaire shared the link with their friends so that the number of participants increased. As for the participant sampling for interview and observation procedure, purposive sampling method was followed. Purposive sampling is defined as “grouping participants according to preselected criteria relevant to a particular research question” (Mack et al., 2005, p. 5). Sample size mostly depended on time and resources available and suitability of participants' schedules.

First two parts of the teacher survey (CELTA questionnaire) focused on personal and occupational information about participant EFL teachers. From the data achieved, it can be stated that more than 75% of the CELTA graduates were female (31 people in number) and 25% were male. More than 90% of them were between ages 25 and 44. The year that they took the CELTA course varied between 2005 and 2014. That proves this course has been and is still increasing its popularity. Participants completed their course in various cities in and out of Turkey. 63% of them completed the course on full-time mode whereas 37% completed on part-time mode.

When examining educational background of the participants, it was seen that most of them (70.73%) were holding an undergraduate diploma when they took the CELTA course. 24.39% also pursued a postgraduate degree prior to the course. That is to say, a huge majority of the subjects gained a higher education degree at the time of starting their CELTA course. Of 36 participants, the majority studied English Language and Literature (11 people). Next highly studied degree was English Language Teaching by 9 people followed by American Culture and Literature with 6 people. When asked if the participants were involved in any kinds of studies after completing CELTA, 18 of them (38.29%) stated they did not take any course after the CELTA. The majority of the participants by 85.36% were not taking any teacher training courses at the moment whereas 14.63% of the participants were still enrolled in a teacher training programme.

As for employment histories of the participants, it was indicated that 30 of 41 people were already employed in the teaching sector at the time of completing the course. Of 37 participants who gave away details of their current employment, it can be understood that all of them are working in Turkey. 21 of them were working as instructors at schools of languages at Turkish universities. 15 participants were working as EFL teachers; 11 of them were working at private or public K-12 schools and 4 of them were working at language schools. One of the other sector employees stated that she was working as a specialist in foreign affairs office.

5 of the participants who completed the survey and agreed to answer in-depth questions about this issue were interviewed.

As for the observation, of these interview participants were observed as one of them was not teaching any classes during the class observation stage of the study.

2.3. Data Collection Instruments and Procedure

In order to generate a general profile of the CELTA graduate teachers, a survey was conducted. The survey used was adapted by O'Connor (2011) for teachers. O'Connor (2011) explained the aim of this survey as "to gather data that will provide a broader picture of the impact of initial skills-based training in English language teaching" (p. 123-124). The reason why this survey was used in this study was because the aim of the study and what the survey was expected to measure overlapped with those aspects of O'Connor's (2011) study. Moreover, this survey was believed to present some solid and important quantitative data about CELTA holders.

The survey consisted of four parts: The first part of the survey had some personal questions about the participants, such as gender, age range and details of the CELTA course they had attended. The second part of the survey was about the educational background of the participants. Part Three was to discover employment details of the participants. The final part, Part Four, was where the participants were asked to rate some statements about teaching by taking their own beliefs and thoughts into consideration. This part of the survey was of a Likert-type which enabled the participants to choose the most suitable option in response to the specific statements. Those statements were about their general attitude towards the CELTA course, its methodology and techniques. Also, there were statements about self-esteem which required the participants to compare themselves as teachers before and after the CELTA course.

Based on the survey questions, 13 open ended questions were prepared for the semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with the participant EFL teachers who completed the CELTA questionnaire. These open-ended questions enabled teachers who are currently working as EFL teachers to make judgements about themselves after completing their CELTA courses. Also, they were required to make comments on the CELTA programme to depict the parts of this training which seem to work meet the requirements of the Turkish context and those which do not work (See Appendix A for interview questions).

Another set of 13 semi-structured interview questions were prepared for the administrators to answer (See Appendix B). These questions would reveal what the administrators who hired EFL teachers actually thought about the CELTA and its outcome.

As the final part of the data collection procedure, classroom observations were held, two whole class hour per participant teacher, in total 10 hours. The classroom observation form (See appendix C) was created to fully cover the aim of this study. During the observation, class management, adopted language approach and a variety of CELTA techniques, such as use of concept checking questions, feedback and error correction were under focus. In order to leave adequate space for comments, field notes type of observation procedure was adopted. Richards and Farrell (2005) describe field notes as "brief descriptions in note form of key events that occurred throughout the lesson" (p.89). This kind of observation procedure gives the observer the flexibility to focus and comment on various points. In particular, teachers who answered the open ended interview questions about their practices of CELTA techniques were observed to see if their answers were consistent.

2.4. Data Analysis Procedure

For this study, both quantitative and qualitative data were achieved. The quantitative data was supplementary in that it would help to explain the case from the qualitative research framework.

After the administration of the survey, the participants' ratings for the multiple-choice questions were added up and the mean scores were calculated. For the open-ended questions in the survey, the most recurring items (in the form of ideas or phrases) were detected and categorized. As for the qualitative data obtained from interviews, all the audio records were transcribed and translated into English. In the transcripts, the most recurring words /sentences were selected to be grouped into thematic units. Then, this data were interpreted through pattern coding based on the framework suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (2003). After the initial step of open coding, with the careful examination of existing data, the most recurring patterns (especially the ones that each participant mentioned) were identified as subthemes. Taking these themes into consideration, categorization of the data was followed. Main categories were arranged according to their level of relevance to the research questions whereas subcategories were elaborated on to support the main findings. Similarly, field notes taken during observations were organized and grouped. All observation notes were compared with the other collected data as well as themes and finally interpreted.

3. Results

3.1. Findings about the Applicability and Practicability of CELTA in the Turkish Context

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), as underpinned by the CELTA course according to O'Connor (2011), student participation, pair and group activities are important elements for participant teachers. Approximately 63% of the teachers and instructors think that CLT is very much important in their classrooms. Being one of the best ways to practice CLT, pair and group work activities are equally important for them. This is confirmed by the classroom observation made. During those observations, the teachers tried to practice these activities as much as they could whether in the form of letting students check their answers in pairs or grouping students to perform a task such as completing a worksheet.

However, participant teachers acknowledged difficulties of practicing pair and group works within the classroom. One of the difficulties that half of the teachers and instructors that were interviewed stated repetitively was that Turkish student profile was not suitable for this kind of communicative activities. They told that when they tried to apply a pair or group work, students thought that they could talk to their peers freely without dealing too much with the activity. The reason that participants came up with was that Turkish education system does not give students much opportunity to involve in pair or group work to complete a task. The exam-based system forces students to sit down, listen to the teacher and complete written activities or tests individually. About this issue, one of the instructors made the following comment:

Turkish students come to university having studied and passed the exam [the university entrance exam] and prior to the university, they have already been accustomed to being passive listeners during all the courses. When communicative activities are adopted, students regard the situation as an authority gap, which leads to problems in classroom management. (EFL I2)

Another point mentioned in the interviews was the difficulty of monitoring students during pair and group work activities because of large class sizes. Generally, interviewees revealed that CELTA techniques could be practiced in the lesson when they were appropriate. The point that they all agreed was that practicing such techniques mostly depended on many

variables, such as student profile, group profile, motivation, the attitude of students towards the lesson and lesson objectives.

As for the techniques to be elaborated on in the questionnaire, lesson planning and delivering a lesson in stages constituted two of the main objectives of the CELTA course, which were assessed by their outcomes at teaching practices. More than half of the teachers (by 58.53%) agreed that their lessons generally followed stages, such as presentation, practice, and produce.. In the classrooms observed, either there was no warm-up or no time left for freer practice activities at the end of lessons.

Although EFL teachers concurred that they used concept checking questions to explain language points in the CELTA questionnaire (53.65%), 3 of the teachers interviewed and observed hardly ever applied concept checking questions (CCQs) and instruction checking questions (ICQs). Apart from the necessity of preparing these questions before lessons which causes extra work for EFL teachers, both CCQs and ICQs were seen as threats to students' presence in the classroom by the instructors. Below are the comments made by the participants:

CCQs and especially ICQs pretend students are idiots. Activities are always the same. Students already know what to do. (EFL Instructor 1, personal communication, February 13, 2015)

CCQs and ICQs are ridiculous. They are threats to 'coolness' of students. No matter how well you explain an activity or a language point, a student is going to ask their friends who sit next to them [in their native language]. (EFL Instructor 2, personal communication, February 13, 2015)

In the classroom observations, few incidents of concept checking questions were seen. However, they did not seem to work for students. Students kept asking the person next to them what the teacher was talking about, inevitably in Turkish.

Approximately 51% of the teachers believed that they provided accurate and appropriate models of language in their classrooms. 24 EFL teachers also strongly agreed that they were able to clarify forms of language to their students. These statements were confirmed in classroom observation sessions.

The answers about teaching word and sentence stress, intonation and pronunciation were diverse. 14 EFL teachers indicated that teaching word and sentence stress as well as intonation were important in their lessons. However, results were not significant; there were also EFL teachers and instructors who thought that these aspects of language were not of importance.

The CELTA course covers effective use of course books; giving teacher trainees' self-confidence and methods about adapting a course book according to learner needs and desires. In response to the related question in the survey, majority of the participants (41.46%) agreed that they used various course books confidently in their English lessons. 39% of them strongly agreed that statement whereas 17% of them did not have an exact idea about it. In the observed lessons of EFL teachers, no proper course book was used: either worksheets or learner packs were utilized.

As for another technique to focus on, error correction is an essential part of input sessions and teaching practice in this short teacher training course. In the teacher survey, both spoken and written error correction were addressed. The same number of participants (22) agreed that they could identify spoken and written errors and provide students with remedial activities to correct these errors. However, more participants (18) were confident that they could identify written errors and treat them than participants who could identify spoken errors (14). During the whole observation period, various techniques of error correction were seen.

When asked about the techniques that they wished to learn, teachers' answers differed widely. Although they were satisfied with the content of the course overall, they admitted they wished to learn about following topics more: teaching grammar, testing and assessment, teaching academic writing and classroom management. Another topic that was expected to be covered was teaching young learners. Though young learner extension to CELTA was brought up, a teacher remarked that in order to take that extension they had to pass CELTA and added that it did not make sense why a teacher wanting to teach young learners would be obliged to take a course that was meant to be for adult learners initially.

Participant teachers acknowledged that the CELTA course had both strong and weak spots. They expressed their satisfaction in terms of encouraging team work and collegiality among teacher trainees in the course. Experienced teachers said that with the help of the course, they were able to understand the notion behind the techniques they were already practicing. Two of the EFL teachers explained that supportive, inspiring and experienced tutors were one of the strong points of the course. Having both theoretical and practical knowledge within the same course was the strength of CELTA. On the other hand, teachers discussed the points that made them suffer during the course. Foremost of them was the intensity of it, which caused a huge pressure upon the teacher trainees. Some of the teachers who were interviewed took the course on part-time mode; still all of them wished that the course took longer but less intensive.

Considering the applicability and practicability of the CELTA course, participant teachers seemed to have concerns about it. Each teacher focused on different aspects of the Turkish context and CELTA methodology. One of the points that interviewees mentioned was the workload of teachers. In CELTA course, each lesson has to be planned and delivered carefully. However, in a K-12 school, with 24 up to 30 hours of teaching per week, it is impossible to plan each lesson, which eventually leads teachers to stick to the course book only. Even if teachers want to include more activities that will address students' needs, they can hardly ever do extra-curricular activities due to time limitations.

Another point made was the assessment of students. One of the participant teachers drew attention to this issue by highlighting the discrepancies between CELTA and Turkish education system. In the CELTA course, the assessment is based on the process, but in Turkey, especially in K-12 schools, students are assessed based on the scores in exams. When students finally reach university level, they have already got used to exam-based teaching in their schools and they want to carry on the way they were taught before. Therefore, as the participant instructors complained, these Turkish students whose goal is to score high in any upcoming exam do not enjoy or understand the way that CELTA is imposing.

Also, teachers mentioned that in the CELTA course, a perfect classroom environment was presented. In their teaching practices at the course, their classrooms consisted of maximum 15 people, all motivated and aware of their purpose to learn English. However, in K-12 and schools of language at universities, student profile rarely matches the description above. Classrooms have more students in number, not very motivated and more apt to speak in L1. In these circumstances, teachers confessed that it was very difficult to apply communicative techniques in that it was harder to monitor, motivate and control students.

Considering all the conflicts above, it is possible to claim that teachers apply techniques from the course, which was also agreed by the participants, as approximately 61% of them concurs the teaching strategies suggested on their CELTA course were useful in their English

classrooms, but adopting the whole structure of the course was very difficult, inferring from the teacher interviews.

3.2. Findings about the Possible Changes in EFL Teachers after CELTA from Their Perspectives

Approximately 46% of the teachers marked the statement that their CELTA course played a very big role in helping them to be an efficient teacher whereas almost 49% of them stated that the course helped them a fair amount. To sum up, 39 of 41 participants think their CELTA course has helped them to be a more efficient teacher after all. Likewise, nearly 53% of the participants shared the thought that their CELTA course prepared them for their first teaching post after the course fairly well and 45% of them thought it prepared them fully. Out of 41 participants, there was only 1 participant who thought their CELTA course did not prepare them for the next teaching post at all.

All of the teachers that were interviewed agreed that the CELTA course boosted their self-confidence as a teacher. In the face-to-face interviews, teachers were asked if the CELTA course helped them overcome the difficulties that they encountered. Three of the teachers stated that it helped them while dealing with some difficulties, causing them to abandon their habits. For instance, one teacher stated that she reduced teacher talking time (TTT) and avoided unnecessary repetitions. One teacher admitted CELTA helped her pay attention to time management and lesson planning. Another teacher stated this course helped her in adapting herself to new teaching contexts. It took less time for her to get used to different teaching methods (she used to teach English using ESL course books, but at the time she was teaching English using English novels). Besides, she acknowledged that she became more confident and comfortable in lesson planning and material preparation. It is obvious that through the provision of theoretical and practical knowledge, CELTA course is useful in reflecting what EFL teachers' insufficiencies are.

Considering the language teaching method adopted, teachers were required to answer the question about comparing their teaching styles before and after the CELTA course. All of them agreed that more communicative activities were now included.

Academically, teachers brought up applying some techniques they learnt in the course that they had not even heard of. As for the social changes in teachers, all of the interviewees agreed on the idea that this course made them more collaborative as it encouraged team work. They liked that they could see and learn from the experiences of other teachers' with different backgrounds. Teachers were also asked about their previous and current employers' approaches to them and whether they felt privileged as CELTA graduates. Responses to this question were various. Depending on the institutions they were at, some of the participants received a raise or promotion, but some did not. On the other hand, the conditions of instructors at the private foundation university are different. They admitted that the certificate helped them before taking the job and while working as an EFL instructor. Apparently, at the university level, teacher training certificates like CELTA is more appreciated and supported financially and professionally. However, at K-12 level schools, either teacher training certificates like CELTA are not known or they are not valued.

It is worth mentioning that the personal and contextual changes that EFL teachers and instructors noticed before and after the course depended on their declarations. There is no evidence of these participants' beliefs and tendencies before the CELTA course; therefore, an objective comparison between their pre-CELTA and post-CELTA attitudes cannot be made.

Briefly, teachers noticed changes in themselves in many aspects. It boosted their self-confidence, helped them see and treat their errors in teaching, enabled them to learn more about practical strategies and find out more about other teachers' experiences, all of which seemed to make positive contributions to these teachers.

3.3. Findings about the Necessity of Taking CELTA from Employers' Perspectives

Discussing the impact of CELTA course on EFL teachers and how short teacher training courses like CELTA contributed to teaching styles of teachers, participants recognized their contributions in many ways emphasizing the nature of the course which brought theory and practice together. Also, they admitted that as the first step of the teaching profession, it provided EFL teacher candidates an insight into teaching. This discussion brought about some criticism, as well. The common concern among the administrators was that EFL teachers should not only depend on what were taught in the course.

Participant administrators were asked about benefits and advantages of the short teacher training courses, especially of CELTA. Each participant pointed to a different benefit of the course such as receiving input, opportunity to practice teaching, improving awareness, developing lesson planning skills and adopting various activities according to learners' profiles. Apart from the benefits of these courses, possible negative effects of them were also discussed. One commonly mentioned problem was that CELTA created an illusion about teaching skills of teacher candidates and whoever completed it assumed that they have become EFL teachers. Some of the participants admitted that they had the chance to observe teachers during their regular teaching hours. They were asked if teachers with CELTA certificate could reflect its methodology to their actual lessons, if so, to what extent they were observable. All of the participants who observed those teachers agreed that those teachers' lessons included some features of the CELTA training.

Building on these points, administrators were asked to compare EFL teachers with CELTA certificate and EFL teachers without it. All of the responses were in favour of CELTA-holding EFL teachers. Their superiority relates to a variety of features. Some of them were explained by the participants as such: CELTA holders were more creative, better at lesson planning and staging, adapting suitable activities to their classes, better at understanding learners' needs, probably the foremost of all was that they had more awareness and better insight into teaching. Participant administrators were required to evaluate the contribution of CELTA holding teachers to their institutions. Although this contribution was considered as results of individual efforts of these teachers, changing the perception of English language learning in learners' minds could be regarded as the most important of them.

The participant directors made comments on the CELTA courses in Turkey and their functionality in the Turkish context. First of all, the reason why the CELTA course became so popular in Turkey and among Turkish EFL teachers and teacher trainees was asked. Each participant explained in different ways. Head of the foreign languages department at private K-12 schools think that CELTA is useful for professional development and they prefer teachers with CELTA. This is the reason why teacher candidates are eager to take it. Also, they provide easy access to teaching. It was mentioned that the number of CELTA holder teachers has been increasing; accordingly the perception of CELTA by EFL teachers and teacher trainees is

changing as well. It was stated that CELTA was converted into a key element for EFL teachers in order to be employed at school with better opportunities and benefits.

Lastly, participants were requested to share their opinions about the position of CELTA in the Turkish context. This question also shed light on the topic about the applicability of CELTA methodology in Turkish CELTA graduates' classrooms. Even if CELTA was not addressed in the legislation of MEB (Ministry of National Education) it brought unity in teaching because it had international recognition, as one of the participants explained. As another director claimed, CELTA was like a "free pass" for teachers. She added that when teachers had this certificate, the doors of many schools were open to them regardless of their being native or non-native teachers.

4. Discussion

As a result of carefully examined data, it can be said that the applicability of CELTA methodology is quite limited. EFL teachers were able to practice some of the techniques that they learnt at their course; however, they admitted that applying all the techniques in their own classrooms was almost impossible. One of the reasons why this seemed impossible to the teachers was that the context was completely different from the one at the CELTA course.

Considering all the findings, EFL teachers / instructors in this study encountered many obstacles in their actual classrooms that were not an issue at their CELTA courses. Some of these issues were motivating reluctant students, dealing with a high number of students in one classroom, administrative duties to complete, the obligation to assess students and preparing them for big scale exams. Besides, not many of them taught adults after the course, there were many teachers who teach young learners and young adults after CELTA, which made the transition process even harder. The change of context was discussed by O'Connor (2011) as well. She claims that when newly qualified teachers encounter different teaching situations, such as teaching young learners, they "revert to using teaching models from their own school days" (p. 253). This was also mentioned by one of the directors by indicating that when the classroom at the CELTA course and their own classrooms where they work did not match, teachers had a tendency to leave what they learnt at the course and start to teach like how their own EFL teachers taught at their high school.

Because there is no previous research on the applicability and suitability of CELTA course in the Turkish context similar to this one, the results of this study cannot be compared or contrasted with any research conducted in Turkey. Instead, practice of Communicative Language Teaching, the framework of CELTA, in Turkish K12 schools was investigated by several researchers. For instance, Bal (2006) came to the conclusion that due to excessive lesson burden and the setting at their schools, EFL teachers faced some constraints in the application of CLT. One of them was that due to large class sizes, teachers had to deal with classroom management issues. Likewise, in Ozsevik's (2010) study, constraints to use CLT in Turkish classes were elaborated on based on participant teachers' statements. The results achieved were categorized under four titles: Teacher-related difficulties, student-related difficulties, difficulties and challenges related to the educational system and CLT-related difficulties. This study and Ozsevik's study showed resemblance in that both studies reached the same conclusion that due to many constraints led by large class sizes along with the exam-focused student profile, the practice of CELTA methodology, or rather CLT, was extremely limited.

It seems that as long as the threat of an exam at the end of a learning process is there, students' common goal is to score high in that particular exam and aim of learning English to communicate is ignored. The assessment system should be revised in order to get students fully

perform in English. Otherwise, adapting CELTA methodology does not go beyond practicing a couple of techniques in the EFL classrooms. Additionally, it was observed that EFL teachers / instructors felt self-confident right after CELTA. The course boosted their self-confidence in that surviving such an intensive programme and being able to put theory into practice in the course made them satisfied with the training.

As for the personal change, all the participants emphasized how CELTA strengthened team work. The sense of collegiality and bond among fellow EFL teachers were established thanks to this course. This was also expressed by the participants of O'Connor's (2011) study. They emphasized the positive atmosphere in the workplace and collaboration between colleagues eased the jobs of these EFL teachers, especially in their transition period. She indicates that support from workplace and colleagues help teachers to develop socially and professionally. Unlike Sag's (2013) study, the participant teachers stated having a full confidence in themselves about the language competence. Sag evaluated this handicap as a factor to decrease self-confidence as the focus of Sag's study where NNESTs might have felt that way under the influence of the inevitable comparison they were most probably making between themselves and the NESTs, but the participants in this study expressed confidence related to language competence, which was proved by the teacher survey.

Finally, not only EFL teachers but also administrators found CELTA useful. They agreed that EFL teachers should not rely only on what they were taught at the course. CELTA is a good step to start, but this process is never ending. There is no doubt that CELTA contributes to prospective or current EFL teachers a great deal, yet this should be followed by more in-depth training or education in their weaknesses in teaching, or in response to the need they felt to improve themselves professionally.

5. Conclusion

This study has examined the general perception of CELTA in Turkey, particularly the applicability and suitability in the Turkish context, how this short teacher training course influence EFL teachers after completing it and if CELTA has any impact on employers in an EFL teaching job application. That is to say, it provides a general image of CELTA journey in Turkey from its graduates and from experts in ELT. The analysis of all the data demonstrates that CELTA is a favourable starting-point in ELT and is regarded as an advantage by employers and its holders. However, the CELTA graduates cannot fully practice CELTA methodology in their classrooms due to some institutional and curricular constraints. These constraints either derive from the policies of institutions, such as too much lesson burden of EFL teachers, which make the preparation and application harder; tight syllabi so that EFL teachers / instructors should make an extra effort to keep up with daily schedule and omit communicative activities that they were taught at CELTA; or more generally, from the policies of the Turkish education system. It sets the goals based on the success at exams. The achievements of students in English are measured with written exams, which enable students to shift their focus on how to score high at these exams rather than how to communicate successfully.

In short, general perception of CELTA in Turkey is positive from EFL teachers' and instructors' points of view as well as administrators' points of view. However, there is a dilemma in that EFL teachers / instructors value this certificate programme more than the administrators. Teachers believe that CELTA helps them find and secure a job, but administrators regard it as a

plus in terms of professional development. In this respect, this study demonstrates a divergence of the perception of CELTA from two sides of education.

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Appendix A

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS WITH CELTA HOLDER EFL TEACHERS

1. After your CELTA course, did you feel supported by the institution that you took CELTA at and/or by the institution that you worked at?
 2. Did your CELTA course help you to overcome difficulties that you have encountered after this training? How?
 3. Could you describe how confident you felt about class management after CELTA?
 4. Could you explain what language approach you adopted in your classroom before and after CELTA course?
 5. Did your CELTA training make you a more confident teacher generally?
 6. Did you find any dilemmas and / or similarities between the mentalities of British context and Turkish context?
 7. Considering a random lesson that you have taught, to what extent could you apply CELTA techniques?
 8. What kind of changes did you see in yourself as a teacher before and after CELTA course? Please explain professionally, socially and academically.
 9. From the perspective of a CELTA graduate, what are the strengths and shortcomings of this short teacher training course?
 10. How were your previous and current employers' approaches to you as a CELTA graduate? Do you think this certificate put you ahead of other teachers?
 11. What was the reason of taking a CELTA course? Did it fulfil any of your expectations?
 12. Are there any topics that you wish to have been taught at the CELTA course?
 13. Are there any aspects of the CELTA course that you do not think useful while teaching?
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Appendix B

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS WITH ADMINISTRATORS

1. How many CELTA graduates have you hired until now? How many of them are still working at your institution?
2. How do you think short teacher training courses like CELTA contribute to teaching styles of teachers?
3. What sorts of benefits and threats do short teacher training courses provide for teachers?
4. Does your institution provide any in-service teacher training courses for its teachers?
5. What are your thoughts on the place of CELTA in the Turkish context?
6. Why do you think CELTA courses became popular amongst teachers and institutions?
7. Describe a perfect CV for the teaching position in your institution.
8. Do the passing grades of CELTA graduates (Pass, Merit or Distinction) matter to you?
9. What are the discrepancies between a CELTA graduate and a non-CELTA graduate?
10. How do teachers who did CELTA contribute to your institution?
11. Is a CELTA certificate preferable when hiring teachers? Why?
12. Do you have a chance to observe teachers who did CELTA in their classrooms? If you did, how do they practice CELTA methodology?
13. How close is the mentality of CELTA to your institution's teaching policy?

Appendix C

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION FORM

Instructor:	Date:
Course No.:	Time:
Course Title:	Course Level:
Reviewer:	No. Students:
PART 1 Classroom Management	
Part 2 Language Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Pair and Group Work</u>• <u>Student Participation</u>• <u>Lesson Planning, Stages and Material Preparation</u>• <u>Use of Concept Check Questions and Instruction Check Questions</u>• <u>Teacher's Model of Language</u>• <u>Focus on Pronunciation and Intonation</u>• <u>Variety of Activities</u>• <u>Use of Coursebook</u>• <u>Feedback and Error Correction</u>	
Part 3 Other Notes	