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EFL TEACHERS' CONCEPTIONS OF TEACHING GRAMMAR

THESIS BY

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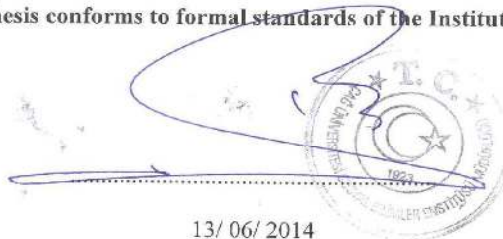


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II

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13.06.2014
Dilber MADENSOY

DEDICATION

To my mother...

ÖZET

İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN GRAMER ÖĞRETİMİ ÜZERİNE

ALGILARI

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Gramer öğretimi, dil öğretiminde en önemli hususlardan bir tanesidir çünkü öğrencilerin uygun bir şekilde hedef dili kullanımını etkiler. Öğretmenlerin grameri öğretimi ve kullandıkları gramer yapılarını pratik yöntemleri, onların tecrübesinin, yaşının, cinsiyetinin, diğer birçok etmenle aldıkları eğitimin doğal sonucudur. Başka önemli bir faktör ise öğretmenlerin grameri nasıl en iyi şekilde öğretebilirim yargısına karşın sahip oldukları algılarıdır.

Türkiye’ de bu alanda birçok çalışma yapılmasına rağmen, öğretmenlerin gramerin öğretimi ve dilde kullanımına dair kavrayışları henüz açığa çıkarılmamıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı öğretmenlerin gramer öğretimi ve bunla ilişkili olarak gramer yapılarının kullanımı üzerindeki algılarını keşfetmektir. Bu çalışma aynı zamanda öğretmenlerin dilin bir parçası olarak gramer öğretimini ne kadar önem verdiklerini de göstermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma Zirve Üniversitesi’nin Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu bölümünde görev yapmakta olan 49 İngilizce okutmanı üzerinde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Öğretmenlerin gramer öğretimine dair algıları hakkında bilgi toplamak amacıyla bir tutum anketi uygulanmıştır.

Bu çalışmada kullanılan anket Abdullah Nemah Ayyash Ezzi’nin 2011’ de Yemen’ de kullandığı bir çalışmadan alınmıştır. Toplanan bilgi Sosyal Bilimler İstatistik Programına girilmiştir.

Çalışma, İngilizce okutmanlarının İngilizce öğretiminde gramerin bir role sahip olduğu görüşüne lakin gramerin dil eğitiminde temel bir vasfa sahip olmadığına inandıkları yönündedir. Aynı zamanda, gramerin dil ediniminde temel amaç olarak düşünmemelerine rağmen, hocaların gramer öğretirken izlediği yol ve tutumlar

gramerin dilden ayrılamayacağı ve gramerin ayrı bir yetenek alanı olarak kabul edilmemesi yönündedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Gramer Öğretimi; Öğretmen Algısı; Gramer Yapıları.

ABSTRACT

EFL TEACHERS' CONCEPTIONS OF TEACHING GRAMMAR

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Teaching grammar is one of the most important aspects in language education because it affects the learners' appropriate use of the target language. The ways that teachers use to present structural patterns and practices come out of their experiences, ages, genders, or the language teacher education that they have gotten as well as many other aspects. Another important factor that has an effect on the ways the language teachers use in teaching grammar is their personal beliefs as to how best to teach the languages. Despite many studies that have been implemented on this field up to now, the beliefs of EFL teachers about presenting and practicing grammatical structures have not been revealed clearly especially in Turkey. The aim of this study was to discover EFL teachers' conceptions about grammar teaching and its practices. This study also aimed to show to what extent EFL teachers give importance to teaching of grammar as part of English language teaching.

This study was conducted with 49 EFL teachers working at Preparatory School of Zirve University. A belief questionnaire was used to collect information about teacher beliefs on presenting and practicing grammatical structures. The questionnaire used in this study was an adapted version of Nemah Abdullah Ayyash Ezzi done in Yemeni by him in 2012.

The data was subjected to Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). This study showed teachers believe that grammar has a part in English language education, but it does not have primary function. The classroom practices they used in teaching grammar also showed it is an integral part of the target language, and it must

not be regarded, as a separate skill from the language even if they do not think grammar is the chief goal of the language learning.

Key words: Teaching Grammar, Teachers' Conceptions, Grammatical Structures.

ABBREVIATIONS

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

ELT: English Language Teaching

GTM: Grammar Translation Method

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

SFL: School of Foreign Languages

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CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION

The goal of this study is to find out EFL instructors' conceptions of presenting and practicing grammatical structures in English language teaching. This chapter presents the background of the study, the statement of the problem and the purpose of the study. Then the research questions, the limitations of the study and the definitions of the terms are pointed out.

1.1. Background of the Study

The place of grammar in ELT has been discussed for many years by various academics and linguists (e.g. see Thornburry, 2001, Celce- Murcia, 1991, Mukminien, 2008, Newby, 2003). Hence, as you guess, the ideas that put forward are changeable from one to another. For instance, Ezzi (2012) says that if your teaching method depends on structural syllable, “grammar has the chief place in communicative language teaching” (p. 170). On the other hand, according to Male (2011), there are two sides: “proponents of grammar and anti- grammar” (p. 58). The proponents of grammar teaching say that grammar must be the main focus of language acquisition while anti- grammar argues that grammar should totally be wiped out from the language, as they believe learners can get through the grammar via natural settings and real-life situations. Teaching grammar had been central to foreign language teaching, even equaled with it till 1940s under the roof of Grammar Translation Method (GTM) nearly for more than 25 centuries (Rutherford, 1987), but even after Audio- Lingual and Situational Language Teaching came out, grammar instruction still had an important part (Male, 2011). However, in the late 1970s, “By most, it was asserted that learning grammar was unessential, even they thought that utmost grammar knowledge could affect language acquisition in a bad way” (Nassaj & Fotos, 2004, p. 126). Since that time, instruction of grammar has been at the center of many discussions (Male, 2011). Schmidt (1990, 1993, 2001) puts forward that being aware of the grammatical patterns is needed to learn a second language.

Even there have been some researchers who question Schmidt's idea. However, some researchers such as Bialystok & Hakuta (1994, 1999), Bygate, Skehan, & Swain (2001) and De-Keyser, (1998) mostly agree on the importance of awareness raising activities with regards to teaching grammatical structures.

Moreover, Norris and Ortega (2000) add that presenting the structures, describing and exemplifying them with examples rather than being in real communicative settings provide the learners with substantial gains. From a different point of view, Krashen (1993) defines the effects of grammar instruction as “peripheral and fragile” (p. 725), which means that explicit instruction is not effective to activate the underlying “unconscious language comprehension and production” (Nassaji and Fotos, 2004, p. 129). As well as Krashen (1999), Truscott (1996, 1998) is against implicit grammar instruction as he finds effects of it short and shallow, and this may harm “authentic language knowledge ” (p. 120). However, N. Ellis (2002) Basically, language is learnt implicitly, and this is provided thanks to long-time practicing and playing around the language (p. 175).

Takahashi (2005) states: the learners just can carry out easy daily life tasks, they cannot perform practical-grammatical functions of the language except for ordering superficial greetings, or ordering at a restaurant; as a result, he believes in the necessity of forms in language acquisition (p. 232).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Turkish teachers generally have to follow a textbook. The textbooks are changeable from university to university. In some books grammar is presented via contexts, in others the structural rules are given directly.

Day by day, grammar activities are more contextualized in course books. Still, it is somehow observed that there is a great deal of instructors in favor of teaching grammar directly without practicing as required. Thus, when teachers mostly knuckle down to rote teaching of grammar rules, their methodology and techniques may not prove to be effective (Ezzi, 2012, Mohammed, 2006). As a result, learners cannot acquire the target language to use in writing and speaking as required.

At Zirve University among the instructors, teaching grammar deductively remains as a feature of language learning process. They generally ignore linguistic functions, concentrate on the structures and the rules; therefore, the university students cannot use the target language communicatively. That is, language teachers generally do not incorporate grammar items in other skills. Learners can affirm a rule, yet cannot integrate the rules with speaking or writing. They make lots of mistakes, which cause misunderstandings in communication. For this reason, by the time we

understand bottom ideas of instructors on to what extent grammar matters in teaching a language, then we will be able to find out what kind of conception affect their classroom practices (Ezzi, 2010, p. 172).

1. 3. Purpose of the Study

Via this research, it is desired to be able to explore how grammar matters in teaching a foreign language, and correspondingly why they are employing the methods, techniques and strategies during their courses in the classroom environment. It also aims to find out teachers' real classroom practices of teaching grammar at Zirve University preparatory school.

1. 4. Research Questions

The study and research questions that I used are similar to the many studies applied out of Turkey like Mohamed (2006, p. 62) and Ezzi (2012, p. 172).

What is wanted to be discovered is addressed by the questions just below: "What do EFL instructors think about the place of grammar in the language acquisition? What kind of practices are they using while teaching grammar?"

1. 5. Limitations of the Study

There are some limitations of this study, even if results are beneficial for the sake of English language education. One limitation of this study was small number of participants, which were 49 teachers. Another limitation is that this study was implemented only at one university, Zirve University in Gaziantep. Therefore, the findings of the study may not represent the whole group of teachers working across Turkey.

1.6. Operational Definitions

Grammar: “It is the features of a language” (Alvarez, 2010, p. 14).

Teachers’ Conceptions: “They are the concepts that are effective in explaining why some disciplines exist.” (Nespore, 1987, p. 326).

Deductive Approach: “In this approach, the rules are presented explicitly, and the emphasis is not on the getting in the language implicitly” (Krashen, 1987, 2002, cited in Widodo, 2006, p. 128).

Inductive Approach: According to Widodo (2006), this approach means learning the rules subconsciously, and it is like acquiring his/her first or second language as a child.

Method: Methods are the ways that teachers get help during their teaching process. (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. ix).

Implicit Grammar Instruction: In implicit instruction teacher tries to raise consciousness and awareness of students to infer the rules from give examples by providing natural exposure to the target language (Brown, 2007).

Explicit Grammar Instruction: In explicit grammar instruction the teacher explains the rules of grammatical structures (DeKeyser, 1995).

CHAPTER II

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter starts with an explanation of teaching grammar and its historical background. Then, it discusses the two main approaches to teaching grammar. Finally, it focuses on competence and performance in teaching and learning grammar.

2.1. Teaching Grammar

Grammar instruction has gained a great fame in the field of language pedagogy (Nassaji & Fotos, 2004). As for Batstone & Ellis (2009), language-teaching scholars have defined grammar as a focal point in language learning thanks to efforts of both teachers and students. Grammar has an intricate basis and its teaching and learning has brought about inconsistencies and complicated issues in education (Dekeyser, 1995).

Inceptions of new psychological theories or methods have put grammar in the limelight while dismissal or break down of theories has led to its desertion (Borg, 1999). There have been times grammar has been seen as pivotal to language instruction and times when it has been disregarded. With this in mind, it seems that language teachers have established distinctive views on grammar (Alijanian, 2012). According to Ellis (2006), teachers need to teach grammar in such a way that the process should take attention of students so that learners can understand the forms and never forget what they have been taught (p. 84). Moreover, Ellis (2006) shows some basic points in teaching grammar:

First, some grammar lessons may be presented without practice as others may just entail practice without presentation. Second, students can also learn the grammar not just for passing the classes, but to be competent in the language for the benefit of themselves. Last, exposing students to input can help the students to learn the grammatical structures easily as they will be able to witness to an abundance of samples. Here, there is also not any presentation or practice. Finally, while students are carrying out some linguistic tasks, their mistakes can be corrected during the feedback session. (p. 84).

Indeed, there still exist debates on whether grammar must be taught or not. The supporters for grammar teaching together with the opponents have their own

arguments to back up their own ideas. For instance, according to Thornburry (2001), grammar knowledge provides the learners with the means for potentially infinite linguistic creativity. It is clear that getting the knowledge of grammar likely will be helpful to produce a great number of the new- formed sentences (Mukminatien, 2008, p. 81). As well as sentence-making machine, Mukminatien (2008) also says grammar is central because it plays an important role to increase the awareness communicative side of the language (p.81). This does not happen to the learners with no grammar knowledge. The opponents of grammar teaching defends that the ultimate aim of acquiring language is achieving communication skills. They support that linguistic skills ought to be gained by means of experiential learning or learning by doing, not by cognitive approach (Dewey, 1938). If educators see their present experiences as valuable for the their further education life, they may make a great benefit for the advent of linguistic acquisition. They may face problems such as evaluating their actions in the classroom and take lessons from those experiences (Dewey, 1938).

As for Krashen (1981, cited in Hurd and Lewis, 2008, p. 148), you can learn the language consciously or unconsciously. This means that when you are aware of the rules of the language, it may hinder the communicative competence; however, the latter one consists of factors that are including natural acquisition of the language. The opponents of grammar teaching emphasize communicative competence underestimating linguistic competence of the target language. For Omaggio (1986, cited in Mukminatien 2008, p. 83) pointed out, the more knowledge of grammar you have, communicative competence shows that the better you communicate in the language; however, linguistic competence means knowing the grammatical patterns. However, DeKeyser (1998) stated, the learning process requires some focus on form. (p. 42). In addition to others, Lock (1997, p. 267) says that there are certain pairings in teaching grammar which contend against each other; the most prominent being communication and grammar. Other examples would be form and function, or form and meaning competing for the emphasis.

2.2. Historical Background of Grammar and Teaching Grammar

“Along the history of second language teaching, the role of grammar has been an issue of controversy” (Mukminatien, 2008, p. 80, also see Richards, 2002). Thornbury (1999) argues: There is a long history of competing claims about the role

of teaching grammar including debate between theorists and practitioners. This has been one of the most pressing issues, which has divided teachers over the years (p.14). Prior to 1970s, it was assumed that one could not communicate without knowing grammar well. It was seen as being one of the most important aspects of instructions. (Ellis, 2006 cited in Silvia, 2013). This belief was later confronted by the notion that grasping language structure is seen as the basic tool for effective communication. (Richards & Renandya, 2002, p. 145). This means that a communicative speaker or writer will not only master language patterns, but also will be aware of how the rules put together in actual communication situation in order to convey the meaning. Canale and Swain (1980), for example, ability to communicate entails knowledge of grammar, social and linguistic awareness, and the purpose of your communication. There is no end to the debate on whether or not grammar is the key to communication. (Thornbury, 1999, p. 23). As mentioned before by Lock (1997, p. 267), there is constant strife amid communication and grammar over which is to be most vital.

The communicative side contends that language in and of itself is the medium and subject matter not forms (Mustapha & Yahaya, 2013, p. 790). This communicative approach was developed in Europe because of the language needs of immigrants, which led the Council of Europe to develop a syllabus for learner based on notional-functional concepts of language use (Savignon, 2001). Lindsay and Knight (2006, cited in Mustapha & Yayaha, 2012, p. 790) believe that this approach is based on the view that language is learnt in order to communicate effectively “in the world outside the classroom.” It stresses the meaningful use of language for communication, instead of the focus on form and structure; hence the term “real-life” communication in the classroom (Brown, 2000). Nguyen (2010) shows that in the classroom that focuses on language use for practical purposes like communicating in real situations tries to get the students to do the most of speaking and to produce the language. This type of approach is often referred to as communicative and putting the learners at the center.

(p. 209). Brown (2001, cited in Mustapha & Yahaya, 2008) advocates that learners demonstrate linguistic fluency and not just accuracy. He offers six interconnected characteristics of CLT: There are various competencies involved in learner-centered classroom including grammar, speech, purpose, setting and reason for

communication:

Learning how to do things that would be needed in every day life to accomplish tasks has a way of grabbing the attention of the learners,

Fluency and accuracy are complimentary principles underlying communicative techniques,

Language should be used productively and receptively,

The activities are learner-centered, and the learners focus on their own learning process,

The teacher's role is mainly as a facilitator to guide the learners in the interaction that takes

place in the classroom (p. 790).

According to Nguyen (2010, p. 209) learning the language by speaking it and engaging with others in dialogue is at the heart of the communicative approach.

The figure below summarizes what is meant by CLT (Mushapa&Yahaya, 2008, p. 90).

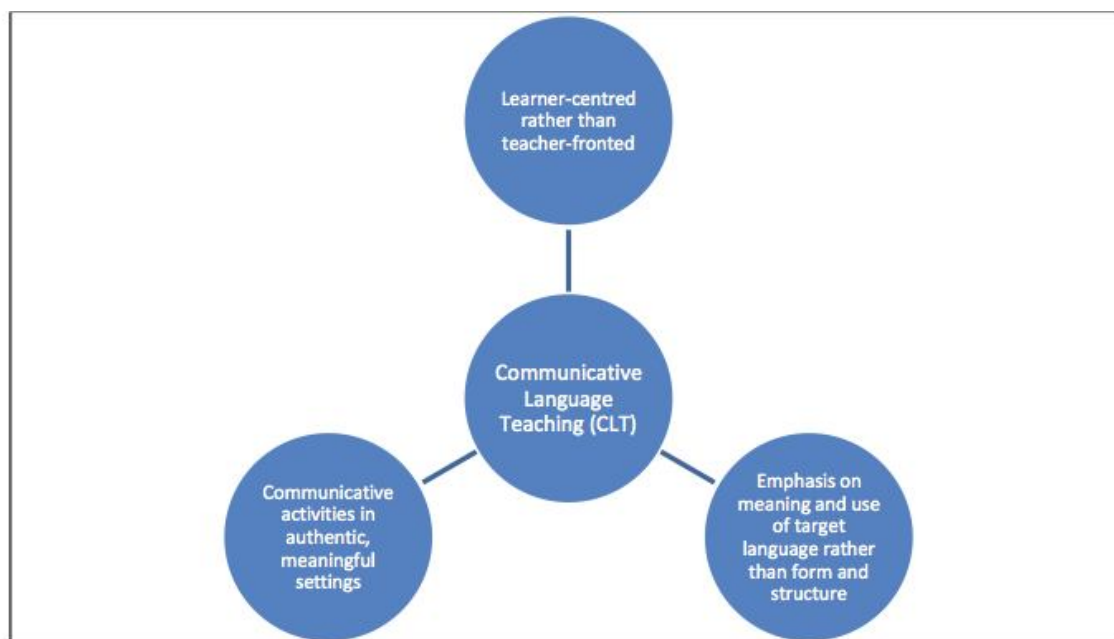


Figure 1. Characteristics of Communicative Language Teaching

According to Crandal (2000), theories tend to make approaches more abstract becoming doctrines instead of practices. Everyone is responsible for his or her own education (p.38).

As can be inferred, what is meant by post-communicative approaches is blending the approaches for the aim of acquiring the target language. Thus, it may be said that this requires the evolution of communicative approach. In this evolution of the process, “modifications in the input and in the interaction process” (Rama& Agullo, 2012, p.183) need to be integrated with explicit grammar teaching (Ortega, 2000 cited in Rama and Agullo 2012). They show this combination in the course of the time just below via Figure 2.

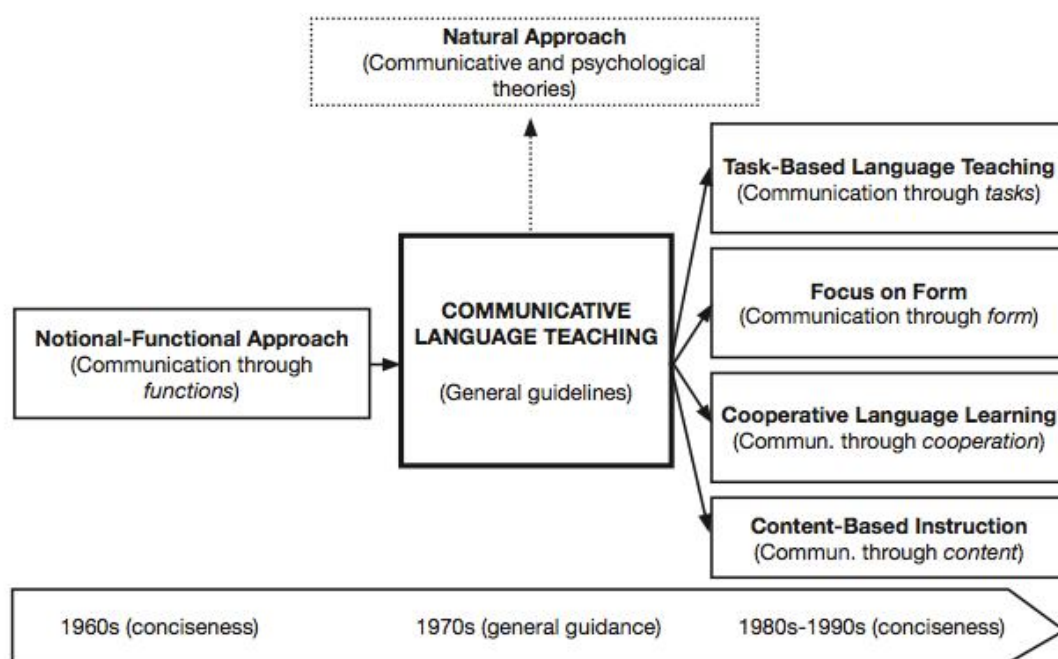


Figure 2. Evolution of Communicative Approaches (Rama and Agullo 2012,p.183)

Grammar structures are often introduced in the flow of natural communication and in this way highlighted or taught. (Rama& Agullo, 2012, p. 185). In Harmer's (1997) opinion, both direct and indirect grammar teaching is appropriate and necessary for learners. (p.7).

Richards and Rogers (2001) also put forward that the place of grammar and grammar teaching have changed in the course of time within approaches and methods: the following information explains *the methods, advantages and disadvantages of grammar*, which were deduced from Richards & Rogers (2001, cited in Silvia 2013 pp. 3, 4)

Grammar Translation Method (GMT) was the most popular method from nineteenth century until the mid of twentieth centuries, but still it is seen that this method has been applied in some language classrooms even if not so common as used to be. Teachers give instruction in the native language; they do not have to use target language. Main aim is to help students to acquire the grammatical patterns. The exercise, which the users of GMT mostly are applying, is translating sentences from the target language into the mother tongue. As might be expected, the communicative side linguistic acquisition is underestimated. As a result of the failure of Classical Method, the Direct Method was introduced. (Celce-Murcia, 1991). In this method, no native language is used. The focus of the lesson is generally emphasized through

contexts; the grammatical patterns are not given directly. Pictures and actions are used to make the meanings of the structures clear. In Audio-lingual method, language learning is viewed as habit formation. They assume repetition of language items helps effective oral production. For this reason, different types of drills are used for language practice. Errors of students are tried to be decreased to the least, but this may cause lower motivation among students to get the meaning. In this approach, language learning is viewed as the acquisition of linguistic rules (Celce-Murcia, 1991). The students learn the language inductively or deductively. Pronunciation is deemphasized; perfection is viewed as unrealistic (Celce-Murcia, 1991).

Natural Approach means acquiring language naturally. The students produce the target language whenever they get ready. They are not pushed to produce the language.

In Communicative Approach, the goal of language teaching is to establish in the learner the ability to communicate in the target language. Classroom materials and activities are often authentic to reflect real-life situations and demands (Celce-Murcia, 1991). As pointed above, how much to focus on grammar in language instruction has been an important concern in the history of foreign language teaching. In order to understand the rules of grammar, one must have been exposed to their forms, structures and functions (Ellis, 2006, p.102).

2.3. Two Main Approaches to Teaching Grammar

The place of grammar in foreign language education has been a controversial issue in the course of time. Many methods and approaches have been applied in order to teach grammatical patterns even if the roles of teachers have changed during the process. Sometimes, the former has been at the center of teaching such as an instructor, director, facilitator... etc. while the latter has been underestimated, but it is seen that the more time goes by the more needs of the learners are taken into consideration (e.g. see Ezzi 2012, Rama & Agullo, 2012, Hurd & Lewis, 2008). For instance, in our day I observe that the plans and the programs are arranged according to the students' needs and interests. Main focus is on how students' can acquire the target language in the best way. Thus, grammar is taught as an essential part of the language. As a teacher what I see is that instructors use either

deductive or inductive approach to teaching grammar. But, not every teacher agrees whether to use an inductive approach or the other one (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011).

2.3.1. Deductive Approach and Inductive Approach

There are two main processes that may happen during learning grammar, which are called explicit and implicit knowledge. As for Pupura (2004, p. 42), there is a combined influence between what one knows one has been exposed to and what one has been exposed to unaware, which exerts itself upon the mind when processing the language. This helps the learners' implicit knowledge, also it makes giving output easier. Even if it is sometimes automatized, explicit knowledge is generally acquired in slightly controlled process. DeKeyser (1995) shows that in explicit grammar instruction the teacher explains the rules of grammatical structures. Concluding from his idea, it can be said that rule presentation is related to "PPP (Presentation-Practice-Production) approach" (Jean & Smard, 2013, p. 1024). The language instruction can happen both deductively and inductively, which are changeable according to some forms or some students (DeKeyser, 1998). Widodo (2006) gives a student as an example, who knows and explains the rules, but he seriously struggles with speaking and writing. That is, in spite of explaining the rules deductively very well, he cannot implement the rules during speaking or writing as required. Further, implicit grammar knowledge points out naturally happening language acquisition such as in conversation or writing (Ellis, 2011). As with Ellis, Brown (2007, p. 291) also says "implicit knowledge involves conscious awareness and intention." He thinks that it happens without being aware of what has been learnt. The learner may not explain the rules, but s/ he can speak and write well despite not knowing the rules behind. Explicit grammar knowledge is generally instructed to second language learners, however native speakers mostly adopt implicit knowledge. As a conclusion, explicit and implicit grammar knowledge is closely associated with deductive and inductive approaches. There is a combined influence between what one knows one has been exposed to and what one has been exposed to unaware, which exerts itself upon the mind when processing the language. (Ellis, 2008, p. 125). Deductive approach to grammar teaching is generally called as rule based teaching; it starts with the presentation of rules, and then goes on with examples or drills (Thornburry, 2001). This is the approach used in Grammar Translation Method. Teaching follows the sequence of presentation, practice and production (Mukminiati, 2008). Many

grammatical rules can be explained in a simple and fast way than elicited from examples (Thornbury, 2001). Incorporating grammar rules in communication exercises becomes part of the speaking and listening experience where forms are used in multiple ways, repeated, reviewed and processed. (Jean & Semard, 2013).

The figure below gives a sample of deductive instruction:

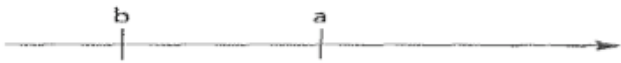
T: Right. The past perfect.	(cueing)
T: The past perfect is formed from the past of the auxiliary 'have', plus the past participle.	(rule of form)
T: For example, 'everyone had left', 'the film had started'.	(examples)
T: So, what's the past perfect of 'they go'?	(check)
ST: 'They had gone.'	
T: Good.	
T: It is used when you are talking about the past, and you want to refer to an earlier point in the past.	(rule of use)
T: For example, 'We were late. When we got to the cinema, the film had already started.'	(example)
T: Did the film start after we arrived, at the same time as we arrived, or before we arrived?	(check)
ST: Before.	
T: Right.	
T: So, it's like this. [draws]	
	
T: We arrived at this point in time (a). But I need to refer to an earlier point in the past, when the film started, here (b).	(illustration)

Figure 3. Example of Instruction in Deductive Grammar Teaching (Thornbury, 2002, p. 33)

According to Figure 3, the grammatical rules are given explicitly. The teacher explains the rules in detail, also gives examples. In the last step, s/he draws an illustration, and then again gives examples. Fortune (1992) asserts that this approach constituted the basic essentials and still incorporated in many courses and books. Deductive Approach still paves the way for the presentation process a teacher uses when introducing grammar and sentences, which illustrate specific grammar rules. (Widodo, 2006). The teachers explain the grammatical rules directly, so it is timesaving. Rules are clearly explained to the learners. It is easy to grasp the grammatical patterns for the ones who have analytical style. On the other hand, it may be hard to understand the grammar terminology. Also, as the teacher is at the center of

teaching, it may prevent students' participation into the lessons, it may decrease their motivation. As teachers explain the rules by presentation, it may not prove to be as effective as other ways, which are more memorable for instance, demonstration.

Inductive approach starts with examples, and then rules are inferred in contrast to deductive approach, which is also known as discovery learning (Thornburry, 2001). An inductive approach comes out of a reasoning progression going up to generalities (Felder & Henriques, 1995). Acquiring target language via inductive approach is not different from native speakers as they are not aware of the grammatical structures they are using during speaking. Hence, it can be said that this approach requires internalization of the rules without getting them directly. At first, the students are exposed to graspable language input, and then they get the rules subconsciously by giving central attention to the language forms. After that, they put out the language automatically and naturally through the process of hypothesis testing cycles along the stages of inter-language (Mukmunitain, 2008). Also, Brown (2001) states that it provides the learners more intrinsic motivation through discovery learning. Like him, Widodo (2006, p. 128) showed in his study that "the approach encourages a learner to develop her/his own mental set of strategies for dealing with tasks". The figure below gives an example of inductive approach taken from Thornburry (2002, p. 51).

Study these two sets of sentences:

a Chris has lived in Cape Town for ten years.
Andrew has been learning to drive for six months.

b Wendy has lived in Edinburgh since 1995.
David has been out of work since January.

They are then invited to choose *for* or *since* to complete the following sentences:

1 Anna has been married ____ seven years.
2 Jeff has been studying French ____ 1990.

This is fairly straightforward. The next three test items, however, challenge the learner to refine their initial hypotheses, since the clues are not so easy to interpret:

3 Chris and Jim have been together ____ a long time.
4 I have been living here ____ last summer.
5 They have been going out together ____ they met five weeks ago.

Figure 4. Example of Inductive Approach in Teaching Present Perfect Tense

In Figure 4, it is seen that the examples are given at first hand, and then the students are asked to fill in the blanks as to what they have driven from the examples.

In the last part, the task is harder since the clues are not so easy to interpret. Thus, students need to actively participate in their own instruction. The main focus of inductive approach is gaining the rules given by teacher implicitly. If you do not provide enough input, this approach will probably be insufficient in EFL context where English is not used outside the English class setting, and as a result it can be said that “it will work well only in the setting where there is sufficient language input” (Mukminaitain, 2008, p. 85).

With their advantages and disadvantages, both of the approaches relate to teaching/ learning processes in the second language acquisition. While you get the rules of the language directly in deductive approach, you acquire the rules subconsciously in inductive approach. Widodo (2006, p. 129) draw some conclusions adapting from Krashen’s acquisition/ learning hypothesis (1981, 2002).

Each approach has their own significance, so trying to choose which is best can cause long lasting discussions. Every person is unique; hence it is natural that each human being has a different learning style. This variety in cognitive styles may be related to different neurological mechanism in learners (Einstein, 1987). No matter in which way the grammar is thought inductively or deductively is it an estimated part of meaning and use (Ur, 1999).

2.4. Competence and Performance in Teaching and Learning Grammar

Even if we know the grammar of a foreign language, it does not mean that we are totally capable of producing the target language. To be able to perform the language, it is a need to be competent in using linguistic patterns. What I want to emphasize is that language proficiency factor is not equal to having a native-like command of the target language to be able to teach it. Richards (2011) shows that there are some abilities need to be had to teach a language effectively, this also includes teaching grammatical patterns. For instance, comprehending texts accurately, providing good language models, maintaining use of the target language are some of these abilities according to him. He believes that even if you are not a native speaker, you can carry out a lesson if you learn how to work out such kind of aspects. Otherwise, Medgyes (2001) puts forward that teachers who have not reached this level of proficiency will be more dependent on the textbooks. Also, Seidlhofer (1999) adds that perceiving himself or herself as weak in target language will reduce

confidence in her/his teaching ability. Of course, these abilities and characteristics of a teacher greatly affect a student's competence and performance during the acquisition of the target language. As Hymes (1972, pp. 277- 278 cited in Makihara, 2013, p. 440) said before, "the development of competence involves learning values, attitudes, and motivations that allow the users to accomplish communicative acts, participate in communicative events, and evaluate one's own and other language users' accomplishment." Thus, it is obvious that the teachers' attitudes towards the language will be directly effective on teachers' competence. There are lots of research and discussion on competence and performance in the language acquisition process. For example a generative – grammarian Chomsky (1965) believes that grammaticality of the sentences must be the main component of investigation for linguists. Hence, he makes a distinction between competence and performance. According to him, structural patterns that is, the form of the language is equal to competence, which is internal grammar, but the knowledge that you are using during speaking or writing matches with the concept of performance. However, Hymes (1972, p. 277) asserts "that the rules of the language should be taken into consideration more comprehensively. He also shows that knowing when to speak, when not, ...where need to be considered during real speech". Indeed, Chomsky (1965) supports that the more you are good at grammar, the more it shows that you are competent in the target language. Thus, he says: "Acceptability is a concept that belongs to the study of performance, whereas grammaticalness belongs to the study of competence" (Chomsky, 1965, p. 11). To conclude from this, it can be said that he refers to linguistic competence, which comes out of some components like the "phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic and lexical" ones (Belinchón, Igoa & Rivière 1994, p. 261-262 cited in Trujillo Saez & Ortega Martin, 2005) As seen, there are different ideas on the issue of competence. Munby (1978) suggests a different module on competence. This model consists of linguistic encoding, sociocultural orientation, sociose-mantic basis of linguistic knowledge and discourse level of operation, which are categorized as subtitles of communicative competence. On the other hand, Canale and Swain(1980) and Canale (1983) came up with another model that distinguished four aspects of communicative competence. We can see the figuration of Canele and Swain (1980) in the study by (Trujillo Saez & Ortega Martin, 2005, p. 4).

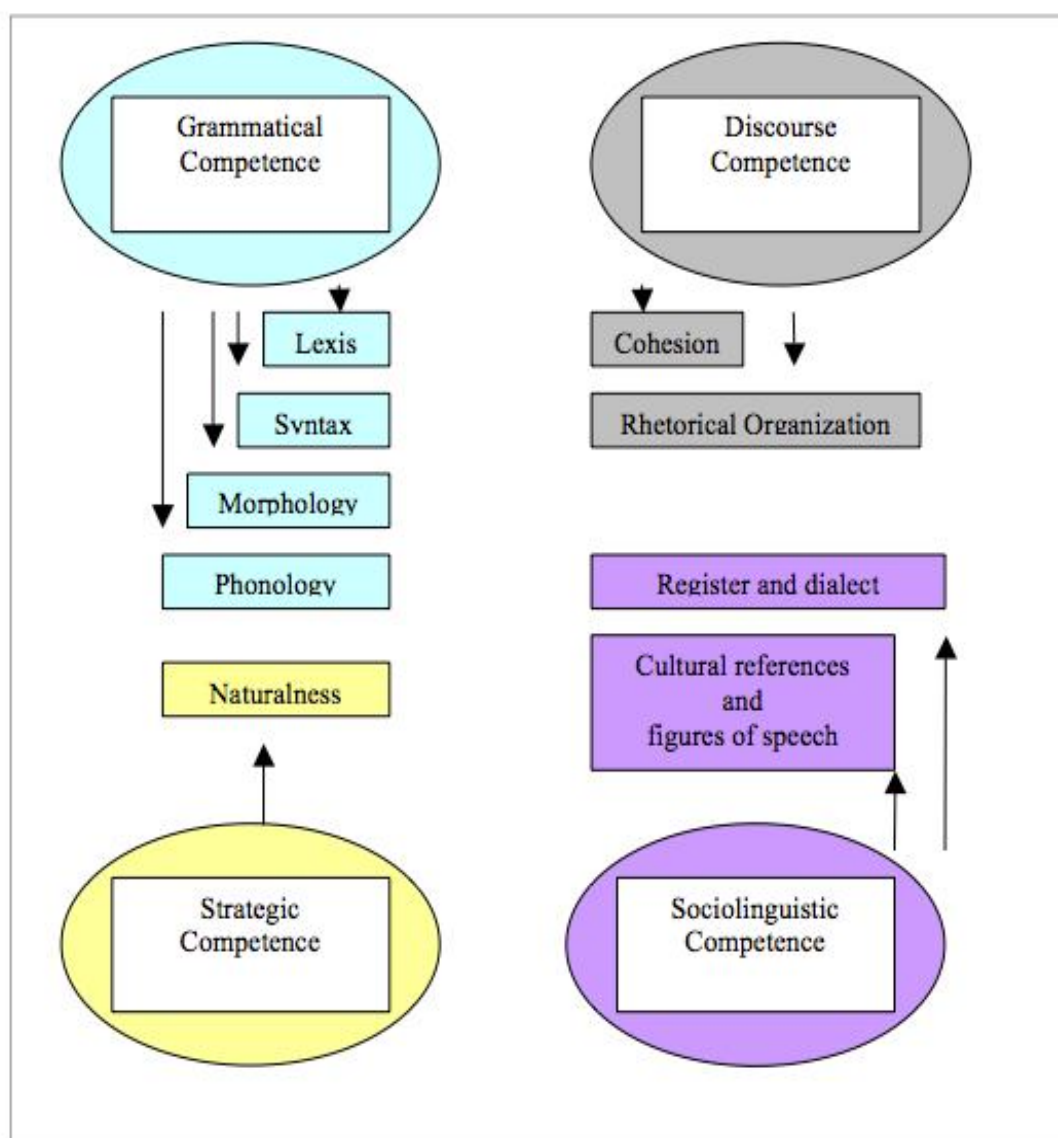


Figure 5. Communicative Competence by Canale and Swain (Trujillo Saez & Ortega Martin, 2005, p. 4)

Under this figure, there are four categories, which are related to each other. Grammatical competence includes the information of lexicon, syntax and semantics. Then, it is seen that “discourse competence is concerned with cohesion and coherence of sentences” (Trujillo Saez & Ortega Martin, 2005, p. 4). Sociolinguistic competence sets the basis for cultural references. Lastly, strategic competence paves the way for the effectiveness of communication as it comes out naturally. According to Dörnyei & Thurrel (1991), strategic competence means getting the meaning across successfully especially as the problems emerge in the communication process. Indeed, this was defined by Canale and Swain (1980, p. 30) as “verbal and non-verbal communication

strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence.” It can be inferred that strategic competence and pragmatic competence have the common points. We can see this in the definition of Fraser (2010) because he defines pragmatic competence as the ability of communicating “your intended message with all its nuances in any socio-cultural context and to interpret the message of your interlocutor as it was intended” (p. 15). Hence, he believes that even if learners create a perfect speech, they may fail to achieve the communicative goals.

CHAPTER III

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodological procedures of the study. Firstly, the research design is introduced. Then, the participants, the context of the study, data collection tools and the data analysis procedures are presented in detail.

3.1. Research Design

The main focus of this study was to find out teachers' beliefs on teaching grammar. It also aimed to identify EFL teachers' actual classroom practices in teaching grammar. Both qualitative and quantitative research design was used to find answers to the research questions. According to Hancock (1998, p. 2), while qualitative research is interested in questions such as "why, how, in what way"; quantitative research searches answer for questions about "how much, how many, how often, to what extent." The figure below explains what he means in short.

Qualitative Research	Quantitative Research
Subjective	Objective
Holistic	Reductionist
Phenomenological	Scientific
Anti positivist	Positivist
Descriptive	Experimental
Naturalistic	Contrived
Inductive	Deductive

Figure 6. The Comparison of Qualitative and Quantitative Research (Hancock, 1998, p. 3)

When looked at the figure, it is understandable that qualitative research mostly depends on opinions, feelings, and experiences of the participants who are producing subjective data. Patton & Cochran (2002, p. 2) say "Qualitative research is characterized by its aims, which relate to understanding some aspect of social life, and its methods which (in general) generate words, rather than numbers, as data for analysis." However, quantitative research is concerned with the ability of identifying

a set of variables. Quantitative research is deductive because it tests the theories have been scrutinized before hand.

In this study, a survey research design was used. "Survey research is defined as a method of descriptive research used for collecting primary data based on verbal or written communication with a representative sample of individuals or respondents from the target population" (Mathiyazhagan & Nandan, 2010, p. 34). In this part I draw a road map for implementation of the questionnaire.

3.2. Participants

The study took place at Zirve University in Gaziantep, Turkey. The subjects of this study were 49 English language teachers working at Preparatory School of Zirve University. Random sampling strategy was used to select the participants as the completion of the questionnaire was on voluntary basis. In random sampling strategy, "we select a group of subjects (a sample) for study from a larger group (a population). Each individual is chosen entirely by chance and each member of the population has a known, but possibly non-equal, chance of being included in the sample" (Davis & Pekar, 2012, p. 609).

3.3. Data Collection Tool

In this study, I used a belief questionnaire that was used beforehand by a researcher whose name is Nemah Abdullah Ayash Ezzi. He studied on "Yemeni Teachers' Beliefs on Grammar Teaching and Classroom Practices" (p. 170). His research became a source of inspiration for me, which created a wonder to conduct this study.

The questionnaire was designed to first, reveal teachers' attitudes about grammar and its purposes. The questionnaire also shows the classroom approaches that teachers employ with regarding grammar. The questionnaire consisted of three main parts, A, B, and C. In part A, there were 3 questions that elicited background information about the participants. Part B had 22 items that were used to identify teachers' beliefs regarding grammar. In part C, there were four sections to learn about teachers' classroom practices regarding grammar. The first section in Part C included one item, the second section contained 9 items; the third section included 9 items and part four consisted of one open-ended question. This questionnaire was

based on a four-point rating scale ranging from *strongly agree*, *agree*, *disagree* and *strongly disagree* (Ezzi, 2012). Four responses were obtained through the questionnaire. Teachers were encouraged to indicate whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree. This type of four- point scale yields clear results in favor or against the items in the questionnaire.

3.4. Data Analysis Procedure

Descriptive analysis was used to analyze the quantitative data. The items in the questionnaire were computed according to scales. Then, they were analyzed in the form of percentages and frequencies by means of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The frequencies and percentages were listed in tables respectively.

The data elicited from the open-ended question was subjected to content analysis. According to Berelson (1952, p. 489 cited in Bailey, 1994, p. 304) “Content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication.”

CHAPTER IV

4. FINDINGS

This chapter reveals the findings of the study that have been gathered from a belief questionnaire (see Appendix 1). The findings of the study are presented in three sections. In the first section, the demographic characteristics of the participants are presented. In the second section, EFL teachers' beliefs about grammar are discussed. In the last section, EFL teachers' classroom practices regarding grammar are explored.

4.1. Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

This section demonstrates the demographic characteristics of the EFL teachers who participated in this study.

Table 1. Distribution of Participants by Gender

Gender	f	%
Female	26	53.1
Male	23	46.9

Table 10 shows that the number of females (53.1%) and males (46.9%) are nearly equal, yet the females (f=26, 53.1%) who returned the questionnaires are a bit more than the males (f=23, 46.9%).

Table 2. Teachers' Undergraduate Area of Study

Undergraduate Area of Study	f	%
English Language Teaching Department	21	42.8
English Culture and Literature Department	8	16.3
American Culture and Literature Department	5	10.2
Department of Interpretation	7	14.2
Others	8	16.3

As shown in the table above, participation in the survey (f=21, 42.8%) among teachers from English Language Teaching department was very high; they majored in how to teach English, whereas the rest of participants (f=28, 57.2%) do not have a diploma in the field of teaching. Also, it is obvious that 16.3% (f=8) of them even do not have a degree from a department related to foreign languages.

Table 3. Teachers' Years of Teaching Experience

Years of Teaching Experience	f	%
1-5 Years	31	63.3
5-10 Years	15	30.6
10-15 Years	2	4.1
More Than 15 Years	1	2

As Table 12 illustrates that majority of the teachers (f=31, 63.3%) had 1-5 years of teaching experience while 15 (30.6%) of them had 5-10 years of teaching experience. Two of the teachers had 10-15 years of experience, and only one teacher (2%) had more than 15 years of teaching experience.

4.2. Teachers' Beliefs about Grammar

This part shows the teachers' ideas about the way they teach grammar. The question of how grammar is learned is the main concern.

Table 4. Conceptions about Ways of Learning Grammar

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1-Students can learn English without teaching grammar (i.e. similar to how children learn their mother tongue).	9	18.4	28	57.1	4	8.2	8	16.3
2-Grammar is best learned naturally through trying to communicate.	16	32.7	23	46.9	2	4.1	8	16.3

Table 4 reveals that many teachers ($f=16$, 32.7%) strongly/agreed with the statement that students are capable of learning English by relying more on communication, then direct grammar instruction (Ezzi, 2012). Further, findings ($f=23$, 46%) indicated that learning English without formal grammar instruction may actually be better. Only 8.2% ($f=4$) of the instructors strongly disagree with the idea that language can be learned without grammar instruction. However, 46.9% ($f=23$) of the participants strongly agree that grammar is best gotten naturally like trying to communicate while 4.1% ($f=2$) of them do not share the same point. Thus, it can be inferred from this table that being naturally exposed to the target language without focusing on structural patterns is more effective than presenting grammatical patterns to the most language teachers ($f=16$, 32.7%) of this intuition.

4.3. Classroom Practices for Grammar Teachers

Here, the importance of grammar in language learning process is integrated.

Table 5. Attitudes Regarding the Significance of Grammar

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
3. Grammar should be the essential part of any language teaching course.	4	8.2	8	16.3	14	28.6	23	46.9
4. Explicit/Direct teaching of grammatical rules is important for the mastery of English.	2	4.1	18	36.7	9	18.4	20	40.8
5. Grammar should be taught to all levels of students (i.e. beginner, intermediate and advanced).	6	12.2	21	42.9	18	36.3	4	8.1
6. It is important to focus on grammar in all English lessons.	1	2	11	22.4	14	28.6	23	46.9

According to the data presented in Table 5, nearly half of the teachers (f=23, 46.9%) are not in favor of the belief that grammar should be the main component of any language teaching. They believe that grammar should be integrated with other skills. Thus, the results of this table are consistent with Table 4 as it shows grammar ought to be acquired naturally. Many teachers (f=20, 40.8%) felt that grammar should simply be integrated instead of being isolated in lessons or classes.

4.4. Teachers' Conceptions about Presenting Grammatical Structures

This section is to investigate teachers' conceptions regarding grammar teaching strategies.

Table 6. Conceptions about Approaches to Grammar Teaching

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
7. Grammar is best taught incidentally.	6	12.2	16	32.7	9	18.4	18	36.7
8. Teachers should begin a grammar lesson by explaining how separate structures work	0	0	13	26.5	14	28.6	22	44.9
9. The major part of a grammar lesson should involve students in practicing structures.	13	26.5	21	42.9	3	6.1	12	24.5
10. Students can improve their grammatical accuracy through regular practice of structures	13	26.5	27	55.1	1	2	8	16.3
11. The main role of the teacher in a grammar lesson is to explain the new grammar rule	2	4.1	4	8.2	22	44.9	21	42.9
12. Practice of structures must always be within a full communicative contexts	24	49	18	36.7	2	4.1	5	10.2
13. Drills are very useful exercises to learn and teach grammar.	1	2	25	51	6	12.2	17	34.7

As shown in Table 15, 36.7% (f=18) think that grammar cannot be taught in isolation, but in conjunction with four skills. Only 12.2% (f=6) of them strongly agree with teaching grammar in the context of four skills. As a result, the seventh item is in perfect harmony with the eighth one. Also other items in the table are coherent with each other when reviewed. That is, 42.9% (f=21) of the instructors agree that for the

most part students should be practicing structures. As a result, they (55.1%, $f=27$) think accuracy improves with regular practice of grammar. Only one (2%) teacher does not support this idea. Forty-three teachers (88.8%) do not think the principal role of a teacher is to present grammatical patterns that students are unfamiliar with. They (85.7%) strongly/agree that the practice of structures must always be within full communicative context. However, there is an interesting result despite the positive attitude towards meaningful grammar in communicative context: while 25 participants (51%) agree that drills are very beneficial for grammar teaching, 17 teachers (34.7%) disagree with this idea.

4.5. Teachers' Conceptions about How to Correct Mistakes and Using of English in Class

In this section, the teachers' beliefs about correcting mistakes and usage of English in the class are revealed.

Table 7. Conceptions about Error-Correction

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
14. If students receive explicit/direct grammar instruction they are more likely to be able to correct their errors.	3	6.1	5	10.2	20	40.8	21	42.9
15 It is important to correct all grammatical errors in students' oral work.	6	12.2	14	28.6	15	30.6	13	26.5
16 It is important to identify all grammatical errors in students' written work.	7	14.3	22	44.9	4	8.2	15	30.6
17 Students rarely become error-free because English grammar is very complex	15	30.6	24	49	7	14.3	3	6.1
18 You do not need to speak grammatically correct sentences to communicate well.	5	10.2	23	46.9	7	14.3	14	28.6

Most of the instructors (83.7%, f=41) disagree or strongly disagree that self-correction among students of grammatical errors is linked with having had isolated grammar instruction. They are not in favor of correcting all student mistakes. They-30.6%, f=15- disagree that it is important to correct all the grammatical errors in the learners' oral work. However, for most (44.9%, f=22) the teachers it is important to identify all the grammatical errors in students' written work. Also, it is agreed by 24 participants (49%) that students rarely become error-free because English grammar is very complex. Almost half of the teachers (46.9%) agree that "You do not need to speak grammatically correct sentences" in communication.

4.6. Students' Knowledge of Grammar According to Teachers

This section reveals what teachers think about their students' ability to understand grammar.

Table 8. Teachers' Views of Grammatical Knowledge of Students

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
19. Students generally do not learn the grammatical structures they are taught because they are unable to understand and remember rules.	3	6.1	36	73.5	3	6.1	7	14.3

This table shows that most of the teachers (73.5%, f=36) agree students generally do not learn the grammatical structures because they believe students cannot understand and remember rules.

4.7. Teachers' Views on Trends in Grammar Instruction in Turkey

This section explores the teachers' beliefs about the place of grammar in language education system in Turkey.

Table 9. The Place of Grammar in Turkish Education System

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
20. Teaching grammar is hard for teachers to teach in Turkey.	5	10.2	17	34.7	11	22.4	16	32.7
21. Instructions and strategies given in the "Teacher's Book" for teachers to teach grammar are difficult to understand and follow.	6	12.2	11	22.4	12	24.5	20	40.8
22. It is usually difficult for teachers themselves to grasp and understand English grammar.	3	6.1	7	14.3	17	34.7	22	44.9

We see in Table 18 that there is a strict difference among the participants' ideas. The number of the teachers (34.7%, f=17) who believe teaching grammar is hard and the vice versa (32.7%, f=16) is nearly equal. 40.8% of the teachers (f=20) strongly disagree that comprehension of teachers' editions of books is a problem. Also, it is clear that an important number of teachers (79.6%, f=39) have no hardship to understand English grammar.

4.8. Teachers' Ways of Teaching Grammar

This part shows the ways the teachers use to teach grammar. It shows variety of techniques used by English language teachers.

Table 10. Teachers' Ways of Teaching Grammar

Items	f	%
a. You first present the grammatical rule then give examples to your students.	4	8.2
b. You first give examples then ask students to discover the grammatical rule from the given examples	18	36.7
c. Both (a) & (b)	25	51
d. Neither (a) nor (b). Using another way	2	4.1
No answers	0	0

These results show to us that only 8.2% (f=4) of the participants presenting the grammatical rules first. While 36.7% (f=18) of teachers want students to deduce the rules from examples, 51% (f=25) prefer both ways; that is, implicit and explicit teaching. Two of the teachers prefer none of the ways.

4.9. Grammar Teaching Strategies Used by the Teachers

In this section we present the most frequently used strategies by the language teachers.

Table 11. The Most Frequently-Used Strategies by the Teachers

Strategies	Never		Rarely		Occasionally		Frequently	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
a. Translating English grammatical rules into Turkish	22	44.9	11	22.4	14	28.6	2	4.1
b. Writing explanation of a grammar rule on the board	14	28.6	14	28.6	18	36.7	3	6.1
c. Providing as many examples as possible in teaching structures	1	2	1	2	20	40.8	27	55.1
d. Correcting students' grammatical errors in the class.	0	0	16	32.7	24	49	9	18.4
e. Eliciting the grammatical rule s from examples	1	2	3	6.1	10	20.4	35	71.4
f. Comparing English grammar with Turkish grammar	5	10.2	20	40.8	17	34.7	7	14.3
g. Using Oral pattern-practice drills	5	10.2	6	12.2	26	53.1	12	24.5
h. Using comparison and contrast between the grammatical structures of English.	1	2	9	18.4	28	57.1	11	22.4
i. Presenting grammatical structures in complete texts such as giving different structures in a short story.	1	2	10	20.4	23	46.9	15	30.6

As shown in Table 20, it is obvious that the teachers working at this university do not support grammar translation method. A great many of them, which is 44.9% (f=22), never translate grammatical rules from English into Turkish. The rules are occasionally written on the board by 36.7% (f=18) of the participants. 28.6% of them never write the rules or explanations on the board. Nearly all of the teachers, 95.9%, believe in presenting abundance of examples related to the topic. Twenty-seven

(55.1%) of the teachers frequently provide as many examples as possible while teaching structures, and 20 of the instructors (40.8%) occasionally provide examples. Among the participants, there is no teacher who says, “I never correct students’ grammatical errors in the class.” While 49% of them occasionally correct students’ mistakes, % 32.7 of the instructors rarely correct students’ mistakes. A great many of the teachers are in favor of the strategy *Eliciting the grammatical rules from examples*. Thirty-five teachers (71.4%) frequently apply this strategy while only 2% (f=1) do not. Another item in this questionnaire is comparing English grammar to Turkish grammar. Twenty teachers (40.8%) rarely use this strategy. Only 5 teachers (10.2%) never compare the grammar of two languages. Seventeen teachers (34.7%) occasionally, 7 teachers (14.3%) frequently use this way as part of the lesson. Using oral pattern-practice drills is another strategy that 53.1% (f=26) of the teachers occasionally employ in class. Nearly as half as of this number (24.5%, f=12) frequently use oral pattern-practice drills. The other half (22.4%, f=11) never or rarely engages this strategy in language teaching. 57.1% (f=28) of the participants occasionally compare and contrast the grammatical structures of English and Turkish. Eleven teachers (22.4%) frequently, 9 teachers (18.4%) rarely, and 1 (2%) participant never use this strategy.

When examined carefully, Table 20 shows that most instructors find presenting structures in texts such as short stories beneficial. 46.9% (f=23) of the participants occasionally, and 30.6% of them frequently present grammar in this way while one quarter (22.4%, f=11) of them never or rarely use this technique.

4.10. Teacher 's Conceptions of Effective Strategies

This section presents the teachers’ conceptions of effective grammar teaching strategies.

Table 12. Effective Grammar Teaching Strategies

Strategies	Not at all effective		Fairly effective		Effective		Very Effective	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
a. Translating English grammatical rules into Turkish	22	44.9	14	28.6	10	20.4	2	4.1
b. Writing explanation of a grammar rule.	17	34.7	16	32.7	14	28.6	2	4.1
c. Providing as many examples as possible in teaching structures	0	0	9	18.4	14	28.6	26	53.1
d. Correcting students' grammatical errors in the class.	6	12.2	14	28.6	25	51	4	8.2
f. Eliciting the grammatical rules from examples.	1	2	8	16.3	17	34.7	21	42.9
g. Comparing English grammar with Turkish grammar.	10	20.4	20	40.8	16	32.7	2	4.1
h. Using Oral pattern-practice drills	6	12.2	6	12.2	27	55.1	10	20.4
i. Using comparison and contrast between the grammatical structures of English.	3	6.1	16	32.7	25	51	5	10.2
j. Presenting grammatical structures in complete texts such as giving different structures in a short story.	0	0	13	26.5	21	42.9	15	30.6

This table focuses on effectiveness of particular grammar strategies. Firstly, 44.9% of teachers find “translating English grammatical rules into Turkish” not at all effective. While 22.6% of them think that it is fairly effective, 20.4% believe it is effective and the rest (2%) agree it is very effective; as seen, most of teachers are not in favor of translation of the rules. 34.7% of them find “writing explanation of grammar rules” not at all effective, % 32.7 think as fairly effective, 28.6% defines as effective, and 4.1% finds this way as very effective. “Providing as many examples as possible in teaching structures” is another strategy that is thought as very effective by

the majority which equals to 53.1%. However, according to 28.6% of the participants it is perceived as effective, and 18.4% of them share the idea that it is fairly effective. In addition, none (0%) of the teachers agrees this way is not at all effective. 51% of teachers feel, “correcting students’ grammatical errors in the class” is an effective strategy. As for 28.6% of the instructors, it is fairly effective. Six (12.2%) teachers feel that it is not at all effective. Indeed, very few (8.2%, $f=4$) of them believe it as very effective. The strategy that is “eliciting the grammatical rules from given examples” is regarded as very effective by most of the instructors (42.9%, $f=21$). 17 participants (34.7%) regard this strategy as effective. Thus, it may be deduced that most of the instructors working at this university use inductive approach while teaching grammar.

“Comparing English grammar with Turkish grammar” is a strategy that nearly half of instructors (40.8%, $f=20$) think it is fairly effective while 32.7% ($f=16$) regards it as effective. More than half of instructors (55.1%, $f=27$) support “oral pattern-practice drills” is effective. For 20.4% (10), it is very effective. The rest finds it as fairly effective (12.2%, $f=6$) or not at all effective (12.2%, $f=6$). “Using comparison and contrast between the grammatical structures of English” is regarded as effective by many teachers (51%, $f=25$). In addition, it is believed as not all effective (6.1%, $f=3$), fairly effective (32.7%, $f=16$) and very effective (10.2%, $f=5$) by the rest. No one thinks that “presenting grammatical structures in complete texts such as giving different structures in a short story” is not at all effective. On contrary, it is viewed as effective by nearly half of the instructors (42.9%, $f=21$), and very effective by 30.6% ($f=15$) of the participants.

CHAPTER V

5. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study and the conclusions arrived at for each research question. The chapter concludes with suggestions for further research.

5.2. Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to show various views held among teachers on the topic of grammar and its place in learning English (Mohamed, 2006, Ezzi, 2012). In addition, it aimed to find out EFL teachers' classroom practices while teaching grammar. Since Zirve University is a 4-year-old university, there has not been any research done on this topic. Hence, this study has great significance, as the findings might be helpful to us to understand the teachers' conceptions of grammar in language education.

The study was carried out with 49 ELT instructors from Zirve University, Gaziantep, Turkey. They completed the belief questionnaire, which was also used in the study of Nemah Abdullah Ayash Ezzi in Yemeni in 2012. The questionnaire used in this study consisted of three parts. In the first part, there were 3 items that elicited background information of the participants. Second part had 22 items to identify teachers' conceptions regarding grammar. Last part had 4 sections, which outlined various strategies and approaches used by teachers in teaching grammar.

The data gathered from the questionnaires responded to 2 research questions respectively.

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

“What are Turkish EFL teachers' beliefs about the importance of grammar in learning English and its role in teaching English as EFL?

What are EFL teachers' actual classroom practices of teaching grammar?”
(Mohamed, 2006, Ezzi, 2012).

5.3. Conclusions and Discussions

The findings of the study showed that teachers do not support teaching grammar as a separate item. That is, the teachers do not find explaining the grammatical structures in isolation useful for their students. Rather they try to present grammatical structures in context integrated with four skills. This conclusion is similar to Ezzi's (2012) study. Most of the teachers strongly support the idea of the practicing grammatical structures in communicative tasks. Indeed, the participants mostly do not think receiving explicit grammar instruction is something beneficial for target language learning. Hence, it is understandable that implicit instruction is usually being applied during the courses in teaching grammar. This finding is in line with Widodo's (2006) argument that “meaningful interaction in the target language (that is, natural communication) is more important than the form of the language. For this reason, error correction and explicit teaching of the rule are de-emphasized” (p. 129). Also, they go along with the idea of grammar’s being complex for the learners; that is why, students generally become error-free. Furthermore, it is agreed that students are unable to remember the rules; however making mistakes is an acceptable point while trying to communicate their ideas.

Apart from all, there is a strong distinction between teachers’ views on whether teaching grammar is difficult in the country or not. For this reason, we may assume that language teachers are having difficulty in teaching grammar from time to time. This conclusion is similar to the findings of Al-Mekhlafi & Nagaratnam (2011).

Furthermore, the findings of the study provided us with significant information about how the instructors actually teach grammar in their classes. The findings clearly showed us that the teachers use both inductive and deductive ways of teaching grammar. This finding is similar to that of DeKeyser's (1998) who stated, “some kind of focus on form is useful to some extent, for some forms, for some students, at some point in the learning process” (p. 42). The findings also revealed that the teachers in the present study believe in the effectiveness of inductive approach. This conclusion is based on the finding that *Eliciting grammatical rules form the examples* is most frequently used strategy along with the strategy *Providing as many examples as possible in teaching structure*.

Finally, we might conclude that language teachers working at Zirve University are leaving old-fashioned teaching styles, and are giving importance to creative and intellectual aspect of language learning by not using classical methods. For example, they view the mistakes as the natural outcome of language learning process. They have good expectations of their students. Of course, it is not clear that the stated beliefs are reflected or not in classroom practice as observations was not done. Indeed, this study shows that teachers regard grammar significant even if it is not seen as main component of the target language. Most of the teachers also believe that grammar is not the main concern of the language lessons; that is why, most of them believe in the uselessness of teaching grammatical structures in isolation. This conclusion is in line with the findings of Vooren & Casteleyn & Mottart (2012).

5.4. Suggestions for Further Research

This study was conducted to find out English language teachers' conceptions of teaching grammar and classroom practices. The data were elicited only from 49 English language instructors from Zirve University. However, further studies could have been done with all the instructors working in the institution so as to increase the reliability and validity of the study. Even the belief survey can be used with the EFL instructors working at other universities in Gaziantep (like Gaziantep and Hasan Kalyoncu University) to understand the topic in some depth. Moreover, during this study no classroom observation was done. Further studies could be conducted to find out whether the teachers implement the reported strategies or the approaches in their teaching practice. Finally, the participants in the present study were graduates of different faculties, that is, they did not have the same university background. In further studies, the sampling may be arranged of only those who graduated from faculties of language teaching.

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7. APPENDICES

7.1. Appendix 1: Belief Questionnaire

In this part, just below, I am going to share the questionnaire that I used in the study with you. As I stated before, the questionnaire was designed to first, reveal teachers' attitudes about grammar and its purposes. The questionnaire also shows the classroom approaches that teachers employ with regarding grammar.

As for analyzing the answers gotten from the questionnaire, descriptive analysis was used to analyze the quantitative data. The items in the questionnaire were computed according to scales. Then, they were analyzed in the form of percentages and frequencies by means of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)

Beliefs Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain information about your views of the role of grammar in teaching English in your classrooms. It is NOT an evaluation of you as a teacher. Also, it is NOT a test so there are no right or wrong answers. All your responses are confidential .I assure that the questionnaire will be used ONLY for the sake of this research.

Part A

Please answer the following questions about yourself. Please tick (✓) next to your selected answer.

1. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

2. Academic qualifications: **(tick and complete)**

☐ A teachers' certificate in

☐ A diploma in

☐ A bachelor's degree in

☐ A master's degree in

☐ Other (please specify).....

3. How long have been teaching English?

a. 1-5 years ☐

b. 5-10 years ☐

c. 10-15 years ☐

d. more than 15 years ☐

Part B

Tick (✓) in the cells of the most appropriate answer you select on the given scale.

No	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree
1	Students can acquire English without teaching grammar (i.e. similar to how children learn their mother tongue).	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Grammar is best learned naturally through trying to communicate.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Grammar should be the main component of any language teaching course.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Explicit/Direct teaching of grammatical rules is important for the mastery of English.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Grammar should be taught to all levels of students (i.e. beginner, intermediate and advanced).	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	It is important to focus on grammar in all English lessons.	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Grammar is best taught incidentally (i.e. there is no need to pre-plan grammar lessons)	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Teachers should begin a grammar lesson by explaining how separate structures work.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	The major part of a grammar lesson should involve students in practicing structures.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	Students can improve their grammatical accuracy through regular practice of structures.	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	The main role of the teacher in a grammar lesson is to explain the new grammar rule.	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	Practice of structures must always be within a full communicative contexts.	☐	☐	☐	☐
13	If students receive explicit/direct grammar instruction, they are more likely to be able to correct their errors.	☐	☐	☐	☐
14	It is important to correct all grammatical errors in students' oral work.	☐	☐	☐	☐
15	It is important to identify all grammatical errors in students' written work.	☐	☐	☐	☐
16	Students rarely become error-free because English grammar is very complex.	☐	☐	☐	☐
17	You do not need to speak grammatically correct sentences to communicate well.	☐	☐	☐	☐
18	Students generally do not learn the grammatical structures they are taught because they are unable to understand and remember rules.	☐	☐	☐	☐
19	Drills are very useful exercises to learn and teach grammar.	☐	☐	☐	☐
20	Grammar in "Turkey" is difficult for teachers to teach.	☐	☐	☐	☐
21	Instructions and strategies given in the "Teacher's Book" for teachers to teach grammar are difficult to understand and follow.	☐	☐	☐	☐
22	It is usually difficult for teachers themselves to grasp and understand English grammar.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Part C**1. How do YOU actually teach grammar in your class?**

- a. ☐ You first present the grammatical rule then give examples to your students.
- b. ☐ You first give examples then ask students to discover the grammatical rule from the given examples.
- c. ☐ Both (a) and (b).
- d. ☐ Neither (a) nor (b). Using another way which is.....

2. The following table shows some strategies that a teacher could use to teach grammar. Please indicate how often you use each of the given strategies in your teaching by using the "frequency" scale below. Tick (✓) in the appropriate cells of the table.

Strategies	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently
1. Translating English grammatical rules into Turkish	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Writing explanation of a grammar rule. <i>i.e. teacher writes the structure on the black board before explaining it to the whole class.</i>	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Providing as many examples as possible in teaching structures	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Correcting students' grammatical errors in the class.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Eliciting the grammatical rule s from examples.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Comparing English grammar with Turkish grammar. <i>e.g. comparing how the passive is used in English and Turkish grammars</i>	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Using Oral pattern-practice drills. <i>E.g. Teacher: He stole the picture. Class: The picture was stolen. Teacher: He left the door open. Class: The door was left open.</i>	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Using comparison and contrast between the grammatical structures of English.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Presenting grammatical structures in complete texts such as giving different structures in a short story.	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. Using 'effectiveness' scale given in the table below, please indicate how effective the given strategies to be used in a grammar lesson. Tick (✓) in the appropriate cells of the table.

Strategies	Not at all effective	Fairly effective	Effective	Very Effective
1. Translating English grammatical rules into Turkish	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Writing explanation of a grammar rule. <i>i.e. teacher writes the structure on the black board before explaining it to the whole class.</i>	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Providing as many examples as possible in teaching structures	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Correcting students' grammatical errors in the class.	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Eliciting the grammatical rule s from examples.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Comparing English grammar with Turkish grammar. <i>e.g. comparing how the passive is used in English a Turkish grammars</i>	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Using Oral pattern-practice drills. <i>E.g. Teacher: He stole the picture. Class: The picture was stolen. Teacher: He left the door open. Class: The door was left open.</i>	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Using comparison and contrast between the grammatical structures of English.	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. Presenting grammatical structures in complete texts such as giving different structures in a short story.	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. Please write down any other types of grammar strategies (not mentioned in the above tables) that you use with your students, indicating how often you use them.

.....
.....

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.