



**EFL TEACHERS' COGNITIONS IN GRAMMAR
TEACHING AT TERTIARY LEVEL**

MA Thesis

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ÖZET

YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM DÜZEYİNDE YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN DİLBİLGİSİ ÖĞRETİMİNDE BİLİŞLERİ

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Danışman: Prof. Dr. Ali MERÇ

Bu yakınsayan paralel tasarımlı karma yöntem araştırması, bir Türk devlet üniversitesi bağlamında yükseköğretim düzeyinde görev yapan yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğretmenlerinin dilbilgisi öğretimine ilişkin bilişlerini incelemektedir. Çalışmanın nicel aşamasına, 27 maddelik Likert tipi Öğretmenlerin Dilbilgisi Öğretimi Hakkındaki Bilişleri Anketi (Zhang & Sun, 2022) aracılığıyla toplam 128 öğretmen katılmıştır. Katılımcılardan 38'i ise nitel aşamada derinlemesine yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelere gönüllü olarak katılmıştır. Nicel veriler, betimsel ve çıkarımsal istatistikler için SPSS 30 programı kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Nitel veriler ise Dedoose 10 programı aracılığıyla tematik analiz yöntemiyle incelenmiştir. Nicel bulgular, bağlamsallaştırılmış ve biçim odaklı dilbilgisi öğretimine güçlü bir destek olduğunu göstermiştir. Öğretmenler, tümevarımsal ve anlamlı dilbilgisi öğretimini tercih ettiklerini belirtmiş; tümdengelimsel ve biçim odaklı yaklaşımlara ise daha sınırlı düzeyde destek verdiklerini ifade etmişlerdir. On bir tema altında kategorize edilen nitel bulgular, öğretmenlerin ifade ettikleri bilişsel süreçler ile sınıf içi uygulamaları arasında belirgin gerilimler bulunduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Katılımcılar sıklıkla iletişimsel ve tümevarımsal yaklaşımları desteklediklerini dile getirmiş, ancak çoğunlukla öğrenci yeterliliği, sınavların geri bildirim etkisi, öğretim programı baskısı ve kişisel öğretim geçmişleri tarafından şekillenen daha geleneksel ve eklektik yöntemler kullanmışlardır. Öğretmenler, açıklama ve motivasyon amacıyla seçici bir biçimde öğrencilerin ana dilini kullanmış, dilbilgisi terminolojisini işlevsel bir biçimde uygulamış ve dilbilgisi öğretiminde dijital ve yapay

zekâ destekli araçlara artan fakat dengesiz bir ilgi göstermiştir. Bulgular, yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğretmenlerinin bilişlerinin karmaşık, uyarlanabilir ve bağlamsal gerçekliklere derinlemesine gömülü olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Teorik olarak ilerici metodolojilere eğilim göstermelerine rağmen, birçok öğretmen kurumsal ölçme ve değerlendirme beklentilerine uyum sağlamak için daha kontrollü uygulamalara yönelmiştir. Bu çalışma, öğretmenlerin pedagojik idealleri ile sınıf gerçekleri arasındaki uçurumu kapatmak için yansıtıcı uygulama ve bağlama duyarlı mesleki gelişimin gerekliliğini vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: dil öğretmeni bilişi, İngilizce öğretimi, sınıf uygulamaları, dilbilgisi öğretimi, yükseköğretim

ABSTRACT

EFL TEACHERS' COGNITIONS IN GRAMMAR TEACHING AT TERTIARY LEVEL

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Education

Programme in English Language Teaching

Graduate School of Anadolu University, September 2025

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This convergent parallel design, mixed-methods study investigates tertiary-level EFL teachers' cognitions regarding grammar instruction within the context of a Turkish state university. A total of 128 instructors participated in the quantitative phase through the 27-item Likert-scale Teachers' Cognitions About Grammar Teaching Questionnaire (Zhang & Sun, 2022), and 38 of them volunteered for in-depth semi-structured interviews in the qualitative phase. The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS 30 for descriptive and inferential statistics. The qualitative data were analyzed using Dedoose 10 through thematic analysis. Quantitative results indicated strong support for contextualized and focus-on-form grammar instruction. Teachers reported favoring inductive, meaningful grammar teaching, while expressing less support for deductive and focus-on-forms paradigms. The qualitative findings, categorized under eleven themes, revealed tensions between teachers' stated cognitions and their enacted practices. While participants frequently endorsed communicative, inductive approaches, they often employed more traditional and eclectic methods shaped by learner proficiency, exam washback, curricular pressures, and personal teaching histories. Teachers selectively used L1 for clarification and motivation, applied grammatical terminology pragmatically, and demonstrated growing but uneven engagement with digital and AI-supported tools in grammar instruction. The findings reveal that EFL teacher cognition is complex, adaptive, and deeply embedded in contextual realities. Despite favoring progressive methodologies in theory, many teachers resorted to more controlled practices to align with institutional assessment expectations. The study highlights the need for reflective practice and context-

sensitive professional development to bridge the gap between teachers' pedagogical ideals and classroom realities.

Keywords: language teacher cognition, English language teaching, classroom practice, grammar teaching, tertiary education



**STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND
RULES**

I hereby truthfully declare that this thesis/dissertation is an original work prepared by me; that I have behaved in accordance with the scientific ethical principles and rules throughout the stages of preparation, data collection, analysis and presentation of my work; that I have cited the sources of all the data and information that could be obtained within the scope of this study, and included these sources in the references section; and that this study has been scanned for plagiarism with “Scientific Plagiarism Detection Program” used by Anadolu University, and that “it does not have any plagiarism” whatsoever. I also declare that, if a case contrary to my declaration is detected in my work at any time, I hereby express my consent to all the ethical and legal consequences that are involved.

.....

Muhammet Gökhan GÖK

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Undertaking this research has undoubtedly been an arduous journey for me. I am forever indebted to some people who encouraged and guided me through this challenging quest in my life, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them.

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24/09/2025

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE USAGE

I declare that I received support from generative artificial intelligence programs of ChatGPT, Gemini, NotebookLM, and Napkin while preparing this thesis. I have received support from generative artificial intelligence program to access scientific articles and create visuals during the preparation of the thesis. I declare that I have checked the accuracy of the information I received from generative artificial intelligence programs.

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Muhammet Gökhan Gök

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

LTC:	Language Teacher Cognition
CLT:	Communicative Language Teaching
GTM:	Grammar Translation Method
ALM:	Audio-Lingual Method
FonF:	Focus-on-Form
FonFS:	Focus-on-Forms
FFI:	Form-focused Instruction
DA:	Deductive Approach
IA:	Inductive Approach
DP:	Drilling and Practice
GT:	Grammatical Terminology
EFL:	English as a Foreign Language
ESL:	English as a Second Language
CELTA:	Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
DELTA:	Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
ICELT:	In-Service Certificate in English Language Teaching
TESOL:	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
L1:	Mother tongue
L2:	Target language (English)
GI:	Grammar instruction

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the background of the study will be discussed, along with its purpose and significance. In addition, the research questions will be presented, and key terminology within the study will be briefly defined.

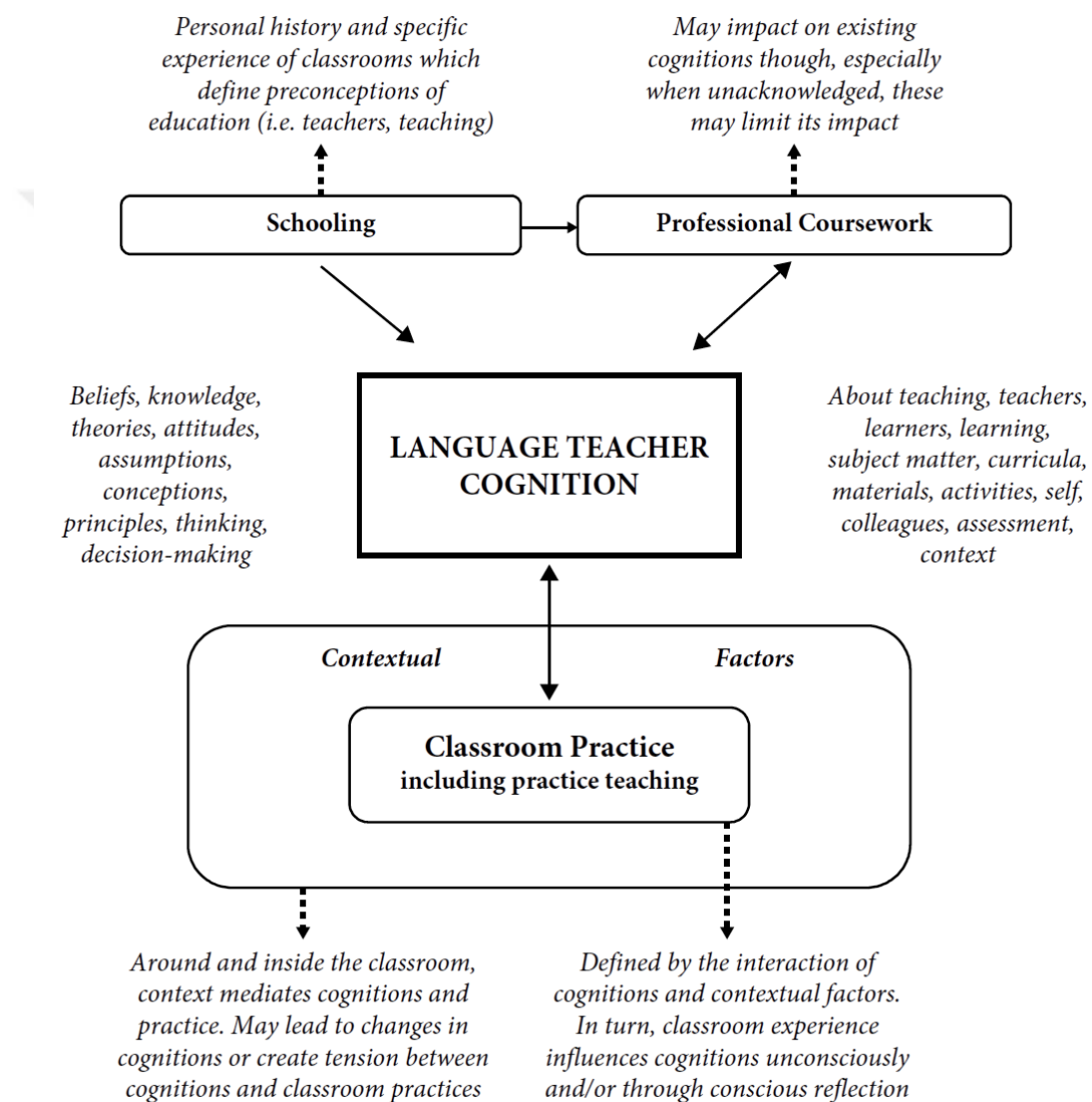
1.1. Background of the Study

Teacher cognition entails a reservoir of beliefs, assumptions, knowledge, theories, and attitudes, belonging to teachers, that wield a substantial influence on their classroom practices (Borg, 1998a). Within the realm of scholarly investigation, the concept of teacher cognition delves into the actual cognitive processes that teachers engage in when they strategize, design, and deliver their lessons (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). A vast body of research carried out within the domain of teacher cognition contends that teachers' understanding of teaching primarily stems from their own experiences as both learners and educators. These studies posit that language teachers' instructional choices when they are in action are mainly steered by cognitive processes that have been affected by their accumulated beliefs in relation to teaching and learning throughout their careers. Underlining the complex nature of teacher cognition, Pajares (1992) referred to teacher beliefs as a "messy construct" which covertly operate and appear in disguise.

Teachers partake a crucial role and are deemed to be one of the most invaluable stakeholders within established education systems. Existing literature further reinforces beliefs and 'teacher factor' as a critical factor in education. This abundance of research serves as concrete evidence highlighting the significance of teachers' impact on various aspects of the teaching and learning processes. Looking over the realms of the teaching and learning, it can be easily observed that teachers bring much more than just their knowledge on specific subjects; they also bring forth their thoughts, ideas, characters, and beliefs. All these factors are encapsulated within the concept of 'teacher cognition' which sheds light on the intricate aspects of a teacher's inner world. Borg (2001) postulates that teacher cognition encompasses a multitude of components such as beliefs, knowledge, principles, theories, attitudes, and thoughts. Furthermore, Borg (2003) provides a comprehensive definition of teacher cognition, emphasizing that it encompasses the cognitive processes and structures that influence teachers' actions. This includes "not only their beliefs, knowledge, principles, theories, and attitudes, but also their thoughts and reflections both before, during, and after teaching" (p. 81). Expanding upon this concept,

Borg (2006) further characterizes teacher cognition as a tacit, personally held, practical system of mental constructs that is constantly dynamic in nature. These mental constructs are defined and refined based on the educational and professional experiences encountered throughout a teacher's lifespan.

Figure 1.1. *The interconnectedness between teacher cognition, schooling, professional education, and classroom practice*



Source: Borg, 2015, p. 283

Figure 1.1 above illustrates the various factors that shape teacher cognition. According to this visual representation by Borg (2015), teachers' own learning experiences as students, professional education undertaken by teachers such as their pre-

service training or in-service training, contextual factors surrounding the educational setting, and classroom practice, which encompasses both teachers' in-action practices and practicum done as pre-service teachers, all contribute to the formation and development of a teacher's cognition. These factors work in tandem, influencing and molding a teacher's cognitive processes and structures, thereby impacting their teaching practices and approaches. Through the interplay of these factors, teachers acquire, refine, and form their beliefs, knowledge, principles, theories, attitudes, and thoughts regarding teaching. This intricate web of influences ultimately molds the way teachers navigate and engage in the teaching and learning processes within the educational landscape. Consequently, it is imperative to recognize and understand the multifaceted nature of teacher cognition to fully understand the complexities inherent within the education system. By delving into the depths of teacher cognition, researchers, educators, and policymakers can gain invaluable insights into the inner workings of teachers' minds, allowing for the development of targeted interventions and strategies aimed at enhancing the quality of teaching and learning experiences. Thus, the exploration of teacher cognition serves as a vital avenue for further research and exploration within the field of education.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Fenstermacher (1979) emphasized as early as the 1970s that examining teacher cognition is crucial in research on teacher effectiveness. By uncovering how teachers make decisions, it becomes possible to gain deeper insights into teaching and learning, which in turn can enhance educational effectiveness (Brophy & Good, 1985). Research studies on the mental lives of teachers mainly assists in the achievement of a deeper understanding of teachers' viewpoints on teaching processes (Nespor, 1987) and potential reforms in education systems (Skott, 2014). As a byproduct of this, teacher cognition research has transformed into a long-standing field of inquiry for the last 50 years. Exploring teacher cognition is essential for gaining insight into teachers' perceptions and decision-making, their approaches to teaching and learning, the dynamics that unfold in the classroom, the development of effective pedagogy, and the processes of teacher learning (Li, 2017; Borg, 2019). Within this landscape, language teacher cognition research has flourished and gained prominence in the last 30 years while the attention of the language teaching research shifted from a process-product model to a paradigm of teachers' thought processes (Li, 2019; Borg, 2006). In the panorama of language teacher

cognition, the matter of grammar teaching has been in the spotlight and is of paramount importance (Borg, 2015). In contrast with the growing global interest in relation to language teacher cognition in grammar teaching, the body of research pertinent to this topic has remained comparatively underdeveloped. Although various aspects of language teacher cognitions in grammar teaching have been explored worldwide (Li, 2017), there seems to be a scarcity of comprehensive research on Turkish EFL teachers, particularly in tertiary education contexts. This lack of research restricts our insights into how teachers' cognitions, knowledge bases, and thinking processes interact with grammar instruction in unique educational and sociocultural settings within Turkey.

The majority of existing language teacher cognition research directs attention to EFL teachers operating within primary and secondary school levels, leading to uncharted territories of perspectives specific to tertiary level education. As methodologies of instruction, dynamics of classrooms, curricula vary vastly across these educational degrees, the findings arising out of primary and/or secondary contexts may not ably represent the circumstances particular to university teachers such as possible misalignments between pedagogical ideals and classroom realities and its influence on learning outcomes and curriculum effectiveness. These problematic areas might deeply affect various stakeholders such as teachers, learners, policy makers, curriculum and assessment offices of tertiary institutions.

Most of the available language teacher cognition research in Turkey primarily relies upon qualitative data collection methods, making them case studies which deliver profound views but oftentimes accompany shortcomings in terms of generalizability by virtue of their restricted sample sizes. Evidently, quantitative data-oriented research is direly needed in pursuit of discerning the underreported patterns and scanning the broader horizon placed within the sphere of language teacher cognition.

Since 2019, there has been a lack of large-scale studies on EFL teacher cognition in Turkey (Gerem, 2019). This scarcity of studies with substantial participant counts additionally stresses the need for systematic investigations capturing the present sliver of grammar instruction located within the panorama of language teacher cognition.

Addressing these gaps is fundamental not only to expand the knowledge base but also to better advise teacher education programs, initiatives in professional development, and guide policymaking in the Turkish EFL environment. Through the exploration into cognitions of tertiary level teachers and the utilization of a mixed-method approach, the

current study strives to contribute thorough and nuanced perspectives to the current understanding of how grammar teaching is conceptualized in the Turkish EFL tertiary context.

1.3. Significance of the Study

The current study aims to investigate the cognitions of EFL instructors in connection with grammar instruction at the tertiary level, addressing a notable gap in the existing literature. There has been very little research in relation to EFL teacher cognition in Turkey. Research working on cognition focusing on Turkish university teachers were case studies with a small number of participants (Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2017) or had different central points as research topic (Phipps & Borg, 2009; Gerem, 2019). Some other research in Turkey studied pre-service teacher cognitions (Sarigöz, 2015). There are simply not enough studies to paint the general landscape of university EFL teacher's cognitions in grammar teaching. In addition, very little research on tertiary-level EFL teachers through quantitative data collection exists (Önalın, 2018a). This makes it clear that the cognitive landscape of tertiary-level EFL teachers in relation to grammar teaching has still not been a fully explored inquiry in the Turkish context. Furthermore, through the employment of a recently developed and validated questionnaire designed by Zhang and Sun (2022), the study at hand might potentially further its validity and contribute to its application in diverse environments, marking the first utilization of the said questionnaire. In addition, with the aid of the quantitative data from the aforementioned questionnaire, a clear snapshot of the variables surrounding and connected to language teacher cognitions in relation to grammar instruction can be taken.

The significance of the study lies in its focus of the under-researched settings of tertiary education, particularly located within the preparatory schools of state universities in Turkey. Valuable perspectives surfacing from this data-driven research could inform and hence help develop the integral processes staged in policymaking, teacher education, administration, and research as Breen et al. (2001) argued that investigating teacher cognition can contribute to the development of pedagogical frameworks derived directly from classroom practices across diverse teaching contexts, offering grounded alternatives to the conventional assumptions of language teaching methodology. An obvious connection exists between teachers' understanding of their pedagogical considerations and their instructional decision-making in classroom settings (Borg, 2003; Mangubhai et

al. 2004). Casting light on the cognitions of teachers regarding grammar per se, grammar instruction, and the factors influencing teachers' cognitions, this scientific inquiry strives to promote enhanced instruction strategies, assist in the formation of more practical professional development options bespoke for the needs of language teachers in higher education, and support more informed decision-making.

The specific regional context of the research might help fill in one of the remaining empty grids within the global scale of teacher cognition research, adding to overall literature and enabling comparisons and contrasts with other cultural or geographical contexts. A fuller picture of language teacher cognitions on the world map might enrich the comprehensive understandings of pedagogical decision-making of EFL teachers especially in diverse educational systems.

A foreign language classroom also represents an ideology of language learning, where teachers and learners collectively shape views on what language is and how it should be acquired. Thus, grasping the dynamics within the classroom is a key component of understanding pedagogy (Li, 2017). Therefore, practical implications emerging from the study might help EFL teachers improve their cognitions and practices through reconsidering their cognitive perspectives of the grammar teaching methodologies within the report and assist them in preparing better grammar lessons particularly in the context of Turkey. It is aimed to urge tertiary-level language instructors to reflect on their cognitions and in-class practices, encouraging professional development as practitioners and plausibly fostering a cultivation of their pedagogic strategies. The conclusion drawn from the research could carry considerable implications for language teaching at Turkish universities, expressly in terms of targeted professional development opportunities within Turkish tertiary education landscape.

1.4. Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

Grammar teaching has long been a subject of interest in language education contexts, with never-ending discussions as to how to provide effective grammar instruction. The extent of grammar teaching and what methodologies or approaches provide effective results in the execution of grammar instruction remain widely debated and unresolved (Fotos & Nassaji, 2004). Exploring how practicing teachers interpret grammar instruction and navigate cognitively through the intricacies surrounding grammar teaching can offer valuable contributions to the current understanding of

language teacher cognition and language teaching. Given the significance of teacher cognitions and practices, the present study seeks to investigate the cognitions of EFL instructors regarding grammar teaching at the university level.

This study attempts to address the following research questions:

1. What are tertiary-level EFL teachers' cognitions in grammar teaching?
2. Do lecturers' cognitions in grammar teaching statistically differ based on their;
 - i. academic qualifications
 - ii. professional development certificates
 - iii. years of teaching experience
 - iv. preferred language while teaching grammar?

1.5. Definition of Key Terms

Cognition: Cognition refers to the broad range of mental processes involved in acquiring, processing, storing, and using knowledge. It encompasses how people perceive, attend to, remember, reason, and interpret information. In psychology and education, cognition is often understood as the internal processes that shape how individuals think, learn, solve problems, and make decisions.

Teacher cognition: "Understanding, concerning the personal, professional, sociocultural and historical dimensions of teachers' lives, how becoming, being, and developing as a teacher is shaped by (and in turn shapes) what teachers (individually and collectively) think and feel about all aspects of their work" (Borg, 2019, p.4)

Classroom practice: Instructional acts made by teachers in lessons to teach a specific point.

Accuracy: "The extent to which a learner's use of a second language conforms to the rules of the language." (Thornbury, 2006, p. 2)

Fluency: "Being able to speak the language idiomatically and accurately, without undue pausing, without an intrusive accent, and in a manner appropriate to the context." (Thornbury, 2006, p. 82)

Form: “The way a word is written or pronounced and is independent of its meaning.” (Thornbury, 2006, p. 83)

Context: “The context of a language item is its adjacent language items. In the absence of context, it is often impossible to assign exact meaning to an item.” (Thornbury, 2006, p. 51)

Communicative competence: “What you know in order to be able to communicate effectively.” (Thornbury, 2006, p. 37)

Metalanguage: “The language that is used to talk about language, a.k.a terminology.” (Thornbury, 2006, p. 130)

Methodology: “A system for the teaching of a language that is based either on a particular theory of language or on a particular theory of learning, or (usually) on both.” (Thornbury, 2006, p. 131)

Input: The spoken or written language learners are exposed to. Without input, language cannot be learned.

Reflection, reflective teaching, and reflective practice: When teachers engage in reflection, they look back on their teaching with the aim of gaining deeper understanding and identifying ways to improve. Reflection is considered a vital stage in the experiential learning cycle, alongside planning, action, and learning. It goes beyond merely recalling events; it requires thinking critically about experiences, recognizing issues, and reframing them from a new perspective in order to generate potential solutions and develop concrete action plans.

Fossilization: “A fossilized error is one that has become a permanent feature of a learner's interlanguage. In theory, such errors are resistant to correction.” (Thornbury, 2006, p. 86)

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, first the core concepts within this study such as grammar, grammar instruction methodology, teacher cognition, language teacher cognitions will be described with a brief history. Next, research on language teacher cognition and language teacher cognition research on grammar instruction methodologies will be presented in a chronological manner.

2.1. Grammar and Its Role in Language Classrooms

Grammar has always been an issue of debate due to its being of paramount importance. Bearing in mind its long history within the literature, various definitions and perspectives of grammar have been introduced. Grammar can be identified as how language shapes and integrates words or word units to convey certain types of meaning, some of which might not always be communicated effectively through only the use of vocabulary (Ur, 1988, p. 4). In the body of language, grammar is the underlying skeleton that brings and holds words together to form sentences. Through the system of grammar, accuracy and meaning are interconnected. Furthermore, language without grammar could potentially be incapacitating and chaotic in essence (Batstone, 1994). According to Akar (2005), grammar rules explain how words change themselves and come together to create various sentences and convey meaning. Larsen-Freeman (2003) regards grammar as “a tool of exquisite precision, allowing us to create forms to express delicate shades of meaning.” Ellis (2006) delineates the concept of grammar as a part of grammar teaching, highlighting its historical association to the presentation and practice of discrete grammatical items. However, a more refined understanding of grammar teaching has been suggested in recent studies, going beyond the traditional two-phase approach. Ellis (p.84, 2006) states that grammar teaching encompasses a range of techniques that focus learners’ attention to certain grammatical elements to enable metalinguistic understanding and processing in comprehension and production, hence aiding internalization.

In the realm of language instruction, language teachers adopt various approaches and prioritize diverse aspects of grammar. Within a conventional approach, grammar instruction is considered as its presentation and practice through discrete structures. Drawing the full picture of grammar instruction, Ellis (2006, p. 84) defines it as “any instructional technique that draws learners’ attention to some specific grammatical form in such a way that it helps them either to understand it metalinguistically and/or process

it in comprehension and/or production so that they can internalize it.” Bearing this in mind, it is common to see some teachers emphasize form (usage) whereas others draw more attention to function (meaning and use) in their grammar teaching. Three discernible kinds of grammar emerge out of language classrooms: as a product, as a process, and as a skill. If grammar is treated as a product, it is very commonly introduced in contexts with limited extent and little vocabulary. In this case, learners gain command of grammatical rules yet have difficulty implementing them in authentic communication. In relation to this, Thornbury (2001) advocates for considering grammar more as a process than as a product. Grammar as a process entails the regulation of tasks for language use to be utilized in self-expression while grammar as a product direct learners’ focus on pre-specified meaning and forms of structures (Batstone, 1994). In line with this credo, Larsen-Freeman (2003) coined the terms ‘grammaring’ and ‘to grammar’. The concept of grammaring entails aiming to utilize grammatical forms accurately, appropriately, and meaningfully on the part of learners as a continuous process, as indicated by the -ing added to the word grammar. Achieving this aim demands more than learners noticing or understanding how grammatical structures work. Practicing language and engaging in meaningful exercises plays a critical role in grammaring, removing the barrier between real-life and classroom language use. (Larsen-Freeman, 2009). Thornbury (2021) highlights the potential of treating grammar as an ongoing exploratory process entailing critical steps such as discovery, reasoning, hypothesis testing, and restructuring. Batstone (1994) suggested approaching grammar as a skill that involves teachers acting as a guide to learners to fully utilize grammar in communication with a specific focus on meaning.

Regardless of whether it is considered as a process, or as a product, or as a skill, grammar has always assumed a vital role in second language teaching. In the beginning of the 20th century, language teachers and scientists operated under the assumption that having a proficiency of target language grammar facilitated effective communication, positioning grammar teaching as a central component within the contexts of foreign language or second language classes. Some traditional grammar instruction methods, particularly the Audiolingual Method (ALM) and the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), frequently adhered to a structural syllabus that distinguished grammar teaching. On the contrary, some methodologies such as the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Teaching (TBT) minimized the significance attributed to grammar, asserting that grammar instruction had a negligible role in second language acquisition.

2.2. Grammar Teaching Methods and Approaches

Through all the pendulum swings in the annals of foreign language teaching, grammar has repeatedly maintained its determinant position, fundamentally impacting the characteristics defining each teaching approach (Rutherford, 1987). Decision processes on whether to incorporate grammar or not and how to teach it have brought forth the formation of distinctive and dichotomous pedagogies, e.g. explicitly or implicitly, inductively or deductively, isolated or integrated, proactive or reactive, meaning-focused or form-focused. The history of language instruction manifests evolving perspectives in terms of the prominence of grammar and its part in both the realms of language teaching and learning. Consequently, shifts in emphasis placed on specific contrastive constructs such as fluency versus accuracy, output versus input, contextualized versus decontextualized teaching, and inductive versus deductive instruction highlight the essence embodying the changes in stances towards grammar. Through all these dichotomies, there have been plenty of instructional choices offered to teachers.

There have been significant changes in the landscape of grammar instruction throughout the last decades (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). Initially, language lessons focused mainly on grammar, especially with the help of methods such as grammar-translation. Over time, the significance of grammar translation method waned, particularly with the ascension of communicative approaches. However, during the last two decades there have been some calls by scholars to reevaluate the role of grammar (Schmidt, 2001; Long, 1996), resulting in a resurgence of the importance of grammar instruction (Long, 2014; DeKeyser, 1998, VanPatten, 1996). The focus has moved onto effective grammar teaching methods (Ellis, 2001a; Borg, 1999a). Despite all the mass of research and literature on grammar teaching, there has been a lack of consensus regarding how to approach the matter of grammar instruction within the classroom (Ellis, 2006). Bearing these dichotomies in mind and synthesizing insights from influential works, a review of teaching methods and dichotomies will demonstrate substantial points concerning the role of grammar.

2.2.1. The Grammar Translation Method

The inception of the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), also referred to as the Classical Method, can be traced back to the Middle Ages, an era in which Latin was by

far the most extensively studied as a foreign language all around Western societies. The dominance of Latin in fields such as commerce, religion, education, and government in the classical period induced its widespread study around the globe. During this period, Latin was especially studied by scholars and young men of rich families who could afford expensive education (Dixon, Video 1: Back in Time: Grammar Translation | Coursera, n.d.). Following the waning relevance of the Latin language during the 16th century, the rationale for teaching Latin was reformulated, and the focus shifted to cultivation of intellectual capacities through the learning and teaching of Latin. As a consequence of this shift, studying Latin grammar and rhetoric transformed into a pedagogical objective, which later on solidified the position of GTM as the standard approach in foreign language teaching worldwide. At that stage, the primary objective in learning a language was to understand literature written in it.

In character with its nomenclature, GTM prioritizes rote memorization of word lists and grammatical rules. GTM highlights writing and reading as principal skills to be honed and perfected whereas minimal instructional consideration is granted to the skills of listening and speaking. GTM imparts explicit and deductive grammar instruction, through which learners are presented the grammatical rules and some related examples to memorize and consecutively produce the structure (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). GTM does not per se define communicative proficiency as a learning objective and prioritizes accuracy over fluency. Within the frame of GTM, students' learning of the grammar correctly is deemed critical, hence requiring the explicit correction of students' errors. Translation and back translation are inherently prominent in GTM, assigning the native language of learners as the instruction language through which grammatical rules are particularly elucidated. Moreover, GTM predominantly favors the presentation of discrete sentences that are decontextualized and unrelated to learners' life experiences (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

2.2.2. The Audiolingual Method

The inception of the Audiolingual Method (ALM) was rooted in the mid-19th century, put in action by the recognition of the increasing need for spoken language proficiency because of the growing opportunities of communication among Europeans. Innovations in language teaching arose in response to the shortcomings of GTM in preparing learners for effective communicative language use (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

This shift of focus towards natural communication in language teaching marked a period referred to as the Reform Movement, which signified a departure from GTM. As pedagogical approaches of this period were plentiful, the pendulum kept swinging the emphasis between natural communication (Celce-Murcia, 2001), embodied in the Direct Method in the European continent, and reading knowledge, exemplified in the Coleman Report in the United States of America (Coleman, 1966). The Direct Method served as a transitional approach to language teaching and was later replaced by the ALM (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

ALM emerged out of divergent approaches, standing out as an oral-first method rooted in psychological and linguistic principles. Originating from the World War II Army Method (Dixon, Video 4: Back in Time: The Audio-lingual Method | Coursera, n.d.) and created to respond to the need for fluent interpreters on the field, ALM was strongly influenced by B. F. Skinner's behaviorism and developed from the Aural-Oral or Structural Approach by Charles Fries of the University of Michigan. Up until the 1960s, ALM was adopted widely in the USA in English as a Second Language context.

In reaction to GTM's ineffectiveness in producing fluent language speakers, ALM gave precedence to the improvement of oral skills and paid little attention to the skills of writing and reading. Learning of grammar was also central to ALM and was conceptualized as systematic syntactic sentence patterns facilitating the creation of correct sentences through the insertion of new linguistic elements. Contrary to GTM, the target language was employed as the medium of instruction in ALM, refraining from translation and the utilization of the native language of learners. ALM theorized language learning is possible through habit formation, underscoring dialogue memorization and automatization through diverse drill types e.g. repetition drills, slot substitution drills, chain drills and transformation drills.

Another key difference of ALM from GTM is that ALM abstains from making explicit grammar rule explanations, endorsing analogy perception with the help of constant drills. Through ALM, sequenced grammatical structures are exemplified and rules are induced from examples provided (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). ALM initially focuses on the development and automatization of learners' speaking proficiency, along with the ability to provide an answer swiftly and accurately in speech situations. ALM attached importance to fluency and accuracy in speaking via repetition drills and error correction.

Despite its aims to develop effective communicators, ALM confronted practical challenges, with learners having difficulty in transferring their learned skills to real communication. Criticisms emerged regarding the monotony and dissatisfaction linked to the learning experience of ALM. The shortcomings of ALM were attributed to its behaviorist roots, which was considered inadequate in replicating human language acquisition processes. Chomsky deeply criticized the deficiency of imitated behavior through memorization and drilling and emphasized the importance of and the need for an underlying knowledge of abstract rules in language learning (Chomsky, 2014). Another contributing factor to ALM's shortcomings was the utilization of decontextualized sentence drills, causing a lack of meaningful associations to real world contexts. In addition, slot substitution drills employed commonly within ALM were reprimanded heavily due to their isolated nature from authentic language functions.

2.2.3. Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) materialized as a pedagogical approach in answer to a perceived inadequacy in learners' language proficiency in spite of their accuracy in sentence-making performance in classroom contexts during the 1970s. Educators discerned that the requirements of effective communication far exceed the mastery of linguistic structures. Widdowson (1978) made the distinction between knowledge of linguistic 'usage' and the ability to effectively 'use' the language. Wilkins (1976) also highlighted the significance of students being able to perform diverse functions within social settings.

The era of form-focused teaching went through a decline in the 70s since scholars were doubtful of its ability to foster 'communicative competence' (Hymes, 1972). This trend to a new perspective (Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980) posited the credo that grammar knowledge was solely one of the many facets involved in communicative competence. This view on language teaching claimed that competent use of language entails not only the understanding of grammar rules but also their appropriate application in authentic communication. Within language teaching grammar instruction suffered a decline in prominence during this era. In some situations, it was even thoroughly deserted, with prominent researchers such as Krashen (1982) claiming that the acquisition of language and fluency result from the unconscious processing of second language, not from explicit grammar instruction.

Krashen's Monitor Hypothesis (1982) laid the theoretical groundwork for CLT, which put forward the idea of language acquisition through exposure to comprehensible input, also known as (*i+1*), comprised of linguistic elements slightly above learner's existing competence (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). To enhance the comprehensibility of the linguistic input, realia such as pictures, charts, gestures, songs, objects, maps etc. are utilized. CLT favors natural language use and avoids explicit grammar teaching, contending that accuracy can be built organically via inductive learning of comprehensible input. (Krashen & Terrell, 1983).

The discourse surrounding CLT outlines two distinct versions, thereby positioning CLT as more of an approach than a method (Howatt & Widdowson, 2004). The strong position of CLT advocates for a complete rejection of planned grammar instruction. This 'zero position' completely disregards grammar instruction of both deductive and inductive types, contending that teachers should not intend to provide grammar instruction (Ellis, 1997, p. 48). Input is prioritized instead of output, as the comprehension of input is the core element in language acquisition. Incidental interventions for error correction are eschewed since Krashen (1982) asserts it undermines learners' confidence and discourages them from using complex linguistic constructions for fear of making mistakes. CLT promotes fluency over accuracy, considering form errors as an organic feature within the process of communicational skill development (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Authentic materials and contextualized instruction is preferred to support language acquisition. Within CLT, decontextualized instruction is thought to impede language acquisition. Furthermore, CLT incorporates a diverse array of interactive activities, e.g., role plays, games, information gaps, interviews, pair work, group work into the classroom.

The weak version of CLT underlines the quality of offering learners ample chances to practice their English for communicative purposes and endeavors to seamlessly incorporate such communicative activities with all the facets of language instructions. On the other hand, the strong version of CLT posits that language acquisition transpires with the help of communication, targeting not only to activate pre-existing linguistic inert knowledge but also to enable the use of language to foster actual development in the language system per se. The distinction between the strong and weak positions of CLT lies between 'learning to use English' and 'using English to learn it'. (Howard & Widdowson, 2004, p. 279). Both positions agree on the shared goal of

communicative competence development as the core element of language instruction, yet they diverge in point of view as to what the role of grammar in the frame of CLT should be. CLT systematically attends to both functional and structural characteristics of language, indicating an ongoing position for grammar instruction (Littlewood, 1981). In contrast, supporters of the strong position such as Krashen debate that grammar teaching is superfluous, and language systems should be acquired unconsciously using authentic communication. Krashen's acquisition/learning dichotomy, denouncing the influence of formal teaching on the language acquisition process, is identified as the non-interface position by Ellis (1989). The non-interface position asserts learned knowledge cannot be seamlessly transformed into acquired knowledge and diverges from the interface position, which posits acquisition and learning are completely discrete and learning can potentially evolve into acquisition through adequate practice.

2.2.4. Focus-on-FormS and Focus-on-Form

Focus-on-formS (FonFS) is deeply rooted in linguistic structuralism and underscores language forms over their meanings (Long, 1991). Along with teaching items in isolation, FonFS entails dissection of the target language into separate linguistic elements encompassing discrete words, structures, sentences, and functions and teaching of these items one by one cumulatively in the frame of a linear and systematic syllabus. FonFS is closely linked to artificial classroom techniques such as explicit presentation of grammar rules, immediate correction of errors, engagement in transformation exercises, and repetition of models. The crux of this method lies in examining linguistic components, providing learners with minimal space to employ language for communicative purposes, and practicing individual structures. Within the frame of FonFS, activities engaged in by learners vary from mechanical to communicative drills (Doughty & Williams, 1998). Nevertheless, too much focus on linguistic forms in the process of these drills results in deliberate and conscious language production as opposed to spontaneous and natural communication. FonFS is employed and adopted specifically in EFL settings in which exams are given a particular priority although it is at the expense of communicative aspects.

Focus-on-Form (FonF) represents a departure from FonFS in favor of practicing linguistic elements through the context of meaningful communication (Long, 1991). Long's framework identifies FonFS as a conventional approach primarily considering

language acquisition as a preset sequential mastery of grammatical structures whereas FonF involves prior engagement with meaning in advance of any emphasis of linguistic elements (Long & Crookes, 1992; Doughty & Williams, 1998). The key features of FonF revolve around meaning negotiation with focus on formal properties of language (Ellis, 1994). FonF prioritizes communicative production and is student-centered, which is considered a limitation of FonFS (Ellis et al., 2002). FonF is in line with approaches that are centered around learners in which learners are engaged in meaning to communicate to overcome challenges (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011), with error correction usually implemented following the communicative activities. Within communicative language teaching environments, FonF has been comprehensively put into practice (Lightbown & Spada, 1990; Long, 2014).

Storch (2018) contrasted meaning-focused and form-focused instruction in second language teaching and emphasized their distinct theoretical underpinnings and pedagogical implications. Meaning-focused instruction prioritizes exposure to comprehensible input and downplays the role of grammar instruction, drawing heavily on Krashen's input hypothesis. In contrast, form-focused instruction (FFI), encompassing both proactive and reactive approaches, highlights the importance of drawing learners' attention to linguistic forms either within or outside communicative contexts. Kamiya (2018) explored the distinction between proactive and reactive FonF in second language instruction, both of which aim to draw learners' attention to linguistic features within primarily meaning-focused classrooms. Proactive FonF involves pre-planned tasks that are likely to elicit specific or general language forms, whereas reactive FonF arises spontaneously in response to learners' errors or questions during interaction. Kamiya (2018) outlined subtypes such as teacher or learner-initiated preemptive FonF and problem-oriented reactive FonF, each varying in explicitness, timing, and effectiveness. Combining both FonF types tailored to learners' readiness and instructional goals can enhance grammatical development, especially when tasks minimize cognitive overload and provide clear, focused feedback. Valeo (2018) examined the distinction between isolated and integrated form-focused instruction (FFI) and emphasized that the key difference lies in the timing of grammar instruction in relation to communicative activities. Isolated FFI addresses form before or after communication, while integrated FFI embeds attention to form within communicative tasks. Drawing on cognitive theories such as transfer appropriate processing and skill acquisition, Valeo (2018) highlighted

that both approaches offer unique benefits depending on learner needs, instructional goals, and context. The empirical study of Spada and Lightbown (2008) suggested neither approach is universally superior; rather, a flexible use of both may best support grammatical development and communicative competence in diverse teaching contexts.

2.2.5. Deductive and Inductive Approaches

Depending on how rules and examples are presented, English as a Foreign Language instruction can be categorized into two approaches. The deductive approach entails an explicit presentation of grammatical rules to learners, usually succeeded by examples and exercises pertinent to the structures. Fortune (1992) notes the globally prevalent use of the deductive approach in language teaching, drawing attention to its dominance in the structure of numerous textbooks. Even though the deductive approach has the benefit of straightforward information delivery without the necessity for elicitation techniques, learners might find it challenging to comprehend the concepts and associated grammatical terminology. Therefore, this approach could impede active learner participation, nurturing a teacher-centered language learning climate, hence resulting in a ‘transmission’ or a ‘lecture’ teaching model.

The provision of rule explanations is frequently mentioned as part of deductive teaching in practical teaching guides (Thornbury, 1999; Scrivener, 2011). In their discussion on the point of rule explanations, Hedge (2001) addresses the use of metalanguage and underscores the value in taking into consideration whether metalanguage could potentially help enhance learners’ understanding of language point before incorporating it into a lesson plan. It is also noteworthy to consider that learners with varying proficiency levels and learning styles may react distinctively to the utilization of metalanguage (Schellekens, 2007). Scrivener (2011) highlights the importance of planning ahead and brevity of rule explanation deliveries.

On the other side of the coin, the inductive approach, as a counter to deductive instruction, essentially revolves around inductive reasoning, entailing a progress from specificities to generalizations (Felder & Henriques, 1995). In inductive reasoning, particulars come before generalities in the process of learning. Learners are introduced to grammatical examples and are then expected to infer and induce the grammar rules through the examples. Inductive approach encourages learners to be autonomous and capable of self-discovery, which in essence seeks to leverage the substantial reward

inherent in establishing order, meaningfulness and simplicity to the learning experience (Long & Richards, 1987). Even though inductive teaching fosters active participation and problem-solving abilities for learners, learners could potentially form incorrect rule concepts reliant on their inferences from the information. The inductive approach could be demanding on both the parties of learners and teachers as it necessitates intricate lesson planning and organization to enable students to undertake a more active role in their learning. Further learners familiar and accustomed to deductive teaching approaches might not necessarily consider the shift to an inductive framework satisfactory and think it disheartening due to their previous learning experiences.

Scrivener (2011) and Thornbury (1999) advocate for the use of generative situations and demonstrations in inductive grammar teaching. Generative situations entail contexts crafted by teachers to necessitate the production and application of the target grammatical structure. Elicitation of examples before the introduction of a task can assist in ensuring that learners are familiar with the language necessary for contextual use. Thornbury (1999) spotlights the effectiveness of inductive approach in grammar teaching, albeit stating that it is considerably demanding in terms of teacher preparation.

Deductive and inductive approaches in grammar teaching have generated conflict among language teachers and researchers (Ellis, 2009). Within the deductive approach, the teacher initiates by explicitly laying out grammar structures, which is then practically applied by learners (Thornbury, 1999). Contrarily, the inductive approach abstains from the initiation of teaching the rules explicitly. Preferably, learners are encouraged to uncover the hidden patterns within the target structure and are occasionally obliged to work out the governing rules on their own.

2.2.6. Explicit and Implicit Grammar Instruction

The pedagogical approaches in teaching grammar have always maintained being a subject of controversy in the context of language instruction, with various viewpoints on whether grammar structure should be presented via examples first or through rules initially. Therein lies the dichotomy of implicit versus explicit grammar teaching. Ellis (1994) postulates grammar could be taught either implicitly, obliging learners to deduce rules from examples, or explicitly, in which rules are introduced prior to practice. Within explicit grammar instruction, structures and metalinguistic rules are delivered before learners engage in the practice or application of them (Doughty, 2003). Explicit teaching

is of considerable importance in the language acquisition process, supporting conscious awareness and learning through tasks, boosts awareness and prompts noticing (Ellis, 2005). This does not entail the instant learning of grammatical forms, yet they could be utilized for problem solving in a meaning-making communication setting, potentially acting as support in prospective language learning. Learner output is usually monitored through conscious rules as part of explicit instruction.

On the other hand, implicit grammar instruction entails learners instantly discerning and discovering grammatical rules through analyzing examples (Cowan, 2008). In implicit grammar instruction, the attention of learners is drawn to linguistic forms without a direct explanation or discussion on the grammar rule behind them (Ellis, 1994). Implicit instruction relies on subconscious learning and is informed by behaviorism (Stern, 1983). Krashen (1982) posits that acquisition of grammatical knowledge occurs autonomously by means of exposure to linguistic and syntactic structures located in reading and listening texts, with the credo that language is too intricate to be extensively described and comprehended consciously. According to Doughty and Williams (2008), implicit grammar teaching is outlined into three techniques, namely input flood, input enhancement, and unfocused exposure to input.

Divergent viewpoints on this particular dichotomy exist among academics, with some promoting explicit grammar instruction while others favor implicit teaching of grammar. Norris and Ortega (2000) contend that explicit grammar instruction is more potent compared to its implicit counterpart since learners may consider implicit teaching lacking in terms of language accuracy. In contrast to this perspective, Krashen (1982) advocates for implicit teaching of grammar through comprehensible input. Dekeyser (1995) emphasizes learners perform better when they are provided many examples in the target language in comparison to when they are initially introduced to the rules. Some prominent figures see merit in both grammar instruction types, with Ellis (2001b) suggesting that explicit teaching of grammar per se assists implicit learning through fostering general language proficiency and aiding learners in making connections between their native language and the target language.

2.3. Language Teacher Cognition

Prior to the prevalent employment of the term teacher cognition within the realm of academic literature, teacher belief was identified as implicit and generally unconscious

personal epistemologies concerning learners, classroom dynamics, and the subject matter (Kagan, 1992, p. 66). Teacher cognition was also described as the knowledge, beliefs, and thought processes held by teachers. Within this conceptualization, teachers are considered as thoughtful, active decision-makers who position their instructional choices on intricate, practice-informed, customized, and context-dependent systems of intelligence, notions and opinions (Borg, 2003, p. 81). This intricate character embodied within teacher cognitions is thought to become essentially instrumental in teachers' pedagogical decisions, strategies, and practices in classroom environments. The belief systems and cognition sets of teachers function as a cognitive filter substantially governing their performance in educational settings (Shavelson & Stern, 1981).

By the early 80s, the prevalent view that good execution of teaching was principally tied to teachers' training in implementing language teaching methods and theories commenced to give way to the perspective that the teaching profession was broader and also multidimensional. Teaching came to be considered as an elaborate and versatile occupation. This change in viewpoint inspired scholars to intensely scrutinize issues of what teachers completely understood, how they acquired and built on their knowledge, and how their knowledge related to their teaching routines. The progressively growing interest in these matters gave rise to the domain of language teacher cognition, which extensively explores "what language teachers think, know and believe and of its relationship to teachers' classroom practices" (Borg, 2015, p. 1).

In the 1990s, research on language teacher cognition thrived, driven by the notion that it was unrealistic to comprehensively scrutinize teachers and their practices without shedding light onto their underlying beliefs, thoughts and knowledge (Borg, 2009). Groundbreaking research from this period which possess findings remaining relevant to this day can be seen in Figure 2. As these studies concentrated on the exploration into the knowledge base of teachers, specifically looking to how it links with classroom practice and cognitive processes, they have played a fairly prominent part in the expansion of our understanding of teachers' mental frameworks and their learning-to-teach experience.

Table 2.1. *Language teacher cognition terminology in research over time*

Source	Terminology	Description
Richards et al., 1992	Culture of teaching	The nature of teachers' knowledge and belief systems, their views of good teaching, and their views of the systems in which they work and their role within them
Spada & Massey, 1992	Specific pedagogical knowledge	Knowledge related specifically to the teaching of a particular subject
Johnson, 1992	Theoretical beliefs	The philosophical principles, or belief systems, that guide teachers' expectations about student behavior and the decisions they make
Freeman, 1993	Conceptions of practice	A set of ideas and actions teachers use to organize what they know and to map out what is possible; they guide individual action but are also affected by new situations
Johnson, 1994	Images	General metaphors for thinking about teaching that not only represent beliefs about teaching but also act as models of action
Richards et al., 1995	Pedagogical reasoning	The process of transforming the subject matter into learnable material
Richards, 1996	Maxims	Personal working principles which reflect teachers' individual philosophies of teaching
Woods, 1996	Beliefs, assumptions and knowledge	A construct analogous to the notion of schema, but emphasizing the notion that beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge are included
Burns, 1996	Theories for practice	The thinking and beliefs which are brought to bear on classroom processes
Golombek, 1998	Personal practical knowledge	A moral, affective, and aesthetic way of knowing life's educational situations
Sendan & Roberts, 1998	Personal theories	An underlying system of constructs that student teachers draw upon in thinking about, evaluating, classifying, and guiding pedagogic practice
Golombek, 1998	Image	A personal meta-level, organizing concept in personal practical knowledge in that it embodies a person's experience; finds expression in practice; and is the perspective from which new experience is taken
Borg, 1998a	Personal pedagogical systems	Stores of beliefs, knowledge, theories, assumptions and attitudes which play a significant role in shaping teachers' instructional decisions
Crookes & Arakaki, 1999	Routines	Habitualized patterns of thought and action which remove doubts about what to do next, reduce complexity, and increase predictability
Meijer et al., 1999	Practical knowledge	The knowledge teachers themselves generate as a result of their experiences as teachers and their reflections on these experiences
Gatbonton, 2000	Pedagogical knowledge	The teacher's accumulated knowledge about the teaching act (e.g. its goals, procedures, strategies) that serves as the basis for his or her classroom behavior and activities
Breen et al., 2001	Pedagogic principles	Shaped and generated by underlying and more abstract beliefs, these service to mediate between beliefs and ongoing decision-making in particular instructional contexts

adapted from Borg, 2003, p. 87

While research on teachers' mental lives served both the parties of scholars and practitioners within the field, as Borg (2003) stated, the emergence of such a diverse set of terminology in line of language teacher cognition has resulted in overlaps in definitions over time as illustrated in Table 1.1. As analogous terms have been described through various means and distinct terminology has been utilized to refer to resembling constructs (Clandinin & Connely, 1987), a conceptual obscurity has emerged and complexified the landscape of language teacher cognition even further.

Language teacher cognition conceptually envelopes the knowledge, beliefs and thoughts of educators (Borg, 2003). This inclusive concept enables scientists to delve into the intricacies within their professional practices and experiences (Johnson, 2018). The wide spectrum of language teacher cognition inherently encompassing terms such as beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, assumptions, theories, images, metaphors, concepts, and perspectives (Borg, 2015) can sabotage its particularity and merit (Borg, 2019). In order to address this convolution arising out of exponential growth of literature surrounding language teacher cognition, Borg (2019, p. 4) has expanded the concept into a multifaceted framework that positions language teacher cognition in socio-cultural, professional, personal, and historical planes. Based on the framework, language teacher cognition is molded by and concurrently impacts teachers' experiences of becoming, existing, and evolving within their profession along with their emotions and thoughts in connection with all dimensions of teacher. All these nuanced features of language teacher cognition make it a sophisticated, ever-changing and highly context-dependent system (Feryok, 2010; Li, 2019; Johnson, 2009). Out of the interactive and changing nature of the components located within, language teacher cognition can be classified as a dynamic system (Richardson et al., 2014).

Regardless of the terminological variability which has given rise to a 'definitional confusion' (Eisenhart et. al, 1988), investigation into language teachers' cognition has exponentially prevailed as a research direction up to this day (Feifei & Abdullah, 2023). Inquiries into how language teachers execute their actions and what informs their in-class practices have persisted in being fundamental areas of debate to the modern day.

2.3.1. Language Teacher Cognition in Grammar Teaching

Research on English as a Foreign Language teacher cognition specifically related to grammar instruction investigates the intricate interplay among teachers' thought

processes, knowledge, and beliefs and in what way these concepts interact with teachers' pedagogical practices in terms of grammar (Borg, 2003). This plane of research plays a significant role in discerning the value of grammar instruction, an essential piece in language acquisition and learning. Teacher cognitions involve a broad array of cognitive constructs, encompassing perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes regarding grammar teaching, all of which steer their instructional methods and classroom strategies (Borg, 2003).

The evolution of language teaching methodologies, historically shifting from the Grammar Translation Method to more interactive and communicative approaches, has immensely impacted in what way grammar instruction takes place in EFL classes. Traditional approaches of grammar instruction, frequently condemned for concentrating on rote memorization and falling short of addressing real-world and practical language usage, have been replaced with modern grammar teaching methods entailing the incorporation of communicative competence and meaningful language use along with the progress of time (Larsen-Freeman, 2003). Conceptual perspectives grounded within cognitive linguistics have enabled a more thorough understanding of how complex grammar concepts are taught, advocating for a more holistic approach which is potentially more unifying in combining practical language use with structure (Geeraerts, 2007; Langacker, 2008).

EFL teacher cognitions in grammar teaching per se are not static but dynamic as they are under the influence of socio-cultural influences, working experience and reflective practice (Richard, 1996, p. 281). These cognitive concepts considerably impact teachers' preferences of whether to adopt inductive/deductive and FonFS/FonF methods, whether/to what extent to employ grammatical terminology, their error correction and drilling strategies (Zhang & Sun, 2022; Dhanavel, 2022).

2.4. LTC Research

Since the conceptualization of teacher cognition, it has been extensively researched in various contexts, education levels, and locations around the globe to flesh out what this construct is and how it influences the fluidity of language teaching in classroom settings. As mentioned in the previous chapter, having been a focus of scientific curiosity, teacher cognition has been studied under a variety of constructs and labeled with different nomenclature. This resulted in a turbulence in the agreement on the definition of language teacher cognition.

Laying the groundwork for the concept of language teacher cognition, in their doctoral dissertation, Woods (1996) explored the cognitive processes fundamental to the decision-making of language teachers and their teaching practices, specifically aiming to understand how pedagogical knowledge, classroom events, and teachers' cognitions come into interaction to inform language instruction. Utilizing a multi-method qualitative design, the study employed classroom observations, ethnographic interviews, and video-based stimulated recalls to gather qualitative data from various teaching contexts. Participants of the study were eight language teachers who were delivering integrated or skill-based language courses to cater to the differentiating needs of various proficiency level learners. The research classified three interwoven levels of teacher cognition as abstract (independent of time), lesson-specific, and course-specific. Results indicated that teachers' decision-making is constantly changing and content-dependent, underscoring the interconnection of teachers' cognitions and their interpretations of classroom actions. In relation to grammar instruction, this usually entailed regulating the teaching strategies in line with wider educational targets and adapting to immediate learning needs. This study highlighted the importance of teacher cognition in terms of transforming pedagogical decisions, indicating that structured and target-oriented instruction emerges out of deeply held presumptions and circumstantial perceptions. Finally, these insights underscore the need for professional development programs to handle the construct of teacher cognition explicitly, supporting reflective practices to improve the efficiency of instruction through evidence-based grammar teaching strategies.

Numrich (1996) found similar results, examining the experiences of inexperienced ESL teachers to detect common difficulties and developmental processes in the early stages of their teaching careers. They set out to uncover recurring themes in their reflections, particularly concentrating on their pedagogical growth and practical challenges. A secondary analysis of 26 diary studies was conducted, utilizing personal language learning accounts and reflective diary entries written following every teaching practice in a 10-week practicum. The participants were 23 female and 3 male novice teachers who were graduates in a TESOL program, providing instruction to adult ESL learners of a community language course. The study revealed that novice teachers at first were preoccupied with their teaching actions instead of learning outcomes and student learning. As they progressed through their practicum teaching sessions, the participants came face-to-face with challenges of classroom management, adjusting the balance

between practicality and creativity, and their self-doubts about grammar teaching. Participants' prior language learning experiences significantly impacted their instruction approaches, and recurrent challenges range from time management to adaptively responding to individual needs. The study reiterates the need for teacher education to provide targeted assistance to novice teachers in developing confidence and strategies for grammar teaching.

Mohamed (2006) investigated the relationship between teachers' beliefs, instructional practices, and professional development, focusing on grammar teaching in Maldivian secondary schools. The study aimed to determine how pedagogical innovations influence teachers' cognitions and classroom behaviour. Employing a mixed-methods approach, Phase One used questionnaires with 197 English teachers from 51 schools to explore beliefs and self-reported practices, while Phase Two adopted a quasi-experimental, descriptive ethnographic design. In the second phase, 14 teachers from two schools participated in a 12-week school-based professional development programme promoting inductive grammar instruction. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and programme evaluations. Findings from Phase One revealed a strong emphasis on grammar, limited awareness of inductive approaches, and a preference for traditional, teacher-centred methods. Phase Two results showed that while teachers' practices generally aligned with their beliefs, discrepancies existed. The professional development raised awareness of inductive methods but produced minimal sustained change, with only two teachers fully adopting the innovation. Factors impeding change included limited openness to innovation, low professional motivation, unsupportive school culture, large class sizes, and challenging working conditions. One-on-one, ongoing support was more effective than workshops alone. The study underscores the complex, individualised nature of teacher change and the need for contextually responsive professional development.

Feryok (2010) investigated the applicability of complex systems theory as a potential framework to interpret the construct of language teacher cognition, pointing out its complex, dynamic, heterogeneous, and context-dependent quality. The study focused on one Armenian EFL teacher, employing classroom observations and interviews to shed light on the interconnection of language teacher cognition components such as declarative and procedural knowledge, emotional investment, and sociocultural effects. Key findings of this study underline the altering evolution of language teacher cognition, structured by

previous experiences, institutional needs, and emergent in-class practices. The participant teacher harmonized communicative teaching approaches with traditional deductive grammar instruction, creating a balance and displaying adaptability and disinclination to change. Contextual elements of curriculum limitations and learner expectations substantially stirred her instructional choices, exposing the non-linear and emergent progress involved within language teacher cognition. The research study underscored the prominence of reflective instructional practices, which can enable teachers to adapt and act in response to contextual challenges. The researcher advocated that complex dynamic systems theory has the potential to unify the intricate interplay between the elements of practice, context, and cognition. Through the lens of complex dynamic systems, a holistic perspective on language teacher cognition is provided, notably allowing us to make sense of how teacher cognition possibly steers grammar teaching and unfolds and progresses in constantly shifting educational environments.

Criticizing psychocognitive models for disregarding the wider cultural, political, and social aspects of teaching, Cross (2010) conducted a study with the framework of Vygotskian sociocultural activity to examine the interactive relationship between context, practice, and teacher thinking. Conceptually positioning language teacher cognition on a momentum negotiated by historical and contextual elements, this study draws attention to the cognitive contradictions and points to the potential of the tensions between teaching actions and teacher cognitions as catalysts for professional growth. Employing a qualitative research design, the study focused on a Japanese teacher working at a middle school in the Australian context and gathered data through classroom observations, interviews, and document analysis. Results of the study point to a significant effect of sociocultural elements like institutional policies, community expectations, and prior learning experiences on the teacher's pedagogical decision-making. This sociocultural view of language teacher cognition is supported by various prominent sources in the field (Li, 2019; Feryok, 2010; Golombek, 2015; Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015; Burns et al. 2015; Johnson, 2009).

In the Pakistani context, Kalsoom (2013) explored the interplay between English language teachers' cognitions and practices in relation to grammar. The aim of the study was to investigate if and how teachers' cognitions in grammar teaching were affected by demographic factors like gender, location, qualifications, and professional experience. A teacher belief questionnaire related to grammar teaching was utilized, involving 160

secondary schools from eight different districts within the country. Through the use of multi-stage sampling, 320 teachers took part in the study. The results indicated a strong positive correlation between teachers' practices and beliefs, further proving that beliefs critically shape pedagogical instruction. While gender, locale, and teaching experience demonstrated no substantial discrepancies in cognitions, contextual elements such as curriculum and institutional expectations were deemed as crucial. The belief systems of teachers were interconnected to their self-confidence in grammatical knowledge, substantially informing their tendencies towards implicit or explicit teaching. The study emphasized the necessity of the integration of teacher beliefs into professional training and the significance of understanding teachers' cognitive processes to design professional development programs that could potentially meet the needs of teachers in terms of grammar instruction, hence contributing further to Feryok's (2010) findings.

On a different note, Ellis (2013) set out to explore how the plurilingualism of ESL teachers influenced their cognitions in the context of Australia. This qualitative, exploratory research gathered data from classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and language biographies of 31 teachers who had diverse teaching experience and tertiary TESOL qualifications. The study results indicated that plurilingual teachers viewed language learning as challenging yet achievable due to their prior fruitful attempts in learning a language. However, monolingual teachers tended to label language learning as difficult and associate it with failures. This contrast in the perceptions of plurilingual and monolingual teachers was also reflected in their conduct with their students. Plurilingual teachers leaned on their language learning histories to empathize with learners, frequently drawing parallels between their own challenges and student challenges. In addition, they were eager to engage in translanguaging practices and leverage their students' language learning backgrounds to create a flexible atmosphere within their classrooms. In contrast, monolingual teachers were constrained to solely English in their instruction and unable to utilize any of the plurilingual strategies. Indicating that teachers' perceptions and histories of second language acquisition or learning directly transformed their cognitive frameworks and practices, specifically through translanguaging, this study shined a light on the personal aspect of language teacher cognition and showed the potential in embracing translanguaging in language classrooms.

From a different perspective, Sanchez (2014) conducted a more focused examination of how EFL teachers' self-perceived grammar knowledge shapes their instructional decisions. The exploratory-interpretive case study was conducted in an Argentine secondary school and focused on two experienced non-native teachers. Data were collected through 10 lesson observations and several stimulated recall interviews to investigate their classroom practices and reflections on their teaching. The findings indicated that pedagogical approaches were remarkably oriented by self-perceptions of knowledge about grammar. The first participant, feeling secure in their grammar knowledge, counted on grammar-centric and teacher-centered instructional methods; however, they sporadically engaged in unorthodox strategies, including diverting questions when faced with uncertain concepts. The second participant, lacking confidence in their knowledge about grammar, tended to reduce grammar teaching time and be deeply dependent on textbook terminology. The effects of external elements such as classroom setting and available resources, alongside internal factors like confidence and teaching experience, on instructional decisions and choices were highlighted in the study. The researcher emphasizes the value in handling teachers' self-perceptions as a part of professional development to refine the effectiveness of their grammatical instruction and enhance their confidence. This study highlighted the multifaceted nature of teacher decision-making, linking individual perceptions to much larger and context-specific cognitive processes.

Coffey (2015) aimed to discover the conceptualization process of linguistic knowledge of language teachers with the help of metaphor analysis, seeking to strengthen the position of reflective practices in language teacher education. The study applied an interpretivist, qualitative approach and collected data in a workshop in which 26 teacher candidates participated in England. Participants reflected on their language learning histories through creating visual and textual portraits, representative of their emotional and cognitive interaction with various languages. The multimodal data emerging out of these representations was analyzed to uncover metaphors and underlying cognitions about language knowledge. Results indicated that participants reflected on their language knowledge frequently through emotional and sensory metaphors such as the body as a container for languages, language learning as immersion, and mother tongues as core identities. Illustrating that the journey into language learning is not only cognitive but also deeply personal and sensory, the study displayed that grammar and pedagogical

approaches surrounding it have a subjective and context-sensitive dynamic, supporting the results of Feryok's study (2010). The study concluded that metaphor analysis could put forth remarkable visions into language learning and teaching as a lived and embodied experience, advocating for reflection potentially acting as the passageway among cognition, cultural identity, and emotion.

Highlighting the changing, situated, and context-reliant characteristics of language teacher cognition, Kubanyiova and Feryok (2015) proposed a reformulated broader framework to make better meaning of the notion. Through the introduction of 'intentionality' as a uniting concept, they encouraged interlinking the emotions, cognitions, actions, and motivations within teachers and steering away from static perspectives of cognition towards an ecological understanding that positions language teaching cognition as emergent sense-making within dimensions such as individual, institutional, and sociocultural. Pointing out the unyielding gap between student learning and teacher cognition, especially in grammar teaching, where theoretical knowledge does not translate into practical application, the authors appealed for more use of bottom-up research methods like ethnography and narrative inquiry to capture the real-world experiences of teachers. Reiterating the functionality reflective practices and the benefits contextually-relevant training programs deliver, the article called for an alignment of language teacher cognition research with socially meaningful learning settings and acknowledgement of the existence of distinct classrooms worldwide.

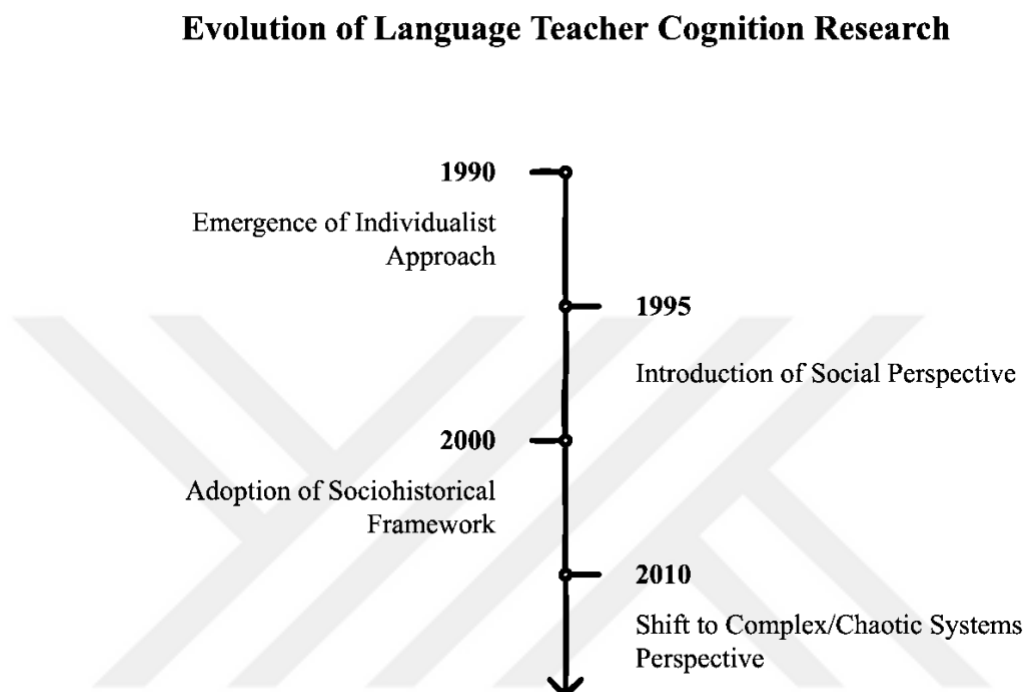
Challenging traditional cognitive frameworks, Crookes (2015) approached language teachers' philosophies and cognitions with a theoretical perspective of critical pedagogy, urging for thoroughly integrating ethical and sociopolitical aspects such as democratic values and social justice into the construct of language teacher cognition. Crookes argued that teachers' philosophies, embodied in their beliefs, behaviors, and ethical values, might prove essentially instrumental in putting together a broader framework of language teacher cognition. Through the expansion of teacher cognition into ethical and philosophical planes, the author suggested that social implications of language instruction can be incorporated into teacher training. This inclusion of critical and socially conscious philosophy could enable teacher educators to equip prospective teachers with a holistic outlook of teacher cognition, embracing moral, social, and political dimensions, helping them enhance their awareness as agents of change within modern classrooms.

Through a novel lens to scrutinize teacher factor, Kubanyiova (2015) researched how teachers' envisioned professional-selves governed classroom discourse and fostered opportunities for second language development. Set in a Slovak secondary state school, this study incorporated second language acquisition and teacher cognition to observe how an experienced EFL teacher's inner resources like beliefs, aspirations, and emotions impacted their teaching practices. Data were collected through eight lesson observations, four in-depth interviews, and field notes over the span of a year. Through conversation analysis and grounded theory, the study demonstrated that the teacher's interactional patterns in teacher-led discourse frequently mirrored her bigger identity targets, but these occasionally clashed with immediate pedagogical objectives. The study highlighted the teacher's ideal and ought-to selves had a substantial influence over her in-class instruction, sometimes at the risk of limiting authentic student involvement due to her control of discourse. The shapeshifting reciprocity between teachers' internal frameworks and learner engagement was brought under the microscope, unearthing the criticality of fostering self-awareness and reflective teaching in teacher training.

Golombek (2015) studied the intertwined dynamic of cognition and emotion in language teacher education, thoroughly underscoring the potential of reflective teaching on both sides of teacher educators and student teachers in the similar vein with Kubanyiova (2015). Data sources comprised of reflective journals, retrospective interviews, and written responses. Participants of the study were undergraduate teaching English as a second language student teachers who were co-teaching English to visiting scholars in the United States of America. Operating with a Vygotskian sociocultural lens, the study utilized self-inquiry and scrutinized the emotional dissonance of a teacher educator while mediating reflective journal entries composed by pre-service teachers through a teacher internship process at a university. Findings point out the significance of 'perezhivanie', which refers to lived emotional experiences, in transforming the reflective inner processes of student teachers and educators. The study also concluded that emotional dissonance like frustration or annoyance can be catalytic in professional growth and might trigger educators to create a dialogue and mediate effectively, which demonstrates that teacher educators' self-regulation processes substantially affect learners' reflective practices. The author called for a broader concept of language teacher cognition which incorporates emotions and emotional awareness into teacher education

to open the way for a more holistic approach to teaching and learning, clarifying the intricate nature of teacher cognition by unlocking another related dimension to it.

Figure 2.1. *Historical shifts in Language Teacher Cognition Research*



Adapted from Burns et al., 2015

Burns et al. (2015) presented an ontological review of research in the field of language teacher cognition, surveying how conceptual frameworks and research methodologies have unfolded over the last three decades. The comprehensive meta-analysis determined four generational shifts: individualist (from 1990 on), social (from 1995 on), sociohistorical (from 2000 on), and complex/chaotic system (from 2010 on) approaches as seen in Figure 2.2. The study mapped out these generational trends on the basis of methodological tendencies and theoretical change in the interpretation and understanding of language teaching cognition, featuring the relocation from isolated cognitive processes to dynamic, contextually embedded systems. Cognitive processes, decisions, and assumptions of teachers were progressively perceived as relational and situated within more general ecological and sociohistorical settings. Specifically in terms of grammar teaching, the researchers called for aligning cognitive and sociocultural

elements to pave the way for a better understanding of how teachers navigate the friction between interactive pedagogies and prescriptive curricula. The study also highlighted the potential benefits of innovative research methods such as narrative inquiry and diary that accurately capture the complex realities of educational settings.

Following up with the call of Burns et al. (2015) to utilize newer research methodology, Moodie (2016) explored how prior negative learning experiences swayed the cognitions and practices of South Korean EFL teachers. The study reviewed the model of ‘apprenticeship of observation’ by Lortie (1975), which debated that teachers generally learn what to do from their own positive experiences as students. Contending for the inverse proportion of this model, the researcher proposed a contrary phenomenon called the ‘anti-apprenticeship of observation’. Applying a qualitative, grounded narrative inquiry method, data were gathered from 18 teachers by means of reflective writing and follow-up interviews with four teachers. Participants were a combination of experienced and novice teachers, all of whom received their education in Korea and were at the time teaching in public schools. Attracting attention to the evolving national curriculum of South Korea, findings showed that participants’ negative experiences of learning English, mainly featuring teacher-centric and grammar-centralized instruction, remarkably induced them to adopt contrasting communicative teaching methods, seeming to be in line with the findings of Moodie and Feryok (2015). In spite of their intentions to utilize communicative language teaching, limited exposure and a lack of practical communicative models in their own language learning histories caused participants to struggle with the implementation of such reforms. This study emphasized the need for containing learning backgrounds and sociohistorical settings and embracing experiential learning in teacher education to substantiate curricular reform processes. The findings of this research are significant in the sense that not only the experienced teachers but also the inexperienced teachers utilized traditional grammar instruction regardless of their teaching experience.

Following in the footsteps of Cross (2010) and Golombek (2015), England (2017) examined the collective epistemological cognitions of language teacher educators through a sociocultural framework in Indonesia. The study aimed to fill the methodological gap in the literature of collective teacher cognition by discovering shared beliefs in the professional community of a teacher education center. This exploratory research collected data through four rounds of recorded dialogues, two on the group level

and two on the individual level. Researcher-designed scenarios depicting classroom dilemmas and published materials on teacher education were employed in the dialogues to facilitate discussions and expose common cognitions. Participants within the study were five experienced language teacher educators and three trainers-in-training. The findings of the study indicated that shared cognitions pointed to the crying need for the combination of external theoretical frameworks of language acquisition, learning, and teaching with practical classroom knowledge. Drawing attention to the situatedness of teaching within specific contexts, participants put forward a common understanding that some sort of balance needs to be struck between contextual knowledge and universal pedagogical principles. Additionally, local cultural norms and institutional subtleties played a pivotal role in the shaping of dialogue discourse and cognition formation. Through structured dialogues, teachers were able to express their idiosyncratic cognitions and co-construct collective beliefs. Highlighting the professional growth stimulated by dialogic inquiry, the study advocates for methodological innovations to research collective beliefs and promotes collaborative and dialogic professional development to contextualize mainstream instruction pedagogies.

Torres (2017) investigated the dynamic of grammar teaching practices and teacher cognitions in the Filipino ESL settings. Adopting a qualitative case study design, the study collected data by means of non-participatory classroom observations, pre and post semi-structured interviews from two female teachers at a high school. The participants had differing durations of teaching: six years for the less experienced and eighteen years for the experienced teacher. Results of the study demonstrated that regarding pedagogical preferences, both participants opined that explicit grammar teaching aids learners in mastering language rules and achieving fluency. Conversely, driven by their teaching experience, slight differences were observed in their approaches to explicit and implicit grammar teaching, contextualization, and instructional strategies as opposed to the findings of Moodie (2016). Demonstrating a stronger alignment with her cognitions, the experienced teacher adapted to the classroom dynamics more flexibly, whereas the less experienced teacher adhered more firmly to grammatical rules and structured teaching methods. The primary causes of the glaring discrepancies between cognitions and in-class actions consisted of situational elements such as curriculum requirements, lack of time, learner needs, and student readiness. The study placed emphasis on the fluctuating characteristics of teacher cognition in connection with teaching experience and external

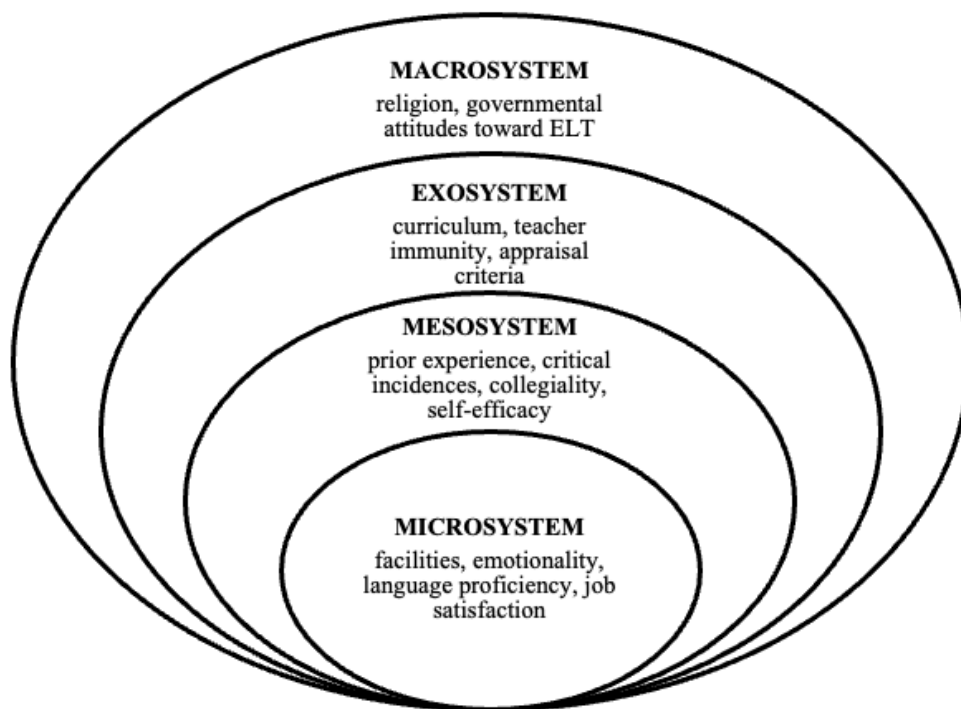
constraints. Although the findings of Moodie (2016) and Torres (2017) contradict to an extent, the contexts of both studies, along with the differing number of participants, arguably pose a problem in reaching a definite conclusion as to the reasons for the choices of the participants regarding the grammar instruction.

Scrutinizing the agreed-upon connections among EFL teachers' cognitions, institutional settings, and classroom practices through a longitudinal study, Öztürk and Gürbüz (2017) proposed a data-driven model of language teacher cognition. The research study, undertaken in three state universities in Turkey and utilizing purposive sampling, focused on three EFL instructors with varied teaching experience durations at preparatory language programs. Data collection was administered through semi-structured interviews, 12 hours of non-participatory classroom observations, stimulated recalls, and reflective journal entries over the course of five months. Guided by grounded theory analysis, the study aimed to explore how language instructors' frameworks evolved and interfaced with their in-class actions and contextual factors and culminated with a framework named 'Clusters of Language Teacher Cognition'. Findings suggest that language teacher cognition is formed by a combination of factors, encompassing prior language learning experiences, pre-service education, and novice teaching years. Their classroom practices were under the influence of their beliefs, learner profiles, classroom dynamics, improvisational teaching acts, and contextual limitations such as testing and curriculum policies. The study noted a dynamic interplay between practice and cognition of language teachers, identifying that teaching experience boosts both persistent principles and flexibility in language teaching. Underscoring the multifaceted and evolving quality of language teacher cognition, the conceptual framework contributed enormously to insights into the language teacher cognition literature by demonstrating how grammar-related cognitions thrive through teaching experience and context-specific adaptations in grammar instruction unfold due to institutional realities.

In another context, where the language institution's focus was uniquely on grammar instruction, Azimi (2018) conducted a qualitative study involving four teachers at a language center in Iran. Setting out to explore the relation of EFL teachers' stated beliefs and grammar teaching acts in their classes, the researcher gathered data via 20 classroom observations and semi-structured interviews and processed the dataset through thematic analysis. The research unveiled that teachers' professional experiences were more prominent in shaping their grammar teaching compared to their theoretical

knowledge. Interestingly, a notable disconnect was observed between their stated beliefs and grammar instruction practices, with participants mostly incognizant of the incompatibility. The study sheds light on the need for reflective practices to bridge the gap in the cognition-practice dichotomy and realign the planes of belief systems and instructional applications, echoing the results of Woods (1996).

Figure 2.2. *Factors influencing language teacher cognition at ecological systems*



Source: Mohammadabadi et al., 2019, p. 675

In another Iranian study, targeting to identify the reciprocity among micro, meso, exo, and macrosystems that drive and frame teachers' cognitions, Mohammadabadi et al. (2019) investigated the multifarious components forging language teacher cognition aided by Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model, which depicts interconnected environments embedded in each other in cognitive development (1993) as noted in Figure 2.2. In this qualitative study, data were obtained in the form of classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with 62 EFL teachers employed across a variety of language schools. Participants were of various educational backgrounds (BA, MA, PhD) and differed in teaching experiences, which granted diversified standpoints on language teacher cognition and its development. Following the analysis applied with grounded theory, the findings disclosed that within the microsystem, classroom facilities, emotional

conditions, job satisfaction, and proficiency in language impose influence on language teacher cognition. The powerful factors interacting with teacher cognitions at the mesosystem plane were lined up as prior learning experiences, self-efficacy, and collaboration among colleagues. At the exosystem, institutional policies, teacher performance evaluation, and curriculum demands were prominent drivers of language teacher cognition, whereas macrosystem government policies and religious values were contributors to teachers' mental frameworks. The study illustrated that language teacher cognition is not merely an individual trait, but a constantly in-motion attribute crafted by correlations located throughout varying systemic layers, advocating for fundamental systemic reforms in education with the intent to better support teachers through continuous professional development and enhance instructional efficacy.

During the lockdowns of the COVID-19 pandemic, Gao and Zhang (2020) scrutinized EFL teachers' cognitions in relation to online teaching, examining their adaptations to the abrupt transition from face-to-face to online teaching. Framed within constructivist theory, this qualitative case study was conducted in a Chinese university, collecting data through interviews and written reflections from three English teachers who had differing levels of teaching experience from 1 year to 27 years. The key finding of the study regarding language teacher cognition demonstrated that teachers' perspectives of online instruction were fundamentally distinct from face-to-face teaching. Participants stated they had to adapt to new roles within the new format of online teaching such as facilitators of autonomous learning and resource integrators, compared to their usual roles of knowledge providers and instructors in face-to-face environments. Their cognitions and attitudes towards information and communication technologies developed as they learned to navigate within digital platforms through trial and error. However, their initial reactions to the sudden change of educational environments involved emotions of anxiety and skepticism. Their experiences of online teaching gradually turned positive as they gained knowledge on how to leverage web tools to make their online lessons more engaging and student-centered. On the other hand, teachers articulated deep concerns about the limitations caused by the mode of education like not being able to read the paralinguistic features of language in their classes and inequality among learners deriving from technological infrastructure. Yet, through learning efforts on their own, they adapted to the online medium to respond to learner needs and vary their instruction. Presenting how teacher cognitions greatly fluctuate and stabilize in trying times and in different

settings, this study exposed the fluid nature of language teacher cognition. Showing the to-be-reckoned-with position of information and communication technology literacy in crisis-driven online teaching, the study underscored the need for the inclusion of digital competencies and technological advancements in teacher training programs. As the convergence of the planes of language teacher cognition and online education is understudied, future research on online education holds enormous potential to better understand the changes in language teacher cognition within such a medium.

In a comparable inquiry, to interpret the dynamic between EFL teachers' teaching experience and the 'transparency' of course book activities, conceptualized as the level of ease with which teachers can understand activity procedures for pedagogical purposes and apply them in class, Xu (2021) conducted a mixed-method approach study in two urban centers in China. Data collection was implemented through a questionnaire from 115 Chinese middle school teachers and interviews with 15 survey takers. The professional experience of participants varied, deriving from tenure, offering a comparable viewpoint of how expert (more than 20 years), experienced (10-15 years), and novice (1 to 3 years) teachers process and engage with educative materials. The study findings point to a considerable interplay between teaching experience duration and the transparency of textbook activities. The data suggested that expert teachers were more competent in interpreting and exploiting high-transparency activities, demonstrating accumulated knowledge of pedagogy strengthens material perception. Conversely, novice teachers confronted problems deriving from limited familiarity with pedagogical principles embedded within the activities. The study shed light on divergences between textbook design simplicity and teachers' interpretations, commonly emerging from rigid cognitive schemata in experienced teachers and lacking pedagogical proficiency in novice teachers. This gap between the levels of transparency intended by textbook designers and the perceptions of teachers demonstrated that well-designed educational materials face the risk of being misunderstood and being underutilized. Xu's study (2021) elucidated how pre-existing cognitive frameworks and accrued teaching knowledge of language teachers might profoundly affect processes in educational material utilization, calling for continuous professional development opportunities that amplify teachers' capacity of critically analyzing and competently making the most of teaching resources. The research clearly spotlighted the need for aligning material design with teacher

training for the optimization of instructional practices and materials use in language teaching environments.

The study by Gao and Yang (2022) sought to investigate the evolution of an EFL teacher's professional growth and her developing cognitions, ranging from being a novice to a teacher leader. Compiling data over six months through semi-structured interviews, written narratives, and teaching documents, this qualitative study showcased a teacher 'Jennifer,' in Chinese tertiary context, delineating her professional journey throughout 28 years. Jennifer's professional career was split into three phases. In the novice stage, Jennifer struggled with the gap between her university education and the practical demands of teaching, largely paying attention to vocabulary and grammar in her instruction. Furthermore, Jennifer encountered difficulties in self-confidence and adequacy as a teacher and extensively utilized dictionaries in her lesson planning, aiming to improve her language proficiency. As an experienced teacher, with the aid of further professional education and teaching experience, Jennifer felt more confident in her teaching skills. Labeling this period in her career as a 'comfort zone' in which she possessed a firm grasp of pedagogical methodologies, Jennifer prioritized student engagement, higher-order thinking skills, and discussions about texts. Her triumphant incorporation of innovative instructional strategies into her teaching practice led to positive feedback from her students, bolstering her confidence and passion for teaching. At the teacher leader phase of her professional journey, Jennifer received a promotion, taking on administrative duties. Jennifer blended morals education into her classes, utilizing texts not merely for language but also for imparting values and ethics. At this stage of her career, she emphasized the potential of modern information technology in teaching and fostering a holistic student development that leads to a better sense of global citizenship. Throughout these phases, Jennifer's evolution as an educator was characterized by a gradual growth of sophistication in her teaching and cognitions. This progression from rudimentary teaching focus onto a more integrated teaching philosophy illustrates the potential benefits of ongoing teacher education and support systems in language teaching institutions.

Similar to Ellis' (2013) study focusing on plurilingualism, Tishakov and Tsagari (2022) examined language teacher cognitions and perceptions regarding multilingualism in EFL classrooms. The quantitative study utilized a 32-item survey from 110 teachers in Norway, where the multicultural population is mirrored within linguistically diverse

language classrooms. The findings showed that despite a general support for multilingualism, tensions between monolingual and multilingual philosophies appeared between teachers' cognitions and practices. Although non-native English speakers were considered valid by most, the participants still tended to conform to native speaker norms and prevalently provided standard pronunciation instruction, revealing a gray zone of uncertainty in their classroom practices. However, younger teachers were more likely to prioritize intelligibility in communication rather than native-like standards of pronunciation. Demonstrating the paradoxes and conflicts between traditional norms and emerging multilingual ideologies, the study demonstrated the balancing and evolving dynamic of language teacher cognition and underlined the necessity of inclusive, multilingual teaching strategies in teacher training programs.

Within the vast confines of language teacher cognition, Schlam Salman and Inbar-Lourie (2023) explored the collective cognitions of EFL teachers in connection to future readiness and innovative pedagogies. Using a qualitatively driven mixed-methods design, data were amassed through a 40-item questionnaire and 7 open-ended questions completed by 74 teachers, semi-structured interviews with 12 teachers working at secondary schools in Israel. The participants at the time were involved in a professional training program that offered instruction on interdisciplinary approaches such as content and language integrated learning and emphasized the potential of 21st-century skills. The findings indicated that teachers were strong supporters of newer methods such as project-based learning and student-centered pedagogies to enable learner autonomy beyond classrooms. Moreover, teachers perceived English as an interdisciplinary tool for learners to access global knowledge and professional opportunities. Teachers also acknowledged the need for integrating digital tools and collaborative work into their lessons to equip learners with 21st-century skills, demonstrating flexibility in their cognitions to adapt to the evolving pedagogical paradigms. Drawing attention to the demands of modern-day education, the study called for a meaningful shift in both teacher education and professional development realms to foster future-ready cognitions and practical applications of interdisciplinary instructional paradigms.

Taking a different approach to language teacher cognition, Dimitrieska (2024) examined the language teacher identity construction process and the consequent cognitive changes during and post the Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA) course. Shadowing a novice teacher named Tom, the qualitative case study gathered data

longitudinally over 18 months by means of interviews, lesson observations, self-reflection forms, and reflective assignments to enable a deep dive into Tom's identity evolution. Substantial transformations were revealed in Tom's cognitions regarding his teaching and professional identity. Reflective procedures entrenched in the CELTA training, such as refined teacher talk, structured discussions, and teaching practice sessions, sparked Tom to undergo shifts in his instruction and cognitions. Tom expanded his cognitions in relation to the roles of a teacher in the class and recognized that the adoption of additional roles as a moderator, an evaluator, and a facilitator into his teaching skillset could enable him to address learner needs more efficiently and increase his sensitivity to learner diversity. Among the pioneering studies that promote hands-on experience and experimentation within the language teacher cognition field, the study makes a great contribution to the literature by proposing the reflective conversation heuristic as an instrument to monitor and foster professional growth inside the intertwined practical and cognitive domains.

To conclude, from the birds' eye view of this section, it can be argued that language teacher cognition has been a remarkable and advancing field of inquiry for more than 25 years in both EFL and ESL settings. Through time, the accumulative understanding of language teacher cognition has evolved from a static, mental picture of teachers and their decision-making processes in their classes to a more situated, context-embedded, social, complex web of factors in a constantly interactive dynamic with one another as the field has flourished and grown into a massive domain of research. Language teacher cognition has been scrutinized through the lens of various scientific frameworks such as complex dynamic systems, sociocultural theory, ethics, sociopolitics, epistemology, and ecological systems, attaching language teacher identity a modicum of meaning and significance on various levels. The voluminous body of literature on language teachers is evidence of its intricate, multilayered, and fluid nature. Surrounded by contextual constraints and molded by the realities of moral, institutional, and social complexities, language teacher cognition plays a crucial role in what teachers do in their classes and their unobservable mental lives. A broad spectrum of cultural and social phenomena such as emotions, identity, and multilingualism has been investigated and observed in relation to language teacher cognition, sparking interdisciplinary collaboration and transforming language teacher cognition into a construct to be reckoned with in the world of language teaching.

2.5. LTC Research on Grammar Teaching Methodologies

As the body of research focusing on language teacher cognition extended over the years, a considerable amount of inquiry was also placed on different grammar instruction approaches in English language teaching. In their comprehensive review of literature, Alqahtani (2022) scrutinized the theoretical linguistic underpinnings of grammar teaching methodologies that have historically transformed and informed language teaching in EFL contexts. Acknowledging that prominent frameworks such as behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism, and sociocultural theory have swayed grammar instruction practices and involved crucial implications for teaching methods, the study demonstrated that while traditional models under the influence of behaviorism continue to prevail and still dominate English language instruction, a significant shift towards more communicative and integrative approaches that account for social and cognitive aspects is actively in progress. The study suggests that this shift in momentum boils down to traditional grammar instruction methodologies overlooking the function of cognition and communication embedded in language learning and modern methodologies championing learner-centered, interaction-based, meaning-focused teaching. The following subsections will be delving into research conducted in relation to various teaching paradigms of grammar instruction and narrated chronologically to demonstrate to what extent the pendulum swings took place in the realms of language teacher cognition.

2.5.1. LTC Research on Communicative Language Teaching

Arguably one of the most popular approaches that has produced a long-lasting impression (Harmer, 2015), Communicative Language Teaching has seized the spotlight in the vast body of language teacher cognition research. Drawing on the shift from more traditional approaches, many researchers have sought to illustrate how this approach might have factored in the intricate nature of language teacher cognition.

Underwood (2012) conducted a mixed-method study to investigate how high school senior teachers processed the addition of communication-oriented instruction under the imminent overhaul of the Japanese national curriculum. Under the guidance of the theory of planned behavior, the study gathered data through surveys, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews from 16 participants in urban and rural areas, picked via purposive and snowball sampling to reflect assorted teaching environments of private and public schools. The study findings demonstrated that although teachers acknowledged the

potential gains like enhanced learner engagement and motivation in the adoption of communicative language teaching and seemed highly responsive to the reform, several barriers, namely time constraints, lack of training, high-stakes exam pressures, and impressions of social pressure hindered their enactment of the modern methodology. Teachers' cognitions regarding the prioritization of discrete-point and accuracy-centric grammar knowledge ingrained in university entrance exams tempered their motivations to genuinely embrace communication-focused instruction and continue utilizing the grammar translation method. Collective resistance and pressure of colleagues, learners, and other stakeholders within the educational structure challenged teachers to adhere to the reforms, inducing them to stick to their established grammar teaching, which inevitably widened the gap between the reformed curricular principles and actual classroom practices. Another crucial obstacle in the way of the naturalization of the reforms was the inadequacy of material resources such as textbooks to comply with the contemporary communication-centric method. Highlighting the societal, institutional, and personal aspects in play in the domain of language teacher cognition, this research calls for more research to form a better understanding of collective and individual elements in the effective execution of grammar teaching reforms to enlighten resembling educational contexts on the global scale. The study also points to the value in the provision of targeted professional training and adjustments in policy-making that secure the translation of massive-scale reforms to the daily realities of learning environments.

Investigating communicative language teaching curriculum innovation in another context, Zhu and Shu (2017) conducted a longitudinal research study in a secondary school in China, concentrating on the alterations of cognitions and practices of a teacher named 'Marian' in the phases of a four-year project initiated to establish a weak form of communicative language teaching. Applying an ethnographic approach, data collection tools of the study consisted of cyclical semi-structured interviews through each project phase, 66 teaching journal entries, and 34 classroom observations spanning over four years. Initially showing skepticism about communicative language teaching and strong beliefs in the validity of the presentation-practice-production approach, Marian's trajectory of her cognitions and practices fluctuated. Although Marian transitioned from traditional methods that made discrete linguistic forms a priority and gradually employed more communicative strategies in her grammar teaching, she faced setbacks during uncompromising test preparation periods and temporarily reverted to traditional, form-

focused practices. While Marian's receptivity to communicative teaching methods progressively expanded during the study, the full realization of learner-centric innovations might manifest later as the automatic application of such approaches with ease takes time to yield observable results. The study illustrates the oftentimes strenuous characteristic of altering in-class instruction acts, especially in contexts in which conventional grammar approaches have been the norm. The longitudinal nature of the study demonstrates how mighty results context-sensitive and continuous teacher training programs can provide if implemented over a long period.

In their study, Robertson et al. (2018) aimed to determine the potential effects of exposure to alternative pedagogies on EFL teachers' ideologies and grammar instruction. The qualitative study focused on 12 Vietnamese in-service EFL teachers participating in an intensive applied linguistics course in Australia, collecting data by means of reflections, dialogic engagement, and task-based group activities. Through the innovative design of the course, the study exposed teachers to diverse teaching approaches, fostering a more dynamic and context-embedded viewpoint of teaching, and observed if teachers reevaluated and reformed their cognitions in grammar teaching. Participants examined a single grammatical item 'like' through the lens of diverse teaching methodologies, encompassing structural, functional-notional, and task-based approaches. Results of the study indicate a remarkable adjustment in teachers' cognitions in relation to grammar instruction. Early in the course, teachers held traditional perspectives of grammar as fixed, rigid, rule-based structures. In virtue of engagement with varied instruction pedagogies and contemplation about their practices, their understanding of grammar gradually morphed into a dynamic tool of communication, opening the way for a more nuanced and in-depth awareness of grammar pedagogy. This cognition transformation also amplified teacher agency, enabling teachers to demonstrate motivation to adopt new teaching approaches and adapt them to the particularities of their own contexts and learner needs. Alongside England (2017), this study particularly accentuates the pivotal role of dialogic and contextually adaptive pedagogical training in making meaningful teaching transformation possible. Context-based, reflective, continuing pedagogical perspectives seem to be most effective in helping practitioners deeply grasp and effectively apply different approaches to grammar teaching.

In a mixed-methods study, Sato and Oyanedel (2019) explored the conflicts in the cognitions of EFL teachers in relation to the position of grammar teaching in the

communicative language teaching framework of Chilean educational contexts. Merging survey data from 498 teachers and focus group interviews from 9 teachers, this study purposed to discover teachers' beliefs about the blending of grammar into communicative activities and possible gaps between the theoretical knowledge and practical experiences of teachers. The sampling of the population was at varying education levels of Chile and involved extensive teaching experience ranges, generating an accurate representation of the local teaching demographics. Three distinct categories of conflicting beliefs were revealed within the study. The first category was connected to theoretical plain and demonstrated that even though teachers confirmed the significance of grammar in the progress of communicative competence and were in support of teaching grammar through communicative methods, they encountered problems in placing explicit grammar instruction in communicative approaches due to their limited theoretical knowledge as to how these approaches operate in practice, similar to the findings of Azimi (2018). Practical challenges concerning learner engagement and productivity of communicative activities, with plenty of teachers recounting abortive attempts, particularly in pair or group work due to student disengagement, composed the second category of clashing cognitions, highlighting the potential problems with the experiential aspect of learner-centric approaches. Contextual discords, arising from the perceived incompatibility of the local educational norms and the communicative ideals and teachers' ability and willingness to adopt this type of instruction, were discussed as the third kind of conflicting beliefs. This study provides valuable insights on how valuable it is to achieve a relative harmony of teacher cognitions and pedagogical practices within settings where traditional methods are deeply entrenched in teacher minds.

Also focusing on traditional and communicative grammar instruction, Wyatt and Dikilitaş (2019) sought to explore the English language teachers' self-efficacy beliefs connected to grammar teaching, targeting their perceived competencies to support language learning processes. This mixed-methods research combined survey data from 126 EFL teachers at 19 Turkish universities and qualitative responses. The questionnaire contained sections that measured teachers' attitudes towards approaches and inquired about grammatical awareness, language proficiency, and self-reported teaching acts. The data analysis designated three types of grammar teaching. Demonstrating-exemplifying-explaining grammar instruction was a teacher-centric approach entailing explicitly showing specific grammar rules, often on the board, succeeded by giving examples to

illustrate practical application in language use. Compartmentalizing-reinforcing was a traditional approach that isolated grammar from other language skills, working on reinforcing grammatical rules with the help of repetitive drills and structured exercises such as fill-in-the-blanks and sentence transformation. Contextualizing-interactive-communicative was a modern method that emphasized functionality and practicality and incorporated grammar into communicative contexts, making use of interactive activities such as role-playing, problem-solving tasks, and group work. In correlation with their pedagogical approaches, whether being more traditional or communicative, teachers exhibited varied degrees of self-efficacy pertaining to grammar instruction. While lower self-efficacy usually correlated with more traditional, form-focused teaching, higher self-efficacy beliefs were often associated with more innovative, discovery-oriented instruction. Another key finding of the study was that teachers with increased grammatical awareness and improved language proficiency tended to demonstrate higher self-efficacy beliefs and displayed greater confidence in engaging in communicative teaching and adopting learner-centered practices in their educational environments. Suggesting practical propositions such as the inclusion of micro-teaching, peer observations, and reflective dialogues in professional training systems with the intent of streamlining in-class grammar teaching procedures, this study points to the sophisticated network in between self-efficacy beliefs, grammar knowledge, and instructional choices.

In their study to examine EFL teachers' cognitions in connection to grammar instruction in the communicative approach, Setoodeh et al. (2020) administered a questionnaire to 177 EFL teachers in the Iranian context. The 24-item Likert scale questionnaire developed by Mohamed (2006) aimed to deliver a complete account of teachers' pedagogical practices and the decisional processes in language classrooms. Key conclusions of the study indicated that rather than isolated grammar drills of form-focused instruction, teachers strongly leaned towards communicative language teaching tasks, empowering learners to enact linguistic structure through the addition of real-life-like communication scenarios. However, a nuanced perspective of grammar instruction, with teachers still acknowledging the potential of explicit grammar teaching to some extent, was highlighted in the results of the study, reflecting the ongoing tug-of-war between more up-to-date pedagogical paradigms and conventional methodologies ingrained in teaching environments in a similar fashion with the findings of Sato and Oyanedel (2019). The study also found that despite systemic or institutional pressures and

societal expectations to adhere to more traditional grammar teaching methods, those with stronger beliefs in the efficacy of communicative pedagogies tended to implement such strategies with more frequency. The co-existence of both communicative and traditional teaching norms in the language teacher cognition landscape of the Iranian EFL setting is indicative of a transitional phase in grammar instruction, potentially foreshadowing a larger-scale drift in progress and reiterating the need for educational pedagogy and teacher education schemes to equip pre-service and in-service teachers with modern skillsets to keep pace with substantive changes in language teaching methodology.

Responding to the call of Underwood (2012) for more language teacher cognition research in the educational reform transitions, Sun et al. (2020) aimed to explore Chinese EFL teachers' implicit and explicit cognitions regarding communicative language teaching pedagogy in comparison to traditional language teaching methods during a curricular overhaul, entailing a shift from traditional to more communicative frameworks. The study utilized the Implicit Association Test, measure teachers' unconscious preferences between the two grammar instruction paradigms and semi-structured interviews to gauge explicit attitudes. This novel research methodology enabled the exploration of attitudes that teachers might not explicitly acknowledge or state. The study sample comprised 24 EFL teachers who graduated from the same teacher training institution and were teaching across high school and college levels in a Chinese metropolis. Findings demonstrated a diversity of subconscious preference of communicative teaching over traditional methods, with 15 teachers showing some and 9 demonstrating no preference. Although teachers received education in and often articulate a preference for modern, communicative teaching practices, their deep-seated, implicit cognitions might not fully orient with these approaches. Contrasts emerged between explicit attitudes and implicit cognitions between data sets of interviews and the test. The majority of teachers explicitly favored communicative teaching and cited its potency in students' productive development and its favorable reception in international contexts. On the other hand, a noticeable discrepancy between teachers' perceived beliefs and attitudes unveiled by the association test proposed that the explicit responses might be under the influence of professional expectations and the social desirability of communicative pedagogy. This gap in the cognition sets of teachers signifies that teachers may seemingly agree with educational restructuring that endorses communicative methods while deep down harboring attachment to more traditional, structured grammar

teaching, supporting the results of Woods (1996). The study provided input on how implicit attitudes, less susceptible to social desirability bias, might potentially draw unique pictures of teacher cognition, frequently diverging from openly expressed beliefs. The nuanced results of the study cast light on the obscurity of language teacher cognition and the probable barriers to executing innovation in EFL settings, calling for policymakers, curriculum designers, and teacher educators to take notice of the cognitive and contextual landscapes in advance.

In the Turkish context, targeting the exploration into language teacher cognition concerning grammar instruction, Başar (2020) scrutinized the cognitions and classroom techniques of four EFL teachers. Applying qualitative case methodology, data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, five lesson observations, and stimulated recalls. Four participants, all of whom were female, had teaching experiences spanning from 1 to 15 years. The study's findings illustrate an intricate give-and-take linking teachers' cognitions and their instruction, with variations often precipitated by individual experiences and contextual dynamics. Participants' grammar instruction was informed by reliance on course books, experiential knowledge, lack of deep theoretical understanding, and tendency towards communicative activities. While some congruence was observed between teachers' cognitions and in-class actions, curricular demands, lack of sufficient time, and subtleties of classrooms induced teachers to follow teaching strategies inconsistent with their cognitions. Despite the stated common preference for communicative language teaching among teachers, teachers prevalently followed traditional methods in their grammar instruction. Experienced teachers frequently adapted materials to address learner needs, displaying further alignment of their practices and beliefs. However, inexperienced teachers were more likely to count on textbook guidance and exhibit mismatches. Contributing to the broader academic discourse on the impact of contextual and practical aspects on grammar instruction, this study appeals for institutional support systems to mitigate the adverse implications generated by contextual constraints and teacher education and training curricula to provide instruction on how to handle the subtle intricacies of classroom environments. The value of the findings notwithstanding, more studies revealing whether these findings might extend to a broader number of teachers could be valuable in this context.

In another study in the Turkish context, Gökçe and Keçik (2021) purposed to explore EFL teachers' cognitions connected to how they handle the challenges involved

in speaking instruction at a state university. Utilizing a multiple case study methodology, data collection was implemented via questionnaires, classroom observations, and reflection reports from 28 teachers, with deep focus on five to reach enhanced understanding of a variety of elements such as prior schooling, professional coursework, in-class teaching, and their effects on teachers' mental processes. They study found there was a consensus on the fundamentality of speaking as a skill, identifying speaking as a core component within language proficiency. Some teachers still conformed to more traditional, teacher-centric approaches, relying more on controlled practice and less on freer speaking activities, whereas others adopted learner-centered instruction, navigating their classes within a communicative framework with ease and flexibility. Key factors playing a critical role in this differentiation were the pressure of curriculum coverage, student demotivation, personal preferences, class sizes, lack of resources, and assessment procedures prioritizing grammar and vocabulary systems over speaking. Participants who were engaged in reflective practices and professional dialogue showed a deeper understanding of their teaching strategies and were more willing to adapt their instruction to deal with contextual limitations. Stating that teachers' in-class practices are most of the time a negotiation of their cognitions about what effective teaching entails and the practical barriers they face in their day-to-day teaching scenarios, the study calls for more support for language teachers in the form of training, resources, and manageable class sizes to enable teachers to implement their practices in the best way possible.

The research conducted by Nguyen et al. (2023) delved into the pedagogical decision-making processes of 5 novice Vietnamese EFL teachers amidst a mandated communicative language curriculum in secondary schools in urban and rural regions. The study primarily sought to interpret how extrinsic factors interacted with teachers' cognitions and action selection while operating with national English language course books developed on communicative language teaching paradigms. Qualitative data were amassed through interviews, classroom observations, and stimulated recalls. This data collection mix facilitated a nuanced survey of how novice teachers decided to adapt textbook activities, often curtailing opportunities for student interaction due to the perceived limitation of students' capabilities and motivation on the teachers' part. The results reveal a major divergence between teachers' enthusiasm for communicative approaches of textbooks and teachers' conservative teaching procedures. The curriculum promoted communicative teaching through guided and free activities to enhance learner

engagement. However, teachers repeatedly modified or omitted these procedures and favored mechanical, controlled tasks such as drills and comprehension checks, citing the learners' insufficient proficiency, exam-focused educational culture, and large class sizes as major obstacles. Underlying these modifications and omissions is a mismatch of policies in the educational sphere backing communicative methods and the grounded classroom realities in which practitioners play a pivotal role. This study highlights that for teaching practices to keep pace with pedagogical reforms and the aspirations of language instruction policies, especially in challenging educational settings, novice teachers should be fervently supported with targeted professional development alternatives, thus enabling them to actualize newer paradigms in their classes and better their cognitions.

In conclusion, parallel to the shift in grammar instruction from traditional to contemporary methods, language teacher cognition research in relation to communicative language teaching has been flourishing in plenty of contexts in the last couple of decades. Particularly in countries undertaking a curriculum reform and adopting more student-centric paradigms in language teaching, language teacher cognitions have drawn significant research efforts with the aim of checking whether the reform is being acknowledged and accepted within the minds of practicing teachers. The research presented up to here on communicative language teaching and cognition has demonstrated that cognitive development and espousal of modern language teaching approaches by language teachers does not simply follow a linear growth but exhibit a fluctuating pattern, deriving from the fact that real change in classroom practices takes great effort on teachers' part and cognitions. Even when teachers acknowledge the potential of newer student-centered methodologies, they might not be able to convert them into their practice and revert to traditional teaching norms depending on various factors such as context, curriculum pressures, theoretical knowledge, and social norms. Bearing this in mind, it can be said that there is an ongoing shift, however inconsistent, from traditional to communicative practices in language classes. Cognitive change is gradual and/or resistant in nature and adjustment of everyday teaching acts to new norms of grammar instruction might not occur or emerge in a long time if teachers are left to their own devices. In the translation of cognitive changes into in-class teaching acts, reflective practice seems to be one of the key solutions proposed by language teacher cognition literature. The research covered so far in this section collectively calls for

context-based and continuous professional development to support language teachers in bettering both of their cognitive and teaching worlds, particularly in the process of nationwide curriculum overhauls.

2.5.2. LTC Research on Focus-on-Forms and Focus-on-Form

Focus-on-form and focus-on-forms have been widely put to use in teaching grammar all around the globe (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011) and drawn attention as a prominent research topic in the field of language teacher cognition. Taking inspiration from the swing of grammar instruction between traditional and contemporary paradigms, numerous studies have strived to explore which roles these methods may have played in the complex characteristics of language teacher cognition.

Schulz (1996) aimed to explore the effectiveness of focus-on-form instructions and teachers' and learners' perceptions on the matter of grammar's role in the language classroom. Through a mixed-methods exploratory design, the research collected data through a questionnaire at the University of Arizona, USA. Participants involved 824 students and 92 instructors of various languages. The study revealed that while most teachers recognized the benefits of focus-on-form in supporting language acquisition, they tended to employ focus-on-forms instruction because of their perceived effectiveness. This significant discrepancy between what teachers believed was most effective for learning, that is, focus-on-form, and what they routinely practiced in the class, that is, focus-on-forms, constituted a cognition-practice dichotomy. Teachers reported their preference for focus-on-forms derived mainly from assessment structures and institutional pressures. This specific finding of the study seemed to align with Borg (1997) and contributed to a broader and prevalent theme in line with the findings of Chan (2015), Ahmad and Nasim (2024), and Öztürk and Gürbüz (2017) that contextual factors and language teacher cognition are in a dynamic relationship. Another interesting finding of the study indicated that learners favored explicit grammar teaching, widely believing that grammar learning aids language mastery, emphasizing the need for reconciling student and teacher expectations to reach learning objectives.

With the aim of comparing FonF and FonFS, Spada and Lightbown (2008) examined the effects of isolated and integrated form-focused instruction (FFI) on the development of L2 grammar among 103 French-speaking Grade 6 learners in Quebec. Utilizing a quasi-experimental design, participants were divided into three groups:

isolated FFI (grammar taught separately), integrated FFI (grammar taught within communicative contexts), and a control group. Data were collected through grammar and oral tasks administered as pretests, posttests, and delayed posttests alongside a measure of language analytic ability. Results showed that both FFI types improved grammatical accuracy compared to the control group, with integrated FFI proving more effective for communicative use. Learners with higher language analytic ability benefited more from isolated FFI. The study highlights the importance of aligning instructional approaches with both learning goals and learner characteristics.

Phipps and Borg (2009) conducted a study to address the similar question of the interplay between EFL teachers' stated beliefs and actual classroom teaching acts, specifically scrutinizing the tensions arising between the two aspects and providing a foundation for later studies. Utilizing a longitudinal and qualitative characteristic, the study combined semi-structured interviews and non-participatory lesson observations throughout an 18-month span. The study took place in a preparatory class of a private university in Turkey with three experienced instructors who were relatively new to the institution, opening space for their perceptions on their adaptive instruction practices in an unfamiliar context. Participants were of different nationalities: one Turkish, one American, and one British. The institutional setting involved teaching young adults at diverse learning levels and utilizing a blend of commercial and in-house materials. Key findings unearthed a stark disparity of teachers' expressed beliefs and their existing instructional approaches. Teachers voiced support for contextualized and communicative grammar instruction paradigms instead of isolating grammar as a separate focal point. In contrast, teachers were observed defaulting to more traditional, expository approaches, e.g., focus-on-forms, explicit grammar explanations, drilling, and mechanical exercises, while providing grammar instruction particularly on sophisticated grammatical structures. Due to the emphasis on grammatical accuracy within the curricular and evaluative procedures of the institution, teachers were pressured into more form-based instruction. Teachers had some perceived cognitions in relation to the proficiency level of the learners, particularly that students respond better to more traditional methods and lower-level students had difficulty in keeping up with interactive activities. Contrary to the prevailing employment of form-focused instruction, teachers adapted activities to incorporate student-centered elements, attempting to balance their cognitions and practical constraints. This incorporation of communicative teaching into their in-class

procedures allowed them to tailor their approaches depending on grammatical structures and the dynamics of individual classes. Even though teachers reevaluated their teaching skill sets and demonstrated motivation to make alterations, sustained change was challenging to achieve under contextual struggles with curriculum requirements, student responsiveness, and assessment orientations. Elucidating that teachers' instructional decision formulation is subject to the dense web of core and peripheral beliefs, surroundings, and practical class dynamics, the study accentuates the criticality of ongoing support and teacher training through which teachers are enabled to coordinate their daily teaching practices carefully with their pedagogical cognition sets.

In a similar context, Uysal and Bardakçı (2014) investigated the cognitions and practices of EFL teachers regarding grammar in Turkish primary schools. Applying a mixed-methods design, data collection included a questionnaire completed by 108 participants and a focus group interview. Findings revealed that teachers strongly preferred to utilize traditional focus-on-forms approaches such as explicitly explaining grammar rules, controlled exercises, and mechanical drills. 88% of teachers stated that drills and repetitions of grammatical structures play a pivotal role in effective language acquisition. Despite the curricular reform that pushed communicative and meaning-focused instruction, the reality within the classrooms frequently showcased a substantial orientation towards form-focused methods. Teachers were largely unfamiliar with modern focus-on-form paradigms and found meaning-based instruction designs impractical within their settings, referring to numerous contextual factors like resource constraints, crowded classrooms, time limitations, and exam-based education culture norms. Laying stress on the apparent disconnect between teacher cognitions and curriculum goals, the study suggests a reevaluation of established language teacher education procedures and the creation of context-specific, ongoing teacher training models with the view of forming a proper alignment of practice with contemporary language teaching models.

On a different vein, Graus and Coppen (2017) aimed to discover grammar instruction-related cognitions of EFL pre-service teachers and their cognitions' connection with their perceptions of learners. Set at a university in the Netherlands, the qualitative study amassed data from 74 graduate and postgraduate EFL student teachers through focus group interviews. Surprisingly, findings indicated student teachers strongly supported explicit, systematic, isolated, and form-focused instruction, viewing it as

fundamental for accuracy and communicative competence, especially to reach advanced levels of proficiency. Furthermore, student teachers valued meaning-centered, implicit teaching methodology, associating it with rudimentary communicative skills. Considering these points, the study uncovered a cognitive dissonance among student teachers, where their idealistic support for progressive communicative pedagogy paradigms clashed with their gravitation towards more traditional, form-focused methods. Another result of the study was that student teachers' perceptions of their learners in connection with a range of factors such as age, motivation level, learner autonomy, language proficiency, and learner needs significantly affected their decision-making process, informing them on how intensively to focus on grammar, use, or context. Although these findings are on the plane of pre-service teachers, they seem to be in line with Sato and Oyanedel (2019), suggesting that even though EFL teachers are gradually moving towards more dynamic and flexible grammar teaching paradigms, they still overwhelmingly favor explicit grammar teaching, influenced by various contextual factors and their perceptions of what is most useful for their learners.

Another research by Graus and Coppen (2018) studied the effects of teacher education on student teachers' cognitions in connection with grammar instruction in an EFL undergraduate program in the Netherlands. Employing a qualitative case study design, the study incorporated data from interviews with 10 teacher educators, 16 teachers, and 6 school placement mentors, with 30 lesson observations over the span of 10 months. A considerable incongruence between student teachers' in-class instructional practices and their formal training was revealed in the findings of the study. In contrast with the program's principles that are communicative pedagogy-oriented, student teachers consistently operated with form-focused pedagogical cognitions, displaying a strong inclination for explicit grammatical rule explanations and systematic grammar coverage through detached, mechanical exercises in line with the grammar courses within the teacher education program. As a consequence of mixed signals regarding grammar teaching that rooted from mentors' and educators' personal traditional beliefs and inconsistent grammar teaching models in place, the teacher education program inadvertently ended up reinforcing conventional grammar instruction cognitions. The research study highlighted the importance of changing the teaching cognitions terrain within and through teacher education systems, calling for the adjustment of resistant practices to provide effective modeling of grammar teaching in line with contemporary

paradigms. While Graus and Coppen (2018) emphasize the profound impact of teacher education systems on language teacher cognition construction, it is worth questioning whether this impact varies across different contexts.

In their study to shed light on Chinese university EFL teachers' cognitions in form-focused instruction through a sociocultural perspective, Sun and Zhang (2021) explored teachers' conceptualization of grammar teaching, how their concepts were translated into classroom practice, and whether any mismatches existed between the cognition and practice realms. Employing a qualitative research design, the study collected data through a total of 4 semi-structured interviews, 16 hours of lesson observations, 4 stimulated recalls with 4 EFL teachers throughout one academic semester. The results showed that all four teachers were in favor of FonF, supporting grammar teaching through context compared to explicit grammar instruction. However, in lesson observations, a dominant reliance on FonFS was explored with teachers providing explicit grammar instruction through rule explanations, translation, and decontextualized grammar exercises. During the stimulated recalls, the participants attributed their inclination towards FonFS to institutional expectations, exam pressures, textbook limitations and the Confucian education conventions ingrained within the education system. Underscoring the bind between teacher cognitions and contextual factors, the study lay out the context-dependency of teacher cognitions. The contradictions between teachers' cognitions and practices point out the contention between the progressive and traditional paradigms, indicating that teacher cognition is socially mediated and under the constant effect of cultural, historical and institutional factors in line with Cross (2010) and Ngo (2018).

Another study looking into form-focused instruction by Sun and Zhang (2022) compared the practices and cognitions of experienced and novice EFL teachers at a university in China. Employing a multi-case research method and the framework of complexity theory, the study involved 4 participants: two experienced teachers with more than 9 years of teaching experience and two novice teachers with approximately 3 years of teaching experience. Data collection was performed over a 16-week academic semester through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and stimulated recalls. Through the semi-structured interviews at the initial stage of the research, it was found that all participants recognized the potential of integrating grammar teaching within communicative contexts, favoring a focus-on-form pedagogy rather than on-forms.

Subsequently, in lesson observations, experienced teachers routinely implemented form-focused instruction in parallel with their stated cognitions, whereas novice teachers adhered to more traditional focus-on-forms instruction, usually demonstrating grammatical structures through decontextualized examples, unearthing findings similar to their previous study (Sun & Zhang; 2021). The results of this study are in line with Nguyen et al. (2023), calling for teacher training schemes in support of novice teachers to develop their pedagogical expertise to ensure a coordination of their practices with their cognitions.

In a study shedding light on how teachers conceptualized grammar instruction, Ahmed and Mahmood (2024) amassed questionnaire data from 210 EFL teachers at state and private institutions in the Pakistani tertiary context. A significant incompatibility between teachers' expressed support for meaning-focused instruction and their prevalent reliance on focus on forms in classrooms surfaced, with teachers reporting little recognition of second language teaching theories. Teachers displayed enthusiasm for progressive educational methodologies such as focus-on-form, yet this preference was not consistently mirrored in their classroom practices thanks to contextual limitations like institutional tendencies and assessment frameworks, echoing the findings of Phipps and Borg (2009). The study stipulated that tailored teacher training initiatives are absolutely imperative to implement contemporary grammar pedagogies in higher education settings.

In a nutshell, since Long's (1991) proposal of FonF, a great deal of research in relation to grammar instruction has been conducted in various settings to shed light on the dichotomy between FonF and FonFS. The studies included in this section indicate that a dangerous imbalance between the cognitive landscapes of teachers and their in-class tendencies might exist, meaning that while their minds speak in support of FonF, their classroom acts are aligned with FonFS paradigms. In the account of this striking duality, one of the major factors seems to be the dynamic and nuanced relationship between teachers and the contexts they are situated in. Fundamental limitations imposed by contextual factors such as policies regarding curriculum and assessment, institutional pressures, proficiency levels of learners, class sizes, exam-oriented cultural norms might severely hinder teachers' decision-making processes and drive them to employ traditional grammar teaching. Additionally, the efficiency of teacher education systems in place is contested, underlining the importance of teacher educators also implementing newer paradigms in their classes to keep pace with the instructional developments and act as an

example for the prospective language teachers. As an attempt to redress the imbalance between FonF cognitions and FonFS practices, an update to teacher education and teacher training models to make them tailored to the context and continuous through the phases of teachers' careers is suggested by researchers. Also, the potential benefits of reflective teaching in establishing a direct and real connection between the cognitive realm and in-class practices are highlighted.

2.5.3. LTC Research on Deductive and Inductive Approaches

In a similar tone with the FonF versus FonFS dichotomy, another point of major conflict in grammar instruction has been deductive versus inductive teaching (Hammerly, 1975). Fueled by the long-running controversy over the efficiency of both approaches, an immense body of research has been conducted on these grammar teaching paradigms in conjunction with language teacher cognition.

The study conducted by Borg (1998a) sought to investigate how an EFL teacher's personal pedagogical systems reciprocated with their classroom grammar teaching practices. Through an exploratory-interpretive inquiry design, the study gathered qualitative data through documents, interviews, 15 classroom observations over 2 weeks, and stimulated recalls with an experienced EFL teacher at a language school located in Malta, which emphasized teacher autonomy in lesson planning and materials selection. Significant findings from the study demonstrated a heavy influence of personal beliefs, professional experiences, and teaching context on teacher cognitions. Approaching grammar with a pragmatic and reflective view, the teacher blended inductive and deductive methods to suit the diverse range of learner needs. In opposition to his training involving communicative language teaching, the teacher was observed integrating traditional grammar instruction techniques, stating their practicality in retention. The utilization of a variety of grammar teaching approaches points to the fluid dynamics between teaching practices and teachers' cognitions in seasoned teachers, in harmony with the findings of the later study of Phipps and Borg (2009).

Andrews (2003) explored Hong Kong secondary school English teachers' beliefs about grammar pedagogy, focusing on how these cognitions relate to their backgrounds, grammar knowledge, and classroom practices. Using a mixed-methods design, the study collected data from 170 teachers through questionnaires and grammar knowledge tests, followed by interviews and classroom observations with 17 teachers. While participants

generally supported communicative grammar teaching, classroom practices largely reflected explicit, form-focused instruction. Notably, teachers with stronger grammar knowledge showed a greater preference for inductive approaches. The study highlights how contextual constraints, such as exam-oriented curricula, and teachers' confidence levels influence the alignment between beliefs and instructional practices.

In another relatively more recent study centered on how teachers' cognitions, lesson planning, and in-class practices correspond, Hong (2012) aimed to uncover the underlying reasons for teachers' inclinations to deductive versus inductive grammar instruction and how their tendencies are reflected in lesson plans. Adopting a longitudinal mixed-methods design, the study employed a pre-course survey, participants' analysis of grammar-focused lesson plans, and a self-evaluation questionnaire to illustrate cognitive processes in charge of their grammar lesson planning and teaching. Over a period of 4 years in a 60-hour grammar course in Singapore, 37 secondary school EFL teachers with different durations of teaching practice developed and submitted grammar lesson plans, subsequently executed them, and self-evaluated their lessons. The study found that teachers often adopt a blend of prescriptive/descriptive deductive and communicative inductive grammar teaching methods. Although many teachers demonstrated a theoretical tendency for inductive communicative approaches, they still opted for deductive instruction while planning their lessons. This variance between practical application in lesson planning and teachers' theoretical knowledge base signified the impact of prior educational experiences and established teacher training practices on teachers' current in-class acts, furthering the findings of Numrich (1996) and Woods (1996).

In an ESL context, MacFarlane (2015) aimed to determine the extent of teachers' grammar knowledge and bring to light the gaps in teachers' knowledge of traditional English grammar in the Australian context. Motivated by an introduction of mandated grammar classes across all levels of education, the study examined teachers' preparedness for such teaching tasks. Exercising a mixed-methods action research approach, the novel study amassed data through inventories to distinguish challenging grammar items, surveys, and semi-structure interviews with 26 English tutors that provided instruction to international students looking to get into university. The results indicated a considerable deficiency in the teacher's grammatical knowledge along with a prevalent insecurity among the participants. Inductive, contextualized, and integrated grammar instruction over traditional, discrete, and deductive methods was the preferred instructional choice

by many teachers, demonstrating an alignment with contemporary paradigms. The study pointed out that teachers' reported challenges with specific dimensions of grammar and their insecurity in terms of their grammatical proficiency derived from a deeper appreciation of grammar's cruciality in language teaching, possibly shaping their instructional strategy-picking process. The study gave rise to a professional development program tailored to respond to the needs of teachers and satisfy the demands of curriculum changes, highlighting the potential need for and growth of continuous professional development initiatives to equip teachers with better skills and confidence to provide effective grammar instruction, contributing to the findings of Kalsoom (2013) and Feryok (2010).

In another ESL setting study, Svalberg (2015) explored how grammatical knowledge developed in student teachers in the process of collaborative, inquiry-based learning in the United Kingdom. The study mainly aimed to examine how a functionally oriented grammar instruction taking place in a language teacher education context could alter student teachers' cognitions and improve their teaching strategies. The data were gathered at a short graduate degree course from 9 ESL students at a university by means of learner diaries, interviews, and recordings of workshops. Participants who were mostly international students engaged in consciousness-raising tasks in group workshops intentionally devised to provoke cognitive conflict and stimulate engagement with language. The course blended grammar classifications with a functional approach to grammar and speaker choices in the hopes of facilitating new grammar knowledge construction. The study indicated that cognitive conflict, triggered by novel and challenging concepts and active engagement with language tasks, played a pivotal role in the formation of a stronger awareness of grammar. The results pointed out that developing their contextual interpretation of grammar and manipulating grammatical forms of their own volition, participants gradually shifted from perceiving grammar as a set of static rules to recognizing it as a flexible, user-driven, and context-sensitive tool for communication, demonstrating similar results on the pre-service teacher plane with the findings pertaining to in-service teachers in Robertson et al. (2018). The inductive nature of the MA course challenged pre-service teachers' pre-existing notions in relation to grammar, prompting them to actively reevaluate and reconstruct their grammar knowledge base. Concerning language teacher cognition, the study reinforced the fundamental role of active engagement and collaborative learning in teacher education

programs. The research called for teacher training schemes to be designed and implemented in such a way that reflects contemporary paradigms of language acquisition and discovery-based grammar teaching pedagogy, corroborating Graus and Coppen (2018).

In a similar research study conducted on the pre-service teacher level, Sarıgöz (2015) explored how structured microteachings of grammar might potentially increase the efficacy of teacher education programs. Set at a state university in Turkey, the case study gathered qualitative data through lesson plans, non-participatory observations of microteaching, follow-up feedback sessions, and reflective journals in an ELT undergraduate program. The findings demonstrated that some student teachers frequently had difficulty with the integration of grammar through real-world contexts and could not go beyond form-focused, deductive approaches whereas some trainees seamlessly employed inductive, communication-centric teaching. The findings of the study further supported the idea of Burns et al. (2015), underlining that reflection on teaching through journals and constructive criticism in the follow-up feedback sessions were found to be instrumental in the improvement of grammar instruction.

On a different note, focusing on teachers of modern foreign languages, Liviero (2017) investigated the secondary school teachers' reported cognition and in-class practices regarding grammar instruction in England, UK. Collecting data from 8 teachers from differing contexts through interviews, classroom observations, and think-aloud protocols, the study applied an exploratory-interpretive design. Considerable variations between teachers' interpretations of grammar and grammar instruction were observed, with some teachers favoring explicit grammar teaching methods and others leaning on task-based instruction. The study highlighted that these disparities come into existence due to a wide variety of factors such as institutional policies, exam-driven pressures, and individual teacher beliefs, consistent with the findings of Underwood (2012) despite the concentration of this study on the instruction of other languages.

Concentrating on university-level EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia, Ahmad (2018) conducted a mixed-methods study to find out how teacher cognitions influence teaching practices. Data collection was executed through a 13-item questionnaire completed by 60 teachers and multiple classroom observations of 8 teachers. Matching the results observed in a later study by Nguyen et al. (2023), a significant discrepancy between teachers' supportive cognitions of progressive, student-centered, inductive paradigms and their

more traditional, teacher-centered, deductive in-class practices was revealed within the study. Amplifying the results of Azimi (2018) and Woods (1996) and shedding light on the cognition-practice dichotomy on the landscape of language education, the study called for a curriculum adjustment in professional development and teacher education programs to assist teachers in rectifying the imbalance between their progressive cognitions and traditional practices.

On a similar note, Önalın (2018a) aimed to compare the grammar-related cognitions of novice and experienced teachers at a preparatory class of a state university located in Turkey. The quantitative data were collected through the use of a 15-item questionnaire by Borg and Burns (2008) that was centered on direct, explicit, and indirect, implicit grammar instruction from 70 teachers. The results indicated that both experienced and novice teacher groups predominantly approved of direct and implicit grammar teaching, supporting explicit rule teaching and repetitive grammar drilling. Moreover, it was discovered that novice teachers displayed a stronger tendency towards deductive methods while experienced teachers demonstrated more flexibility, occasionally navigating through both deductive and inductive approaches, in accordance with other research (Torres, 2017; Sun and Zhang, 2022) in grammar methodology and language teacher cognition.

In another research domain, Ahmad and Nasim (2024) put under the microscope the dissonances of EFL teachers in the Saudi Arabian context in relation to grammar instruction, employing the activity theory framework by Engeström (2001). Utilizing a mixed-methods design, the data collection processes comprised a teacher belief questionnaire completed by 132 teachers and structured 24 classroom observations of 8 teachers. The findings of the study put forward a striking disconnect between teachers' reported beliefs and classroom acts. While teachers clearly endorsed progressive, communicative models of grammar instruction, in-class observations exposed a predominance of traditional and deductive methods, mirroring and corroborating the findings of Ahmad (2018) in the same country. It was also found that contextual factors, including educational context, curriculum requirements, high-stakes exams, and assessment methods which prioritize grammatical accuracy, compelled teachers to utilize more traditional methods of grammar instruction in their classes, matching with the findings of Underwood (2012).

Overall, considering the existence of recent studies, the point of contention between deductive and inductive approaches in grammar instruction has remained intact to this day. Analogous to the dissonance between communicative language teaching and traditional methods, FonF and FonFS, there seems to be a prevalent cognitive preference for inductive methods but practical employment of inductive approaches in various contexts, resulting in a dichotomy of practice and cognitions. There seems to be a mismatch between stated beliefs of teachers and classroom practices. However, there are also cases where a blend of inductive and deductive approaches is utilized for grammar instruction. A vast spectrum of elements such as teachers' own beliefs, theoretical grasp of language acquisition theories, limitations in teachers' grammar knowledge, prior learning experiences, curricular and assessment policies, institutional expectations, and time restraints posed decisive effects on teachers' decision-making in between the two instructional paradigms. With the hope of bridging this gap between the lands of practice and cognition, the researchers underscore the likely gains that can be reached through reflective practice on the part of teachers and call for a redesign of teacher education and professional development curricula to facilitate the learning and implementation of discovery-oriented grammar approaches to meet the learner needs of the contemporary world.

2.5.4. LTC Research on Explicit and Implicit Instruction

In parallel with the divide between deductive and inductive instruction, the enduring debate on explicit and implicit instruction has sparked another source of contention in the domain of grammar teaching (Ellis, 2009). Driven by this ongoing discussion over the superiority of each approach, extensive research has been undertaken to discover the connections of these methodologies with the sphere of language teacher cognition.

In search of alignment between theoretical perspectives and teacher practices, Ebsworth and Schweers (1997) investigated the role of explicit grammar instruction in contexts of New York and Puerto Rico. Employing a mixed-methods design, their study collected data through questionnaires and follow-up interviews to discuss teachers' underlying rationales for explicit grammar instruction, confidence levels, and practices from 60 college-level instructors and compared the participant groups from two locations. The study revealed that in contrast with both groups' recognition of the potential of

explicit grammar teaching, teachers varied their grammar instruction approaches depending on their teaching contexts and personal philosophies. Remarking upon the limited exposure to the language, Puerto Rican instructors in general assumed more traditional, systematic, and rule-based grammar teaching. On the contrary, reflecting diverse learner backgrounds and language immersion, New Yorker teachers gravitated towards interactive methodologies and contextualized practice. This study painted a nuanced landscape where ESL teachers oscillate between explicit and implicit instruction and strategize their grammar teaching according to the culture and needs of learners rather than basing their teaching style on second language acquisition theories.

In another study examining the difference of cognitions in relation to explicit grammar teaching in differing contexts, Schulz (2001) aimed to discover the cross-cultural differences and similarities of cognitions in the contexts of the USA and Colombia. Framed in a quantitative design, the study gathered questionnaire data from a total of 1551 learners and 214 teachers at the University of Arizona and postsecondary schools in Bogota. The results indicated that Colombian participants exhibited a stronger inclination towards formal, explicit grammar instruction in comparison to their U.S. counterparts, in accordance with Ebsworth and Schweers (1997). In addition, differences between teacher and learner cognitions were more pronounced in Colombia compared to the U.S. In contrast with these dissimilarities, a consensus on the importance of explicit grammar instruction and corrective feedback was seen between teachers and students. This study directly highlights that cognitions are in direct interplay with cultural backgrounds, offering insights into learner perceptions to strengthen motivation in language learning.

On a different angle in an ESL setting, Burgess and Etherington (2002) conducted a study in relation to English for academic purposes (EAP), aiming to uncover teacher cognitions in relation to their inclinations for explicit or implicit grammatical instruction. Through a mixed-methods design, the study gathered data with a survey from 48 EAP teachers from a variety of university language schools in Britain. Key findings indicated that the vast majority of teachers believed explicit grammar teaching to have an essential function in meeting learner expectations and improving grammatical accuracy. Despite their significant gravitation towards explicit grammar instruction, teachers also recognized the importance of contextualizing grammar through communicative and authentic tasks. Depending on classroom dynamics, learners' needs and proficiency

levels, teachers reported modifying their grammar teaching, mixing in contemporary, implicit models, and bringing a balance to their methodology. This research contributes to the inquiry into language teacher cognition, indicating practical and contextual considerations inform teachers' decision-making processes in EAP contexts as well.

A global-scale study conducted by Borg and Burns (2008) focused on English language teachers' cognitions and practices concerning the integration of grammar with language skills in adult TESOL classes. Utilizing a mixed-methods design, the study amassed data through a detailed survey completed by 176 teachers from 18 countries. The survey was made up of Likert-scale items in relation to grammar teaching cognitions and open-ended items designed to gather nuanced perspectives of teachers' conceptualization of grammar integration into language teaching. Participants of the study were primarily employed at universities and adult education centers with a broad spectrum of professional education. The majority of respondents reported having substantial control over their teaching materials and hence autonomy in deciding their pedagogical strategies in their classes. Key findings of the research uncovered that the teachers overwhelmingly embraced the integration of grammar with language skills as opposed to treating grammar in isolation. Most participants favored explicit grammar teaching inside broader language activities and employed various strategies to embed grammar instruction within communicative tasks and meaningful language use, citing experiential evidence such as improved student performance, increased learner engagement, and enhanced communicative competence. Teachers rarely referred to second language acquisition frameworks and heavily relied on their experiential rationales to justify their teaching practices, which points to a plausible gap between standard pedagogical models and classroom application, corroborating the finding of Ebsworth and Schweers (1997) and Nishimuro and Borg (2013). Demonstrating the predominance of practical knowledge informing instructional decision-making systems in teachers' cognition sets, the authors called for more research in the diverse conceptualizations of grammar integration to maneuver language teaching pedagogy and professional development.

Coming from a distinct angle, Önalán (2018b) explored how demographic factors shape non-native English-speaking teachers' cognitions in relation to explicit and implicit grammar instruction. A sample of 75 participants from 29 countries who were enrolled in a 16-week teacher training program in Texas, USA, responded to a 15-item questionnaire designed to capture their preferences for either direct or indirect grammar teaching

methods. Participants had diverse years of teaching experience and educational backgrounds and taught various age groups ranging from high school to adult learners. Data analysis showed that most teachers favored systematic, explicit grammar instruction integrated with skills-oriented tasks. While it could be argued that the quantitative nature of the study may not definitively reach this conclusion, participants who had higher qualifications demonstrated a stronger inclination for indirect grammar teaching as they progressed in their academic careers and gained teaching experience. This specific finding of the research is not consistent with Kalsoom's finding (2013) that teaching experience had no substantial effect on cognitions related to grammar teaching, which could derive from the cultural differences of the study contexts. Additionally, teachers of adult learners and advanced-level students tended towards direct grammar teaching. Another key finding of the study was that although there was a common preference for explicit grammar instruction, the isolation of grammar from language skills was strongly opposed, similar to the findings of Phipps and Borg (2009). The insights from this study make contributions to the grammar teaching cognition research literature, highlighting substantial links between teacher cognitions and professional backgrounds and suggesting contextual factors like student age and proficiency level impact grammar instruction pedagogies.

In their study to craft a theoretical framework that encapsulates language teacher cognition, Alzaanin (2020) utilized a qualitative multiple case study design alongside constructivist grounded theory to elucidate the nuanced and often implicit cognitions and their reflection on practices. Data collection was implemented at two Palestinian universities by means of 12 semi-structured interviews, 24 classroom observations, stimulated recalls, and document analysis from 12 EFL teachers. The findings indicated an enormous diversity in teacher cognitions, spanning from pragmatic concerns about classroom management and variations in teaching philosophies to deeply ingrained beliefs. Driven by their cognition that a solid foundation of grammar is indispensable for the mastery of a language, some teachers strictly adhered to grammatical accuracy through an explicit lesson flow, similar to the findings of Graus and Coppen (2017). Another finding of the research demonstrated that educational backgrounds of teachers, either as students or in the form of professional training, were directly connected with their preferred language teaching methodologies. Teachers who received formal education on either linguistics or language teaching were more inclined to employ

teaching approaches that integrate grammar with communicative practice. However, those without such specialized training counted more on traditional teaching paradigms they experienced as students themselves. Illustrating the interconnectedness of practice, context, and teacher cognition through grounded theory, the study contributes to the broader theme of cognitive-ecological literature of language teacher cognition along with earlier studies (Mohammadabadi et al., 2019; Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015; Burns et al., 2015).

In the ESL context of the USA, Smith (2021) investigated the grammar teaching practices of P-12 teachers in an urban setting. Through the employment of mixed-method methodology, data collection tools included an online survey of 86 teachers of diverse grade levels and a focus group interview with 9 participants. Key findings demonstrated many teachers employed a pragmatic approach to grammar instruction. While teachers primarily leaned on explicit rule teaching, finding it useful in terms of accuracy, some teachers were inclined to utilize inductive discovery in their classes, encouraging learners to figure out grammar patterns independently. Despite their approval of inductive teaching, teachers enacted this approach less frequently because of its time consumption and the challenge of ensuring and checking student understanding of target structure. Moreover, controlled exercises such as worksheets were employed on a large scale to reinforce grammar instruction. Even though many teachers stated that connecting grammar to meaning is key for effective grammar learning, few integrated higher-level form-meaning connections into their instruction. The study underlined the absence of sufficient pedagogical education and systematic frameworks knowledge in teachers and called for targeted professional training and better support systems for teachers to effectively provide grammar instruction.

In line with the trend between FonF and FonFS, communicative language teaching and traditional grammar instruction pedagogies, deductive and inductive approaches, the duality between explicit and implicit grammar instruction has been a source of major controversy in language teaching. Overall, a good deal of language teacher cognition studies seems to be drawn to this great conflict. Evidently, although the literature on language teacher cognitions is vast, the findings are similar to some extent. Looking at the studies covered within this section, it could be argued that a clear tendency for explicit grammar instruction has been exhibited rather than inductive grammar teaching. The disparity seems to be even more obvious in between ESL and EFL contexts,

where learners' exposure to the target language varies drastically. One major factor for this preference seems to be teachers' prior learning experiences informing their own in-class actions. Also, teachers oftentimes refer to their experiential knowledge rather than second language acquisition models in the rationalization of their classroom preferences, proving the nuanced nature of language teacher cognition. Other factors for the inclination towards explicit models include classroom dynamics, learner needs, and learner proficiency levels. Drawing attention to a lack of adequate pedagogical training and language learning theories, some researchers underlined the importance of targeted professional development bespoke for the context and improved teacher support systems to foster language teachers in their navigation between grammar instruction pedagogies. It should also be stated that some significance lies in long-term rather than one-off teacher training, as to not be remiss of what learning involves.

2.5.5. LTC Research on Drilling and Practice

Practice can be described as any learner engagement with the language, typically run by the teacher, with the primary goal of reinforcing what is being learned. Practice assists in the internalization of grammar and facilitates retention in long-term memory. Together with progressively diminishing teacher assistance, practice leads to production on the part of the learner. A procedure of practice usually has the characteristic of being receptive by exposing learners to comprehensible input or being productive by getting learners to speak or write (Ur, 1988). Drilling is a structured practice method that entails the repetition of predetermined sentences or dialogues. Although drilling is believed to be obsolete by some, there is still a prevalent use of drilling in language classrooms. Through repeating the same grammatical pattern, learners can internalize them (Thornbury, 1999). In this section, language teacher cognition studies relating to drilling and practice will be discussed.

Chandler (1998) examined the extent and nature of grammar instruction that may inadvertently lead to inefficient approaches and prioritize surface-level activities instead of meaningful learning outcomes. Utilizing a quantitative design, data were amassed in Somerset, the United Kingdom, through a questionnaire completed by 50 English teachers who had little to no formal training in linguistics. The findings indicated that a crushing 84% of respondents taught grammar with a primary focus on parts of speech and tenses. In addition, it was also found that their teaching followed outdated, prescriptive

models of grammar instruction, often utilizing drills and mechanical exercises. Highlighting the disconnect between contemporary linguistic theories and teachers' overuse of repetitive memorization of grammatical forms, the author drew attention to the lack of sufficient training on modern paradigms of grammar instructions. The unproductive use of drills within classroom practice often resulted in superficial understanding or confusion in learners, pushing them to rote learning rather than meaningful language use. It could be argued that the productive use of drills might have stemmed from the fact that the participants of the study had little professional training in language teaching.

In their study examining teachers' philosophical stances and personal theories about language learning and teaching, Chappell (2017) proposed a heuristic to assist teachers in creating a configuration of their practices and their underlying cognitions in the Australian context. This sequential mixed-methods study collected data through an online questionnaire, interviews with 10 teachers, and 10 lesson observations in English for academic purposes classrooms. The findings indicated that teachers often diverged from their cognitions. Despite their claims to conduct communicative language teaching, a predominant focus on grammar and grammatical accuracy was observed, with some lessons revolving around heavy use of mechanical drilling activities rather than meaning-focused interaction. Some teachers perceived grammar as a safety net and utilized grammar-focused approaches when they had doubts about implementing communicative activities. Teachers' perceptions of students' expectations such as direct error correction, grammar-centric teaching, and exam preparation, additionally narrowed their focus to accuracy over fluency. Highlighting the enormous potential of reflective practice to achieve a harmony between teacher cognitions and practices, the author introduced an experiential framework encircling three consecutive stages of 'wisdom of practice': articulation, interrogation, and refinement, a systemic reflection on cognitions and revisiting of practices.

In the unique context of Ethiopia, in a recent study, Shumiye (2024) investigated teacher cognitions and practices in grammar instruction to detect congruences and divergences between them. Following a qualitative case design, the research collected data through 10 non-participatory lesson observations and pre- and post-unstructured interviews with five experienced EFL teachers at a primary school over a semester. Large class sizes, constrained resources, and diverse learner proficiency levels were some of the

defining factors within the research context. Parallel to their strong cognitions that emphasize grammatical accuracy and promote explicit grammar teaching, all the teachers were commonly observed providing teacher-centered and traditional grammar instruction. Also, expressing a belief in the effectiveness of drills, teachers routinely utilized drilling to reinforce grammatical structures and to enable learners to memorize particular grammar rules. However, relying frequently on drills failed to foster student engagement, resulting in communicative activities often remaining absent or superficial. Indicating a tension between traditional and modern grammar instruction paradigms, this study highlights the influence of contextual factors such as large classes and limited resources on teaching practices and calls for reflective teaching among language teachers to reconcile their cognitions with contemporary methodologies along with Woods (1996), Azimi (2018) and Chappell (2017).

Overall, despite the extensive body of language teacher cognition, there seems to be a limited number of language teacher cognition studies in relation to drilling and practice. While the findings and results of these studies are significant, more research in the future might explore the overlap of drills and language teacher cognition to obtain a more comprehensive understanding.

2.5.6. LTC Research on Use of Grammatical Terminology

Whether to use grammatical terminology or not in teaching language has been a considerable subject of dispute among language teachers and researchers. Furthermore, even when agreed on the use of grammatical terminology as part of instruction, ‘to what extent to utilize grammatical terminology emerges as the next thought-provoking question (Jeffries, 1985). In this section, language teacher cognition studies regarding the use of grammatical terminology will be examined.

Mitchell et al. (1994) explored how knowledge about language transformed into classroom practices in the context of secondary schools located in England. The case study collected data by means of 29 lesson observations of eight classes in three schools, a total of 21 interviews with 7 teachers of either English or modern foreign languages, pupil tasks and interviews. The findings indicated that teachers’ cognitions and limited professional backgrounds in language studies heavily influenced their delivery of grammar. In comparison with their foreign language counterparts, English teachers conducted explicit grammar instruction less frequently and were hesitant to utilize

grammar terminology. Underlining the lack of a coherent and systematic approach to knowledge about grammar, the authors called for the formation of clearer educational policies and the betterment of teacher training programs to foster grammar instruction.

In their study to examine the value of meta-talk, which is described as explicit discussions about grammar in the foreign language classrooms, Borg (1998b) aimed to investigate how meta-talk initiated and developed and teachers' decisional processes in relation to meta-talk. The exploratory-interpretive study revolved around two EFL teachers at a language institute in Malta, with 15 hours of unstructured lesson observations for each teacher and three following semi-structured interviews. Findings demonstrate that teachers' use of and approach to meta talk differed considerably, although both were educated under communicative language teaching methods. One teacher utilized unprompted, student-driven meta talk, engaging learners in the analysis of grammatical structures through comparison with their native languages, and stated this strategy assisted in the clarification of grammar points and enhanced student understanding. The other teacher complied with a structured, planned instruction in the style of the presentation-practice-production model, minimized the use of meta talk, and stated an excess of focus on grammatical terminology might impede communicative competence and fluency. Despite this differentiation in their cognitions, both teachers preferred inductive strategies in the process of meta talk, encouraging learners to discover grammar instead of simply providing them with the rules. The study also indicated that teachers' cognitions regarding meta talk resulted in different types of learner participation. Explicit discussions of grammar prompted analytical thinking of language structures in students, whereas minimal meta talk enabled learners to focus more on using language structures in practice, potentially beneficial in language acquisition.

Building on their previous study on meta-talk and aiming to identify the extent to which teachers utilize formal grammatical terms in their classes, Borg (1999b) examined how ESL teachers use grammatical terminology and the impact of such usage on student learning progress. Through a qualitative approach, data collection was executed by a total of 30 lesson observations and 20 semi-structured interviews with 10 teachers in secondary education in the United Kingdom. Participants had a varying teaching experience, ranging from novice teachers with less than five years of teaching practice to experienced teachers with more than 15 years in the field. Most teachers occasionally utilized grammatical terminology in cases where it was directly related to the learning objectives or to clarify

particular language points for learners. A strong correlation between teachers' beliefs in explicit grammar teaching and their use of grammatical terminology was explored, with those who valued formal grammar teaching using more terms on a regular basis. Teachers reported that students' reactions to the use of grammatical terminology in classes showed a wide array of emotions. While some students found understanding terminology helpful in the clarification of complex language rules, others stated technical language blocked their language learning processes, leaving them feeling confused or sometimes overwhelmed. In addition, teaching experience turned out to be a differentiating factor in terms of grammatical terminology use, with experienced teachers balancing technical terminology with learner-friendly language and novice teachers heavily relying on the explicit use of grammatical terms. Teachers cited institutional curriculum expectations and learner proficiency levels as the reason why their decision-making was in the direction of utilizing grammatical terminology as part of their instruction.

Approaching the matter of grammar terminology from a distinct angle, Andrews (1999) compared the explicit grammar knowledge and metalinguistic awareness of native and non-native teachers from various educational backgrounds in Hong Kong, China, and the United Kingdom. Utilizing a comparative research design, a 60-item grammar terminology test that evaluated four categories of error correction, production, recognition, and rule explanation was administered to 70 participants. 20 non-native experienced teachers, 20 non-native prospective teachers, 10 native prospective teachers with English studies backgrounds, and 10 native prospective teachers with modern language backgrounds made up the four groups of participants within the study. The findings indicated that experienced non-native teachers significantly outperformed all other groups in terms of explicit grammatical knowledge. Also, both prospective and experienced non-native teacher groups consistently surpassed their native counterparts in the recognition and explanation of grammatical rules. However, all groups found it more difficult to manage tasks involving explaining rules in comparison to other task types, identifying a substantial gap in their knowledge about grammar. In terms of language teacher cognition, this study suggested education and experience interactively function in key positions, informing pedagogical practices of teachers. To address this gap, the researcher called for teacher education and training systems to include components pertinent to teacher metalinguistic awareness-raising and grammar terminology.

In another teacher metalinguistic awareness study, Andrews (2001) further delved into the question of whether it is necessary for teachers to know about the language and how their knowledge about language shaped learner input. This qualitative and exploratory study was conducted in Hong Kong, China. Data collection included a total of 34 grammar-centered lesson observations of 17 secondary school teachers and 17 semi-structured interviews. The participants had at least three years of teaching experience, were representative of different levels of metalinguistic awareness, and were pursuing a postgraduate certificate in education. The study resulted in a significant correlation of teacher language awareness and effective grammar instruction. Teachers with stronger language awareness clarified grammar points more clearly, filtered lesson materials, adapted the relevance of their input to be learner-friendly, and included real-life examples in their instruction to meet learners' needs. On the other side of the coin, teachers with weaker language awareness followed textbook materials to the letter without critically considering their appropriateness for learning objectives and faced difficulties in responding to students' questions adequately, often resulting in confusion or missed learning opportunities. Regardless of teachers' preferences for form-focused or meaning-focused instruction, teacher language awareness was found to be cardinally important in structuring input and scaffolding learning. In terms of curriculum design, the study indicated the great benefits that might arise from integrating guidelines into textbooks to enhance teacher grammar cognitions. The author reiterated their call from their previous study (Andrews, 1999) for teacher training schemes to incorporate metalinguistic awareness components to equip teachers with a better knowledge about language, enabling them to provide more effective grammar instruction.

In the Iranian setting, Nazari and Allahyar (2012) conducted a qualitative study devoted to the correlation of teacher knowledge about grammar and classroom practices, particularly examining error correction strategies and their choices of inductive and deductive approaches. The study gathered data through lesson observations totaling around 800 minutes and pre- and post-observation interviews with four EFL teachers working at a language institute in Tehran. The findings indicated that teachers who possessed stronger knowledge about grammar confidently leaned towards deductive methods, taught grammar explicitly, and frequently relied on grammatical terminology. Conversely, teachers who were less confident tended to abstain from grammar instruction altogether and relied on learners to infer grammatical rules from examples. Another

striking finding of the study was that teachers who preferred deductive approaches corrected student errors directly and significantly more often by utilizing grammar terminology as a main part of their feedback. Teachers who were inclined to inductive teaching showed less consistency in error correction, displaying frustration and belief in prioritizing communication. Following the footsteps of Andrews (1999), the authors called attention of teacher educators to address the shortcomings in knowledge about grammar in the frame of teacher training programs, thus bettering the cognitions and practices of teachers.

Although language teacher cognition has been at the core of extensive research, research exploring its relevance to the use of grammatical terminology in language classes remain fairly scarce. While existing studies presented here offer invaluable perspectives, future research could further explore the intersection of grammatical terminology use and language teacher cognition to enhance the current state of understanding of the relationship between these concepts.

2.5.7. LTC Research on Use of L1 in Grammar Teaching

Through the pendulum swings of the language teaching methodology paradigms, the use of learners' mother tongue in grammar instruction has been a fierce root of clash between language teachers. There have been numerous takes on what role, if any, the use of L1 should perform in language classes (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003). In this section, research related to the use of L1 in the language teacher cognition literature will be examined.

In the Japanese context, Nishimuro and Borg (2013) delved into the connection of three veteran EFL teachers' cognitions with their practices in the scope of grammar instruction in the settings of a private high school. The case study was grounded in qualitative data from pre- and post-observation interviews and 6 classroom observations of the three participants, all of whom had more than 25 years of professional experience. The findings noted that the teacher strongly relied on explicit grammar teaching with teacher-led decontextualized presentations, detailed metalinguistic terminological explanations of grammar structures, and a predominant use of their native language to explain grammar rules and translate sentences. Their teaching style stemmed from their grammar-centric cognitions influenced by personal teaching experiences and contextual factors such as curricular time restraints and assessment procedures in line with the

findings of Schulz (1996). It was found that teachers' decision-making processes were not informed by any second language acquisition pedagogical theories or methodological innovations along the lines of the findings of Borg and Burns (2008) and Ebsworth and Schweers (1997). In addition, participants stated that mastery of grammar form should be prioritized before it can be used or presented in a meaningful context because it can confuse the learners, which clearly goes against the contextualized grammar teaching norms of modern teaching perspectives, parallel to the results of Torres (2017).

Looking into the pedagogical content knowledge of experienced EFL teachers in relation to grammar explanation, Sanchez and Borg (2014) conducted a multiple-case exploratory study in an Argentine secondary school. The focus of the study was on two experienced EFL teachers, Sofia and Emma, with more than 30 years of experience. Data collection was comprised of four semi-structured interviews, 20 lesson observations, and 18 stimulated recalls in total. The results of the study indicated that teachers exercised a wide array of techniques such as examples, translation, repetition, metaphors, elicitation, and visual aids to simplify grammar for their students. In terms of L1 use, while Emma utilized it for meaning clarification to save time, Sophia leveraged L1 for cross-language comparisons to get learners to make connections between L1 and L2. Viewing L1 as a cognitive base for students to relate what they previously know with what they are learning, Sophia highlighted similarities and differences of Spanish and English grammatical concepts to draw analytical parallels between L1 and L2 to make explicit connections for learners, thinking this strategy assisted in the development of learners' grammar understanding. Emma, on the other hand, regularly translated grammatical rules herself and elicited the translations of example sentences from students in the hopes of equalizing the field for weaker learners. In addition, Sophia strategically utilized L1 as an attention-grabbing tool to sometimes regain attention or mark crucial grammar points. Sophia even went so far as to state that the use of L1 provided students with a break from the heavy cognitive load of constant L2 flow in lessons targeting intricate grammar structures. While the teachers put L1 to use for clarification purposes of either meaning or cross-linguistic insights, both cited contextual factors like learner proficiency, class size, and lesson timing within tight schedules as main factors in their decisions of code-switching. Showcasing the context-situated characteristic of code-switching, this study underlined the central position regarding learner needs within language teacher cognition.

In another study based on the Turkish context, Gerem and Ekşi (2019) scrutinized the cognitions and classroom practices of EFL teachers, specifically aiming to uncover the disparities between these two dimensions. This qualitative design study collected data by 5 semi-structured interviews and multiple lesson observations over two weeks. Participant teachers were teaching English at state elementary and high schools and had diverse experience levels ranging from 1 year to over 15 years. The results indicated that notable gaps between teachers' cognitions and practices existed. Teachers considered grammar as foundational in language learning and were in favor of contextualized, inductive, and communicative grammar instruction. However, lecture-based, deductive, and explicit grammar instruction dominated their in-class practices in contrast to their stated preferences for inductive grammar teaching. In addition, communicative activities rarely were utilized whereas mechanical and meaningful drills were prevalent in their lessons. In addition, despite their beliefs in teaching grammar in context, their practices revealed a heavy use of direct rule providing and comparing the grammatical structures with the mother tongue through translation. Teachers also prioritized grammatical accuracy, oftentimes correcting errors on the spot. The influencing factors on the stark contrast between teachers' cognitions and practices comprised curriculum demands, time limitations, exam-driven education system, insufficient resources, ingrained teaching habits, and lack of training. Highlighting that teachers may intellectually align with contemporary grammar instruction paradigms and still employ more traditional methods in their practice, the study reinforced the need for professional development and systemic support to fill this gap.

Engaging with language teacher cognition in a Chinese school where the control shifted from teachers to learners through learner autonomy, Wang and Ryan (2020) explored how practices and cognitions of nine teachers in a private high school hindered or facilitated the transfer of control to their students. Employing a longitudinal mixed-methods research design, data were amassed via 22 lesson observations, post-lesson feedback discussions, lesson plans and interviews with teachers, the academic director, and the principal of the school. The findings demonstrated that teachers' understanding of learner autonomy differed dramatically. While some teachers exhibited support for control transfer through peer-teaching, collaborative group work, and self-study, others retained teacher-centered and traditional methodologies. One salient finding of the study was that independent from their preferences of instruction methods, teachers' degree of

reliance on Mandarin Chinese was considerably high in their grammar lessons. L1 prevalently acted as an essential aid to explain grammar rules, give instructions, manage activities, convey meaning efficiently to save time, and facilitate lower proficiency level learners with comfort to reduce anxiety. However, this overuse of L1 negatively impacted learner autonomy, leading learners to mediate in their native language rather than engaging independently in English. Citing the culturally ingrained drive of exams and the pressure to catch up with the syllabi, L1 was perceived as a necessary scaffold in the learning process. However, some teachers were conscious of the necessity to decrease their L1 use and encourage more active English use in their classes, stating that L2 use could vigorously foster learner autonomy. This tension arising from the functions of L1 as a strategic resource and an emotional crutch underlines the key importance of having an awareness as part of their cognitions to balance native and target language use for language teachers to support learner autonomy.

Despite the considerable body of scientific research examining language teacher cognition, the number of studies explicitly addressing its connection to the use of L1 is relatively very little. The research presented here provides important points; future research studies might delve deeper into how language teacher cognition and use of L1 intersect, contributing to a thorough understanding of the connections between them.

2.6.LTC Research on Washback

Washback entails the effect of tests on the classroom practices (Bailey, 1988). Washback also refers to the degree to which exams cause learners and teachers to do things they normally would not do (Messick, 1996, p. 243). Constituting a dangerous threat to learning and teaching processes, this acute dilemma presents teachers with either following a curriculum or covering what is going to be tested. In this section, language teacher cognition studies related to washback will be discussed.

Chan (2015) investigated the teaching practice and underlying cognitions of six experienced university EFL teachers in the Taiwanese context, scrutinizing how their cognitions, professional knowledge, and context guide their instruction in class. Utilizing a qualitative, interpretative design and collecting data via 24 classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with both the parties of learners and teachers, the study revealed a complex web of interactions among received knowledge formed through formal education, grounded beliefs emerging from personal and professional experiences,

and contextual factors such as class sizes and constraints caused by standardized curriculum and exams. Even though their grounded beliefs exerted a stronger influence on their in-class practices, they conformed to exam requirements and adjusted communicative teaching approaches and even utilized grammar-centric methods to tackle these contextual challenges. Citing exam-oriented curricula, cultural norms prioritizing exams, and their apprenticeship of observation formed by their prior learner experiences, teachers oftentimes utilized the grammar translation method in their classes. The value of contextualizing teacher education through linking theory and practice, knowledge and application was strongly underscored, making worthwhile contributions to the formation of second language teacher education training programs.

In their study to explore how previous language learning experiences, professional commitments, and teaching practices interact in time, Moodie and Feryok (2015) explored the cognitive development and commitments of four primary school EFL teachers in South Korea. Through a multiple-case study design, data collection included 28 classroom observations, 50 semi-structured interviews, and reflective writings over 18 months. Findings indicated that teachers' early affective commitments to learning English that commonly stemmed from enjoyment of learning English deeply influenced their professional identities in later stages of their lives. A significant finding of the study was that teachers' own negative and positive experiences as language learners molded their teaching cognitions and goals of creating engaging, meaningful learning environments for their students, supporting the findings of Lortie (1975) and a later study by Moodie (2016). However, in contrast with their awareness of the communicative language teaching, teachers repeatedly reverted to traditional, teacher-centered practices mainly owing to their lack of training in communicative approaches and cultural pressures to give precedence to grammar and exam preparation. High-stakes testing and rigid educational structures exerted a washback effect on teachers' in-class practices, limiting their ability to implement innovative teaching strategies in grammar instruction. Highlighting the misalignments between curricular goals and classroom practices, this study drew attention to the influence of assessment policies on language teacher cognition and contributed to a critical broader theme in the field.

Approaching from an international aspect, Macalister (2016) explored the influences of transnational language teacher education on the cognitions and practices of pre-service EFL teachers in Malaysia. This longitudinal qualitative study investigated the

dynamics between two years of study in New Zealand and the final-year teaching practicum of 11 student teachers. Data collection was comprised of 7 lesson observations, interviews with pre-service teachers and their supervising teachers, and lesson plans. The practicum was implemented in Malaysian secondary schools, typically in classes of approximately 40 learners. Even though notable traces of learner-centered applications were observed in the classes, factors related to the immediate teaching conditions, such as large class sizes, exam-oriented curricula, and cultural expectations, dictated delivery and lesson planning processes, resulting in a clear dominance of teacher-centered instruction. Despite their training on contemporary language teaching paradigms in New Zealand, collaboration with peers and mentors had a more immediate effect on participants' lessons. Deductive grammar teaching was commonplace in lesson observations, deriving from the teachers' perceived efficiency of this approach in preparing learners for nationwide standardized tests. Feeling pressured to adhere to the national curriculum, prepare students for high-stakes exams, and obey cultural norms focusing more on grades rather than learning processes, teachers felt compelled to prioritize grammatical accuracy, explicit rule teaching, rote learning, and prescribed syllabi. This persistent tension between teachers' cognitions and the practical realities of grammar instruction within exam-centric contexts made it impossible for teachers to reconcile contemporary grammar teaching with the immediate demands of Malaysian classes. The study highlighted the potential of transnational teacher education programs in forming teacher cognitions and called for sustainable teacher training schemes to tackle the cognition-practice tensions by equipping teachers with strategies for modifying modern pedagogies to specific classroom settings.

In the scope of a sociocultural lens, Ngo (2018) examined the developmental trajectory of an EFL academic writing teacher's cognition and practices at a university in Vietnam. Aiming to discover the major shifts in Jara's cognition set, this narrative inquiry study gathered data via a total of 6 unstructured or semi-structured interviews, supplementary materials, and student writing samples over a period of five months. The findings indicated that Jara's communication-oriented cognitions and the product-focused requirements of exams generated considerable tensions in Jara's cognitions and resulted in a narrowed-down writing instruction in the form of writing a response to exam prompts. Furthermore, students' perceptions of grammar as the vital dimension of language and Vietnam's exam-driven system placing grammar accuracy at the top of the

hierarchy forced Jara to go against her communicative teaching philosophy and allocate considerable teaching time to form-focused instruction for exam preparations, corroborating the findings of Chan (2015) and Moodie and Feryok (2015). Pointing to the systemic demands on teachers to focus on grammar in writing, this study called for a rework of assessment criteria and reevaluation of institutional policies to neutralize the overemphasis of grammatical accuracy in writing exams.

Following up on their previous research on transnational teacher education, Macalister (2022) examined the decision-making processes of two novice EFL teachers in the rural Malaysian context with the aim of exploring how international teacher education experience affects professional identity and teaching practice. The participants had four years of experience and studied abroad in New Zealand as a part of their pre-service education. Adopting a qualitative narrative inquiry design, data were collected by means of classroom observations for a full week for each participant over a month, 4 semi-structured interviews, field notes, and teaching materials. One key finding of the study was that while their study abroad experience introduced innovative teaching strategies and motivated teachers to integrate them into their teaching skillset, its practical relevance was strictly downgraded by local limitations like the pressure of national exams and the prescribed curriculum in adherence to the exams. This finding of the study is in line with Chan (2015), Moodie and Feryok (2015), and Ngo (2018). Teachers had difficulty reconciling student-centered teaching of New Zealand with the exam-driven education system in Malaysia, causing professional clashes between practices and cognitions. Indicating the adaptive nature of language teacher cognition and practices to local constraints of washback, this study calls for incorporating teacher input into curriculum development processes to provide teachers with a degree of flexibility to balance prescribed content and classroom realities.

In a different vein, Bozorgian et al. (2023) investigated teacher practices and cognitions in connection with writing instruction in the Iranian setting. Aiming to assess how writing is integrated with other skills, this mixed-method study utilized an attitude questionnaire completed by 100 in-service teachers, 10 non-participant lesson observations, and semi-structured interviews. The findings indicated that grammar and writing were commonly conflated in single lessons, with 6% of time spent on actual writing activities and 94% of time allocated for explicit grammar teaching in these lessons. Also, teachers were more prone to provide corrective feedback on grammatical

errors instead of content enrichment, causing a disproportionate emphasis on grammar rather than holistic development of writing skills such as coherence and cohesion. Their heavy reliance on grammar pointed to a gap in their expertise in process-oriented approaches and their cognitions in alignment with grammar-focused methodologies. This unbalanced prioritization of grammar was closely connected to the teachers' perceptions of grammar as more manageable, foundational, and test-relevant due to systemic pressures of exam preparation. Highlighting this completely detached dominance of grammar teaching practices over writing instruction, the authors called for a massive overhaul of exam-oriented systems that positions grammar at the core of assessment practices, in a similar fashion with Ngo (2018).

In another Iranian study, Allahyari et al. (2023) examined the relationship between EFL teachers' cognitions and high-stakes nationwide language exams' social and psychological effects. Utilizing a two-phase qualitative research design, the study aimed to explore the awareness of language teachers regarding test consequences. A 25-item survey looking into teachers' perceptions of testing and its consequences was completed by 210 EFL teachers. 30 teachers with the lowest awareness scores took part in two sessions of workshops aiming to raise their awareness related to the psychological and social implications of high-stakes exams. The findings indicated that even though teachers possessed a relative understanding of the negative and positive influences of tests, their understanding of psychological impacts was limited. Highlighting the positive effect of teacher training workshops within the study, the researchers called for teacher education programs to incorporate assessment literacy and critical pedagogy to enable teachers to understand washback does not only take effect in the classroom but goes outside to daily life as well.

Overall, these studies indicate that there is a washback effect in some contexts where the education system is exam-driven or cultural norms prioritize grades over the learning process. This washback effect also exerts pressure on language teacher cognitions, causing teachers to go against their preferred grammar instruction and adopt grammar-centric teaching in the forms of deductive, form-focused, grammar translation method. In some cases, grammar was prioritized over other language skills due to its essential status within language teacher cognition. Highlighting the negative influences caused by washback in language teachers' cognitions and practices, some studies state that a washback effect of such strength might be construed as a message to rethink

language assessment systems and reorganize curriculum development phases integrating teachers into the process.

2.7.Conclusion

This chapter aimed to provide a comprehensive review of research on language teacher cognition involving its formation, the influential factors on it, and its interplay with contexts it is located in. In each subsection of the literature review chapter, the research studies were introduced in a chronological order to delineate the evolution of language teacher cognition from its inception in the 1990s to its metamorphosis into a firmly established field of inquiry in the 2000s. Language teacher cognition has transformed into a robust scientific research domain and now constitutes a critical component in the realm of language teaching.

An in-depth analysis of the literature reviewed here identifies some key themes and findings regarding the phenomenon of language teacher cognition. First, language teacher cognition is a multifaceted construct sculpted by a multitude of mutually influential components encompassing beliefs, experiences, emotions, contexts, and instructional decisions (Borg, 2015; Dhanavel, 2022). The complex attributes of language teacher cognition also entail being in dynamic motion rather than staying static like a monolith (Feryok, 2010), in association with personal (Burns et al., 2015), historical (Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015), and sociocultural (Li, 2019) dimensions. Functioning as decisional filters (Zhu & Shu, 2017), language teacher cognitions are integral to how teachers process information and determine pedagogical pathways in their classrooms.

Second, language teachers' deeply ingrained cognitions and actual classroom practices may not always achieve a complete harmony, resulting in a cognition-practice dichotomy (Woods, 1996; Schulz, 1996; Phipps & Borg, 2009; Sanchez, 2014; Moodie & Feryok, 2015; Ahmad, 2018; Azimi, 2018; Graus & Coppen, 2018; Gerem & Ekşi, 2019; Sato & Oyanedel, 2019; Başar, 2020; Nguyen et al., 2023). This dissonance between cognition and practice planes occurs under the considerable impacts of social, cultural, and institutional contexts (Mohammadabadi et al., 2019). In addition, teachers' knowledge base of language, subject matter, and pedagogical paradigms assumes a vital part in their decision-making processes, cognition sets, and how they deliver input (Andrews, 1999; Andrews, 2001; Nishimuro & Borg, 2013). In correspondence with the cognition-practice dichotomy, a persistent gap between language teachers' in-class

practices and understanding of second language acquisition theories has emerged in diverse contexts, with experiential knowledge emerging substantially more in the rationalization of teaching practices (Ebsworth & Schweers, 1997; Borg & Burns, 2008; Nishimuro & Borg, 2013; Sarıgöz, 2015; Mahmood, 2024).

Third, context-specific and continuous professional development within teacher education and training schemes perform invaluable functions in narrowing this gap and aligning practices, cognitions, and pedagogies. Teacher educators shoulder the onerous responsibility of facilitating the construction and restructuring of cognitions and practical applications in pre-service teachers, serving as a model by doing what they preach in second language teacher education processes (Graus & Copper, 2018). Furthermore, the power of reflective practice through encouraging teachers to reflect on their cognitions, experiences, practices, and expertise with the goal of identifying tensions, making informed decisions, and refining their instructional approaches has been positioned at the forefront of professional development by a substantial body of research (Golombek, 2015; Kubanyiova, 2015; Moodie & Feryok, 2015; Sarıgöz, 2015; Chappell, 2017; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2017; Robertson et al., 2018; Wyatt & Dikilitaş, 2019; Gökçe & Keçik, 2021; Dimitrieska, 2024).

Within the vast body of language teacher cognition, grammar instruction has taken the spotlight (Borg, 2003). In the Turkish context, there have been some language teacher cognition studies regarding grammar instruction (Phipps & Borg, 2009; Uysal & Bardakçı, 2014; Sarıgöz, 2015; Önalın 2018a; Önalın 2018b; Wyatt & Dikilitaş, 2019; Başar, 2020). However, it could be argued that this research body seems to be sporadic. Although they present valuable insights, the limited number of participants in these studies may not paint a full picture of the Turkish language cognition landscape. Furthermore, there seems to be a paucity of research on EFL teachers' cognitions at the tertiary level. Research that will shed light on university language teachers' cognitions in grammar instruction through both qualitative and quantitative data is direly needed in the Turkish English language teaching literature. To conclude, a unifying study illustrating the foregoing discussion might make considerable contributions to the domain of language teacher cognition on both local and global scales.

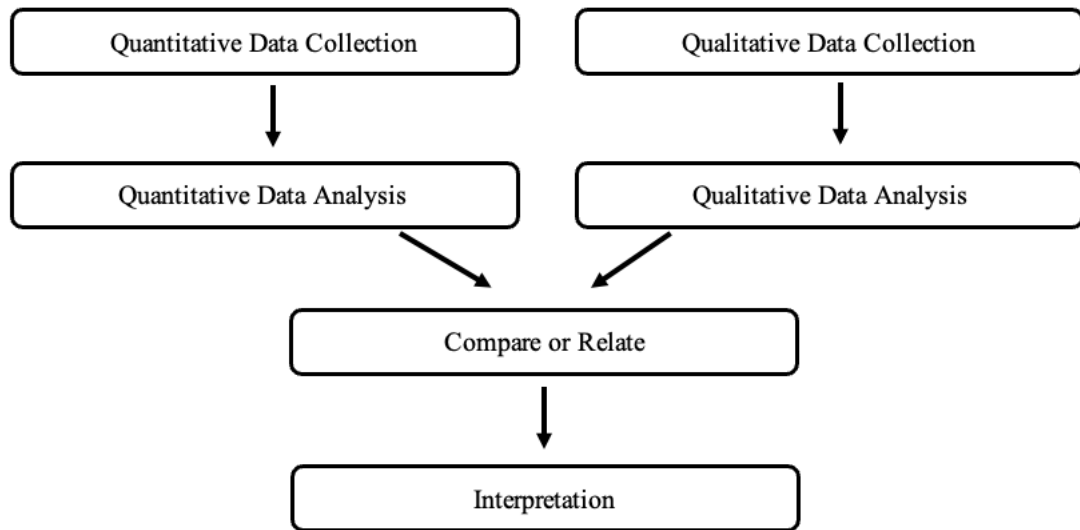
3. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the methodological framework of the study is presented, starting with research design, followed by an overview of research context and participants. Subsequently, essential details about the data collection process and the instruments utilized in the study are provided, namely the questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews. Lastly, the data analysis in relation to the study objectives is addressed in this chapter.

3.1. Research Design

The current study aimed to explore the cognitions of tertiary-level Turkish EFL teachers in relation to grammar instruction. Accordingly, a mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The initial phase of the study consisted of quantitative data collection to draw a general picture of the teachers' cognitive landscape in grammar instruction, succeeded by a second phase involving qualitative instruments to yield more detailed and nuanced insights in relation to the research questions (Creswell, 2009). The division of the research into two distinct phases allowed for a more rigorous and proper execution of each stage (Creswell, 2015). The grounds for this research design lie in the potential for quantitative findings to be augmented by qualitative analysis, hence depicting a broader perspective on the research problem (Creswell, 2015). Through the incorporation of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies, researchers can discover answers to queries that otherwise might be overlooked and stay uncovered with only one approach. This strategy of mixing both methods capitalizes on the strengths of each approach while minimizing their corresponding restrictions (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). In the present study, utilizing two distinct data collection instruments and integrating their results offered a more thorough understanding of the multilayered nature of language teacher cognitions in grammar instruction.

Figure 3.1. *Convergent parallel design*



adapted from Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 69

Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) identify four primary mixed-methods research designs, namely embedded, exploratory sequential, explanatory sequential, and convergent parallel. Predicated on its compatibility with the context and research objectives, the convergent parallel design was specially designated for this particular study. As shown in Figure 3.1, the convergent parallel design involves the simultaneous execution of quantitative and qualitative methods. These data collection methods are conducted independently but addressed with the same amount of prominence. During the data analysis stage, by comparing or relating the quantitative and qualitative findings, data from both strands are merged to arrive at an exhaustive interpretation of the results. Specifically, in this study, data from the responses to the questionnaire were subjected to quantitative analysis, whereas the data from the semi-structured interviews were processed qualitatively.

3.2. Research Context

English does not possess an official status and is taught as a foreign language across primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of education in Turkey. English language preparatory programs play a pivotal role in terms of language learning since they provide students with intensive and systematic instruction on English. Many tertiary institutions offer such preparatory language programs to accommodate students whose departmental

courses will be partially (30%) or entirely (100%) taught in English. To take their prior language knowledge from their earlier education, students are placed into the program through a placement test. Under normal circumstances, the duration of these programs is usually one academic year. Students are required to pass a proficiency exam at the end of the year to proceed to their respective studies in their departments. However, should they fail the proficiency exam, they can continue receiving language instruction for another year. Although the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) oversees the regulations of these programs, particular educational policies regarding curriculum, testing, etc. are formulated and developed by each university depending on their needs.

Aiming to shed light on language teacher cognitions in grammar instruction at tertiary level, the present study was carried out at a preparatory school affiliated with a state university in Central Anatolia. The preparatory school where the study was set is tasked with providing intensive language instruction of general English to accommodate a diverse student body with different backgrounds and of various academic disciplines. The language program aims to provide quality English education to enable learners to develop language skills to meet the needs in their academic and professional lives and enhance their intercultural competencies and global perspectives by adopting communicative and innovative teaching methods. At the onset of the academic year, all the students who are going to start departments providing 30% or 100% are expected to take a proficiency exam. Those receiving 60 or more points from the proficiency exam are exempt from the preparatory class and can directly move on to their respective faculties. Students who receive a failing grade below 60 are required to take a placement exam and subsequently enroll in a mandatory year-long intensive language program at the preparatory school. English language instruction is provided on four levels corresponding to A1, A2, A2+, B1, and B1+ on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The progression within the curriculum of the intensive language program is built upon Global Scale of English (GSE). Upon completing the program, students must pass the Test of English with a score of at least 60 to be considered proficient and advance to their departmental studies. The intensive language program at hand mainly caters to two learner profiles: the students of departments with English as the medium of instruction and those opting to enhance their English skills voluntarily and follows an integrated curriculum design with all language skills (speaking, writing, reading, listening) and systems (grammar, vocabulary) given equal weight. It is also

important to note that following the establishment of the language school as a part of the university, the preparatory school program followed a separated language curriculum for about a decade, in which language skills and systems were taught through separate syllabi and class hours. At the time of the study, the teachers teaching within the preparatory program usually have a workload of 12 lesson hours weekly. Additionally, teachers participate in weekly meetings aimed at fostering cooperation and maintaining consistency in the overall educational delivery. Most teachers provide instruction to the same class of students through the term, which lasts around 16 weeks. Specific teachers have specialized roles in the units of professional development, testing, curriculum development, material design, technology integration, coordination, student clubs, and quality assurance, being tasked with responsibilities of meeting the needs of the teachers and learners at each level of the program. Teachers working in the aforementioned units are offered teaching relief depending on the workload of the unit in which they work. Unit work is usually rotated between the staff and is done on a voluntary basis. All teachers are expected to be involved in the grading of examinations and are advised to attend professional development activities. For instance, a professional development bulletin tailored to the instructors' needs is sent to the staff monthly, workshops related to instructors' interests are offered on a regular basis, and a blog page is developed and shared by the professional development unit members.

3.2.1. Participants

The study at hand sought to explore tertiary-level language teachers' cognitions regarding grammar teaching at the preparatory school of a state university located in Turkey. For participant selection, the study employed convenience sampling, a prevalent non-probability sampling technique particularly known for its practicality in scientific research methodology (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2009). This method entails selecting participants on the basis of their availability and appropriateness to meet the research criteria (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015). Getting onto the track with the approach of convenience sampling in mind, 128 EFL teachers who were available were chosen to take part in the quantitative phase of the research, where they completed the questionnaire (Mackey & Gass, 2022).

Detailed information about the participants who completed the questionnaire can be seen in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. *Demographic information of questionnaire respondents*

Dimension	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	93	72.7%
	Male	35	27.3%
Age	31-35	28	21.9%
	36-40	18	14.1%
	41-45	44	34.4%
	46-50	24	18.8%
	51+	14	10.9%
Highest education level	BA	50	39.1%
	MA	64	50.0%
	PhD	14	10.9%
Years of teaching experience	6-10	8	6.3%
	11-15	31	24.2%
	16+	89	69.5%
Professional Development Certificates	CELTA	47	36.7%
	CELTA & DELTA	11	8.6%
	CELTA & TESOL	3	2.3%
	DELTA	3	2.3%
	CELTA & ICALT	1	0.8%
	CELTA, DELTA & ICALT	1	0.8%
	CELTA, DELTA & TESOL	1	0.8%
	DELTA & TESOL	1	0.8%
	Total	68	53.1%
Time spent in English-speaking country	No time spent	36	28.1%
	Up to 6 months	67	52.3%
	6 to 12 months	14	10.9%
	More than 12 months	11	8.6%
Language preference in teaching grammar	Mainly Turkish	7	5.5%
	Mainly English	37	28.9%
	Both	84	65.6%

Table 3.1 draws the demographic picture of the participants who filled out the questionnaire. At the time of the study, all the instructors who were then teaching at the preparatory class participated in the questionnaire. While an exact (n=64) half of the

participants completed their masters' degree, 39.1% (n=50) had undergraduate degrees and a small portion (n=14) of 10.9% had doctoral degrees. It should be pointed out that all instructors who participated in the study are relatively experienced EFL teachers, as they have more than 5 years of teaching experience, and throughout most of their careers, they have been providing English language instruction in the same teaching context.

Table 3.1 also gives the overall outline of the participants' professional development certificates. It is worth noting that more than half (n=68, 53.1%) of the instructors had recognized credentials such as Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA), Diploma in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (DELTA), Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), In-Service Certificate in English Language Teaching (ICELT). While an exact half (n=64, 50.0%) of participants held CELTA, 11 (8.6%) among the CELTA holders also completed their DELTA training.

Furthermore, as part of the questionnaire, the participants were asked if they spent time in an English-speaking country and which language they used while they were teaching grammar. More than a quarter of the sample stated not having spent any time in parts of the world where English is the native language of the local population as can be seen in Table 3.1.

As part of the questionnaire, the participants were asked which languages they used while teaching grammar. As can be seen in Table 3.1, a majority of 65.6% (n=84) stated that they utilized both English and Turkish whereas 28.9% (n=37) preferred mainly English and 5.5% (n=7) used mainly Turkish in their grammar instruction.

In the second phase of the study, at first, a voluntary sampling method was employed to gather qualitative data through the semi-structured interviews (Murairwa, 2015). Participants were asked if they would be interested in participating in further interviews at the conclusion of the questionnaire. At the end of the questionnaire, 64 of the survey participants volunteered to take part in semi-structured interviews. Dörnyei (2007, p. 126) emphasizes that qualitative research prioritizes depth rather than breadth in its sampling strategy, concentrating on the selection of participants who can provide rich and varied perspectives rather than on representativeness. In line with this view, out of 64 volunteers, 38 participants who were considered likely to contribute more detailed and valuable data were selectively invited to the interviews. This approach, also known as purposive sampling, is designed to enrich data previously gathered in the initial phase

of the study and to obtain a more comprehensive understanding from those chosen (Bernard, 2017; Cresswell, 2015). In addition, all participants were provided with a consent form to meet the ethical standards outlined in Appendix 1. Detailed information about the semi-structured interview participants can be seen in Table 3.2.



Table 3.2. *Information about the interviewees*

#	G	Time	For	Academic Qualifications			Exp	Professional Development Certificates	Unit Work History
				BA	MA	PhD			
0	M	32''58'	Onl	ELT	ELT (c)	-	10	-	-
1	M	47''27'	Onl	ELT	ELT	ELT (c)	15	CELTA, TESOL	Coordination, Testing, Curriculum Development
2	F	28''52'	Onl	TIS	-	-	22	CELTA	Material Development
3	F	40''19'	Onl	ELL	TEFL		19	CELTA	Coordination, Testing
4	M	57''46'	F2F	ACL	-	-	19	CELTA	Testing
5	M	45''32'	F2F	ELT	ELT (c)	-	12	CELTA	Material Development
6	M	37''10	F2F	ELT	CI	CI	20	CELTA	Accreditation, Curriculum Development
7	F	45''56'	Onl	ELT	-	-	20	CELTA, TESOL	Curriculum Development
8	F	90''39'	F2F	ELT	TEFL	-	20	CELTA, DELTA, Teacher trainer	Professional Development, Testing, Curriculum Development
9	F	71''46'	F2F	ELT	-	-	20	CELTA	Material Development, Coordination
10	F	49''22'	Onl	ELT	TEFL	-	23	CELTA, DELTA, Teacher trainer	Professional Development
11	F	46''29'	Onl	ELT	TEFL	-	24	CELTA	Curriculum Development
12	F	50''30'	F2F	ELT	TEFL	-	14	CELTA, DELTA	Material Development
13	M	57''32	F2F	EFL	EFL (c)	-	11	-	Curriculum Development
14	F	48''27'	Onl	ELT	EASPE	EASPE	27	CELTA	-
15	F	69''33'	Onl	ELT	-	-	25	-	-
16	F	49''25'	F2F	ELT	ELT		13	-	Material Development
17	M	46''30'	F2F	EL	-	-	30	-	-
18	F	59''53'	Onl	ELT	DE	-	14	CELTA, TKT	Coordination
19	F	56''22'	F2F	ELT	ELT	ELT	16	DELTA, TESOL	Quality Assurance
20	M	33''47'	F2F	ELT	ELT	-	30	-	-
21	M	47''06'	F2F	ELL	TEFL	-	20	CELTA, DELTA, Teacher trainer	Professional Development

22	M	67"15'	F2F	ELT	-	-	14	CELTA	Testing
23	F	49"34'	F2F	ELT	ELT	ELT	14	-	Coordination, Technology Integration
24	M	93"32'	Onl	ELT	ELT	-	29	-	Coordination
25	F	52"01'	Onl	ELT	TEFL	-	10	CELTA, DELTA, TESOL	Professional Development, Student Clubs
26	F	38"48'	F2F	ELT	ELT (c)	-	12	CELTA	Testing
27	F	37"28'	F2F	TIS	TEFL	DE (c)	20	CELTA	Testing
28	F	56"53'	F2F	ELT	ELT	-	10	CELTA	Material Development, Curriculum Development, Student Clubs
29	M	48"43'	Onl	ELT	HEAP	-	21	-	Testing
30	F	58"36'	F2F	ELT	TEFL	-	24	-	Testing, Curriculum Development
31	F	49"40'	Onl	ELT	MO	MO (c)	19	CELTA, DELTA	Testing
32	F	41"59'	F2F	ELT	ELT	ELT (c)	10	CELTA, DELTA	Testing
33	M	68"05'	F2F	ELL	-	-	16	-	Student Clubs
34	M	48"50'	Onl	EL	-	-	22	CELTA	Testing, Curriculum Development, Coordination
35	F	43"54'	Onl	ELT	ELT	-	25	-	-
36	F	47"50'	Onl	ELL	BA	-	14	-	Student Clubs
37	F	44"17'	F2F	ELT	TEFL (c)	-	12	CELTA, DELTA	Professional Development, Testing
38	F	45"11'	F2F	TIS	ELT	-	12	CELTA, TKT	Testing

G: Gender, F: Female, M: Male, For: Format of the Interview, F2F: face-to-face, Onl: online, Exp: Years of Teaching Experience, c: continuing TIS: Translation and Interpretation Studies, ELL: English Language and Literature, TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language, ACL: American Culture and Literature, CI: Curriculum and Instruction, EASPE: Educational Administration, Supervision, Planning and Economics, EL: English Linguistics, DE: Distance Education, HEAP: Higher Education Administration and Policy, MO: Management and Organization, BA: Business Administration

3.3. Data Collection Instruments

The study followed a mixed-methods research design, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools. While the quantitative data collection was implemented with a questionnaire, the qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews. More information regarding both data collection procedures will be presented below.

3.3.1. Teachers' Cognitions About Grammar Teaching Questionnaire

In the initial phase of the study, the recently developed and validated Teachers' Cognitions About Grammar Teaching Questionnaire was adapted from Zhang and Sun (2022). The questionnaire aimed to systematically examine EFL teachers' beliefs, knowledge, and instructional preferences regarding grammar teaching. After obtaining the necessary permissions from the creators of the questionnaire via email, minor adaptations were made to better suit the research context. Modifications included changing one item in the category of FonF to ensure its clarity and altering demographic questions to ensure its alignment with the participant profile and clarity and relevance for the respondents. The adapted questionnaire was reviewed item by item to ensure it matched the unique context of the preparatory school where most participants have similar profiles and follow the same syllabus in their classes. Following these modifications, the questionnaire was shared with six EFL experts, three of whom were teacher educators in the education faculty and three of whom were preparatory class instructors in similar settings to the research context. The feedback of EFL teacher educators was from a research viewpoint while preparatory class instructors provided comprehensive feedback on the practical and meaning-related aspects of the questionnaire from the point of the target population. This combination of expert and practitioner feedback aimed to enhance the clarity and comprehensibility of the items, ensuring their appropriateness and validity for the context. Based on the feedback from six experts, the questionnaire items were finalized (see Appendix 2). The questionnaire comprised two sections: (1) demographic data through seven multiple-choice items and (2) teachers' cognitions about grammar teaching through 27 five-point Likert scale items. In the second section of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to rate their agreement with each statement as follows: *1 for strongly disagree*, *2 for disagree*, *3 for undecided*, *4 for agree*, and *5 for strongly agree*. Completion of the questionnaire typically required

up to 15 minutes. The questionnaire had varying number of items on different methodologies and concepts in grammar instruction to gather data on EFL teachers' cognitions. While there were six items about FonFS, five items were probing for FonF. Furthermore, there were five items each about deductive and inductive approaches. Three items each were inquiring into the concepts of grammatical terminology and drilling/practice. Each section targets a distinct aspect of grammar instruction to provide comprehensive insights into teachers' pedagogical orientations and underlying cognitions. A concise overview of the items of Teachers' Cognitions About Grammar Teaching Questionnaire and its items divided into subsections can be found in Appendix 6.

The reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .644. This value is considered moderate as it meets the generally accepted minimum standard of .60 in terms of reliability (Dörnyei & Dewaele, 2022).

3.3.2. Semi-structured Interviews

In the second phase of the study, semi-structured interviews were employed to complement the initial quantitative data and to gain a deeper understanding of language teachers' cognitions in relation to grammar instruction at the tertiary level. The rationale behind the preference for semi-structured interviews as the qualitative data collection method lies in their effectiveness and practicality of eliciting data on participants' cognitions, practices, and their decision-making processes (Talmy & Richards, 2010). Allowing participants to freely express their opinions, beliefs, and experiences, these interviews got down to the real nitty-gritty and core aspects of grammar instruction and teacher cognitions where questionnaires might not be of much help and leave them unexplored (Mackey & Gass, 2022).

Interviews hold a valuable position in their potential to steer conversations toward matters of paramount importance, giving room to the researcher for flexibility in questioning and enriching the data collection process (Brinkman & Kvale, 2005). Moreover, questionnaire results might not sufficiently elucidate finding from quantitative measures; thus, qualitative methods are integrated to drive an extensive and empirical exploration into the research questions (Dörnyei, 2007; Johnson & Christensen, 2004). The researcher, acting as interviewer, utilized strategies to remain neutral, conduct impartial inquiry, and minimize biases in order to enhance reliability of the interviews

(Dörnyei, 2007). Maintaining impartiality played a pivotal role in encouraging participants to fully articulate their thoughts and cognitions, enabling the researcher to take a picture of the mental and cognitive landscape of the research context (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

The semi-structured interviews were designed to delve deeper into the various dimensions of participants' cognitions, particularly those in connection with grammar and grammar teaching. The interview questions were prepared with research aims in mind and then were reviewed by one expert specialized in language teacher cognition and three experts of EFL to ensure the validity of the interviews. Following expert feedback, semi-structured questions were finalized, and a pilot interview was implemented with a participant in a similar context to check if the questions were effective in eliciting data connected to the research questions. Lasting 32 minutes and 58 seconds, the pilot interview was the final validity check of the interview questions, demonstrating their suitability in live action. The pilot interview was not included in the data set.

All interviews began with a warm-up question to build rapport and break the ice, followed by some queries that covered the educational and professional backgrounds of the interviewees. Next, twelve questions about the concept of grammar and grammar instruction were directed to the participants. As per the nature of semi-structured interviews, follow-up questions were directed to the participants to extract more data. The questions utilized within the semi-structured interviews can be found in Appendix 3. 38 semi-structured interviews were conducted, either online over Zoom or face-to-face depending on participants' choice. The duration of the interviews varied, with the longest being 93 minutes and 32 seconds and the shortest 28 minutes and 52 seconds. On average, the semi-structured interviews lasted 51 minutes and 55 seconds, totaling a duration of approximately 33 hours of interview data. Conducted in English, the semi-structured interviews included 13 males and 25 females. In total, the interviews lasted 1973 minutes.

In brief, this study utilized a mixed-methods approach and a convergent parallel design, integrating both a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to thoroughly address the research questions and gather data on language teacher cognitions in connection with grammar teaching and grammar.

3.4. Data Collection Procedures

Prior to the initiation of data collection, ethics committee permit was secured from Anadolu University Social Sciences and Humanities Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee. The application involved thorough documentation covering the study's aim, scope, significance, contributions to the field of ELT, research methodology, along with a concise review of literature. The approval by the ethics board can be seen in Appendix 4. Subsequent to the obtainment of ethics approval, the same set of documents were presented to Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages to secure a research permit, which was duly granted as noted in Appendix 5. Following the authorization from the school board, questionnaires were distributed to volunteering participants, with the quantitative data collecting phase taking place in January 2024. Participants were informed about the objective of the research study. In addition, they were assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses and identities. Furthermore, it was stated that participants' data would be only used for scientific research purposes. Ultimately, 128 EFL instructors who were at the time working at the preparatory class volunteered to take part in the study and completed the questionnaire.

Participants were inquired if they were interested in engaging in a follow-up semi-structured interview. 64 instructors consented to participate in these interviews. Through purposive sampling, 38 volunteers who were considered 'information rich' by the researcher were selected to gather thorough qualitative data on language teacher cognitions in grammar instruction (Cresswell, 2015). Semi-structured interviews were scheduled at a time of participants' convenience and conducted on their preferred meeting setting of either face-to-face or online. Before commencing each interview, the research goals were reiterated to interviewees and their consent to audio or video record the sessions was received. All interviews were done in English. The interviews' semi-structured characteristic entailed allowing participants to answer questions uninterrupted, getting them to elaborate on their perspectives. With the aim of getting more data, follow-up questions were asked to participants depending on the flow of the conversation. Following the interviews, the recordings were transcribed word for word and sent to participants for review and additional comments. The review of the transcriptions of the interviews by participants marked the completion of the data collection of the study.

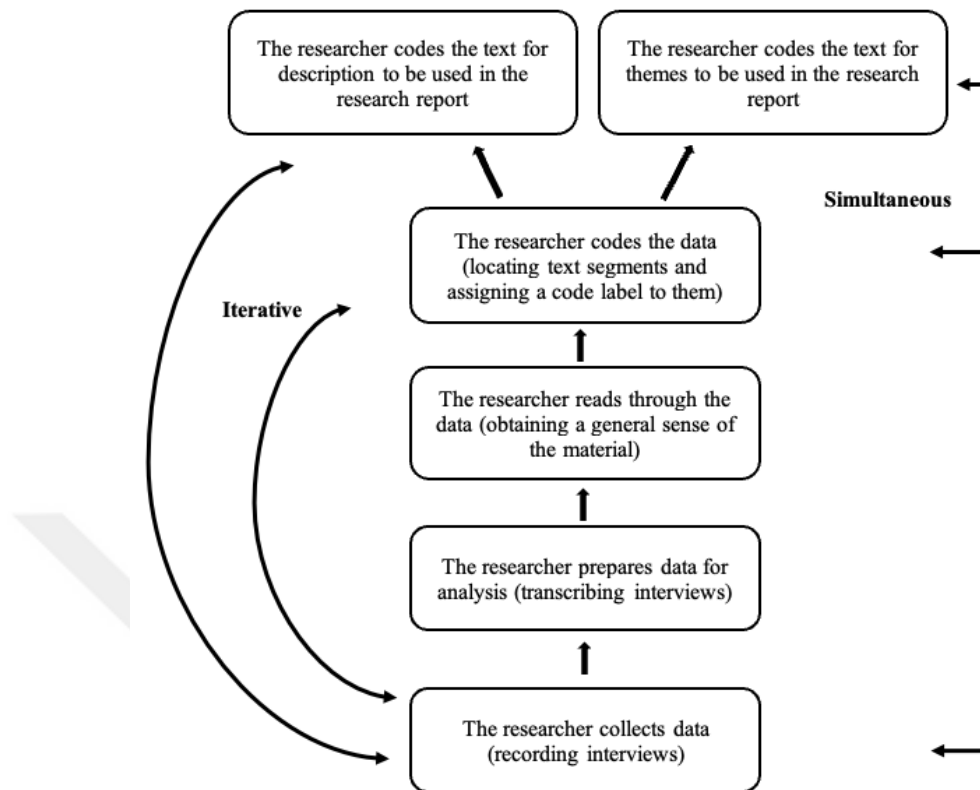
3.5. Data Analysis

The present study sought to scrutinize tertiary-level EFL teachers' cognitions in grammar instruction through a mixed-methods research design. To achieve this research goal, both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were executed, creating the need to perform distinct analysis approaches for each dataset. The quantitative data analysis sought to respond to both research questions whereas the qualitative data analysis purposed to provide answers to the first research question.

To answer both research questions, the quantitative data set obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed via SPSS version 30. Descriptive statistics were applied to calculate the mean scores, percentages, and response frequencies within the questionnaire data set, which will be presented throughout the first eight subsections located in the quantitative findings section of the findings chapter. The first section of the questionnaire collected demographic and personal information, while the second section, comprised of 27 items under 6 sub-headings, collected data on teachers' cognitions in relation to grammar teaching and grammar. The second section consisting of 27 Likert-scale items was incorporated into the Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis. In addition, the personal information of the participants was categorized to answer the second research question through inferential statistics. Thus, cognitions of different categories of teachers regarding grammar instruction were further analyzed through inferential statistics to identify possible statistically significant differences or similarities between or among different categorical variables including academic qualifications, professional development certificates, teaching experience, preferred language while teaching grammar. The inferential statistics included independent samples t-tests and One-way ANOVA depending on the number of the categories of the variables as part of the research question, which will be presented in the last four subsections embedded within the quantitative findings section of the findings chapter.

To answer the first research question, the qualitative data collected through the semi-structured interviews were analyzed within the qualitative analysis framework proposed by Creswell (2015), as illustrated in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2. *Qualitative data analysis*



adapted from Creswell, 2015, p. 236

The analysis process began with transcribing the audio or video recordings of the interviews, conducted with participants' consent. The finalized transcriptions of a total of approximately 33-hour-long interview recordings revealed a data set of 472 pages made up of 185589 words. The researcher initially scanned and then thoroughly read the transcriptions multiple times to arrive at an overall grasp of the valuable insights articulated by the participants. Subsequent steps involved assigning codes to specific text segments and labeling them systematically, grouping these labels into broader categories, and determining dominant or broader themes in the study. Next, the interpretive phase followed, where the emergent themes were employed to discuss the findings or the study and address the research aims. This process is of an iterative and simultaneous nature, meaning that coding and interpretation is revisited multiple times to refine findings and ensure their accuracy and coherence. Through this non-linear, systematic approach, the reliability of the qualitative data analysis is increased. Dedoose version 10 research data management software was utilized for data coding and analysis. To enhance the credibility of the findings, an EFL expert was extended an invitation to code the qualitative dataset along with the researcher. To further ensure the reliability of the coding

process, an assessment of the inter-rater reliability was executed through Cohen's kappa (κ) statistic. The two independent raters coded a randomly selected 40% subset of the data set through the cloud-based software. The resulting Cohen's kappa coefficient was calculated to determine the degree of agreement beyond chance. The analysis yielded a κ value of 0.92, revealing almost perfect agreement considering Landis and Koch's (1977) interpretative benchmarks. The high level of consistency between raters suggested a reliable application of coding and a dependable thematic categorization. By collaborating in the coding process to check the codes, reconcile discrepancies and reach an agreement on the themes of the study with an EFL expert, the researcher enhanced the trustworthiness of the qualitative data analysis and key findings (Nowell et al., 2017).



4. FINDINGS

In this chapter, the findings of the study will be presented in detail with the aim of answering the research questions. The first section displays the quantitative findings of the study whereas the second section gets into the specifics of the qualitative findings. While the quantitative findings section aims to answer both research questions, the qualitative findings section aims to provide answers for the first research question.

4.1. Quantitative Findings

In this section of the report, quantitative findings emerging out of the questionnaire will be presented to address research questions of the study. The Teachers' Cognitions About Grammar Teaching Questionnaire, adapted from Zhang and Sun (2022), inquired EFL tertiary teachers about their cognitions in relation to the concept of grammar and grammar teaching and offers valuable and compelling insights into the cognitive processes of language teachers. While the first eight subsections of this section aim to provide answers in detail to the first research question with descriptive statistics, the following four subsections aim to work on the second research question with inferential statistics.

The general mean and standard deviation scores of the subsections of the questionnaire can be found in Table 4.1. The overall mean of the questionnaire ($M=3.4569$; $SD=.25429$) across all the subsections showed that the participants generally agree with the grammar teaching approaches and methods presented within the questionnaire. FonFS (Focus-on-FormS) had a lower mean than the mid-point of the scale ($M=2.7956$; $SD=.47978$), suggesting a neutral stance and a general ambivalence with varied perspectives about its efficacy. In contrast, FonF (Focus-on-Form) had the highest mean ($M=4.0625$; $SD=.41145$) among the subsections of the questionnaire, pointing to a strong support among the participants. DA (Deductive approach) had a mean ($M=3.2609$; $SD=.51102$) indicating general favorability by the respondents. IA (Inductive approach) had a mean score close to FonF ($M=3.6813$; $SD=.30059$) demonstrating a high level of agreement. DP (Drilling and Practice) had a mean score slightly above the midpoint ($M=3.1719$; $SD=.37411$), suggesting a moderate agreement among the lecturers. GT (Use of Grammatical Terminology) had a higher mean ($M=3.4401$; $SD=.62736$), indicating a good level of support. However, the relatively higher standard deviation of GT might mean a larger variability in the cognitions of teachers regarding GT.

Table 4.1. *Descriptive statistics for cognitions on each subsection of the questionnaire*

Subsection	M	STD
Focus-on-FormS (FonFS)	2.7956	.47978
Focus-on-Form (FonF)	4.0625	.41145
Deductive Approach (DA)	3.2609	.51102
Inductive Approach (IA)	3.6813	.30059
Drilling and Practice (DP)	3.1719	.37411
Use of Grammatical Terminology (GT)	3.4401	.62736
Overall	3.4569	.25429

M: Mean, STD: Standard Deviation

Looking at the descriptive statistics of subsections of the questionnaire in Table 4.1, some distinct patterns were revealed in the cognitive plane of university language teachers. The total mean score of all the factors in the questionnaire indicated that tertiary level EFL teachers generally expressed agreement with the grammar instructional paradigms outlined in the questionnaire. In addition, the low standard deviation of the whole questionnaire demonstrates a strong consistency in positive responses across the subsections. FonF and IA subsections had notably higher mean scores, demonstrating particularly stronger support for context-based and contemporary grammar teaching paradigms. Furthermore, FonFS and DA subsections had more moderate support, indicating lesser favorability of traditional and forms-focused grammar instructional pedagogies. GT stands out with its higher variability, unearthing a nuanced landscape of differing perspectives among the participants in terms of technical language in grammar instruction.

The outline of the general descriptive statistics of the questionnaire offers valuable insights on which grammar teaching methodologies are more or less favored by tertiary level EFL teachers, painting a panoramic view of the participants' cognitive grammar landscape through the six categories discussed earlier. However, delving into the results of the subsections will give a better picture compared to the overall scores. In accordance with the structure of the questionnaire, descriptive statistics of each category will be outlined respectively to further delineate the vista of EFL teachers' cognitions in grammar teaching at university level.

4.1.1. Focus-on-Forms

In this subsection, the findings emerging from the questionnaire regarding FonFS grammar instruction methodology will be discussed in depth.

Table 4.2. *Descriptive statistics for cognitions regarding Focus on Forms*

Factor	Cognition in Focus-on-FormS	SD	D	U	A	SA	M	STD
FonFS #1	Teachers should focus more on the structure and form than meaning.	19.5%	65.7%	11.7%	3.1%	0.0%	1.98	.664
FonFS #2	Students need to be consciously aware of a structure's form and its function before they can use it proficiently.	1.6%	16.4%	16.4%	50.8%	14.8%	3.61	.982
FonFS #3	If students memorize rules and facts about grammar, it will help them to produce correct language in spontaneous situations.	14.1%	36.7%	31.3%	17.2%	0.8%	2.54	.963
FonFS #4	Students should be encouraged to speak/write accurately from the beginning.	2.3%	26.6%	17.2%	44.5%	9.4%	3.32	1.042
FonFS #5	When using language to communicate in English, it is more important to be grammatically accurate than socially appropriate.	12.5%	65.6%	18.8%	3.1%	0.0%	2.13	.652
FonFS #6	Accuracy, or correctness in linguistic form, is a primary aim in grammar teaching.	1.6%	25.0%	29.7%	39.8%	3.9%	3.20	.836
FonFS	Overall						2.7956	.47978

SD: Strongly disagree, D: Disagree, U: Undecided, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree, M: Mean, STD: Standard Deviation

Table 4.2 pictures participants' cognitions in relation to the grammar instruction approach of FonFS in descriptive statistics, illustrating varied teacher perspectives on FonFS. An overwhelming 85.2% of teachers disagreed with the idea of focusing more on structure compared to meaning, indicating a significant preference for meaning-based grammar instruction. A majority (65.6%) was in support of students' awareness of a grammar structure's form to proficiently apply it, potentially connoting a predisposition to explicit grammar teaching. Approximately half of teachers (50.8%) expressed skepticism about the help of rote learning of grammar rules in being accurate in improvised language production while 31.3% remained undecided on the matter. A little over half of the participants (53.9%) exhibited support for the notion of prioritizing accuracy at the onset of language learning which assigns grammatical accuracy a critical role early on the language instruction. However, a large majority (78.1%) opposed positioning grammar accuracy over social appropriateness in communication, appreciating the importance of communicative approaches over strict grammatical correctness. On the issue of whether accuracy should precede in grammar instruction, a division of views emerged with 43.8% agreeing that it is a priority and 29.7% stated being uncertain. This reflects a nuanced landscape of cognitions in relation to the role of accuracy in language learning, suggestive of a split in preference for form-focused instruction.

On the importance of grammatical accuracy and communicative competence, FonFS #5 and FonFS #6 displayed a relative split among the respondents. While a strong disagreement (78.1%) was revealed against grammatical accuracy being more important social appropriacy in communication, on FonFS #6 a divided view emerges, with 43.8% agreement on accuracy being the main target in grammar teaching. In addition, while FonFS #2 indicates a substantial agreement (65.6%) on the benefits of recognition of function and usage in proficiency, FonFS #4 shows 53.9% promote the notion of encouraging learners to produce accurate language from the beginning of their learning process. These two factors reveal a harmony among teachers that a deeper understanding of grammar rather than mere rote learning and establishing a solid grammatical foundation early in language acquisition can prove helpful in grammar instruction. It could also be said that this draws a parallel to FonFS #3, where 50.8% disagreed with memorization of rules being helpful in unplanned language production. However, a noteworthy 31.3% wavered and were hesitant to make a choice in this factor.

Furthermore, while FonFS #1 revealed the biggest percentage in this section of the questionnaire (85.2%) against focusing more on structure and form compared to meaning, the same level of consensus was not seen in FonFS #6 without a majority on the issue of accuracy being a primary concern in grammar teaching, unearthing a dissonance among participants.

Overall, a general tendency among teachers to disagree with strict FonFS was displayed, in favor of a more meaning-focused and communicative language teaching paradigms ($M=2.7956$; $SD=.47978$). Considerable variations among individual questions provided nuanced and subtle glimpses into the cognitions of language teachers that value both form and meaning yet with a certain propensity for practical usage and communication in language teaching. This diversity of opinions regarding the balance between form and meaning in EFL grammar instruction exists in parallel with the still-ongoing debate on the prominence of form fluency versus accuracy.

4.1.2. Focus-on-Form

In this subsection, the results produced by the questionnaire data analysis concerning FonF grammar teaching approach will be presented in detail.

Table 4.3. *Descriptive statistics for cognitions regarding Focus on Form*

Factor	Cognition in Focus-on-Form	SD	D	U	A	SA	M	STD
FonF #1	New grammatical points should be presented and practiced in contextual situations.	0.0%	0.8%	2.3%	53.9%	43.0%	4.39	.578
FonF #2	Thinking about the grammar rules while talking prevents students from communicating fluently.	1.6%	6.3%	14.8%	59.4%	18.0%	3.86	.839
FonF #3	Focusing students' attention on forms is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the acquisition of grammar.	0.0%	2.3%	20.3%	64.8%	12.5%	3.88	.640
FonF #4	Grammar teaching should focus on the meaning of structures and their use in context.	0.8%	1.6%	3.1%	65.6%	28.9%	4.20	.644
FonF #5	Students learn grammar best through exposure to language in natural context.	0.8%	7.8%	17.2%	40.6%	33.6%	3.98	.947
FonF	Overall						4.0625	.41145

SD: Strongly disagree, D: Disagree, U: Undecided, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree, M: Mean, STD: Standard Deviation

Table 4.3 provides the descriptive statistics of participants' cognitions in relation to the grammar instruction approach of FonF. A staggering 96.9% recognized the potential of context in the presentation and practice of new grammar topics. This extremely strong agreement (M=2.96) in support of context could be indicative of making an informed

choice of teaching grammar integrated through real-life and meaningful situations. In addition, a similar consensus also appears with an overwhelming 94.5% considering meaning and use of structures in context as a major focus of grammar instruction, affirming a widespread acceptance of context-orientation in grammar teaching. 77.3% stated that thinking about grammatical rules when talking hinders fluency in communication, suggesting a preference for intuitive processes in the learning of grammar. Similarly, 74.2% showed clear appreciation for natural exposure in learning grammar, possibly highlighting immersion as the most effective way of it. Interestingly, more than three quarters of participants (77.3%) felt that highlighting forms is essential yet might not be enough for learners to acquire grammar. This might indicate that while teachers acknowledge the importance of noticing on the part of learners in grammar learning and highlighting grammatical structures through input enhancement to assist students in noticing them, they are aware this process might still not result in the acquisition of those grammatical structures. This understanding of the complex interconnectedness between input enhancement and noticing by teachers might be demonstrative of a high level of cognition in the participants.

FonF #1 and FonF #4 unearth an almost total and harmonious support (respectively 96.9% and 94.5%) among the respondents for contextual grammar instruction and working on the meaning of grammatical structures in within context. In addition, while FonF #5 reveals substantial endorsement (74.2%) of natural exposure in the process of grammar learning, this number is in contrast with the almost unanimous support for other factors advocating for meaning-focused and contextual grammar learning. This slightly lower agreement might be suggestive of a level of variability in how strongly participants feel regarding the effectiveness of natural language exposure in comparison to other context-based teaching strategies. In addition, 77.3% agreement in FonF #3 that focusing on forms is necessary but not sufficient for acquisition is indicative of teachers' recognition of the limitations of FonF. This creates a somewhat contrast with the strong supports found in FonF #1 and FonF #4, where the emphasis on context might imply a more reduced part for form than the moderate support FonF #3 displays. The level of difference on these factors demonstrates a slight tension between the acknowledgement of significance of forms and approaches where they are incorporated into teaching.

Overall, the general descriptive results regarding FonF ($M=4.0625$; $SD=.41145$) suggest a strong tendency toward contextualized and meaningful grammar teaching. This inclination possibly reflects a pedagogical shift taking place in the mentality of participants towards language teaching paradigms that more effectively support learners in the practical realities of language use and demonstrates a progressive alignment with contemporary methodologies where communicative competence takes precedence.

4.1.3. Focus-on-Forms and Focus-on-Form

Considering the longstanding debate between FonFS and FonF, this subsection will delve into a comparative analysis of questionnaire factors related to both approaches to elucidate the diverse methodological orientations of university EFL teachers on how to provide grammar instruction most effectively.

The overall mean for FonF ($M=4.0625$; $SD=.41145$) is a high average close to the maximum value of 5, revealing a strong agreement with the factors of FonF among participants. In addition, the relatively low standard deviation of FonF signals a tight cluster of data and similar scores among the participants. The high average and similar scores of FonF is indicative of teachers' broad endorsement of teaching grammar in context, practical application and use of grammatical structures. On the other hand, the mean of FonFS points to a more moderate degree of agreement ($M=2.7956$; $SD=.47978$). This could mean that while teachers acknowledge the importance of focusing on grammatical structures and forms to some extent, their appreciation of FonFS is simply not as strong as FonF. The higher standard deviation of FonFS compared to FonF demonstrates a greater variability in teachers' cognitions and that teachers' viewpoints on focusing strictly on forms are mixed.

While FonF #1 indicates a consensus (96.9%) on contextualized presentation and practice of grammar, FonFS #1 shows a substantial disagreement (85.2%) on the prioritization of structure and form over meaning in grammar teaching. From the point of a contextual versus structural grammar teaching dichotomy, these statistics indicate a strong preference of real-world communication and abstinence from a structure-centric approach in the teaching of grammar. In addition, while 77.3% agreed with FonF #3 that focus of learners' attention on grammar forms is crucial in acquisition, 65.6% agreed on FonFS #2 that a conscious awareness of form and function is key in proficiency. In terms of the support for the necessity of a focus on grammar forms, these factors make a similar

case for noticing grammatical structures on the part of learners and for input enhancement on the part of teachers. While teachers acknowledged that grammar should be integrated with other language skills, they also seemed to support that a comprehensive understanding of grammar is useful in proficiency.

The overview of FonFS ($M=2.7956$; $SD=.47978$) and FonF ($M=4.0625$; $SD=.41145$) factors in the questionnaire highlight the trend among lecturers towards the integration of grammar teaching within a communicative framework while explicit knowledge on grammatical structures and forms maintains a large role. This balanced approach captures a subtle nuance where form is taught as a part of larger language functions and practical communication rather than in isolation. This combination of modern and traditional grammar instruction methodologies capitalizes on the strengths of both through recognizing the need for understanding grammatical structures and rules and placing emphasis on their production in natural and communicative settings.

4.1.4. Deductive Approach

This subsection will thoroughly delve into the findings coming out of the questionnaire regarding the Deductive Approach.

Table 4.4. *Descriptive statistics for cognitions regarding Deductive Approach*

Factor	Cognition in Deductive Approach	SD	D	U	A	SA	M	STD
DA #1	Grammar should be taught in an explicit or direct way.	2.3%	32.0%	39.8%	23.4%	2.3%	2.91	.861
DA #2	Teachers should begin teaching a new grammar point by explaining the rule.	13.3%	55.5%	18.0%	12.5%	0.8%	2.32	.887
DA #3	It is best to give the grammatical explanation first and then practice the rule.	5.5%	25.8%	31.3%	35.9%	1.6%	3.02	.951
DA #4	Teaching grammar in different units leads to language knowledge which students can use in natural contexts later.	0.0%	3.9%	21.1%	66.4%	8.6%	3.80	.644
DA #5	Teachers should teach simple grammatical structures before more complex ones.	0.0%	1.6%	6.3%	57.8%	34.4%	4.25	.640
DA	Overall						3.2609	.51102

SD: Strongly disagree, D: Disagree, U: Undecided, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree, M: Mean, STD: Standard Deviation

Table 4.4 demonstrates participants' cognitions in relation to the grammar instruction of deductive approach in descriptive statistics. Interestingly, on the matter of explicit and direct grammar instruction there seems to be a significant split between the participants. While 25.8% showed support for explicit and direct grammar instruction, 34.4% stated their disapproval of it, and a large group of 39.8% remained undecided. Therefore, emerges a lack of consensus on whether grammar instruction should be

provided explicitly and directly. A notable majority of 68.8% was against starting with the explanation of rules in grammar teaching. However, opinions on whether explanation should come before practice are relatively mixed. While 37.5% agreed with the notion of explanations preceding practice, an equal number of 31.3% disagreed and was undecided on the issue, presenting a diverse set of cognitions among teachers about the timing of grammatical explanations inside the lesson stages. The idea that grammar instruction in different units could be useful for knowledge applicable in natural contexts afterwards received strong support (75.0%). Combining this shared preference with the highest score of 92.2% agreeing on the teaching of simple grammar topics before complicated ones, it could be said that there is a clear preference and strong agreement among the participants for structured and unit-based grammar teaching, in line with traditional approaches that segment grammar learning into manageable and linear sections following a synthetic syllabus step by step.

There seems to be a relative harmony among the participants regarding the effectiveness of a gradually cumulative grammar instruction entailing building complexity progressively, as can be seen in the factors DA #4 and DA #5. Contrastingly, over the issue of how to begin grammar teaching, a salient dissonance emerged from the factors of DA #1, DA #2, DA #3. While DA #1 unearths a fragmented cognitive plane in relation to explicit and direct grammar teaching, DA #2 demonstrates a strong opposition of 68.8% against beginning with a direct rule explanation. This dissonance might suggest while some participants are open to explicit grammar instruction, they may prefer to integrate it into a broader context or stage of a lesson, rather than as an initial step in grammar teaching. Moreover, DA #1 and DA #3 seemed to show a somewhat alignment. Those who support explicit grammar instruction (25.8%) on DA #1 might seem more likely to prefer to provide explanation before practice (37.5%) on DA #3, in line with the structure-centric orientation of deductive approach. However, the high undecided and disagree rates on both factors can be indicative of an ongoing uncertainty or extreme variability in participants' inclinations. Furthermore, a significant dissonance arose between DA #2 and DA #3. The fractured perspective on whether explanations should come before practice on DA #3 and the strong opposition against beginning with grammar rule explanations on DA #2 seemed to be in conflict with one another. This might mean that those who disagree with direct rule explanations might still consider them be of somewhat value before the practice stage if integrated properly into the lesson.

Overall, the statistics arising from this section of the questionnaire depicts the complexity of the cognitive scenery of tertiary-level EFL teachers in terms of deductive approaches. The emerging trend ($M=3.2609$; $SD=.51102$) seems to lean towards a general agreement on deductive grammar teaching, with a relative unity for structured complexification of grammar instruction and mixed perspectives on explicit grammar teaching. The findings indicate to an educational environment in which contemporary and traditional methodologies intersect and collide, displaying a rich ground for more improvement of and discovery into optimal instructional preferences in the EFL context.



4.1.5. Inductive Approach

This subsection will be extensively attending to the questionnaire results related to the Inductive Approach.

Table 4.5. *Descriptive statistics for cognitions regarding Inductive Approach*

Factor	Cognition in Inductive Approach	SD	D	U	A	SA	M	STD
IA #1	Grammar explanations should be avoided by the teacher.	16.4%	71.1%	8.6%	3.1%	0.8%	2.01	.670
IA #2	Having students figure out grammatical rules can help them increase their awareness of English.	0.0%	0.8%	7.0%	62.5%	29.7%	4.21	.597
IA #3	Teachers should begin teaching a new grammar point by giving examples.	0.0%	0.0%	7.0%	73.4%	19.5%	4.13	.502
IA #4	Students should be encouraged to create language by a process of trial and error.	0.8%	0.8%	12.5%	57.0%	28.9%	4.13	.710
IA #5	Teachers should help students to work out grammar rules for themselves.	0.0%	2.3%	14.8%	69.5%	13.3%	3.94	.612
IA	Overall						3.6813	.30059

SD: Strongly disagree, D: Disagree, U: Undecided, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree, M: Mean, STD: Standard Deviation

Table 4.5 reveals participants' cognitions in relation to the grammar instruction of inductive approach in descriptive statistics. An overwhelming majority of 87.5% were in opposition of refraining from grammar explanations altogether, which could be symptomatic of inclination toward direct grammar instruction. However, roughly all participants (92.2%) recognized the likely rewards of guided discovery grammar teaching in consciousness-raising of learners. Similarly, another near consensus of opinion with 93.0% formed on the effectiveness of starting grammar instruction through examples, a

typical form of presenting grammatical structures in discovery-based paradigms. In addition, it is noteworthy that none of the participants (0.0%) disagreed with the procedure of beginning grammar teaching with providing examples. Experimentation in language production and experiential learning by learners was greatly endorsed by a whopping 85.9%, reflective of a learning environment that empowers student engagement with language and allows space for scaffolded discovery. Additionally, 82.8% of respondents were in favor of student-driven rule discovery, further underscoring the appropriate recognition of learner-centered inductive strategies by the participants.

The factors of IA #2, IA #3, IA #4, and IA #5 altogether seem to be in accord with one another, indicating a consistent degree of agreement on the gains of student-centric, example-based, learner engaging, and trial and error aspects of inductive approaches in grammar teaching. However, a notable dissonance emerged out of IA #1, where a majority of participants advocated for not omitting descriptions of grammar. This perspective might derive from a nuanced understanding of grammar teaching by teachers. While seeing value in inductive grammar teaching, they might also utilize direct grammatical explanations as a complementary strategy to inductive instruction within the learning process, conceivably to ensure the comprehension of grammar on the part of the learners or respond the questions directed by the learners.

In summary, the findings emerging from this section of questionnaire reveal a clear tendency ($M=3.6813$; $SD=.30059$) for discovery-oriented instruction that empowers learners to explore grammar rules and actively engage in experiential learning through a process of trial and error. The distinct preference of using grammar explanations depicts a pragmatic blend of inductive approach with some deductive elements, suggesting an intersection where traditional and progressive methodologies converge to accommodate learner needs.

4.1.6. Deductive and Inductive Approaches

Due to the polarity of deductive and inductive approaches that has long been a point of contention, a comparative analysis of the questionnaire factors regarding both approaches will be discussed in this subsection to illustrate distinct instructional preferences among EFL lecturers, shedding light on their nuanced cognitions on how grammar should be taught.

The overall mean for deductive approach ($M=3.2609$; $SD=.51102$) indicates to a moderate degree of agreement on deductive grammar instruction among participants. While some level of support for deductive approach emerges, it is not overwhelmingly strong. Also, perspectives on deductive methodology vary greatly as can be interpreted from the overall standard deviation of the factors regarding deductive approaches. The moderate mean score and high standard deviation could imply a cautious acceptance of traditional, rule-centered grammar instruction embedded within a broader framework of strategies. On the other hand, inductive approach appears to have a higher mean score ($M=3.6813$; $SD=.30059$), demonstrating a stronger endorsement by lecturers. Furthermore, the standard deviation of inductive approach items is lower, signaling more consistency in the perspectives of respondents.

While IA #3 demonstrates a fervent support (93.0%) for beginning grammar teaching by providing examples, DA #2 reveals a substantial opposition (68.8%) against grammar instruction with upfront explanations. This preference against explicit rule introduction and for exemplification might be indicative of tendency toward inductive methodology in the presentation of grammar input among lecturers. Additionally, while IA #1 reveals a massive disagreement (87.5%) on the matter of eschewing explanations regarding grammar, only a minority supports explicit or direct grammar instruction on DA #1 (25.8%). In terms of the role of explicit grammar teaching, this could mean some reservation and caution its directness, yet it could function within a broader and integrated teaching set of strategies. Also, taking into consideration the 39.8% showing uncertainty on explicit and direct grammar instruction on DA #1, this nuanced understanding might be interpreted as even though teachers do not fully support grammar explanations, they do not feel the need to assiduously avoid using them in their classes. DA #4 indicates a strong support (75.0%) for grammar instruction in different units to convert language knowledge into production in natural settings. From the perspective of building language knowledge, this cognition in favor of structured, systematic grammar instruction might go hand in hand with the strong endorsement (92.2%) of discover-based learning on students' own accord in IA #2. The same level of support (92.2%) for progressive complexity can also be found in DA #5, favoring a scaffolded approach in grammar instruction through gradually moving from simple to more complex structures. IA #4 also reveals a similar support (85.9%) for carefully fostering learners to try and make errors in their learning process. This trial-and-error strategy inherently accommodates gradual

complexification of grammar as learners discover language through use and experience with the scaffold provided by teachers. In addition, while IA #3 unearthed almost unanimous (93.0%) support for providing examples initially to start off grammar teaching, DA #2 showed 68.0% in support of explaining the grammatical rule first in grammar instruction, highlighting a nuanced approach to the presentation of grammar input among the participants. This subtle cognitive plane could be dynamically related to various factors such as learner levels, grammar topic, and classroom dynamics. Another conflict arose among the factors of IA #2, IA #5, DA #1, DA #2, and DA #3. While IA #2 and IA #5 put forward a strong case for discovery of grammatical structures by learners, the response rates of DA #1, DA #2, and DA #3 did not construct a cohesive tie in supporting inductive teaching paradigms. This complex web of cognitions might be arising from a practice/cognition dichotomy. Arguably, while lecturers value and are in support of guided discovery methodology in grammar instruction, they might not be able to convert their cognitions into practice due to contextual factors.

The synthesis of the findings regarding inductive and deductive approaches outlines a subtle understanding of grammar teaching that creates a balance among systematic, structured and flexible, heuristic methodologies. The potentials of both explicit grammar explanations and discovery-based learning seem to be acknowledged by lecturers. This hybrid approach of grammar instruction can involve merging direct instruction with opportunities for learners to explore and apply grammar within context, possibly enabling a more comprehensive grasp of grammar and more robust language skills. Moreover, the strong support of progressive complexity and context-based learning through discovery signals an inclination for pedagogical paradigms that phase grammar learning from basic to advanced through real-life like communicative situations. This unifying understanding in grammar teaching not only respects the cognitive processes embedded in learning but also caters to the practical needs related to language use outside language classes within a broader scale. To conclude, these viewpoints indicate that while lecturers lean towards contemporary and communicative grammar instruction paradigms, they also tend to see value in the roadmap and clarity offered by more traditional approaches, advocating for a blend that effectively optimizes teaching to address learner needs and processes.

4.1.7. Drilling and Practice

This subsection will deliver the findings of the drilling and practice section of the questionnaire.

Table 4.6. *Descriptive statistics for cognitions regarding Drilling and Practice*

Factor	Cognition in Drilling and Practice	SD	D	U	A	SA	M	STD
DP #1	Mechanical drilling is of no value in English teaching.	19.5%	55.5%	16.4%	7.8%	0.8%	2.15	.852
DP #2	Teachers should ask students to practice new grammatical structures.	0.0%	1.6%	7.0%	70.3%	21.1%	4.11	.578
DP #3	Drilling and memorization are essential to the successful learning of new language forms.	0.8%	18.0%	41.4%	34.4%	5.5%	3.26	.844
DP	Overall						3.1719	.37411

SD: Strongly disagree, D: Disagree, U: Undecided, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree, M: Mean, STD: Standard Deviation

Table 4.6 pictures participants' cognitions in relation to drilling and practice in grammar instruction in descriptive statistics. 75.0% of participants considered mechanical drilling of no value in teaching English, highlighting a tendency away from this traditional method. In addition, over the potential of encouragement of practice, an overwhelming support of 91.4% emerged among the respondents, implying a definite preference for meaningful practice of grammar as an effective technique in line with contemporary communicative paradigms. However, while 41.4% were undecided on whether memorization and drilling are key in learning new forms, 39.8% were in support of it and 18.8% were against it. This huge variation and mixed views in responses mean while there is some level of support for these techniques, a substantial skepticism and hesitation regarding their efficacy. In addition, the factors of DP #1 and DP #2 indicated a clear distinction of cognitions between the rejection of mechanical drilling (75.0%) and support for practicing grammatical structures (91.4%). This distinction highlights a somewhat level of cognition among lecturers. While participants consider practice valuable, they are recognizant of the differentiation between rote learning through mechanical drilling

techniques and more deliberate, communication-oriented practice. DP #2 and DP #3 put forward a nuanced understanding of the process of language learning, where there is some space for structured memorization and drilling as part of a larger pedagogical toolkit of grammar instruction. The mixed perspectives regarding the essence of drilling and memorization on DP #3 can be also indicative of an ongoing debate in the language teaching world about the most effective ways of incorporating older and more traditional techniques into modern language instruction frameworks.

Overall, the mean score of the drilling and practice section ($M=3.1719$; $SD=.37411$) indicate a moderate degree of agreement with the significance of practice and drilling in grammar instruction and a discernible departure from conventional drilling methodology. Lecturers lean towards engagement-centered, active language use in practice scenarios compared to passive repetition ingrained in mechanical drilling. This shows alignment with the educational paradigm shift towards learner-centered and communicative language pedagogies that prioritize interaction and practical language use as a core aspect of effective learning. The data from this section suggest a move towards integrating conventional techniques through a more dynamic, contextually-driven fashion to supplement and augment interactive grammar teaching approaches.

4.1.8. Use of Grammatical Terminology

This subsection will delve into the results of the questionnaire in connection with the use of grammatical terminology.

Table 4.7. *Descriptive statistics for cognitions regarding Use of Grammatical Terminology*

Factor	Cognition in Use of	SD	D	U	A	SA	M	STD
	Grammatical Terminology							
GT #1	Students should understand the common grammatical terms in English.	0.0%	8.6%	14.1%	64.8%	12.5%	3.81	.761
GT #2	Students should be able to use the common grammatical terms in English correctly when discussing grammar.	1.6%	19.5%	30.5%	43.8%	4.7%	3.30	.892
GT #3	Teachers should use grammatical terms to explain grammar rules to students.	0.0%	21.1%	43.0%	30.5%	5.5%	3.20	.836
GT	Overall						3.4401	.62736

SD: Strongly disagree, D: Disagree, U: Undecided, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree, M: Mean, STD: Standard Deviation

Table 4.7 pictures participants' cognitions in relation to the use of grammatical terminology in grammar instruction in descriptive statistics. A strong majority of 77.3% considered learners' understanding of common grammatical terms a necessity. This high degree of agreement indicates a widespread cognition among lecturers that a foundational recognition of grammatical terminology potentially assists in clarity when talking about language structures. While teachers showed a somewhat consensus on the understanding of common grammatical terms on the part of learners, only 48.4% agree that learners should be able to use these grammatical terms to discuss grammar. Furthermore, 21.1% disagreed and 30.5% remained undecided over the matter of students' use of grammatical terminology to talk about grammar. This ambivalence or doubt about the necessity for learners to actively utilize common grammatical terms when speaking about grammar might be reflective of a focus on practical language use over technical knowledge transfer.

Over the matter of teachers using grammatical terminology for the purposes of explaining grammar rules, only 35.9% were in favor while a substantial 43.0% were undecided and 21.1% was against it. This remarkable divide between the participants might be surfacing due to a notable portion of lecturers in favor of the simplification of grammar explanations and accessible, plainer language so as to eliminate confusion and make grammar more relatable to learners. A harmony between GT #1 and GT #2 is achieved in terms of grammatical terminology. While GT #1 demonstrated a stronger degree of agreement on the importance of learners' understanding of the grammatical terms, GT #2 shows that they are less convinced of learners' need to actively make use of grammatical terminology in discussing grammar. In addition, a clear dissonance is observed between GT #2 and GT #3, as teachers are less open to the notion of themselves using grammatical terminology in explanations compared to students using these terms in discussions about grammar. This might derive its room from a pedagogical understanding of providing more comprehensible and attainable grammar by bypassing overly complicated terminology despite a somewhat level of acknowledgement of the potential of grammar terminology in the overall picture of grammar instruction.

In conclusion, a moderate degree of agreement was discovered in the overall mean of the section of the use of grammatical terminology ($M=3.4401$; $SD=.62736$). The variability of the responses as seen in the standard deviation is reflective of a delicate balance between recognizing the importance and effective use of grammatical terminology. While lecturers consider grammatical terminology as a beneficial tool for grammar education, they seem to be wary of placing too much emphasis on it to the detriment of communicative effectiveness and learner progress. Grammatical terminology can assist in building foundational linguistic comprehension but also can create potential barriers in the path of student engagement and comprehension of grammar. Participants seem to root for striking a balance and tailoring the use of grammatical terminology depending on their context without overwhelming their learners.

4.1.9. The Relationship between Academic Degrees and Cognitions in Grammar Teaching

The second research question aimed to detect if there are any statistically significant differences in tertiary-level teachers' cognitions in grammar teaching in

relation to academic qualifications. To answer this question, an independent samples T-test was conducted to between the lecturers with graduate degrees (MA and/or PhD) and those with undergraduate degrees (BA) in terms of cognitions in grammar instruction.

Table 4.8. *Independent samples t-test results: Differences in grammar cognitions between graduate degrees and undergraduate degrees*

Dimension	Degree	M	SD	t	df	p
Cognitions in grammar teaching	Undergraduate (BA) n=50	3.4437	.21641	-.468	126	.640
	Graduate (MA and/or PhD) n=78	3.4653	.27688			

Table 4.8 shows the results of the independent samples T-test which indicates that there is not a statistically significant difference ($t(126)=-.468$; $p>.05$) between the mean grammar cognition score of the instructors with only undergraduate degrees ($M=3.4437$; $SD=.21641$) and instructors with graduate degrees ($M=3.4653$; $SD=.27688$). This suggests that the level of academic education (undergraduate or graduate) does not exert a significant impact on EFL teachers' cognitions in grammar teaching at the tertiary level, at least among the sample at hand. Both groups appear to have similar cognition scores in grammar instruction. The lack of a significant difference might mean that schooling experience of how grammar instruction is provided to teachers back when they are language learners might form and solidify their cognitions before they reach the undergraduate or graduate education levels. As cognitions have a nuanced and complex characteristic, more on this matter will be discussed in qualitative findings.

4.1.10. The Relationship Between Professional Development Certificates and Cognitions in Grammar Teaching

The second research question sought to discover if there are any statistically significant differences in tertiary-level teachers' cognitions in grammar teaching in relation to professional certificates. To analyze the relationship between academic qualifications of tertiary-level EFL teachers and their cognitions in grammar instruction, an independent samples t-test was conducted to detect whether teachers with one of the professional development certificates of CELTA, DELTA, TESOL, and ICALT have

different cognition levels in grammar teaching than those without any of the certificates mentioned.

Table 4.9. *Independent samples t-test results: Differences in grammar cognitions between those with and those without professional certificates*

Dimension	Certificate	M	SD	t	df	p
Cognitions in grammar teaching	CELTA, DELTA, TESOL, ICELT holders (n=68)	3.4575	.27810	.030	126	.976
	Non-certificate holders (n=60)	3.4562	.22662			

Table 4.9 outline the findings of the independent samples T-test between the two groups. The statistical analysis reveals no statistically significant difference ($t(126)=-.976$; $p>.05$) between the mean grammar cognition score of the lecturers with professional certificates ($M=3.4575$; $SD=.27810$) and the lecturers without certificates ($M=3.4562$; $SD=.22662$). This outcome suggests that holding professional certificates such as CELTA, DELTA, TESOL, and ICELT does not significantly affect teachers' cognitions in relation to grammar teaching at the tertiary level. This absence of discrepancy might imply that while professional certificates per se are worthy in terms of training and recognition in language teaching, their effects might not necessarily translate into enhanced teacher cognitions in grammar instruction. Since the construct of cognitions is immensely complicated, the subtle variations might not have been detected by the questionnaire. More on this issue will be discussed within the qualitative results.

4.1.11. The Relationship Between Teaching Experience and Cognitions in Grammar Teaching

The second research question also targeted to investigate if there are any differences in tertiary-level teachers' cognitions in grammar teaching in relation to their teaching experience. To explore the relationship between academic qualifications of tertiary level teachers and their cognitions in grammar instruction, a one-way ANOVA was executed between the three groups of teaching experience: 6 to 10 years, 11 to 15 years, and more than 16 years.

Table 4.10. *One-way ANOVA results: Differences in grammar cognitions between 6-10, 11-15, and 16+ years of teaching experience*

Dimension	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	.041	2	.020	.310	.734
Within groups	8.171	125	.065		
Total	8.212	127			

Table 4.10 displays the results of the one-way ANOVA test between the three groups of EFL teachers. There is not a statistically significant relationship between years of teaching experience across 6 to 10 years ($M=3.3889$; $SD=.12676$), 11 to 15 years ($M=3.4564$; $SD=.22537$), and more than 16 years ($M=3.4632$; $SD=.27252$) groups' cognitions in grammar teaching at the tertiary level ($F(2,125)=.310$, $p>.05$). Therefore, it can be said that the duration of teaching experience does not have a discernible impact on tertiary-level EFL teachers' cognitions within the ranges studied. It is important to note that all the participants of the study were not novice but relatively experienced teachers as they had more than five years of teaching experience. As a result of this, if we were to assume any differences between novice and experienced teachers in grammar instruction, the data at hand might not prove it as the sample did not have any teachers with a teaching experience of less than five years. Considering the dynamic nature of cognitions, the subtle nuances might not have come out in the questionnaire and more on this matter will be discussed among the qualitative findings of the study.

4.1.12. The Relationship Between Languages Used in Grammar Instruction and Cognitions in Grammar Teaching

The second research question additionally aspired to scrutinize if there are any differences in tertiary-level teachers' cognitions in grammar teaching in relation to the language they use while teaching grammar. To explore the relationship between languages used for grammar instruction by tertiary-level teachers and their cognitions in grammar instruction, a one-way ANOVA was executed between the three groups: those who use mainly English, those who use mainly Turkish, and those who use both languages.

Table 4.11. *One-way ANOVA results: Differences in grammar cognitions between the groups who use mainly Turkish, mainly English, and both while teaching grammar*

Dimension	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	.281	2	.141	2.215	.113
Within groups	7.931	125	.063		
Total	8.212	127			

As can be seen in Table 4.11, the one-way ANOVA results indicate no statistically significant differences in cognitions of university EFL teachers in grammar teaching among the groups that mainly use Turkish ($M=3.5873$; $SD=.36379$), mainly English ($M=3.3954$; $SD=.22206$), or both languages ($M=3.4731$; $SD=.25416$) while providing grammar instruction ($F(2,125)=2.215$, $p>.05$). This suggests the preference of which language to use in grammar teaching does not have a significant effect on teachers' cognitions in relation to grammar instruction at the tertiary level. Taking into consideration the intricacy of cognitions, more on this matter will be provided in the qualitative results.

4.2. Qualitative Findings

This section will delve into the qualitative findings emerging out of the semi-structured interviews held with 38 participants. The iterative data analysis of approximately 2000-minute data set revealed 11 themes, 63 codes, and 31 sub-codes in total. The table below depicts how codes were categorized under the themes and provides code counts within the qualitative data strand.

Table 4.12. *Qualitative data themes and code counts in the qualitative data strand*

Role of Grammar in Language Classes (69)		
Foundation (21)	In tandem with vocabulary (20)	Tool (18)
Equal with other elements (12)	Hindrance (7)	
Autonomy and Instruction (65)		
Methodology Related Cognitions (471)		
Drilling and Practice (132)	Separate and Integrated GI (80)	Explicit and Implicit GI (73)
Feedback (54)	Deductive and Inductive GI (44)	FonF and FonFS (43)
Personalization (24)	Eclectic Grammar Teaching (20)	Grammar Translation Method (14)
Communicative Language Teaching (11)	Creating a Need (5)	Emerging Language (4)
Presentation Practice Production (3)	Test-Teach-Test (3)	Schema (3)
Teacher Factor (332)		
Language Learning Experiences (133)	Teaching Experience (48)	Teacher Emotions (41)
Professional Development (36)	Lesson Planning (23)	Experience Abroad (19)
Reflective Practice (18)	Cognitive Dissonance (17)	Self-Efficacy (13)
Professional Curiosity (7)		
Learner Factor (303)		
Learner Level (70)	Learner Needs and Interests (69)	Learner Psychology (64)
Learner Expectations (48)	Learner Readiness (32)	Learner Training (30)
Limited L1 Competence (15)		
Contextual Factors (306)		
Immediate Context (112)	Lesson Materials (57)	Wider Context (51)
Curriculum (46)	Classroom Dynamics (41)	Assessment (37)
Language Related Factors (203)		
Accuracy and Fluency (82)	Meaning and Form (82)	Exposure (27)
Pronunciation (12)	Appropriacy and Register (3)	
Use of Grammatical Terminology (105)		
Learner Recognition (65)	Teacher Use (53)	Learner Use (4)
Use of L1 (136)		
Strategic (71)	Functional (20)	Social and in Discourse (13)
Multilingual Classes (7)		
Washback (86)		
Negative (68)	Positive (11)	
Use of Technology (69)		
Material (30)	Artificial Intelligence (29)	Social media (11)
Flipped Classroom (5)	Disruptor (4)	Corpus (2)

GI: Grammar instruction

4.2.1. Role of Grammar in Language Classes

One of the commonly emerging themes in the semi-structured interviews revolved around the role assigned to grammar in language classes by teachers and learners. A wide range of perspectives came out in the semi-structured interviews regarding the position of grammar by the participants. Participant 15 conceptualized grammar as the foundation underpinning language learning and teaching processes through the metaphor of human body.

“We've got some organs in our body, like livers, kidneys, heart, lungs, etc. But there is also a skeleton, and they are all attached to the skeleton, the main body. Vocabulary, for example, is so important, and sometimes, we don't need much grammar if you know some words. I mean, we can just communicate, but with grammar, we can form all our ideas and communicate in an accurate way. I believe that grammar is an important part of language, it's the skeleton. You cannot just ignore that skeleton, the thing that holds our body parts together. Grammar is my favorite subject to teach. So, grammar is the main component for forming language.” P15

Adding to the metaphor of the human body, Participant 13 mentioned grammar taking the lead in language learning processes and other language skills acting as subsidiaries.

“I think it is like the skeleton of language, the foundation of language. It's the thing that we learn first and build around it. When we are learning a language, also when we're teaching, it's the foundation for the student. The student learns it and supplement it with other skills. So, I think it's the main component in language learning and teaching.” P13

Likening language to a body, Participant 29 considered grammar a vital mechanism in effective communication ensuring the utilization of other skills.

“I always think of the language as a whole body, and grammar itself is the collection of key points that makes the body function properly. Without grammar, we cannot speak or communicate properly. So, grammar is a very important part of language. It serves as a means to use other skills.” P29

During the discussions of the role of grammar, vocabulary was seen emerging in tandem with grammar as a system. Participant 23 underscored the order provided by grammar in an EFL context to learners. In addition to their metaphor describing language as a wall, vocabulary as bricks, mortar as grammar, they argued that vocabulary is even more critical compared to grammar.

“Grammar means a lot to me, especially in a situation where we teach the language as a foreign language, because students are not able to acquire the language like the natives are. Because they need to learn the systematicity of the language, that's why grammar means a

lot to me. What is more important than grammar is vocabulary knowledge, I guess. Because when you consider the language as a wall that you need to construct, bricks are the vocabulary knowledge and what sticks them together is the grammar knowledge. That's why it matters a lot.” P23

However, Participants 7 and 18 exhibited a more pragmatic cognition of grammar, primarily positioning it as an instrument rather than a central objective in language teaching. They stated that clear communication does not necessarily require explicit grammatical awareness, highlighting grammar functions mainly play an unconscious role in supporting meaningful communication.

“For me, it's just a medium. Grammar is a tool for communication. It's not of great importance in my own classes or for me, because communication can take place without knowing the structures really well. So, it's just a tool for me.” P18

“I see it as a system. It's not the aim of my lesson because I see it as a way of communication, which enables people to communicate clearer. That's why I do not focus on grammar a lot in my classes. I do not see it as the main part of English or the language. Let's say it's just a tool that you use unconsciously sometimes. Of course, we need grammar to be understood clearly but it's not always necessary to be aware of what we're doing while we're speaking.” P7

While positioning grammar on the same line with other language skills, Participants 6 and 31 characterized grammar as ‘enabling’ and underscored the integrality of grammar in productive and receptive language processes.

“I see it as a skill, besides listening, reading, writing and speaking. It is a very important skill to conduct a language properly in daily life. So, it is 20% important, I cannot divide it from other skills.” P31

“Grammar is an enabling skill, as many people call it. There are four core skills and grammar enables them to be produced. In general, grammar is an enabling skill, and without it, we cannot produce any language of course, and we cannot understand any listening or reading text.” P6

Bringing the dimension of learner level into play, Participant 5 asserted that grammar can act as an initial stepping stone for learners with lower proficiency levels. While recognizing the dissonance between their actual practice and theoretical beliefs, they revealed an implicit tendency to diminish and stop providing explicit grammar teaching at higher levels.

“So, I see grammar as a means of kickstarting something, but right after that it loses its importance for me. At the beginning for lower levels, it's OK to teach them explicitly, and then right after like some level, I think it starts losing its importance. Then I just abort it as soon as I have the chance to do so. By the way, this is just my practice. This is not how I see

it actually. This is just how I unconsciously practice it in my mind. When I look back at my own practice, I just see this.” P5

All in all, the participants’ cognitions related to the role of grammar in language classes portray various yet interconnected perspectives in relation to the functional and fundamental significance of grammar. Several instructors metaphorized grammar as the skeleton of the human body, underscoring its structural criticality and supportive function in proper language production. While they emphasized the indispensability of grammar in accurate communication, some suggested vocabulary inherently carries more weight in nuanced interaction. In contrast, some instructors portrayed grammar as a tool or enabler in the active use of other language skills, highlighting its necessity yet considering it as not the core of language instruction. In addition, they also remarked grammar knowledge being largely being in an unconscious operative state in effective communication and hence downplayed explicit grammar instruction. Furthermore, a multilayered cognition set surfaced regarding the position of grammar in different levels. While a possibly critical role of grammar at earlier proficiency levels was recognized, at higher levels its prominence diminished. Overall, grammar was largely recognized as integral to language learning and teaching, whether as a foundation, a system, a tool, or a skill. A nuanced landscape of cognitions regarding grammar’s role emerged due to teachers’ significant differences in terms of instructional centrality and practical application of grammar. These variations in cognitions point to the multidimensional characteristic of tertiary-level EFL teachers’ cognitions in grammar instruction and an extremely complex web of connections between classroom realities, theoretical beliefs, and teaching experiences.

4.2.2. Autonomy and Instruction

Another theme emerging out of semi-structured interviews was deeply connected to the matter of learning and teaching grammar particularly in terms of learner autonomy and learning in a language classroom through instruction. Highlighting the importance of instruction as a source of exposure within non-English speaking geographies and reflecting on their past language learning experience Participant 11 said:

“I think autonomous learning in a EFL context is not so possible. If you live in an English-speaking country, you can maybe autonomously learn it by exposure. But in an EFL context, we need a teacher, a learning environment, even though it is artificial, we need it for all the skills as well. Maybe, some can learn autonomously but the majority of people need a teacher

who can teach and make them practice it. There should be a kind of push to learn it. I needed somebody to teach me, I needed a role model. So, as a learner also, it was good for me to be taught grammar by a teacher.” P11

On the other hand, Participant 20 called attention to the internet as a source of input and exposure, underscoring the convenience provided by internet and discerned the social aspect inherent to language learning within a class environment.

“Why not? Of course, it can be learned autonomously. It's not a rediscovery of the world. There are simple rules, and there are many sources on the Internet. I know many students who have learned grammar without any help, by themselves. An average student can easily learn everything on grammar. But, in our situation, students have the opportunity to practice the grammar points they have learned and socialize in English. That's the key. So it's not very difficult to learn from online sources or autonomously. Sometimes there is no need for a teacher I think.” P20

Diverging from Participant 20, Participant 19 exhibited a subtle perspective dissecting learner autonomy and proposed that true learner autonomy contains independent discovery through exposure and argued that learning grammar through explicit instruction found on online sources is not necessarily equal to learner autonomy. Additionally, they mentioned that complete learner autonomy is challenging in itself as learners are naturally in need of external guidance or assistance when they have trouble in processing grammatical concepts, hence emphasizing the key role of language teachers in the process of language learning.

“What we mean by autonomy is also important. If we mean not needing anyone, reading books, watching some stuff and learning it like that, if you can do it, perfect. I'm fine with that. But if you go online and look at YouTube for explicit grammar teaching, this is not autonomous, somebody is still there to explain. So you need someone to help you when you have difficulty in understanding something. You always need someone.” P19

Making a critical assessment of the contemporary learner profile, Participant 15 noted the general tendency to dependence. Conceding that learner autonomy still remains achievable through self-control, they pointed to the rarity of autonomous learners through the metaphor of a mythical being and expressed their frustration related to the scarcity of such a significant phenomenon in their classrooms.

“Especially today's children like to be spoon-fed, so I don't think they can learn a language on their own. But if they are self-disciplined and autonomous, they can. I really love autonomous learners, but where are they? They're like unicorns. They're very hard to find.”

P15

Participant 14 stated that prior language learning experiences might have a considerable influence on learners' potential for autonomy. Stating that no previous experience in language learning might cause hurdles in autonomy, they implied that a minimum proficiency level or a certain amount of familiarity with language learning strategies as foundational in learning grammar.

"I actually think if they have no language learning experience, they cannot do it by themselves. But if they have a language learning experience with another language, they can handle it with English. And, they at least have to A2 level, I mean just a little bit experience with how to organize things, how to find a way through grammar." P14

Approaching the duality of instruction and autonomy from the transformative role of artificial intelligence in redefining both concepts, Participant 13 argued the line between autonomy and instruction has become blurry and even claimed that effective use of large language models such as ChatGPT might possibly render teachers the less pivotal role of a guide in language learning. Considering the emergence of artificial intelligence tools in language learning landscapes, they conceptualized autonomy not as merely self-directed study but also as the strategic engagement with these digital tools, thus hinting at a possible change from teacher-centric classroom environments to technology-guided self-controlled learning.

"There is AI, you can ask questions and it gives you the answers, just like a teacher. It also can explain and describe everything. So, does a person really need a teacher, or a guide? I think a guide is the answer right now. But 10 years ago, I would say, yes, a teacher was necessary. Here's ChatGPT. Can you use these tools? Do you know how to use them? Are you an autonomous learner? Do you know how to use these tools effectively? If you can, I don't think you really need a teacher right now." P13

On the other side of coin, Participant 26 stressed a major drawback of autonomy in grammar learning as the absence of provision of instant feedback, underlining the likely hazard of fossilization emerging due to uncorrected errors. Their advocacy for teacher-guided grammar learning likely stemmed from their cognitions regarding the capacity of immediate feedback in reducing persistent grammatical mistakes and supporting more accurate language development.

"In terms of maybe making mistakes or misunderstandings, learning autonomously is a little bit risky, and the most important disadvantage is the feedback for the autonomous learning. I mean I believe in both forms, it's possible to learn grammar. But when the learners learn grammar with the teacher, then they have a chance to get immediate feedback. In terms of errors, it will be better when they get immediate feedback, so there will not be any fossilization in the future." P26

On a more optimistic note, Participant 4 remarked that autonomous language learning is largely connected to learners' engagement with diverse exposure opportunities. Pointing to the fertile ground of abundant cross-cultural contexts and accessible facilities in modern times, they argued that learner autonomy is growingly more attainable through consistent exposure and social interaction especially within the local grounds.

"Of course, autonomous learning possible depending on certain conditions. It depends on how willing the student is to make himself or herself exposed to the language in various ways. We do have millions of ways in the age we're living in. It's always possible to reach sources through the Internet, and the world is a lot more multicultural nowadays. It's even more possible to meet people from foreign countries in the context of the campus, for example. They may have a chance to meet people, talk to them. There are even cafes that serve the same in this city that gather people from different backgrounds, different countries, different cultures together to speak English and so on. By doing these as much as possible as often as possible, of course, through interaction everything is possible." P4

While not ruling out the likelihood of autonomous grammar learning, Participant 21 highlights the benefits of having a more informed mentor -whether a language teacher or not- in the facilitation and acceleration of language learning process. Furthermore, they suggested that lack of expert guidance may result in motivation loss and futile attempts to discern grammatical structures on learners' part. Their cognitions might provide a perspective of language teaching in which teachers act as a guiding figure in language learning to boost comprehension, strengthen confidence, and maintain learner engagement.

"I think grammar can be learned autonomously, but the presence of, which doesn't have to be a teacher, someone who is more knowledgeable than the person who's learning the language or the grammar could maybe accelerate the learning process. Because when you feel stuck and you can't really figure out why a certain rule is there and how you can use it, without the person that would guide you, you can spend hours trying to understand something very simple. If you don't know this and you can't really access this with your own resources, then the learning could turn into something that is not enjoyable, at least to put it simply. But the presence of a figure who knows and can help you, like the teacher does, is essential to have in my opinion. Of course, I can see a lot of people doing this very effectively without having somebody to help them, but they could be exceptions as well. A lot of students need a teacher figure to feel more confident and to learn maybe more quickly." P21

To conclude, participants' cognitions on the matter of autonomy and instruction reflect multifarious qualities regarding the opportunities and challenges of autonomous

grammar learning within the contemporary EFL contexts. While the theoretical possibility of independent grammar learning was acknowledged particularly with the help of digital instruments such as artificial intelligence and online videos, it was also underlined that true autonomy entails not only access to resources but also self-discipline and strategic consciousness. Considerable skepticism regarding the average modern day language learner's capacity to self-regulate was expressed. In addition, prior language learning experience or a rudimentary proficiency level was mentioned as a scaffold, paving the way for autonomy in language learning. Also, deep concerns were articulated regarding the absence of immediate feedback in autonomous learning processes, especially in terms of error fossilization. It was stated that demotivation can result from encounters with conceptual obstacles learners cannot make sense of on their own and thus most language learners could exponentially benefit from a 'guide' with their timely assistance to speed up the process of learning and to maintain learner involvement. Ultimately, participants' cognitions setup a scenery where even though learner autonomy shines like a beacon, informed guidance in grammar learning is greatly appreciated and considered realistic.

4.2.3. Methodology Related Cognitions

In this section, tertiary-level EFL teachers' concerning the vast scope of methodologies and approaches to grammar instruction will be explored. Since grammar instruction progressively evolves from teacher-centered, form-focused, and traditional paradigms toward communicative, learner-centered, contemporary norms, mental processes and everyday practices of language teachers maintain a pivotal role in molding classroom methodology. The semi-structured interviews revealed that instructors held a diversified and sometimes conflicting cognitions in relation to the effectivity of grammar instruction methods, reflecting a polarity between theory and practice and context-specific adaptations. Participants articulated their tendencies and rationales across a huge variety of approaches and methodologies, including deductive and inductive, explicit and implicit, separate and integrated grammar instruction, FonF and FonFS, communicative language teaching, and grammar translation method. Besides, their cognitions regarding practice and drilling, feedback processes, test-teach-test, emerging language and other techniques further depicted their pedagogical orientations. This section will delve into

their methodological cognitions, showcasing the interconnectedness between tertiary level EFL teachers' conceptual and pedagogical understandings and teaching processes.

4.2.3.1. Deductive and Inductive Grammar Instruction

This subsection will delve into teachers' mental pictures regarding deductive and inductive grammar teaching paradigms. The dichotomy between deductive and inductive grammar teaching has sparked lots of comments from participants regarding their preferences and practices. Participant 31 expressed strong support for deductive approach, highlighting its efficiency in the introduction and transaction of knowledge compared to inductive paradigms where it can be time-consuming while learners figure out grammatical structures.

"I teach deductively and directly. Because I think the introduction part is important, and I don't want to waste time by forcing students to explore something in 40 minutes. I just want to give them the rule, and then I want them to transfer this knowledge to practices and the continuum of the subject. I tell them the rules quite explicitly." P31

Participant 17 demonstrated a tendency for deductive approach, attributing it to learner expectations and inclinations for directness and simplicity. Employing the metaphor of 'pills', they suggested a relationship between themselves and their students resembling doctors and patients. Additionally, they mentioned the immediate relief that deductive grammar teaching offers for students through simplifying learning and eliminating confusion in the classroom.

"Our students like direct things, so most of the time I'm trying to teach grammar directly. I think I teach directly, and because of the students. While they are learning, we need some pills to give them, as teachers. So they take those pills, and then they are relieved." P17

Participant 20 displayed marked tendency for deductive method, deeply ingrained in their cognitions due to long-standing teaching habits and personal comfort with explicit teaching. A rule-based approach in which learners apply grammatical structures deductively presented with a teacher-centric manner formed the basis of their preferred instruction.

"I definitely teach grammar deductively and directly. It's been just my style for many years. I got accustomed to teaching that way, so that's easier for me. I write the rules on the board and expect them to understand how to use them in productive sentences. That's why I don't like to teach implicitly." P20

Participant 36 showed a considerable tendency towards deductive grammar teaching saying “I write the grammatical structures to the board and give some example sentences to the students. During the presentation of grammar, I’m the active person in my class.”

On the other hand, Participant 3 exhibited a predilection for inductive approach, underlining learner discovery and involvement with the aid of contextualized materials as a baseline in grammar learning. While adapting their instruction based on classroom dynamics, learner level, their core teaching principle remains aiming to guide learners to independently explore the structure and its function.

“I’ve been teaching for a long time. So, I do have some fundamental essentials, but from time to time, according to class, the level, and the atmosphere, I do change some certain things, but basically, I try to give them a chance to find out the rules for grammar for themselves. So, I try to present some kind of material which can be a written or a listening text or something to be considered as a starting point. Then, I’m trying to give them an opportunity to work on it, try to find out what that is used for, or what kind of structure we’re working on. So, I try to give them a kind of chance for it. Then, I work together with them, and in the end, we come out with the structure.” P3

While mentioning not having enough time for inductive grammar teaching in a similar fashion to Participant 1, Participant 11 emphasized enhanced learner engagement and curiosity, teaching enjoyment and retention as potential benefits of it. Valuing the student-centered nature of inductive teaching, they argued that getting learners to analyze grammatical structures and infer their meaning fosters deeper understanding and long-lasting learning of the input. Considering the dynamism inherent to the discovery process, they underscored that teachers can also have fun with their learners in the classroom.

“Actually, it depends on the time we have. If I have enough time to do it, of course teaching inductively is more fun because it creates a curiosity for learners. And maybe, with the help of some visuals we can make it more interesting for the learners. But mostly, we don’t have enough time to do this. As I said, it is more fun for the learner and for the teacher as well. It is not ordinary. Getting some ideas from the learners, seeing how they can analyze the situation, or the structure is also fun for the teacher, not only for the learner. It is a different way to teach and learn something. Another thing is when they discover it by themselves, it is more permanent and memorable for them, I think.” P11

Similarly, Participant 7 echoed the same view of permanence of learning through inductive teaching “Because if they discover, they do not forget.” Participants 30 shared the same vision of learner-centeredness in inductive instruction by stating “When I teach them, they may forget easily, but when they discover the rules, it will be permanent.”

These remarks point to a collective cognition that inductive grammar teaching is more likely to result in more meaningful grammar acquisition through fostering active cognitive engagement.

Advocating strongly for inductive grammar instruction, Participant 6 stressed the significance of starting grammar lessons with discovery rather than direct rule presentation and explanation. Furthermore, they explained that deductively revealing the form and function of grammatical structures too early in a lesson eliminates the opportunities for learner curiosity and motivation and rules out the possibility of deeper engagement with the input. Highlighting the importance of sustaining interest throughout grammar lessons, they showcased lesson planning as a ‘craft’ and placed high pedagogical value on sequencing lesson stages meticulously to pave the way for learners to construct meaning and understanding progressively. In order to maintain learner engagement and foster enjoyment, discovery at the outset seems to be the methodologically sound way for Participant 6.

“You can only use the discovery methods at the beginning. If you can't use them at the beginning, you cannot use them at all. When they know the structure, the function, and the form at the beginning because they were told that, then there is no room for discovery. Because the beginning is the only time that you can use it, I start with that. It's only natural to do it this way. I think grammar lessons of one or two hours, maybe three hours, is a design. It is a fiction, as you may call it, you have to craft it carefully. If you start at the beginning with the information learners need to know at the end, what are you going to do for one or two hours? There would be no room for motivation, no room for curiosity. So, they are going to get bored probably at the end of the first hour. Then, this whole lesson becomes a punishment for the teacher and students.” P6

Employing a blended approach of deductive and inductive methodologies, Participant 28 described their standard grammar lesson beginning with discovery techniques and ending with deductive clarification. Guided discovery through contextualized examples and collaborative analysis of the target structures took priority in their instruction. They mentioned the ultimate step would be providing explicit rule explanations to ensure learners’ understanding of the structure. This nuanced approach demonstrates a high cognition where consciousness of learners’ need for both cognitive engagement and reassurance opens the way for a flexible set of methodology. In this way, they fused the potential gains of meaning discovery contained within inductive methods and the feelings of security within deductive reinforcement.

“Sometimes, if students just get so confused, I just tell them that ‘OK, this is the rule, this is its function, and you need to use it like this.’ But otherwise, I always try to help them to understand the function of that grammar structure. I don't tell them directly, but I write sentences. I help them to find these sentences in their reading text or somehow, and we go over the rules altogether. All in all, I give them the whole explicit instruction at the end of the class, even though they discover it by themselves during the course of the class. Because they always want to check with me and make sure that they got it correctly. I go over it over the board one more time.” P28

Majorly influenced by their CELTA training, Participant 32 stated firmly believing in guided discovery and being motivated to plan lessons centered around student engagement. Critically reflecting on inductive methodology, they considered lower proficiency levels, students’ prior learning experiences and tendencies molded by exam-centric education as possible sources of resistance to guided discovery. While their experiences of inductive methodology with higher level learners suggested positive response and meaningful engagement, lower-level students tended to question its efficiency and consider it suboptimal compared to deductive and direct teaching. This critical incident leading to emotional disappointment and professional frustration demonstrates the reciprocity of teacher cognitions, grammar teaching methodologies and learner expectations.

“I’m not sure but they were level B1+ or B1 level, I guess. I was using the guided discovery thing we learned in CELTA, and I was so enthusiastic to do it in the classroom because I really like teaching that way. I guess it's all about the classroom atmosphere, students’ background, and their previous learning experience. With B1 level, everything was perfect. They liked it, and they didn't realize that we were talking about the grammar, the function, but they were getting the points. I saw that light in their eyes. But when I tried to use it with lower-level students, their reaction was ‘Why did you waste our time with this? Just tell us the rules, and we can do more practice, isn't it better?’ So, I believe that the proficiency level of the learners and their previous learning experience could be important factors here. At high school, they were trying to get into university. So they didn't actually focus on learning English because it was not their purpose, so the teacher most probably gave them the topic directly, and then they just learned it. That was their understanding of English class, and now, what I'm trying to do here is nonsense for them. Guiding discovery is something I like a lot, but the proficiency level of the learners and their previous learning experience have an important effect here. I felt terrible because I spent a lot of time creating that material before the class. I was also a part of the testing unit, so I had some other things to do. But I told myself that the classroom comes first, and I prepare some stuff in the middle of the night.

But when they said that, I realized that I was wasting my time, because they already created a barrier.” P32

The participants’ cognitions on deductive and inductive grammar methodology provided a wide spectrum of instructional preferences informed by learner characteristics, personal teaching styles, and contextual limitations. Several teachers were clearly inclined to teach deductively, commending direct rule explanation on its efficiency and its compatibility with learner expectations. Their rationalizations for deductively introducing grammar points included its time-saving capacity and its solid foundation for later practice. Conversely, some teachers advocated for inductive instruction, stressing its qualities of fostering learner curiosity, engagement and easier retention in the long run. Their cognitions for inductive grammar teaching was heavily connected to the learning process being more dynamic and meaningful when learners collaboratively uncover grammar rules with the aid of contextualized input. It is also important to note that for some, methodological decision-making was not a static and fixed process but rather responsive to many factors like learner level, timing, and learners’ prior learning processes. The tension arising from these variables led teachers to the adoption of a blended version of both methodologies, beginning classes with inductive teaching and concluding with deductive instruction with the aim of reinforcing the understanding of input and responding to learners’ needs. Ultimately, the findings demonstrate that while teacher cognitions may gravitate towards one approach over another, classroom practice usually entails flexibility and adaptivity of inductive and deductive grammar instruction to create a balance between pedagogical ideals and classroom realities.

4.2.3.2. Explicit and Implicit Grammar Instruction

In this subsection, EFL tertiary-level instructors’ cognitions regarding explicit and implicit grammar instruction will be analyzed. The gulf between explicit and implicit grammar teaching paradigms generated many remarks and observations from the participants. Participant 36 underlined the critical role of explicit grammar teaching, particularly at tertiary level, considering it fundamental to support academic achievement and professional skills. They highlighted its potential of enhancing knowledge about language, fostering both writing and speaking skills. While conceding the necessity of balance with communicative activities, they ultimate perspective involves explicit instruction as the groundwork of language learning at university.

“I can say that explicit grammar instruction at an advanced level or at university level is necessary to equip students with the details and understanding of language required for academic success and professional competence. It plays a crucial role in addressing gaps in knowledge, developing metalinguistic awareness and ensuring that students can use English clearly in both written and oral forms. I’m not totally in favor of explicit grammar instruction; it should be balanced with communicative practice. But overall, it is essential for the comprehensive development of language skills at these advanced levels, I can say.” P36

On another note, Participant 12 argued that explicit instruction of grammar is needed due to learner affective factors, namely anxiety and discomfort with self-directedness and demands of implicit teaching. They stated that learners perform better when the input is explicitly provided, implying that explicit grammar teaching provides reassurance to those who may struggle with ambiguity with the aid of through clearly structured explanations.

“Also, because some students are very nervous, and they are just closed to this type of process where they need to discover by themselves, they want the teacher to tell them everything explicitly, and it works better for them.” P12

Similarly, Participant 30 made a case for explicit teaching of grammar based on its efficiency and clarity, explaining that maintaining learner engagement and pace with the syllabus is practical through it especially in time-constrained conditions. While they remarked that implicit grammar teaching might be perceived as abstract hence be less accessible for learners, they stressed explicit grammar instruction provides a sense of security and enjoyment, making it the preferable option for both parties.

“Direct and explicit grammar teaching is easier for the teacher and for the students, and it takes less time. We need to catch up with the syllabus or students get bored easily and lose their concentration. They find indirect teaching abstract, but with explicit grammar, the students feel safe and satisfied. That’s the reason why we prefer it.” P30

Similarly, challenging the pragmatic potency of implicit grammar instruction even with its theoretical appeal, Participant 5 demonstrates a clear inclination towards explicit grammar teaching succeeded by extensive practice. Drawing on their teaching experience of a decade, they revealed minimal perceived gains from implicit methodologies, pointing out that students commonly get the most out of explicit rule explanations accompanied by contextualization instead of independent discovery by itself. In addition to not ruling out implicit grammar teaching, their cognitions were embodied within their critical examination of their self-efficacy in their teaching practices.

“I prefer explicit teaching with a lot of practice afterwards. Implicit looks good and cool, and you expect students to discover it, but I can say that I haven’t found it so useful until today. I

have been using it with the help of the course book for nearly 10 years, but I haven't seen any superiority that it might possess. I'm not saying it's evil or bad, but I haven't seen a lot of difference between explicit with a lot of practice and implicit with practice. Of course, I believe that a new topic should be given in a context, but right after the context, we can explain the topic and we can ask the students to find the examples in the book. Expecting everything from them never worked as much as it should, or maybe I haven't been able to apply it properly.” P5

Conversely, Participant 12 considered implicit grammar instruction more useful, highlighting the active self-discovery resulting in deeper and more permanent learning. Further, their classroom experiences indicated that engaging contextualization of content led to learner motivation and their active involvement, reinforcing the potential of implicit grammar instruction.

“I would say implicitly teaching is more effective because when students figure out the rules for themselves, it's always more permanent with them. It sticks with them because they work it out themselves. Usually, in my classes, when I give them an interesting context that they are indulged in, they like it. And, when I asked them about their opinions, they told me that it's more effective, because they're more active in the process this way.” P12

In a similar vein, Participant 10 was in strong support of implicit grammar instruction, actively utilizing guided discovery to involve student in uncovering grammar rules with the support of contextualized tasks. Through the conversion of explicit rule introductions into interactive, learner-centered activities, they fostered greater cognitive engagement in their grammar lessons, checking comprehension of target structure through elicitation instead of providing it explicitly. Their typical lesson stages structurally addressed meaning, form and pronunciation respectively, enabling learners to meaning discovery first and then as their teacher to assist in understanding rather than focusing on form as a priority. Their cognitions were aligned with implicit approaches to promote meaningful and more lasting language development for learners.

“I definitely teach grammar implicitly. For example, if we use a certain course book, I look at the activities, and then I start designing my own guided discovery tasks. Instead of just referring to the grammar box given in the book, I just turn it into a guided discovery task. I leave some blanks in the forms that are given in that grammar box, and then I ask students to fill in the gaps by looking at the marked sentences we use, that I introduced in the beginning of the lesson. After I clarify the meaning, they work on the form, and then we focus on pronunciation. When they start to practice, I again ask them to justify their answers to the questions, because I need to check if they've understood its meaning. I correct the form related mistakes immediately. Then we move on to the last activity, the production task. I don't just explain them directly, like ‘OK, this is simple present tense and it's used to express

routines in daily life,' instead, I use questions, 'Why do we use them? Are they about our daily routines or what we did last week?' So, I try to ask as many questions as possible and I try to teach grammar implicitly." P10

Along the same lines with Participant 10, Participant 32 describes implicit grammar teaching as more effective on the whole, underscoring its motivational potential to boost students' confidence through discovery-oriented activities. Contrastingly, they also mentioned having to teach explicitly due to having a hectic syllabus with the aim of saving class time for communicative production. Although they recognized the heavy burden of practical constraints, their overall pedagogical preference remained implicit instruction, grounded in its positive impact on learner engagement and autonomy.

"My choice would be implicit, I guess. I teach explicitly from time to time, I cannot lie about it because we have a very busy syllabus. If I spend one classroom hour just helping students to realize the structure and understand the point, I cannot spend more time on communicative tasks, so I must go with the explicit one. Still, the overall picture is implicit for me because I see how effective it could be. The students feel like they manage something, so they develop a sense of confidence. They think "We can understand it and we don't need to read the whole explanation or listen to the teacher explaining things to us in Turkish." P32

In a similar fashion, Participant 35 expressed strong cognitions of implicit grammar teaching, underlining its cognitive upsides, especially in enabling learners to establish meaningful webs of connections and achieve long-lasting retention. However, their perspective differed from Participants 32 in terms of more time and efforts implicit teaching necessitates from the teacher. They stated in the long run, implicit grammar instruction simplified and enriched the learning experience for students. Similar to Participant 10, they demonstrated commitment to fostering learner awareness through elicitation and guiding learners to explore rather than explicit formula-based explanations.

"I try to make the students think about different points and come from different backgrounds to the point, but it takes time, in terms of catching up with the syllabus sometimes. Still, I think it's more effective and students can remember and make connections with the details. Although it makes my job difficult, I believe that it makes the students' job easier. That's why I choose the implicit method to teach grammar. I do not like writing formulas on the board by explaining everything. Instead, I try to ask them questions; to make them think about the situation or the points then try to make them aware of the rules. This is my way of teaching grammar." P35

Showing the bitter clash between their cognitions and practice, Participant 26 stated predominantly favoring explicit grammar teaching despite their overall inclination

to implicit grammar instruction. Their rationalization for this dissonance had a multilayered nature such as concerns regarding potential learner misunderstandings, constrained instruction time, exam pressures, and low learner autonomy. In addition, they demonstrated skepticism about the effectiveness of implicit grammar instruction in EFL settings. Coupled with their idiosyncratic tendencies to ensure that no learner is left behind in their classes, development of accuracy, fulfillment of syllabus requirements and exam preparation steer their preferences to explicit grammar teaching.

“I teach explicitly and directly. Although my general attitude for teaching grammar is implicit teaching, while I’m teaching grammar, I use explicit teaching most of the time. I just want to be sure that everything is understood, and this is also about my personality as well. I just want to be sure that everything is understood clearly. I just want to check whether they get it or not, so I cannot leave it to chance. And I’m not sure whether implicit teaching can work out in our context, because there may be some misunderstandings, or some points that students miss. Implicit teaching is not possible in an EFL context I think, because we don’t have enough time to provide them with lots of examples and contexts. So, as a teacher, I am there to teach everything in the syllabus, and I know that my students will have a test about these topics. So I am responsible for teaching them and they are responsible for learning them. Also, when I think about our students, they are not so autonomous learners.” P26

Employing a refined taste in grammar instruction, Participant 23 blended explicit and implicit methodologies. While they initiated their grammar lessons implicitly to encourage learners to independently notice grammatical structures with the help of discovery tasks, later they utilized explicit instruction either to provide the input if noticing did not take place or clarify rules systematically to consolidate the form with the aid of formulated explanations. Their nuanced cognitions presented a balanced approach of integrating implicit engagement with explicit consolidation.

“First, I teach implicitly and by discovery. I expect students to notice the new grammar point there. If they are unable to notice it, I try to draw their attention to it with questions or examples. After I manage to make them notice the grammar structure, and then I prefer to teach it explicitly, but this explicit teaching doesn’t refer to just explaining the rules. I think letting them experience the learning itself is a very important thing to make it solid, so things they’ve learned go along for a long time. Then, I just try to make them notice the grammatical structure there and I ask questions to find out the rules themselves, ‘What comes first? What comes next? What happens here? What is the rule of the structure? Can you tell me?’ Then, I want them to apply the rule to different examples. After this is all finished, I may go through explicit teaching again, ‘OK, tell me, what’s this? What’s that? Now, let’s write the formula.’ This may be strange for some others and some teachers may not prefer this, but in the end, I prefer to make the grammar structure formulated. In a way, it’s a kind of consolidation.” P23

Closely analogous to Participant 23, Participant 4 employed an eclectic approach to grammar teaching, utilizing both methodologies depending on classroom dynamics and learning goals. Demonstrating a flexible cognition through the recognition of shortcomings and strengths of each method, their strategy entailed adapting their style to most effectively respond to the varying learners' needs and address different instructional goals.

"I use both methods. I tend to vary my methods according to the dynamics of the class and the requirements of the subject matter. Many components come into play at this point. They all have their ups and downs, their advantages, disadvantages and they're both useful in different conditions, different situations." P4

Participant 1 put forward a finely tuned perspective, acknowledging the merits of both methodologies according to the specific grammar points and learner language level. Especially on the upper levels, their preferred method seemed to be implicit grammar instruction, fostering retention and utilizing meaningful, real-life contextualization.

"I don't say the one method is better than the other. They both have their uses depending on the grammatical structure and the level of the students. But which one I prefer more is definitely discovery method. The other one is useful, but as we have more students in the future, higher level students, definitely they will benefit more from the discovery method because then they will have the meaning and the context in their lives too. That means that they will remember the structures more in the future, which will help them be proficient users of language, so discovery is more important than explicit method, but that doesn't mean that the other one is bad." P1

Along similar lines, Participant 12 demonstrated flexible cognitions regarding grammar teaching, describing their instructional decisions as subject to change dependent on learner preferences, class climate, and the characteristics of the grammar input. Their stated showing tendency to teach explicitly through contextualization for entirely new grammar topics and teach implicitly while revisiting previously introduced grammar structures. Their malleable set of cognitions reflect high level of sensitivity to varied learner needs and prior knowledge.

"It totally depends on the topic, on students, what my students usually prefer. Because some groups like discovery and these kinds of methods, but some students like explicit instruction. But, in the same group you have both kinds of students, so I try everything depending on, let's say, if this topic is brand new, I may go with the explicit instruction but, again, within a context. But if this is not a brand-new topic for them, I might go with the implicit one. So, it totally depends." P12

In a nutshell, participants demonstrated miscellaneous yet context-oriented cognitions in terms of explicit and implicit grammar instruction. Their collective cognitive scenery depicts a thorough understanding of gains and losses underlying both methodologies. On one hand, explicit instruction was highly commended for its brevity and efficiency in securing learners' understanding of grammatical concepts, particularly in correlation with curriculum and assessment demands dominating classroom practices. Moreover, participants considered explicit teaching fairly valuable in dealing with learner anxiety, responding to the learner expectations for clarity, and setting up a foundation for academic development. On the other hand, implicit grammar instruction was widely applauded for its considerable promise for deeper cognitive engagement, longer-lasting retention, and learner autonomy. Emergent themes from participants in support of implicit methodology included enabling learners to independently figure out and internalize grammar structures through contextualization and long-lasting acquisition through meaningful interaction. In contrast, several teachers pointed to the contextual limiting factors such as limited time, learner levels, ingrained learner expectations and admitted shifting to explicit methods despite their implicit-oriented cognitions. Ultimately, some participants advocated for eclectic and flexible grammar teaching, bringing the best of both worlds into classroom such as implicit exploration and explicit clarification. These strategically-adaptive collective cognitions demonstrated a high degree of responsiveness to pedagogical paradigms and classroom realities, establishing harmony between theoretical principles and practical effectiveness.

4.2.3.3. Separate and Integrated Grammar Instruction

This subsection will draw a comprehensive picture of the EFL university-level instructors' cognitive landscape regarding separate and integrated grammar teaching. Whether grammar instruction should be integrated into language skills or be provided as a distinct component has generated many distinct perspectives from the participants. Many veteran instructors in the research context executed both instruction types of grammar and gave detailed accounts of their experiences on upsides and downsides with separate and integrated grammar instruction. While some put emphasis on the effectiveness of integration in supporting holistic language competence development, other advocated for separation to ensure detailed, accurate understanding to respond to academic and professional needs.

Participant 15 strongly supported the coexistence of both integrated and separate grammar lessons. Drawing on their observations emerging out of past experiences, they stated that learners previously achieved higher grammatical proficiency and accuracy when grammar instruction was provided within a standalone course. Their cognitions entailed academic achievement and detailed, structured grammar instruction being in tandem. They also expressed frustration with current practices in the language school that favored only integration of grammar, showing belief in separate grammar classes with grammar-focused content to help learners develop overall linguistic precision and competence.

“Actually, based on my experience, there should be a course book that you should follow integrating all the skills, grammar, vocabulary, listening, writing, etc. But also, there should be a separate grammar class, because in those days when grammar was taught as a separate skill, I remember that my students were much more proficient. For example, they could write very well because of the hours we spent on those grammar classes. When it comes to speaking, it depends on your purpose. If you learn the language just to speak, you don’t have to learn details about the grammar, the basic things, and expressions, like some vocabulary, slang, pronunciation would be enough. But if you are learning English to do a post-graduate degree, you need to have a kind of language certificate. Grammar plays a big role there; accurate grammar is what they’ve been looking for. So, it depends, but I think we can still teach our prep school students grammar. For example, six hours of grammar in a separate grammar book, in a week. That may help students to be more accurate language users, especially in writing. As I said, from my experiences, even elementary levels could write essays. But now, it’s different and it’s frustrating.” P15

Displaying similar cognitions to Participant 15, Participant 29 advocated for separate grammar instruction. Drawing attention to the norm of having multiple teachers for each class in the preparatory program, their main argument for grammar separation was important elements being overlooked or inconsistently provided within integrated grammar teaching. In addition, they pointed to the lack of thorough coverage of grammar in the integrated course books, requiring standalone grammar instruction to address the missing depth and accuracy. They also underlined that an optional structured grammar lesson could assist learners in developing precise and versatile language use and hence contributing more effectively to linguistic competence in the long-term for their academic and professional careers.

“Listening, reading, writing can be integrated, no problem. But for grammar, separate instruction is necessary, I think. When grammar is taught as a part of the whole teaching process, things can be disregarded. Also, we have 2 or 3 teachers for a classroom, and

depending on the teacher, some grammar points may not be taught properly. Some grammar points are missing in the book, and we may need some extra grammar points to teach. For that, we can use an integrated book without its grammar parts and in addition to that, we can have separate grammar lessons, or an optional grammar lesson in our school. In a separate grammar lesson, we teach grammar more comprehensively, and because our students are prospective experts in their fields, they need to be accurate and to be able to express themselves in a variety of ways.” P29

Agreeing with Participant 15 and 29 on accuracy, Participant 36 added “There are some advantages and disadvantages of both systems. But I can say in terms of better linguistic awareness and academic readiness of the students, the results are better in separate grammar instruction.”

Approaching from an angle of practicality, Participant 19 questioned the true nature of what is considered as integrated grammar instruction within the current practice of the language school. In their mindset, even though grammar instruction was officially provided in an integrated style, the actual implementation oftentimes resembled separated grammar teaching, merely centered on topics with superficial integration of skills. Looking back on their past experiences of teaching grammar separately, their memories consisted of incorporating listening, reading, context in a similar fashion today’s so-called integrated grammar instruction. This in-depth reflection into their practice within both instruction systems resulted in the conclusion that genuine integration of grammar does not reside in the structure of the course but in how grammar is meaningfully embedded in context and connected to communication. Their cognitions showed that regardless of the labels of separate or integrated instruction, the prioritization of meaning and comprehension proved absolutely indispensable to the learning process.

“At our school, we’re teaching in an integrated way but I don’t think it’s really integrated. Because our lessons seem like topic-based actually. Let’s say this lesson’s topic is about relationships and we have a reading text, we look at the grammar structures, then we do this, we do that, but again, we’re teaching separately. I had some experience in separated instruction in the past. At that time, when I was teaching grammar, I was doing the same thing, but grammar was a different course. I would go into the classroom with a reading text, a listening text and also with a context. So for me, separate classes were just exactly the same way that we are teaching now, integrated. They are all separate for me. For most, integrated grammar is reading or listening texts, and then doing exercises, fill in the blank, maybe some writing or speaking activities. But my separate teaching experience from years ago was the same. It was separated but what I did in the grammar class included different skills. So, down to the basics, grammar should always be integrated into something so that students can make

sense of it. And I said before, meaning is really important for me and students should understand the meaning first. To do that, we have to teach it in an integrated way.” P19

Stating the inverse of the remarks of Participant 19, Participant 6 argued that teaching grammar in isolation proved impractical and pedagogically baseless. Their perspective of integration entailed effective instructional design and learner engagement as basic tenets of grammar instruction. Elaborating on integrated instruction, they stressed that decontextualized grammar with no connection to other language skills such as listening and reading is not conducive to real learning and that legitimate grammar instruction inherently encompasses integration.

“I integrate grammar with other skills no question. Because it is easier to do an instructional design where you can incorporate other skills. If you only have a grammar point at your hand and no other skills, then it's very hard to design a lesson. That's the reason, you cannot design a lesson if grammar or other skills are not incorporated to the other skills. I think, if a teacher says “I teach grammar separately,” I don't think they are teaching at all. It's impossible. Think about it, can we do a grammar lesson without reading, listening? No. We can, of course, but that's not something students learn.” P6

Drawing parallels to the points of Participant 6, Participant 18 fully endorsed integration of grammar. Reflecting on their prior language learning experiences, they harshly criticized separation of grammar instruction due to the focus on developing test-taking abilities rather than real-world language skills. Highlighting that language learning should simply put communication first instead of rule memorization, their cognitions involved grammar supporting other skills and not overshadowing them.

“I don't think grammar should be the primary focus in a language class. We should integrate it with some other skills. For example, we should get some help from their reading skills when we are teaching grammar. They should be together and follow each other in my opinion. I have never taught grammar separately, but, as a learner, I've experienced this, and I don't think it works. For example, I could just take any exam, and I could find the correct answers for everything, but I had some difficulty in communicating. That's why I think separate grammar teaching doesn't work. The language is not about knowing all the rules, it's about communicating, and as a student I didn't have much opportunity to practice other skills, like listening, speaking, and even writing. Yes, we knew all the rules, but language is not fill-in-the-blanks. It's about producing it.” P18

In a similar mindset, Participant 10 demonstrated full support for integrated grammar instruction, underlining the merit of introduction of grammar through meaningful contexts tied to other language skills. Their cognitions are against teaching grammar in isolation and in favor of practice of grammar in such a way that allows

learners to understand its relevance and execute it meaningfully in a lesson to reinforce both comprehension and practical use of the language.

“I think it shouldn't be taught as an isolated aspect of the language. I like teaching it by integrating it into other skills. So, the students should find it meaningful to understand the rules right from the beginning of the lesson, and by the end of the lesson, they should be able to use it in a meaningful context.” P10

Reflecting on their experiences in skill-based instruction, Participant 27 argued that separation of grammar from other skills in contradiction with the holistic nature of language per se. Asserting that language learning is in its essence a blend of all four skills, they rejected the notion of grammar instruction as a standalone subject. Their main point for this cognition was that the students at the preparatory school are going through a language learning process to utilize the language for communication in real life purpose rather than linguistic analysis as a profession.

“Integrated is better. I'll repeat this over and over, but we shouldn't focus on grammar on its own. Our students are not going to be linguists. Long ago, when we were teaching in a skill-based way, we had this book ‘Focus on Grammar’ for every level. But language is the combination of four skills. How can you separate one from another?” P27

Exhibiting a similar cognition to Participant 27, Participant 4 endorsed integration of grammar with language skills owing to the authenticity of integration in real-life contexts. Their reasoning was dissecting and isolating grammar or other skills is artificial and incompatible with how communication takes place by default, involving the simultaneous use of multiple skills. They believe that with the scaffold of introducing grammar within integrated activities, grammar instruction can become more realistic and transferable to everyday language use.

“I guess integrated grammar is a lot better than isolation, because when you separate skills - this is also true for all other skills- it's not compatible with life, it does not happen that way in real life. At a single moment, we don't only read, we don't only listen, we don't only speak in life. Sometimes, we read as we speak, or answer questions as we read, someone might ask about the text we're reading. In real life when you're reading something from the screen, someone might ask you a question. As you listen to that question, that's listening, and when you respond to that question, that's speaking. When you take notes as you're reading or listening to someone that's writing. So, integrated skills teaching is a lot more authentic than divided teaching, I guess.” P4

From a practicality perspective, Participant 21 challenged the idea of separate grammar teaching, looking back on their experiences as a learner and a teacher. In line with Participant 19, their argument central argument against isolation of grammar was

that even if it could be labelled as separate, grammar in substance is directly in connection with other skills through input texts and required output activities of speaking or writing. Since assessment of learning is dependent on the evidence of learning, mainly composed of how well learners can apply structures in real communication, the interconnectedness of language was apparent for this participant.

“In my experience, even if it was taught separately, it wasn't really taught separately. I don't remember any separate grammar lessons in which we only focused on the rules and there was no language production, or no reading or listening text. Even when it was taught separately, there is some kind of integration of other skills, because the language comes from maybe a listening text or a written text. And I, as a teacher, used to expect them to use the new language in a written or in a spoken form for the output. So I think it's not possible to teach grammar in a completely separate form, it will always be linked to other skills because if you don't see it in written or spoken form, then you don't really know how to assess learning.” P21

Displaying pragmatic and balanced cognitions, Participant 34 acknowledged the performance of both models of instruction based on their experience of teaching within the preparatory school. They suggested that integration of grammar teaching emerged out of evolving education trends and practicality and the language school followed suit with the paradigm shift. Additionally, they pointed to the logistical challenges underlying separate grammar instruction especially in terms of synchronization of content in skill based and grammar courses.

“Depending on my experience, I think both can work. I wouldn't say separate grammar teaching wouldn't work; it might work because we tried it years ago and it kind of worked. But then, because of populism and modernism, we changed our system and set integrated teaching. I think it's OK, too. There is no big problem in integrated grammar teaching as well. Separate grammar teaching is in fact more challenging in terms of scheduling syllabus. Because most of the time, you need to match whatever you're teaching in terms of grammar with other skills. Maybe that's one reason we started to do it this way, because integrated teaching seems to be easier the other way around. In a separate grammar instruction system, at one point, you might be teaching past tense, but in another skill class, they might be talking about their future plans. But as I said, both can work. I believe, even if we start to separate grammar instruction next year, I don't think we would have a lot of problems, depending on the planning of course.” P34

Differing from Participant 34 with their learner-oriented cognitions, Participant 22 suggested that the determinant of grammar instruction should be the learner profile,

thinking separate grammar instruction fit for excellence in language and integrated grammar instruction fit for practical communication.

“This depends on the student, I guess. If the target learner focuses on grammar more, and wants to have perfect English, you should teach things separately, I guess. But if you have an overall language learner in front of you, integrated would work better. Nowadays, the purpose of most language learners is just to travel or communicate with native speakers, and because of this popular purpose of learning a language, integrated works better, I think.” P22

Recalling their personal learning experience regarding separate grammar instruction, Participant 16 noted its detrimental impact on their communication skills and affectively causing anxiety due to the overemphasis placed on linguistic correctness. Stating that grammar introduction in authentic contexts is effective in promoting confidence and real-life communication skills, they considered integrated grammar instruction is the better option for learners although they might have accuracy issues along the way.

“I learned grammar separately and it affected me negatively in terms of communication because as a learner, I always focused on my accuracy while speaking English. I think I definitely had speaking anxiety at that time because there was a negative effect on my communication skills due to the grammar instruction I received. Separate grammar instruction had such effects on my communication as a learner. But of course, after a while, I overcame those problems. I am sure that learners can do that one as well, but it is good to see the grammar in context, in real life. In that sense, integrated teaching is way better for our students. Yeah, it might lead to some problems with accuracy, but I think they would be able to communicate well outside of the classroom despite those effects. They would be confident enough.” P16

Displaying refined set of cognitions, Participant 23 appreciated the focused attention dedicated to reading, listening, speaking and writing in a skill-based scenario. In contrast with this, they made a crystal-clear distinction on grammar instruction that it should not be provided in isolation. Their mindset reflected a vision of grammar teaching embedded within authentic language and meaningful context along with a skill-partitioned curriculum.

“If you ask me, I would prefer skill-based teaching. When I started working here years ago, there was skill-based teaching and there were separate classes. It was quite good because you can focus on everything in detail and give your 100% for everything in the language. They are like gears, each of them affects how good or bad the other one is. That's why skill-based teaching is my favorite one. But when it comes to grammar teaching, I do not believe it is a good way to teach grammar on its own. I do not prefer this type of grammar instruction where you just tell the students the rules. You have to integrate grammar with reading or listening.

Except for grammar, I do believe it would be better if we had separate classes for reading, writing, listening and speaking.” P23

Critically comparing separate and integrated instruction histories within the language school, Participant 35 listed the weaknesses and strengths of each model. On one hand, they remarked that while separate skills instruction provided a wider range of knowledge in skills, learners struggled to convey their learned knowledge across the skills. On the other hand, they stated even though integrated instruction of skills had a more holistic nature, it lacked depth and led to surface-level knowledge of the language. Furthermore, they expressed doubts over and openly questioned the efficacy of integrated teaching in supporting knowledge transfer by learners, implying neither mode of instruction is fully sufficient by itself.

“It's not only about grammar, but it's about the other skills as well. I had the chance to teach in two different methods. When we taught separately, I believe that the students learn more effectively, but there too, we had some problems as well. They couldn't transfer the knowledge. For example, they learned many words in reading classes but they didn't use those words in their essays. There was no transfer and it was one of the biggest problems. But in the integrated form, we cannot go into depths of the skills. We can teach at a certain level and I'm not that pleased with that level, I guess. So both sides have advantages and disadvantages, but still, if you ask me if students can transfer the knowledge with the integrated instruction, my answer would be, not that much.” P35

In summation, participants' cognition in connection to separate and integrated grammar instruction models exposed a broad scope of perspectives informed by teaching and learning experiences, learner needs, and thought on instructional objectives. Most teachers were in strong support of integrated grammar teaching, stressing its compatibility with authenticity of language use and real-world communication. Meaningful contextualization of grammar through and into four skills was clearly highlighted, enabling the enhancement of communicative competence and learner confidence. In particular, the anxiety associated with isolated rule-focused grammar instruction can be avoided through integrated grammar instruction and for many, grammar gains relevance and retention in this way of embedding it within context. Contrarily, some participants considered separate grammar teaching more valuable, especially due to its clarity, focus and efficiency in developing accuracy. It was noted that standalone grammar lessons paved the way for thorough coverage of grammatical structures and greater academic and professional performance in the future. Still, even among those immensely supportive of separation of grammar, there was tacit

acknowledgement that grammar hardly exists in isolation and mostly coexists with other skills, rendering complete separation of grammar instruction impractical and unrealistic. In a context-responsive manner, some adjusted their methods dependent on learner goals, proficiency levels, and contextual pressures. Finally, the results point to a somewhat understanding of the limitations and advantages involved in both models of grammar instruction and flexibility and immaculate instructional design are cardinal principles of quality grammar instruction in tertiary-level EFL settings.

4.2.3.4. *FonF and FonFS*

Another methodology dichotomy that was revealed in the cognitions of participants was regarding FonF and FonFS. Although participants did not explicitly name these methodologies during the semi-structured interviews, their instructional decision-making and in-class practices involved elements of both. Participant 36 clearly followed FonFS through explicitly introducing grammatical structures before contextualizing their uses. A traditional and systematic methodology prioritizing the provision of precise form over functional explanations on examples was revealed in their cognitions. While recognizing the role of reading texts as initial exposure to forms of grammatical structures, they heavily stressed that explicit teaching is needed in the clarification of grammatical rules. In addition, their use of multiple contexts and discrete items to introduce grammar structures and distinct, carefully sequenced style where form preceded meaningful context and usage seemed to be closely aligned with FonFS.

“First of all, I am giving specific forms of that grammar point. For example, for past simple, I write “S + Verb 2” This is very traditional, but students must see the form and structure first. Then I am giving examples on the board. I’m trying to make my students understand where we use this grammatical structure and form in real life. So I can say that form and structure first, and then I give the usage and function. We use coursebooks, and inside these books, there is a reading part. First of all, our students see these forms in a reading text, but they don't really understand it clearly. There are some gaps, and in order to fill those gaps, we need to give the structure and form, then the function. This is my preference. There can be different contexts. It depends on the function. For example, when I’m teaching past simple and the first usage is the actions at a certain time in the past, we need a specific exact time related to the past and I am giving these sentences. The second function of past simple is past habits, and I am giving the sentence in a different context for this, of course.” P36

Akin to Participant 36, Participant 22 mentioned utilizing multiple contexts to introduce grammar structures when necessary, by saying “I try to make them fit into just

one context. But sometimes, some topics are not up for it, and I go with separate contexts.”

Similarly, Participant 29 placed importance on systematic instruction of grammatical structures and exhibited FonFS oriented cognitions. Despite coursebooks introducing grammar embedded in contextualized texts, they stated deliberately deviating from the guidance of these materials and administering their personal style in a structured manner. Through the clear articulation of forms and functional distinctions, they aim to equip learners with a coherent perspective of grammar, following a style of teaching centered around explicit incremental grammar knowledge via discrete units compared to contextualized input.

“I teach grammar explicitly and directly. The materials we use always present the target structure in a reading or listening text. The students listen to sentences, and then we put one of the sentences on the board and stuff. But I don't actually use the book and its patterns. I have my own notes and my own ways of teaching. For example, when I'm teaching the passive, I first talk about why we need it. In that case, the students feel more interested in the topic. They feel it is more relatable. So I explicitly write the functions and how the structure is formulated, and I put some examples. Also, for example, the book teaches the zero conditional only, but when it comes to teaching the first conditional, comparing it with zero conditional becomes more important for me. And when it is the second conditional, then teaching it with the third conditional makes sense. So when the students have a bigger picture of the function and the form, it becomes more important for them, I guess.” P29

Characterized by explicitly presenting and deliberately analyzing grammatical structures, Participant 4 similarly fashions a FonFS approach in grammar instruction. Their set of instructional techniques subsumed provision of formulas, drawing timelines and discrete examples on the blackboard to assist learners in understanding grammar structures visually and conceptually. Besides, through getting learners to identify correct and incorrect sentences, they aimed to reinforce grammatical awareness on accuracy and form. This methodical and unambiguous analysis of grammar prioritizes form-based understanding and systematic rule-centric practice.

“I have classical ways of presentation with which we all are familiar, like writing some formulas on the board and then giving some sample sentences. If we're dealing with tenses, for example, drawing a timeline and showing the actions on the timeline so that the students have a better image of what's going on through time, from the past to now and into the future. Sometimes, I write some sentences on the board and I ask students which ones are correct, which ones are not. In some cases, all the sentences are correct, and in some others, there actually are some wrong sentences. For example, I tend to do that with articles. I write

sentences with the use of 'a, an, the, and no article'. And I asked students if the sentences written on the board look and sound natural in terms of the use of articles. Of course, I tell them that our subject matter that day is the articles." P4

On the other hand, Participant 30 differed in terms of their cognitions regarding context from Participant 4, 36, and 22 and underscored the risks of learner disengagement involved in utilizing multiple contexts in grammar teaching and said: "I try to focus on one context, in order not to lose the concentration of the students. If the sentences are from different contexts, as the number increases, I may lose their attention."

In line with the FonF paradigms, Participant 18 underlined the importance of authentic and meaningful contexts as the first step in grammar teaching. Their strategy of introducing grammatical structured set in real-life scenarios such as news stories or videos provided learners with opportunities to grasp language use within a coherent and realistic context. The explicit attention to specific grammar structures takes place only after learners encounter structure within context through concept-checking to ensure deeper understanding and authenticity.

"I try to give them some authentic materials. First, I let them see the structure in a whole context instead of a separate sentence, because a separate sentence doesn't sound or look natural. They should see the structure in the whole context, in real-life situations. Then I take this little sentence or the structure from this whole context, and I put the emphasis on it. Well, one context. Even when I supply more examples for them, there is always one big context with a good focus. It could be a news story, or a video. It could be anything but not separate sentences, it doesn't work in my classes. Teaching tenses, for example, works really well because when you give them some context, a story maybe, they can understand the sequence of events and other things. I follow the same steps, giving them, let's say, a story or letting them watch something in whatever context I'm using. With the help of a meaningful context, they understand very well. Well, I can't change the context because it already takes some time and students are on something, but I can change the questions. I always prepare some backup questions for concept checking." P18

In dissonance with their FonFS oriented cognitions, Participant 4 stated giving precedence to meaningful context and communicative practice in their grammar instruction, clearly showing FonF related tendencies. Their emphasis on interaction through pair and group work promoted authentic language use and natural language development. In addition, their utilization of peer feedback and collaborative error correction encouraged accuracy through communicative purposes and input loop of communicating about the language in the language. Their cognitions reflected to strong

commitment to contextualized and communicative instruction were in line with FonF norms, seamlessly integrating grammar into broader language use.

“My general approach to grammar teaching is actually depending on the subject, on the context, and on the function. It may vary, but most of the time I try to make it a part of production. I always focus on interaction and drills that involve students. I try to make grammar learning a part of production, speaking and writing, and I always want students to work in groups or pairs, so that they will also have a chance to correct each other’s mistakes. They will have a chance to give each other peer feedback, in some ways. I try to make it sound and look as natural as possible, as part of the process, as an important component of the process of learning language. I cannot just cross it out and not see, because I’m aware of the need in students for a more accurate production. So, that’s why I pay attention.” P4

In summary, participants’ grammar instruction cognitions were implicitly connected to FonF and FonFS paradigms although they did not refer to them with their labels. While some were FonFS oriented with consistent prioritization of explicit instruction, systematic rule introduction through discrete sentences and deliberate analysis of grammatical forms, some were in favor of FonF through their use of authentic, meaningful contexts and communicative tasks. Ultimately, diverse practices and varied cognitions regarding grammar instruction emerged ranging from explicit form-focused instruction to context-driven practice.

4.2.3.5. Drilling and Practice

This subsection will be examining tertiary-level EFL instructors’ cognitions regarding drilling and practice in grammar instruction. Since this part of grammar instruction conventionally follows certain stages in a lesson, the rhetoric is going to revolve around the four components in grammar teaching, namely and consecutively, drilling, mechanical practice, freer practice and production. Participants articulated various perspectives on classroom experiences, showing their tendencies, explaining their rationales, prioritization of which stages depending on their pedagogical preferences.

Participant 8 underlined the potency of drilling as a pedagogical device that forms a bridge over the gulf between the written language aka script and spoken language aka pronunciation. Reflecting on their insights from their CELTA training, they considered drilling pivotal in raising confidence of learners and enhancing their pronunciation skills. Although they faced initial resistance from learners who perceived drilling as redundant, they considered this bump as an opportunity to explain the pedagogical value of drilling

to their learners. Their strategic use of drilling and explicit explanations regarding its broader benefits enabled them to normalize its regular use and enhanced phonological and pronunciation awareness of the learners. Their cognitions indicated to a high level of consciousness embodying drilling as a critical strategy in transforming grammar knowledge from letters on a paper to authentic production.

“I remember asking my CELTA tutor about drilling. We talked about the benefits. Especially in our case, for instance, what you see is a bunch of letters, but what you say is different, you know, script versus pronunciation. I think drilling helps those who are used to seeing grammar on paper. It helps them be more confident when they realize that can actually say what is on paper. And even if they cannot, we, as the teacher, go over a certain aspect of pronunciation. So drilling is a bridge to carry what's on paper to communication, I suppose. But, especially in the first week, I can see the awkwardness as I ask them to drill. So I try to change things up a little bit, but I still expect them to do it. We talk about the reasons. Lower levels, of course, notice that it helps and get on board sooner, but the higher levels tend to think drilling is not necessary for them. I try to show, for them, it's not about the individual words, but other features of phonology. As a teacher, when you rationalize and normalize it, I think they get used to it.” P8

With an analogous thinking to Participant 8, Participant 10 saw the potential in drilling, considering it as equivalent to controlled practice. Highlighting the reinforcement of good pronunciation through drilling, they stated this foundational step in their grammar lessons assists learners in the internalization of grammatical structures, getting accustomed to the target language, and gaining fluency.

“Well, drilling is also a kind of practice, isn't it? We are modeling and they are repeating, so it's a very controlled practice again. Especially at the lower levels, I love drilling everything into their minds. Because I'm expecting them to get their tongues around the target structure I'm teaching, drilling is important. We need to model the target language accurately and then drill it.” P10

Approaching the matter of drilling from their ongoing language learning experience, Participant 25 entirely endorsed drilling thanks to its value in developing fluency and boosting confidence. Although they stated initially hesitating to employ drilling, their perspective of drilling transformed into repeated, essential and intensive practice to turn unfamiliar grammar into comfortable and natural form for learners. From their point of view, particularly for learners who prefer to stay silent during lessons, drilling can foster confidence with the help of structured repetition and practice and eventually enabling them to communicate freely from anxiety. Their firsthand learning

experiences of another language fueled their advocacy of drilling, indicating the potential strength of the empathetic dimension of language teacher cognitions in action.

“I didn’t drill a lot before, but I love drilling right now, because I think it really helps fluency. When you drill so much that students are sick of your drilling, they feel comfortable and even make jokes about the things that you drilled. I let them make jokes about the drilling, but I know that stays there, when they try to form a sentence. I think why I like drilling a lot right now is about my experiences of trying to learn another language. One time, the teachers were teaching us very basic Russian and they showed us very simple conversation, “Hello, how are you? I’m fine. How are you?” That was all. They showed us five times, but I needed a lot of drilling, and it was very shocking how much drilling I needed, even at this basic level. Then, the teachers asked us to come in front of the class and do the conversation, but I was very shy to even try that out. I didn’t want to do that because I wasn’t comfortable, and I think we miss that part out. We expect a certain level of English from our learners, and we think this is very basic and simple, why wouldn’t they drill that? But there are a lot of silent learners who would really use that practice, and I am a big fan of drilling right now.” P25

From the angle of practicality, Participant 5 considered mechanical drilling central to grammar teaching, underlining its assistance in the automation of language production. Looking back on their personal language learning process, they placed high value on intensive repetition to the degree that grammatical forms become a part of second nature, requiring minimal cognitive effort from learners. Their intricate viewpoint entails fluency and automaticity as the primary goals in grammar instruction, where learners instinctively produce accurate language not with an explicit analysis of grammatical rules but with the aid of mechanical drills to internalize language and thus spontaneous and effortless production of language.

“I learnt English with drills. I was always repeating many, many sentences in my mind when I learned a new grammar topic. So, if something becomes automatic in your mouth, without thinking, it doesn’t matter whether you know the meaning or not. My purpose is that, of course, they don’t need to understand the logic behind it, “after subject I use verb,” they shouldn’t be thinking about that. They should be in a state in which they have practiced this so much that their mouth just looks for a verb as soon as they say a subject, that’s what I expect from them. I don’t know if it is accomplishable, but that’s my approach. Mechanical drillings, a lot of repetitions, all the time.” P5

On the other end of the spectrum, Participant 2 conceded that they tended not to do much drilling due to learners’ disengagement saying “I do pronunciation drilling rarely. I try to, but I see that they don’t like it so much. I’ve tried a few times and many of them, they didn’t do the whole class. This saying it loud thing.”

Demonstrating hesitant and negative attitudes towards drilling, Participant 7 stated that they did not find it enjoyable and unnatural. While they conceded the potential benefits involved in drilling, they admitted their tendency to avoid methodologies that are not in alignment with their preferences and in comfort zone. However, recognizing the limitations caused by their stance and reservations, they critically reflected on their classroom practice and decided to make attempts at drilling in the future.

“I hate drilling. It is not natural. Maybe there is something really important, if I do not enjoy anything, I never do it in my class, even if it's something really useful and beneficial for the students. It's a really bad thing for a teacher because maybe I'm missing something, let's say, technique or method, which is really useful. But, as I do not enjoy it, I never give drilling a chance. OK, next term, I'll try it.” P7

On a different note, Participant 19 took a critical and cautious stance against excessive drilling, underlining the prominence of teacher decision-making processes in creating a balance between practice types. While they did not entirely dismiss drilling, they contended that overreliance on repetitive and controlled exercises could result in constraints in terms of language production. Instead, they argued for a responsive judgement to learner needs, proposing a somewhat progression to freer or communicative or mechanical activities in cases where drilling no longer contributes to learning. Their subtle cognitions pointed to an adaptable, learner-centered approach that attaches great importance to variety and flexibility.

“I'm totally against the excessive use of drilling and I know that some teachers keep doing that, always going through the grammar questions, drilling and all these fill-in-the-blank types of exercises. You, as a teacher, should be able to decide when it's enough or when it's time to stop in terms of exercises. If drilling or the exercises are not enough for the students, then you should go with other types of exercises, more freer ones, maybe.” P19

With a likewise mindset to Participant 19, Participant 26 preached for a balanced approach in grammar practice, ideally merging communicative activities and mechanical drills. However, they conceded that syllabus pressures and time limitations oftentimes pushed them into giving precedence to mechanical practice with the aim of learner understanding of the target grammatical structure. Since the practice section of grammar lessons typically entail controlled activities before communicative and freer stages, later steps might be omitted due to running out of time. Consequently, mechanical practice and drilling became a consistent routine in their grammar teaching, drawing a landscape of practical and structure-centric language instruction molded by contextual influences instead of merely pedagogical tendencies.

“In my lessons, I think there is a balance most of the time. For my ideology, there should be a balance between drilling and practice. But sometimes, because of maybe the time constraint, or the syllabus that we need to follow, I just only cover the mechanic activities. The reason for this might be the sequence of the activities, because I start with the mechanic activities all the time, and then I go on with the communicative activities. I always try to do the communicative activities later, and if my lesson is over, then there's nothing I can do. If they're responsible for the target structure of today, and if I have an hour, then I just want to be sure that they get the structure, so I prefer the mechanical ones. So in my grammar lessons, mechanical activities and the drilling is always done.” P26

Contrary to the routine of Participant 26, Participant 27 stated often preferring to assign mechanical practice as outside-the-class study instead of spending valuable class time on them. While they still acknowledged the importance of mechanical practice in grammar teaching, they demonstrated a clear dislike for them due to their monotonous characteristics. Their cognitions implied a tendency for more learner engagement and dynamic interaction in their grammar lessons with collective answer checking and discussion of mistakes, creating a balance between accuracy and communication through selective mechanical practice.

“Mechanical practice is boring. Generally, I give students time, and then I tell them to check their answers and that we are going to focus on their mistakes. Sometimes, I randomly pick students, and we do it together. It depends. As I said, mechanical drills are so boring and so repetitive that sometimes I assign them as homework.” P27

Looking at mechanical practice through a communicative glass, Participant 12 underscored the potential in transforming mechanical practice into interactive activities. Through the adaptation of materials with personalization, interaction and creativity, they intentionally encouraged learners to manipulate the content and attached grammar practice a communicative purpose, enhancing motivation and retention. Their commitment to student engagement and meaningful learning led them to blend the structure in mechanical drills with interactivity and turned it into somewhat freer practice.

“I just want to make these kinds of mechanical practices meaningful and communicative. I want them to have a purpose in each exercise. In my experience, students love it when you add a little bit of meaning and some interaction in it. For example, let's say, they have this fill-in-the-blanks exercise in the book on past tense, and they do it. But then, I want them to create something meaningful out of this practice, even if it's not written in the book. I say, ‘OK guys, now rewrite those sentences any way that you want, but make five of them true and two of them lie for you’ or ‘OK guys, now I want you to write a sentence about everyone in the class about what they did yesterday. Let's guess.’ Then, they check each other's sentences with a question form, if this is correct or not.” P12

Exhibiting resembling communication-oriented cognitions to Participant 12, Participant 9 stated favoring information gap activities as a set of meaningful drilling, where learners unknowingly practice target grammar within a natural and communicative context. These types of activities provide a structured and engaging way to use grammar purposefully to achieve a task, which the participant considered enjoyable and effective.

“Actually, I really like information gap activities. Students drill grammar without consciously knowing they do it, but they do it in a structured way. When they have to ask the question to get that information, it naturally comes, and they really enjoy it too. I don't really like the exercises in the book because it's really boring. But those are also useful and needed because they write so little. I really believe in motor skills, and the structured and correct way of writing the words. Still, my favorite is really this information gap where they have to use the structure to get some information, to fill something up, to feel some kind of accomplishment in an exercise. That's my favorite.” P9

While acknowledging the merit of mechanical practice especially in reinforcing common problems and preparing learners cognitively for speaking practice, Participant 32 heavily stressed the criticality of moderation and timing, warning that excessive mechanical tasks could potentially hinder learning process and diminish learner performance. They stated having a tendency towards contextualized exercises to assess whether learning has taken place and learners fully comprehend the function and distinctions regarding the target grammar structures. Their cognitions align with a responsive approach where teachers observe their learners and transition to freer and communicative stages in grammar lessons once they see learners display readiness in mechanical practice. In their decision-making processes, Participant 32 made the discernment between mechanical practice being an endpoint and serving as a stepping stone for the ensuing communicative practice.

“Mechanical exercises are quite important, but of course, we should be careful about the number of the activities. During the whole lesson, we cannot just focus on filling the blanks or, just choosing the correct option there. Depending on the grammar structure, I like doing error correction activities, because those activities provide the common problematic parts generally. When they realize their errors and have the opportunity to correct them, I believe that it is useful, especially when it's time to do some speaking practice. Instead of just filling in the blanks with the correct form, I like seeing them in context, especially for the mixed tense activities. At that point, you see whether they understand the function and differentiations of all these specific tenses. But as I said, we should be careful about how much time we spend on it, because after a while it could be quite ineffective. When we move on to the next stage in the production part, they may have some problems. So instead of

wasting our time there, if we realize our learners are ready for the next step, we should move on.” P32

Similarly, Participant 37 displays cognitions regarding the importance of production stages as the culmination of a grammar lessons, considering them fundamental to assess learners’ internalization of newly learned grammar structures. They regard both successful and failed attempts at using the target grammar within communicative output as a primary measure of instructional efficiency. Their communication-oriented cognitions were deeply rooted in their perspective that ending a grammar lesson with productive practice not only reinforced learning but also presented a sense of accomplishment through the active and meaningful use of language by learners, marking the lesson a success.

“I feel like I should do a production activity at the end of a grammar lesson. They know the rules now, and they need to use the language, it’s a must in each grammar lesson. If I see the students are using the target structure correctly or at least they’re trying to do it at the end of the class, I feel that I achieved something. I feel like it was a good lesson.” P37

Demonstrating a likewise understanding with Participant 37, Participant 26 underlined that they aim to move beyond controlled practice to guarantee learner engagement with target grammar in authentic communication, stating “I bring some communicative activities, and I try to involve some speaking and discussion with the target structure. I just want to be sure that students use it in a meaningful, communicative way.” The cognitions of Participant 37 and 26 demonstrated a central focus on production as a critical lesson stage in the consolidation of grammatical knowledge.

In a similar fashion, Participant 23 considered production as vital in determining the degree of learners’ comprehension of grammar, underlining that receptive knowledge on its own remains insufficient. By employing pair work, whole class discussions or writing tasks, they encourage learners to articulate their own ideas thus ensure the meaningful use of grammar.

“The final stage is production, because without production, I cannot know what students have in their minds. Maybe they know the grammar structure very well, but it is only in a receptive way. So in order to see them practice the rule, I ask them to make sentences on their own or write a paragraph. I also ask them to speak to each other as a whole class activity or as a pair work related to the grammar structure that we have learned.” P23

Prioritizing speaking and writing production when learners already are exposed to the target language, Participant 8 demonstrates highly intricate cognitions in relation to production of grammar. Acknowledging that the learning process might not always

result in immediate application of the target language, they still make production a primary goal in their grammar lessons. To support learners in transferring newly-introduced grammar input into active production, they utilize scaffolding techniques of having learners pre-select structures to aim for and reminding them of these target phrases to decrease the likelihood of hit-and-miss of target grammar and to raise learners' awareness in terms tracking what they are supposed to produce in their learning process. Moreover, their cognitions regarding the production stage of grammar lessons seemed to be intertwined with feedback. With the goal of maintaining a positive classroom atmosphere and reinforcing learning at each stage of grammar instruction, they shared their vision of constructive feedback, highlighting both correct language use accompanied by the name of specific learners and incorrect grammar to ensure grammatical accuracy.

“If it's something that I know the students have some exposure to, I tend to cut mechanical practice shorter and I'd like to invest more time on speaking and on writing. Depending on what is missing, maybe we explore the context for meaning, and then highlight form and a little bit of pronunciation. During the production, I sometimes don't hear students using any of the target language I put up on the board. In that case, I ask them to stop briefly and show or remind them the target language on the board. Just because you showed them something 20 minutes ago, it doesn't mean they will be able to use it right then. I ask them to choose three of the phrases to use before the task. They are supposed to choose the ones that they're uncomfortable or unfamiliar with. I try to make it a habit, but it doesn't always happen. I'm OK with them doing the task with whatever language they have at their disposal, in which case I just say, OK, this grammar wasn't today's focus, but you did the task very well. Then, I select a couple of correct and incorrect sentences and give feedback. If it's a good sentence, I mention the name of the student. Hopefully, it has an effect.” P8

To conclude, participants' cognitions in connection with drilling and practice demonstrated a multilayered body and complicated network regarding the four sequential phases often found in grammar lessons, namely, drilling, mechanical practice, freer practice, and production. Drilling was greatly valued by a few participants in terms of fostering the development of pronunciation, connecting text and speaking, affectively reducing anxiety through repetition and modeling particularly for lower proficiency level learners. While a few participants embraced the use of pronunciation drills enthusiastically due a variety of benefits, some others displayed hesitance or critique, citing reservations over artificiality and lack of natural communication. While mechanical practice was widely employed by a majority of participants to reinforce accuracy and recognition of the target structure, some pointed to the need to control its duration and

place in a grammar lesson to ensure a transition to more meaning-centered, interactive stages. A recurring theme seemed to be transformation of controlled practice into meaningful freer practice by inserting personalization, interaction, and creativity. Freer practice and production were of paramount importance since participants commonly discussed that it is essential to provide learners with ample opportunities to apply grammar in authentic, real-life, and communicative tasks. Furthermore, these two stages were perceived as key indicators on whether learning has taken place or not in addition to their pivotal role in consolidation of target grammar. All in all, the general landscape demonstrated that while participants considered that drilling and practice served important foundational and mechanized roles, they tended to value progression towards meaningful language use, achieving an adaptive harmony between lesson goals and learner needs.

4.2.3.6. Feedback

This subsection will explore participants' cognitions related to feedback in grammar instruction with three main feedback categories commonly addressed in the semi-structured interviews: delayed, immediate, and written feedback. Feedback remained a critical element in grammar instruction for the participants, functioning not only as a corrective tool but also a means of raising awareness of learners, promoting reflection on the learning process, and guiding learners to build accuracy and fluency. Participants discussed a wide range of strategies and tendencies of feedback, dependent on the teaching context, learner levels, classroom dynamics, and position of grammar in their minds.

Advocating for delayed feedback, Participant 24 mentioned that fluency can take over accuracy in terms of importance during communicative tasks. They exhibited a cautious stance against interrupting or reprimanding learners for errors in their attempts to produce language, asserting that this might result in loss of motivation and discouragement in learners. However, they proposed providing corrective feedback through recasting in grammar-focused lessons to enhance accuracy without disrupting the flow or communication. Their perspective depicted learner-centered and supportive characteristics valuing communicative competence in grammatical development.

"I think we should also value attempts to be fluent and later attempts to be accurate. This should be promoted because in the opposite, once you ask to construct something and

penalize that person by saying it's not accurate, what's the meaning of communication then? What we could do is to motivate them to be fluent and when it's the right time, if it's a grammar course, you can maybe do some explicit kind of correction through recasting. But we never should cut a fluent will. That's why discouraging people from performance is worse." P24

Similar to Participant 24, Participant 16 showed support for delayed feedback, noting "When it comes to producing in the classroom, I try not to interrupt them as long as they communicate, but when they finish the activity, then I will give some feedback on the accuracy." However, their cognitions suggest that feedback on accuracy was the main form of feedback in their grammar instruction.

Approaching the matter of feedback from a point of refinement and positive reinforcement, Participant 8 demonstrated a distinct set of cognitions to Participant 24 and 16. Their feedback strategies involve going beyond error identification and correction and include highlighting correct output and offering improved versions to indicate learners how they can elevate their language skills. With this slight deviation of demonstrating what is correct versus what is better, they strongly aimed to encourage learner engagement and motivation towards improving their proficiency levels. Participant 8 also observed that learners respond more actively to these enhanced suggestions, highlighting that learners might appreciate feedback that does not only revolve around accuracy but also feed sophistication in language use.

"At the end of the lesson, I obviously correct them and write a correct sentence on the board and put a tick. But for the last couple of years, I have started to insert a little something. I add another tick and say 'So this is a very good sentence and this is how you make it a better one.' That's when I noticed students taking notes, not when I correct them, but when I give them a better version of it. So if they're taking notes, they think that's something worthwhile. It's not about correct grammar or incorrect grammar. Maybe it's also about the level they want to get at." P8

Prioritizing fluency in communicative tasks, Participant 32 described a delayed feedback approach in their grammar instruction. In the last stage of their lessons, they conducted feedback sessions, using anonymous examples from learners' performance in the production stage and getting learners to correct their own errors with the help of peer correction.

"If I realize that they have self-confidence, and they can communicate, I don't interrupt them because fluency is more important in communicative activities. I take some notes there, and at the end of the lesson, I just provide a whole class feedback session, without naming the

students and the specific structures, I change those structures, or I make students correct them.” P32

Adopting a recursive approach in providing feedback, Participant 12 noted revisiting problematic grammar points later on with the aid of new tasks and collective error analysis. This circular loop of feedback could potentially help with reinforcement over time and stimulate active learner engagement with previous grammar mistakes.

“A few weeks later, I would review this problematic grammar point again with another task. Then, maybe I would give them collective feedback, or maybe, I would give them sentences and I would ask ‘What is the mistake here guys?’ So, I would go back to that.” P12

Participant 13 recognized the reciprocity of feedback, stating that students appreciated receiving accuracy and form related feedback not during but following speaking. Their beliefs indicated that feedback at the end of lessons was well-received especially in cases of non-fossilized errors.

“You get feedback from students as well. I remember many of them saying ‘The teacher does not stop me. That's a good thing. The teacher also points out the mistakes at the end of the lesson.’ The important thing is giving feedback at the end of the lessons as long as it is not a fossilized mistake.” P13

On the other side of the coin, depicting a detailed hands-on frame of mind on feedback, Participant 29 underscored the role of immediate feedback when learners repeatedly made the same grammatical errors. Highlighting that at the university level a certain degree of grammatical accuracy is to be expected, they were inclined to intervene in real time to tackle persistent grammatical mistakes. Their marked tendency towards timely, repeated correction eventually led to peer correction and prevention of fossilization.

“For me, if we’re talking about our students who have finished prep school successfully at tertiary level, they should be making at a minimum level of grammar mistakes. So in my classes, I started to spend more time teaching grammar and giving more mechanical exercises. I also started correcting my students, if they keep repeating the same mistakes. For example, I had a student last term who was speaking English very well, but he couldn't stop saying ‘I was go.’ Every time he made the same mistake, I corrected him. Sometime later, his friends started correcting him as well, he actually started to make fewer mistakes.” P29

Participant 10 exhibited a stage-sensitive feedback state of mind, providing immediate feedback during accuracy-based stages such as controlled practice during which form takes the stage. Further, they tended to avoid interruptions during fluency-based stages like production to offer delayed feedback afterwards. Their cognitions

regarding feedback carried characteristics of flexibility and versatility, counterbalancing accuracy and fluency dependent on lesson flow and goals.

“When I gave them my controlled practice, I tried to correct their errors on spot because the focus is on accuracy. That's why I tried to correct as many errors as possible right after I heard they were making some. Then, when I asked them to use it in a situation as part of the production task. As feedback depends on the aim of the activity and it was a fluency-based activity, I didn't stop them when they made mistakes. I just asked them to use the language as much as they can, and I gave them feedback on their accuracy after the language they generated.” P10

In line with Participant 10, Participant 18 stated arranging feedback dependent on the lesson stage. In addition, they mentioned providing on the spot feedback amidst mechanical exercises with the help of self-correction or peer-correction in the process. Employing guided questioning, they aimed to encourage peer feedback and set a collaborative atmosphere in their classroom.

“Actually, my approach depends on the step we are at. So, if we're at the mechanical exercise step, then I try to give some feedback on the accuracy. For example, I offer them two options if the student makes a mistake. Let's say, he used the relative pronoun, 'who' for a place, then I try to correct him by asking, for example, 'a place who or a place which?', if I'm not teaching 'where' in this case. I can also let some other students give feedback by asking 'Do you think it is correct? Can you help him?' Then we work on it together.” P18

Participant 17 described a situational perspective of feedback, hoping to manage the tension between fluency and accuracy during speaking activities. They acknowledged that interruptions in communicative activities might possibly disrupt meaning exchange and errors could be reinforced if they go uncorrected. Their inner conflict demonstrates a form of cognitive dissonance, stuck in between two distinct pedagogical goals of fostering spontaneous language production and prevention of error fossilization. To navigate these troubled waters, they gravitated to vary their feedback strategies from providing immediate correction on critical grammatical errors to giving delayed feedback to address some errors later. However, they mentioned struggling with mentally tracking learner mistakes in the case of longer sentences produced by learners.

“Accuracy is necessary. Fluency is also necessary. For example, while the students are speaking and they make mistakes, if you interrupt them, there will be no meaning, no context. But if you don't interrupt them, they might think that they use the structures correctly. Because sometimes, they produce long sentences, and I might forget some errors. I'm trying to keep a balance in correcting the mistakes. I don't correct their errors all the time. It

changes. If it's really critical, I stop them and then correct the mistakes. Sometimes I take notes, sometimes I'm trying to keep in my mind." P17

Participant 3 highlighted the potential in written feedback, particularly in smaller class sizes in the preparatory class where it is possible to provide each learner with individual attention. They considered written work especially helpful in managing diagnostics of repetitive grammar problems and providing targeted and personalized or whole-class feedback accordingly. They stated offering not only corrective feedback but also advice and resources for further self-study with the hope of enabling learner autonomy. Their enthusiasm for written feedback demonstrated a strong investment in their cognitions regarding writing instruction.

"If I have a written production of each student in my classroom, then that makes things easier for me, because nowadays we've got about 15 students in a class. It's easy to handle the written works of the students. I try to give written feedback. I sometimes give advice to them, because they have a responsibility there. For instance, if they're using a structure really in a problematic way repeatedly, I'm giving them written feedback and telling them that they can check, for instance, this material or this website and some other stuff. It's a kind of personal initiative there. Other than these, the whole class or some individual feedback would help if needed. Because our classes are not crowded nowadays, it's easy to diagnose the problem. I like teaching, writing, and giving feedback. Writing is my favorite there. From the written work of students, I get a lot of feedback about repetitive mistakes as well." P3

Along with Participant 3, Participant 30 highly valued written feedback. Considering learners' written work as source of diagnostics instead of a product in need of error correction, they stated pedagogically utilizing the common errors to conduct remedial teaching certain grammar topics or getting learners to self-explore their grammatical struggles. This reflective lens on written feedback allows room for solid and personalized learning through student-centered analysis.

"Written feedback is vitally important for me. The students' work is so precious. It is more precious than the feedback I provide to learners because in a way they discover their mistakes and I can reteach or summarize the topic based on their mistakes. It is more meaningful for them this way." P30

Participant 13 stated differentiating their approach of written feedback, utilizing error correction codes selectively dependent on individual learner grammatical awareness. They tended to provide indirect feedback if they think a student is capable of independently discovering and fixing their errors. They implied that using error correction codes was instrumental in fostering learner autonomy and deeper cognitive engagement

due to the reflective process learners undergo a process to resolve their grammatical errors. Unfortunately, they also stated that the majority of the learner profile lacked the skills to interpret indirect feedback provided with the error correction codes widely employed within the language school.

“At our school, we have error correction codes, and I use them. I think feedback depends on students, too. For example, when I write ‘prep here’ on a student’s paper, which means preposition is missing, that specific student probably will not understand what I mean. But sometimes, you know a certain student will understand this kind of feedback. So, if I know the student can understand when I write the correction code instead of the corrected version of the mistake, I prefer indirect feedback. This also enables students to work on and correct their own mistakes, which is always better. They’re not just recognizing the mistake but also thinking about it. But most of our students are not at that level, unfortunately.” P13

Drawing parallels to Participant 13 to a degree, Participant 35 displayed considerable skepticism regarding the employment of error correction codes and meta-language in written feedback, especially with lower proficiency levels. Sharing their frustrations, they shared their observations that learners tended to ignore the coded feedback and thus the learning process came to a halt. Due to learners not reflecting on their errors, Participant 35 considered coded feedback on errors particularly ineffective and time-wasting. Instead, they were inclined to take the direct route of providing feedback, supposedly thinking that giving learners corrected forms directly helps them in improving accuracy.

“When we focus on the grammatical structures and the meta-language, they do not pay attention, and they don’t try to understand what the correct form is. They just keep the papers. We spend time making corrections with the error correction codes, but if there is no learning, it’s not useful and it’s a waste of time. Students do not understand it. Maybe it doesn’t work with lower levels. But for higher levels, it might work. That’s why, instead of using this meta-language or codes, I prefer using the correct forms and I want the students to see it, internalize it, and then use it.” P35

To sum up, participants’ cognitive landscape of feedback in grammar instruction painted a picture of thoughtful, context-sensitive practices informed by learner needs, instructional goals, and teaching experience. Three categories of feedback emerged regarding grammar teaching: delayed, immediate, and written. The majority of participants reported favoring delayed feedback during fluency-based tasks in order to maintain communicative flow and not induce anxiety. They showed strong tendency to take notes in connection to grammatical errors during activities and provide whole-

class, anonymous feedback mostly on accuracy. Some participants reported utilizing immediate feedback, particularly in mechanical or accuracy-based activities with the hopes of preventing fossilization and reinforcing linguistically correct language use through real-time error correction. The need to intervene in repeating errors, especially in higher proficiency levels was stressed although the importance of not overwhelming students in real-time communication was also acknowledged. Furthermore, participants placed high value on written feedback, diagnosing common problematic areas and offering tailored feedback to each learner. While some instructors preferred to opt for direct feedback through error correction through explicit, highly guided forms of feedback, some tended to utilize indirect feedback through using error correction codes to prompt learners to foster autonomy and deeper cognitive processing. However, it was also stated that the success of such strategies mostly was dependent on learners' metalinguistic awareness with some participants voicing concerns regarding the effectiveness of code-based feedback for lower-level learners. Overall, although there definitely seemed to be room for improvement in the general landscape, participants mostly exhibited an adaptive mindset highlighting the function of feedback not merely as correction, but as a fundamental strategy in grammar teaching.

4.2.3.7. Communicative Language Teaching

In this subsection, university EFL teachers' cognitions in connection with communicative language teaching as part of grammar instruction will be discussed. While grammar instruction has traditionally been provided with the help of rule memorization and translation-based methodologies, a shift towards meaning-focused teaching has emerged in language classrooms, with communicative language teaching emphasizing practical use of grammar in real-life contexts. Participant 26 reported prioritizing grammar instruction with a communicative framework that mirrors authentic language use. They asserted that meaningful contexts should be key form of presenting grammar structures, critiquing traditional grammar teaching methods of grammar-translation for not addressing the modern-day learner needs and hence considered it outdated. Their cognitions reflected a strong tendency for contextualized learning through communicative language teaching as a connection between real-world language application and classroom grammar instruction.

“We cannot ignore the context and the communicative language teaching. In the past, the grammar-translation method, or just teaching grammar separately worked at some point, but I don't think it works now. When we provide the context for the students, it's easier for them to get the meaning and the structure, because in their daily lives when they need to communicate, the language will be in a context. In this sense, they need to see the grammar structure in a context so that they can use it in a similar context in real life.” P26

Participant 5 clearly aligns their grammar instruction cognitions with the main principals of communicative language teaching through prioritizing verbal meaningful communication and communicative competence over grammatical competence and form. They reported principally aiming for developing learners' ability to speak and convey meaning in real-world situations regardless of minor grammatical errors and accuracy problems. Their grammar instruction cognitions involve a conscious deprioritization of form-focused teaching, assigning the lead role to meaning-making within context rather than perfecting linguistic accuracy. Their idiosyncratic benchmark for communicative competence is when a learner can convey their thoughts to a non-Turkish speaker of English and be understood even when their grammar accuracy has flaws. In addition, they conceded that there might be more necessity of accuracy in writing, they firmly grounded their beliefs in the precedence of oral fluency and intelligibility. Their elaborate cognitive prospects are positively in support of functional and real-life communication instead of rule mastery, clearly in line with the deep-end communicative instruction paradigms.

“When it comes to form, I can say that I am interested in developing students' communicative skills. I am aware that this is not something that we should be doing, but my main objective is to teach my students how to speak, actually. Verbal communication is my main object. So, I don't pay attention to form at all. As long as they can make themselves understandable to whoever's listening, not just their friend, not just the native Turkish speaker. That's the level where I consider them to be sufficient. So, my focus on form is not that much, but when it comes to context and meaning, that's the purpose of grammar for me. I have a benchmark for that. I shouldn't be able to understand my students just because I know Turkish because they are translating directly from Turkish. So, I shouldn't be able to understand it because of this, but I should be able to understand it because, although they have a couple of mistakes, they manage to convey most of the message to me. That's kind of my benchmark, but of course it has a writing part. It requires accuracy, so we should be paying more attention to that, but for my students, I don't think that should be the priority. So, I approach it accordingly.” P5

Similarly, Participant 37 expressed full commitment to communicative approach but also mentioned the contextual limitations of preparing learners for the proficiency test at the end of the academic year, which requires them to plan their grammar instruction

according to both purposes without compromising either. They strived to achieve a state of equilibrium between communicative and context-orientation and exam study, tailoring their instruction bespoke to their learners' needs.

“Even though we have the context to create ideal conditions and communicative teaching, at the end of the day, we still have this proficiency exam, and we need to teach it. I want to organize my time and materials accordingly. I want to have communicative tasks, context-oriented teaching, and also exam teaching. So I need to work harder to do it.” P37

In summation, participants' cognitions on communicative language teaching sculpted a monument leaning towards meaningful, contextualized, and real-life communication. With the mindset that grammar does not have to be the final product and can function as a toolkit to enhance fluency and ensure intelligibility, the necessity of assisting learners in using target grammar within authentic contexts was constantly stressed. For some, verbal communication took precedence over grammatical accuracy and for others metalinguistic awareness outweighed communicative competence. The overarching theme of the tug-of-war between communicative ideals and vintage methodologies ran through the cognitive plains of grammar instruction in university language instructors.

4.2.3.8. Grammar Translation Method

In this subsection, participants' cognitive vista of grammar translation method will be explored. Despite being regarded old-fashioned in modern language teaching pedagogy, grammar translation method still holds prominence in the cognition versus practice dichotomy of language teaching. Participant 30 painted a pragmatic shift in their cognitions on grammar translation method. Despite being initially critical of grammar translation in their academic training, their teaching experience led them to give thought to its contextual practicality and usefulness, specifically in culturally and educationally warped environments where learners expect language learning to be a resembling experience and process to other academic subjects of math and science. This cognitive dissonance and learners' apparent inclination towards rule-based learning processes prompted Participant 30 to endorse grammar translation especially in lower levels since cognitive comprehension of abstract grammatical concepts can prove to be challenging and time-consuming. Even though they did not demonstrate full support for GMT as their sole grammar instructional preference, they reported learner expectations and cultural

learning norms could render L1 support and direct explanation techniques involved in GTM relevant and effective in their current setting.

“At first when I was at the faculty, we used to criticize GTM methods. However, when I started teaching more than two decades ago, I saw that we need it in a way. The reason can be cultural, general attitude of the students towards learning a lesson. Students think that they are studying a lesson just like they study something at high school like math, chemistry, etc. That's why they needed explicit grammar teaching, but not always, because sometimes, some students need it even in higher levels, and of course, there is an obvious fact that lower levels need it more. Still, teaching grammar directly, just like math, was not the only way. In a way, students' general understanding affects their attitudes and learning ability in English or in another language. However, in lower levels, it doesn't matter if you teach grammar, math or something else, it takes time to understand. That's why in such an environment; they need grammar because they are grammar focused. They need explicit Turkish GTM methods sometimes. This is one perspective.” P30

Following traditional teaching paradigms, Participant 14 revealed deeply ingrained grammar-centric cognitions fueled by their prior language learning experiences within the frames of grammar translation method. Although reporting not strictly adhering to GTM throughout the entirety of their lessons, they maintained a strong commitment to explicit rule explanations. They described a certain level of consistency in valuing clarity and form, hence providing direct and systematic grammar commentaries regardless of lesson stages, showing how their past learning process echoed in their instruction.

“Since I'm an old English teacher, I learned English through grammar translation methods. I can never just let it go. So my focus is on grammar very often, and I accepted that. I'm usually less flexible in writing but more flexible in speaking. It's quite important for me and for them to see the rules. I don't mean that I have to give them in a grammar translation way or before any productive exercises, but at the end of the day, in any part of the lesson, I will give them a clear explanation of that grammar topic.” P14

Participant 11 voiced an intentional support for grammar translation specifically through the strategic incorporation of L1 dependent on student level and lesson content. They stated GTM could exponentially prove useful with total beginner language learners in making it possible to understand intricate grammatical structures in L2. They also mentioned their occasional utilization of translation tasks with higher level students. Even though they stated GTM not being as their default instructional tendency, they still opted in a 50/50 approach of translation and other methodologies, making it their popular choice rather than a supportive tool in teaching grammar.

“I use L1 depending on the lesson and the level of the students. If they are zero beginners and the topic is quite new to them, I use L1. Sometimes, I use it with the upper levels just to make use of the grammar translation method. It works and they love it, but I don’t use it all the time, of course. I also can check if they can translate it correctly or not. I can see it explicitly with the help of GTM. Actually, I love it. In the teaching grammar process, maybe it’s 50/50, I neither use it too much nor too little.” P11

Along the same line with Participant 11, Participant remarked a pragmatic reliance on grammar translation method, fueled by learner expectations and institutional limitations rather as opposed to their subjective choices. Underlining the monolingual nature of their learner profile, they reported their grammar instruction switching to L1 and moving towards GTM in direct connection with learners’ insistence for explanations in L1. Along with learner expectations, they linked their rationalization for their use of translation to educational norms in the wider contexts of the country, instilling a rule-based, analytical approach into learner cognitions. They also commented that learners’ perspectives involving looking for clarity and logic in grammar and considering grammar rules as mechanical and formulaic shifted them into defaulting to grammar instruction with grammar translation. Additionally, they shared reservations regarding exploratory methods, perceiving them as time-consuming. Their set of cognitions formed an instructional design directed by practicality and learner-driven expectations.

To wrap up, participants held complex cognitions on GTM, demonstrating an intricate interplay between personal learning histories, contextual conditions, and pedagogical beliefs. While GTM might not be considered a contemporary paradigm by many, several instructors appreciated it with a practical mindset, especially in monolingual learning environments and lower-level learner groups or when a common desire for L1 explanation emerges in grammar teaching. GTM was viewed as a means to clarify grammar rules and structures and foster metalinguistic awareness. Across the board, selective and strategic use of GTM elements emerged, necessitated by cultural expectations and institutional norms. All in all, it can be concluded that while GTM does not exert dominance in grammar instruction, it still persists as a supplement, provided by instructors seeking to respond the learner needs within this specific language school.

4.2.3.9. Other Methodologies

In this section, participants' cognition regarding a range of supplementary or alternative methodologies or techniques that have emerged a few instances in the dataset and do not neatly fall under the more commonly discussed approaches will be explored.

Participant 21 exhibited a distinctly adaptive and eclectic cognitions in relation to grammar teaching, drawing on multiple methodologies informed by a variety of factors such as learner profile, lesson content, and learner motivation. Anchored in investment in professional development and long-standing reflective practice, their core philosophy leans towards discovery-based learning. Yet, they reported not always sticking to discovery methods and shifting to direct instruction, peer teaching, and even translations in cases where guided discovery prove fruitless. Their insight into emergent language and grammar surfacing naturally in conversation suggested an open mindset to growth. Their variation in grammar instruction techniques and versatile decision-making illustrated a learner-centered and flexible cognition, professional autonomy and prompt responsiveness to their immediate teaching environment, hallmarks of an experienced teacher who successfully strikes a balance theoretical ideals and classroom realities.

“In the last couple of years, there's no one single approach that can define how I teach grammar subjects. It depends on the topic, the students, and sometimes, on my motivation. According to those, I adopt different ways of teaching grammar. I've been reading books for the last 10-15 years and getting some training on this, and I think the one approach that could define my way of teaching grammar is helping them discover the rules by means of a text, an example sentences, a situation, or a tasks that could help my students see the gap in their knowledge, in their skills, and in their output. In this way, they ask for the grammar that will help them to say certain things or to be able to use the language in a certain context. But sometimes, I just dive into the topic and give them the rules, because in some classes, I don't see the need to spend 10 or 15 minutes helping them to discover the rules, because I know that this is not going to be helpful for those students. It doesn't work well with what is labeled as 'good grammar teaching' in most reference books with some group of learners. So I just give them the rule and see how they react to this kind of grammar teaching. Sometimes, I let them read the grammar rules at the back of the book and I ask them to tell each other what they have learned. Sometimes, I give them the Turkish examples, Turkish explanations and ask them to see the link between the examples in English. Sometimes, I don't even tell them the grammar topic, we just talk about something, and then it organically emerges out of the need to talk about certain things. I try to see how students best work in learning the new grammar items or aspects.” P21

Along the same lines with Participant 21, Participant 9 identified a responsive and emergent approach to grammar instruction, where the need for instruction on a certain structure arises organically out of learners' curiosity amidst natural conversation. Instead of executing a predetermined grammar agenda, they tend to be ready for teachable moments when their students need help with a structure they cannot figure out and ask for their assistance spontaneously. Deeply appreciating genuine learner engagement and need-driven instruction, Participant 9 prioritized taking on the role of facilitator, stepping in when needed to assist in understanding meaning.

"How I would like to and how I enjoy approaching grammar is when we just chat or we read something and something comes up, then they ask it and I explain to them. At that moment, we have this moment of 'AHA! That's why we use it here.' That's really enjoyable, I really love that because it's really a curiosity that comes from the students and I really feel like a teacher, a tool that is there to explain it at the right moment." P9

Participant 6 painted a needs-based perspective into grammar teaching, in which they create a communicative need before the introduction of grammar point. Prompting learners to produce target grammar structure to elicit the language item paves the way for them to present the grammar topic. This strategy mirrors principles of task-based instruction, learners encounter a gap in their language skills and feel the need and get motivated to learn. This way of building curiosity and demonstrating the functional aspect of grammar raises the awareness of learner through the discernment of grammar as a toolkit of meaningful expression rather than an isolated section of language. This technique reflects a learner-centered, context-driven set of cognitions, making grammar teaching engaging and relevant to learners' communicative needs.

"I tend to create a situation where they need to use the target language. So, first, students should feel the necessity to use that language item, that vocabulary item or that grammar point. When I start teaching a grammar point, I don't start with the grammar point, but creating the necessity to use language. For example, when I teach past habits with 'used to,' I try to create an imaginary person, his life back in the 70s and his life and habits now, but he's a changed person, so his habits were very different in the past. So, 'How can we express these habits like this?' So this is an example to create a necessary situation that students want to use the language, but they don't know what to use, and at that point, I introduce the grammar point." P6

Reflecting on a critical incident, Participant 8 shared a powerful instance of emergent language teaching, where a moment of deep emotional expression by their students resulted in a completely unplanned yet remarkably productive grammar lesson.

Confronted by a disinterested group of learners repeating the same language level multiple times, they swiftly decided to shift away from a failing lesson plan and instead based the context on students' frustrations and emotions in real life with the aim of exploring the mixed conditionals, target grammatical structure of that lesson. By eliciting student's regrets and personal experiences, they paved the way for engagement with grammar through real communication and reflection for learners while getting them to produce relevant and emotionally resonant content in line with lesson objectives. This specific example demonstrated how Participant 8 abandoned their lesson plan and followed their learners' lead in order to provide learner-driven and context-sensitive grammar instruction despite their initial self-doubt. Their utilization of classroom dynamics and connection lead to a successful learning process, embodying learner-centric and responsive teaching.

"I'd like to tell you about a positive experience, which started out like a complete failure. When we had a different system at our school, there were repeat classes. They were not fun and very challenging. Imagine a classroom full of students who didn't want to be there, and they were there the second time around. They knew things, but they failed, and they failed again. I was supposed to teach mixed conditionals. As soon as I started to write some sentences on the board, I started hearing groans and grunts. It wasn't fun and I have to say I wasn't as tolerant as I'd like to think I am now. I turned back and asked what was bothering them. One of the students said, in Turkish, 'This is probably the 4th or 5th time I'm seeing this on the board and it's not going to happen this time either' and everyone agreed. I could see the lesson plan was not going to work. I asked, in Turkish, how he felt, and he said he was frustrated and he wanted to feel less like a dumb person. Then I used that context. I erased what was on the board and wrote their sentences instead 'I wish I felt less like a dumb person'. A lot of the students felt that way, so they related to it. They made a lot of mistakes, and we used them. We talked about their regrets, mostly about prep school and English. So naturally, I was able to get sample sentences for Type 2 and 3. They were able to notice the mismatch between form and meaning. They asked questions, valid ones like 'You're asking me how I feel, but why is it in the simple past?' By the end of the second lesson, I remember this very same student. He raised his hand and he said 'I understood it' and I saw some other students nodding as well. It was a good feeling because it was not planned, obviously, and I was second-guessing myself the whole time. I think that kind of Q&A helped a lot. I don't particularly enjoy teaching grammar, but even now, I get goosebumps thinking about it. That was a good lesson." P8

Participant 25 told an account of personalization in their grammar teaching, in close alignment with communicative and meaning-centric paradigms. Through their short, engaging story containing an element of mystery and anonymous students, they

managed to set a context personally relevant and engaging for learners. Their skilled use of personalized context drew learners to quickly internalize the target structure without any conscious focus on form or rules. The focus shifting toward comprehension and interaction allowed for guided discovery and effective concept-checking, facilitating acquisition through meaning. Participant 25 reflected cognitions of student-centered nature and context-rich grammar instruction, enabling learners to engage emotionally with grammar and making the learning process enjoyable and memorable.

“Teachers can definitely prepare some context or exercises that would have close ties to your students and their needs. I remember one. I was teaching passive voice. I think I presented it in a very engaging way, and that’s why they were very interested. I created an only-5-sentence story, and I used some of the people in the class, but I didn’t tell them who I used. I only gave them the halves of five sentences. First, they matched the sentences, and then they tried to come up with the names. The story was about 3 students partying at school and then they decided to steal the questions of the quizzes. Then they stole the quiz, and my car. When they were running away, a policeman stopped them. That was the end of the story, only 5 sentences. So, I told them that I chose these three people because of the things that they shared with me. They were very engaged to find out who they were, and the grammar was not even there. We weren’t even thinking about the grammar, but the meaning was there, and everybody understood the story. When I asked them “The questions were stolen by who?” and some other concept checking questions, the whole class was answering the questions. It was so smooth that I was really shocked.” P25

In addition to personalization, Participant 25 expressed a clear tendency for Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) model in grammar teaching due to learners’ familiarity with the technique and their personal comfort in applying it. Acknowledging the student-centered and communicative characteristics of task-based teaching and guided discovery methods, they mentioned trying them out and defaulting to PPP since it is clearly structured in a way that met learner expectations. Reflecting on their experience with guided discovery unearthed an impression of counterproductive efforts and a sense of instructional strain due to avoiding directly explaining the rules. The friction between methodological ideals and classroom realities was clearly articulated in their reflection, demonstrating a set of cognitions influenced by teacher and learner preferences and the dichotomy of practical application versus theoretical knowledge.

“I mostly teach in PPP model. I present it in a listening or a written text, then I focus on the grammar. Afterwards, I try to practice it. This is what I am comfortable with, and I think it is also what my students are comfortable with. I tried different methods, for example, task-based teaching. It is more communicative than PPP, and I think PPP is a traditional way now.

So I tried different things, and I remember one of my students asked me why I was trying this hard and why I just didn't give them the rules. Especially in guided discovery, I try too hard. I sometimes feel like I'm playing a taboo game because I'm trying too hard not to give the rules and everything. That's why I prefer PPP Teaching when it comes to grammar, I think." P25

Participant 8 described a meticulous application of Test-Teach-Test (TTT) model and effective utilization of schema as part of their grammar instruction. They highlighted that even in relatively homogeneous classes in term of language proficiency, learners might have different levels of prior knowledge due to exposure to English in and outside the classroom. Therefore, they stated that they tend to begin their grammar teaching by assessing schema, which is what learners already know. In cases where they observe learners already show competence in the target grammar, they preferred to enrich learners' knowledge. In other instances where there are evident gaps or errors regarding the target structure, they tended to clarify and fix those issues. Their use of diagnostic testing at the onset to determine to what extent teaching is necessary showcases an, analytical, highly efficient and learner-needs-driven skillset that maximizes the use of time, learner autonomy and relevance.

"I'd like to begin with what they already know. Although our classes are somewhat homogeneous, but not quite. So first, I'd like to begin with understanding how much they know or if they know anything at all. Then, I'd like to either fix what's broken or add to what they already know. Sometimes, they already have a good command of a form, and in that case, I try to add to their grammatical knowledge. It could be an addition of an adverb, for example, because I've come to notice that they don't use adverbs as much, but I think a proficient language speaker does use them quite often, so I try to uplift what they already have. Sometimes, there are only mistakes or errors that need to be fixed, because English is everywhere. And sometimes when I give my students a test, as in the first test of 'test-teach-test,' if I don't see a particular problem, I skip to production, but there's usually something related to stress or contracted forms or something. If there's still a problem in the second test of the 'test-teach-test', I highlight it." P8

To conclude, as part of their grammar instruction, participants also stated utilizing various methods and techniques such as creating a need, eclectic grammar teaching, emergent language, personalization, PPP, TTT, and schema. Whether consciously or intuitively, teachers adopted these instructional tools into their grammar teaching philosophies to improve engagement, contextual relevance, and learner-centeredness. With the hopes of responding to differing learner needs, improving classroom dynamics, addressing time limitations, participants opted in a variety of methods, often merging and

fusing them. Some underlined the potential in creating a communicative need to introduce a grammar point, while others stressed the promise within personalization and schema activation as highly effective strategies to make learning grammar more personal and memorable. The remarks in this subsection revealed a rich tapestry of pedagogical orientations that clearly demonstrated the merits of reflective decision-making, professional training and learning from the experience of teaching.

4.2.4. Teacher Factor

In this section, how personal, professional, and psychological influences interact with teachers' cognitions of grammar instruction will be put under a microscope. Teaching processes does not take place in a vacuum as teachers operate in their classes with their cognitions informed by their prior language learning experiences, teaching backgrounds, emotional responses, self-efficacy perceptions. This section also will delve into the impact of professional development and reflective practice on teachers' grammar cognitions.

4.2.4.1. Language Learning Experiences

The first subsection under the Teacher Factor section will have a look at how prior language experiences, particularly through the lenses of apprenticeship of observation and anti-apprenticeship of observation, interact with participants' cognitions on grammar teaching. Both of these concepts are deeply intertwined with their experiences as language learners and can be described as whether they emulate the instructional strategies of their past teachers (apprenticeship of observation) or reject teaching approaches they experienced as unhelpful or discouraging (anti-apprenticeship of observation). Participants deeply reflected on how these past experiences of grammar instruction informed and molded their current practices and cognitions in grammar teaching whether consciously or unconsciously. These narratives showed that personal learning histories potentially act as a powerful blueprint or warning interacting with their instructional choices and additional language learning attempts.

Participant 7 mentioned learning Italian and how their prior learning experiences of English enabled them to shape their current language learning process and to discover the grammar, stating "Now, I'm trying to learn Italian by myself. I always compare Italian grammar with English. Knowing a second language helps me to figure out the grammar

rules of another language.” Similarly, Participant 22 depicted how their grammar-focused language learning might have shaped their cognitive framework in learning Spanish. Their experience with grammar-heavy instruction, prompted by their teacher and lesson materials, resulted in their habit of cross-linguistic comparison. This comparative language learning strategy revolving around transferable grammar indicated the lasting impact of apprenticeship of observation, in which their teacher’s methods were imprinted and later mirrored in their recent language learning approach.

“While learning Spanish, I always compare it with English. And, when I was learning English, I always focused on grammar again. I don't know, maybe it was because of our teacher. We used those English Language Studies magazines, and we had to finish all those grammar points first. That's why I had the same experience when learning Spanish, and I made a lot of comparisons between two languages, and it really helped actually.” P22

Looking back on their English learning experience, Participant 28 depicted a grammar-dominated education system prioritizing grammatical accuracy and providing rule-based instruction. In addition, they mentioned having limited early exposure to English through entertainment-based input, while their formal education almost exclusively concentrated on mechanical grammar practice and exams. Their account of overemphasis on decontextualized grammar might be considered as an example of anti-apprenticeship of observation, influencing their instructional choices today.

“I think the problem at that time was that English wasn't in our lives that much. We had only CNBC and computer games. And of course, there was an overemphasis, and grammar was the only part of language that we were aware of at that time, I guess. In my primary school times, we had only one teacher who was teaching us some English songs and stuff. Other than this, our exams were also grammar, writing some sentences, and completing dialogues. When we came to high school, we had a final test focusing on grammar solely. So the whole system was based on grammar. There was an inevitable emphasis on grammar.” P28

Standing in stark contrast to Participant 28, Participant 9 recounted a communicative and context-based language learning history. Having learned English in Germany through immersive, English-only teaching, they developed a fluent and functional command of grammar. Consistent and meaningful exposure and authentic language input depicted a strong apprenticeship of observation favoring fluency-oriented and communicative teaching philosophy.

“I studied English in Germany, so before I came to Turkey, I didn't even know most of the names of the tenses, but I could fluently use all of them. Yeah, I learned English in Germany. In fifth grade, we started learning English, and my first teacher never spoke German, he always spoke English. My second teacher was a Scottish native speaker. It was integrated

books similar to the ones we have now, but of course, I don't remember so many details, but the grammar was restricted to the exercises that followed the contextual language.” P9

Contrasting with Participant 9, Participant 6 described a grammar and accuracy-oriented language learning background, where making accuracy mistakes carried a certain level of stigma in the learning environment. Even though they personally excelled within the system and enjoyed their performance, they observed that many of their peers developed negative attitudes toward learning English due to the accuracy-focus involved in it. This might be indicative of the risks involved in the overemphasis on accuracy, especially for young learners. Rather than following the form-focused education models they learned English through, the participants revised their cognitions and moved to a more communicative and learner-centric grammar instruction, revealing a conscious cognitive evolution in pedagogy.

“I had 24 hours of English at a prep school in a week at the age of 11. We had very good teachers and materials, but the focus was on grammar, structure, and accuracy. We believed in the god of accuracy when we were learners. We couldn't make mistakes because they were the worst thing you could do. Accuracy was more important for us as a learner. All of the quizzes and tests were about grammar and vocabulary, so that made them more important. I loved it and I didn't hate it because I was good at it. But the other students who didn't like English back then had developed a negative feeling about the whole language. And it's because of the given importance on the accuracy back then, people went off the language at such a young age. You see, there was a change. When I was a learner, I was taught merely grammar and language use mostly, but as I began to teach, I shifted my beliefs and my whole learning experience to a more communicative side.” P6

Manifesting very similar motives, Participants 10 and 24 describe prior language learning processes revolving around Grammar Translation method, prioritizing accuracy, form, and rules at the expense of meaningful and communicative production. Participant 10 recalled not being able to apply grammatical knowledge in real life situations and struggling with pronunciation, which resulting in them purposefully avoiding translation. Participant 24 severely censured their teachers who tended to equate grammar mastery with proficiency in language, only to realize that such a grammar-centric approach left learners unable to communicate effectively and fend for themselves. Both participants' rejection of grammar centered language teaching methodologies and resistance to replicate them clearly manifest an anti-apprenticeship of observation.

“When they started teaching me English, it was only grammar. They were teaching me the rules and I wasn't able to use them in any given situation. They used only the Grammar-Translation Method, so when I was preparing for the exams, I wasn't able to produce anything

at all. Not only did I use the grammar accurately, but also I wasn't good at pronouncing the words correctly. That was one of the challenges I faced while learning the language. Because I remember those days, I'm trying not to translate anything in my lessons and trying to help my learners understand what it means, again, by providing them with meaningful contexts.” P10

“We used to have teachers in the past who were just opening a grammar book and were only focusing on the form and the structure. They were thinking this is grammar and this is English and this is language. And if you do that well, you know the language, you speak the language but later on, you see these people in real life and during a conversation, they are not able to use that structure either in their sentences because they cannot construct a meaningful context within that complicated grammar they are teaching their entire lives. So I kind of protested these teachers.” P24

Similar to Participant 10, Participant 19 also described a rule-centric grammar instruction in their language learning journey which left them well-prepared for tests but ill-equipped for real life language production. Because they had trouble bridging the gap between their knowledge of the rules and their application, their language performance was seriously hindered by anxiety. This anti-apprenticeship of observation experience transformed their teaching philosophy putting more emphasis on practical use rather than memorization to encourage their learners to concentrate on usable, relevant grammar details instead of mastering every little detail.

“The most important effect was that I was taught grammar rules actually, but I didn't really know how to use them. I had every bit of knowledge about grammar, but then when I started university, that was the most difficult thing for me. I could solve all the multiple-choice questions without any hesitation, but when it comes to writing and especially speaking, and it's a little bit anxiety driven kind of skill, it was really difficult because I didn't have that much experience about applying all those grammar rules into real life. At that time, I realized that I've learned that many rules but I had a lot of difficulty in remembering which ones I had to use. And now, I know that I don't need to force my students to remember every bit of information, they just need to pick up the ones that they can make use of.” P19

Participant 28 shared their test-oriented language learning process similar to Participant 19, dominated by multiple-choice grammar tests, which both participants considered constraining in retrospect. While Participant 28 conceded having had some good teachers, they also stated that the overall system lacked depth and variety for their generation due to the exclusive overreliance on testing formats. This washback effect caused them to be dissatisfied with their learning process and led to intentionally steer away from methods through which they were instructed as a student.

“I was a language student, so I needed to know every stupid detail of the English language, but my students don’t need it. And also, I took some lessons from my learning experience of course, but to be honest, to some extent. I can’t say that I had a completely bad learning experience, so I try to make it good with my students, because I had good teachers as well, and I was happy with them, but our whole system was focused on multiple choice tests. So that’s one thing. When I started university, I realized that there are so many ways of teaching English and I was really disappointed about the time that I was a student. so I believe that it didn’t affect much. Of course, I learned some stuff from my own learning experience, but still, we didn’t have a very good learning experience, as a whole generation. It could be different, but generally, we were just solving multiple choice questions. Now, I don’t give my students any multiple-choice questions in my classes.” P28

Participant 27 described a change from an exam-driven, grammar-centric mindset a learner to a communicative understanding as a teacher. They explained that their earlier success in grammar-centered exams did not translate into fluency in their speaking skills, leading them to deeply reconsider their conceptualization of effective language learning.

“I have always been a language learner for all my life, and I’m still a learner. The thing is that when I started teaching English, my concept of language learning changed. When I was a student, I was grammar oriented because I was preparing for the exams. I couldn’t speak English fluently, but I was very good at my exams. Now, I think in retrospect, and I see that it shouldn’t have been that way.” P27

Similar Participants 24, 10 and 28, Participant 38 critiqued having received explicit and form-focused grammar instruction and stated that despite their strong knowledge of grammar rules, they had limited speaking ability even during the undergraduate studies. They went on to identify the core issue as not grammar instruction per se, but the lack of opportunities for learners to practically practice the grammar input on the wider context of the country. This epiphany raised their grammar teaching cognitions to the level of helping their learners understand the purpose of the target grammar. The shortcomings in their language learning process inspired them to allocate more room for communicative use of grammar in their classroom practice.

“The grammar was taught to me explicitly and I struggled a lot while speaking English even when I was a university student, although I knew everything about grammar, every little detail. In Turkey, we teach a lot of grammar to our students, but when you look at the whole picture, no one can speak English as much as they’re supposed to speak. If we need to change something, which we do, then we need to start from here I believe. We already focused on teaching grammar explicitly and it didn’t work. Now, I’m trying to do a different thing than my teachers did in the past. They focused on grammar a lot. In fact, the problem was not that they focused on grammar a lot but that they didn’t give us enough chances to use that grammar

in the classroom. I learned a lot of grammar, but I didn't know what to do with this grammar. So now as a teacher in my own classroom, when I teach grammar, I try to motivate my students to use grammar in the classroom so that they can understand why they need that grammar point". P38

Drawing parallels to Participant 38, Participant 25 highlighted the ineffectivity of the grammar-heavy language education they received within the traditional frameworks. Through a thorough analysis of their teachers' traditional practice of teaching grammar, they recognized the likely cause to be outdated training and learning experiences of their teachers in the past.

"I think it is related to our teachers' education at university because in our field, things have changed. For example, I remember my university education and we were learning about task-based English teaching, but I don't think our teachers at high school learned about anything related to communicative language teaching. Maybe those were mentioned in a way at their universities, but that was very limited, I guess. Also, I think it is related to how they were taught back when they were students. So they repeated that and because of their background experiences and their education at university, they were feeling confident and comfortable with teaching in a very traditional way. We received education in a traditional way, and I think that shaped our learning. So that's why we know that it doesn't work in traditional ways. It didn't work for me. I hated English classes in high school because we always talked about grammar. I was taught that way, but it wasn't the good way. I had that knowledge even before university education. As a learner, I knew that that wasn't the correct way of teaching English. So that experience guided me." P25

Contrasting two formative language experiences, Participant 11 commented on the distinctions between rigid, rule-based and contextualized, integrated grammar instruction. Although, their initial perception of language learning was formed by a strict teacher prioritizing grammatical accuracy and pure memorization, later they were introduced to contextualized grammar through text-based learning by a non-specialist instructor at a private course. Comparing both methodologies, they were inclined towards a communicative, learner-centered teaching philosophy relating it to better learner engagement and easier retention.

"I remember in my high school years when I was taught English. We had a very strict teacher and she was teaching us just the grammar rules. She was obsessed with grammar rules, and I thought teaching and learning language is a process like this for a while. Then, I went to a private course for the university exam, and I had a teacher there. Actually, she was not an English teacher, she was a psychology major graduate, and I think she knew how to teach language more than the other teacher of mine. After her, I came up with this new teaching and learning style. She used to teach us vocabulary and grammar rules by giving us

interesting texts. In her classes, we just read and analyzed the text, its grammar and vocabulary. Then, we did some specific exercises based on that specific target language and vocabulary items and I still remember the topics I read there. So, when language items are given in context, it's more meaningful and learning becomes permanent, and it's going to be a more and more fruitful lesson for both teacher and students. So, grammar should definitely be taught in a context, not apart from it." P11

Approaching their language learning experiences from a perspective of learner identity, Participant 23 reflected on a step-by-step learning process through deconstructing and reconstructing of language, a system they extended into their grammar instruction. Their cognitions that teaching through their own learning lens can enhance learning effectivity demonstrated how personal learning strategies and preferences can deeply influence pedagogical choices.

"I believe what made me a learner helps me become what I am now. This is what I believe. As a learner, I tried to put things into smaller pieces, and then put them together again. For example, while I am learning the structure of a language, I just try to learn one-by-one and then put them together, and when I am teaching now, I try to do the same to my students, but of course it depends a lot on the student personality and learner types. So first, I try to do my way and then I try to do their way. I try to make a combination of both, because I believe I teach the best in the way I learn. So what kind of a learner I was contributes a lot to what kind of a teacher I am now." P23

Exhibiting strong apprenticeship of observation, Participant 8 shared a vivid account of their exposure to context-rich and performance-based language learning process, which made lasting mark on their teaching mentality. With grammar not stealing the limelight through analysis and staying in the background in activities, the input became more meaningful and memorable through use and repetition, fostering implicit grammar acquisition. Their teacher's referral to intonation with the word 'music', a word learners could easily understand and follow demonstrated an effective strategy of prioritizing natural rhythm and fluency. The great degree of appreciation underlying their memory for learning through discovery, relevance and personal engagement informed their pedagogical inclinations to contextualized, learner-driven grammar teaching. Their narrative embodies how a positive model in the early language learning processes could inspire communicative and inductive teaching paradigms.

"I remember one of my teachers had a cassette player. Each week, he played a conversation, and we listened to it. He did what I think any of us would do with a listening text. But at the end of the day, he would say this is your homework for this week, you will memorize it, you will act it out. Bonus points, if you get the music right. He said music, not intonation, not

pronunciation. We were very interested, and we were tick-hunting because if you get the script right, you would get a tick. If you get the music right, if you'd get two. We knew it was more important. Now that I think about it many, many years later, those conversations had a grammatical structure, but we didn't focus on them. But we got the conversation, the context, and I think a lot of the structures just got stuck in our tongue because we were not after grammar. It was meaningful. In all the conversations, we knew about the different characters or speakers. The language we would use would be different, so we even knew about appropriateness and register although the teacher never really highlighted any of them like 'Look! there's this shiny piece of grammar here.' I think that was useful. I like jigsaw puzzles and piecing things together. As a learner, I didn't like when the structure was right in front of me. I think I'm in favor of context, guessing, finding out and discovery. Because I think that it comes with a feeling of achievement, and this is important if you want things to continue, I think. I pretty much prefer it but for that to happen, I think the context needs to be clear, relevant, and when I say relevant, I mean clear and relevant to the students." P8

On a distinct note, showing professional alignment and apprenticeship of observation with Grammar Translation Method, Participant 20 shared their views of grammar taking the central stage in their language teaching, informed by their educational background. Even though they conceded that GTM is under criticism by contemporary linguists and academics, they maintained that learner expectations and cultural tendencies are in line with it. Their positive personal experience with traditional instruction reinforced their ongoing cognitions regarding its validity even in the face of evolving pedagogy and transforming landscape of teaching.

"I think grammar teaching is the main part of teaching a language or learning or teaching a language. I'm an old-fashioned teacher and many linguists or academics are against grammar-translation methods, but I'm in favor of grammar-translation method. I think that it obeys the Turkish students' characteristics, and they will be more capable of learning by grammar-translation method. I don't use much translation, but grammar is the main part of my lessons I can say. We learned the same, grammar-translation method. It was in the 1980s, so there weren't any modern methods used by teachers. If you ask me if our teachers were successful, I would say they were successful, but some others weren't. So it was good for me I can say." P20

Similar to Participant 20, Participant 36 noted "My learning background is like my teaching. I learned English in a very detailed way. Maybe my teaching style stems from my background." indicating a direct connection between personal learning history and current instructional practices.

Demonstrating apprenticeship of observation, Participant 35 stated the cognitive dissonance between their tendency to provide implicit grammar instruction in line with

their experiences as a learner and their students' expectations of explicit grammar teaching. The tension between their past learning and classroom realities depicts a constant negotiation of apprenticeship of observation and practical classroom experience.

“During the first years of my career, I was trying to teach grammar in an implicit way in a class, although I was taught English like this, I've experienced that my students cannot learn in that way. They want to hear or to see the rules and structures on the board. This is not the way I was taught when I was learning. That's also why it's a kind of conflict, I guess. My way is still to teach implicitly.” P35

Similarly, Participant 14 commented on their learning process in the past “I always have an image of my grammar teacher. I'm teaching at university now, but she's still clear in my mind, and her way of teaching quite affected me when I was a student. I still try to be like her.” depicting a strong apprenticeship of observation that continues to influence their instructional choices.

Overall, the findings clearly suggested that prior learning experiences of university EFL instructors had significant impacts on their cognitions about grammar instruction. Participants vividly recounted anecdotes and memories from their language learning journeys, commonly underscoring the powerful and enduring influence of their language teachers in the past and instructional tendencies. Some instructors identified positively with their past learning experiences, replicating approaches like grammar translation or explicit grammar teaching in their skillset, clearly indicating apprenticeship of observation. On the other hand, many other instructors commented on their formative negative learning experiences often characterized by excessive grammar drills, exam-focused teaching, a deficiency of communicative practice, which cast their cognition sets in the opposite direction, signaling anti-apprenticeship of observation. Within their narratives, participants reiterated the argument that purely grammar-based instruction caused shortcomings in their learning process, citing having struggles with fluency, speaking anxiety and practical application of their grammar knowledge. As a consequence of these frustrations, they tended to adopt more communicative, integrated and learner-centered pedagogical instruction. The cognitive reflectivity manifested by participants pointed to an intricate layer of awareness in relation to the restrictions and value born out of traditional grammar-centric methodologies and established a close correlation between purely personal language learning experiences and professional identities, philosophies, and in-class practices in terms of grammar.

4.2.4.2. Teaching Practice

This subsection will examine how teachers' classroom practice experiences accumulated over the years interplay with their cognitions and approaches related to grammar teaching.

Participant 17 pointed to the crucial role attached to personal experience in grammar instruction, painting in-class practice as an inherently isolated and individual endeavor. Although they conceded the availability of extensive ELT literature, their cognitions signal that theoretical frameworks often fall short when placed in the classroom environments and realities. This set of cognitions seemed to be fed by the dichotomy between theory and practice, pushing teachers into navigating their own paths and developing their own praxis, independently adapting and refining methodologies through direct classroom incidents.

"I have been doing this job for quite a long time. I am not saying that I am not giving importance to one specific methodology, because there is a wide range of literature in ELT, but what I see is when you enter the classroom, you are all alone. So all the written things might not help you, and you have to find your own way. This is what I do, in fact." P17

Participant 11 described a rapid evolution in their grammar teaching cognitions prompted by a critical incident in the form learner feedback. As a novice teacher they were inclined towards providing immediate error correction and tended to frequently stop their learners to correct grammatical mistakes. However, a student's comments on the disruptive nature of constant and instant corrective feedback resulted in a cognitive shift to incorporate delayed feedback into their practice instead. This reflective moment marked a critical milestone for Participant 11, prompting them to self-monitor and gradually adjust their instructional choices. This narrative is a clear indication of how learner interaction with teachers can serve vital functions in meaningful pedagogical development and increased teacher awareness.

"In the first years of my teaching, I was always interrupting my learners. 'No, stop, you will say like this. OK, this is wrong.' I was always interrupting my learners to correct them, and I didn't realize it until one of my students told me this, 'You're always stopping us to tell the correct structure. Why don't you let us speak, and then you can tell us the correct form?' So, I realized this after four or five years of teaching, with the help of one of my students. Then, I tried to stop myself in the classroom, I tried to remind myself not to rush and give delayed feedback to that specific student or the whole class. So, I got used to it by doing practice, after some time." P11

On a different note, Participant 21 explained a significant cognitive and practical change regarding the use of L1 in grammar teaching, influenced by learner feedback and teaching experience. Consciously avoiding learners' native language, they adopted a strict solely English approach in their grammar instruction. Although this practice was reinforced by positive learner feedback, they explained that their perspective over this matter evolved considerably through deep reflection on it. This cognitive shift enabled them to recognize the pedagogical value in L1 and systematically integrate L1 into their grammar instruction, highlighting how teacher cognitions might transform in line with or in opposition to learner feedback and classroom dynamics through teachers' initiative and sustained teaching experience.

"About 10 years ago, L1 use was almost non-existent. I deliberately refrained from having any kind of L1 in my teaching, when I was presenting or clarifying the new language item, which some of the students appreciated and they came to me and said, 'This is really good. At first, we didn't understand anything, but you kept doing it, and after a couple of weeks, we were able to follow you. So thank you.' That was the reaction that I got from some of the students. But maybe the other ones that weren't happy, they didn't even come to me and complained about it. In the last, maybe 6-7 years, it's become a core part of my grammar teaching." P21

Participant 22 reflected a shift in their instructional orientation over the course of their teacher career from a form-focused approach to a function-driven mindset. They commented on their novice teaching years and stated that they initially gave precedence to rule presentation and board work. However, as they gained teaching experience, they realized that understanding the purpose and communicative function of grammar structures are key to support deeper learner comprehension and more accurate production.

At the beginning of my teaching years, I always focused on the form. I always started writing the rules on the board. But after years, I realized that the function is more important, because if students don't know the function of it, why to use it, then they don't understand the logic of that grammar point. So the form doesn't really matter. P22

Demonstrating the fluctuating characteristic of teacher cognition, Participant 29 shared the evolution of their perspective on grammar instruction throughout their teaching career. In the initial stages of their teaching experience, they were inclined to place minimal emphasis on grammatical accuracy and more emphasis on fluent communication in line with communicative approaches that downplayed the role of grammar in language learning. However, they were prompted to reevaluate their cognitions and practice due to a noticeable decline in learners' grammatical competence in time. This induced a renewed

attention to grammatical accuracy in their cognitive set, illustrative of how practical observations can dynamically reshape cognitions.

“Now, grammar is not the core of the teaching and learning process. Let me talk about one of my early experiences in teaching. At tertiary level, I didn't pay a lot of attention to grammar when I first started teaching, because the methodology, the approaches and the understanding of teaching did not put the grammar in the core. I never corrected grammar mistakes while my students were speaking, so the skills were more important to me. Our basic purpose was to communicate and teaching to communicate was important for me. But as time passed, our students' expertise in using grammar decreased and kept decreasing all the time. Now, at this level, I see that most of our students have problems using accurate grammar and it didn't use to be like that. Although we didn't pay a lot of attention to grammar back in those days, our students weren't making as many mistakes as our students are doing now. So I started to pay more attention to grammar, and I keep grammar as a bigger component of my teaching process. So when I was a student, grammar was the core. When I started teaching, grammar wasn't very important. And now grammar has become more important to me.” P29

A considerable change occurred in the cognitions of Participant 30 over the course of their career, with them noting, “When I was an inexperienced teacher, I used to make more explanations for students. However, in time, I learned that little explanation, more student talking time, more students questioning it, and producing the language is more effective.” The evolving and dynamic nature of language teacher cognition is mirrored in their shift from teacher-centric to learner-centered pedagogy, focusing more on the learner aspects of engagement and autonomy in their classes.

Adding to Participant 30, Participant 2 openly shared how early-career challenges in practice and cognitions significantly reshaped dependent on accumulated teaching experience. At the onset of their teaching career, they tended to underestimate the potential benefits of lesson preparation, reliant on textbooks and their guidance. They vividly recalled the ineffectiveness and discomfort of merely reading out loud the grammatical rules from the textbook to introduce target grammar structures. These challenging and decisive moments served as tipping points in their practice as a teacher, prompting deeper reflection and greater commitment to lesson preparation. As their teaching experience increased through the years, repetitive practice and reflective thinking enabled them to get more confident and effective in their grammar teaching practice. Their initial struggles and following change through practical teaching experience are demonstrative of the evolution and refinement of pedagogical skills and cognition.

“A few times in my early years, I went to the class thinking I know the content and I don't need to check it or prepare it. It was really bad on my part as a teacher, and I made some mistakes. What is even worse than this was related to how I tried to teach the grammar again in my first or second year. All teachers followed the book. We just went into the classroom just to teach grammar, which is not a good idea actually. I read from the book about why we use that structure or grammar point and the students were there listening to me, or not. Now when I think about it, it's a cringe worthy moment for me. But these moments taught me you have to make mistakes to be better. Now, I'm happier with my grammar lessons because lesson preparation is important for me. I feel so much more confident. Doing the same books and grammar structures really taught me a lot. They showed me how to teach better and how to approach things.” P2

In a similar fashion, Participant 35 commented on undergoing a complete overhaul in their teaching cognitions driven by teaching experience and emotional reflection. Attempting to reach the idealistic goal of universal learner achievement, they felt personally responsive for their students' varied performance in summative assessment. Upon experiencing stress due to learners' failures in spite of their continuous efforts, they consciously came to observe and acknowledge factors underlying learning performance such as individual differences, learner motivation and interests over several years. This epiphany paved the way for a more realistic and grounded perspective of teaching efficiency and learner achievement, moving from self-blaming to a conscious awareness of the diversity of learner needs and abilities.

“I was really sad about one of the quiz results in the past. I had some students who got 90 and some students who got 30. I was really sad because I couldn't teach those students, but later on, I understood this was not about me. Unfortunately, it took several years to figure that out. When I first started teaching, I was more idealistic and I wanted all the students to learn the same way, which is not possible. I used to focus on every student and I wanted them to learn all the points. But after a few years, I understood that it's not possible because there are different factors like individual differences, motivational differences, interests and so forth.” P35

To conclude, the results suggested that teaching experience takes a pivotal role in the dynamic nature of language teacher cognition. Participants openly shared and commented on early career challenges and their pedagogical growth and adaptative transformations informed by their cumulative in-class teaching practice. For some, initial experiences unearthed a clear disconnect between theoretical foundations and classroom realities, highlighting the formation of praxis in time. Common among the narratives was a move from teacher-centeredness to learner-focused approaches, informed by learner

feedback, observation of learner performance and progress, and personal trial-and-error experiences. These personal accounts also depicted how teachers gained greater confidence and developed a nuanced understanding of their professional identity through amassing experiences of teaching. All in all, the profound impact of cumulative teaching experience on transforming teacher cognition was highlighted through reflective, flexible and context-tailored grammar instruction.

4.2.4.3. Teacher Emotions and Self-Efficacy

This subsection will take a close look at teacher emotions and self-efficacy and how teachers' feelings, self-perceptions and cognitions interplay with their instructional effectiveness of grammar. Teacher emotions and sense of efficacy are instrumental to their instructional decision-making, motivational levels, and ability of responding to the challenges emerging in classrooms. These psychological factors seemed to be in a dynamic interaction, influencing teachers' behaviors inside the classroom and their overall satisfaction with the professional practice on a daily basis. For instance, Participant 37 directly connected their self-efficacy to learner success and performance, stating "If I see the students are using the target structure correctly or at least they are trying to do it at the end of the class, I feel that I achieved something. I feel like it was a good lesson." This is a clear indication of how perceived learner progress can substantially reinforce teachers' satisfaction with their teaching acts and their continued commitment to good grammar instruction.

Participant 15 revealed how deeply emotions and passion are entangled in their teaching experience. Although they have been teaching over two decades, they stated still experiencing strong emotions at the beginning of each term. Their teaching enjoyment of grammar and other language skills contributed considerably to the creation of a positive classroom presence. Their learners acknowledged their enthusiasm for teaching, showcasing the powerful impact of teacher emotions on instructional effectiveness and learner engagement.

"It has been more than 20 years, and I still feel like it's my first year. Before each term, I get excited and get nervous, and at the end of each term, I sometimes can't help crying. I enjoy most of my grammar lessons because I love teaching, it doesn't matter if it is reading, writing, listening, or speaking. My students tell me I'm an enthusiastic and energetic teacher." P15

Along similar lines with Participant 15, Participant 14 expressed a strong degree of self-efficacy and enjoyment in relation to grammar teaching. They indicated

confidence in their capability to teach grammar effectively. Their teaching enjoyment was directly linked to proficiency levels, feeling satisfied with lower levels and even greater enjoyment with higher levels. However, their enjoyment with grammar teaching contrasts with other skills of writing and speaking, which may not yield the same degree of satisfaction. Their cognitions demonstrated how perceived self-efficacy and personal confidence can positively impact emotions and overall enjoyment.

“Most of the time I can say that I feel really satisfied after my grammar classes because I can do it well, I believe. After most of my grammar classes, I feel like I did a good job, even with the lower levels. A higher-level class, of course, is more enjoyable, but, even in lower levels, that's OK for the grammar part. I can't say the same thing for the writing sessions or speaking sessions all the time, but grammar is OK for me.” P14

In a similar manner, Participant 23 commented on how emotional states and self-perception might contribute to or hinder the effectiveness of grammar instruction. They noted that their preconceived fears or expectations for learners' performance in understanding a certain grammar topic can turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy, resulting in unsuccessful classes. This kind of doomsday mindset can create a domino effect that influences their self-efficacy due to feeling uncomfortable and losing confidence. Teachers' anticipation of failure might negatively inform and shape their lesson delivery and further reinforce those fears, depicting the reciprocity between teacher emotions and lesson outcomes. Reflecting on their emotions and experiences, Participant 23 asserted that undertaking lessons with an open and positive mindset could prove fruitful in maintaining confidence and providing effective instruction.

“Sometimes, for some topics, I think that students are not going to understand it. When I start like this, it becomes really difficult for them to understand already. I am afraid of something, and that fear comes true, and it's the same in teaching. If I am scared that I am not going to make it, I am not going to teach. Well, those days generally end up like this, because I don't feel comfortable and lose my self-esteem a little bit. This is one of the reasons, prejudice. I believe we should be open at the beginning of the lesson so that everything could go well at least.” P23

Participant 26 stated that learners and they might experience a lack of security when grammar instruction is not provided explicitly and is not reinforced through mechanical activities, saying “Without any explicit teaching, without any mechanical activities, students do not feel secure, and I also do not feel secure.” Their cognitions clearly indicated that emotional states and personal comfort might be in correlation with instructional choices.

Participant 9 shared a powerful narrative about emotional vulnerability, teacher identity and self-efficacy struggles language teachers might face during the early years of their career. They recounted a negative classroom experience where their learners questioned her explanations, exposing her lack of confidence in using grammatical terminology and handling spontaneously emerging queries. Their close age difference to the students might have amplified their feeling of self-doubt, particularly when they overheard students' sarcastic comments. This personal story opens a window on how a teacher's perceived failure to meet their professional ideal self of knowing everything about the language can potentially cause intense emotions of shame, anxiety, and insecurity and even psychosomatic responses like stomach aches. Even though the participant mentioned a past experience and is now an experienced teacher, it could easily be argued that their anecdote of this critical incident underscores the absolute necessity for emotional resilience, mentorship, and supportive professional environments to help novice teachers navigate such moments without internalizing them as professional inadequacy or low self-efficacy.

"There is a negative memory I remember very clearly. It was in my first years of teaching. It was this grammar lesson, and it was the higher-level group. The students were a bit critical, they were like 'Why can't we use this tense here?' But, when we have structured exercises, the actual aim is to use the structure that we've just taught. I didn't have the experience, and I was really stressed they would ask questions that I couldn't explain, or I didn't have the grammatical terminology. And because I was younger, our ages were closer, they felt that I was stressed. They asked me questions like 'Couldn't we use this tense here?' And I said 'Yes, that's possible too.' then they made a joke about it, 'Yes, that's possible too.' They talked behind my back, and I heard that. 'Yes. She's the teacher. She says that's possible, too'. But I didn't know at that time that I could just say 'Yes, that's possible too, if this was an exercise for all tenses.' I thought that I had to know all the answers, or I had to explain everything, and hearing that made me feel so bad about myself. I felt like I wasn't professionally good enough that the students were joking at my back. They didn't like the way I was teaching, and they didn't trust me anymore that I really knew what I was doing. It was like the worst experience I had. I clearly remember the feelings I had at that time. I don't know how to explain the feeling, but I felt insecure, unsuccessful, failed, and ashamed. I had a lot of negative feelings about it and I didn't want to go to that class. I had stomach aches." P9

Furthering the emotional turmoil caused by their struggle with grammatical terminology, Participant 9 stated even though they had confidence in their fluency and contextual explanations, they admitted to feeling inadequate when learners expected formal and technical explanations with precise grammatical terms. The shift to a skill-

based language teaching system within the preparatory class, with a certain emphasis placed on grammar for extended periods of time, intensified this pressure and caused feeling of anxiety and professional insecurity in Participant 9. This experience echoed their previous anecdote and demonstrated how a lack of mastery in linguistic metalanguage can undermine a teacher's confidence and lead to a significant blow to teacher self-efficacy and emotional well-being.

“When I started teaching, we had skill-based lessons, so, for it two hours just grammar, for example. That was really scary for me. To be honest, in the first years, most of my colleagues were so good at all of the details of grammar in the language that I felt really short, because the students used to ask so many questions, and I didn't have the language to express that. I could use it fluently, I could explain how in a context it's going to be used, but all of these terms, like infinitive, gerund, etc., it was really difficult. Grammatical terminology was missing, so I felt really short.” P9

On a different note, implying that the emotional states have an infectious and contagious nature, Participant 27 said “Because of my personality, I think students feel really comfortable with me. I don't have to do much, I feel comfortable in my classes.” They attributed a positive classroom atmosphere to their own disposition, suggesting that their natural ease and calm demeanor contribute to their learners feeling comfortable and at ease as well. In contrast with deliberate rapport-building strategies and activities, Participant 27 implied that personal authenticity and emotional stability play a central function in establishing a supportive and positive learning and teaching environment. Their cognitions about their personality indicate how teacher personality and emotions can transform classroom dynamics and how teacher confidence can assist in classroom management, acting as a protective layer against stress or anxiety.

Exhibiting a strong sense of self-efficacy, Participant 34 underlined the significance of experience, subject-matter expertise, and confidence in language teaching. They suggested that learners are mostly perceptive of teacher's emotional states and are responsive when they sense assurance. They also mentioned their tendency towards spontaneous teaching, demonstrating a degree of self-efficacy, flexibility in implementing lessons successfully without meticulous and detailed planning. Additionally, their cognitions further stressed teacher agency and responsibility, signaling that success or failure in learning is largely within the control and resourcefulness of the teachers. Their perspective also entails learners' respect being earned through demonstrated knowledge and qualification not through rigid lesson planning.

“When you feel very confident, students feel that too. I usually don't plan my lessons in a detailed way. So sometimes, spontaneous teaching is in effect in some of my classes. Maybe I have been all lucky, but I don't really remember any bad classes, because I usually teach upper levels. But still, I believe what makes a lesson bad is the teacher, mostly. If you are qualified enough and know what the students want, I don't think you will have a lot of problems because students respect knowledge.” P34

The findings regarding teacher emotions and self-efficacy highlighted the complex emotional plane underpinning grammar instruction among EFL university instructors. Participants expressed a broad spectrum of emotions, from pride and enjoyment when learners successfully learned and applied target structures, to anxiety, fear and even shame when confronted by unexpected challenges or critical feedback. The emotions seemed to be closely connected to teachers' perceived self-efficacy degrees. Some revealed that their confidence levels grew over time as their teaching experience accumulated or as they reflected on their practice. Others pointed to the influence of personality, emotional openness and rapport with learners in creating a productive language learning setting and managing classroom dynamics. Furthermore, while some connected their self-efficacy to lesson planning and preparedness, others equated it with subject knowledge and ability to improvise and follow the flow in unstructured settings. Grammatical terminology and learners questioning teacher performance emerged as emotional triggers, especially for novice teachers. In a nutshell, teachers' cognitions in relation to their teaching capabilities and their emotional responses evoked by classroom interactions seem to be in a constant interconnected state and are instrumental to grammar teaching at tertiary level education contexts.

4.2.4.4. Professional Development

This subsection will examine how tertiary-level EFL teachers' cognitions in grammar instruction are informed and shaped by various forms of professional growth. Language teaching is an ever-changing playing field. Therefore, many language teachers recognize the need for ongoing professional development to refine their pedagogical approaches, appropriately respond to the changing learner needs and update their knowledge-base to the current trends. Whether through formal training such as MA or PhD programs and in-service workshops or certifications or informal means such as peer collaboration, self-reflection, and reading the field literature, professional development majorly contributes to the formation of instructional habits and strengthening teacher

identity. This subsection will take a deep dive into how various professional development schemes engaged with teachers' cognitions in relation to grammar instruction.

Some participants compared professional development certificates such as CELTA and DELTA with their undergraduate and graduate degrees from a practical point of view. Participant 27 reflected on the long-lasting and transformative impact of CELTA on their professional development as a teacher. Although they had a decade of teaching experience and master's degree in ELT, they identified a critical gap in their prior teacher training: the absence of classroom observation and practical, hands-on teaching experience. CELTA course, with its sharp focus on observed teaching practice and real-time attention to classroom environment, offered them a stark contrast to the theory-driven nature of their earlier education. With the help of CELTA, they acquired skills such as providing constructive feedback and effective lesson planning. Their description of their CELTA experience as 'life-changing' suggested a profound modifications and changes in their approach to classroom teaching and possibly grammar instruction. Their account underscored the potential of practical teacher training in allowing teachers to see the bigger picture of their practice through animating abstract or disconnected concepts in real time.

"Before CELTA, I already had ten years of experience and my master's degree in ELT. The thing is that it was more theoretical, and I didn't graduate from an ELT department, so I have never been observed in the classroom while teaching. As CELTA is practice oriented, I was observed, and it was all about what is going on in the classroom. We weren't dealing with the literature, instead, we were focusing on the real classroom experience. I learned how to give feedback, how to prepare my teaching, and more other things. It was really life-changing for my classroom practice." P27

In a similar fashion to Participant 27, Participant 11 commented on a pivotal moment in their professional journey regarding how CELTA rewired and enhanced their consciousness in grammar teaching. Although they had learned about presentation of form and meaning in grammar instruction as part of their undergraduate degree, they stated that the importance of explicitly and separately focusing on these aspects of grammatical structures was not a concept thoroughly emphasized and internalized at the time. It was not until approximately a decade into their teaching and CELTA training that they grasped the practical value of clearly explaining form, structure, meaning and appropriateness of target grammar as lesson steps in their grammar teaching. They were introduced to concept-checking questions (CCQs) to measure learners' comprehension of

grammar structures and their understanding of when, where and how to use them. As a direct result of their CELTA training, they have since made it a personal standard in their teaching to deliberately focus on meaning and form in all their grammar lessons. Their cognitive and practical shift is clearly illustrative of how sustained professional development even after a considerable amount of teaching experience can significantly influence instructional choices and awareness of pedagogical practice.

“We have to explain the meaning of grammatical structures clearly to the learner. Actually, nearly ten years later in my teaching career, I got some CELTA lessons, and I realized, in the traditional way of teaching, we don’t have this specific presentation of the form and the meaning. I think I learned it during our undergraduate education, but I didn’t know the real importance of the meaning. I think that presenting the form and meaning clearly to the learners wasn’t emphasized enough when we were taught how to teach grammar at university. After 10 years of teaching, I realized how important it is when I got some CELTA input sessions. I tried to put them on the board, I did some drilling and to make students use the correct form, and ask concept-checking questions to understand if they understood meaning and if they understood in which context these things are used or not. So, now I pay more attention to these things, putting the form, the meaning or explaining them separately to the learner. It is my norm to do it in all my grammar lessons currently.” P11

The transformative quality of professional development qualifications such as CELTA and DELTA were also evident in the cognitions of Participant 10. In their early years as a novice teacher, their methodology was predominantly teacher-centric through a heavy reliance on explanation of grammar rules without any active checking of learners’ understanding of the target grammar and any encouragement of learner engagement. They likened their approach to traditional lecturing, where asking whether the lesson content was ‘clear’ following its presentation marked the success of instruction, regardless of any substantial learning. However, their participation in CELTA and DELTA training programs prompted epiphanies in them and guided them into critically reassessing their prior practice models and improving them. Consequently, they adopted a learner-centered style, where students are expected to take charge of their grammar learning through articulating grammar rules, describing what the grammar structure is, what it means, how it is formed and pronounced and what its function in a context is. This practical and cognitive overhaul in their instruction represents how meaningful professional development can carefully foster reflective practice and bring about substantial pedagogical change through prioritizing active learning processes.

“When I look back at my first years, I can say that rather than asking the students questions, I was explaining everything again and again. I was kind of lecturing on the grammar points. When I asked them if it was clear and they were saying it was, I was just moving on. But, after working on this and doing some specific courses, CELTA and DELTA, I started to hand it over to the students more, for sure. I mean, this is the biggest change in my grammar instruction. It was an awakening; I had many awakening moments that helped me see what I had been doing to that stage didn't help my learners at all. Because I couldn't check if they understood it and if they were able to use it. But now, as I said, I'm helping them by asking them to tell me what it is, what it means, how it's formed, how it's pronounced, and again, how to put it into practice, etc. I don't remember a specific lesson, but what I remember is the way I taught it, which is totally different from what I'm doing right now.” P10

How professional development experiences like CELTA, DELTA and workshops transformed their approach to grammar was recounted by Participant 12 as well. They reported initially mirroring their learning experiences following their undergraduate degree, mainly working on form, structural accuracy, and mechanical practice in their grammar teaching. The value of context and function as part of grammar instruction occurred to them through these training qualifications, prompting them to recognizing as equals to form. Their reorientation towards more meaningful and communicative practices was also motivated by their observations of increased learner engagement. They cognitively arrived at an understanding that adult learners require relevant and purposeful motivation to utilize grammatical structures, instead of taking on the passive role of recipients of disconnected rules. Through continuous professional development, they came to the realization that a more learner-centered and context-driven instruction conveniently teams better up with adult motivation and real-life language use.

“When I graduated from school, English language teaching department, in the first two years, I was teaching grammar as I learned it at school, very focused on structure, mechanical activities. But then, I did CELTA, DELTA, and some workshops, after some professional development, doing some courses and some workshops over the years, it has changed dramatically. Then I said, ‘OK, structure is important, yes, but context and function are important as well, as important as the structure.’ They always focused on context and function more and while I was doing these courses, I noticed that students get more motivated. Because you cannot expect students to sit there in silence and just take what is given to them passively. Students are not motivated like this. You have to give them a reason, a context, to learn something, to make context and function, make grammar learning more meaningful. This is what motivates students. You have to give them a reason to use those grammatical structures, and I learned this during these courses. Without it, students will be super bored,

and they are adults, why should they fill in the blanks all the time? This is so meaningless.”
P12

On another note, Participant 7 underlined the importance of teacher language use and accuracy in forming learners’ linguistic process, a realization reinforced through professional training. They recalled being told by teacher trainers that teachers’ consistent use of inaccurate language may cause learners to internalize and replicate those language errors. Their insight underscores teachers’ part in modeling accurate language use for learners, enabling learners to be exposed to and absorb good language examples. One of the tenets of language instruction, language teachers’ accuracy demonstrated heightened cognitions where teachers’ command of English serve as not only as a pedagogical tool but also as a linguistic model for learners.

“During one of the professional courses that I took, the instructors specifically and repeatedly told me that if I use broken English, my students are going to use broken English as well. So I’m not going to be able to teach them how to talk accurately. That’s why not during teaching grammar, but while we are conducting a lesson, we have to use English well to be a role model. They are listeners all the time, and that’s why accuracy is important for teachers.” P7

Reflecting on another professional development experience in their early career, Participant 27 implied that even though professional development schemes were well-intentioned, they might fall short if they are not responsive to specific classroom realities. In their narrative, the participant strictly avoided use of L1 in their grammar teaching, reinforced by an in-service training that emphasized English-only instruction. However, this avoidance of L1 led to learner disengagement and low performance, which only became clear in a candid class discussion in L1 following poor exam results. The pivotal moment occurred when a learner conceded that they had not understood much of the instruction due to being only in L2, indicating a significant disconnect between the guideline of the in-service training and the learners’ actual needs in the school setting. This personal anecdote demonstrated how one-size-fits-all professional development schemes are likely to fail to take into consideration context-sensitive qualities such as learner proficiency and institutional culture.

“During my first year, I never spoke Turkish because they gave us some kind of in-service teacher training when they hired us. Students weren’t saying anything in the classes. It was skill-based at that time, and I was teaching grammar. After the exams, when I looked at their grades, I was really disappointed with the students’ performance. Then I went to the class, and I explained how I was disappointed. They couldn’t understand me, and then I switched

to Turkish. One of the students raised his hand, and he said, 'Most of the time we didn't understand you.' It wasn't what I was taught in the in-service training." P27

Participant 31 shared a detailed account of the tension between their professional development experiences and long-standing teaching practices. Despite completing internationally recognized training programs of CELTA and DELTA, they openly stated that their grammar teaching preference has remained widely unchanged over two decades, still favoring grammar translation method. However, the participant also reflected on the contrasting methodologies they utilized during their experience abroad during CELTA and DELTA qualification training, especially the emphasis on inductive, exploratory grammar instruction multilingual classrooms. While they were willing to concede that these methods were effective in multilingual classrooms, they were not fully transferred into their own grammar teaching due to a perceived mismatch with their monolingual classroom environment in Turkey. Their cognitions regarding 'taking the easier way' clearly illustrates that professional development opportunities have the potential to broaden pedagogical perspectives of teachers, yet its transformative and progressive power heavily depends on teachers' acknowledgement and internalization of its principles. When possible takeaways from the wide spectrum of professional development schemes remain unrecognized or are filtered through entrenched personal beliefs and contextual justifications, their potential in reshaping teacher cognitions may significantly diminish. Thus, it could be extrapolated that sustainable professional growth requires not only exposure to new methods, but also critical engagement and openness to adapt core beliefs and to adopt new paradigms.

"I am an old graduate here. I graduated from university in twenty years ago, then I did my CELTA, DELTA, and other stuff that could be considered professional development. But, in terms of grammar, I'm still at the same place, I guess. Most of the time, grammar-translation method works for me and my students, but this is because our teaching method is integrated. Students have the chance to use that grammar in other interactive parts of the lesson, in speaking, in listening, in writing, and in reading. So I generally use traditional grammar teaching methods. When I was doing my CELTA and DELTA abroad, we were using implicit methods there. But because we had multilingual classes, we could not give them a grammar rule in just one way. All languages have different thinking and expression systems, and under these circumstances, we had to make the students explore it where you give them a situation and ask questions, then they thought about this in terms of their own thinking system of the language. All explored something in many different ways, so this is a must in a multilingual class. But, in monolingual classes like in our context, you can take the easier way, I think."

P31

On the other hand, Participant 10, a teacher trainer underlined how their grammar instruction cognitions have evolved not only through their personal classroom experience and professional development but also through extensive observation of other teachers' practices while they are training teachers. This dual perspective from two distinct lenses, both as an instructor and a teacher trainer, appears to have reinforced their belief in the primacy of meaning in grammar teaching. Through observing and providing training in a range of teaching contexts, they asserted that there is a clear pattern in grammar instruction where lessons grounded in meaningful contexts led to greater student engagement and comprehension, while those lacking such context resulted in learner confusion and disengagement. This experiential insight, accompanied by reflective practice, has molded their cognitions that grammar teaching should begin with meaning, followed by form. Their experiences clearly demonstrate how teacher training roles can potentially reconfigure and validate teacher cognitions, particularly in cases where trainers engage in comparison between their personal practices and those of others. In this case, the congruity between personal teaching experience and professional observation has bolstered their meaning-first convictions about grammar teaching.

"I've been working with teachers from different contexts, and I can see that if they don't set a meaningful context, the students don't follow. They don't understand what's going on. But if there is a very meaningful situation set right at the beginning of the lesson, they just follow everything and understand what it means and how it's formed, and they also get more involved in that learning process. So, it is not only based on my own experience of teaching but also the observations I made by other teachers. In this sense, my experience and what I observe are matching. So, according to my experience and knowledge, meaning should come first, and then I'll teach them how it's formed." P10

Participant 21, another teacher trainer in the same school, reflected on the significant reconfigurations in their grammar teaching cognition set brought about by both receiving professional training and training other teachers. Initially anchored in prescriptive, literature-informed paradigms, they tended to view grammar teaching through a rigid lens, adhering to specific methodologies as ideal to achieve great efficiency. Gradual exposure to diverse teaching contexts and taking professional development initiatives broadened their outlook on teaching. Their engagements with teachers from a wide range of backgrounds and observations of real time classroom teaching practice guided them to contemplate and question the absoluteness of their previous convictions. Their experiences on both sides of the aisle have enabled them to

foster a more pragmatic and context-sensitive approach to grammar. Rather than dismissing any one methodology or paradigm in grammar instruction, they now tend to acknowledge that each has its instructional use to reach specific learning objectives. This cognitive shift is illustrative of how both teacher training roles as a trainer or a trainee can substantially prompt an entire alteration of pedagogical cognitions. Their account of professional development clearly depicts how it encourages language teachers to reflect and move beyond rigid methodologies and adopt adaptive, learner-centered practices in grammar instruction.

“I think before investing in professional development, I was stricter in the way I taught grammar. I used to believe in certain things, because I read books, and I thought there were the best way of doing things. But after being trained up, seeing teachers from different contexts, and working with teachers from different backgrounds, I think I've learned to be more flexible in the way I approach, not only grammar, but teaching language as a whole. There's no one single right way of doing things. For example, you don't have to avoid using L1 when teaching grammar, or you don't have to think of grammar-translation as a no-no in a language class. It doesn't have to be always communicative. Some grammar items can be taught very effectively without a very clear communicative purpose to them, because the students don't need to use it in that context. So, I think I've learned to become more realistic in my expectations and a bit more flexible in the way I approach teaching in general.” P21

To conclude, the findings regarding professional development reveal that structured qualifications such as CELTA, DELTA and in-service training workshops are instrumental in shaping and reshaping EFL instructors' cognitions in grammar instruction. Many participants reported a marked change in their teaching preferences following their participation in such programs such as moving from rule-based, teacher-centered methodologies to contextualized, meaning-driven, learner-centered practices. Practical input sessions and classroom observations were found particularly useful in having teachers reconsider the balance between form, meaning and use. However, it can also be argued that professional development does not automatically transform practice unless it is critically reflected upon with personal motivation and contextualized. Several participants noted that they gained valuable insights during these professional development schemes and eventually adapted those takeaways to fit the classroom realities. All in all, professional development appears to serve as a catalyst for fostering reflective practice, gaining mental flexibility, and driving a continuous evolution of teaching grammar cognitions and strategies.

4.2.4.5. Reflective Practice

This subsection will explore the connection between reflective practice and grammar instruction of tertiary-level EFL teachers. Reflective practice constitutes a core component of teacher cognition and takes on a pivotal role in the ongoing development of grammar teaching. It involves teachers' conscious evaluation of their instructional decision-making processes, keeping track of lesson objectives, observation of student learning to make informed improvements. Continuously questioning and revisiting instructional methodologies both during and after lessons leads to adaptation and evolution of instructors' approaches based on learner response, lesson effectiveness and broader pedagogical insights instead of adhering to a fixed set of cognitions and practices. For some, reflection is not only a personal trait and habit but also a professional requirement that supports growth and adaptability. Participant 10 commented on their practice showing a deep degree of reflection that perfection of instruction is always elusive and what truly matters is whether learners achieve the learning goals by the end of the lesson. Their teaching cognition set is deeply rooted in meaningful change in learner behavior as the primary metric for evaluating the success of grammar lessons, portraying a pragmatic and learner-centered reflective understanding.

“Well, I wouldn't say I do perfect lessons because to me, to my experience, no lessons are perfect. So, there is always room for more improvement. I focus on if they meet their aims or not, that's my important thing. I focus on what they are able to do by the end of the lesson because I need to see that change in their behavior.” P10

Similarly, Participant 24 shared a principled stance on grammar instruction, spotlighting the cruciality of long-term learning transfer compared to surface-level performance. Their cognitions involve how the real value of grammar teaching lies in questioning if learners are unable to produce target grammar accurately and appropriate in communicative contexts. Their perspective of true teaching success resides not in completing isolated grammar tasks or acing multiple choice tests, but in witnessing learners incorporate these features into their knowledge base and utilize them in productive stages of grammar lessons. Critical of superficial teaching where teachers tend to deceive themselves into believing that completing tasks or covering sections in textbooks equate to proper teaching, Participant 24 advocated for a more meaningful, responsible form of teaching, entrenched in learner performance and communicative integration of grammar.

“If I’m teaching some grammatical features throughout the year, I really appreciate seeing them in their productive tasks. I think a responsible teacher should have concerns about this. Does it become true? Does the student incorporate that grammatical feature in real life? I think that’s the biggest thing teachers should do. Otherwise, it doesn’t pay the effort off. Well, of course you can also lie to yourself and say, I did a grammar exercise or an isolated, multiple choice grammar test, where the prompts are always there, and think that you’re a good teacher.” P24

Demonstrating a reflective and constructive mindset, Participant 4 commented on examining instructional methods rather than hastily attributing unsuccessful learning outcomes to learners’ limitations, saying “Sometimes, we erratically tend to blame students for their perception or their lack of perception after some classes, but it’s always better to question the method we use.” In line with the stance of Participant 4, Participant 21 underscored the effectiveness of reflective practice in the fostering of their teaching cognitions. While Participant 4 stressed the need to shift responsibility from learner shortcomings to pedagogical choices of teachers, Participant 21 elaborated on this trajectory by painting a personal transformation in reflective depth. Participant 21 admitted to having attributed classroom factors to external factors and now engages in a more nuanced self-evaluation of their teaching practice through questioning what could be improved and adapted. Both participants suggested that true reflective practice lies in a mindset shift from blaming students to assuming pedagogical responsibility and being more intentional and learner-centered in grammar teaching.

“There’s a change. I’m reflecting more about the classes. In the past, I used to think, ‘OK, that lesson went well. I’m a good teacher,’ or ‘I was off today. Maybe the students were not really good,’ but now, I try to go a bit deeper in the reflections, ‘How could it be better? What else could be incorporated into my teaching? How else could I deal with the problems or respond to learners?’ So reflection is a key part of my teaching. Maybe I don’t do it as much as I’d like to, but I’m aware of the importance.” P21

The findings regarding reflective practice clearly demonstrate that reflection is highly beneficial in forming and refining teachers’ grammar teaching over the course of time. Participants acknowledged that while they once evaluated their lesson success dependent on superficial indicators, yet they have adopted a deeper and more critical stance on their instruction. The paramount importance of assessing whether lesson objectives are truly met and whether learners are able to convert grammatical knowledge into productive language use was acknowledged. A greater awareness of learner needs, a better understanding regarding the potency of the chosen methodologies, constructive and

pedagogically informed decision-making were acknowledged as the products of reflective thinking and teaching. While some expressed enthusiasm to question their long-standing teaching habits and modify their practice accordingly, it is important to note that they made up a minority among the total participant sample in the study. A gradual but meaningful cognitive change from teacher-centric judgement to a learner-focused evaluation was observed in the cognitions of this minority. All in all, it could be argued that while the value of continuous self-assessment and growth in context-sensitive grammar instruction was acknowledged by some participants, this sentiment did not emerge as a common theme in the larger picture of the language school.

4.2.4.6. Cognitive Dissonance

This subsection will depict the moments of internal conflicts experienced by teachers when their cognitions in grammar teaching clash with classroom practices or contextual realities. Cognitive dissonances often arise from theoretical ideals and institutional expectations, or teachers' personal teaching philosophies and learner needs or clear distinctions between perceptions and realities. Exploring these contradictions might provide critical insights into how teachers navigate, rationalize and sometimes transform their pedagogical tendencies to relieve the tensions.

Participant 5 expressed a sense of resignation to imposed instructional materials, following the textbook's guidance and execute it to the word. Although they demonstrated their tendency for explicit grammar teaching, they mistakenly believe that they lack agency in making decisions regarding how to present grammar input. They stated "I don't change anything and just follow whatever is given in the book. Some grammar input is explicit, some is implicit, but if this choice was given to me, I would prefer explicit teaching, I think." This unearthed a clear instance of cognitive dissonance, while Participant 5 has explicit grammar instruction-oriented cognitions, their actual practice does not align because of a perceived constraint. Their perception stemmed from overlooking the flexibility emerging out of lesson planning and material adaptation. In the language school, teachers typically have the autonomy to modify teaching materials as long as they cover the learning objectives. This gulf between cognitions and practice reflected the potential need for empowerment through greater pedagogical awareness and reflective decision-making.

On another note, Participant 17 revealed a form of cognitive dissonance stemming from the perceived mismatch between pedagogical theories and classroom reality. While they acknowledged the mismatch between theoretical knowledge and practical application, their reaction to this was implying a discarding of structured methods altogether, adopting a highly reactive and unplanned approach in their instruction. This cognition suggested that because theories do not perfectly match with experiences in the classroom, it holds limited value. However, this stance overlooked that while not always fully applicable, in their essence, theoretical frameworks may still offer valuable guidance, critical insights, and pedagogical tools that can enhance teachers' decision-making processes through thoughtful adaptation. A similar dissonance in relation to lesson planning arose in their admission of not focusing on any specific grammar topic and merely responding to what arises in their teaching. This reactive understanding of teaching undermines lesson planning, which is vital for setting lesson objectives, ensuring coherence between each and every lesson, and systematic response to learners' needs. Their teaching philosophy reflected a dissonance between pedagogical awareness and instructional practice that might highly benefit from critical reflection.

"Theory and practice in our field do not match, so it depends on the classroom, and there's no specific method I follow. In fact, I don't concentrate on any subject specifically while I'm teaching. If I see a suitable structure, I teach that, too. I try to explain it mostly." P17

Showing a mismatch between the actual objectives of the preparatory school and their perception, Participant 14 said that "The target group is here to learn academic English." While they thought that primary aim of the intensive language program is developing academic English skills of their learners, in fact, the preparatory curriculum is structured to build their general English proficiency as a foundation for later academic use. This clear mismatch between their perception and reality may affect their instructional priorities, potentially leading to a focus on advanced academic skills before learners are ready. Furthermore, Participant 14 revealed a clear instance of lingering learner-based cognitions influencing current teaching practices. Despite the integrated nature of the language program, the teacher admitted to mentally prioritizing the grammar topic from the outset. This unearthed a deeply ingrained cognitive focus on grammar as a discrete element, a perspective likely informed by their own learning experiences of isolated grammar instruction. While they conceded that they follow the integrated sequence in their practice, their internal and cognitive emphasis on grammar clearly

indicate that past learning experiences continue to shape their instructional mindset. A cognitive dissonance emerges between their behavioral adherence to integrated instruction and the persistence of entrenched, form-focused beliefs. This stark mismatch is indicative of the difficulty in aligning everyday teaching practice with contemporary pedagogical principles when longstanding cognitions remain unchallenged or untouched.

“I received separate grammar instruction as a learner. I see the integrated lesson planning in the book here; reading and then grammar. ‘Oh today’s grammar topic is relative clause. I love it,’ and this sentence shows them that I am already focused on the grammar topic, not the reading at the very beginning. But I do the reading first, then the presentation of the grammar topic. There are some things I couldn’t change in my mind, but I try to act it that way.” P14

Participant 36 demonstrates opposition against communicative language teaching, remarking that despite the coursebook following a communicative design, they often step away from this instructional paradigm to execute their grammar teaching in an explicit, teacher-led, decontextualized, and form-focused fashion, stating that this kind of instruction has more potential to develop learners’ metalinguistic awareness. Highly valuing separate grammar instruction, they reported planning and splitting their grammar lessons in alignment with grammar-centric cognitions. While the teacher recognized that their curriculum follows a communicative approach and expressed general approval of integrated instruction, they also articulated a strong belief in the value of separation of grammar to enhance learners’ metalinguistic awareness. This cognition prompts them to set aside the coursebook designed for integrated language teaching and instead deliver grammar explicitly and deductively, getting learners to focus solely on the form and discrete sentences introduced on the board. A cognitive dissonance emerged from their simultaneous endorsement of both communicative and traditional paradigms even though they have pedagogically distinct characteristics. Although they claim to ‘handle’ the communicative demands of the coursebook and syllabus, their deviation from both to isolate grammar input reflected a major conflict between their theoretical alignment and their ingrained tendency for decontextualized, teacher-fronted grammar delivery. This cognitive tension and dissonance could be interpreted as strongly indicative of how personal convictions can override theoretical and curricular frameworks, even when educators are fully aware of the underlying methodological inconsistencies.

“We use a coursebook that is based on communicative approach in general. I try to handle this situation in my classes, but I don’t know if my other colleagues can do it or not. I believe that separate grammar teaching can raise their metalinguistic awareness more. But also,

integrated instruction is fine for me as well, because I divide my lessons accordingly. I put the coursebook aside and I am teaching them a new grammar point and ask them to focus on me and the sentences on the board.” P36

Participant 20 showcased a subtle, yet critical case of cognitive dissonance related to grammar instruction. They admitted generally favoring explicit grammar teaching and that there might be times when their delivery of grammar is implicit without them being consciously aware of it, saying “Maybe sometimes, the material goes about it implicitly and I might teach some part of the grammar implicitly, but I’m not aware of it.” The fact that they might unknowingly teach grammar implicitly draws a picture where their teaching is shaped more by the structure of the material rather than intentional pedagogical decision-making. It could also be extrapolated that they might not always fully recognize how their teaching methodology shift and change in practice in real time, particularly under the influence of the course book or lesson flow. This lack of awareness clearly demonstrates absence of reflective teaching and points to the necessity of self-observation in resolving such cognitive mismatches.

Participant 31 initially claimed to follow a meaning-form-pronunciation (MFP) sequence as the outline of their grammar instruction. While this sequence is a presentation framework widely accepted in communicative language teaching paradigms, their declared flow of lesson stages does not align with it. This creates a clear dissonance between their cognitions and practices of grammar teaching. Despite referencing the MFP framework, a contradiction between the orders of the first two stages of meaning and form revealed a disconnect between theoretical alignment and instructional reality. This suggested that while they are aware of and perhaps place value on the MFP model conceptually, in practice they adhere to a more form-driven approach and prioritize grammatical structure over contextual meaning. This tension may reflect broader institutional or curricular constraints or internal uncertainty about best pedagogical practice.

“For me, form comes first, I work on meaning later on. Then, if it's necessary, I use pronunciation. I use meaning-form-pronunciation draft in my classes. Most of the time, I start the lesson with the formula of the target structure, and then I go on with the reasons why we need to use that structure in our speech.” P31

Participant 4 demonstrated a cognitive conflict in their grammar instruction cognitions. They openly advocated for integrated grammar instruction and expressed a strong stance against designing lessons where grammar takes precedence over meaning

or skill development. They harshly critiqued textbooks that featured texts constructed solely to highlight or present a particular grammar structure and argued that such texts lack authenticity and cause learner disengagement. However, this exposure to target grammar structure paves the way for language focus and noticing of the target structure by the learners. This type of lesson flow is prevalently utilized in integrated grammar instruction. While Participant 4 showed strong support for grammar integration, they disapproved of text-based lessons, a very common way of integrating grammar and reading, revealing a gulf between their cognitions and behavior.

“In a book I read, the method of doing everything for the sake of grammar teaching was being criticized, and I also agree with that. I am for the teaching of grammar in an integrated manner, but I'm against doing everything for the sake of grammar, and what I mean by that is the method most of the course books have employed nowadays. They give us a reading text, and that reading text seems to have been written for the sake of grammar teaching only. Let's say the subject matter that day is present perfect, and the text happens to be about someone's travel experience. ‘I have been abroad at such and such times. I have been to such places and I, but I have never been to this place and that place’ and so on. The text and the sentences follow like this, and then in the post-reading activities students are usually asked to find and underline sentences written in the target structure, and then to analyze the sentences and so on. At that point, the text in an instant loses its value in the eyes of the students. This is something criticized, and I would agree to some point with that criticism. I'm against doing things for the sake of grammar, but grammar can always be integrated into teaching of all kinds of skills.” P4

Participant 4 also demonstrated dissonance stemming from a confusion regarding the conceptualization of context and discrete sentences in the presentation stage of grammar input. They shared instances of fostering inductive learning by introducing multiple example sentences on the board and asking students to identify correct usage and justify their choices. However, the examples seemed to have an isolated and decontextualized nature rather than being part of a meaningful and coherent discourse context. Although the teacher considered this strategy to be contextual learning, the approach in fact reflected a FonFS characteristic, where learners are exposed to syntactic variations of the target language with minimal semantic or situational grounding. The same applied to their sample for teaching tenses, where they maintained stable lexical items and solely manipulated the grammatical forms. While this tendency could be instrumental in the minimization of learner confusion, it gives precedence to grammatical contrast or form over meaningful use, in contradiction with their cognitions in support of

context for clarity and depth. Their perception of a series of structurally varied but semantically shallow examples as context-rich learning despite their disconnected characteristic from authentic language use involved cognitive dissonance, revealing a conceptual gap in situational or communicative context in grammar teaching.

“The examples usually are in just one context. While teaching articles, for example, all the sentences are about coffee. I write on the board sentences like, ‘I like coffee, I like the coffee, I like a coffee, I like coffees.’ Some of them could even be wrong. Again, building on students’ previous knowledge, assuming that students have knowledge on this because of their level, I ask them to find the correct ones and discuss why the others are wrong, and if they agree with each other on that. In some other cases where we are teaching, let’s say, the difference between simple present and present continuous tense, the context tends to be the same again for the sake of keeping some things stable and playing around with the other elements, because changing everything all at once may create some kind of confusion. For example, the sentences would be something like, in this subject matter, ‘I live with my parents/I’m living with my parents,’ or ‘I study English/I am studying English.’ I keep some of the components stable.” P4

Overall, internal conflicts emerging out of the clash between theoretical knowledge, instructional practice, contextual constraints and personal cognitions highlight that cognitive dissonances constitute a pivotal role in university EFL instructors’ mental lives. Several participants showed tendency to adhere to textbook guidelines and flow or past learning experiences despite holding contrasting cognitions regarding how grammar should ideally be taught. This tension became easily visible among instructors who claimed to prefer explicit instruction but passively followed the lead of implicitly structured lesson materials or vice versa. Some complained about the perceived incongruity between theoretical ideals and classroom realities, leading to ad hoc decision-making that lacked pedagogical clarity and rationale. In some cases, deep-seated and long-established beliefs informed by language learning histories surfaced, taking control of their current practice even though these beliefs were no longer pedagogically justified or valid. Some teachers also appeared to misinterpret the conceptualization of context in grammar instruction, mistaking isolated sentences without situational grounding with meaningful and relevant context. Collectively, these findings indicated a persistent presence of unresolved cognitive dissonances in relation to grammar teaching, demonstrating the critical need for continuous reflective practice and in-service pedagogical training schemes in helping teachers bridge the divide between theory and practice.

4.2.4.7. Lesson Planning

This subsection will picture how tertiary-level EFL teachers approach planning their grammar lessons and the degree to which lesson planning informs their instructional decision-making. Participants' perspectives on lesson preparation revealed not only their underlying cognitions in grammar instruction but also how their personal teaching tendencies, contextual demands and learners needs drive the structure and flexibility of their teaching. Participant 3 underscored the necessity of teacher flexibility and adaptability in grammar lesson planning. While theoretical guidelines and teacher resources of textbooks offer structured methodologies, they pointed to the requirements emerging out of classroom dynamics in real-time from teachers to spontaneously respond to learner needs and reactions and adjust their plans.

“There are some ground rules in grammar that we can see in literature of course. Even in teachers' books, when you open it, there are instructions about how grammar should be presented. But still, I think that it's not always that easy. You come up with some different examples to help them with production and the students get it in a totally different way. For grammar, I believe that the teachers should be alert. We should be following what is happening around us. Of course, you're teaching, you're doing your best to teach it as effectively as possible, but it's not always the case. In my classes, I always try to be alert and careful. For grammar, it's not a good idea to say 'I'm going to do this like that.' Sometimes, something happens, and then, you have to change your plan.” P3

Participant 15 mentioned a change in their lesson planning from a detailed understanding in their early career to a more intuitive, experience-based approach as they gained teaching experience. While lesson planning time decreased over the years, they tended to invest that time in preparing engaging materials, balancing efficiency and creativity as a teacher.

“When I first started to teach, I was spending at least one or two hours on planning my grammar lessons. Now, it just takes me 15 minutes, but of course, preparing materials takes more time. I prepare some, for example, Quizlet or Kahoot! quizzes, some visuals or some stories depending on the subject. I no longer make physical lesson plans. It's all in my head. I just look, spend 15 minutes and then prepare materials.” P15

Showing a distinct approach from Participant 15, Participant 12 considered detailed lesson planning of paramount importance in grammar teaching. Their cognitions embody grammar teaching as a layered and complex process of introducing the form, function, meaning checks and well-thought-out drilling activities. For them, when their planning is rushed or insufficient, they tend to overlook essential instructional

components, resulting in ineffective teaching. Their cognitions depict a clear awareness of structured nature of grammar instruction and how learning process hinges on meticulous, step-by-step preparation.

“I usually have a bad grammar lesson if I don't plan it very much in detail beforehand. So, I have to plan them step by step because grammar teaching has multiple layers. You need to check the form, you need to check the function, and you need to check the understanding. You also have to do some drills, you cannot just go to class and make students drill some sentences. It doesn't work like that. You have to plan even the drilling step very carefully. So, when I don't do that, sometimes I don't plan it very much in detail, then I skip some parts and it doesn't work out as I want it to work out. So, those are bad lessons for me.” P12

Similarly to Participant 15 and differently from Participant 12, Participant 23 commented that even brief but purposeful lesson preparation can positively impact their lesson delivery. Their cognitions showcase that mindful preparation might dramatically enhance teaching effectiveness no matter its duration.

“If I just have a look at the lesson and prepare myself for the things that I'm going to teach, it could be even 5 minutes just before going to the lesson, even the vocabulary or the jokes, stories, and gestures I'm going to use, the lesson goes really well. So preparation makes a good contribution to the way I teach.” P23

Participant 21 shared a nuanced set of cognitions regarding the crucial role of adaptive lesson planning in teaching. Their experience of teaching of two groups identically but observing different outcomes made them understand that rigid adherence to one method can hinder the learning process and limit learner success. Through their narrative, they came to realize that teachers should have flexibility and modify their strategies at once if things go awry. Their reflection linked their unproductive lessons to insufficient lesson planning and not anticipating potential issues. They stated that overreliance on intuition and overconfidence based on teaching experience might result in ineffective teaching, showing that experience cannot replace or cover for thoughtful lesson preparation and prompt responsiveness.

“A couple of years ago, we used to teach two groups at the same level, and I would teach the same way in both classes. For one group, I would leave the classroom thinking, ‘OK, this went really well,’ but I wouldn't get the same reaction for the other group, so I couldn't really put my finger on this. The reason for this is the willingness to change the way you teach I think. If it's not working for a specific group of students, then change it, try something different. And when I realized that, I think most of my classes have ended relatively more successfully, because I wasn't pushing the students to do things in a certain way. When things don't work, you, as a teacher, should respond to this on the spot during the lesson. I think

most of my unsuccessful lessons started with bad planning. If it went downhill, I probably didn't think about the problems that could rise and I couldn't think about how I could respond to them, how I could solve the problems. I didn't really think about how to put the rule or the usage of the language item as clearly as possible. And sometimes, if you don't plan it well in the class, no matter how experienced you are, you can just make a mess of it. So, I wasn't really thinking about what I should be doing by relying on my experience, thinking that I could just handle everything, but it usually didn't go as planned. That's probably the fundamental reason for a lesson that didn't go well.” P21

The findings regarding lesson preparation demonstrated that solid grammar instruction is inextricably intertwined with flexible and intentional planning. It can be said that growing teaching experience helped teachers to internalize planning processes, discarding detailed written lesson plans over time. However, experienced instructors highlighted that grammar teaching necessitates meticulous preparation owing to its layered characteristics involving form, function, meaning, and appropriacy. It was also recognized that overconfidence based on teaching experience can mislead teachers and lack of planning often caused a failure in accomplishing learning objectives. Additionally, adaptive planning acted as a driving force in lesson preparation as many teachers remarked the value of responding to learner needs and classroom dynamics in real-time instead of blindly following predetermined steps. All in all, the data indicated that while planning evolves and takes different forms dependent on teaching experience, its paramount importance in adaptability and outcome of grammar lessons remains a fundamental constant.

4.2.4.8.Experience Abroad

Teachers’ experiences abroad often act as critical moments in shaping or validating their instructional cognitions and teaching practices. Exposure to various teaching and learning contexts, multilingual classrooms and experiencing distinct educational philosophies can deeply challenge. In this subsection, a close examination of how participants’ experiences abroad as teachers or learners influenced their perspectives and tendencies in their instruction.

Participant 37 revealed a substantial cognitive transformation following their experience abroad. While they initially had an accuracy-oriented cognition set owing to their language learning experiences, living and teaching in a different cultural and linguistic environment resulted in their recognition of communication and fluency. They

came to realize that accurate grammatical knowledge does not guarantee clear communication and there are other factors such as body language and context in play within real life interactions. Their experience might be indicative of how immersion in authentic communicative settings can broaden teachers' horizons of language and instructional priorities.

"I was mostly accuracy oriented as a learner, but my ideas changed mostly when I lived abroad for some time as a teacher. I realized that communication is very important. Yes, we make perfect sentences, but sometimes it doesn't work. There are many factors, even the gestures, the context. We create context from the book, but the real-life context shows us that the fluency side is also very important." P37

Similarly, Participant 12 shared a personal realization that emerged during their Erasmus experience abroad. Although they had excelled in grammar through traditional instruction, they found they were unable to speak English fluently in real-life situations. This stark disconnect between their grammatical accuracy and communicative competence made them question their previous language learning journey. This critical abroad experience as a learner prompted them to reassess their earlier cognitions. It could be argued that experience in such immersive contexts can expose the limitations of decontextualized grammar teaching and foster communication-centered pedagogical cognitions.

"Although I liked learning English through separate grammar instruction, I noticed that I couldn't speak English fluently at the end of my study. I was perfect with grammar and vocabulary. I answered every question without any mistakes, but when I went to Europe with Erasmus as a student, I couldn't speak, although my grammar was perfect. It took me a lot of time to speak fluently with the right grammar. That's why I can say that it didn't work for me." P12

On a similar note, Participant 13 commented on a profound realization regarding the limitations of grammar-centric instruction after living abroad. Despite achieving exceptional scores on grammar-based university entrance exam trials in Turkey, they found themselves unable to orally communicate in English during the first months of their exchange in the United States. Despite their full comprehension of the dialogues, their inability to speak English triggered emotions of frustration, anxiety and a sense of failure. This blatant conflict between their academic success in grammar and communicative demands of real-life interaction in an immersive setting induced them to reevaluate the benefits of discrete grammar instruction at high school. Their cognitions paint a picture where while grammar-centric instruction might assist in test performance, it does not

necessarily translate into practical fluency inherent to authentic, spontaneous interaction. It is fair to say that their experience abroad served as a milestone in their cognitive world and transformed their cognitions of language learning.

“I received a lot of grammar-oriented classes at high school. I got better and better. I could do grammar; it was clear because I was getting full points like 98 or 99 out of 100 questions while preparing for the university exam. So, did it work? It worked for the exam. After I graduated from high school, I went to the USA through an exchange program and stayed there for a year. I couldn't speak for three months, there was a problem. So, why couldn't I speak? And I was getting angry because people were asking me if I understood them or not. I understood them perfectly; I just couldn't speak. It was making me really angry, and maybe I was anxious because of the new setting, being a teenager, and lots of things. Everything was new, and maybe that's why I couldn't talk. Also, my friends from other countries, Scandinavian countries especially, Germany, Belgium, could speak better than me. So, we had groups, and, in my group, there were students from Germany, Indonesia, Thailand and Egypt. Once, I remember secretly asking my consultant who spoke best in our group, and she said the German guy. I felt so disappointed, because I was a language major. When I went back to Turkey, I was going to study a language department at university. So, that made me frustrated. That told me there was something wrong with my grammar or with my language learning, at high school.” P13

The findings indicate that firsthand immersion experiences in authentic language environments substantially altered participants' cognitions in relation to grammar instruction. Although some instructors had achieved perfect command of English grammar with the help of grammar-centric instruction as learners, they desperately struggled with real-time interaction in English during their time abroad. Even though these narratives carry an anecdotal merit, these experiences still could point to the limitations of traditional, form-focused learning and the potential benefits of fluency, contextual understanding, and communicative competence. It was acknowledged that a substantial knowledge of grammar must go beyond mastery of form and accuracy and exam performance. All in all, participants' time and experiences abroad served as catalysts in refining their pedagogical cognitions and made the case for a more balanced methodology of integrating grammar with meaningful communication.

4.2.5. Learner Factor

This section will explore the effects of learner-related variables on tertiary level EFL teachers' cognitions in relation to grammar instruction. Recognizing that effective teaching practices are structured around learner characteristics, this findings section will

closely examine teachers' cognitions in connection to the emerging subsections of psychology, needs, interests, and expectations of learners, as well as their proficiency levels, training in language learning strategies, and limited competence in L1. Since teacher decision-making is constantly in interaction with distinct learner profiles, attitudes, and abilities, delineating these elements bears significant importance. This section aims to shed light on the relationship between these learner-specific dimensions with teacher cognitions.

4.2.5.1.Learner Psychology

This subsection will picture how teachers' grammar teaching practices and cognitions come into contact with learners' affective and cognitive states. Motivation, anxiety, confidence, willingness to participate and attitudes towards grammar were frequently cited by the participants as decisive factors in how, when and to what extent grammar should be taught.

Participant 6 stated that learner traits such as introversion, anxiety and motivation are key factors that cause explicit grammar teaching to be more suitable in the Turkish university language learning context. They argued that implicit instruction necessitating active participation and the learners lacking confidence may have a part in explicit teaching being more practical and useful for such learners.

"I think explicit grammar instruction is more suited to introverted students because they are anxious and don't want to talk much. Explicit grammar teaching is all about listening to the teacher, right? So, in Turkey, at university, many students do not want to speak in the foreign language when they are learning. They are shy and anxious, and they don't have much motivation to learn. So, explicit grammar teaching is more suited to these kinds of students. If you try to do it implicitly, with the whole discovery journey, you need students to be relaxed, motivated, and extroverted. It affects, when you try to be that kind of a teacher. If students are not energetic enough, it's harder to carry out your lessons implicitly." P6

Similarly, Participant 37 shared their observations regarding discovery-based methodology that learners particularly who are less confident may have anxiety or confusion with them. In contrast, in classrooms with risk-taking and confident students, they find themselves more comfortable using inductive methodology. Their adaptation of approach dependent on learner traits and classroom dynamics demonstrate that learner psychology plays a significant role in their choice of method.

“I try to use a variety of methods, but I observe that some students are not happy with the discovery method. Because they don't know what to do with that new grammar point at the beginning, they feel very anxious. It's confusing for them. Still, I use it from time to time, but not always. I mix them all. I think the first factor is the classroom atmosphere. If there are some risk-taker students, brave ones, they like it. So, I tend to use more of inductive methods.” P37

Participant 30 argued that the effectiveness of implicit grammar instruction was closely connected to learner psychology and individual differences. For them, implicit methods better engage their learners since they usually struggle with motivation and concentration following rigorous university entrance exam processes. They also underlined that implicit grammar instruction sustains learner interest and enables them to perceive the relevance of grammar to real-life situations. In addition, they also recognized that learners with higher intellectual curiosity, broader cultural interests or stronger socioeconomic backgrounds naturally possess greater intrinsic motivation and are more receptive to implicit teaching practices. Their cognitions suggested a perspective where learners' personal characteristics, individual differences, and learner motivation heavily define the potency of implicit grammar teaching.

“Teaching grammar implicitly gives them more motivation. Because of the era we're in, students have little time for concentration, and they come here right after a very big serious exam, so they feel tired. When we teach them just explicitly or traditionally, they may lose their motivation, concentration. Of course, there are some students very happy and satisfied with direct teaching. But with implicit teaching, they can see how it is related to real life. There are also some individual differences. If the student is eager to learn anything, reads books in their free time, has a high level of intellectual abilities, has a high level of socioeconomic background, etc., they are more motivated and when they start, the other step comes automatically. These factors are correlated with learning English grammar. For example, if I am interested in films, then I'd prefer films with original language. That's why I should learn English and it makes me motivated.” P30

Demonstrating to a heightened degree of awareness towards anxiety, Participant 37 framed it as interlinked to broader concerns about academic success, exam performance, and future prospects. They shared an astute observation that some learners avoid risk-taking or openly discussing their ideas in the classroom due to their flawed perceptions that flawless English proficiency and grammatical accuracy are equal to personal or career success. This set of cognitions on the learners' part entail a constant fear of making errors that severely hinders their engagement and language production. Additionally, they commented on possible causes of these emotions such as teachers'

error correction tendencies and learner personalities and suggested these might even dramatically amplify these anxieties. To alleviate anxiety and handle anxiety-inducing factors, they proactively work on establishing a supportive and respectful learning environment atmosphere and explicitly discourage ridicule or mockery at the onset of each academic term. Formation of a collective consciousness from day one might exponentially foster emotional safety, reduce anxiety, enhance motivation and transform grammar learning into a meaningful experience instead of causing stress.

“I think our students have general anxiety, exam anxiety, anxiety about the future. So learning English became a part of it. So they think that they need to learn English perfectly in order to be rich or successful. It's true, but it sometimes creates anxiety for them and for learning grammar. Some students are so afraid of making mistakes, they are not tolerant of it. It makes them not produce the language, not share their opinions, not try to use it. So anxiety can affect them negatively. It usually happens on making mistakes. The grammar mistakes are so important for learners, I don't know why. Maybe it's because of us, our correction techniques. Maybe it's about their personality, too. At the beginning of semester, I have an agreement with the students, a respect agreement. I'm very sensitive about not making fun of different ideas or different use of languages. I want them to feel safe in the classroom. For their motivation, that's what I do as a teacher. I don't want them to feel grammar learning as a burden, as something to get rid of in their learning.” P37

Similar to Participant 37, Participant 14 pointed to the psychological dimension of language learning especially in terms of speaking and grammar. They commented that learners' struggles do not necessarily derive from ineffective instructional choices or demotivation but often are rooted in deeper psychological barriers like fear, insecurity or internal mental resistance against using a foreign language. They underlined the need for strategic support instead of repetitive practice in tackling these possible problems. For instance, they mentioned encouraging learners to read texts aloud and record themselves when alone to normalize the experience of speaking a foreign language and gradually dismantle mental barriers. Uncovering a dimension that is oftentimes overlooked in conventional language environments, this reflective strategy demonstrates that successful language learning is not only associated with cognitive or methodological domains but also recognizing and overcoming psychological hurdles that learners must confront daily.

“Sometimes, as language teachers, we have to see things on not a language basis but a psychological basis. In some cases, it's not the way of our teaching, not the students' laziness, or being unmotivated, it's just something psychological. That's why I always advise my students to read all these reading texts aloud at home and record their voice, and then listen to it again and again, so that their mind can understand that their voice can simply be in

English because most of our students have some psychological barriers to speak English. We have to find some little techniques to solve these problems. We cannot overcome every problem they encounter with more and more practice. Sometimes, we have to give them sets of strategies to handle this psychological part of language learning and I think we ignore that part all the time.” P14

On another point, Participant 6 drew attention to the emotional responses regarding motivation and grammar learning that might be given due to the linguistic differences and distance between L1 and L2. They explained that Turkish-speaking preparatory class learners often mistakenly expect one-to-one grammatical equivalence between English and Turkish. When confronted with English grammar rules involving many exceptions and no direct Turkish counterparts, learners tend to experience frustration and demotivation. They remarked that this frequent need to clarify grammatical rules might lead to a perceived inconsistency in English and result in a loss of faith in learners and undermine their confidence to engage with English grammar. Ultimately, this emotional response can negatively influence their learning trajectory and significantly lengthen their language learning journey. Unmet expectation entrenched in the comparisons between L1 and L2 can mold learners’ attitudes and trigger emotional responses to grammar learning. This is clearly indicative of the extreme gravity of fostering learner resilience and managing their expectations while engaging with linguistic complexity.

“Feelings play a role for L1 Turkish speakers, because English grammar is a little different. So, students might get frustrated. For example, when we explain a rule and then we say that ‘but there are exceptions’, they lose their motivation. They think that everything has exceptions, and the exceptions don't have a limit, and, of course, this lack of motivation might result in unwanted consequences. They might just get disappointed, because they expect everything to be similar to Turkish, something that they can find an equivalent in their L1, but it's not always possible, and it affects their learning curve.” P6

The findings regarding learner psychology clearly illustrate how psychological factors have a significant influence on grammar teaching and learning process. Participants underscored the criticality of learner anxiety, motivation, personality traits and emotional responses in forming and shaping learners’ experiences with grammar. It was emphasized that explicit grammar teaching might be a better suit for anxious, introverted or less confident learners, as it makes them feel more at ease by providing clarity and reducing uncertainty. On the other end of the spectrum, it was also stated that implicit methodology could prove more engaging, motivating and beneficial for learners

who are more extroverted, confident or risk-takers. In addition, teachers also asserted that learners' emotional reactions of frustration with grammatical rule exceptions or anxiety over making grammatical mistakes can gravely impair their motivation levels and result in significantly less participation and language production. Some participants pointed to the undisputable benefits of establishing a psychologically safe classroom atmosphere such as diminishing learner anxiety or stress, building learner resilience through actively acknowledging and addressing the emotional barriers to a successful grammar learning process. Overall, participants displayed a cognitive vista that appreciates the essentiality of understanding and managing psychological dynamics to deliver successful grammar instruction in their tertiary EFL context.

4.2.5.2.Learner Needs, Interests and Expectations

This subsection will explore how learner interests, expectations and requirements from EFL classes influence grammar instruction practices and cognitions of university level instructors. Teacher cognitions in grammar teaching might be interwoven with their perceptions of learners' goals and desires. Acknowledging and accommodating learner needs and expectations is instrumental for teachers in tailoring their approaches effectively, delivering engaging lessons and helping learners in their language learning journey.

Participant 23 painted the complex interplay between instructional purpose and learner motivation and showcased the acute dilemma confronted by many: exam oriented instruction versus teaching for genuine language learning. Although they recognized that ideally authentic learning should take precedence in language instruction, they mentioned that classroom practices frequently need to respond to exam requirements. This alignment appears to be strongly influenced by learners' motivations and expectations. While learners genuinely interested in learning English largely concentrate on meaningful language use and progress in proficiency, those lacking in intrinsic motivation and aim to pass the preparatory class to move onto their studies in their departments focus on exam-driven teaching. It appears that learner motivation and expectations powerfully alter instructional choices and constitutes an enormous challenge for teachers in balancing pedagogical ideals with immediate necessities dictated by educational systems and learner cognitions.

“Do we teach for the sake of teaching, or do we teach for the sake of exams? This is the big question. Unfortunately, most of the time, we teach for the sake of exams, because students learn for the sake of exams. It also depends quite a lot on the motivation of the students. If I have motivated students, not to pass the prep school but to learn English, I teach for the sake of teaching English. If I have not motivated, bored students, I teach for the sake of the exams. This is how I think.” P23

In contrast with Participant 23, Participant 31 conceded that learner needs and goals of passing the proficiency exam heavily influence their instructional focus and lesson design. Their perception of learners prioritizing exam success above all made them feel compelled to adapt their teaching, demonstrating a conflict between their cognitions and broader pedagogical goals. It could be argued that learner expectations might shape teacher decision making processes and potentially result in exam-oriented instruction delivery.

“This is students' choice. This is about how students make us feel about it. Most of the time, they have one target which is finishing passing the proficiency test. If they insist on that, in spite of everything, then we basically say ‘OK, these are asked in your exams. So let's study this.’ So it's completely about students, about the takers of the instruction.” P31

The considerable tension generated by the differences between student expectations and pedagogical priorities was also stressed by Participant 8. They strive to move the aim of their learners to the more meaningful objective of communication while the students tend to give precedence to grammar with mindsets informed by past learning experiences and exam pressures. As opposed to Participant 31's inclination to respond to exam-driven learner expectations, Participant 8 challenges these high expectations through instilling a broader perspective of language learning beyond rule learning and exam preparations. This wide divergence in their point of views clearly pictures the dilemma tertiary level ELF teachers confront routinely between aligning with student goals of passing exams and fostering more communicative, long-term language competence.

“My students obviously think grammar is very important because they know it's going to come up in a test or an exam. Maybe their previous experiences say grammar is the important piece. So they expect me to do things in a way they're used to. But just because we're used to doing something in one way, it doesn't mean that's the only way, or that's the accurate way. So I try to help students to realize that communication is a little bit more important and cannot be downgraded to knowing the grammatical rules of a language.” P8

In a similar vein, Participant 29 disputed the shared fallacy among learners that mastering numerous grammar structures alone ensure success in exams and maintained

that learners tend to not concentrate on developing other components in their language learning process, saying “Students think that learning a lot of grammar structures will help them a lot in the exams, but this is a misbelief. They should improve their skills a lot more.” Similar to Participant 8, they criticized the overemphasis imposed on grammar by learners and encouraged a shift toward communicative competence development. Both participants heartily endorsed moving beyond a narrow, rule-based grammar instruction and suggested that while grammar holds an important place, it simply should not overshadow the development of integrated language skills.

Different from Participant 8 and 29, Participant 37 shared their observation that many learners tend to experience boredom and exhibit prejudice against grammar instruction and express a desire for a more entertaining learning process instead of rule-focused teaching. While Participant 8 and 29 asserted that learners tend to mistakenly concentrate on grammar at the expense of communicative competence and skill development, Participant 37 pointed to a different mental hurdle of learners’ perceived dullness of grammar resulting in their disengagement from grammar lessons and the imperative of making grammar more enjoyable and relevant for learners. Together, these points of view paint an intricate picture in which learners may both overvalue grammar for the sake of exams and simultaneously show resistance to engaging grammar through traditional grammar presentation paradigms.

“I think they find grammar boring, and they have a prejudice against it, I can see it. They don't want to learn it, they want to have fun all the time. Maybe that's the issue, to connect the rules and the fun side of English learning.” P37

Participant 30 demonstrated similar cognitions to Participant 8 and Participant 29 and underlined that grammar should not take precedence over communicative skills. They argued that learners need to engage with language through authentic content such as movies and social media and use the language for real-world purposes and out of personal interest. For them, prioritization of grammar is not in line with the learner needs of the modern day and limits learning enjoyment and meaningful discussion opportunities in the language classrooms and gets in the way of speaking practice and increasing learner motivation.

“In this era, with these opportunities and with the needs of the learners, grammar shouldn't be on top. They have to listen, read, speak because our time requires it. We watch films, news, we follow social media in different languages for different perspectives. I also think it is more enjoyable for students. For example, according to their interests, we can prepare materials,

we can open discussion topics. So when we put the grammar on top, they have little chance to discuss and improve their speaking activities or enjoy learning.” P30

The dichotomy between cognitions and practice was also echoed in the tension between Participant 1’s teaching philosophy and learner expectations. In contrast to their preference of not placing emphasis on grammar, they were driven by learner demands to allocate significant time for grammar instruction as part of their classroom reality. This discrepancy mirrors the perspectives of Participants 29 and 31, where learners’ tendency to attach great importance to grammar is considered a common fallacy. Participant 1 conceded that learner perceptions and demands dictate their instructional choices although they might be pedagogically unideal. In contrast with Participant 37’s comments on learners’ prejudices against grammar teaching and desire for fun, Participant 1 shared instances of learners actively seeking out grammar instruction in the form of more mechanical practice. These two counts of learner expectations show a distinctly diverse learner profile and a recurring conflict which prompt teachers to navigate through a complex balance between their professional tendencies for communicative paradigms and learners’ deeply entrenched expectations formed by prior language learning and exam-oriented thinking.

“To be honest, I don't want to teach grammar in my classes, but my experience has shown me that whenever I go into the class, students always expect some kind of grammatical structure. They want to know the rules, they want to do more practice, especially mechanical practice. So even though I don't want to do grammar lessons as the term progresses, I find myself doing grammar lessons every day. Out of four lessons, two lessons directly go to grammar because students need that and students want to feel comfortable by doing multiple choice questions or filling the blank activities. So I don't want to really go into grammar, but I do it especially when students ask for it. ‘Sir, can you please teach us this grammar topic? Because our other teachers are not really doing that.’ I receive questions and requests like this. So as a result, I put myself into a situation where I teach a lot of grammar. Am I happy? Not really, but I think my experience and what I want to do are two different things in the classroom.” P1

The diversity of the learner profile and preferences and how individual differences profoundly interact with grammar teaching was also mirrored in Participant 4’ cognitions. They shared their keen observations that some learners are heavily reliant to teacher-centered input presentation methodologies and associate good teaching with rule-based instruction, visual demonstrations and thorough explanations. In addition to considering a pedagogical matter, they insightfully note that this may be a reflection of personality

traits and tendencies related to finding comfort in structure, caution versus autonomy, and guidance versus spontaneity. To suit varying learner needs and psychologies, Participant 4 mentioned having to balance their instructional approaches since while some learners tend towards discovery-based methods, other expect explicit grammar teaching. These observations indicate that differentiated instruction and flexibility in grammar teaching methodology are instrumental to respond affective, cognitive, disposition learner factors.

“Some students are, let's say, addicted to presentation. They love it when the teacher stands in front of the board and tells them for one or two hours how the sentences are made. The teacher is a good teacher if they draw charts and arrows, write out formulas and underlying sentences, point out important points and so on. That's the best teacher to their mind, because some people may need that guidance, but some others like to discover things themselves. This shows a lot more than people's language learning habits but more about their stance in life, what kind of people they are. Some people like to discover, some people like to be guided. Some people are very cautious, some people like to live spontaneously.” P4

The findings in teachers' cognitions regarding learner needs, interests and expectations demonstrated how learners' perceptions and desires significantly give shape to grammar instruction. Some participants noted that learners' perception of grammar learning works primarily through the lens of exam performance and this assessment-driven motivation dominantly influences the instructional choices and decision-making of teachers. In contrast, a certain degree of discomfort with overly exam-centered grammar instruction and the significance of communicative competence beyond grammatical accuracy was acknowledged by some participants. While some noted learners' expectations for traditional explicit grammar teaching methodology, others stated that the meaningful integration of grammar into communicative tasks relevant to learners' interests enabled an engaging and enjoyable grammar learning process. A balancing act between learners' exam-oriented demands and deeply ingrained prior learning cognitions and fostering language skills development appears to be a routine for many. To put it in a nutshell, the findings demonstrate that learner needs, interests and expectations substantially impact teachers' grammar practices and cognitions. A meticulous lesson design of flexible and differentiated instruction seemed to be teachers' common approach in aligning learners' perceived requirements with broader communicative goals.

4.2.5.3.Learner Level

In this subsection, how students' proficiency levels inform teachers' grammar instruction and practices. Differences in learner levels within the same classroom might pose instructional challenges and deeply influence teachers' adoption of approaches in terms of language development. For instance, Participant 31 admitted acknowledged varying learner proficiency levels and mixed ability classes yet did not consider such disparities as a block in the way of their teaching, saying: "Sometimes, the level of students in the same class can be different, but this is not a problem for me, actually. This is not something I give thought to a lot. As long as I perceive the general power of a class, I can adjust everything accordingly. I try to do my best to close the gap between those students." Their flexibility presents a cognitive stance in which teachers dynamically shift their teaching for proficiency variations to maximize the effectiveness of their grammar instruction.

Learner proficiency levels plays a key role in teachers' methodological preferences and tendencies in grammar teaching. For instance, teacher might prefer to equip inductive and discovery-oriented paradigms with more advanced learners. Participant 4 noted, "With higher levels, I tend to use the method, discovery. I write a few sentences on the board in the subject matter, and then, I ask students to come up with the rule without giving them any formulas beforehand." On a similar note, Participant 17 succinctly explained that explicit grammar instruction might be of little use for advanced learner levels due to their existing knowledge of target grammar structure: "At the highest level, you cannot teach grammar directly, because most of them already know many things about those structures." Participant 11 reinforced Participant 17 and 4's perspectives and mentioned utilizing inductive techniques that build on higher level learners existing grammatical knowledge: "If the learners' language level is around intermediate or upper intermediate level, I always try to elicit the rules because they have all the grammar rules in their mind already. I mean, they know almost everything." These keen insights reveal a collective cognition that teachers might be encouraged to utilize methods leveraging learners' prior grammatical knowledge and analytical skills when teaching higher levels.

The findings reveal that teachers consistently tailor their grammar instruction based on learner level. Due to higher level learners' existing understanding of grammar structures, discovery-based learning was considered a better suit for them. In addition, it

was also reported that with mixed ability classrooms, teachers mentally adapt their strategies to close the gaps between learners with the help of differentiated instruction. Overall, learner level emerged as a key factor informing teachers' instructional style and pedagogical decision-making in grammar teaching.

4.2.5.4.Learner Training and Awareness

This subsection will explore EFL tertiary-level participants cognitions in relation to equipping learners with effective strategies to enhance their language learning and improve their understanding of grammar. This entails promoting learner autonomy, raising their consciousness about how grammar works, guiding learners towards recognizing their individual differences and tendencies, and helping them identify and navigate through engaging learning resources.

Participant 8 stated that they explicitly encourage their learners to explore their interests to chart a personalized road map of learning. Considering individual differences and generational shifts, they attached great importance to foster autonomy through helping their students engage in self-directed, interest-driven language learning practices with the hopes of going beyond classroom or the preparatory class year and making their learning lifelong.

“Well, if I'm honest, I say this to my students: ‘Find your own way. My way was through reading, but it was a different time. So if I learned 10 items in English, whether it be grammar or vocabulary, I probably learned 8 of them through reading, and I enjoyed it. So find whatever you're interested in and do that in English. If you're a gamer, find some blogs, find people to talk with, etc.’” P8

Differing from Participant 8, Participant 16 shared a more hands-on and proactive approach in terms of learner training and presented their learners a curation of digital resources tailored for different language skills. To foster learner autonomy and support development of independent learning habits, they demonstrated how to use online dictionaries at the start of each semester.

“This is my habit or routine at the beginning of each semester with a new classroom. I provide them with a list of links for grammar, reading, listening, and speaking. Some of them are for exercises, some of them for reading, some of them for improving speaking skills, and some online tools. I also give them an online dictionary link because they don't know how to use the dictionaries, and I show them how to use it, in the classroom.” P16

Participant 9 demonstrated a heightened sense of reflection in terms of learner training and identified an enormous gap in terms of learner training. Invoking the

metaphor of ‘being a passenger or driving the car’, the participant pointed to a severe lack of understanding and internalization of learning objectives by learners and underlined that learners should take charge of their learning through being aware of their own language development goals and tracking their progress in terms of grammar and vocabulary. They went so far as to claim that without awareness of learning objectives, both the parties of teachers and learners might risk playing passive roles in the learning process. This poignant reflection demonstrated that learner training should include elements of goal setting, self-monitoring, contemplation to improve autonomy and purpose in grammar learning.

“One thing that comes to my mind is that I, as a teacher, and especially my students, don't have a clear focus on our learning outcomes at the end of the day, the week or, maybe, the month. If the outcome was to enrich the structures and vocabulary of the output, and they would be conscious about it, where they are now or where they could be, or where they are supposed to be, just having a more tangible understanding, we would see where we are going and where we want to be. Awareness is definitely the solution here. Having your own thought through the process and internalizing outcomes of where you want to be and where you need to be. So it's either going as a passenger on a ride or literally driving the car.” P9

Participant 6 reiterated the potential in learner awareness and reflection and reinforced the argument made by Participant 9. In addition to conscious progression within language goals, Participant 6 commented on reflection functioning as a catalyst in the internalization of learning objectives and long-term retention and application of target structures. They stated that encouraging learners to articulate what they have learned could be instrumental in the development of metacognitive awareness and progressively enable learners to make meaningful connections between form, function, and context of grammar structures. These comments by Participant 9 and 6 jointly displayed that the inclusion of structured reflection and objective defining into learner training practices could get them to gain active ownership of their language learning.

“In my opinion it's very important to let students reflect on their learning, when they think by themselves ‘What did I learn today? I learned this tense, it was about the past, and I use it when I refer to something in the past, before another event in the past.’ It may be very hard to remember, but it's very important for students to reflect on their own learning.” P6

The findings related to learner training and awareness indicated that some participants highly valued the potential in fostering learner reflection, autonomy and strategic engagement beyond the classroom. Personalized pathways for learning through learner interests was highlighted. In addition, some teachers shared their practices of

providing learners with curated online resources and demonstrated effective dictionary utilization to enhance learners' independent learning habits. Raising learners' awareness of learning goals was deemed crucial and reflection by students was noted to be considerably helpful in internalizing grammatical knowledge. To put it briefly, it was considered imperative that teachers train learners to equip them with growth mindsets and guide them to consciously direct their language development through self-monitoring and reflection.

4.2.5.5.Limited L1 Competence

This subsection will explore the impact of learner proficiency in their first language L1 on their English grammar learning processes and teachers' cognitions on this matter. Restricted abilities in their native language might often pose challenges to learners in fully grasping grammatical concepts and transferring linguistic awareness between languages.

Participant 33 expressed a strong concern about the foundational role of L1 competence in learning a foreign language. They emphasized that the majority of the students do not receive formal instruction in Turkish grammar prior to tertiary education and questioned their ability to understand texts even in their L1. Thus, they claimed that low metalinguistic awareness in L1 in turn severely hinders learners' capacity to grasp abstract grammatical structures in L2. This remark by Participant 33 debunked the notion that learners can build second language knowledge without establishing a solid foundation in their first language and showed that this underlying assumption might lead to unrealistic expectations and considerable challenges in grammar teaching.

"I think they have Turkish classes, but they don't have Turkish grammar classes in primary and secondary schools if I'm not wrong. So they don't even know basic grammar rules and skills. If they can't comprehend something they read in their own language, how can we expect them to understand something written in another language? So their level of foreign language cannot exceed that, and we never measure that actually. We put them through some exams, but we never try to find out what their level is in their own language." P33

Similarly, Participant 29 drew attention the usefulness of L1 competence in grammar teaching by stating, "I ask them what the grammar topic means in Turkish, and if students know it in Turkish, they understand it better. And those students who are not competent about Turkish grammar show less success in English grammar." This brief remark reinforced Participant 33's argument that insufficient Turkish grammatical

competence might greatly impede learners' ability and capacity to comprehend how English grammar works.

The interdependence between L1 grammatical awareness and successful L2 grammar learning was further embodied in the grammar teaching cognitions of Participant 32. They pointed out that many learners lack even a simple command of parts of speech in Turkish. Despite repeated exposure and instruction of parts of speech, their students often struggled to recognize terms such as adjective or noun. This demonstrated that low level of L1 grammatical knowledge might obstruct learners from engaging with English grammatical concepts and complicate the teaching process even further.

"When I say parts of speech, I see 'blue screens.' I try to give them some examples in the first week, sentence with to be, and we talk about the components of the sentences like, the noun, the subject. And, when I say parts of speech, even at the end of the term, they still can't figure it out. For example, when I write a sentence, even in the 7th or 8th week, I try to teach them what an adjective is, because, even in Turkish, they don't know it. This is a big problem." P32

Participant 22 also echoed the earlier concerns by Participant 32, 33 and 29 by highlighting the shortcomings of earlier language education in both Turkish and English in the country. They shared their frustrations on how learners' prior learning experiences provided them with limited L1 grammar awareness and cognitions and hence deeply hindering learners' grasp of complex English structures.

"When I see they get lost in those formulas and terms, I criticize all the teaching of Turkish or English in their elementary or high school sometimes. That's a big problem, because if you want to learn a language, first, you should have a good control of your own mother tongue. Some are unaware of all the grammar rules and terminology in Turkish." P22

The findings in the grammatical cognitive landscape of university language instructors regarding learners' grammatical competence in L1 indicated that a foundational understanding of L1 proves essentially instrumental in the acquisition and learning of L2, particularly in terms of grammar. It was emphasized that learners' limited competence in Turkish grammar severely impedes their comprehension and internalization of English grammar structures. Learners' inability to recognize and name rudimentary concepts like parts of speech in their mother tongue creates formidable barriers to the development of grammatical awareness in the target language. This huge gap in L1 knowledge might considerably restrain teachers' instructional choices and negatively inform their approach to terminology, metalanguage and conceptual explanation in their English grammar teaching practice.

4.2.6. Contextual Factors

This section aims to picture the various layers of educational environment influencing grammar instruction at the tertiary level beyond teachers' tendencies and learner characteristics. As grammar teaching does not occur in vacuum and is embedded in an educational ecosystem, it is constant interaction with immediate and wider contexts. The immediate context refers to the language school and the tertiary institution where the study was carried out and wider contexts entails cultural and societal factors in the scale of the country. Furthermore, the role of instructional materials through which grammar input is presented will also be examined. Teacher cognitions about classroom dynamics involving the relationships and interactions between learners and teachers, assessment and curriculum practices will be explored in detail. Together, contextual factors provide a more comprehensive understanding of university EFL teacher cognitions in grammar instruction.

4.2.6.1. Immediate Context

The immediate context is integral to how grammar instruction is provided since it encompasses the internal dynamics and situational realities of the institutional setting. Institutional vision, teacher coordination and collaboration, and shared cognitions might directly or indirectly take hold of teachers' decision-making processes and instructional tendencies. Within the micro-level environment, even well-intentioned pedagogical choices can have dire consequences or be restrained by contextual ambiguities. A lack of common understanding about instructional goals might inevitably result in fragmented teaching of grammar in the form of incoherent grammar teaching methodologies and may have detrimental effects on the learning processes.

Participant 19 remarked a dearth of collective vision in the school climate and pointed to a misalignment between institutional goals and individual teaching practices. They stated that this paucity of shared understanding brings about considerable variation in how grammar is perceived, and grammar instruction is implemented among their colleagues. This wide range of opinions and cognitions is embodied in teaching practice as the dichotomy of exam-focused or contextualized teaching. It appears that without clearly articulated institutional aims and collective acceptance of them, grammar teaching has unavoidably been rendered fragmented and discordant instead of a unified and harmonized in the language school.

“I think, in our school, we don’t share a common idea of teaching, not just in terms of grammar. Everybody has their own teaching philosophy of course, but we have different takes on the reasons for the stuff we are doing in our school. That’s why we have different grammar instructions and such differences. I think the most important thing is as an institution, you should know why you are teaching, your aims. Then you are going to shape your grammar instruction and many other things. If you are just teaching just for exam purposes, then why do you include some indirect and contextual things? You just need to teach the rules, that’s all. But if you have other perspectives and aims, then you are going to design your instruction accordingly. I think in our school, we don’t have a common goal because we don’t really share a vision. I think it’s not because somebody is teaching in the right or wrong way, rather, it’s just because not everybody has the same vision or aim of teaching that language.” P19

Participant 19 further elaborated their points on the institutional incoherence and exemplified the lack of a unified instructional vision. In addition to the absence of collective pedagogical aims, they also exposed a deeper mismatch between instruction and assessment in the intensive language program. To them, the inconsistencies of focal points in between the midterms and the finals and instruction being much less detailed than assessment an institutionalized disconnect between teaching and assessment. This fluctuation caused by the misunderstanding undermines the effectiveness of grammar instruction since teachers are left to their own devices and without clear guidance on whether to prioritize communicative competence or grammatical competence. The instability between focusing on accuracy in midterms and then downplaying it in finals demonstrates a broader issue of lack of curriculum alignment of assessment. While teacher provide grammar instruction with limited depth in their classrooms, students are assessed in much more detail. Participant 19’ remarks about their immediate context signals how the paucity of a coherent institutional strategy and the existence of discord between teaching and assessment might cause fragmented teaching and inconsistent learning experiences where students might end up in confusion and frustration.

“In our institution, we don’t have an overemphasis. Actually, we lack emphasis on grammar, I mean not lack of emphasis, but we don’t know what we are doing. Because, in the midterms, we put emphasis on writing and accuracy, but when it comes to finals, we don’t give that much importance to grammar. But we should stick to something and shape ourselves accordingly. Because when we are teaching grammar, we don’t give that many details, in terms of rules, but quizzes and exams are different from what we teach in the class, they are much more detailed. What we teach and what we test are on different paths. We have some kind of misunderstanding there.” P19

Participant 26 commented on contextual factors such as exam pressures, curriculum demands, institutional expectations and time limitations and how they shape their instructional decisions. Despite holding different cognitions as to how ideal grammar instruction should be implemented, they feel pressured or forced to conform to the needs arising from contextual factors. This clear tension between personal teaching cognitions and classroom realities reveals a form of context-induced cognitive dissonance where teaching practice appears not entirely compatible with belief owing to the surrounding educational environment and school climate.

“Talking about cognitions, what I believe and what I practice do not match completely, because I’m a part of the system. My ideology is a little bit different, but because of the exams, curriculum, the learners, or their prior knowledge and maybe our context, I just have to practice in that way. Also, in our context we have limited time, and our students have exams that they need to pass. The expectations of the students and the administrators are the reason why I teach the way I teach.” P26

Similar to Participant 19 and 26, the overarching theme of a clear mismatch between teaching practices and institutional assessment tendencies can also be found in the cognitions of Participant 36. In addition to Participant 19, Participant 36 drew attention to the misalignment between what is taught in the classroom and what is assessed in exams and noted that while communicative competence takes the spotlight in instruction, grammar is often emphasized disproportionately in testing. Unlike Participant 26 who expressed a sense of resignation to contextual pressures, Participant 36 acknowledged the divisiveness of the issue within the context. Contextually driven dissonance emerging from ideal instructional goals and challenging practical realities and systemic expectations surfaced in decision-making cognitions of Participant 36.

“I can say that there is an overemphasis on grammar in our education system, in terms of the exams especially. We do not test the communicative skills in our tests in Turkey, but at our prep school, we just try to make a balance of course. It is a little bit hard sometimes, but we just try to make our students be ready orally and in a written way for real life or for their academic purposes. Also, when I have a look at our exams, grammar part is a little bit detailed for our students, because in general, we try to make our students be more communicative, and we sometimes skip the grammar. This creates a gap between our teaching style and our exam style. This must be covered, and actually it is a difficult topic. I know there are different opinions.” P36

On a different note, Participant 4 talked about one specific collective tendency displayed within the language school that teachers might unintentionally impede learning

processes by overwhelming students with excessive input in an attempt to provide clarity or more knowledge: “At our school, most of the time out of impatience, we, as teachers tend to overteach students, give too much information with an aim to help them better understand and see the bigger picture, but most of the time it works the other way around. It causes them to get confused.” This astute observation is clearly illustrative of how well-intentioned instructional choices by teachers might backfire drastically in classroom practice when not calibrated to learners’ cognitive load or zone of proximal development.

Participant 34 pointed out a misalignment between collective pedagogical expectations and tendencies and practical needs of learners. They mentioned mechanical grammar exercises being undervalued and skipped by their peers and stated that they actually are crucial in the reinforcement of grammatical accuracy and formation of linguistic habits. Their perception resonates with Participant 19 and 36 on the matter of the inconsistency between teaching and testing or a shared vision and institutional clarity. In addition, Participant 34 identified a gap between what is pedagogically useful, e.g. repetitive mechanical practice and what is institutionally favored, e.g. complex tasks integrating two or more topics. These keen remarks by Participants 34, 19 and 36 together point to the mismatches in assessment styles and instructional priorities contribute to instructional dissonance and confusion within the teaching context.

“I think the problem in this institution is that our expectations are too high. When we check the coursebook, mechanical exercises play a huge role, but we usually don't like them. We always think that we don't need to cover them or to do every one of them, but mechanical exercises are really important. Even if the structure is so easy, the more they practice, the better they get. They form a kind of habit. But as far as I know, we usually skip most of the mechanical exercises and we want more complicated ones or for example, whatever we have taught on that day, we want an exercise which combines the points today with the points last week.” P34

The findings in relation to the immediate context revealed a collective cognitive landscape marked by stark discordance and fragmentation. Concerns about the absence of a shared institutional vision were consistently voiced. The lack of a collective understanding of grammar instruction appears to result in divergent teaching practices and instructional confusion. While some emphasized the importance of communicative competence, others shared their concerns over grammar-heavy assessment not being in full alignment with classroom instruction. This mismatch arising from teaching and testing tendencies repeatedly emerged as a source of frustration seen in the form of

complains about fluency-oriented curriculum and accuracy-centric testing. Additionally, inconsistencies between individual cognitions and actual classroom practices brought about by institutional pressures further showed elements of discord. Teachers reported adapting their methodologies not due to professional and cognitive conviction but because of systemic demands. Although all the teaching staff have become experienced teachers in the language school and have worked together for a long period, individual cognitions regarding grammar teaching appear to vary drastically, ranging from support for mechanical drills to a preference for integrative tasks. This divergence in the cognitive collective landscape demonstrates a pressing and dire need for greater curricular coherence, institutional dialogue, collaborative engagement and mutual understanding to overcome the seemingly irreconcilable differences between individual and collective cognitions and practice.

4.2.6.2. Wider Context

The wider context of language education envelopes the educational climate, policies, and societal norms that interact with and give shape to English grammar instruction across the country. The institutional contexts may differ vastly depending on local requirements and distinct realities. However, teacher cognitions appear to be informed by dominant language teaching paradigms, personal ideologies, national assessment systems and curriculum mandates, and the role of English language in the sociocultural terrain. These macro level might interplay with classroom decisions, sometimes reinforce or other times conflict with them. This subsection will go into a detailed description of how exam-oriented nature of the education system and societal attitudes toward English encounter how tertiary level EFL teachers perceive and think about grammar instruction in the classroom.

Participant 19 commented on the exam-oriented characteristics of English education in the country: “In general, when we look at Turkey, although I have no idea about the primary and secondary schools, all other exams we have on English knowledge focus on grammar and vocabulary.” Their brief comment pointed to a national tendency to prioritize discrete language systems of grammar and lexis over communicative competence in exams. Similarly, Participant 31 said “Everything depends on the purpose of learning a language. If the purpose is to get prepared for a standardized test, which is the main reason generally in our country, then accuracy matters more.” Their cognitions

also reinforced how examination preparation considerably influence pedagogical decision-making and hence accuracy takes precedence over fluency. However, Participant 1 critically expressed frustration with this tendency towards grammar-focused, exam-driven language education by calling for a radical change and saying “We are an exam-oriented country, and our school is exam-oriented, too. So it’s natural that we focus too much on accuracy, but I think grammar should just go. It’s high time it just got erased from the books.” Additionally, Participant 38 mentioned a country-wide tendency towards explicit grammar teaching, saying “In Turkey, teachers generally just explain the grammatical point explicitly, and make their students practice some controlled exercises. Then grammar is done.” All these remarks collectively demonstrate that accuracy-orientated, exam-focused and grammar-centric nature of the wider educational context in Turkey significantly influences the grammar cognitions of tertiary level EFL teachers.

Participant 32 revealed incongruity between the expectations placed on language learners at the tertiary level and their prior learning experiences. They fiercely criticized the grammar-heavy instruction starting as early as primary school and continuing throughout the following steps in education. This deeply entrenched focus on grammar gets ingrained in learner cognitions in time and causes learners to consider language as a system of rules to memorize instead of a tool for communication. This prior overemphasis on grammar conditions learners to prioritize rule mastery over development of communicative competence and inhibits the transition phase to fluent communication. The instructor pointed to a contradiction in simultaneously pushing for fluency and focusing on grammar a lot, resulting in unrealistic expectations.

“We focus on grammar a lot. I think the problem starts with the primary school, because what they do there is learning the grammar structures and that’s it. Each term, I see it in our students. This is the case for other educational levels and institutions as well, unfortunately. But at tertiary level, we expect them to focus on communication, and that’s impossible, because this is what they have observed for so many years. So in these circumstances, we want them to use the language, but we also focus on the grammar points a lot. They need to control all the rules in their minds, and then we expect them to be fluent, and it’s not possible. So somehow, we should prove that our concern is not just the grammar.” P32

Participant 27 challenged the traditional, form-focused paradigm prevalent in the national context, where grammar often overshadows other language elements. Labeling grammar as ‘overrated’, they exhibited a disapproving stance against the dominant role of grammar in English language education in Turkey. They also framed grammar merely

as a facilitator in interaction and advocated for a more balanced and functional approach in grammar instruction.

“I think in Turkey the role of grammar is overrated. It's only essential to facilitate communication, so grammar shouldn't be the real focus of language learning and teaching. It should be a helper for people to communicate with each other.” P27

Similarly, Participant 15 criticized the system of English language education in the country through making a comparison between German and Turkish English speakers. Pointing out that Turks speak English less proficiently compared to Germans, they attributed this underperformance to a systemic and prevalent neglect of speaking skills in EFL education in Turkey. They implied that the existing emphasis is misplaced, and meaningful overall improvement might be accomplished through reconsidering what is prioritized within the wider educational context.

“English teaching system in Turkey should change. When you look at people in Germany, they speak English much better than our people do. What do they do right, and what are we doing wrong? We most of the time ignore the importance of speaking.” P15

The findings regarding the wider context collectively unearthed grave concerns among participants over the exam-oriented, grammar-focused, accuracy-prioritizing properties of English language teaching in Turkey. It was consistently reiterated that national language exams are predominantly centered around grammar and considerably influence learner expectations, institutional priorities, and instructional practices. This increasingly pervasive outlook on grammar enacts a widespread overemphasis on grammar teaching and grammatical accuracy and led to trivialization of communicative competence in classroom practice. Several participants conveyed their discontent over this imbalance and stated that learners are conditioned from early education to downgrade language to grammar and equate rote learning of rules to language development. This architecture of learner cognition at the early stages of education instils misconceptions about the language learning processes in students' minds and later renders it extremely difficult to cognitively progress towards more functional, communication-driven language use at the tertiary level. Finally, participants called for a nationwide progressive move to language teaching paradigms in which grammar functions as a supportive tool rather than the core of language learning.

4.2.6.3. Lesson Materials

This subsection will examine how lesson materials interact with grammar instruction and grammar teaching cognitions at the tertiary EFL teaching. Teachers' observations picture how the structure, content and pedagogical approach embedded in the coursebook influence their decision-making, constrain or support their instructional flexibility, and interplay with their cognitions regarding grammar instruction.

Participants frequently referenced the course book as a controlling factor in their grammar instruction. Participant 34 shared their unique perspective of fairness, implying there should be a standardization of grammar instruction across the board by saying: "In terms of teaching, I don't usually go out of the coursebook, because it's not my own class. They need to get the same thing with the next class, so fairness matters." This notion of following the coursebook verbatim to ensure standard grammar teaching might cause context-induced dissonances. Likewise, Participant 14 displayed uncertainty regarding making changes to the material through lesson planning and expressed adherence to the course book due to methodological necessity: "Our book doesn't give us any choice in that way. We have speaking and reading material. They have to see it in context first, so I never change that order. I don't want to change such things." Likewise, Participant 26 pointed to the institutional pressures and their influence on their instructional domain: "In general, when it's time to teach grammar, I follow the course book in my lessons, the reason for that is we have a syllabus to follow and the exams that students need to take. Textbook reliance also emerged in the cognitions of Participant 27: "I follow the book and the syllabus. Whatever syllabus gives me I do it. I don't bring extra materials on my own." While there is somewhat tendency to strictly stick to prescribed teaching materials, the underlying reasons seemed vary such as fairness, methodological coherence, exam alignment and self-perceptions.

On the other hand, Participant 20 demonstrated a more flexible perspective in their material use, stating "If I find the grammar exercises in the book valuable, I start with them. But if I think that they are not enough, I use extra materials." This pragmatic stance involved the coursebook as a starting point but not the sole resource to respond to learner needs. Furthermore, adopting a more adaptive, proactive, and learner-centric attitude, Participant 10 mentioned adapting course book material or designing input instructionally in such a way to enable learner discovery. This conscious effort to move beyond the passive transmission of grammatical rules through reworking pre-designed content into

exploratory, inductive tasks is a shining example of teacher agency in terms of adapting materials to better scaffold learning process and support learner engagement through rule discovery.

“If we use a certain course book, I look at the activities. Then I start designing my own guided discovery tasks. Instead of just referring to the grammar box given in the book, I just turn it into a guided discovery task.” P10

Similar to Participant 10’s constructivist view of language learning, Participant 37 underlined the potency of contextual relevance in grammar instruction. Like Participant 10, they demonstrated a flexible and learner-responsive attitude and adapted or replaced coursebook material and content to foster learners’ cognitive engagement and boost their interest. Participant 10 and 37 mentioned modifying coursebook input presentation and supplementing materials to enhance contextual relevance for their classes. Their cognitions show considerable disagreement with fixed textbook use and show support for tailoring content based on classroom dynamics.

“Sometimes, the context in the course book is perfect, so I use it. Other times, students are not interested in it and it doesn't work in my class. If they don't like that context, I create another context, I tell stories, I tell my own experiences. I bring some authentic material, some popular news headings, and realia, I use them. An interesting context is the key to good material in grammar teaching.” P37

Participant 2 expressed some concerns caused by significant constraints within the coursebook used in the intensive language program. Despite their teaching philosophy in line with contextualized grammar instruction and flow of discourse within a context, they stated occasionally facing instructional limitations due to the decontextualized, isolated sentences in grammar exercises.

“I try to focus more on context and meaning in my classes, but you know books limit us because it comes to using grammar in exercises and they are more focused on structures. They don't give it in a contextual way like in a little paragraph. Well, my hands are a bit tied especially with independent sentences are not contextualized enough sometimes.” P2

The findings relation to material use indicated a spectrum of teacher cognitions informed by pedagogical beliefs and contextual constraints. While many participants mentioned strict adherence to coursebooks with rationalizations such as fairness concerns, syllabus design, and institutional expectations, others showed a higher degree of teacher agency and tended to selectively adapt or supplement materials. These findings collectively illustrate the pivotal role of material design in grammar instruction and

showcases a collective cognitive dissonance where teachers strive to balance institutional standardization and teacher agency.

4.2.6.4. Classroom Dynamics

This subsection will look at how interactional patterns, classroom atmosphere, peer relationships, and teacher-learner rapport inform teacher cognitions and shape grammar instruction in the tertiary level EFL classroom. Unlike the fixed nature of curricular or assessment procedures, classroom dynamics are inherently fluid and constantly evolve with each group of learners over the course of lessons. Teachers oftentimes adapt and adjust their grammar instruction dependent on learner engagement, motivation, risk-taking behavior, and the collective mood of the class. These social-emotional and behavioral elements render teacher cognitions embedded in the context and deeply influence their methodological decision-making and active learner participation in grammar teaching.

Participant 21 drew attention the potency of building rapport and group dynamics in the success of grammar lessons. For them, without a friendly and responsive connection on both parties, grammar instruction might easily become dull and ineffective. However, when positive relationships and classroom harmony are established, teachers can naturally adapt more effectively to learner needs, maintain active engagement, and prevent grammar-focused lessons from turning monotonous. Emotional climate and interpersonal connection within the classroom appear to have a direct influence on the pedagogical outcomes in grammar teaching.

“Bad planning and bad responding to the emerging needs of the learners. In general, if I couldn't really build this rapport with the students, the lessons were not really successful. The grammar lessons, for instance, were not really successful because we weren't able to communicate in a friendly manner. Inserting some kind of fun moments in your relationship with the students helps you with the context of the grammar item, the examples. If you have this connection, especially the grammar lesson don't fall into the boring grammar stages of a lesson. You can pick it up and fix the problems thanks to your relationship with the students. The group dynamic is really important, I think. If you see them losing concentration, you say something and get back to the lesson quickly. If that connection is not there, then whatever techniques you try, it doesn't really work.” P21

Participant 29 commented on the significant challenge of learner reticence in establishing classroom dynamics. Although learners were fluent and there was a positive teacher-student relationship within the classroom, students consistently refrained from

speaking and actively participating in the lessons. This points to the intricacy of classroom management and might indicate that there is more to classroom dynamics than affective factors of rapport and comfort.

“Last term, learner reticence was a very big problem in my class. Students were fluent speakers but they never spoke. They were nice people, they liked me, I liked them, but they refused to speak most of the time. My partners were also not happy about that.” P29

Participant 20 considered learner attitudes and group cohesion as critical components of classroom dynamics. For them, even well-prepared activities may end up failing if learners collectively lack motivation or are disruptive. This shows that learner behavior might indirectly influence the efficiency of grammar lessons and instructional outcomes.

“I had many good lessons and many bad lessons, and usually, those depend on the students’ attitude towards the lessons. In some groups, we can’t catch the rhythm together. There might be some naughty students who want to distort the lesson, and they don’t want to do anything in the lesson, they are looking forward to the end of the lesson. In those groups, if such students are the majority of the class, I’m not happy with the lessons, just like any teacher I think. Sometimes, I find a perfect activity that will work properly in that lesson, but in some groups, it doesn’t work.” P20

Similarly, Participant 24 commented on the challenge of maintaining lesson effectiveness when learner engagement is lacking. They pointed to the complexity in classroom dynamics arising from various factors such as low attendance, inattentiveness, and wide variability in learner profiles. In line with the differing pace and participation levels of learners within the same classroom, they indicated having to find a balance and adopt adaptive teaching strategies.

“There is always the possibility that you can be very motivated at that time, but the students are not. From my side, of course I do the course all the time, I can’t say I don’t want to do this today, but sometimes, you don’t have attentive students within the class, or the number of students is very low. They’re supposed to be the same level, but some are sleepy, some are lazy, and some are hard working. You have very various kinds of students. Some students are very fast, and some students are just very isolated and they don’t know what they’re doing. And you actually try to find the balance between those students.” P24

Approaching classroom dynamics from an interpersonal and emotional perspective, Participant 27 stressed that a comfortable and supportive classroom atmosphere is the key to effective teaching and learning. They noted that learner attitudes, motivation, and attentiveness might drive the success of lesson objectives more than teacher lesson preparation at times. Their perspective entails teaching not as a one-way

street in terms of motivational effort but rather a reciprocal dynamic operating in both directions. For them, optimal class sizes is another key dimension of classroom dynamics. Their self-identification as a ‘people’s person’ signals how pivotal a role the social and emotional aspects of classroom atmosphere plays in their instructional approaches.

“Everybody has emotional filters, and walls. First, you have to cross over those walls so that students should feel comfortable. The atmosphere should be student-friendly. Sometimes, even if you are well prepared, the lesson may not go well as you have planned, and I think students play an important role here. They always say teachers should motivate students, but I think it's reciprocal. When students are motivated and more attentive, even if I'm not well prepared, my grammar lessons go well. Now we have really an ideal number of students in our classes, 12 to 16, but it can be a bad thing as well. In this sense, students’ profile, their learning styles, and preferences all affect me. Because I’m a people's person I guess, the people that I'm interacting with affect my teaching.” P27

Like Participant 27, Participant 25 showed strong support for establishing a psychologically safe and emotionally supportive environment to facilitate better grammar learning. Both participants highlighted the real need for lowering learners’ affective filters by building trust and relatability. Participant 25 deliberately adopts a more humorous and self-deprecating approach towards their own minor mistakes and laughs about them with their students to normalize error-making and reduce anxiety. This mirrors Participant 27’s emphasis on emotional rapport and learner motivation as key drivers of effective grammar learning. Both instructors hold cognitions where classroom acts as a safe space distinct from the pressure of outside world and learners freely experiment with language without a fear of making mistakes. Their shared cognitions revolve around the establishment of a positive emotional climate to foster learner comfort and encourage an error-and-trial process in grammar learning.

“I try to be a cute person and show them I don't care about their mistakes; I just try to have fun. I try to create a safe place for students. For example, I confuse the third singular person all the time. I make mistakes, and they laugh. If I make that mistake, they would definitely make that mistake, too. So I make mistakes, and I just try to show them we are human. Also, I always try to share my own experiences and tell them that they can make mistakes here, they cannot make mistakes outside the class when they’re going to work in a company or a firm. I try to do that, but I'm not sure if it works and honestly. If I were in their shoes, my teacher sharing their experience with me would affect me, because they are mostly scared of me, their teacher. I just hope that it helps.” P25

On a different point, Participant 3 mentioned a shift in student behavior following the COVID-19 pandemic. Their post-pandemic experience of diminished social skills

painted a picture where while learners might still show great interest in conversational engagement with their teacher, there is a noticeable decline in group-wide participation and willingness to contribute. In addition, they stated this issue of low classroom interaction in group settings poses a significant barrier to inductive teaching paradigms in which learners are supposed be collaboratively involved in noticing and inferring how grammatical structures work. Additionally, they noted interpersonal problems such as peer conflict or even bullying can inhibit participation. Their cognition set suggests that social cohesion within learner groups is key enabling factor of learner-centered grammar instruction.

“Although we're not really happy with our student profile or we're not as happy as before, the students are eager to have a kind of conversation with me while I'm teaching. But still, I had really off classes, of course. And the biggest thing about them is that they are really reluctant to contribute as a whole group. Especially after the COVID pandemic, they're lacking some kind of social skills as well, so it's not about English. To be able to implicitly teach something to a group, most students, they have to, I mean not maybe have to, but they should be willing to contribute a little bit, to comment on some certain things, because they're going to catch and notice the implicit details, work on and build on them. But if I can't get anyone to contribute, or sometimes they're having problems among themselves and they don't want to do anything in that classroom, that may be because of bullying or their age group. I have also seen such cases.” P3

Digital distractions emerged as a notable classroom dynamic influencing grammar instruction. Participant 33 shared grave concerns regarding diminishing learner attention spans and stated “Phones are always distracting students. In recent years, students are always distracted.” The pervasive presence of mobile phones was also considered a burning issue by Participant 17 as they observed “Phones affect my classes in every way. The number of students using mobile phones in classes has doubled. They come to the classroom, sit and then start using their phones immediately.” Together these keen observations reflect the impact of mobile devices on classroom engagement and suggest that the ubiquity of smartphones gradually poses a mightier challenge in maintaining learner focus and sustaining effective instructional flow.

The findings in connection to classroom dynamics revealed that interpersonal relationships, learner behavior, and group atmosphere considerably influence grammar teaching practices. Teachers repeatedly reiterated the exponential benefits of positive rapport, mutual motivation, and a safe emotional environment in enhancing learner engagement and receptivity within grammar instruction. Conversely, it was also

highlighted that when learners are disengaged, reluctant to participate, or disrupted by emotional filters or distractions such as smartphones, grammar learning and teaching processes might come to halt. Furthermore, it was noted that classroom dynamics such as uneven participation, varying learner profiles, post-pandemic social issues, and behavioral challenges may derail even well-prepared lessons. Some teachers also pointed to empathy, humor, and authenticity in building trust and encouraging risk-taking for learners especially in grammar practice and production. Collectively, these findings prove that successful grammar teaching simply cannot be divorced from the emotional and social fabric of the classroom environment and dramatically flourishes when learner feel psychologically safe, socially included, and motivated to interact. All in all, it appears that classroom dynamics are not peripheral but central to grammar teaching experiences and cognitions of university EFL instructors.

4.2.6.5. *Assessment*

This section will explore how university preparatory school EFL teachers perceive and respond cognitively to the evaluation system within the institution, particularly in relation to grammar instruction. Assessment practices may directly or indirectly influence how learners approach language learning and teachers' instructional decisions and classroom priorities. This subsection will take a close look at teachers' critical reflections on the features, content, and effects of grammar-related testing, and how assessment influence and inform their pedagogical choices, classroom emphasis, and professional satisfaction.

Participant 1 assumed a highly critical stance on the disproportionate weight assigned to grammar in assessment practices and emphatically asserted that both parties of teachers and learners within the language school have internalized the misconception that grammar is the most important criterion in assessment. They contended that communicative competence including fluency, vocabulary, and content plays a pivotal part in conveying meaning even when grammatical accuracy is lacking. They fiercely defended affecting a balance in evaluation where communicative effectiveness is rewarded even in the presence of errors. Their cognitions challenged the prevailing grammar-dominant mindset and suggested that grammar should be taken into consideration as one of the several components in assessment, not the defining one.

“I think there is some nonsense focus on grammar on both sides, teachers and students. Somebody should come up to both students and teachers and say ‘Grammar isn’t everything’. Even when you have some kind of broken English you can still communicate with me. If you can get the message across in the exam, I give you points in the content band. If you speak fluently but with mistakes, I give you points from fluency. Of course, if your grammar is bad, then OK, there is a grammatical competence section the descriptor and I deduct points from there. Or maybe you’re making a lot of mistakes, but your vocabulary is great then it’s okay. People think grammar is more important than all these other descriptors or all the other bands in our speaking criteria or in any other criteria. So grammar kind of rules the floor in this sense and I think this is a false idea on both parties’ minds.” P1

In alignment with Participant 1’s recognition of the overemphasis on grammar in the evaluation of learner performance, Participant 8 presented a reflective and intricate set of cognitions on the role of grammar in assessment. Similar to Participant 1, they recognized that grammar oftentimes monopolizes assessment discussion and decisions although other language components such as vocabulary range, contextual appropriacy, pronunciation, and stress should carry substantial weight. However, Participant 8 added a layer of critical introspection by highlighting a shared dissonance among their colleagues that grammar is often given precedence since it has a more tangible nature and hence is easier to justify in negotiation and evaluation conversations. In addition, they pointed out another inconsistency arising from the key issue that while grammatical accuracy is rewarded, weakness in vocabulary such as excessive repetition or low-level range may simply go overlooked. This richly detailed depiction demonstrated an imbalance in the application of assessment criteria and that grammar potentially skews holistic judgments of graders. Both Participant 1 and 8 articulated deep concerns that the present assessment culture within the language school may inadvertently prioritize grammatical form over communicative competence and contextual appropriateness and results coming out of grading processes may not accurately reflect learners’ real-world language abilities.

“I’d agree with my students and most of my colleagues that it’s important. Students think if they don’t have enough grammatical knowledge, they won’t be able to pass. I understand it, because grammar is quite a big part of our booklet, and we give this information to our students. But there are other components as well: speaking and writing. For these components, I’m not sure we can dissect grammar or vocabulary when grading. If a paper is good in terms of grammar, I think we tend to give a higher grade overall and I’m not sure I’m okay with that. I’ve come to notice over the years, when negotiating, of the different sections in our criteria, we end up talking about grammar. OK, this student used this structure

and that structure, but he kept using the word ‘nice’ which is an A1 word. The use of grammatical structures shouldn’t make up for the other sections. What about the way they use that structure? Is it appropriate in that context? What about pronunciation and stress? I think maybe it feels more tangible for us to point at a grammatical structure and convince each other sometimes.” P8

Echoing the concerns articulated by Participant 1 and 8, Participant 37 acknowledged the prevailing emphasis on grammar in assessment and pointed out that grammar tends to overshadow other essential language skills. However, they also highlighted the institutional efforts to redress this imbalance through the development and use of standardized criteria for speaking and writing. This implies a proactive attempt to distribute evaluative focus more evenly across language skills and systems in the school context. While Participant 37 admitted that current speaking and writing criteria might need revision or rework, they seemed to be even more uncertain regarding how to implement such a change as the path forward seemed obscure in their mind. Their tentative stance involved their recognition of the issue but concrete solutions. Still, Participant 1, 8, and 37 collectively advocated for a more balanced and communicatively oriented assessment system in the language school.

“I think there is an emphasis on grammar more than any of the skills, I should accept that. But we try to overcome this by making and following these criteria for speaking and writing. We want to divide and standardize them to have a balance with that, but there’s a problem here. Maybe it should be changed a bit, but I don’t know how.” P37

Participant 30 presented a nuanced set of cognitions regarding grammar’s position in assessment practices. Like Participants 1, 8, and 37, Participant 30 conceded the dominance of grammar in assessment and noted that this prioritization mainly stems from the sense of security it offers to all the stakeholders in evaluation processes. Their remark clearly echoed Participant 8’s point that grammar feels more ‘tangible’ and hence much easier to discuss and evaluate and Participant 1’s comment that grammar tends to ‘rule the floor’ due to collective perceptions of importance. In contrast to Participant 8 and 1, Participant 30 introduced a dual perspective on the collective prioritization of grammar in assessment. While they criticized the shared overreliance on grammar as a simplistic evaluative shortcut owing to its convenience of identifying and quantifying mistakes, they also defended grammar’s necessity. They argued that severe grammatical errors can impede communication and justify grammar’s weight in assessment. This intricately balanced cognition differs from P1’s stronger critique and aligns more closely with

Participant 8's reflective questioning of present evaluation practices and tendencies. Participant 30 reinforced the shared call for the reconsideration of assessment practices and culture with their remark that grammar should not be treated as the sole determinant of language ability.

"Students, teachers, and even test writers and evaluators feel secure when they see grammar. This is the first reason why grammar has priority considering other skills. It is easy to see the number of the mistakes and see the relevant thing in the criteria and I may criticize it in a way. The second thing is if the students have serious grammatical errors, then the message cannot be conveyed. We cannot understand what they want to mean. It's crucially important. Although I criticized the first point of view, with the second argument of mine, I can't ignore grammar in tests. But of course, it is not everything." P30

Participant 6's cognitions contribute a critical layer to the ongoing discussion by emphasizing the misalignment between teaching and testing in the language school. They argued that testing practices often tend to diverge from the intended learning objectives through creating a grammar overemphasis with difficult or mismatching exam questions. This mismatch results in a false impression that grammar holds greater instructional value than it should. Participant 6 strongly asserted that assessment should follow instruction and curriculum and not dictate its direction. This critical stance closely aligns with Participant 8's concern that grammar can overshadow more holistic aspects of language proficiency in grading processes. While Participant 30's cognitions point to practical concerns and collective cognitions emerging from perceived position of grammar as a secure and measurable domain for all stakeholders, Participant 6 critiqued the design of the assessment tools as the root issue. However, both perspectives echoed the central theme expressed throughout this subsection that grammar is disproportionately emphasized in assessment. While Participant 30 maintained a more ambivalent but pragmatic cognitions that balance criticism with recognitions of grammar's communicative necessity, Participant 6 mainly concentrated on structural flaws in test design that misrepresent instructional aims.

"Testing side is always misunderstood when it comes to understanding the loop of things. Testing should be all about the learning outcomes, whether they are reached or not. Sometimes we deviate from that, we try to over-cover some aspects of language, like grammar. So when you do that, it is mistakenly thought that grammar is more important than other skills. We don't do that here, but sometimes, in quizzes, midterms, and finals, or even in proficiency exams, we ask a little more challenging questions than the learning outcomes want us to do, I think. This raises questions about whether we don't teach enough grammar,

but in fact, we don't ask correct questions in the exams. We ask wrong questions, harder questions, or different types of questions. So, I think it should not affect the teaching side. The teaching process and outcomes should determine the testing. Testing shouldn't affect the instruction at all." P6

On the matter of the disconnect between instruction and assessment, Participant 19 added a nuanced perspective shaped largely by teachers' own educational histories. They acknowledged that instruction is confined to the limits of syllabus and curriculum, but assessments tend to exceed those boundaries due to a shared deep-rooted inclination to test in a more detailed way than what is taught as input. This appears to be on the same wavelength with Participant 6's concerns regarding misalignment between testing and teaching, especially in regard to the overemphasis on grammar and complexity in exam questions. Unlike Participant 6's framing of the issue as a broader systemic deviation from learning objectives, Participant 19 ties this to teacher cognition on both personal and collective levels through internalized habits and prior language learning experiences. Despite differing in the reason of this problematic emphasis on grammar in assessment, Participants 19, 6 and 30 agree on its existence.

"As teachers, we teach based on the syllabus, and if we give too much information, extra things, then it's a little bit of a burden and unfair for the other classrooms. But, as test creators, it's because of our learner experiences. We are shaped by our personal prior experiences. I know we have the urge but, we shouldn't ask the way we don't teach. I think it's because of the personal experiences we, as teachers, have. All of us went through a very detailed examination procedure, and we have learned English in a very detailed way. So, we have to generate some questions based on what we teach. And when we generate questions from what we teach, we have the urge to ask in that detailed way, but we do not teach in that way. And as a result, there's a misbalance there." P19

Participant 32 emphasized the driving force of assessment on instructional decisions and stated that some grammar points are taught primarily due to being a part of assessment. This connects with Participant 6's remark on how assessment can drive teaching instead of reflecting it. However, Participant 32 showed signs of emotional conflict on the matter and expressed sadness over learner readiness and having to teach certain topics not because of pedagogical value but due to institutional demands. As a member of the testing unit, Participant 32 shows more internal tension and a situational perspective that the rationale behind teaching varies depending on the grammar topic and is sometimes driven by real-life utility and other times purely by exam and curriculum requirements.

“For some topics, we teach because we assess it. As a teacher, and also as a member of testing unit, I'm aware of it and it makes me so sad because sometimes I talk to my colleagues and I say ‘I don't think that we should teach this right now,’ but we have to, because we have it on the syllabus and we are going to assess it. So my answer depends on the different grammar points, I guess. Sometimes, I don't think that we should teach it, but I teach it because I'll assess it in the exams. if I cannot assess it, but this is on the syllabus, I have to do it. But sometimes, I believe that they should know it, because they are going to need it outside the classroom. So I should teach it and as a natural result, I just assess it.” P32

Echoing the earlier concerns raised by Participants 6 and 19 on the misalignment between instruction and assessment, Participant 4 challenged the conventional practice of explicit grammar testing. Similar to Participant 6, who argued testing should reflect learning outcomes and not distort instructional priorities, Participant 4 asserted that grammar should be assessed indirectly through language skills of reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Their cognitions show strong opposition to the isolation of grammar as a separate test component and instead align with integrated approaches in which grammar is considered a tool rather than a core language skill. Participant 4 went on by questioning the very logic of assessing grammar separately especially in high-stakes exams like proficiency tests. They also discussed the institutional pressure to teach and assess grammar due to syllabus demands and fiercely critiqued the theoretical underpinnings of this practice by pointing to other linguistic frameworks advocating for implicit assessment. Participant 4's cognition set presents a more theory-driven and holistic overview and calls for a shift to conceptualizing grammar as a means to achieve communicative effectiveness instead of as a standalone language competence.

“Some theories say that it's certainly wrong to ask explicit grammar questions in exams. They say they should be tested implicitly or indirectly within contexts, evaluating other skills. Actually, I shouldn't even use the word ‘other’ because skills are different, grammar and vocabulary are just tools. In general, you can see how accurate and or how fluent the student is in using the language through evaluation of skills. For example, if a student can understand a reading text and answer the comprehension questions, it means that students are able to understand and perceive the grammatical structures implicitly by seeing that text and the same thing goes for listening and production skills. In speaking, if a student is able to construct a sentence grammatically correct and can do the same thing in writing this means that the student is able to use the English grammar. So, what's the use of reevaluating these two systems within or through separate, individual sections in exams? It might be possible to do that in short exams, quizzes and stuff, but in proficiency exams, maybe we shouldn't evaluate students' grammar and vocabulary knowledge explicitly.” P4

Participant 11 demonstrated a balanced perspective on grammar assessment. Like Participants 1, 8, and 30, they acknowledged that grammar is often attached excessive importance by both learners and teachers due to its tangibility and the ease of measurement through examinations. This collective cognition that grammar serves as a measurable indicator of language proficiency closely aligns with Participant 30's point about grammar providing a sense of security for assessors, teachers, and learners. However, parallel to the concerns of Participant 6, 8 and 32, Participant 11 critiqued the overemphasis on grammar assessment and the disproportionate weight grammar carries in the overall evaluation. Similar to Participant 8, they argued grammar can be indirectly assessed through speaking and writing and suggested that separate grammar sections in exams may not always be necessary and result in overtesting. Their cognitions appears to connect with Participant 4's support towards integrated grammar evaluation instead of isolated items of grammar. Participant 11 also makes distinct recognitions of institutional realities and analysis of widespread collective cognitions that some colleagues are strongly invested in testing explicit grammar rules. Personally advocating for a more integrated and proportionate approach in testing, Participant 11 offered a middle ground between traditional and communicative approaches to grammar assessment within the institutional context and collective cognitive landscape.

"In fact, some of my colleagues like to check if students know the correct grammar rules or not by the help of exams. I mean, the number of our colleagues thinking like this is quite a lot in our school. It should be assessed, of course, if they learn the correct grammar rules and if they can realize it in a context. In order to check all these things, we surely need quizzes and exams. Students also pay attention just to get grades and they need something in their hands like grades. Otherwise, they don't have any other motivation to learn. They just want to be graded by some exams or quizzes. As for me, this is important of course, but we cannot assess every little language competence. I mean, the rate of grammar assessment in exams shouldn't be this big. In our school, we have speaking, writing and booklet exams with a grammar part, so grammar assessment is not so exaggerated in our school, I believe. Some of our teachers want everything to be assessed, but for me it's not so important. I mean, we already assess it through a speaking exam, we assess it through a writing exam. It shouldn't doesn't have to be separately graded all the time. We also can also assess the students this way." P11

Participant 27 appeared critical of the limited scope of the current assessment system and stated that exams in the institution are heavily structured around receptive skills with minimal space for language production. Their cognitions align with

Participants 1, 6, and 8 on the balance and authenticity of current assessment methods deriving from the overemphasis on grammar and lack of communicative evaluation. In line with Participants 4 and 11, Participant 27 expressed support for more integrated and process-based assessment and suggested that grammar can simply be evaluated through ongoing classroom activities instead of exclusively through paper-based testing. Moreover, Participant 27 called for conceptual and production-oriented exams, resonating with Participant 32's concerns regarding assessment due to requirement rather than reflection of meaningful learning. Participant 27 stressed the importance of student productivity and pointed out that the present format encourages passive reception rather than active use of language. This nuanced critique of the present paradigms within the language school implies a call for a pedagogically sound reform to evaluate learner through their capacity to use language meaningfully instead of solely recognizing it.

“Our exams are very structured and there is almost no room for production. Maybe more production oriented and conceptual exams would be more efficient, or during the process of teaching for 14 weeks, we can grade their grammar, but from different activities. It doesn't have to be written on paper. The students are not productive, but receptive in our exams. Maybe the exams should change.” P27

Expressing mixed feelings toward the current assessment system, Participant 2 recognized the necessity of exams and critiqued the imbalance in the weights of the components. Their concern that the booklet accounts for 60% while writing and speaking represent 20% echoes Participants 1, 8 and 27's criticisms on the underrepresentation of productive skills in assessment. Similar to 27, Participant 2 stated that such an evaluation structure may unintentionally make the impression that language production is less important and inevitably undermine the efforts to promote communicative competence. In line with Participant 6 and 19, Participant 2 also raised concerns regarding exam difficulty and suggested that tests may not always be representative of appropriate levels or intended learning outcomes. However, like Participant 11, they valued quizzes for their motivational role in maintaining learner engagement and diagnostic purposes in the learning process. Their explicit desire for a restructuring of the exam weighting and increasing quiz frequency as a formative tool depicts a more practical and learner-centric cognition set.

“We need to have a way of testing things, but I wish our school percentage was more on written exam. Booklet is 60% heavy, I wish we could change it because writing and speaking being 20% shows me that they may not need production so much because its percentage is

low. But again, we need exams like frequent quizzes to check their levels and also for them to see their levels. I like quizzes even more and I wish there were more in numbers because they keep them on edge a little bit. Yeah, we need to have exams but again sometimes I'm a bit worried about the difficulty of the exams." P2

Participant 31 presented a deeply reflective and critical perspective on the tensions between personal assessment ideals and institutional realities. As a testing unit member, they revealed an internal conflict and cognitive dissonance. While they stated that grammar is excessively emphasized in both the national and institutional contexts, they conceded that assessment decision-making processes are more under the influence of the need to satisfy various stakeholders than pedagogical ideals. Similar to Participant 4, they advocated for an integrated assessment system and argued that grammar assessment should not be done through isolated and decontextualized items but instead be embedded in language skills. This constructivist and communicative language assessment principle clashes with the practical convenience of traditional grammar tests, which are easier and faster to produce as stated by Participant 31. Their metaphor of 'ending up where they started' powerfully illustrates the frustrating disillusionment that may occur due to working within rigid instructional structures and collectively resistant school climates. In agreement with Participant 1, 6, and 19 on the issue of a disconnect between teaching, learning outcomes, and assessment, their personal narrative of their testing unit experiences entails signs of burnout while compromising with systemic inertia.

"I'm in the testing unit, but the call is not on me. There are lots of people the testing unit need to make happy with it like first the students then the teachers. But for me, grammar is 100% overrated in our country and in our school. Sometimes I think that we shouldn't ask students about grammar directly. We can always put these rules and vocabulary in texts, or we can evaluate it in speaking, reading, listening, and writing. There are lots of ways to assess the grammar, it doesn't have to be on the paper like 'Turn these active sentences into passive sentences.' This is a good in-class question, not a good exam question. Why can't we ask these questions in a reading exercise? When we do that, it's not making some other people happy. I like being a member of the testing unit and I have always been really happy to do the job, but this always happens. First, you have some ideals in your head, you start with your ideals, and then on the way, things change. Then you just look at the scenery and say, 'OK, we are at the beginning where we have started.' I couldn't realize that the ideal things for me are not ideal for the testing unit as well. So you struggle for something, you give lots of time, energy, and you actually give from yourself, but then something happens, and you see that it's easier to write grammar and vocabulary questions, I can write hundreds of questions in a few hours. So it always comes down to this here." P31

Similar to Participant 31, Participant 38 provided a thoughtful and self-reflective critique of the entrenched cycle of grammar-focused teaching and assessment in the language teaching institution and the broader national context. Speaking from the dual lenses of a teacher and a testing unit member, they pointed to a feedback loop where overemphasis on grammar effects grammar-heavy testing and vice versa. Their remark of this cyclical process echoed the concern of Participants 6, 19, and 31 regarding the misalignment between teaching practices, assessment design, and actual learning objectives. In line with Participant 31's metaphor of 'ending up at the beginning', Participant 38 expressed a degree of disillusionment in their efforts to break this vicious cycle and recognized by the systemic constraints posed by the curriculum and widespread inertia and resistance within the institution. However, they were willing to question the structural status quo by proposing a hypothetical removal of grammar and vocabulary from high-stakes tests and envision a change to skills-based assessment. However, they also expressed skepticism and uncertainty about such a reform in the current assessment practices by itself would not effectively change much without a collective desire to systemically change the teaching emphasis in the language program as pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment share a deep interconnectedness. Their cognitions are indicative of the overarching theme in this subsection: the pervasive dominance of grammar in assessment and the institutional difficulty in challenging its primacy.

"There is overemphasis on teaching and testing grammar in our school, and also in our system in the country. I've been working in the testing unit for some time now, and I was thinking about the same thing. What about excluding grammar and vocabulary parts, not from the quizzes, but from the tests? How would this affect students' performances in the end? Would it make them better learners? But sometimes, it's difficult to change things. To do this, we need to change the overemphasis on teaching grammar first. Because, even though I don't agree on that as a teacher, I can overemphasize the grammar in my classes, because there is a syllabus that I have to follow. Sometimes I teach two different grammar points in just a day of four hours, so isn't it an overemphasis? It's an overemphasis for me. That's also why there is an overemphasis on grammar in exams as well. Maybe we can exclude the grammar and vocabulary parts and have skill sections only in the tests, then we can talk about this. I'm not so sure right now. As a teacher, I might not have focused on grammar teaching so much, if there weren't so many grammar questions in the tests. As a testing unit member, I wouldn't include so many grammar questions in the tests, if teachers didn't focus on grammar. There's a feedback loop." P38

On the other side of the fence, Participant 33 criticized the present equal-weighted assessment criteria and argued that grammar does not receive the emphasis it deserves in writing and speaking evaluations. For them, equal distribution between grammar, vocabulary, organization, and content in writing assessment fails to demonstrate the true importance of grammar. Their view indicated a desire for increased emphasis on grammatical accuracy within writing skill evaluation.

“Unfortunately, in our context, being good at grammar is not important. In writing exams, the scores of each skill is equal, which is five points, for grammar, vocabulary, organization, and content according to the assessment criteria. So if they write in the right form and use certain conjugations and organize everything correctly then we have to give them five points for each. It is directly 50 points out of 100. In my opinion, grammar should be at least 7 or 8 points in the evaluation criteria out of 20.” P33

The findings regarding assessment revealed conflicting but interconnected cognitions regarding grammar assessment practices within the preparatory school. While many participants recognized the existing overemphasis on grammar in the broader education system of the country and their own institution, they also admitted to reinforcing this emphasis themselves due to systemic pressures, institutional expectations, and learner demands. Several teachers voiced their concerns that grammar frequently overshadows communicative skills in both teaching and assessment processes despite efforts to diversify evaluation criteria. Others argued that grammar is more tangible and measurable hence more convenient and easier to assess, causing an overrepresentation of grammar in exams. Some remarked that this overrepresentation in the collective cognition brings about a persistent disharmony between instructional goals and assessment formats, as well as a feedback loop where teaching and testing constantly influence each other. Some participants especially those involved in the testing unit of the preparatory school pointed out the tension between their personal perspectives and institutional constraints and manifested discontent with this repeating cycle. Meanwhile, some advocated for skill-based and integrated assessment models and strongly asserted that grammar should be evaluated implicitly through communicative tasks instead of discrete-point items or in a separate section. Overall, the findings unearthed a prevailing sense of dissatisfaction and ambivalence regarding the present assessment procedures and its position in the collective cognitive landscape, with educators stuck between their professional ideals and the practical realities of an assessment-driven system.

4.2.6.6. Curriculum

This final subsection will explore teachers' cognitions concerning the curriculum of the preparatory school and its impact on grammar instruction. The curriculum acts as a guiding framework, dictates the scope and sequence of grammar topics, and informs instructional priorities, classroom pacing, and assessment alignment. Teachers might often find themselves navigating tensions between their instructional judgments and predetermined content and timing set by the syllabus design. In this context, their cognitions might demonstrate how and to what extent curricular structure support or constrain effective grammar teaching.

Participant 24 underscored how preparatory school curricula considerably shape and sometimes even constrain teachers' instructional decisions especially in grammar teaching. They stated that the integrated curriculum presently in place within the institution encourages a more embedded approach to grammar instruction and blending it with communicative and skill-based practices. However, they added that this integrated approach is not a matter of personal pedagogical preference but rather is an expectation imposed by the institutional system. They pointed to a lack of professional autonomy stemming from possible deviations from the prescribed method and misalignment with institutional standards. In addition, they remarked that curriculum functions as an authoritative framework that often dictates content delivery, methodological tendency, and even the underlying educational philosophy. This top-down influence can override individual teacher cognitions and might cause teachers to not have room for their own decision-making and to simply implement what the institution pushes as appropriate. They also highlighted the evolving quality of curriculum depending on the changes brought by learner demographics and time.

“When we look at our institute right now, where we have an integrated designed curriculum, we get to a more integrated version of grammar teaching where I do something within between because I'm expected to do so. You're told to teach grammar the way they want, you do it. Otherwise, you don't fit into the system and you are not that free. So curricula that are designed for the school are actually determining what you can do, what you should do and what the beliefs of the system are, so it's not a personal choice what we do right now. It is the choice of the whole institute and that varies throughout the years, throughout the different contexts of students.” P24

Participant 20 pointed out the present existence of a great need for clarity and alignment between institutional objectives and instructional practice and echoed

Participant 24's point regarding curriculum molding teacher behavior. Both participants stated that grammar teaching is largely determined by institutional expectations instead of individual teacher tendencies. However, while Participant 24 described the restrictive and prescriptive characteristics of a top-down curriculum in terms of teacher autonomy, Participant 20 stressed the foundational necessity of clearly defined curricular goals. Participant 20 primarily raised the question of purpose of the language program and put forward the overarching theme of a duality between fostering real-life communicative competence or preparing learners for standardized exams. This duality mirrors the tension between skill-integrated or form-focused grammar instruction methodologies. In contrast with Participant 24's depiction of a curriculum already imposed within the language school, Participant 20 advocated for initial consensus and clarity within the collective cognitive climate and suggested that a proactive approach in curriculum design would be instrumental in aligning instructional practice of the instructors, learner needs, and institutional goals. Both Participant 24 and 20 acknowledged curriculum as a guiding and driving force through strategic goal-setting on the school level and emerging operational limitations of in-place curriculum on the teacher level.

"First, as a school, we should determine our objectives, what we do, and what we expect from our students. Should they be responsible for a proficiency exam, or should they be productive students who will be capable of speaking and writing with their needs, we should decide this." P20

Participant 35 added another dimension to the discussion of curriculum through their remark regarding the material-driven constraints within the curricular implementation. They drew attention to the coursebook and its embedded treatment of grammar as a key restricting factor in grammar instruction. Participant 35 hesitantly questioned whether separate grammar classes are necessary or more allocated time within the existing curricular structure might be more effective in the preparatory school. Their nuanced hesitation demonstrates a heightened awareness of the unintended consequences of curriculum restructuring that such a change could cause learners to overprioritize form at the expense of communication. Participant 35 pinpointed instructional materials as a critical link in how curriculum informs grammar instruction.

"I actually believe that it's not the instruction type, but the book and the way it approaches the grammar restrict us in this regard. If we have separate and integrated grammar lessons together, I'm not sure whether the students will focus on grammar more or they will make it the center of the learning, but yes, we need to do something about it. They might not need

separate grammar classes, but maybe we should set some more time in our syllabus for grammar parts.” P35

Participant 19 put emphasis on the value of repetition in grammar instruction, saying “As a teacher, I think the most important thing with the free activities is recycling. The repetition of those activities and content in the curriculum.” Their perspective entails the need for curricular structures that enable and allow learners to revisit and reinforce grammatical knowledge with the help of repeated exposure.

Participant 23 mentioned the temporal difficulties posed by complex grammatical structures in the curriculum. They attributed this to both the discrepancies between Turkish and English and the structural intricacy of certain grammar points. The more difficult and unfamiliar the structure is for learners, the more instructional time it requires to teach. For them, this occurs often at the expense of other components positioned within the curriculum. In alignment with Participant 19’s emphasis on recycling and reinforcement, Participant 23’s remarks indicated that grammar learning demands time and repetition for mastery. This also draws parallels to Participant 35’s concern regarding the allocation of more time to grammar in the syllabi. Differentiating from other participants, Participant 23 brings a linguistic and cognitive angle into focus by stressing L1 and L2 differences as a determinant of pacing in the syllabus. This enriches the conversation around why grammar instruction may dominate the curriculum timeline and adds nuance in regard to learner processing difficulties by shifting some responsibility from curricular design.

“Sometimes, we get behind the syllabus, just because of some grammatical structures. As everybody knows, we need more time on such structures, and this is mainly because of the differences between L1 and L2 and the complexity of the structure. The more complex it is, the more time it takes or the more differences there are between the two languages, the more time it takes. So I need to cut from the other parts sometimes.” P23

Participant 37 mentioned that the timing constraints imposed by the syllabus frequently shape their grammar instruction practices by saying “Timing is an issue as well. If we need more time to catch up with the syllabus, I want to go quickly, and I give the rules.” This is clearly illustrative of how time pressure can bring about more teacher-centered and explicit grammar teaching. Participant 27 noted “Because I have to catch up with the syllabus, and when I see I’m running out of time, I have to be in a hurry.” and underlined how rushed teaching becomes inevitable in the face of a rigid curricular timeline. Participant 32 further reinforced the impact of syllabus intensity on grammar

instruction methodology and revealed a pragmatic compromise between ideal and practical limitations. They explicitly acknowledged a trade-off in conscious sacrifice of potential time that would be spent on discovery-based teaching for explicit instruction to spare time for communicative practice. Their nuanced cognitions entail articulating a reluctant but necessary choice due to hectic syllabus.

“I teach explicitly from time to time, I cannot lie about it because we have a very busy syllabus. If I spend one classroom hour just helping students to notice the structure and understand the point, I cannot spend more time on communicative tasks, so I have to choose explicit teaching.” P32

Echoing the recurrent theme of limited classroom time and its limiting influence on instructional decision-making, Participant 2 mentioned adopting a compliant and resigned tone and expressed a desire to expand beyond the textbook but ultimately feeling bound by prescribed targets and pacing of the syllabus. This sense of obligation to the pacing of the curriculum might reinforce how rigid timeframes constrain instructional flexibility and leave little room for creativity.

“We don't have enough time in the classroom. You see, we're very compact. But I try to do the things in the book. I would like to do more but I just have to go on. I have some parts that I have to finish that day.” P2

Participant 3 shared a reflective account of how curricular constraints and classroom realities shape grammar instruction choices. Even though they demonstrated an awareness of preferred grammar instruction in pedagogy and shared their research-backed knowledge, this ideal collides with contextual constraints. Similar to Participants 32, 27, and 2, they cited time pressure and the need to keep up with the syllabus as decisive factors leading to more explicit teaching. The overarching theme of curriculum-induced pedagogical compromise also emerged in Participant 3's cognitions despite their intentional balance between explicit and implicit grammar teaching with the help of their pragmatic philosophy.

“I do know that when you look at the literature, the discovery methods is like the more desired one. But I have to be honest with you, most of the time I try to teach implicitly, but sometimes because of the time and the pressure, and sometimes we have some classes where you can't teach implicitly. You just can't, it is unteachable. To be able to get their attention, to be able to teach something, you have to present something explicitly. Sometimes, I follow that way as well. So, about 80% of the time, that is implicit teaching, but 20% that would be explicit. We come out with the whole picture, but sometimes, If I'm running out of time because of the pressure and the syllabus, I present them like the rules, but that's not often in my classes. Generally, we work together.” P3

Participant 1 also drew attention to the time limitations within the curriculum and commented on the compressed nature of the syllabus accompanied by the rapid pace of coverage of different topics and skills. For them tight scheduling demands cause them to feel pressured to rush through some stages in their grammar lessons similar to Participants 2, 3, 27, and 32. Participant 1 demonstrated a distinguished approach to address timing issues through assigning grammar-related practice as homework. While other participants primarily discussed modifying their in-class instruction such as opting for explicit over implicit teaching or skipping communicative tasks, Participant 1 underscored the pedagogical spillover into learners' independent study time to uphold grammar reinforcement without sacrificing lesson progression. With the aim of maintaining a balance between syllabus coverage and grammar practice, they delegated grammar drilling and practice as homework to their learners.

"We have limited time there. We don't have like 10 hours just to focus on one grammatical point. Tomorrow, there is another grammatical point, and in between we do another writing activity. So I can't focus on grammatical drilling or practice all the time inside the class. So students are required to do that outside the class. That's why we have a lot of things given to students as homework." P1

As a curriculum development unit member, Participant 11 emphasized that practice of grammar structures is systematically embedded into the curriculum through productive skills of writing and speaking and syllabi are deliberately designed to ensure grammar instruction is followed by meaningful use. Their more optimistic view of how grammar is operationalized and integrated in the classroom was also accompanied by cognitions that curriculum supports a complete instructional cycle from presentation to practice. This offers a somewhat counterbalancing narrative to the recurring concerns of insufficient time and building pressure by demonstrating a more structured and supported implementation of grammar teaching within the curriculum.

"Most of the time we practice the target structures with a speaking or writing activity. Actually, there is no chance not to practice all these things students learn because of our syllabus. So, we spare time for this in the syllabus design as the curriculum development unit." P11

The findings regarding curriculum indicated a complex interplay between curriculum design and grammar teaching practices. Teachers frequently expressed grave concerns regarding limited time and constant pressure arising from a dense syllabus and often felt compelled to present grammar points explicitly instead of implicitly and to

cover required grammar points efficiently. Although some valued discovery and implicit grammar teaching, practical realities of curriculum obligations resulted in unwanted instructional compromises. However, some positive perceptions also surfaced regarding curriculum with its deliberate design to integrate opportunities for language practice through productive skills. In a nutshell, the finding showed that while the curriculum aims to balance grammar instruction with communicative objectives, practical constraints such as time pressure and densely packed syllabus exert a substantial effect on teachers' decision-making, inform their instructional choices, and shape their grammar teaching cognitions.

4.2.7. Language Related Factors

This section will look in detail at specific linguistic elements that influence teachers' cognitions and practices in grammar teaching. It will delve into essential dualities in grammar instruction like accuracy versus fluency, meaning versus form, as well as other key considerations such as exposure, pronunciation, and register. By closely examining teachers' perceptions and instructional choices concerning these linguistic dimensions, this section will reveal how their cognitions are informed by the intricate interconnection of language structure, usage, and communicative effectiveness in grammar teaching.

4.2.7.1. Accuracy and Fluency

This subsection will address the critical balance between grammatical correctness and communicative effectiveness in language teaching. Teacher oftentimes grapple with the challenge of promoting accurate language use without compromising learners' ability to communicate confidently and fluently. This tension between accuracy and fluency substantially interacts with teacher cognitions and deeply shapes classroom practices and instructional priorities. How teachers navigate through this tension to foster grammatical knowledge and encourage fluid communication in their grammar teaching will be put under microscope in this subsection.

Participant 30 expressed a tendency to prioritize accuracy over fluency in grammar teaching through their belief that grammatical correctness forms the foundation of effective communication. They argued that while fluency bears a degree of importance, it can solely be achieved meaningfully following the establishment of a solid base of

accurate language use. Their perspective involves accuracy as a prerequisite for successful communication and is evident in their claim that inaccurate grammar can hinder comprehension in everyday conversations. However, they also recognized flexibility as a key factor through their nuanced understanding that not all grammatical mistakes carry the same communicative weight. They also exhibited an awareness of contextual variability through their comment on learning goals and real-life usage influencing the degree of priority given to accuracy.

“Accuracy first, fluency second. Because I believe that if the student obtains accuracy in time, they can sort fluency out in a way. But again, it depends on why the student learns the language and where they are going to use it. Still, even for a daily conversation, if the sentence is not accurate, the listener will not get the message. That's why accuracy comes first. Of course, we can tolerate minor mistakes, and we can say fluency is more important in that case, but with vital errors, we cannot ignore accuracy.” P30

Much like Participant 30, Participant 2 placed greater importance on accuracy than fluency and viewed it as a more attainable and foundational component of language proficiency. Both Participant 2 and 30 shared cognitions that fluency can emerge over time through extended practice and exposure while accuracy should be cultivated earlier through structured learning. However, Participant 2 linked accuracy development with extensive reading through indirect acquisition and underlined that reading is inherently input-rich and might help reinforce grammar knowledge through exposing them to grammatical structures. While Participant 30 emphasized the communicative necessity of accuracy in spoken interaction, Participant 2 stressed the long-term benefits of input-driven learning and lamented that the learner profile often tends to neglect reading, which in turn impedes their grammatical development.

“Accuracy is more important than fluency for me, fluency just comes later if they have a chance to speak with other people, native or non-native. But they can achieve accuracy earlier than fluency, I think. And accuracy for me again comes with more reading. I always tell my students do more reading, that will also teach you grammar, and they generally don't listen to me. That's our biggest mistake. What I teach there in the classroom flies, but if they do a lot of reading, they will see all those grammar points we teach in different types of reading, and then they will learn better. For me, doing some reading is kind of related to accuracy.”

P2

Participant 4 strongly highlighted the indispensability of accuracy within academic contexts. Their outlook of grammar as a non-negotiable element of language competence for academic success stems from the formal quality of the academic settings.

In addition, they asserted that grammar instruction is the primary route to achieving accuracy and acknowledged that even though instructional methodologies can differ on this route, the necessity of grammar-focused teaching remains constant. While echoing Participant 30's perspective that accuracy ensures message clarity, Participant 4 brings in a stronger institutional and contextual justification of academic demands of university environment as the rationale behind grammatical precision.

"I really think accuracy is important in language production. It should not be overlooked. It is not something that can be overlooked, especially in the academic context. This is something you can do outside with less serious contexts, but here is the academy. You cannot overlook the importance of accuracy, and accuracy is only gained through grammar instruction. The methods may vary, you may do it implicitly, explicitly, and ideas may be different, but there is no doubt that it is important." P4

Like Participants 4, 30, and 2, Participant 29's perspective aligned with accuracy as a critical component of academic language use. Participant 29 stated "Because our students will be reading and writing articles, or will be listening to conferences, and will be taking lessons from their lecturers, they shouldn't be making any grammar mistakes, in my opinion." and highlighted the academic context as a domain where grammatical precision is non-negotiable, reinforcing the idea that students must adhere to high standards in their language production to meet the demands of university-level tasks such as reading scholarly texts, writing academically, and understanding lectures. However, Participant 29's view differed slightly in its stronger stance on zero tolerance for grammar mistakes since they suggested that students should not make any errors. Their rigid expectations regarding error-free language use expressed a stricter position than that of Participant 30, who acknowledged the possibility of tolerating minor mistakes depending on the communicative context.

Similar to Participants 29, 4, and 30, Participant 36 underlined the necessity for grammatical correctness in academy especially in writing skills such as essay composition. The common theme of accuracy as a priority in academic contexts emerged in their cognitions as well through their comment that university students need a high level of grammatical precision to succeed in tertiary education. Like Participant 30, who noted that accuracy enables clear communication even in casual interactions, Participant 36 also acknowledges the value of fluency, suggesting it should be supported alongside accuracy during the learning process. Their more balanced stance situates grammar

teaching within the practical goals of academic readiness and entails fluency development as naturally following or accompanying the accuracy building process.

“For me, accuracy is more important than fluency I guess, because we are trying to prepare our students for an academic life, so they need some academic skills. For example, they need to write an essay, so they need advanced grammar to not make mistakes. Of course, fluency is also important. But for my grammar lessons, I can say that accuracy is a little bit more important. During the process, fluency can be also supported.” P36

Participant 16 presented pragmatic and context-sensitive rationales in balancing accuracy and fluency. Diverging from more rigid perspectives by adopting a delayed correction strategy during communicative tasks and reserving grammar feedback until after the activity, they showed appreciation for fluency and communicative flow during language use. Similar in spirit to 36 regarding fluency support during the accuracy-oriented instruction, Participant 16 acknowledged the necessity of accuracy for assessment purposes and valued communicative competence. Their cognitions were informed by classroom-oriented and learner-centered pedagogies.

“To be honest, I highlight accuracy a lot because our students take tests and quizzes. But when it comes to producing in the classroom, I try not to interrupt them as long as they communicate, but when they finish the activity, then I will give some feedback on the accuracy.” P16

Participant 3 took a more learner-centered and affective-oriented stance on the matter of accuracy and fluency and noticeably diverged from more accuracy-dominant perspectives of Participants 4, 30, and 29. While Participant 3 recognized the potential in addressing repetitive errors, they also expressed caution against a full accuracy orientation and shared their concerns that ‘obsession’ with accuracy may cause learner anxiety, reduced participation, and fear of making mistakes. Participant 3 went further in emphasizing the psychological toll that overemphasizing accuracy might take on the learners and stated that learners should be encouraged to take risks in their adventure of linguistic exploration. Their emotionally responsive and pedagogically reflective cognitions informed by their teaching and learning experiences challenge the traditional accuracy-first ideology by demonstrating its potential to inhibit fluency development and learner confidence and enrich the cognitive landscape of the school with a more humanistic and flexible orientation.

“That's one of the problems of English teachers, I guess. When we're teaching, we shouldn't be too obsessed with accuracy, because obviously they're going to make mistakes. It's part of the process and their learning journey, but I always believe in giving the students enough

chances to see their mistakes too, because sometimes, even if you correct the same mistakes again and again, if the students can't fix the structure that they have in their mind about the language itself, they cannot use it correctly. So, I do think that while teaching, we shouldn't be really obsessed with accuracy. Of course, we should use different strategies for correcting their mistakes or coming out with some alternative solutions to especially repetitive mistakes. But other than that, if you're too obsessed with accuracy in the classroom as a teacher, then the students become so obsessed with accuracy, and sometimes this hinders them. They become afraid of producing in the classroom or they feel anxious. So, we should be careful about their mistakes because sometimes in our classrooms, we can observe that 'Yeah, there's a problem here, they can't use this specific structure.' So, we should be aware, but we shouldn't be obsessed. They should have a kind of playground there to use the language and if they learn something new, they should have a space to use it. So, I try to pay attention to this, because I have had teachers like that in my learning journey as well. So, it's not a good idea to be too obsessed with accuracy." P3

Participant 21 presented a fluency-oriented and learner-sensitive cognitions to grammar teaching and offered a nuanced contrast to the accuracy-prioritizing perspectives voiced by Participants 30, 4, and 36. Participant 21 stated that learners themselves tend to give precedence to accuracy due to a fear of making mistakes and this collective cognition in the affective dimension of learning among learners hampers their fluency and inhibit communicative performance. Participant 21 expressed a deliberate effort to foreground fluency during classroom activities. They described holding off on error correction until the end of fluency-focused tasks and allowing space for spontaneous language production in parallel with Participant 3's advocacy for creating a 'playground' for language use. However, unlike Participant 3's general critique of overcorrection, P21 displayed a strategic balance. They remarked that teachers can gather richer data on learners' actual competence by postponing error correction and observing students' output more holistically. This reflects a process-oriented view of grammar learning, where accuracy is gradually developed through meaningful practice rather than enforced prematurely. Participant 21's cognition set synthesizes fluency-first pedagogy with reflective accuracy support and offers a learner-centered model that contrasts with more rule-driven, accuracy-led perspectives, and aligns most closely with the communicative and confidence-building values.

"From the learner's perspective, I think accuracy is much more important. They want to use the language correctly and accurately. That's why they struggle with expressing their ideas smoothly, in a fluent way because they worry too much about saying the correct things. They are afraid of making mistakes, so they put accuracy first and over fluency. I think this also

reflects the idea of many teachers. As far as I see, they want their learners to produce the language as accurately as possible, so they tend to correct their mistakes very often on the spot. I don't know how well I do this, but I want to believe that I put fluency over accuracy in my classes, because I try to give them a lot of activities which seem to be general things not focusing on one single grammar. At the end of those activities, I try to do a 5 or 10 minutes of error correction in which we focus on the accurate usage of the language, but until that, I try to take a step back and give them the space to use the language at their disposal. If you want them to use, let's say, first conditional sentences, and you push them to use it correctly, then this is going to restrict their language use, because they will be focusing on one thing. But if you give them a good task which encourages them to really say things, then they will try to use other things which will help them to use other structures as well, and this will give the teacher much more feedback in terms of what they can say and what they can't say. So fluency is much more important for me, because they can really learn the rules and use the language accurately in one or two lessons. It's going to take time, but they can. But if they try to say things in a fluent way, that's an achievement for the teacher and for the students.”

P21

Participant 5 exhibited strong fluency-centric cognitions that foreground natural communication over accuracy perfection particularly in the early stages of language learning. In contrast to Participants 30, 4, and 29's comprehension-oriented and accuracy-first cognitions situated in and informed by high-stakes or academic settings, Participant 5 stated giving precedence to spontaneity and communicative ease as the primary indicators of successful language use. In a similar fashion to Participant 21, Participant 5 commented on how excessive concentration on grammatical rules during production causes disfluent, cognitively overloaded speech that does not facilitate comprehension or completely disrupts it. Both participant 5 and 21 agreed that accuracy has a place and should be developed following a degree of fluency has been reached. In addition, Participant 5 shared vivid descriptions of classroom observations and accounts of listener's perspective in real-time communication on how slow, rule-bound speaking creates an unnatural flow that blocks understanding. These particular instances offer considerable insights of communicative priority, message delivery, pacing, and listener engagement instead of error-free language use. Participant 5 explicitly rejected the notion of grammatical perfection as a real-time goal in the learning process and drew attention to meaningful interaction and rhythm of speech as valuable features of communication. Additionally, they critiqued the ineffectiveness of rule-based sentence construction even in written production and noted that rule knowledge does not necessarily guarantee accurate use of grammar. Making compelling counterpoints to the accuracy-dominant

cognitions, Participant 5 aligned with fluency-focused mindset and contributed a unique emphasis on the dimensions of listener perception, cognitive load, and discourse flow.

“At the initial stages of learning, accuracy is not what we should be looking for. But of course, at some point, everybody expects students to be accurate as well, until when they're going to be accurate, but that's not the priority. After some time, it would be the turn for paying attention to accuracy, after the fluency was made. I'm talking from experience on this point. We have a lot of students and we sometimes do speaking tasks where we ask them questions they usually have time beforehand to get prepared. They try to remember the grammatical rules, and they try to speak like that. That sounds extremely irritating, and that's very difficult for me to keep track of what they're saying. I cannot follow them. On the other hand, there are some students who have self-confidence and prior knowledge. They're a little bit more fluent, but they have mistakes in terms of accuracy. It is easier to follow them and understand them, so I value it more than the other. But after some time, of course, accuracy should be achieved as well, but not at the beginning. Because there are some students that while they list down the rules of grammar structures and they look at the rules, they write their sentences, but they still lack accuracy, right? Fluency is the most important thing for me. Nobody wants whoever they are listening to speak at a slower pace by thinking with pauses that take a couple of seconds. That would not help to convey the message. So, this disturbs the natural going of the conversation, and I think that's the most important part. If a student tries a little harder in their brain, if they think for four or five seconds and are able to create a perfect sentence, I wouldn't prefer that. I'd rather they created that sentence in a short time with some mistakes.” P5

Participant 11 displayed a fluency-oriented viewpoint and pointed out the primacy of communication and learner comfort over grammatical precision in real-life language use. Similar to concerns raised by Participants 5, 21, and 3, Participant 11 stated that overemphasis on accuracy brings about hesitation, cognitive overload and breakdowns in spontaneous interaction. Like Participant 21, Participant 11 placed high value on creating a supportive classroom atmosphere where learners are free to express themselves without the fear of committing errors. The balanced stance of Participant 11 also mirrors the moderate position of Participants 3 and 16 in terms of the recognition of the long-term importance of accuracy and abstinence from immediate correction. Participant 11 underlined how accuracy-centered environments inhibit learners' expressive capacity and advocated for a low-anxiety, fluency-rich classroom context where accuracy can gradually emerge through usage.

“In a real-life situation, fluency is more important because when we put more emphasis on using the correct language, all of our students are alert to use the correct language but not the fluency. They stop, think, wait, and these really kill the communication. Of course, both are

important, but first, we need to make our learners feel relaxed and comfortable enough to express their ideas, feelings, using the target structure in general.” P11

Participant 13 strongly supported the fluency-oriented perspective and mentioned focusing on real-life communication, message delivery, and productive skills instead of grammatical accuracy. Consistent with Participant 5, 11, and 21, they argued successful communication even with some inaccuracies is more important compared to error-free yet hesitant or unnatural speech. Participant 13 reinforced their point with their first-hand experience in English-speaking contexts and asserted that as long as a speaker is reasonably accurate, being understood is achievable and preferable to grammatical perfection. Moreover, their intentional focus on productive skills added a slightly pragmatic angle of application of language post learning process over test-based accuracy to the fluency argument. This perspective mirrors Participants 21 and 5’s cognitions that learners should be encouraged to express themselves freely first with accuracy improved over time.

“Personally, fluency is my priority. I have been to and lived in English-speaking countries, and I can tell that fluency is more important because unless you’re completely inaccurate, the message goes there and you’re understood. I’m not saying that accuracy is not important, it’s definitely important, but fluency is far more important than accuracy, especially for the beginner levels. Real life, that’s what I try to focus on. Will the students be able to use it fluently, efficiently? Will the students be able to convey the message that they intend to do as best as they can, after they leave the classroom. So, I focus on productive skills. Will they be able to write or speak?” P13

Participant 23 presented a balanced and nuanced outlook on the accuracy and/versus fluency debate and stated that the core purpose of learning lies in real-time communication in a similar vein with Participants 13, 11, and 5. However, they also introduced a perspective and noted that fluency alone may be insufficient if grammatical errors become so severe that they hinder communication. This concern aligns with the accuracy argument made by Participants 2, 3 and 30 that intelligibility and clarity depend on a certain level of grammatical precision. Participant 23’s pragmatic stance bridged the dichotomy through suggesting that fluency should be prioritized but not at the expense of accuracy. P23 acknowledged the communicative power of fluency while recognizing the functional role of accuracy in ensuring intelligibility and offered a context-sensitive and integrated perspective within the wider discussion.

“If you ask me not as a foreign language teacher, but as an individual, I would say because the purpose of learning a language is to be able to communicate with others in that language,

fluency is more important. Still, if you make a lot of errors which impede people from understanding you, how fluent you are does not matter.” P23

Participant 6 exhibited a contextualized stance on the issue of fluency and accuracy dependent on grammar teaching alone or language teaching as a whole. Within the narrower context of grammar instruction, they viewed accuracy and fluency as equally important. However, when expanding the lens to overall language competence, they showed tendency towards fluency and stated minor inaccuracies do not obstruct meaning conveying processes resonating the cognitions of Participant 5, 11, 13, and 23. Participant 6 put forward a dynamic, situationally aware and reasoned position towards the importance of fluency and accuracy. Their distinct framework entailed the notion that while accuracy supports correctness and grammatical knowledge development, fluency ensure communicative success.

“When you put the circle around grammar teaching alone, accuracy and fluency are both important then. But, when we enlarge the circle for the whole language, for the other skills too, I think fluency is a little bit more important than accuracy. Because when you are not accurate enough but fluent, you are understood. But if you have a lot of many problems with fluency but you are accurate, then it takes a lot more time to be understood, and it impedes the communication much more than the other side. So, I'm leaning more on fluency.” P6

Participant 12 offered a process-oriented and developmental angle on the accuracy and fluency debate and presented balanced cognitions. While they added a unique emphasis on language acquisition as a non-linear, cyclical process, they mentioned their tendency to prioritize fluency in the production stage of their lessons in resemblance to Participants 3, 5, and 21. In addition, they affirmed the significance of accuracy in building a strong foundation. Their language acquisition perspective revolved around learner autonomy and self-correction over time and suggested that with sufficient exposure and repeated practice, learners naturally refine their accuracy in line with constructivist and emergentist learning paradigms. Participant 12's complementary perspective synthesizes a temporal and pedagogical framework where accuracy and fluency are not in competition but in coordination entails a long-term developmental model of language learning.

“In the mechanical phase, we've already worked on the structure, focused on the structure. Now, they are at the production phase, and at this stage, I would prefer fluency over accuracy, because I know that we will come back to this later. It's not a linear process, we will come back to it, and then they will correct themselves. I think in the students' mind, things work like that. They learn what they can at first point, and then they come back to this or they have

an awakening moment later in the process, and they correct themselves as well. But, what I would do in the production process is that I would care more about fluency, and I would come back to accuracy later. Accuracy and fluency are both important. I wouldn't choose one over the other one. Students need to learn a grammar point accurately. Of course, they can make mistakes. Everybody makes mistakes in the learning process. Even when you're learning your native language, you make mistakes, and then you correct them as you put something on top of each thing, you correct yourself in the long term, and it is healthier. So, some mistakes can be overlooked, no problem. Also fluency should be focused on as well as accuracy, but it shouldn't be sacrificed in favor of accuracy, or vice versa. I think we should give importance to both." P12

Participant 7 emphasized the importance of both accuracy and fluency and presented a situational and goal-oriented filter on the relationship between them dependent on the instructional aim and lesson stage. Their perspective notably resonated with Participant 12's perspective that fluency should be prioritized during the production phase of lessons. Participant 7 advocated for a contextual balancing act where teaching decisions regarding fluency and accuracy should be fluid and responsive to the classroom objectives instead of strictly adhering to one over the other. Their cognitions of effective language teaching require shifting focus between fluency and accuracy based on lesson stages and communicative goals.

"I expect students to be both fluent and accurate because when they're trying to be accurate, their sentences are full of gaps and it's really difficult to understand what they try to say, and it's difficult to follow. That's why we teach in our books and lessons, let's say, hesitation fillers or some useful structures expressions to fill those gaps. Of course, I expect them to be both accurate and fluent depending on our aim. Sometimes, if we're having a speaking lesson or speaking exercise, fluency is more important than accuracy because we have to communicate, and if they're communicating, if they're delivering the message, accuracy is not that important. So, it changes actually according to the aim of that lesson and lesson stage." P7

Participant 34 showcased a context-dependent, balanced cognitions to accuracy and fluency and clearly stated not favoring one over the other universally. They argued that situational demands whether spoken or written automatically determine which language feature overrides the other. In addition, they made a keen observation in alignment with Participant 11 and 13 that native speakers themselves do not always maintain strict adherence to accuracy in real-life interactions. Furthermore, they pointed out a key difference between written and spoken communication and suggested that formal writing skills require greater accuracy similarly noted by Participants 4, 29, and

36. Participant 34 added unique value with their meta-awareness and pointed out that the interview itself is an example of fluent and relatively accurate communication influenced by professional background. This reflective perspective is relatively distinct in the dataset and complements Participants 3 and 21's remarks about teacher and learner psychology affecting classroom behaviors related to accuracy and fluency. Participant 34's cognitions reinforced the theme that accuracy and fluency are not mutually exclusive but are both essential and their prominence is molded by contextuality. Their nuanced interpretation of effective grammar instruction carries flexible, adaptive, and purpose-driven qualities.

"Personally, I believe accuracy and fluency both matters. But, depending on your purpose and the environment you're using the language, one might sound more important than the other, but it doesn't mean that one of them is more important than the other in general. Accuracy is required in certain contexts and environments. Fluency is preferred in certain circumstances where your basic purpose is just oral communication, because while communicating orally, even native speakers don't pay enough attention to accuracy. But if it's a written petition or an email, accuracy comes first there. Basically, they should go together as much as possible. For example, this conversation might be one of the best examples. Of course, you're going to check the transcript of this interview later on, but most probably you'll see that accuracy exists in our communication for both of us, but it doesn't have to be so. But still, because of our background, we're paying more attention to accuracy as well." P34

Showing a close stance to Participants 7, 12, and 34, Participant 19 offered a highly contextualized and purpose-driven balance between accuracy and fluency and pointed out the reason for learning English and specific language skill in focus as the guide of instructional emphasis. They made a vivid comparison between speaking modes of language use and noted that paralinguistic features of language such as non-verbal clues of body language and proximity may amply compensate for grammatical inaccuracies in speech. However, Participant 19 asserted that such compensatory strategies do not exist in writing and this absence of contextual clues renders accuracy crucial which directly echoes sentiments from Participants 4, 29, and 36 who linked accuracy with academic or written contexts. In addition, Participant 19 maintained a situational and flexible approach to the accuracy and fluency dichotomy and showed resistance to blanket prioritization of either aspect. They stated learner goals and skill-specific demands should be the key factors in an intentional and adaptive decision making process over whether to prioritize either aspect and one-size-fits-all approaches may prove fruitless in grammar instruction.

“For me here, the most important question is why you're learning English. For example, if a student needs to prepare for an exam, then accuracy is important. But in our prep school, it depends on the skill that we are dealing with, actually. I cannot say that fluency is always important or accuracy is more important. No, it's not like that in all language classes. If you're speaking, fluency is really important because your body language tells a lot of things about what you're saying so I can understand you perfectly. But in writing, there is no body language. you only have some punctuation instead, and I cannot understand what you say through the punctuation all the time. For example, if you were supposed to write about past experience, you are supposed to be using accurate grammar. But during the speaking and if you are asked the same question, then regardless of wrong structures, I can understand you, even with the slightest hand gesture or nodding. In that sense, it's absolutely important. Also, if you stop too much trying to be accurate while you're speaking, then this is irritating or it blocks the communication. So it depends on, first, why you're learning the language, and second, which skill are you trying to use or in which skill are you trying to improve yourself.”

P19

Like Participant 19, Participant 18 avoided oversimplification, adopted a balanced and context-sensitive perspective on the accuracy and/versus debate and stated that neither should be universally prioritized. They pointed out learner needs, lesson focus, and class type as key determinants in their decision-making and advocated for tailoring emphasis informed by situational variables. Their explicit recognition of the complexity and multiplicity of influencing factors from learner profile to learning objectives reinforces the notion that effective grammar teaching possesses a dynamic rather than prescriptive quality.

“I think there are numerous interconnected things, like students' needs or the focus of the lesson. Sometimes fluency could beat accuracy, and sometimes vice versa, so I don't think I can say this one is more important for me. But of course, in our own classes, we try to give some integrated materials and we try to focus more on speaking and communicating. I can say I mostly pay more attention to fluency, but when I'm teaching grammar, of course accuracy could outweigh fluency. I think it depends on the type of class, the type of students, and their needs. I think there isn't a single way of teaching, there are always a lot of parameters, and we have to consider all of these.” P18

To conclude, the findings regarding accuracy and/versus fluency issue revealed that teachers' cognitions are informed by a multitude of interrelated factors such as instructional goals, learner needs and teaching contexts. While several teachers tended to prioritize accuracy due to academic expectations, exam pressures, and the need for clear communication in formal settings, others emphasized fluency and highlighted its instrumentality in authentic communication and confidence building. Moreover, a

balance perspective also emerged among participants who stressed that neither accuracy nor fluency should be universally dominant. Their perspective was rather informed by variants like teaching objectives, learner proficiency, lesson stages, and specific language skills in focus. In summation, it can be argued that there emerges a somewhat conflicting cognitive landscape and that collaborative efforts need to be initiated to form collective cognitions that recognize and advocate for a dynamic interplay between fluency and accuracy to foster comprehensive communicative competence in learners of the institution.

4.2.7.2. Meaning and Form

This subsection will explore teachers' cognitions and perspectives regarding the interplay between grammatical form, meaning, structure, and context in detail. Grammatical knowledge encompasses understanding of structural rules and how these structures carry meaning within real-life contexts. Teachers' cognitions regarding whether form should precede meaning or vice versa considerably inform their classroom practices and instructional decisions. By examining their beliefs on how best to contextualize grammar instruction and balance attention to grammatical accuracy with communicative functionality, insights into their broader pedagogical principles will emerge. This subsection thus seeks to illuminate the intricate relationship between grammar form and meaning as reflected in participants' instructional cognitions.

Participant 36 expressed a preference for a form-first approach in their grammar instruction. They showed tendency to prioritize structure and form before addressing meaning and function. While they acknowledged that students initially encounter target grammar structures in reading texts, they noted that learners are likely to fail to notice and fully grasp their meaning through this implicit exposure alone. As a result, they stated feeling the need to explicitly teach the grammatical structure to make sure those comprehension gaps are bridged, followed by an explanation of how the structure functions in use. This sequential model of instruction going from form to function entails form-focused tendencies that understanding form provides a necessary foundation for later comprehension of meaning and use.

"I can say that form and structure first, and then I give the usage and function. We use coursebooks, and inside these books, there is a reading part. First of all, our students see these forms in a reading text, but they don't really understand it clearly. There are some gaps, and

in order to fill those gaps, we need to give the structure and form, then the function. This is my preference.” P36

Participant 3 underlined the importance of providing structural support especially at lower proficiency levels. They stated that foundational elements like sentence structure provides learners a sense of security and enables greater language production by boosting their confidence. This perspective aligns with a form-before-meaning approach in early stages of language learning and considers explicit knowledge of structure as a prerequisite for meaningful communication. Within this approach, grammatical form serves a scaffold for learner autonomy and fluency development for beginners as they tend to feel overwhelmed without a tangible linguistic framework.

“Especially at the lower levels of proficiency, students do need something to stand on. Sometimes, they want, at least the basics of grammar, the sentence structure, and all the things up to lower intermediate, they need it just to feel safe, and then to be able to produce more.” P3

Participant 34 underscored the interconnectedness of context, meaning, structure, and form in grammar instruction and asserted that presentation of grammar within context is pivotal in meaningful grammar learning. Similar to Participant 3, they recognized the foundational function of form in terms of offering structural clarity for learners and pointed out a contextualized approach supported and offered by coursebook design. They maintained that due to the perceived status as the most straightforward element for learners to master, form should be taught first as part of grammar instruction. However, they also stated that meaning naturally follows and consolidates understanding. With an understanding of a sequential yet integrated model of grammar instruction, Participant 34 appeared present form as a necessary stepping stone reliably supported by contextual clues. This form-first yet meaning-dependent pedagogical perspective brings a balance to structural clarity through communicative depth.

“Context, meaning, structure, and form, they all matter. One of the best suggested ways of teaching grammar is you should present the structure in a context; that's the key point. I make students focus on the form first, then the meaning comes and makes all the sense, of course. We already have a context prepared in our course books, so they go hand by hand. I always tell my students that if they are learning a grammar point, there are a couple of things they need to comprehend. The first one is form, and I always tell them that they have no chance to make a mistake in terms of form, because form is the easier one. If students are careful enough, they can grasp the form. They can sometimes make mistakes in the beginning, in terms of meaning, tense or modal, which is natural. So, I could say form comes first, I guess.” P34

Participant 22 highlighted the inertia of learners' previous language education and noted that learners tend to recall forms of grammatical structures before their functions due to prior exposure. In addition, they actively challenge this form-driven mindset by guiding their learners to notice and understand why a certain structure is used. This meaning-first and function-driven cognition set was also accompanied by their learner-centered practices through contextualized use of target grammar.

"Of course, I write the title on the board and ask them what it is, and because of their English learning experience during high school or elementary school, they always tell me the form again. But I say 'OK, that's the form. But what is the function of it? For what purposes do we use it?' So I try to create a situation in which they can use that grammar structure. I try to make them understand the situation and the grammar point they should use. If they understand the function, then I believe they get the form easily and produce that grammar points better, I guess. That's my approach, let's get the function first." P22

Participant 6 stressed that learners should be introduced to the formal aspects of grammatical structures after they engage with the context and communicative purpose of them and advocated for a meaning and function first perspective. They showed strong support for inductive learning through their suggested sequence of motivation, context, meaning/function, then structure/form in grammar instruction. Unlike Participant 34's stance on presenting form first, Participant 6's cognitions involved exposing learners to grammar in a relevant context in order to help them internalize its meaning and function. Notably, Participant 6 did not completely dismiss the value of structure but argued against overemphasizing it at the expense of valuable lesson time.

"I have always believed that students should discover the structure later. So, I think the order of things should be first, they need motivation, then context, then structure and form. Because when they meet the structure for the first time, they should have already felt the meaning and the function of that language. So, structure comes later. I'm not saying it's not important. Of course, it's important, but it's not something to drag about for a whole lesson. Function and meaning first, structure and form come later." P6

Participant 12 placed strong pedagogical value on why learners use a grammatical structure instead of how it is formed and stated that grammar teaching should be interactive, meaningful, and purpose-driven. While Participant 12 recognized the need for accurate language use, their cognition that form without function is meaningless resonates with task-based and communicative pedagogy paradigms. With a balanced yet learner-centered stance, they argued that learners must grasp the relevance of a grammar

point and then work on its technical structure and stated that structure should support communicative competence instead of acting as the primary instructional focus.

“I try to teach grammar in my classes in a very interactive and meaningful way, and my biggest focus is on the function of the grammar point. I want students to know why they are learning it, how they can use it, and to use it. I also design activities to make them naturally use the grammar point. Context and function are super important. If they don't know why they are learning this grammar point, for me, as a teacher, it makes no sense. Even if they master the form, I need to see them in a piece of writing or speaking. I need to see them using this grammar point in the necessary place. But structure is also important because they have to use it correctly. But, as I said, functional context is also extremely important.” P12

Participant 7 asserted that learners need to understand the ‘when, where, and why’ dimensions of a grammatical structure to internalize its form or rule and pointed to the primacy of meaning and context in grammar learning. Their viewpoint aligned with those of Participants 12, 22, and 6 in terms of functional understanding of target structure preceding structural explanation. They also stated that lessons become meaningful when learners encounter real-life use first and then reflect on it consciously in line with Participant 6’s support for discovery-based and inductive learning paradigms. Their cognitions entail grammar emerging from meaningful use and enabling learners to connect grammatical rules to authentic language functions.

“For me, meaning and context is the most important thing, because if they do not know when, where or why to use it, they cannot learn the rule. Sometimes, they unconsciously use it and they ask me, why they use it, why it is used, or why it is necessary, and then the lesson becomes meaningful.” P7

In line with Participants 7, 6, and 12 in terms of presenting functional and communicative aspects of a grammar structure before so form can effectively be taught and applied, Participant 25 supported the primacy of meaning and context in grammar teaching by succinctly stating “Grammar helps convey meaning, and meaning makes sense in a context. If they are not there, grammar doesn't serve any purpose, because learners will not know where to use it or why to use it.” Their grammar instruction cognitions attribute grammar a tool-like function and embeds it within meaningful use instead of treating it in isolation. In contrast with Participant 36’s form-focused orientation involving explicit presentation of structure and form as a starting point in grammar teaching, Participant 25’s cognition set positioned form as secondary to meaningful application, thus strongly echoed a communicative, context-driven stance and demonstrated that grammar without purpose lacks pedagogical impact.

Participant 13 made clear distinctions between form-focused and meaning-focused grammar instruction by stressing that while structural and form-related errors are relatively easy to correct through drills, breakdowns in meaning and miscomprehension of meaning are more complex and require deeper intervention and longer instruction time. Similar to Participant 34's perspective regarding form is easier for learners to grasp, Participant 13 formal inaccuracies are less disruptive and carry a lesser cognitive load in the learning process compared to misunderstandings in meaning.

"Because structure is easy to correct in drills, and at the end of the lesson the student still makes mistakes, and it's easy to correct. But when the meaning is not clear, you have to start all over again, and it's more difficult and there's more to it in my opinion." P13

Participant 15 supported the primacy of meaning and contextualization with direct feedback from their students who openly expressed appreciation of seeing grammatical structures embedded in real-life usage. Their experiential validation also indicated that learning grammar in context enhances retention and understanding and reinforced the overarching constructivist view that learners internalize grammar more effectively when structures are anchored in meaningful, contextualized language input.

"Meaning comes first and I received this kind of feedback from my students. In one of my classes, students told me that I helped them see that structure in real life context. It's important because we can't just forget something if we see it in a context." P15

Participant 23 stated that structure/form and meaning/context are inseparable and depicted a highly integrative and heightened perspective of effective grammar teaching. With the help of powerful metaphors such as likening grammar teaching to assembling and reassembling a Lego set or comparing grammar to following a recipe, they argued that form is essential but is only meaningful when embedded in a relevant context. Participant 23 differed in cognitions by explicitly balancing the value of both form and meaning and by critiquing approaches that tend to lean heavily on either side. In addition, they pointed out the necessity of structure due to the learner profile who cannot produce grammatically accurate sentences despite years of language education. With their holistic and pragmatic cognition set regarding grammar instruction, they asserted that grammar instruction must be rooted in both contextual meaning and structural clarity to respond to the actual needs of the learners within the language school.

"Teaching grammar in context is quite important, because you set the scene with the context. You show the students the end picture from the very beginning, and then you analyze it in detail, and you expect the students to collect the end picture again. It is like a built lego set. You give the students the built lego set, the final version of it, and then, you ask them to

unbuild it. Then, you ask them to build it again. Structure or form without context and meaning is nothing, I believe. It is just like giving the ingredients to someone who has never cooked before. If you want that person to cook, you need to give them the context and the meaning along with the form and structure. Structure and form would be the ingredients and the kitchen utensils. Meaning and context would be the instructions and the recipe. But not focusing on the form enough is a problem too, because I believe structure means a lot as long as it is provided with context. So they are essential for each other, the context and meaning on one hand, and formal structure on the other. Because they're an integral part of each other, I cannot think of them separately. To wrap it up, I can say that we cannot think of grammar teaching without focusing on form and structure in our context. We should be realistic about the target population, the students who have been studying for a long time but haven't produced one single word or sentence. They have been learning English since primary school, but they cannot make a full sentence completely correct. So we should focus on structure or form, but doing this by neglecting meaning and context would be a big mistake. Grammar teaching cannot be taught regardless of structure, and structure or form cannot be taught without context, because meaning is an integral part of teaching grammar I do believe." P23

Participant 18 emphasized that meaning and form have interdependent characteristics and should be treated with equal importance. Through their simile likening form and meaning to siblings, they dismissed the notion that one can be fully effective without the other. Similar to Participants 12 and 23 considering both form and meaning necessary components of good grammar teaching, Participant 18 advocated for an integrated approach to grammar teaching. Additionally, they shared reflective accounts of their past learning experiences and stated that heavily form-focused and repetitive grammar instruction lacks meaningful application. This remark resonates with concerns raised by Participant 22 and 7 that learners are likely to fail to grasp grammar deeply when the purpose or function behind the structure is not clarified.

"I think meaning and form are like siblings. I can't think about one without the other. They both have importance because if you don't know the meaning, or if you don't know why you're using it, there is no meaning to using it. You have to know why, when, or in which situations you use it. So in my grammar classes, I put equal importance in both. When I was a student, the form was more important. So we had to practice tenses for about thousands of times, but we didn't know why we actually used it." P18

Participant 21 articulated a cyclical and dynamic interplay between context, meaning, and structure and stated that they tend to balance contextual meaning and structural form throughout different stages of their grammar lessons. Their grammar teaching starts with the establishment of context and meaning to demonstrate the communicative purpose of the target structure. Once learners get a hold of meaning, form

is then introduced to clarify structure, followed by a return to context in practice and production stages and then revisiting form during feedback. This iterative process of going back and forth between form and meaning shows similarities with Participants 6 and 12's perspective regarding the primacy of meaning and communicative purpose early in grammar teaching, followed by form. However, Participant 21 highlighted a more structured flow of feedback loop between meaning and form and stated that both aspects are continually interwoven instead of taught in a linear sequence. Participant 21's grammar teaching cognitions promote a balanced and responsive model where both components are revisited dependent on learner needs and classroom performance. This adaptive and subtle perspective of grammar instruction involves meaning and form not as competing priorities but as mutually reinforcing elements.

"I think it starts with context and meaning because without the context, I think there's no real reason to see why this particular language form is useful. So the context comes first. Once the meaning is established, the form or the structure also takes the stage. It's also important, because this is the part where the students really understand what they are learning. Also, when they feel that they are learning something and they can see the connection, we go back to context and meaning again for the production. And once they try to use the structure in a meaningful context, then I usually go back to the structure as a part of my feedback. So I think it's just going forth between meaning and structure. First meaning is set, and then, structure is dealt with, and then go back to, meaning for the production, and with feedback, come back to structure again, if there is a need. So perhaps we can say that they're balanced and incorporated in terms of my grammar approach." P21

Participant 16 underlined that the relative importance of form and meaning is closely connected to the nature of the target structure and demonstrated context-dependent and flexible cognitions in grammar teaching. They acknowledged that both aspects are critical in language learning and stated that form may take precedence in certain structures like relative clauses due to its rule-bound characteristics whereas meaning takes the center stage in if clauses due to its communicative intent. In addition, they drew attention to the exam-oriented institutional context and stated that form and meaning are necessary not only for communication purposes but also assessment preparation. They also showed tendency to utilize guided discovery in their grammar teaching to encourage learners to notice structures through examples rather than provide them with direct explanations. Shifting their emphasis on either form or meaning in response to linguistic demands and instructional goals, Participant 16 demonstrated a pragmatic and situational perspective in grammar instruction.

“It changes according to the target structure. Yeah, we need form and structure, but not for communication only, but because we prepare our students for the exam in the end. So we must keep that in our mind, too. I highlight the structure, but not at the beginning of the lesson. And I'm trying to make the students identify and notice the structure themselves by providing them with some examples. But meaning is also important because this is what we use in our daily language, so I highlight that part, too. I believe that we need both, but sometimes, maybe form is more dominant than meaning because of the nature of the target structure, and sometimes, the meaning is more dominant. For instance, in relative clauses, I think the structure comes before the meaning because there are some rules, the place of the relative pronoun kind of things. But if I teach, let's say, if clauses, we need both, but meaning is very important because it can change the whole conversation.” P16

Participant 3 argued that contextual variation is essential for learners to comprehend how meaning shifts despite identical structures and drew attention to the dynamic interplay between form and meaning. While Participant 3 stated not committing to privileging one over the other between form and meaning, they highlighted a critical issue in Turkish EFL tertiary level learners' cognitions. They mentioned that learners tend to assume that mastery of form automatically enables correct usage in the learning process. To counter this specific shared fallacy, they aim to cultivate learners' awareness regarding the flexible and context-bound qualities of language use through promoting contextualization from the initial stages of learning. This remarks about rigid form-based understanding on the part of learners echoes Participant 22's observation regarding learners recalling forms of grammatical structures before their functions owing to prior learning experiences. Participant 3 calls for a pedagogical grammar instruction design that proactively challenges learner misconceptions through contrastive examples in varied contexts to prevent the oversimplification of form-meaning relationships.

“We should have a kind of form teaching there, but the problem here is that we should, just from the beginning, give the students the notion that in different contexts, we can come up with different meanings. Especially Turkish students, when you give them a kind of form or structure, they do think that's all and now, they will be able to use it. No, it doesn't work like that in language. When the context changes, everything changes. So, just from the start, we should provide the students with the suitable scenarios or suitable context where you can find at least according to their level. It can mean something like ‘OK, the form is the same, but the meaning is different here’. So, I'm trying to insert such things into my teaching, because other than that, I can't decide whether the form and structures or the context and meaning is more important.” P3

In conclusion, the participants' cognitions on meaning and form revealed several common themes and varied preferences. A significant number of participants emphasized the importance of context and meaning as essential precursors to teaching grammatical structures and asserted that learners grasp forms more effectively when they comprehend their practical functions in contexts first. Conversely, some other teachers showed tendencies to prioritize form initially as for them a clear understanding of grammatical structures provides foundational stability particularly in the lower proficiency levels. Nevertheless, many teachers expressed that meaning, form, and context should be taught together and pointed to the inseparable relationship between these aspects. Despite some variance and differences in sequencing, most participants agreed that meaningful context considerably enhance learners' ease of comprehension and retention of grammar and an exclusive focus on isolated structures run the risk of constraining authentic language use. All in all, a balanced and dynamic interplay between meaning, form, and context emerged as a crucial pedagogical principal in the cognitive landscape of the language school.

4.2.7.3.Exposure

This subsection will delve into tertiary level EFL teachers' cognitions regarding the function of exposure in grammar teaching and learning. Exposure refers to the quantity and quality of language input learner receive both within and beyond the classroom environment. Teachers' cognitions related to how exposure influences grammar acquisition and learning, learners' ability to apply grammar in authentic communication, their language proficiency levels will be explored.

Participant 2 expressed strong support for the power of exposure through reading, listening, and multimedia input as a natural means of acquiring and learning grammar. They stated that learners increasing the engagement of learners with rich language input may be the core element of grammar development. In addition, they expressed concern that exposure is commonly underestimated and overlooked in grammar learning despite its proven benefits. Their cognitions align with input-based perspective of language acquisition where repeated and authentic encounters with grammar within context can support internalization without overt instruction. Their statement also implied a desire to shift focus to more immersive, input-rich environments from rule-based grammar teaching.

“I really want more reading and listening and videos in our students’ lives. That’s how they acquire grammar. Maybe many people don’t realize the power of exposure. You and I realize it, but many people don’t think they can learn grammar from reading. I strongly believe they do.” P2

The input-driven acquisition which entails the notion of grammar being embedded in language exposure rather than explicitly highlighted also emerged in the cognitions of Participant 17 who said “If we want them to acquire English, grammar must be everywhere, but not deliberately. Students might see grammar without being aware of the rules.” Their view echoes the emphasis placed on the facilitation of natural grammar learning through reading, listening, and media by Participant 2. Clearly demonstrating cognitions in alignment with implicit learning and teaching paradigms, Participant 17 favored subconscious absorption of grammar instead of conscious noticing.

Participant 16 drew attention to the transformative role of technology and the Internet in language acquisition processes. They noted that learners today can conveniently improve their language proficiency with the aid of various forms of digital media compared to their prior learning experiences where coursebooks and teachers were the sole sources of input. Agreeing with Participant 2, Participant 17 recognized the value of input from reading, music, videos online and extended the argument by attributing a more autonomous and informal dimension to contemporary language learners’ experiences. While Participant 17 showed support for incidental grammar acquisition through passive exposure, Participant 16 distinctively placed stronger emphasis on the potential of self-directed learning and the Internet as a powering tool significantly reducing dependency on formal language education in the digital age.

“In my time, we didn’t have the Internet, so the teacher and the book were the only sources of learning the language, but nowadays it has changed a lot. There are some students who haven’t had any formal education for English but have great proficiency in all skills, because they watch movies, listen to music, read something on the Internet. In this age, grammar can be learned without the teacher because of the Internet.” P16

Participant 8 reflected on their personal language learning adventure of English and underlined the substantial impact of extensive reading and listening in their language development. Unlike traditional grammar teaching methodologies entailing conscious study of grammatical rules, their language learning was primarily driven by meaningful engagement with stories and acquiring grammar incidentally. In a similar vein to Participant 2, Participant 8’s cognitions indicate that grammar can be absorbed naturally

with the assistance of extensive input without any explicit focus. Moreover, Participant 8's narrative outlined a more introspective and affective dimension in language learning and indicated that reading for enjoyment may constitute favorable circumstance and emotional climate for exposure and immersive learning. Their recollection that grammar instruction was not particularly memorable or challenging further reinforced the notion that exposure plays a key role in language acquisition.

“When I was learning English, I read a lot. I started reading books and I started enjoying reading books in another language. It was not necessarily about grammar and different structures, but it was more about understanding the characters in the story. There was a lot of stuff I didn't know in the books, but that was OK, because I still got the main characters in the main story and I was able to follow them. I also listened to whatever was available at that time and I remember sometimes, the teachers would write something that I didn't know, but I would understand it. I would remember similar sentences because I read a lot of books. But I didn't know what they were called or I didn't know how to explain their uses. I don't remember the grammar bit of the lessons much, I didn't feel that challenged.” P8

Participant 30 stated that formal classroom instruction is limited in terms of providing sufficient language exposure to learners but pointed out that today's learners are immersed in English through digital platforms. In line with Participants 2, 8, and 16, Participant 30 showed strong support for natural, subconscious exposure to language without deliberate guidance due to its contribution to the acquisition process. Their comment regarding the decreased necessity of explicit grammar teaching paralleled Participant 17's assertion that grammar should be embedded naturally instead of being taught overtly. However, Participant 30 introduced a mild contrast by pointing to the gap between promoting learner autonomy and the reality of restricted classroom time.

“Nowadays, unfortunately, our teaching environment is limited with the classroom, although we support students to be autonomous learners. Still, they are open to the English language thanks to social media, films, and other things. So they learn subconsciously and in such an environment, we need direct grammar less because they are already exposed to the language.” P30

Participant 25 argued that limited exposure to language in the local environment puts a restraint on learners' ability to acquire grammar naturally and underlined the necessity of explicit grammar instruction within the school context. While Participant 25 acknowledged that exposure and autonomy can be instrumental for learners who are already engaged with English beyond the classroom, they maintained that such conditions are prevalent among the learner profile within their teaching context. This nuanced stance

forms a realistic bridge between the more optimistic perspectives of Participants 8 and 17 with a grounded reminder that successful autonomy requires a foundation of sustained interaction with the language. Participant 25 exhibited balanced cognitions demonstrating that without sufficient exposure, formal grammar instruction remains and functions as a necessary scaffold.

“In our context, I think it is necessary to teach grammar because the students have limited exposure to the language, and they don't have simply enough time and exposure to figure things out for themselves. But if your students are interested in doing things in English, and if they are already exposed to English in games or outside class, then autonomy might work for them.” P25

In conclusion, although participants had varied views regarding its practical application, they collectively considered exposure as a significant factor in grammar learning. A recurring theme was the instrumentality of incidental learning through extensive reading, listening and digital media and that grammar acquisition can occur naturally without explicit instruction through effective engagement with authentic language. Conversely, some pointed out contextual limitations within the teaching environment and underlined the necessity of explicit grammar teaching due to the limited exposure available to learners outside the classroom. While participants broadly demonstrated collective cognitions regarding the theoretical benefits of increased exposure to authentic language, their individual cognitions differed in their assessments of how feasible and effective such naturalistic exposure is within the immediate teaching context. All in all, balancing the inadequate exposure of learners with grammar instruction emerged as a key consideration across responses.

4.2.7.4. Pronunciation

This subsection will explore participants' cognitions regarding pronunciation within grammar instruction and address its position within the cognitive landscape of tertiary level EFL teacher cognitions. As a key component of effective communication, pronunciation interacts closely with grammar instruction and influences learners' intelligibility and comprehensibility while using grammatical structures. The participants' responses will unearth how pronunciation is considered or sometimes even overlooked within grammar lessons. Through their insights, this subsection will shed light on how pronunciation intersects with grammar teaching cognitions and how it impacts or is impacted by grammar teaching practices.

Participant 26 acknowledged intentionally skipping pronunciation practice in their instruction due to curriculum pressures and pointed to a prioritization of grammatical accuracy over spoken language skills. This highlighted how pronunciation tends to be overshadowed by the overemphasis placed on grammar within the current teaching and testing system of the language school. Participant 26's sense of insecurity mirrored that of their students and further demonstrated how pronunciation appears to be undervalued in the classroom. Participant 26's deprioritization of pronunciation underscored a systemic issue emerging out of institutional expectations.

"There's absolutely an overemphasis on grammar in our school. That's why, as teachers, we put more emphasis on grammar in our lessons, because students are responsible for some grammatical structures in the exam, so I need to cover them, and because of that, sometimes I even skip the speaking or the pronunciation parts. Students have that attitude as well because of the system. When I skip the grammar part and ask them to have a discussion about the topic by using the target structure, without any explicit teaching, without any mechanical activities, they do not feel secure, and I also do not feel secure. It's not my ideology; I'm just a part of the system. P26

On the other hand, Participant 11 demonstrated differentiated cognitions towards pronunciation depending on proficiency levels of the learners. For the lower levels, they stated finding pronunciation drills beneficial and well-received, especially when the focus is on functional language, intonation, and speech flow. However, for upper levels, they mentioned skipping pronunciation drills as advanced learners tend to perceive it as unnecessary or disengaging. This indicated mechanical pronunciation drills are deprioritized at higher levels tied to a perceived analysis of learner needs and preferences.

"I actually skip the drilling part for most of the time, especially for the upper-level students. They find it a bit weird sometimes, but beginner and elementary level students like pronunciation drills. Sometimes, I use drilling for the functional language parts with the intonation of the sentence and the speech flow. So, for lower levels pronunciation drills are OK, but I skip drilling part for the upper levels most of the time." P11

Participant 15 underscored the communicative significance of pronunciation compared to grammatical accuracy in spoken language. They acknowledged the functionality having a basic command of sentence structure offers and stated that mistake may often go tolerated in real time communication since they typically do not block comprehension. However, they drew attention to pronunciation errors particularly related to intonation can cause communication breakdowns as they may potentially distort the intended message more directly. They also reflected on the difficulty of mastering native-

like intonation and attributed their own challenge in this regard to not having grown up in an English-speaking environment. Their cognition appears to be a prevalent sentiment among non-native language teachers that pronunciation especially suprasegmental features such as intonation may pose a greater challenge and have a more immediate impact on communicative clarity than linguistic accuracy. Participant 15's perspective of pronunciation involves its role in ensuring comprehensibility and points to an intricate set of cognitions regarding how pronunciation influences and interacts with meaning in real-time interaction.

"You should have a basic knowledge of sentence formation, but you can make some mistakes and the other person easily understands you. But the pronunciation is more important in this sense, I guess. For example, intonation is something that I'm not really good at, because I'm not a native speaker. I was not born into that culture and language environment. So, when you make a pronunciation mistake, they can misunderstand you. But with some grammar mistakes, people still would be able to understand you." P15

Participant 22 commented on how public figures with fluent yet imperfect English and subpar pronunciation may deeply influence learners' attitudes toward learning English. Their keen observation pointed out that learners may internalize the notion that perfect or good pronunciation is not necessarily essential in achieving real-world goals due to their role models possessing financial wealth and success despite their flawed speaking skills. Participant 22's cognitions regarding pronunciation unlock a sociocultural dimension to language teaching that learners may opt in to deprioritize pronunciation if they perceive it as non-essential to success.

"I used to criticize rich people with imperfect English, especially rich people who are fluent but have a bad pronunciation. Those people do not have perfect English but have the most money. There are many examples like that all around the world, and when students see them, they think they don't need to learn English perfectly to achieve their goals." P22

Participant 8 described a thorough account of the complexities surrounding pronunciation teaching in grammar instruction in the Turkish EFL context. They pointed out the inherent phonological distinctness between Turkish and English like stress patterns, connected speech, and intonation. They underlined that misplacing stress may put up roadblocks in the way of listener comprehension and drew attention to the suprasegmental features instead of individual word recognition. Additionally, they commented on Turkish learners' reluctance to use contracted forms in speaking and explained that they tend to prioritize overt accuracy and want to clearly articulate grammatical forms in the long forms over native-life fluency. They linked this reluctance

both to the influence of Turkish and to pedagogical tendencies of teachers to bypass pronunciation-focused activities in favor of mechanical grammar exercises and production tasks. They expressed a concern that this pedagogical disregard of pronunciation work in grammar teaching may prevent learners from gaining confidence in their spoken output and cause them to produce considerably less language than their full potential. Participant 8 highlighted drilling as a bridge between controlled practice and spontaneous production and argued for its strategic use to enable learners to become more comfortable with pronunciation by hearing and rehearsing the target forms. They advocated that these low-pressure opportunities in drilling where learners can practice articulation of sounds, words, and sentences may be instrumental in reducing anxiety and provide learners with the ownership of the language. This detailed viewpoint of Participant 8 echoed Participant 11's suggestion that drilling benefits lower-level learners and added great depth to the argument for pronunciation drills by fully explaining why such activities are crucial for learner confidence and phonological development. Participant 8 underscored the intertwined nature of stress, contraction, confidence, and pedagogical practice in pronunciation and urged for a more mindful and scaffolded approach to incorporating pronunciation in grammar-focused lessons.

"There is a difference in pronunciation between Turkish and English, in terms of sounds and the stress patterns. False cognates, for example. The students obviously know a word meaning may be different or same or close, but the stress pattern is different matter. I think if the word is individual, it's not much of a problem. But in a sentence, if they don't stress where they're supposed to, it makes it difficult for the listener to understand. In that case, I highlight them. I think a proficient speaker uses contracted forms more often compared to not so proficient ones. It's very difficult for my learners to get used to it. Whatever the structure is, they usually tend to not do it. When I ask them specifically, they talk about what if the teacher doesn't understand the 'I' sound in will as in the future tense contraction. In that case, they want to make sure that 'will' is there and show that they know the form. So I say 'OK, you can put it that way on paper in writing, but note the example here, and look at the script, listen to a bunch of podcasts or YouTube clips or whatever. Find me an instance with noncontracted form of will.' They are still worried about 'will' there. They understand my concerns and my motive, but it's just very difficult for them to get past what they're used to. I think one of the reasons might be stressing each structure or not going for contracted forms is because of their native language. Another reason is I think we skip certain stones as teachers and sometimes, as learners. We put the structure up on the board, and then we ask them to do some mechanical exercises and then, get them to talk. In between doing the mechanical exercises and the productive activities, a little bit of practice of the target

language through drilling would help so that they would be comfortable hearing that in their voice. I think that's an important part that we're missing out. I think maybe we as teachers don't think it's important and the students don't want to do it. But for some students, hearing their own voice, even in Turkish, is something important. They hear the target language and imitate the way it's supposed to be before they try it out with their partner in the production stage, so they know they can do it. And maybe they feel a little less hesitant about it then hopefully. But I don't overdo it. I do it to the point of OK, this is a bit important, so let's try it out. They don't even have to do it very loudly. They could try out the way their mouths are supposed to work or anything. I think it's an important piece of the puzzle.” P8

In conclusion, the findings indicated that pronunciation does not occupy a prominent position within the cognitive landscape of the language school. While a minority acknowledged the role of pronunciation especially in terms of intelligibility, stress patterns, and contracted forms, the overall emphasis remained marginal compared to other language-related dimensions such as form, meaning, accuracy, and fluency. Several participants mentioned skipping pronunciation activities particularly with higher proficiency level learners and attributed this decision-making tendency to systemic limitations such as exam-oriented school climate and constrained instructional time. Others noted learners’ resistance or discomfort with pronunciation drills, which further entrenched its peripheral status in grammar teaching. Although some acknowledged the pedagogical value of targeted pronunciation practices for fostering learner confidence and controlled attempt at natural usage, these viewpoints remained largely sporadic. Pronunciation appeared to be a relatively underrepresented domain in participants’ instructional priorities and pedagogical decision-making, reflecting a broader trend in grammar-focused EFL contexts.

4.2.7.5. Appropriacy and Register

This subsection will examine teachers’ cognitions in relation to learners’ ability to use language appropriately across various contexts and settings. Appropriacy involves selecting language forms suitable for particular social and communicative situations. Register relates to the degree of formality or informality embedded within language use. Exploring participant conceptualizations and cognitions related to these dimensions of language may provide insights into their understanding of language competence and learning.

Participant 13 depicted a context-sensitive mindset to language use and highlighted the interplay between appropriacy, register, accuracy, and fluency. They suggested that in informal settings the priority may lie within effective message delivery and fluency rather than accuracy. However, they also cautioned that inaccuracies of certain degree may create negative impressions and unfavorable judgment regarding proficiency level and language learning. Importantly, they also mentioned social roles and communicative settings as factors defining expectations of language use. They pointed out that greater emphasis is placed on grammatical precision and appropriate register to ensure credibility and clarity in formal settings such as academic and professional contexts. Their nuanced cognitions involve language instruction preparing learners for varied communicative contexts and fostering awareness of when and how to adjust linguistic choices accordingly.

“I think it all depends on the setting. Let's say, in a setting where a lot of exchange students are talking, the message is important there. Can you convey the message? Can you talk about what you want to talk about without making long pauses? Accuracy is also important. I mean, you can't just say 'I am gone' it shows that you are bad at English. People think either you're a beginner or you did not pay attention at school. In such cases, you might not make a good impression. It also depends on who you are. Are you a teacher? Are you a student? Are you, I don't know, a doctor? It depends on where you're talking, too. If you're giving a speech at a conference, then you have to be accurate. It's a formal setting.” P13

Participant 8 drew attention to the necessity of raising learners' awareness by helping them understand when and where certain language choices are appropriate instead of getting stuck in the dichotomy of fluency and accuracy. They stated beginning their lessons by validating what learners already know and building upon it with the aid of comparing and contrasting various forms and uses and particularly highlighting distinctions based on registers such as test, real-world context, formal, informal, contemporary, historical etc. Additionally, they illustrated how learners tend to question the necessity of learning alternative grammatical structures in cases where their existing knowledge suffices for communicating the same point. In response, they proactively reframe this perspective not as redundant but as an arising opportunity to improve linguistic sophistication and contextual adaptability. This way, they strategically demonstrate their learners that knowing multiple way to express the same idea and recognizing which is more suitable in a given context like polite, formal, informal, modern, etc. bears a hallmark of advanced language proficiency. Their cognitions parallel

with Participant 13 in acknowledging the role of context and social roles in determining appropriate language. While Participant 13 considered audience and setting critical in terms of correctness and impression, Participant 8 extended this idea by actively teaching appropriacy through comparative analysis and encouraging reflection on language variation and choice. This instructional tendency appears to be informed by a more learner-centered and exploratory approach to understanding register.

“I begin with what they already know, so I highlight that. ‘That’s OK if you’re abroad. In a test, don’t do this, do that’ sort of thing. Sometimes, I ask questions like ‘These are all possible options, but which one would you prefer in a test?’ So I think raising awareness about what to use when a little bit is more important than which one has better accuracy or fluency. Sometimes students ask me something like ‘Can’t we say all this with this grammar?’ and I say ‘You can’ then they say, ‘What’s the point of you teaching another?’ I think it’s a good question and once we talk about it, even in Turkish, you know different ways of saying something and that is a sign of proficiency. You can keep using the one you already know, I’m going to show you another and I am going to talk about the differences. Maybe it has to do with sounding cooler or it has to do with making a different context in a better way. So we talk about things a little bit and I highlight that what they already know is a valid one, but knowing another, that’s why we are here. I begin with context, because in a different setting, more polite or formal, that’s more important. Also, sometimes students watch a kind of series and they get stuck with certain structures and certain phrases. I say that’s a very good one but that’s from a sort of a historical movie and when you’re talking to your friend maybe don’t use that word or structure.” P8

The findings and analysis regarding participants’ cognitions related to register and appropriacy show that they do not occupy a central position within the grammar teaching practices and cognitions at the research context. While some instructors acknowledged the significance of contextual language use and the ability to shift between informal and formal registers, such considerations appeared to be peripheral instead of integral to their instructional focus in grammar teaching. Instead, these dimensions of language seemed to be addressed incidentally or in response to learner inquiries rather than through systematic pedagogical planning of grammar instruction. This indicated that even though appropriacy and register are conceptually valued, they are not foregrounded within the institutional grammar teaching framework and the cognitive collective landscape.

4.2.8. Use of Grammatical Terminology

This section will explore how teachers perceive and employ grammatical terms in their instructional practices. Terminology refers to the explicit labels for grammatical

concepts such as tense names, parts of speech, and sentence structures and serves as a fundamental component in grammar teaching and learning. The participants' conceptualizations, preferences, and cognitions regarding the rationales behind, the effectiveness of, and the extent of metalanguage use will be discussed in detail within this section. Through examining these dimensions, a comprehensive understanding of how and where grammatical terminology is positioned within tertiary level EFL teachers' cognitive frameworks and instructional decision-making processes.

Participants drew attention to the functionality of teaching grammatical terminology in supporting learner performance in assessment processes. Participant 16 explained that learners might be at a disadvantage if they are not aware of the grammatical terminology in exams and said "I always give the names of the structures. Because I don't want them to fail in the exam because they don't know the name of the structure, although they know the structure. That happened many times." Furthermore, Participant 9 noted the practical necessity of grammatical terms and stated, "When they see the instructions in quizzes and exercises, I at least expect them to know what the terminology is there so that they can use the right structures because that's important, and that's why I use it." Both participants highlighted terminology usage as instrumental in ensuring learners understand assessment instructions and achieve academic success. While Participant 16 explicitly associated grammatical terminology with the prevention of potential exam underperformances due to lack of recognition, Participant 9 prioritized pragmatic and practical use and understanding of terminology in exercises to correctly interpret instructions and effectively apply them. Participant 26 also noted that learners might understand how a grammatical structure works but still struggle on exams in cases where they do not recognize the corresponding terminology. A slight difference from Participants 9 and 16 is Participant 26's mention of using L1 to clarify these terms. Collectively, the perspectives of Participants 9, 16, and 26 constitute a more flexible and supportive strategy of grammatical terminology use to bridge understanding especially when terminology becomes a barrier.

"I mostly use grammatical terminology, and I expect my students to know, not because I believe they are important, but because in the instructions of exams, we use the grammatical terminology. Sometimes, students know the structure, but they don't know the terminology, so they don't know what to do in the exams. So, I always use grammatical terminology, and sometimes, I make use of L1 as well to make it clear for the students. For high-level students, I might go for the advanced terminology." P26

Participant 6 echoed the predominant perspective that grammatical terminology serves primarily a functional role in test settings like Participants 16, 26, and 9. In addition, they added a nuanced and intricate dimension to metalanguage by linking grammatical terminology with learner reflection and suggested that being able to label grammar points can exponentially support metacognitive development. Participant 6's cognitions on metalanguage point that naming structures aids learners in articulating their own understanding and progress and promotes deeper engagement with grammar learning.

“So, this metalanguage is reported at tests. When students see an instruction or a question item, they should be able to understand that. I think there is no other function for these terminologies. They have to understand the questions at tests, and sometimes, students need to understand or refer to them later when their teacher mentions them. So, I don't think they are very important, but at the structural form stage, when you are naming and when you are uncovering the grammar topic, you have to write the title. That's when they should know about that. It's not very important, but studies persistently indicate that they have to know them. But, in my opinion it's very important to let students reflect on their learning, when they think about themselves ‘What did I learn today? I learned this tense, it was about the past, and I use it when I refer to something in the past, before another event in the past.’ It may be very hard to remember, but it's very important to reflect on a student's own learning.”

P6

Participant 4 described a comprehensive and context-sensitive perspective of grammatical terminology and stated that institutional demands namely achievement tests necessitate the use of grammatical terminology as part of in-class grammar instruction. However, they introduced a more nuanced view by distinguishing between the terminology expectations in different type of assessments within the language school. They stated that proficiency exams of the institution avoid metalanguage and instead rely on contextualized usage compared to the achievement tests explicitly referencing grammatical structures. Furthermore, they demonstrated a selective cognitive process for using terminology in their instruction. They agreed that metalanguage can help clarify grammatical features such as through breaking down tenses meaningfully but critiqued its overuse particularly at lower levels. They argued that using terminology for beginner content such as the verb ‘be’ is unnecessary and may overcomplicate simple communicative functions. This selective cognition of Participant 4 contrasted with Participant 26's perspective of consistent terminology use regardless of content.

“My grammatical terminology use depends on the situation and the requirements of the institution as well. We, as an institution, usually tend to use the terminology in the instructions. We ask students, for example, to fill in the gaps using past continuous or past simple tense. If we do not mention these terminologies at all in classes, our students will certainly have problems in the structured texts that we give them, like the quizzes, midterms, and finals, namely all kinds of achievement tests. We, as the proficiency test unit, don't do that in the proficiency test. In the proficiency test, just the questions are given, and the title of the section tells you that it's language use, and you're expected to find the correct answer depending on your previous knowledge. But in achievement tests the terminology is required, but as for my personal method, I tend to avoid using the terminology that much in class, but sometimes it may also come in handy in the sense that the name of the structure tells you a lot about how to use, and what to expect from that structure. For example, when I say present continuous tense, it helps a lot, at least, I hope so. I hope the students will get a lot just from hearing the name of the structure at the beginning, before even we go into details. I say, the name of the structure is present continuous tense, so these three words tell you a lot about the structure. It tells you that it's happening now, present, or around now when you see the word, present. When you see continuous, it's again a very important point that makes clear that it does not tell you about an instant, but a process. The other name of this structure, as you know, is also progressive, something that progresses and tense, of course, as the name suggests clearly, it tells you something about verbs, and it's about time. So this is something I tend to use with such subject matters, but it may not be that necessary with some others. For example, when you're teaching the verb, “be” at lower levels, you don't even have to mention that the name of the verb is “be,” because you're talking about something very basic, something that you used to introduce your life, introduce yourself, and talk about your life, what your job is, what your age is, what the color of something is and so on. So, we don't even need to mention the name at that stage and for that particular subject matter, but as I told you, we always have that restriction with achievement exams. If we don't do that, students might have a problem. Even if they know their subject, they might have difficulty in answering the questions, because they don't understand the instructions.” P4

On a different note, Participant 30 took a critical stance toward the use of grammatical terminology in assessment and contended that assessment practices should adapt instead of penalizing learners for lacking metalanguage knowledge if they can produce correct answers. This perspective sharply contrasted with the view of grammatical terminology as a necessary tool in navigating test instructions. In addition, Participant 30 shared a personal anecdote where students were unfairly judged for not distinguishing between terms like gerund and infinitive despite their accurate language use. Participant 30's viewpoint aligned with Participant 6's suggestion that grammatical

terminology has limited functional value beyond assessment but went further by questioning the legitimacy of testing grammatical terminology at all.

“Some colleagues think that we should teach grammatical terminology, because we have those terms in tests. Then the test items should be written and organized according to them. Students should not be penalized as they don’t know the grammatical terms. In the past, I had such an experience. The teacher criticized students as they didn’t know the difference between a gerund and an infinitive, but as long as the sentence or the answer is accurate, there is no problem. We shouldn’t test the grammatical terminology.” P30

Participant 7 candidly reflected on their limited familiarity with grammatical terminology, which initially led them to avoid utilizing such terms in teaching and show skepticism about using them in assessment. However, their cognitions went through a change following a Cambridge course, which highlighted the values of learners recognizing basic structural labels for broader applicability beyond their current institution. This cognition implies Participant 7’s tendency to stick to the current paradigms of wider contexts in terms of grammatical terminology use and moderate adoption of teaching only essential terms such as tense names and conditional type names without cognitively overloading learners with complex metalanguage.

“I honestly can say that I'm not familiar with all the grammatical terminology. As a teacher, I do not know most of them. That's why I don't use this grammar terminology. Actually, I had a debate with my colleagues that we shouldn't use the names of the tenses, for example, during the quizzes or exams while we're writing the instructions in the exams. But then, a teaching course that I took by Cambridge emphasized the importance of knowing at least the names of the tenses or the names of the structures because maybe in our school exams we may not use them while writing instructions, but the other schools or other institutions may use them, so we shouldn't hinder your students understanding what is expected from them. That's why after that course; I started to teach at least the name of the structure. But then, I do not use that much terminology, and I only teach the names such as present simple tense, present continuous tense, type 1, type 2.” P7

Participant 21 stated using grammatical terminology only to the extent that it serves practical purposes, namely for assessment and independent learning. Their minimalist and pragmatic viewpoint aligned with Participants 9, 16, and 26 in terms of necessity of terminology due to exam instructions in achievement tests. However, Participant 21 went a step further by framing terminology as a means of learner autonomy to enable learners to locate and study specific grammar topics outside the class by themselves. While Participants 4 and 6 placed emphasis on the pedagogical value or metacognitive function of grammatical terminology, Participant 21 stated consciously

avoiding overwhelming learners with technical terminology that is not directly useful for assessment or external reference, echoing the restrained use perspective of Participant 7.

“I use just as much grammatical terminology as they need for the assessment and to give them a guide if they want to study that grammar subject outside the classroom so that they know how to search for it on the Internet. I just give them the key things, and I don't really go deep into the terminology that they won't be seeing in exam instructions or in other books.”

P21

Participant 34 pointed to the necessity of grammatical terminology in formal educational context particularly where a language proficiency exam is involved. Participant 34 differed slightly from Participants 16, 9, and 26 who stressed the importance of terminology arising from its presence in test instructions and advocated the use of only essential metalanguage without overloading learners. This minimalist moderation resonated with the perspective of Participants 21 and 7 who similarly limit terminology to what it functionally and pragmatically needed. Compared to Participant 4 who elaborated on the pedagogical potential of terminology in dissecting grammatical structures, Participant 34 exhibited more pragmatic and exam-oriented cognitions and pointed out that students often already know how a structure works but have struggle with recognizing it by name. This keen observation reinforced the notion that limited but strategic use of grammatical terminology can actively support understanding and assessment readiness.

“Of course, some simple terminology is really required. Some of the students know the form but don't remember the name of them. If they are getting a formal education and their purpose is to take a proficiency exam, then some meta-language is required, but not a lot.” P34

Participant 31 exhibited a teacher-centered perspective of grammatical terminology use and linked it to content mastery of themselves on top of student level and readiness. This cognition offers a unique dimension compared to the predominant frame of institutional necessities and learner needs and demonstrated how teacher confidence can influence the decision to use or avoid metalanguage, similar to the preference of Participant 7 to not use grammatical terminology. They suggested that terminology can impact learner engagement affectively, enhance learners' perception of teachers' expertise and stimulate interest as see in the anecdote of introducing delexicalized verb. Participant 31's cognitions point to their practice being more situational and self-regulated with their grammatical terminology use fluctuating depending on their own comfort level with the grammar concept in question. This adds

layers of teacher identity and professional development into the wider discussion of grammatical terminology use.

“It depends on both the level and the readiness of the students, but I think there’s an extent about me as well. If I feel insecure about the rule, then I push myself to use grammar terminology to make sure it’s still there. And if I cannot remember, I just go crazy and I search for this information during the break time. I can’t give you an extent of my grammatical terminology use actually. It’s cool to use grammatical terminology in the class, and when I use it, students’ eyes always get bigger. They think that this teacher is an expert. So I like using grammatical terminology, depending on the level. If it’s the highest level, I mostly use it and students pay more attention to the class, because it is something they’ve never heard, and they delve into the lesson after that point. But for lower levels, it’s unnecessary. It makes the subject more complicated for the students. In general, if I reckon that the students can understand, I use it and I explain it. For example, last term, I was teaching at upper intermediate level. In one of our lessons, we were talking about the verb, have, and I told them it’s a delexicalized verb. They didn’t know what it meant and got curious, so I kept talking about it and gave some other delexicalized verbs as examples. They were happy to learn it.” P31

Participant 19 opted in for comprehension over the use of technical metalanguage and exhibited learner-centric and minimalist cognitions. Like Participant 21 and 7, they stated deliberately avoiding overwhelming learners with complex terms especially in cases where the grammar point in question is challenging enough. Their consistent use of elementary basics even at higher proficiency levels renders their cognitions as learner sensitive. Moreover, their key observation that some students enjoy elaborate terminology acknowledges learner diversity, yet their instructional choice remains firmly rooted in clarity and accessibility rather than linguistic sophistication.

“In my experience, some of the students like those fancy terms. But for me, grammatical terminology is not important. As long as they know the basics and understand me when I say ‘subject’ that’s enough for me. Also, when a topic is really difficult for them and on top of that, if I use a very detailed grammatical terminology, I think they’re going to get lost. What I want them to do is not understand my terminology, instead, I want them to understand what the grammar point is. So I stick to elementary basics, even with the advanced levels.” P19

In contrast to Participant 19, Participant 17 advocated for the inclusion of metalanguage at higher levels and said “If students are beginners, they don’t need to know all the things we call terminology. But when they are advanced of course, and they must know what, for example, inversion is.” They exhibited a level-based approach to grammatical terminology use and asserted that learners are not required to learn technical

terms, but advanced learners must become familiar with them. Similar to Participant 31, Participant 17 cognitions involve learner readiness as a key determinant in deciding when to introduce metalanguage.

Participant 14 took a firm stance on the use of grammatical terminology and asserted that learners must be taught the names of the structures as part of the input particularly within academic English contexts. Their rationale carries practical and pedagogical merits and entails equipping learners with relevant terminology to independently search for and practice specific grammar points. However, it is important to note that academic English does not constitute the primary focus of the broader language program within the context, which is largely geared towards general proficiency in language.

“I guess I'm quite strict on grammatical terminology. I give the name of the topic, name of the structure. I'm their teacher and we are teaching academic English, so they need to know. They need to learn it in a proper way. For example, if they want to do more exercises on relative clauses, they need to know what to write on Google. I think they definitely should know the name of the topic.” P14

Participant 13 noted that the learner profile of the school are not English language majors thus do not necessarily need in-depth metalanguage knowledge. Instead of relying on heavily on terms like past participle, they tend to simplify their grammar teaching by using more accessible shorthand such as V₃ and only briefly introduce the formal term to prevent confusion when learners encounter it in self-study. This pragmatic and student-centered resonated with Participants 19 and 7 in terms of prioritizing learner comprehension over technical terminology and contrasted with Participant 14 and 16 regarding the consistent and formal use of terminology for academic purposes. Similar to Participant 4, Participant 13 gives precedence to responding to learners' practical needs instead of enforcing terminological precision with the notion that metalanguage should serve clarity and not complicate learning further.

“Our students will not be English majors, so I don't expect them to understand what past participle means. Because when I say V₃ that does the job. Of course, I say past participle, but then I explain it shortly because if they study at home themselves, they will see it in the book and get confused. Otherwise, I wouldn't do it because they don't need it.” P13

Participant 23 stated using only essential terms and expecting learners to understand basic labels such as parts of speech and word order. With a minimalist mindset, they prefer accessible alternatives like Verb 3 instead of more complicated terms

such as past participle like Participants 13 and 19. However, they made a distinction regarding ELT majors and stated that terminology is necessary for them. The cognitions of Participants 13 and 23 involve attaching more importance to simplicity rather than technicality and carry flexible and context-dependent characteristics that balance learner comprehension with academic expectations.

“For EFL learners, I use terminology to a minimum extent. I also do not expect my students to use terminology, but I expect them to understand the terminology, at least the ones that I use. They should be able to recognize basics of terminology, for example, parts of speech or the word order in sentences. I do not expect them to understand subject clause or, let’s say, ‘Verb 3’ is okay instead of the term, past participle. Also, if we’re teaching the students whose major is ELT, then the terminology should be taught. But at prep school, I don’t think it’s a must.” P23

Participant 28 noted that learners need to know the names of structures in order to search for additional practice online like Participant 14. In addition to Participants 23 and 13, Participant 28 limit their terminology use to the basics with the aim of helping learners grasp how the language works instead of overwhelming them with excessive detail.

“When they want to practice the target structure more, they need to search it on Google. This is another reason for me giving them the title of the topics. So I teach just the basics to help them learn how the language works.” P28

Participant 3 underscored that learners should grasp fundamental grammatical concepts such as sentence structure and basic word order and identify components such as subject, verb, and object both in target language and in their mother tongue. Their cognitions paint a more foundational view focusing on structural awareness instead of detailed metalanguage. A baseline understanding of basic grammatical terms is widely considered necessary across the school despite the variance of the depth of metalanguage.

“Generally, especially for grammar, I think that learners should know at least the very basic sentence structure and very basic word order. This is also true for Turkish. The students should know what subject, verb and object are.” P3

Participant 9 pointed out the exponential impact of knowing parts of speech on learners’ overall language development and autonomous vocabulary learning and underscored that functional understanding and knowing whether a word is a noun, verb, adjective, or adverb enables learners to make informed guesses and hence improves comprehension. This functional and moderately systemic approach to grammatical terminology particularly for essential concepts is parallel to Participants 3 and 23’s

support of the necessity of basic terminology like subject, verb, object and parts of speech. In addition to Participants 16 and 4, Participant 9 noted the practical need for recognizing tense names for exam purposes. However, unlike Participants 19 and 7's caution against overloading learners with technical terms, Participant 9 advocated for deliberate early-term instruction and consistent reinforcement to unlock an organized scaffold to assist learners through their language learning journey.

"If it's something that's very widely used and known and if it needs a word for it, they need to know. At least, I expect them to know parts of speech, that's really important. It's a must, because what I realized is it impacts all of their learning. If they don't know a word, they need to know which part of speech it is, because they have to check it and they can make guesses according to it. So, that's something that I realized they really have to know. If they are weak with that, it makes everything more difficult. That's why I try to emphasize parts of speech at the beginning of the term and I also write the vocabulary and parts of speech next to them. I explain that there are nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc. Because, for some, I know they will really take it, use it, and go very far. And, the others will get a bit of understanding of whether the word they don't know or they need is which part of speech, if I'm lucky. And also, they need to know the name of the tenses because some of my students in the quizzes really asked me about their names, although I write it on the board. So, I realize maybe I need to emphasize it a bit more." P9

Participant 25 admitted to disliking grammatical terminology but using it selectively when it facilitates quicker understanding through opting for simplified, student-friendly and more accessible explanations such as helper instead of auxiliary verb. Their pragmatic cognitions exhibit similarities with Participants 19 and 7 in their reluctance to use complex terminology that might overwhelm learners particularly at lower levels. On the other hand, like Participants 4 and 16, Participant 25 recognized the utility of metalanguage for instructional clarity and exam preparation by consistently teaching topic titles. Their remark point to a common tension in teachers' cognitions across the board regarding balancing teacher convenience and learners' cognitive readiness and practical needs.

"I don't like using grammatical terminology, but I use it to the extent where it helps them to get something quickly. For example, instead of saying auxiliary verb, I say 'It's a helper. It helps us to make questions.' But when we use the terminology, it's easier for us, as teachers, to make things clearer. I think we struggle to simplify it in a way that will work out for the students. I'm not quite sure about the extent, but I use the titles always." P25

Participant 36 stated aligning their grammatical terminology use with demands of the specific grammar point at hand and exhibited a needs-based approach. While not

opposing the use of metalanguage, they conceded that some terminology like transitive and intransitive verbs may cause confusion. However, they considered some other terms such as defining and non-defining clauses essential for accurate usage and punctuation. Their situational viewpoint showed similarities with Participant 4 and 25 in terms of adapting terminology to the context and clarity of instruction. Like Participants 7 and 19, Participant 36 demonstrated sensitivity to learners' cognitive load but diverged from Participant 14 who showed tendency to apply grammatical terminology more rigorously. Their stance reinforced a broader pattern of grammatical terminology use in grammar instruction that many teachers negotiate their metalanguage use based on perceived necessity and student comprehension rather than adopting an all-or-nothing stance.

"It depends on the subject. I am not in favor of hiding the terminology from my students, but sometimes I need to do it. For example, I don't mention transitive or intransitive verbs, because it can be confusing for them. But in relative clauses, again, these terms, defining and non-defining are important in order to use the comma in the correct place. For these reasons, I am using this terminology, when it is needed. My drawing line is related to the subject itself." P36

Participant 12 mentioned deliberately minimizing their use of grammatical terminology during their instruction unless it is necessary for assessment or responsive to learner preferences. Similar to Participants 19 and 23, they give precedence to the functional understanding of grammar over memorization of terms considering that the learners are not prospective English language teachers. However, like Participant 4, 7, and 25, they recognized that adult learners or learners with analytical inclinations may potentially benefit from exposure to metalanguage and even prefer this type of teaching. Their strategy of introducing terminology at the end of class mirrors Participant 6 and 26's approach of balancing clarity with test preparation, reflecting an underlying tension between pedagogical clarity and institutional assessment demands.

"Because my students are not going to be English teachers, I don't focus on whether they know the terminology or not. I just want them to know the functions of the grammatical structures they learn, so that they will be able to use them. So, terminology takes up a very little space in my classes. I deliberately do not use them in my instruction to explain the rules. I do it because it's easier for me, but I try to avoid grammatical terminology. And also, they're adult learners, if they were children, I would definitely avoid it. But since they're adult learners, they need it because some students learn grammar with metalanguage, and they like it. Some students' minds work differently there. Maybe, they have more mathematical minds. They're more comfortable with that, they keep notebooks, they write them down. So, when

those types of students ask me, I tell them what it is, but at the end of the class. I also have to do it because in the quizzes, in the exams, there are questions, like 'Fill in the blanks with present past tense or present perfect tense.' so they have to be familiar with those terms. That's why I write it at the end of the class." P12

Drawing a parallel with native language development, Participant 30 openly expressed that grammatical terminology plays a limited role in language acquisition and stated that proficiency can be achieved without explicit metalanguage use. However, like Participant 25, 12, and 4, they acknowledged a professional and contextual obligation to present terminology as part of their grammar instruction due to instructional and assessment tendencies in the language school. This disharmony is illustrative of the common tension between teachers' own pedagogical convictions and their responsibilities arising from curricular demands.

"I put a little importance to grammatical terminology. Of course as a teacher, I am responsible to write it on the board or to mention it. But I believe that it's just like learning your mother tongue. We didn't learn terminology, yet we are proficient speakers of our native language. So students don't need these terms in order to produce the language. This is my point of view. But still, it's my responsibility." P30

Participant 5 underscored the practical necessity of basic grammatical knowledge of parts of speech as a functional means for learner autonomy particularly while navigating dictionaries. Similar to Participants 9 and 3, they drew attention to the parts of speech for general language comprehension and learning beyond the classroom. While Participants 19 and 30 tend to minimize the role of terminology altogether, Participant 5 advocate for limited but essential metalinguistic knowledge to equip learners with lifelong learning strategies and support independent study routines.

"Parts of speech is a skill they need to have, because every time they look up a dictionary, they're going to come across those terms or abbreviations, and they should understand what they stand for. At least, they should be able to read the dictionary. When they look up a dictionary and see the definition of a verb, they should understand what verb means, what 'V' stands for, or plural, singular mean for nouns." P5

Participant 18 pragmatically distinguished between foundational and unnecessary grammatical terminology similar to Participants 5 and 9 in terms of a minimalistic yet purposeful use of terminology to support learner autonomy in navigating through learning resources. They recognized that learners may seek out grammar exercises independently and thus need to understand some key terms to facilitate that process.

"I don't use a lot of and I don't try to teach a lot of grammatical terminology, because they don't have to know if something is an indirect question or not, for example. I think they

should know why they use it and how they use it. But if it's, for example, subject, adverb, preposition, kind of terminology, then they should know it. Also, when they want to search for some other exercises, they ask me some terminology to find those on the Internet, then I give the names, because they should be more autonomous, and they should take the responsibility of their own learning.” P18

Participant 20 flexibly and pragmatically approached the matter of grammatical terminology and favored its inclusion only when it is prescribed within the frame of syllabus. Additionally, they acknowledged that even teachers might occasionally have trouble remembering certain terms, which suggests that complete mastery of metalanguage is not necessarily a must in effective language teaching or learning. Instead, they placed emphasis on learners being able to use the grammatical structure in question during practice even when they do not recall the precise terms for it. Their process-oriented view assigns grammatical terminology as a support role instead of a main requirement in grammar instruction.

“If it is in the syllabus, I have to teach it. When I teach at the same level for a couple of years, sometimes, I may forget the name of the terminology, which is normal. So they don't have to remember the name of the terminal terminology, but I think they should be able to use them in their learning procedure.” P20

Participant 3 cautiously warned that overreliance on terminology in grammar teaching is not ideal and argued for a functional and strategic understanding in terms of grammatical terminology. They also expressed support for efforts to raise learners' awareness of terminology especially during the initial phase of preparatory class and mentioned their efforts to integrate grammatical terminology meaningfully through written feedback. They consciously aim for conceptual understanding through comparison and contrast though they recognize that successful transfer of this knowledge into practice remains a pedagogical challenge.

“So if you base your grammar teaching on terminology most of the time, it's not really a good idea. For the last five years, I've been trying to raise awareness about the terminology for about the first two months of my classes. I'm trying to compare and contrast and come up with different things. And I'm trying to support this with my written feedback by using terminology. In a good scenario, they can transfer, but that's a tough thing for me in my teaching.” P3

Participant 24 underlined that the ultimate goal in the class in teaching the language and not teaching about the language and presented a strong case against excessive use of grammatical terminology. They critiqued the use of metalanguage as

potentially ego-driven and distracting from meaningful communication. While Participants 4, 9, and 21 accept the use of grammatical terminology in service of practical purposes, Participant 24 warns against overrating its role in grammar teaching and frames it as a tool and not the aim. Their philosophical framing of the debate underscores the importance of practical language use over linguistic categorization. They stressed that terminology should be used only as a means to aid understanding, not as an end in itself.

“There is this big utterance, ‘Teaching the language or teaching about the language.’ Well, the point is teaching the language. The terminology is only needed to get the message across. Don’t overuse it and don’t overrate the terminology. What is more important? Is it the tool or is it the goal of what you’re doing? And because we are not training English language teacher candidates at the moment, the terminology is not that important. It occurs that the students sometimes come and say, ‘You name it like this but in another book, it says like this.’ Then you refer to it, defining, non-defining, restrictive, non-restrictive and say ‘Well, it’s the same. This book says that, and that book says that, but this is only serving for the purpose of solving the conflict of the terminology.’ But feeding the students about the language, rather than the language itself, is just showing off. It’s a big ego for me. The main point is just to send the message across. We are here to make the abstract something real, and at the end of the course, if the students need to figure out what they learned today and then you say, ‘Well, we did this number of things and these are their names, you can be proud of yourself.’ But throughout the course, never write the formula, write the names of the rules, write the terminology only, without making use of that goal. That’s a waste of time, but we used to have teachers like that in the past.” P24

Participant 34 noted that earlier in their career, they heavily relied upon grammatical terminology potentially as a way of projecting professional expertise. This personal and reflective insight echoed the perspective of Participant 24, who protested the use of grammatical terminology as a way of showing off. Similar to Participant 3 who conceded using advanced terminology to capture learner attention or boost learner curiosity, Participant 34 recognized the performative aspect of grammatical terminology use. Their reflection of their novice teaching reveals a more critical stance, shaped by experience and evolving pedagogical values and suggests a shift toward a more student-centered and less ego-driven practice.

“In the past, I used to use a lot of grammatical terminology, again depending on the level of the students. But then it changed, and maybe it was because I was a young teacher and thought students could see that I am a very knowledgeable teacher.” P34

Participant 37 stated that learners should know terminology only to the extent necessary to support their development not as linguists but as learners. This balanced and

learner-oriented mindset aligns with Participants 23 and 18 in terms of minimal yet functional use of grammatical terminology. In addition, Participant 37 highlighted learner autonomy as the central justification in their argument and suggested that learners should be equipped with enough terminology to reflect on their learning process and articulate their learning needs. Their cognitions point to a model of grammatical terminology use where while it can support learning and autonomy, it must be utilized judiciously and contextually by both parties.

“So I expect them to know grammatical terminology to the extent that's enough for a learner, not a linguist, of course. I don't want to put lots of pressure on them. And actually, I don't decide it, the course book decides it. But when it comes to using, I just expect them to explain or analyze their needs and purposes as a learner. For example, if I ask them ‘What do you find the most difficult when you're learning English?’ I expect them to have some ideas and knowledge about it. I think it's important for autonomy, in this sense.” P37

In conclusion, participants' cognitions and practices regarding grammatical terminology vary notably, but common themes emerged from the dataset. Generally, participants do not regard extensive use of grammatical terminology as inherently essential for language learning. Rather, their approach is shaped largely by practical necessities, such as assessment requirements and institutional expectations. Many participants highlight that students should understand basic terms such as parts of speech, tense names, and fundamental structures to comprehend exam instructions and foster learner autonomy. However, most participants state consciously avoiding overwhelming learners with complex linguistic jargon and called this way of teaching unnecessary and potentially confusing. They prefer simplified explanations that support meaningful grammar use rather than theoretical knowledge. Finally, the consensus among teachers is that grammatical terminology should serve as a supportive tool rather than an instructional goal itself.

4.2.9. Use of L1

The use of learners' first language in English language teaching has traditionally been discouraged due to concerns that it may overshadow the target language and reduce learners' opportunities for meaningful communication in English. However, some approaches advocate a more balanced and principled integration of L1 into classroom practice and point to its potential to enhance learning effectiveness when employed thoughtfully. This section will delve into EFL tertiary level teachers' cognitions regarding

the use of L1 within their grammar teaching practices through the lens of four distinct but interrelated dimensions of functional, strategic, social and discourse related, and multilingual classes use.

4.2.9.1.Functional Use of L1

The functional use of L1 in the classroom refers to specific, controlled instances where L1 is utilized to facilitate classroom management, clarify instructions, and resolve immediate comprehension problems without significantly compromising the principle of predominant English use. Teachers typically adopt functional L1 use to address particular learner needs to ensure progression of lessons and reduce learner anxiety emerging out of obscurity. This subsection will discover university EFL teachers' cognitions and practical approaches regarding the purposeful and restricted use of L1 for immediate functional purposes within grammar teaching practices.

Participant 19 recognized the potential of L1 in reducing learner stress and supporting learner comprehension especially in lower proficiency levels and underlined a balanced and pragmatic perspective in L1 use. They acknowledged that insistence of English-only teaching while learners have struggles may prove unfruitful and counterproductive and cautiously warned against overreliance on L1 due to its limitation of language exposure and hinderance of progress. They advocated for a gradual transition from initial use of Turkish with beginners to more English as learners' comprehension skills improve over time. Moreover, they pointed to the benefits of teacher modeling in English and promoting learner autonomy through selective L1 use to maintain English as the primary medium of instruction in the learning environment.

"For me, if we have a common language, it would be nonsense to not make use of that. But there should be some limitations about that. If my students still have difficulty in understanding a grammar point, it would be really useless to force them to listen to it in English. Because they are struggling to understand what you're saying, they feel stressed to understand the topic. So why are you doing this to your students? You have a common language that you can use. But doing everything in L1 in a language class is also a no. You should also be a model with your English for your students there. If a student can produce a sentence they have learned in English, then they have to speak in English in that sense. For example, at the beginning of the semester with the lower levels, I start with Turkish, then after a while, I switch to English because they can understand it. With the upper levels, I start with English most of the time, because they can understand the instructions and stuff already. Turkish is only when it is necessary. I also think you should give the students that freedom.

If they have any difficulty in understanding, they should express themselves in their native language, because we have that option. But of course, there is a danger in that. You should also make clear that they shouldn't always use it. Otherwise, every time they have difficulty in understanding an English instruction or something, they are going to start speaking in Turkish and you're not going to stop it. It is going to be like that. L1 is a safety net, but because we are living in Turkey, so everyone out there is speaking Turkish. Students should be able to hear English at least in school." P19

Participant 3 stated situationally utilizing L1 through cross-linguistic comparisons to facilitate understanding or when both learners and they reach an impasse in communication. Their pragmatic perspective of L1 resembles Participant 19's functional means of L1 use in alleviating confusion or preventing unnecessary cognitive overload. However, while Participant 19 argued for a structured and level-dependent transition from L1 to L2 with clear boundaries, Participant 3 sculpted a more spontaneous, needs-based L1 use model especially for communicative breakdowns. Both Participant 19 and 3 agreed that L1 is not the default mode of instruction but simply acts as a strategic aid employed judiciously to assist in comprehension and clarity.

"I'm not one of those teachers, using English 100%, not even a Turkish word. Of course, I know that it's not a good idea to present all the content in Turkish, and I also have had such teachers. This is really problematic, and it doesn't work. But still, I do believe in comparison. Sometimes, I do use L1, if that comparison helps the student to understand it. Also, if the students are stuck and I'm stuck, it's not a good idea to still talk about something in English and make things more complicated for the students and myself. If I really get stuck and can't find a way out, I do use L1 to tell that really problematic point in L1 and then go on in English. So, that's my approach, comparison or getting stuck." P3

Participant 8 reflectively told an account of their evolving cognitions regarding L1 use. They initially firmly rejected it as a pedagogical weakness in their novice teaching years but later came to embrace it as a functional tool after exposure to alternative perspectives to professional development encounters. Similar to Participants 19 and 3, they appreciated the utility of L1 use in increasing clarity and efficiency when learners confront problems in comprehension. However, Participant 8 warned against overuse of L1 due to the critical part of exposure in language development and underlined that moderation of L1 use is key in the classroom. Their grammar teaching cognitions involve L1 as facilitative device with a conscious effort to maintain an immersive English environment.

"To be honest, L1 use has changed for me over time. When I first graduated many, many years ago, I used to think that using L1 was a disservice to my students and I was very against

it. I didn't use it and I didn't want them to use it. Then I remember doing a survey and the question was something similar to making use of L1 if it's at your disposal. I think the questionnaire was from the British Council. The question framed it as a tool, and I started questioning things a little bit because they, the British Council, know this. So yes, I utilize it. I can hear really well whenever students talk to each other when they didn't understand something, but they don't voice it to you. But I understand the question and utilize it obviously, but I think we should not overdo it because exposure has a lot to do with proficiency. So even in lower levels, I would try to avoid it if I can and I use L1 if it's a tool to get them to understand something a lot quicker so that I can get to practice or produce sooner." P8

Much like Participant 8, Participant 32 mentioned a developmental shift in their attitude toward L1 from initial rejection to conditional acceptance. They stated that their role as a teacher is a source of English input for their learners and hence they aim to maintain a primarily English-medium classroom. However, they also acknowledged the pedagogical potential of L1 use in the clarification of complex tasks and unfamiliar grammatical structures. Through a double stage scaffolding, they distinctively mentioned delegating L1 to utilize peer explanation in Turkish before intervening themselves. Additionally, Participant 32 practically utilize L1 for classroom management purposes during moments of disorder.

"10 years ago, L1 was a big no-no for me, but now it's a yes. I use it and I support it, but there should be some limits. I try to keep the lessons in English, because I'm the one who will expose them to the language, they need to hear it from me so that they will push their limits to do something in the target language. But from time to time, when I try to do some difficult tasks or difficult structures that are very different from their native language's grammar like information gap activities, if they have never done something like that before, they get lost. When I explain it in English, and they don't get it, I sometimes ask some of the students who are better at English than others, to explain to their classmates what they get in Turkish. But still, sometimes none of the students understand, so I explain it in Turkish. I also use it for classroom management. Sometimes, you see there is chaos and whatever you do or say in English, it doesn't work. At those times, I use L1." P32

Participant 25 described a change from initial opposition to L1 use toward a more pragmatic and learner-centric approach much like Participants 19, 8, and 32. They stated the end goal in grammar instruction is learners' understanding of grammatical structures. Like Participant 3, they exhibit a purpose-driven and controlled tendency to turn to L1 only in cases where explanation in English proves futile. They distinctly described an

economical, minimalist, and intentional L1 use profile sometimes involving only a couple of words to resolve confusion then promptly returning to target language.

“Sometimes, not using L1 becomes ridiculous after a while, because why wouldn’t we use it? The purpose is for them to learn it, to understand it. It doesn’t feel natural not to use it, so I use it. I was against it before, but I am all for it right now. When I start preparing some materials, I ask myself, ‘Can I really teach it by using English as simply as possible to make my students understand the point?’ And mostly, the answer is yes in the first place. So, I always try to prioritize my purpose, which is making a grammar structure clear to my students enough for them to use it. But if the students are stuck, and if things are getting even worse by me trying to explain the structure in English, I always use Turkish there. But I try to be very conscious about my use, because sometimes, even only two words in L1 can be enough. After I make everything clear for the students, I go back to English.” P25

Similar to Participant 25, Participant 35 stated that keeping grammar instruction in English when learner comprehension falters is counter-productive and emphatically remarked that constant teaching in L2 might be cognitively challenging for learners to follow. Connecting their L1 use to lower levels, they shared anecdotes that they had to reteach a grammar topic again due to learners’ incomprehension of the topic in a L2-dominant manner.

“I use L1 and I believe it’s effective. I know that the ideal way is to teach in L2, but if the students cannot understand the structure and the rules, there is no meaning in insisting on using L2. They will attend the final exam and the whole year they spend here is going to affect their results. Another point is that I imagine myself sitting in class, and someone is speaking in a language that I do not understand, I cannot listen after a while. Even if you use one simple Turkish word, you can get their attention. That was taught to me when I was in university. I teach at low levels, so it’s not possible to continue in L2 during the whole class. One of my partners in the past years was talking in L2 in all classes. But when I came to class, students used to want me to go over the previous topic again because they didn’t understand. Still, some of them had something in their mind, but of course not all of them. This was the other reason I switched to Turkish.” P35

Participant 13 shared emotionally charged and reflective accounts and described a change in their cognitions over time regarding L1 use similar to Participants 8 and 32. Originally committed to an English-only perspective even in informal settings, they reported a reluctant but gradually growing use of L1 in connection with shifting learner profiles and peer practices in the context. They justified their L1 use as a last resort when learners fail to comprehend the grammar input despite their efforts in English. However, the dichotomy between professional ideals and classroom realities surface as tension and

frustration in Participant 13. Their strong emotions stem from learners' passivity and refusal to engage with English outside the classroom as can be seen their metaphorical juxtaposition of roles and actions such as doctor, teacher, student, patient, prescribing treatment, and teaching. Their utilization of such a powerful metaphor points to total convictions about English immersion even as pedagogical pragmatism may occasionally override it. Participant 13's use of L1 could be framed as a reluctant concession despite carrying minimalist overtones.

"L1 use depends on the student of course. For many, many years I did not use L1, even if it is beginner level. Even in informal settings, like WhatsApp groups, I texted in the target language. But, for the last two years, I think it's changed. I think my colleagues affect me. They use L1. I don't know if this is correct or not, but I think the level of our students is going down somehow. They were better in the past, I feel like. So, I don't know if I want it or need it, but the amount of L1 is increasing a bit. I don't use it all the time of course. It was 0%. Now, it is 10%. When I'm teaching grammar, I try not to include L1. But if I did everything I can as a teacher and see it's not working, I say one or two sentences, 'OK. It's like this. You should do this.' in L1. I do it because it's the only option left. Sometimes, I explain and see their eyes are blank. I wonder if this feeling happens to my colleagues, too. Some of the students have that look on their faces. Maybe, one of the reasons why I started using L1 was because a few students told me 'I don't understand. I know you're trying to explain but it's not working. A bit of L1 would be better.' In the past, I used to believe that using L1 in my classes was a bad idea because these students are trying to learn English in a foreign context where no one speaks English outside the classroom. I tell them to go to Erasmus parties. They don't do that, it's their problem. So, I'm, most probably, their only chance to hear English from, unless they have any English-speaking friends. So, they should be exposed as much as possible. That is why I always used the target language, in every setting, formal or informal, in the classroom, outside of classroom, in the hallway, when they talk to me. They ask me questions in Turkish, I give the answer in English. Speaking English in informal settings is very important, but they don't do that, and it's making me angry. It also looks stupid because the conversation goes English from me and Turkish from them. In my mind, my reaction is like this: What are we doing? You need it, I don't. I'm not expecting perfect English from you, just try. I'm the doctor here. I'm prescribing something to you and you say 'I don't want this.' I'm the doctor, and I'm telling you that you need it. So, if you're rejecting the idea, it's OK, your problem. You will fail. Not me." P13

Participant 34 articulated a strong preference for consistent English use stemming from their entrenched cognitions that sustained and immersive exposure to language enhances comprehension and fosters and sense of progress similar to Participant 13 in their resistance to L1 use. Despite viewing constant L2 use more challenging in their

instruction, they find it more beneficial for learners' engagement and development. Like Participants 3 and 25, Participant 34 conceded occasional uses of L1 particularly in moments of fatigue or difficulty but reported setting a clear boundary by telling their students that their switching to Turkish may signal a breakdown in effort or communication. This symbolic weight and value placed on language choice accompanied with speaking Turkish considered as 'losing faith' in the class carries unique merits and marks a stricter stance regarding L1 use. Additionally, they lacerated the use of L1 for humor and asserted that humorous and informal interactions are supposed to occur in English to reinforce its role as the language of the classroom.

"I prefer English most of the time. I already mentioned that, but sometimes, I might feel very tired or sometimes, have some problems with the class for that specific day. I always tell them in the beginning of the term that I'll speak English all the time, and if I start to speak Turkish, that means I have lost my faith in them. English is more difficult, more tiring, but it's actually a lot more useful. I'm not against using L1, I just feel that English makes them pay more attention to me, because they try to understand what I'm saying. Of course, they don't understand every single word. But they start to understand more and more, and they feel better over time, because they feel that they are improving. Also, I have seen a couple of samples where teachers prefer L1 when they make jokes, but if English is your language, then you should make those jokes in English. Yes, students don't understand them sometimes, but they get used to it." P34

Participant 29 explained their use of L1 as closely tied to proficiency levels and stated that employ the mother tongue primarily at beginner and elementary levels but switch almost entirely to English as students advance in levels by saying, "In beginner and elementary levels, I use L1. In pre-intermediate level, I use 85% English. In intermediate and upper intermediate level, I never use Turkish." Their proficiency-dependent perspective aligns with Participants 19 and 25 who reported greater L1 reliance at lower levels for clarity and learner comfort while gradually minimizing it as learner become more capable of processing input in English. In contrast with Participant 34's more rigid and Participant 13's emotionally charged cognitions regarding L1, Participant 29 displayed a more pragmatic and level-based progression of L1 and indicated a clear instructional boundary where L1 use is incrementally phased out as learner competence increases through proficiency levels.

Participant 17 argued that while L1 use may be acceptable and even helpful at lower levels or in specific situations such as addressing false beginners or refreshing schemata, it is largely unnecessary at advanced stages of language learning. This shows

alignment with Participants 29 and 19 in their tendency to minimize or eliminate L1 use as proficiency level increases.

“It depends on the level. Some people say it’s forbidden; you cannot use it but if it’s necessary, use it. If you think that it will help students, you should use it. I think it’s in vain to teach in L1 at advanced levels. Maybe, there might be some false learners, and you cannot notice these students, or maybe in order to refresh their knowledge about what they’ve learned, it can be used. But in general, I don’t think it’s necessary at advanced levels.” P17

Participant 4 demonstrated a clear preference for target language especially at higher levels where learners’ existing language proficiency and present grammar knowledge make grammar teaching in English more feasible. However, they confirmed the need to use L1 at lower levels owing to learners’ limited comprehension and unfamiliarity with language-focused instruction. Similar to Participants 17, 19, and 29, they advocated for a level-dependent approach to L1 use and resorting to L1 only in cases where it is necessary to scaffold understanding and reduce cognitive load.

“My preference will always be the target language. Of course, it depends on the level of the students. If you’re talking about higher levels, relying on students’ language level first, and relying on their existing grammar knowledge second, makes things a lot easier. At lower levels, we have these two problems. Students are not proficient enough to understand your instructions, or your presentation given in the target language. That’s the first challenge, and the second one is students are coming in contact with such a presentation the first time, maybe. That makes it even harder, so of course I use L1 in lower levels.” P4

Much like Participants 4 and 29, Participant 31 also supported exclusive use of English in higher levels. However, they acknowledged the need for flexibility in lower levels especially in grammar teaching where persistent confusion among learners may inevitably require brief L1 explanation before continuing in English. Participant 31’s conditional and needs-based cognitions of L1 use involve it being a supportive tool to be employed sparingly and purposefully and resemble those of Participants 3 and 19 in terms of limited L1 use to prevent misunderstanding and maintain instructional clarity.

“In higher levels like intermediate and upper intermediate, I try to never use it. The last time I taught in pre-intermediate levels, and I can say that, especially while explaining grammar, I used it when they needed it. If they are insisting on not understanding something, then I just give the rule and explain it in Turkish. Then we keep on in English.” P31

Participant 22 connected their L1 use largely to learner level and comprehension and demonstrated a flexible and pragmatic stance. Like Participants 31 and 3, they tend to conduct lessons in English at higher proficiency levels unless comprehension issues regarding the grammar topic arise, at which point they functionally switch to L1 for

clarification. Compared to Participant 34's rigid avoidance of L1, Participant 22 advocated for selective and responsive utilization of L1.

"So I'd never say I will not use L1 in grammar teaching. It also depends on the level. For example, in higher levels, I generally go with L2 and if I see that they understand, I never switch back to L1. But If I see that there's a problem here, I should do some more explanations, so I switch back to L1." P22

Participant 2 pointed to responsiveness to learner needs and preferences and displayed student-centered and flexible tendencies of L1 use. Similar to Participants 22 and 31, they prefer to speak full English in higher levels when feasible but do not hesitate to switch to Turkish if learners express difficulty or explicitly request clarification. This balance between promoting English exposure and ensuring comprehension echoes the perspectives of Participant 19 and 25 regarding L1 use. Like Participants 34 and 13, Participant 2 also recognized the potential tension and disharmony between learner preferences and pedagogical priorities and stated that what learners want may not always conjoint with what is most beneficial for their progress.

"It depends on the level. I've used full English in higher level classes. I didn't have many actually, but the last one was amazing, so everything was English. Normally, I still try to do it, but I ask them sometimes and we switch to Turkish. It's all about what they want. Maybe what they want may not be the right thing, but if I see it, feel it, or if they say they need me to explain in Turkish, then I won't force it." P2

Some participants highlighted their functional use of L1 as a tool for classroom management and efficient lesson flow. As noted by Participant 8 "I sometimes use it as an attention grabber. For example, when I say 'Gençler!' in any lesson, they immediately understand something is up and they refocus.", a sudden instance of L1 use served as a effective eye-catching strategy to shift classroom dynamics and revitalize classroom atmosphere. With the aim of regaining learners' attention when they are unfocused, Participant 15 mentioned altering tone, singing, or inserting a brief comment in Turkish by stating "If I notice that they are distracted, I change my tone of voice, or sing, or say something about the subject in Turkish." In a similar fashion, Participant 27 admitted to relying on L1 under time pressure or in moments of confusion or even to express disapproval, stating "When they are totally confused, or when I'm running out of time, it's a time saver for me. Also, when I'm angry with them, I use L1 to reprimand them." These comments point to the managerial aspect of functional L1 use as a necessary fallback in situation of mishaps, confusion, or classroom disorder.

Participant 23 displayed a cognitive set viewing the act of teaching grammar itself as a language-rich process and a clear preference for L2 in grammar instruction. Their cognitions resembled Participants 34 and 4 in terms of maximizing L2 exposure and encouraging comprehension through immersion. However, Participant 23 made a nuanced distinction through their description of their instructional L2 as a simplified interlanguage tailored to learner needs and comprehension capacity including components such as basic terminology, visual clues, incomplete sentences. While Participant 23 shares the view that L1 can serve functional purposes like clarifying deadlines, they remain firmly committed to sustaining L2 use as a pedagogical tool, reinforcing a minimalist and principled approach to L1 integration.

“I prefer L2 mainly in my classes. I prefer L1 only when I make announcements or when I want to make sure that they have understood the deadlines or other important things. So for grammar teaching, I do not prefer to use L1 much, because teaching grammar has its own language. In our context, while I’m teaching grammar in L2, the language, the examples, the basic questions and answers I use provide students with language already in itself. In this setting, my interlanguage that I share with my students is basically like a different language for me. So I use L2 but in a very basic way, like basic terminology, sometimes ungrammatical sentences or unfinished sentences and questions, and maybe minus and plus symbols.” P23

Participant 6 stated favoring English for instruction and practice stages but resorting to L1 when learners display persistent misunderstanding. Similar to Participants 22, 31, and 3, they stressed the pragmatic necessity of L1 as a supporting mechanism when English explanations fail to ensure learner comprehension. Like Participants 19 and 25, they acknowledged the importance of student understanding over rigid language use policies and utilize L1 selectively and reactively at the end of grammar presentation phase for clarification of meaning.

“When it comes to grammar parts and especially when I introduce the structure at the end, and then we go to practice and mechanical practice stage, some students ask questions. Of course, out of 20 students, there would be some students who don’t understand. Then, I feel obligated to use L1 because I cannot insist on their misunderstanding by using English language. So, I believe all instructions should be in English, but for grammar teaching, I tend to use L1 towards the end, when I see some students still don’t understand. when you are checking the understanding of the students on meaning and the structure, it might be important to use. Sometimes, it is necessary to use L1.” P6

Participant 38 shined the spotlight on the long-term implications arising from overreliance on L1 and presented a principled and reflective stance. They warned of the habitual use of L1 and its possible bottleneck effect of hindrance on teacher effort and

learner exposure to target language. Their cognitions regarding L1 use shared commonality with Participants 34 and 13 in terms of maximizing classroom exposure in EFL teaching contexts. Much like Participants 19 and 25, they recognized the benefits of L1 use during difficult moments in grammar teaching. Their flexible but cautious mindset placed stronger emphasis on maintaining L2 as the primary language of the classroom to promote language awareness and learner responsibility and differed from Participants 6 and 3 who more readily integrate L1 as a support tool when necessary.

“If you get used to using L1 in the classroom as a teacher, it will be easier and you do not want to push yourself later on. This is the case for students as well. If you let them use L1 a lot in the classroom, then it would be their comfort zone as well. I think we're just taking the chance of using and hearing English from our students in the classroom. It might be the only opportunity for some students to hear English. I know the technology is improving well, but still, we should make our students aware of using the language they are learning. We should make them realize that if they want to learn a language, then they need to use it. But if we do not use it in the classroom, when we're teaching, how can we make our students realize this? I can understand the other side as well, and I agree with them to some extent, because sometimes, L1 makes everything easier. Still, when you're having a difficult time teaching that structure, there you can just switch to Turkish and then back to English. Using English in the classroom doesn't mean that you're not using any Turkish in the classroom, this is not the case, at least, for me. I do that as well. But as a teacher, you are the one who needs to make that decision.” P38

Participant 37 cautiously expressed concerns that frequent reliance on L1 may hinder learners' ability to internalize the logic and structure of English. Their circumspect cognitions position closely to Participants 38 and 13 who collectively warn against the overuse of L1 for fear of limiting learners' exposure to the target language. In a similar fashion with Participants 25 and 19, Participant 37 recognized that there are possible moments when L1 is beneficial but emphasized the need for restraint. They stated that learners' use of L1 might cognitively anchor them in their native language patterns and prevent them from grasping the inherent differences in English. Their grave concern regarding this cognitive interference is less explicitly stated among other participants and marks a more language-processing oriented justification for limiting L1 use.

“But sometimes, using L1 can confuse the learners, and if they get used to thinking like this, they might get confused even more. It can make them think more in Turkish without getting the nature of English. Because languages are not the same, they're very different. So I don't want to use them a lot of L1, but sometimes I do.” P37

Overall, the participants' perspectives revealed a pragmatic yet cautious stance towards the functional use of L1 in grammar teaching. Most teachers agreed on utilizing L1 as a valuable strategic tool to overcome communication breakdowns, facilitate classroom management, clarify complex grammar points, or address critical misunderstandings swiftly. However, they consistently stressed moderation to avoid creating excessive dependence or undermining exposure to English. Teachers tended to allow more L1 use at lower proficiency levels, gradually reducing its frequency as learners progress. Thus, while most recognized L1 as practically beneficial and pedagogically justified, the prevailing tendency is to limit its functional deployment to specific, clearly defined situations to maintain a primarily English-speaking instructional environment particularly for language exposure.

4.2.9.2.Strategic Use of L1

The strategic use of L1 in grammar teaching extends beyond basic functionality and position L1 as a valuable cognitive resource for comparative language analysis. With the strategic L1 use, teachers purposefully encourage learners to draw on their existing knowledge of their native language to identify patterns, make connections, and comprehend new grammatical structures in English. Explicit cross-linguistic comparisons deepen learners' understanding of grammar, strengthens their language learning strategies, and empowers them to become more autonomous in their acquisition of English. This subsection will explore tertiary level EFL teachers' cognitions and practical approaches in connection the strategic use of L1 within grammar teaching practices.

Participant 21 mentioned strategically and actively encouraging learners to draw connections between their native language and English throughout different stages of their grammar lessons. This recursive practice includes tasks where students first engage in an activity in Turkish and then repeat the same task in English and hence present opportunities to recognize structural similarities and differences between languages. They also integrate discovery learning through which learners articulate their understanding of a new grammar point in Turkish before transferring it into English. This emphasis on cognitive engagement and rule internalization accompanied with translation exercises that support cross-linguistic analysis closely align with strategic L1 use.

“In almost every grammar stage of a lesson, I try to make some kind of a link between the target language and the L1 of the students so that they see the connections and see how it's transformed or linked to their own language. Sometimes, I give them the task to do in Turkish so they see how they use their L1 to do a certain task, and then, I give them the same task to do it in English, so they need to use the new language in English and see the connections. Sometimes, we try to discover the rules together based on a text or a situation, and when this is done, I ask them to tell me what they learned in Turkish or maybe to explain in Turkish as if their partner was a student. Time to time, I would also ask them to say something in Turkish, and then to say it in English with the new grammatical item, so translation activities are also included in the lesson.” P21

Participant 37 also showed support for the strategic use of L1 by employing it to facilitate comparisons between L1 and L2 when all their students share the same language in the class through their brief remark, “If all my students’ native language is Turkish in my class, I usually use L1 to for the purposes of making connections and comparing. I think it helps them to visualize the differences and similarities of the structure.” Similar to Participant 21, their cognitions involve L1 as a cognitive tool that enables learners to visualize structural differences and similarities and boost understanding. Both Participant 21 and 37 exhibit a cognitive set that appreciates the pedagogical values lying within L1 regarding its potential of promoting metalinguistic awareness. While Participant 21 integrate L1 use more extensively through translation tasks and reflective activities, Participant 37 adopt a more focused and comparative use without elaborating on broader classroom applications. In addition, Participant 28 stated that drawing comparisons with Turkish grammar is a deliberate strategy through capitalizing on learners’ existing grammatical knowledge to clarify new structures by concisely explaining “I compare it with the Turkish equivalent. I go over some Turkish grammar, because they have a knowledge of grammar.”

Participant 5 highlighted the benefits L1 use provides in terms of clarity and speed in lower levels in grammar teaching. Like Participants 21 and 37, they placed high value on drawing comparisons between English and Turkish to facilitate comprehensive understanding. Compared to Participant 21’s incorporation of more structured learner tasks such as translation and explanation in L1, Participant 5 utilizes shorter, less explicit Turkish phrases during grammar explanations and reserves L1 primarily for instances of difficulty. With their selective and level-dependent perspective, Participant 5 adaptively bases their L1 use on proficiency level and prefers English-only explanations in higher-level classes.

“I believe that using L1 is a helpful part of grammar explanation because it makes things a lot easier and faster. First, I try to explain them, and I don't make a lot of explicit explanations. I don't make long explanations in Turkish as well, but of course I just say some words, some chunks in Turkish and that helps them to understand what I mean. But, in the upper classes where the level of students are good as well, for example in intermediate and upper intermediate levels, I mostly explain everything in English and they would never have any problems. If the students don't understand something, don't make a connection, and if it is very similar to something we have in our L1, then I start explaining it in Turkish and I draw their attention to the resemblance between our L1 and English.” P5

Participant 24 lacerated the enduring stigma around L1 use in language teaching by drawing on both research and historical training practices that support comparative grammar instruction. In a similar vein with Participants 5, 21, and 37, they advocated for strategic use of L1 to demonstrate contrasts and similarities between English and Turkish. Importantly, they grounded their argument for L1 use in pedagogical theory and learner literacy and stressed that adult learners already possess a certain degree of metalinguistic awareness in their mother tongue which can be leveraged through and for comparison between the two languages. Their justification frames L1 as an intellectual right and instructional advantage in EFL contexts where full immersion is not feasible.

“Firstly, there is a big taboo that L1 should never be used. I think it's a taboo because there is research about L1 instruction saying ‘Use L1 in these cases.’ Then turning back to the ELT program that we had decades ago, there was a comparative L1 and L2 grammar course in applied linguistics. So why was there such a course? Why was there research saying that L1 could be used? Again, it's based on experience. It's not that I, as an individual teacher, feel unconfident of my English. It is because it's not a second language acquisition environment we are in and therefore, the advantage of seeing in Turkish, we formalize things in this way, but we cannot do this in English or vice versa, cannot be neglected. I say it's an advantage because we have students who are literate. We don't have kindergarten students who don't know how to read and write. They are adults who already know Turkish linguistic rules, some terminologies, like ‘sıfat’ or ‘edat.’ They have the right to make comparisons about the similarities and differences in their native language and their target language.” P24

Participant 29 described a primarily L2-based grammar instruction approach supplemented with strategic and minimal use of L1 such as key Turkish phrases or short translation tasks to clarify subtle distinctions between complex grammar structures, mirroring Participants 5 and 21 with their selective translation and comparative techniques to deepen learner comprehension of target grammar structure. Compared to

Participant 24's theory-driven rationale regarding L1 use, Participant 29 exhibited a more pragmatic cognition set guided by learner reactions and classroom experience.

"Especially for teaching grammar, I explain things slowly so that they don't have any question marks in their minds. In some cases, I ask my students to translate. For example, I put 2 sentences on the board, let's say, type 2 and type 3, and ask my students to translate them into Turkish. And when needed, I use Turkish to a very small extent like, 'olsam' or 'olsaydım'. My students did not complain about this so far. In the first week, they always try to make me speak in Turkish, but then they get used to this." P29

Participant 36 mentioned directly referencing and teaching Turkish grammatical terminology to establish conceptual links between Turkish and English grammar. Despite being similar to Participants 24 and 28 in terms of valuing learners' existing grammatical knowledge in L1 to facilitate understanding, Participant 36 clearly stated that they take it one step further and explicitly teach Turkish grammar as part of the process before starting working on target language grammar. In contrast with Participants 5 and 21's tendency to utilize more structural comparison without delving into L1 grammar terminology in depth, Participant 36 grammar instruction cognition set involves a more formalized and terminology-driven method of contrastive grammar teaching.

"I teach a grammar point in Turkish, not as a language though. I try to teach them the Turkish equivalent of the target structure. For example, I use this terminology 'sifat-fiil' for relative clauses. Trust me, they don't know it, so I am explaining this grammar topic to my students in Turkish, and then I am teaching the English version of the subject. I am trying to show the differences between Turkish grammar and English grammar. I also highlight its importance for my students." P36

Participant 14 stressed the advantages of collaborative translation in aiding comprehension. Their learner-responsive use of L1 resemble Participants 21 and 29's incorporation of translation activities during grammar instruction with the aim of promoting clarity and reducing anxiety. Like Participant 36, Participant 14 showed tendency to support their presentation of new grammatical structures with L1 though their main focus seems to be on learner comfort and emotional ease. In addition, Participant 14 distinctly utilizes student-led interpretation first and uses translation as a scaffolding strategy only when needed.

"First, I ask them to tell me the meaning of the sentence, what exactly the sentence says, then they start to do it altogether. Some of them are very eager to answer the question, but they make little mistakes, so they just correct each other, and in the end, they have a full translation. If they can't do it, then I just do it myself. And if I see they are stuck in the reading parts, I'm quite flexible to switch to that mode, and translate some of these sentences into

Turkish. I can even make use of translation just to make them feel more relaxed. I can also use it while presenting my first grammar structure. It doesn't matter if the aim of the lesson is achieved." P14

Participant 16 expressed a clear preference for using English throughout all stages of grammar instruction but acknowledged that learner proficiency level may necessitate L1 use and even at higher levels in certain cases. Their perspective is consistent with Participants 5 and 14's strategic use of L1 when comprehension falters. Similar to Participants 21 and 29, Participant 16 incorporates translation exercises deliberately particularly for complex structures like relative clauses. Participant 16's cognitive set involves the conscious and purposeful integration of L1 in specific grammar points while maintaining English as the primary medium of instruction whenever possible, illustrating a pragmatic yet learner-sensitive approach to strategic L1 use.

"I use L1 if I have to. This is not my preference. I first try to use English to present the grammar structure, or in practice, or in the discussion section, in all parts basically. But again, the level might also affect. But sometimes, some students at higher levels still might need to hear the Turkish word for it. Then I can provide it. But for certain structures, I use Turkish on purpose, of course it generally happens in beginner or in elementary level. For instance, while I teach relative clauses, I include L1 because I like Turkish English translation. I give them some English sentences and ask them to translate those sentences into Turkish or vice versa. This is consciously but other than that, yes, of course I use L1." P16

Participant 18 selectively and pragmatically utilizes L1 particularly when dealing with complex grammar topics like relative clauses and conditionals. Similar to Participants 16 and 5, they consider L1 as a last resort when clarity is at stake. Like Participant 29's low-percentage strategy, their 20% estimate of L1 reflects a balanced perspective where L1 is introduced only in necessary situations. Their yearly optimism in beginning entirely in English and the following pragmatic shift based on learner response demonstrate a reflective and adaptive cognition set of L1 use.

"There are some structures that I have problems with, and whenever I'm stuck, I use my own language to explain the meaning or why we use it, at that point. There are two or three grammar topics, like relative clauses, and sometimes maybe conditionals. So, if I must give a percentage, 20% maybe. I use L1 when it's needed. Every year, I say 'OK, this is a new student group. Maybe this time it works.' So I start with the target language. When I see students are confused and don't understand something, then I switch to my own language to explain or to elicit the meaning. I'm not against using translation or something because, in such cases, it works really well and students understand clearly afterwards. So whenever I feel stuck, I use translation." P18

With a topic-dependent mindset, Participant 22 underscored the effectiveness of L1 in the explanation of abstract or complex grammar structures similar to Participants 16, 5, and 18. Much like Participant 21 and 24, they stated that L1 fosters cross-linguistic connections that support deeper understanding and consolidation of grammar points. In addition, Participant 22 shows convictions that ineffective grammar teaching especially in abstract topics might lead to persistent learner errors and L1 use is essential for long-term accuracy. Their positive stance on translation points to its cognitive processing and learner confidence benefits and parallels Participants 29 and 16.

“L1 use depends on the topic I'm teaching. For some grammar topics that they can make connections with the mother tongue, and there isn't much grammar terminology in it, so I try to teach it in English. But in some grammar topics, more complicated ones, I go with L1. Still, I try L2 generally, but if they have those blank eyes, then I switch back to L1. Also, I think L1 should be in grammar teaching, because grammar is very abstract. There are right or wrongs in here, and if you're teaching them, then you should teach it well. Otherwise, they will keep making the same mistake again and again, and it will come back to you, because you taught that. Translation is a great way to practice grammar points for me, because I feel like the brain works better when you have connections with another language. Maybe, you feel more comfortable with that grammar topic. This also happens with some grammar topics, like present perfect tense. When they can't make this connection with the mother tongue, they have problems. If you can translate from one language to the others, you feel more successful, and making connections with the mother tongue consolidates the teaching, I guess.” P22

Participant 20 openly challenged the institutional norms and restrictions on L1 use by giving precedence to clarity and learner comprehension in grammar teaching. Their deliberate choice to teach grammar entirely in Turkish demonstrates deeply entrenched cognitions that mother tongue ensures easier and more accurate understanding. However, considering that there may be learners from other countries inside the class, this unbalanced perspective of L1 use may potentially bring about communication breakdowns, lower learner performance, and cause learner disengagement. Their democratic approach of involving learners in their decision-making regarding L1 use may act as a double-edged sword due to their tendency for a L1-dominant approach in grammar instruction.

“There were some rules in our school in the past like ‘Never use Turkish.’ but I didn't follow that rule and I taught grammar in Turkish. I told my students that I want to teach grammar points in Turkish, only for grammar points, and I asked them if anyone is not happy about it. All the students were happy about it and they supported me in this procedure, I think. When I'm teaching grammar, I especially use L1. I try not to use English in my grammar lessons

because I want to be sure about their understanding, and if I teach in their mother tongue, I think they will learn it easier. Sometimes, explaining something in English may confuse students because there might be some unknown vocabulary for them while I am teaching.”

P20

Participant 33 clearly supported explicit teaching of complex topics like the passive voice in the mother tongue prior to introducing the equivalent structure in the target language. This cognition set closely aligned with Participant 36 and 24 in terms of drawing direct comparisons between Turkish and English grammar to boost learner comprehension. Their collective cognitions point to L1 not just as a supportive tool but as an integral part of the grammar teaching process. Participant 33 uniquely stated devoting a significant portion of class time of approximately 20 minutes for detailed instruction of Turkish grammar before transitioning to English teaching. Taking into consideration that classes are usually not monolingual in the context, it is important to note that this L1-centric approach of grammar teaching may result in learner disengagement and loss of motivation in cases where learners do not speak Turkish as a mother tongue.

“The grammar of the mother tongue also should be referred to while the target language is being taught. If I'm teaching passive, I always start with the Turkish version of passive voice because students actually don't know Turkish grammar. They don't know how the passive voice is formed in Turkish. So I first explain and teach the Turkish version in detail, it takes about 20 minutes. Then, I point out the similarities between passive voice in English and in Turkish. So they can learn Turkish grammar as well.” P33

Participant 7 reflectively described a significant shift in their cognitions regarding L1 use in grammar teaching over time. While they formerly relied heavily on Turkish for clarity purposes, now they tend to largely avoid using it and reserve L1 solely for cases where learner comprehension is completely distorted or when peer explanations fail. This cognitive evolution mirrors the transitional journeys of Participants 8 and 13 regarding a move from rejecting to strategically accepting L1 use or vice versa. Like Participants 16 and 5, Participant 7 utilizes learner-led explanations as a primary resort prior to teacher-led L1 use and puts forward a layered and learner-centric mindset. Compared to Participants 20 and 36's embracing of L1 as a default strategy in grammar teaching, Participant 7 takes a more minimalist and efficiency-oriented stance and prefers English as the main medium unless comprehension barriers demand intervention.

“I used to use L1 to make everything crystal clear. I expect my students to understand everything, especially structures and forms, but it's impossible. As many times as you want

to teach them, if they do not understand, they do not understand. So, I do not use L1. I used to utilize L1 a lot, but one day, I thought ‘Why are you speaking Turkish? You’re an English teacher. They must understand what you say.’ So, I tried to stop using Turkish in my classes. Then, in the last two or three years, I try not to use Turkish unless they are totally lost. If I need to use L1, I ask one of my students who understood the topic or who already knew the topic well, to explain. If they cannot verbalize it in a simple or correct way, then I use L1 to explain that topic. Or while we’re answering the fill-in-the gaps exercises, if they ask me a question and if no other student can’t explain it, not to lose time I give a small explanation in L1. Other than these, I try not to use L1 in my classes anymore.” P7

Participant 1 exhibited highly restrained cognitions to L1 use in grammar teaching similar to Participants 7 and 23 in terms of prioritization of L2 but allowing limited L1 use for clarification when absolutely necessary. Similar to Participant 7, Participant 1 show tendency to observe students’ non-verbal cues such as confusion or disengagement to determine when a brief L1 intervention is warranted. Unlike Participants 20 and 36’s heavy reliance on Turkish for grammar explanations, Participant 1 treats L1 as a last-resort tool to ensure no learner is left behind. Their strategy of inviting peers to explain in Turkish instead of directly utilizing L1 as the teacher also parallels Participant 7’s collaborative mindset. However, Participant 1 distinctly frames L1 as a clarification tool rather than a primary teaching method and demonstrates commitment to maintaining an English-medium classroom whenever possible.

“I don’t do L1 in the class. In teaching grammar, but sometimes students feel really lost and then I can see that in their eyes. They don’t know what’s happening. And at this point, they need some kind of L1 instruction. So if I ask the students in the whole class, does anyone know the answer? Please speak in Turkish. And so that the other person can understand, I cannot lose that person. So that person needs to know what’s going on with the grammatical structure. Sometimes I resort to that situation, and I think it’s healthy for them then. When I know and see that the student is relieved and comfortable now, I can then move on, but I don’t provide, or I don’t use L1 in teaching grammar. I can’t say that I use that as an enabler rather than focusing everything on other one. I use it as a clarification tool.” P1

Overall, participants generally agree that strategic L1 use can serve as a beneficial cognitive and linguistic bridge between learners’ first and second languages. Many teachers consciously incorporate L1 to highlight linguistic similarities and differences, facilitate deeper understanding, and aid learners in overcoming persistent confusion. Strategic translation tasks, explicit L1-L2 comparisons, and targeted explanations in Turkish emerged as common and purposeful approaches. While some participants advocated a cautious and minimal use of L1 and reserving it only for complex grammar

structures, others viewed strategic L1 usage as integral to effective grammar instruction and supported leveraging it deliberately and proactively. In summary, although there is notable variation in the extent and methods of employing L1 strategically, teachers broadly recognize its value in supporting learners' comprehension and reinforcing linguistic connections.

4.2.9.3.Social and in Discourse Use of L1

This subsection will explore the use of L1 in relation to fostering classroom rapport, managing interactions, and supporting discourse functions beyond purely instructional purposes. L1 use may extend to creating positive emotional climates, promoting solidarity, enhancing engagement, managing classroom dynamics, and reinforcement of interpersonal relationships between teachers and students. The insight provided by the participants may reveal the extent to which the native language plays a role in social interactions, informal conversations, humor and various discourse-related practices that contribute considerably to a cohesive and comfortable learning atmosphere.

Participant 15 commented on their personal struggle with consistently maintaining English use in all classroom and informal settings and expressed admiration for a colleague who does so. While they aspire to adopt a similar L2-dominant approach, they acknowledged that it does not come naturally to them. Instead, they occasionally switch to Turkish to make quips about the subject. This particular behavior involves the role of L1 in the establishment of a relaxed and relatable classroom atmosphere, where humor and informality serve to foster rapport and encourage engagement.

“I had a partner who used English all the time, even during the break time, and I really envied him. I wish I could just use English all the time, but it's not part of my nature actually. Sometimes, I make some jokes about the subject, and I use Turkish.” P15

Participant 14 described utilizing L1 socially at the beginning of the day to create a welcoming and motivating classroom ambience. Through dialogic engagement in informal conversation in L1, they aim to foster a sense of comfort and readiness for learning. While Participant 15 utilizes L1 more spontaneously for humor during grammar lessons, Participant 14 deliberately incorporates L1 as a warm-up tool and a more structured social function with the aim of boosting learner motivation and bettering classroom climate.

“To warm them up for the whole day, actually. For example, I can just spend 15 or 20 minutes at the first class just chatting about anything in L1 to make them more motivated in the classroom, in the school atmosphere.” P14

Participant 32 pointed out the motivational role of L1 particularly for beginner-level students who may feel discouraged or disconnected from the learning process. They likened their use of L1 to a ‘soldier on the horse’ speech involving an emotionally charged and empowering message aimed at encouraging persistence. This aligns with Participant 14’s use of L1 to create a positive classroom atmosphere and Participant 15’s use of Turkish for humor and connection and reinforces the idea that L1 can serve as a powerful tool for emotional and social engagement. In addition, Participant 32’s use is explicitly framed as a morale-boosting intervention and suggestive of a more affective and performative application of L1.

“One more L1 use is to motivate them. Beginner level students sometimes feel down so they decide to not come to the classes. I spend 3-5 minutes talking in L1 like a ‘soldier on the horse’ to motivate them. This is more effective when you do it in Turkish.” P32

Participant 12 pragmatically acknowledged the natural tendency of students to think in their native language despite being advised otherwise by stating “It never works when we tell students not to think in Turkish, they do so. In my classes, I don’t want to act in a utopian way, I want to be realistic.” They underscored the importance of being realistic rather than idealistic in classroom practices, which contrasts with the more aspirational tone of Participant 15’s admiration of a colleague’s exclusive use of English. While Participants 14 and 32 use L1 strategically to build classroom rapport and motivation, Participant 12’s focus is more on cognitive realism, accepting that internal use of L1 is inevitable and thus should inform how instruction is approached. This adds a reflective, learner-centered dimension to the social and discourse-oriented use of L1.

Participant 9 reflected deeply on their extensive use of L1 in the classroom and commented on both personal and contextual influences on this decision. Unlike Participant 15’s framework of L1 use in social moments like joking, or Participant 14 and 32’s use of L1 for motivation, Participant 9 presented a more holistic and empathetic rationale. The emphasis of their greater use of Turkish is on creating a safe, inclusive space for students particularly those repeating the preparatory class and those facing personal challenges. This perspective aligned with Participant 12’s realistic stance, but Participant 9 adds a strong affective dimension by linking language choice to students’ emotional well-being and classroom attendance. However, they also expressed internal

conflict stemming from a tension between pedagogical ideals and practical realities and a desire to increase their L2 use especially at higher levels.

“I use L1 quite often, maybe extensively. I had my doubts about this actually and I tried to use just English. But still, I use a lot of Turkish in my classes and I don't force students to completely speak English. It's also a matter of personality, I guess. This has negative and positive outcomes. The positive one is more student participation. This term, for example, I teach for the students who repeated the prep class for a second year. There was no way I could use just English and get six or seven throughout the end of the term. Because, you need personal conversation and get to know them. Most of them have other issues that are kind of in the way of learning. It's not possible. For example, my partner speak only in English and they just sleep or they basically drop out. So, it's not a decision that I'm 100% happy with in my teaching. Others are just speaking English, but I also get feedback about that, and that's also not 100% working for everybody. This is what works for me. Yeah, my approach is more like ‘Just come to the class, don't drop out.’ Because, in general, we, as a country, have too many problems. I'm sure they have a lot that they don't talk about. One of my girls, at the end of the term, told me that she was working part time. Although I told them that they should tell me, she said I didn't want to bother you with my personal problems. You never know. I want to provide them a safe space. If they feel tired, just listen, come, but don't drop out. I don't want them to just sit in their dormitory in depression. I feel a bit guilty about explaining most of it in Turkish, but it's also a big advantage. But still, at some points in higher levels, I want to increase my L2 use. It would be nice but I couldn't find the balance with that.” P9

Similar to Participants 15 and 9, Participant 30 stated that they use L1 even with higher-level students to foster a more relaxed and friendly classroom atmosphere, particularly through humor with their brief remark “Sometimes, I use L1 even with higher levels to make the atmosphere more friendly or to make jokes.”

Participant 31 pointed to the use of L1 in non-instructional, emotionally supportive context and drew attention to teachers having awareness of students' emotional needs as young adults. Their cognitions closely align with Participant 9 regarding creating a safe, understanding environment by engaging in personal conversations in L1. Like Participants 14 and 32, Participant 31 showed that L1 use can serve social and affective purposes, such as motivating or comforting students. However, Participant 31 uniquely highlighted the potential of L1 in addressing emotional well-being and fostering trust, indicating a more pastoral dimension to L1 use in the classroom.

“I sometimes use L1 not in a teaching context. We teach at a university and our students are young adults. Sometimes, they have some problems and just want to talk. Sometimes, they are blue, and they want to share something. These things happen.” P31

To sum up, participants perceive the use of L1 for social and discourse-related purposes as an effective means of fostering motivation, establishing rapport, and creating a positive classroom atmosphere. Some instructors frequently resort to L1 when aiming to build stronger interpersonal connections, provide emotional support, or engage students through humor and informal conversations. Although teachers sometimes question or feel ambivalent about extensive L1 use, recognizing possible negative outcomes such as reduced exposure to the target language, they consistently highlight its necessity for realistic classroom management and maintaining students' well-being. Thus, despite variations in individual approaches, the consensus emphasizes the beneficial role of controlled L1 use in addressing social and emotional dynamics within language classrooms.

4.2.9.4. Use of L1 in Multilingual Classes

This subsection will address the use of L1 in the multilingual classes within the institution. In multilingual classes which constitute a scenario distinct from monolingual settings where teachers and students share the same first language, the teacher does not necessarily share a common L1 with learners and hence the pedagogical approach to L1 usage gets significantly more complex. Teacher must navigate linguistic diversity and take into consideration how L1 can either facilitate or hinder language learning. To bypass possible problems emerging from using Turkish in their classes, they may rely on English as a lingua franca to encourage inclusivity and communication among their learners. Deep insights and valuable findings will be explored by examining teachers' cognitions and practices in managing L1 usage under such multilingual conditions.

Participant 21 demonstrated strong support for acknowledging and incorporating learners' diverse linguistic backgrounds in multilingual classrooms. Even when learners do not share the same L1, they make an effort to explore the grammatical structures of individual students' native languages by discussing similarities and differences with English and conduct additional research if necessary. This strategic use of L1 of learners carries a student-centered and inclusive merits and recognizes learners' L1 as a resource instead of a hindrance. It also demonstrates that when handled sensitively, L1 use can foster learner engagement, validate their identities, and support deeper understanding of target grammar.

“Also, if there are students whose L1 is not Turkish in our classes, let’s say, one of them is of Russian origin, I asked them how that grammar point set in their language, similarities and differences, then I Google it and see if there is a link between their native language and the new grammatical item. So even if they don't share the same L1, I think this is something we need to bring into the classroom, because students feel that the teacher is appreciating their background knowledge, their L1. It's not banned from the classroom because it’s an important part of their learning.” P21

Participant 37 stated utilizing strategic L1 use through encouraging international students to make cross-linguistic connections and reflect on equivalents of English structures in their own languages. This inclusive approach mirrors Participant 21’s cognition that learners’ linguistic backgrounds are inclusively utilized as learning tools.

“I sometimes ask those international students about the equivalence of that structure in their own languages, their own context. I ask them whether they have any examples like that. Because I don’t know their language, I ask them to make the same connection Turkish students make.” P37

Participant 36 reflected on the challenges of teaching in a multilingual classroom, particularly due to their tendency to rely on Turkish as a reference point for grammar instruction. Unlike Participants 21 and 37’s perspective regarding the presence of diverse L1s as an opportunity to engage learners’ backgrounds and promote inclusive learning, Participant 36 experiences a sense of cognitive dissonance. While their usual strategy involves aligning Turkish and English grammar for clearer explanation, this approach proves problematic for students unfamiliar with Turkish. The teacher acknowledges a moment of confusion and pedagogical conflict and recognizes the limitations of a monolingual strategy in a multilingual context. This contrasts with the adaptive strategies of Participants 21 and 37 embracing linguistic diversity and actively seeking ways to make cross-linguistic comparisons more inclusive.

“In one of my classes, there were some foreign students, which can be a problem because while teaching my classes, I use Turkish grammar by adapting it into English grammar. So some of those students cannot understand it really well, because they didn’t know the core of Turkish grammar. I felt a little bit confused when I experienced this.” P36

In conclusion, teachers demonstrate varied responses to linguistic diversity in the classroom. While some participants viewed multilingualism as an asset, actively seeking opportunities to integrate students’ various L1 backgrounds into the learning process, others experienced cognitive dissonance when their instructional strategies which are primarily designed for monolingual Turkish contexts fell short. The general tendency was

toward an inclusive acknowledgment of learners' native languages, with teachers frequently eliciting comparisons between English and students' respective L1s. However, this approach also revealed pedagogical tensions, underscoring the necessity for adaptive strategies and heightened teacher awareness to effectively accommodate multilingual student populations.

4.2.10. Washback

Washback refers to the influence of assessment practices on language teaching and learning and plays a critical role in shaping teachers' instructional tendencies and learners' behavior patterns. In language classrooms located within exam-oriented contexts, the nature of assessment can significantly guide pedagogical decisions, learner motivation, and the quality of instruction. This section will delve into participants' cognitions regarding the phenomenon of washback and focus on their experiences and attitudes towards how testing and assessment processes interact with their grammar teaching practices, curriculum alignment, and instructional priorities.

Participant 22 illustrated a perceived connection between grammar instruction and testing and pointed out that both parties of learners and teachers are under the influence of exam-oriented expectations. They comment on how the anticipation of grammar-heavy assessment drives classroom practices into a heightened focus on grammar teaching. They stated that this collective cognition is rooted deeply in institutional norms and tendencies and reinforced by learners' recurring inquiries regarding grammar coverage in exams. They acknowledged a degree of internalized pressure and suggested that systemic and/or cultural proclivities may greatly contribute to a traditional, exam-centric instruction of grammar, which could be considered an embodiment of negative washback.

"I believe there are teachers just thinking about tests, which are mostly about grammar. There is this strong relation between these two terminologies, grammar and test. This connection is also in our students' minds, because they always ask me which grammar points are included in midterm and final exams. So this kind of accumulated understanding reflects both on our students, and I believe, on some teachers. It personally reflects on me. We might focus on grammar too much in our classes because there's a test at the end, or maybe we have this traditional understanding of grammar teaching." P22

Participant 18 pointed out a classic manifestation of washback by revealing a tension between communicative language teaching and exam-oriented instruction within the preparatory school. They expressed skepticism regarding the effectiveness of the

present model of integrated instruction in preparing students for the proficiency exam assessing discrete skills separately. They remarked that this disharmony between assessment and teaching incites a dilemma that while development of communicative competence is valued highly, the pressure to perform well and pass the proficiency test gives rise to a prioritization of test-related content especially grammar. Similar to Participant 22, Participant 18 confirmed how assessment drives instructional decision-making and went further with their suggestions for structural changes such as dedicated classes for productive skills to bring a better balance between communicative goals and exam preparation. Additionally, their personal anecdote about excelling in grammar-heavy exams yet struggling with speaking underscored the long-term consequences of washback. Compared to Participant 22, Participant 18 articulated a more conflicted and solution-seeking stance and revealed a deeper struggle with reconciling pedagogical ideals and institutional demands.

“We have a proficiency exam in our school, and I think integrated instruction doesn't help. I think integrated teaching is for communication, not for exams. So, as a school, we should give a little bit more importance to maybe teaching grammar and other skills separately, because our exams assess the skills separately in listening, writing, reading, and speaking sections. In this sense, I don't think the exam or the assessment meets our own teaching, and it's a problem. For example, in high school, we had a university exam, so we had to know a lot of vocabulary items and structures and it helped because I got the highest score in the exam. But when I was in university, we had a speaking class, and I couldn't speak at all. I don't think there should be separate grammar classes at our school, because grammar is not that important for me. I think the separate skills should be about writing or speaking. We already have a lot of time to teach grammar, but sometimes, we skip the grammar sessions too fast, because we have to spare some time for speaking or writing. Actually, if we had some classes for speaking or writing in addition to our integrated classes, then we would have more time to teach grammar in our integrated model, I think. Still, I don't know the right way to do this because we have to cover lots of things for the exam and we also want them to communicate.” P18

In addition to Participants 22 and 18, Participant 16 pointed out the constraining influence of assessment on instructional practices. They stated that exams exert a strong washback on how grammar is taught, and which aspects are emphasized. However, Participant 16 expressed frustration regarding a motivational deficit among students and that many learners do not make an effort to learn and improve their language skills beyond classroom settings. In connection with this particular tendency of students, they stated feeling compelled to draw explicit attention to exam-relevant grammar items and point

out tricky sections and even frame examples in terms of their potential appearance on tests with the aim of boosting learner engagement. While Participant 22 linked washback more broadly to a collective understanding of traditional grammar teaching and tendencies, Participant 16 exhibited more immediate and operational cognitions that form and structure are necessary not only for language development but because they are explicitly tested. Thus, it could be argued that washback effect in the school may reinforce form-focused cognitions more than communicative ones and limit Participant 16's lesson planning to the scope of the exams.

"Exams affect a lot of my teaching. Most of our students do not make any efforts to learn the language, they just study in the classroom, if they do it. In grammar teaching, I highlight the structures, I provide them with many examples, or I can say that 'You might see those examples in the exam. Two these are the tricky sections. Be careful with these things' so it affects my teaching, or it limits me while I'm preparing the lessons. We need form and structure, but not for communication only, but because we prepare our students for the exam in the end. So we must keep that in our mind too." P16

Participant 14 pointed out another dimension of strong washback influence by pointing out grammar's position as the most secure and measurable domain in exam preparation in the learner cognitive landscape. Much like Participants 16 and 22, Participant 14 confirmed that grammar instruction is molded by the demands and predictability of formal assessment within the program. Additionally, P14 justifies the prioritization of grammar based on students' emotional and cognitive need for clarity and certainty. Grammar is embodied in their cognitions as domain where both instruction and assessment are closely connected and which allows students to confidently assess their own performance due to its tangibility. This tangibility of grammar stands in contrast to the ambiguity learners experience in vocabulary-heavy sections where contextual guessing strategies often fall short and other skills where cognitive load may surpass grammar. Participant 14 seems to use grammar instruction not only to meet assessment goals but also to provide students with a psychological anchor amid the uncertainties of language learning.

"There's a big effect of exams. I'm teaching grammar and that's the safest place for students, in terms of exams. The other skills, speaking, writing, even vocabulary are quite abstract, but everything is clear in grammar, what we teach them and what we can ask for. Sometimes, when they come out of that examination and say 'Although I studied all new vocabulary in the book, there was lots of unknown vocabulary and I couldn't understand some of the words,' and I say 'But I taught you this or that strategy how to guess the meaning.' So, they cannot

match these abstract strategies easily. But, in grammar, it's quite matching. We ask, let's say, perfect tense in the exam and we've already studied it in the class, so they feel secure. That's the clearest place that they can make judgments in terms of the target language." P14

Participant 9 stated that learner behavior and classroom dynamics can be shaped by motivational function lying in assessment. They acknowledged the strong washback of exams and grading on their teaching practices especially in terms of grammar instruction similar to Participants 16 and 22. Like Participant 16's signaling of 'tricky sections' in lessons due to exam relevance, Participant 9 refers to assessment strategically to regain learner attention and foster engagement in moments of distraction. They highlighted the disciplinary and motivational leverage tests provide as behavioral regulators in the classroom in addition to their traditional role as evaluative tools. Unlike Participant 14's discussion of clarity and student security and Participant 18's reflection on curriculum design, Participant 9's concern centers on ensuring attentiveness and guiding student focus by invoking the authority of grades. Their cognitions regarding assessment reinforce that testing practices have a strong washback effect on grammar instruction, shaping both what is taught and how learners engage with it.

"Usually, if I feel like they don't listen, I say 'Well, in the quiz, you might need it.' And they're back. Because marks are important for them, so it definitely helps. They need it, they definitely need some assessment. I don't think that we can just leave them on their own." P9

Participant 20 commented on the restrictive influence of exams on teaching practices and tendencies and pointed out that an emergent imbalance between productive and receptive skills inevitably hinders students' holistic language development. Much like Participants 22 and 16, they acknowledged the washback effect of assessments, especially how the structure and demands of proficiency exams dictate instructional priorities and lead to an overemphasis on grammar. However, Participant 20 created a direct link between this imbalance and students' limited proficiency in productive skills of speaking and writing. This cognition mirrors Participant 18's concern that integrated teaching does not align with assessment practices and highlights a curricular misalignment between what is tested and what should be taught. Furthermore, Participant 20 candidly reflected on teacher agency and instructional compromise. They expressed a sense of frustration and resignation and noted that there exists an ideal of way of teaching they aspire to, but institutional expectations tied to high-stakes exams override their aspirations. They also argued that designing productive skills activities poses more demands compared to preparing grammar or vocabulary-focused tasks and pointed to the practical ease in

grammar lesson planning. Participant 20's cognition set reinforces the notion that the dominance of exam-oriented instruction does not only stem from systemic constraints but also collective preferences for pedagogical shortcuts.

"We are not free in teaching English. There's a teaching method in our dreams or that we've always wanted to do but there are some realities too, the exams. Students will take a proficiency exam. At the proficiency exam, they'll be asked some question types and students are getting prepared for those types of question types, and because of that, they may not give enough opportunities for productive skills. The weight of those skills is secondary. When we don't give enough importance to productive skills, why should students? There's an overemphasis on grammar because, in my opinion, teaching grammar is easier than teaching speaking, writing, or listening. Naturally, we see the effects of this in their production. Our students are very good at grammar exams, but when we check the writing papers or while in their speaking exams, they are not very good or good enough, because they don't have enough opportunity to practice. The proportion of productive skills is not enough in our lessons, I think. Also, preparing a productive activity is also difficult for a teacher when it is compared with a grammar or vocabulary activity." P20

Similar to Participant 22 and 16, Participant 33 acknowledged that assessment expectations particularly the proficiency exam significantly shape their grammar instruction. They stated that they proactively supplement the curriculum with additional grammar topics not included in the achievement assessments such as midterm and final exams but may show up in the proficiency exam. Their strategic foresight involves a tendency to highlight reactive adjustments based on the coverage of proficiency exam in grammar topics. Their approach is forward-thinking and student-centered and aims to prepare learners beyond the scope of the term's immediate objectives and continuous assessment. Participant 33 implicitly critiqued the mismatch between teaching aims and assessment formats and displayed a sense of responsibility in bridging that gap. Their cognitions unearthed how exams influence content coverage and teachers' instructional scope in response to long-term academic demands involved in the proficiency exams.

"I have to think about the exams. For example, when we finish teaching past perfect continuous, I give them future perfect and future perfect continuous tenses as extras. I always tell them that these are not for the final exam, but for the proficiency exam. Or when we finish modals, might and ought to, I give them perfect modals and continuous modals because of the proficiency exam. I think about that. This is my approach to grammar." P33

Participant 24 commented on washback and how the nature of assessment such as grammar-focused and rigid or flexible and communication-oriented can substantially drive teacher motivation and instructional priorities. Similar to Participants 22 and 20,

they also discussed the tension arising from exam-oriented instruction and broader communicative goals. In addition, Participant 24 framed this tension in terms of teacher agency and instructional philosophy and stated that depending on whether the institutional goal is to prepare learner for high-stakes exams or for real-life language use, teachers' instructional tendencies may completely change. Participant 24 suggested that loosening the emphasis on grammar in assessments may potentially transform the classroom atmosphere, pedagogical direction, and learning experience. Their cognitions foreground the impact of assessment design on instructional choices instead of mere reactions to a fixed exam system and draw attention to the more profound implications of washback on teacher mindset and classroom ethos.

"If you do a very harsh test at the end of the year, the motivation changes. If you're very flexible about the grammatical performance and just look at the productions they do, then you think, well, I'm not preparing them for TOEFL, but I want them to be ready for life, then it changes." P24

Participant 12 critically reflected on the disconnect between assessment design and classroom practice. They acknowledged that institutional exams aim to assess all skills and do not disproportionately tend to focus on grammar. However, they pointed out the school-wide pedagogical inconsistency that grammar instruction is not productive enough in classes and hence contributing to students' struggles in productive skills of writing and speaking. In addition to Participants 22 and 20, Participant 12 connected the overemphasis on grammar at the expense of productive skills with resulting limitations in learner output. However, Participant 12 contrasted with Participants 16 and 33 who explicitly align their grammar teaching with exam content and expectations. Instead of attributing washback to exam pressure alone, Participant 12 suggested that teaching habits or instructional methods may be to blame for students' poor communicative skills, despite balanced assessment formats. They shifted the critique from assessment to implementation and pointed to a need for greater alignment between teaching practices and the integrated nature of the exams. Importantly, Participant 12 implied that even when exams are communicatively oriented, if grammar instruction remains mechanical, the intended washback effect may not materialize in classroom practice.

"On paper, everything is perfect. We don't have a greater focus on grammar, I would say, because we have different types of exams that assess all of the skills. But I think, in our classes, we don't teach grammar in a productive way. That's why students have difficulty in speaking and writing, I think. So, exam-wise, there is no problem with the grammar part, I

think. So students can't come and say to us that they have to learn grammar and do a lot of mechanical practices because that's all we ask in the exams. This is not correct." P12

Participant 7 commented on learner and teacher behavior and criticized exam-driven grammar instruction. They stated learners tend to neglect other skills such as listening and reading and make grammar the focal point of their proficiency exam preparation. Similar to Participants 22 and 16, they pointed how exam format or perceived expectations may encourage an overemphasis on grammar at the expense of communicative competence. Furthermore, they highlighted the limited number of reaching higher proficiency levels and that learners' over-investment in grammar drills may have a negative influence on the effectivity of their learning similar to Participants 20 and 14's remark regarding the imbalance between grammar mastery and productive skills. Moreover, they brought attention to alternative modes of grammar assessment embedded in productive tasks of writing or speaking and even receptive tasks of reading and listening and showed strong support for integrated assessment of grammar instead of isolated grammar testing. In contrast with Participant 16 and 33's tendency to adapt grammar instruction to anticipated proficiency exam content, Participant 7 advocated for reducing or even minimalizing the weight of grammar in exams and designing assessment that evaluates holistic language ability. Their cognitions regarding a more integrative and balanced approach to grammar assessment adds to theme of negative washback within the intensive language program.

"From the students' perspective, I think grammar is really effective because when they try to study for English, let's say, for proficiency exam to pass the prep school, they always try to solve multiple choice questions about grammar. They directly start from it. They do not listen. They do not read. They only focus on the grammar tests or books. That's why exams are really effective for them to study English, but they do not learn while studying, I guess. If they were able to learn it, we would have more A level students, let's say, but we do not have more. But for some of our teachers, maybe because of the separate skill instruction years, or maybe they think that grammar is really effective, they really like to teach and assess grammar. I think there are many other ways to assess grammar, like our speaking exams or writing exams, or while you are answering the reading or listening question, you're also assessing grammar. Because without grammar, they would not be able to comprehend what is asked. That's why I do not want to have that many grammar questions and that much percentage for grammar in our exams." P7

Participant 27 drew attention to the disproportionate attention paid to grammatical accuracy fostered by assessment which often leads to learners scoring well on written

tests yet struggling in spontaneous communicative activities. They commented on classroom practices being forced into being accuracy-oriented and fewer opportunities to support fluency due to negative washback. They explicitly conceded to a misalignment between their personal teaching philosophies and institutional tendencies. While Participants 16 and 33 adapt their methods to respond to exam expectations, Participant 27 clearly expressed a preference for less explicit and more communicative instructional methodologies and suggested that current practices are more a result of systemic pressure than pedagogical conviction. They also stated that learners tend to prioritize grammar at the cost of broader language development like Participants 20 and 7. They critically reflected on the internal conflict arising from a focus on accuracy often at the expense of communicative language development.

“Why are we so exam oriented? For example, a lot of students get high scores in the quizzes or midterms, but when I'm trying to do some speaking activities, they cannot speak at all because they are so focused on accuracy. Because of the exams, we have to explicitly teach grammar and focus on it, but if it was just up to me, I wouldn't use these methods much.”

P27

Participant 5 echoed the overarching theme regarding washback: the influence of assessment on student priorities and instructional focus. Similar to the remarks made by Participants 22, 16, and 7 regarding the perceived position of grammar, Participant 5 highlighted how grammar becomes central not due to its intrinsic value but because it is perceived as the most measurable and predictable aspect of language learning. This practical measurability creates a test-focused learning culture where learners are inclined to prioritize grammar study primarily to succeed in exams rather than develop holistic language competence. In alignment with Participant 14's comment that grammar is the safest place for students, Participant 5 stated that grammar offers clear parameters and outcomes compared to more abstract skills and pointed out learners' strategic behavior in response to the current exam structure. In contrast to Participant 12's argument that exams already assess grammar in a productive way and do not promote overemphasis of grammar; Participant 5 highlighted the reductive effect of exams on students' learning motivations. Their cognitions point to the recurring concern that grammar gains disproportionate importance in exam-driven contexts not necessarily due to pedagogical considerations but because of grammar's ease of assessment and learner perception of predictability.

“The easiest thing that can be measured is grammar, and students are aware of this. They think that if they know the grammar that is going to be in the exam, they’re going to get a good score, so they give importance to grammar only just for that reason.” P5

Participant 32 stated that grammar must be taught in preparatory programs because it is systematically assessed through various formal exams. This pragmatic acceptance of grammar’s position due to institutional testing norms reinforced the theme of assessment-driven instruction pointed out by Participants 22, 16, and 5. However, Participant 32 subtly introduced a distinction that while they acknowledge grammar instruction as a necessity, they consciously create a balance this tendency by clearly communicating to students that grammar is not the only focus in class. This attempt to decenter grammar within classroom discourse reveals a unique pedagogical awareness in the cognition set of Participant 32. While Participants 14 and 27 also critiqued the overemphasis on grammar due to testing, Participant 32 distinctly exhibits an intentional effort to manage learner perceptions even if the institutional framework and collective cognitions remain unchanged. Participant 32’s cognitive position carries the duality of compliance with institutional demands and resistance at the classroom level, much like the internal tensions between exam preparation and broader language development seen in Participant 18 and 7.

“In prep school, I have to teach grammar because we assess grammar here, in the quizzes, midterms, finals, and proficiency exams. We cannot run away from teaching grammar, but in the classroom, I try to give my students the message that grammar is not the only focus here. Because it’s actually not.” P32

Participant 26 commented on the conflict between communicative, context-rich instruction and the accuracy-driven demands of assessment. Much like Participants 27 and 18, Participants expressed harboring deep desires to move beyond isolated grammar teaching and instead offer productive and contextualized learning through authentic texts and communicative activities. Similar to Participants 14 and 24, they advocated for meaningful use of grammar instead of mechanical practice. However, Participant 26 simultaneously indicated that institutional pressure compels a focus on grammatical accuracy as assessment formats such as quizzes and exams reward linguistic correctness over communicative intent or performance. This remark by Participant 26 reverberated the concerns of Participants 22, 5, and 16 that test-centric culture narrows instructional focus and forces teacher and learner behaviors into certain patterns. Participant 26 articulated this nuanced pedagogical dissonance that even though the personally value

implicit and communicative instruction, the institutional context mandates a return to explicit, form-focused, and accuracy-oriented grammar instruction even at the cost of learner engagement and real-world relevance. Participant 26 position involving a dual awareness of idealism and pragmatism and is emblematic of the broader washback reported by many participants.

“We cannot ignore the place of grammar in our exams and lessons, but in the exams and lessons, I would like to do more productive activities instead of just focusing on the grammar structure separately, in an isolated way with mechanical activities. I would provide them some context or some communicative activities that give them space to use grammatical structures in the lessons and in the exams as well. In terms of context, I would provide them with some authentic text maybe, because most of the time, students are just questioning why they are learning the things they won’t use in their real life. So I would do more communicative activities, and go from explicit to implicit teaching, maybe. Accuracy is more important in our context because we have quizzes, exams and we ask students to do some mechanical activities. If their sentences are not accurate, they lose points in the exams, even though, as a teacher, I can understand what they’re trying to say. This is what happens in our context, and because of that, I feel obligated to focus on the accuracy of the structures in our classes.” P26

Participant 22 depicted a balanced view of grammar instruction shaped by institutional responsibility and learner needs. Like Participants 5, 16, and 32, they recognized that grammar is an essential component of language education due to its explicit place in the curriculum and stated that it should be represented in achievement and proficiency assessments to remind learners of grammar’s importance. This aligns with the sentiment of Participant 26 that grammar is unavoidable due to its integral position in the curriculum and exam structure. Participant 22 advocated for not overemphasizing grammar in testing due to learners’ primary aim being functional communication rather than grammatical accuracy. While maintaining grammar as a core component of assessment, Participant 22 advocated for a more skill-balanced approach and recalibrating through giving greater weight to receptive skills like reading and listening to respond to student needs and broader communicative goals.

“We’re a language school and we have grammar in our syllabus. Teaching grammar and making them use this grammar correctly is one of our missions. I believe there should be grammar questions in our exams, but maybe not too many. Because what I’ve observed with my students is that their main purpose is not speaking the language fully correctly, they just want to speak, understand and to be understood. So for this type of students, we should focus more on, maybe reading and listening, I guess. But still, we should always have this grammar

part in our exams, and also in proficiency exams. We should always have a grammar section to make our students be aware of what language consists of. You cannot ignore this part of the language.” P22

Participant 28 shared their moderately positive perception of the exam design in the institution and noted that while grammar is emphasized, there is an effort to maintain balance across different skills. Their perspective is closely connected to Participant 12 and 22’s remarks that while grammar is present in assessment, it does not constitute the sole focus and works in integration with other language skills. Unlike Participants 16, 27, and 26’s concern that grammar often dominates instruction and assessment, Participant 28 displayed a realistic and somewhat accepting tone by describing the school’s assessment tendencies comparatively balanced and implied that there is room for improvement.

“In our school, we have speaking, writing and separate parts, but even in these parts, we give quite importance to structured grammar in our quizzes, I guess. But when I think about the exams in our school overall, I think we have a sort of a balance compared to other schools. I can’t say that we’re really good but we’re OK.” P28

Participant 3 drew attention to the structured grammar exams acting as a reliable source of feedback and pointed their usefulness when aligned with teaching materials and instructional aims. Their positive perception of grammar assessment stems from the function of exams as a diagnostic means to gauge learners’ control over grammatical structures. Participant 3’s cognitions regarding grammar assessment shares similarities with the perspectives of Participants 28 and 22’s support for the inclusion of grammar in exams and more balanced assessment practices. Unlike Participants 27 and 16’s frustration over exam-driven grammar instruction and its limitations for developing communicative competence, Participant 3 appeared more confident in the constructive role of exams when well-designed and called for thoughtful integration of grammar testing into the present curriculum. In this sense, their cognitions displayed a measured and optimistic outlook on the role of grammar testing within the comprehensive language program.

“There’s one thing I’m sure of is that a structured grammar exam gives us really good feedback as long as it is in accordance with all the kinds of other variables and suitable for the teaching material. At least, it gives a general idea how they’re doing and how they control their use of language. I think we need exams for grammar. Of course, there are other ways like spoken and written production but still, we are teaching structure there in different scenarios. So exams are important there, they give us an idea.” P3

In conclusion, the participants' reflections revealed a significant washback effect stemming from grammar-focused exams within the language program. Many teachers acknowledged that grammar testing shapes instructional choices and compels them to prioritize explicit and structured grammar teaching often at the expense of productive and communicative practices. Students were also noted to adopt a similar orientation, concentrating disproportionately on grammar due to its tangible and predictable nature in assessments. Although some teachers emphasized the practical value of grammar exams as a tool for reliable feedback, others critiqued the dominance of traditional grammar assessment methods and highlighted that such approaches may limit authentic language use and development of productive skills. Overall, the findings suggest a complex, multidimensional washback phenomenon, reinforcing the need for a balanced approach to grammar testing that aligns instructional practices with broader communicative goals.

4.2.11. Use of Technology

The integration of technology into language teaching has become exponentially widespread, significantly reshaped pedagogical approaches, and influenced how grammar is taught and learned within contemporary educational contexts. In this section, the use of technology will be examined to offer insights into how digital tools and online platforms have been adopted or resisted in grammar teaching practices. Teachers' cognitions will shed light on the perceived effectiveness, challenges, and overall impact of technology in grammar instruction. This section will examine whether technological integration contributes positively to student engagement, facilitates autonomous learning, and helps achieve instructional objectives more efficiently.

Participant 29 admitted to a personal lack of enthusiasm for technology but recognized its benefits due to learners' familiarity and preferences for tech-based learning. Despite not being naturally inclined towards digital tools, Participant 29 stated purposefully making efforts to incorporate technology into grammar instruction through the videos and websites offered in the syllabus to enhance engagement and provide input. Their reflection involves a sense of responsibility to adapt to students' learning needs, evolving expectations of digital native learners and an openness to more technology integration even though it does not come naturally.

"I'm not a big fan of technology, but our students are. So the teachers should be at least fans of technology because students need it to learn things. Technology must be a very important

component of grammar instruction. As you know, our syllabus is interactive, so I use some websites from there. Other than that, I mostly use videos to start a discussion, or to present a grammar point, and sometimes just for fun. I guess I should use technology more.” P29

Participant 27 pointed out the ubiquitous presence of smartphones and underlined the inevitability of technology in classroom settings. Rather than resisting this shift, they advocated for embracing technology through gamification as a pedagogical tool to enhance learner engagement and make the learning process more meaningful. While Participant 29 focuses more on using videos and interactive websites from the syllabus, Participant 27 explicitly highlights gamification as a central strategy. Their relatively more proactive approach to integrating technology into grammar instruction suggests that when harnessed effectively, technology can become a motivating and productive part of the learning environment.

“Gamification is very important, I think. We cannot avoid technology. Even when you go to the classroom, you'll see all the cell phones on the desks. Because it's inevitable, then you have to make it a part of your teaching and learning process.” P27

Participant 16 discussed the use of specific technological tools such as Wordwall and Gliglish to support grammar and speaking instruction. Similar to Participant 27's cognitions regarding gamification, Participant 16 acknowledges the role of digital tools in enhancing engagement and learning outcomes. Additionally, Participant 16 presents a more hands-on and exploratory attitude through their initiative in experimenting with new platforms and sharing them with learners. Their cognitions of technology use involve an emerging pattern of selective and purposeful technology integration based on peer recommendations and observed effectiveness.

“I use some tools to prepare the materials, for example Wordwall. I use it to prepare some speaking activities, and it works well for some structures in my classes. Other than that, recently, I heard this from my colleagues, Gliglish, and I tried it on my own, then I recommended to my students for speaking practices.” P16

Participant 13 mentioned Google classroom as a tool to provide written feedback efficiently particularly in writing tasks. They stated that features of striking through sentences and leaving immediate comments enable clear and accessible correction and support learner autonomy. Their cognitions blend technology with teacher support through personalized follow-up explanations. While Participant 16 utilizes technology for speaking exercises and game-based learning, Participant 13 provides a more feedback-driven and writing-specific use case.

“I use Google Classroom in my classes. Students write essays or other things, and I correct it directly because on Google Classroom, you can just strike out the sentences and leave a comment right next to it. For students, it's very easy to see the mistake, and the correction that I typed there. That's the first thing that I do. If the student comes to me again, saying ‘I don't understand it.’ I explain it again, providing more examples on the subject. That's what I do in writing.” P13

Participant 24 described using WhatsApp as an extension of classroom instruction to assign tasks like voice recordings or written responses after class hours. Their approach reflects a flexible and student-centered use of technology, where learning continues beyond the classroom in an accessible and familiar platform. Similar to Participant 13's use of Google Classroom for writing feedback and Participant 16's use of Wordwall and Gliglish, Participant 24's case emphasizes technology as a bridge between instruction and independent practice. However, unlike those who focus on specific platforms or tools designed for educational purposes, Participant 24 leverages a common communication app in a low-tech yet effective way, making the process more immediate and personalized.

“We already benefit from WhatsApp, and I give many assignments through WhatsApp to my students. I tell them, the class finishes at 1:00 PM but until 6:00 PM, I'm expecting you to do this, send me a voice recording or write me something.” P24

Participant 9 said “There are some really nice websites like teachthis.com where you can also buy some of the exercises, some are free. Students also tell me that they really enjoy them, especially in the lower levels.” and emphasized the value of external digital platforms and how freely accessible and purchasable grammar exercises enhance learner engagement at lower proficiency levels. This aligns with Participant 29's and Participant 16's practices of incorporating digital resources to supplement grammar instruction and showcases a shared recognition of technology's motivational potential. However, unlike Participant 13's feedback-oriented use of Google Classroom or Participant 24's integration of WhatsApp for extended communication, Participant 9 focuses on ready-made content platforms designed specifically for language teaching and reflects a more resource-based approach to technology use.

Participant 20 stated incorporating tools like Kahoot! and Quizizz when time allows and when textbook materials fall short and demonstrated a pragmatic and student-responsive approach to technology use in grammar instruction. Their acknowledgment of smartphones as modern dictionaries also reflects a broader digital shift in accessing linguistic information and contrasts earlier reliance on print resources. This view aligns

with Participant 29's and Participant 27's recognition of students' preference for digital engagement yet differs in that Participant 20 integrates technology more selectively and flexibly, depending on class time, level, and resource quality. Unlike Participants 13 or 24, who focus on communication platforms for feedback and interaction, Participant 20 leans toward interactive reinforcement and self-access tools to enhance grammar learning.

"If there's extra time, I try to make use of the technology in my lessons. Sometimes, in advanced classes, I research some structures or usages to be sure not to teach them in a wrong way. We used to carry those very thick dictionaries with us in the past, but now, there is no need, since every cell phone is a dictionary. So you can always use it wisely, because it provides you with everything. If I find the grammar exercises in the book valuable, I start with them. But if I think that they are not enough, I use extra materials. And nowadays, students are in favor of more Internet activities, like Kahoot. and Quizizz. They prefer those Quizizz activities in the syllabus to written activities in the book. So if I can find online material, which will be helpful for them, I prefer them I can say." P20

Participant 22 expressed a balanced yet cautious stance on the use of technology in grammar instruction. While acknowledging the convenience and appeal of digital tools like Kahoot and Quizizz like Participants 20 and 29, they also emphasized the potential monotony of repeated technological formats and the value of traditional, paper-based activities as a refreshing alternative. This contrasts with the more tech-forward practices of Participants 13 and 24, who utilize platforms like Google Classroom and WhatsApp for extended instructional purposes. Furthermore, Participant 22 openly admits a limited proficiency in educational technology and echoes Participant 29's self-identified need for improvement. Participant 22's cognitions entail a pragmatic use of available digital resources within the boundaries of familiarity and recognizing the need for greater digital literacy and variety.

"I go more on paper. Of course, I noticed that our students really like playing those games on websites, like Kahoot or Quizizz. But again, using the same materials as a teaching method bores students after some time. But when you have a paper activity, it's a change for them. So of course, technology makes things really easier and very quicker for students and for teachers as well. It should be integrated, and personally, I know that I should have more information about how to use technology. I cannot say I make a big use of technology in my classes. I generally count on what I have right now on the syllabus such as Quizizz activities." P22

Participant 6 described a strategic and purposeful use of technology in grammar instruction involving two key moments: generating curiosity at the beginning of a lesson

and adding engagement during practice activities. Their use of video content to stimulate interest aligns with Participant 29's use of videos for both instructional and motivational purposes. Similarly, the incorporation of interactive tools like Quizizz and Kahoot for mechanical grammar practice mirrors the practices of Participants 20 and 22. However, Participant 6's integration is limited to specific pedagogical stages and demonstrates a targeted rather than comprehensive use of digital tools. Their cognitions regarding use of technology reflect a thoughtful but restrained engagement with technology and are grounded in clear instructional goals.

"Sometimes, I start the lesson with a video but no instruction, no prior knowledge. I just show them something and they get curious. When you get curiosity, you have a big weapon at your hand, and then you shoot. So when I use technology in my classes, I mostly use it at the beginning, when I introduce the general sense of the topic. And sometimes, we use of course these quiz programs like Quizizz and Kahoot at the practice stage. It gives a little sense of fun with the mechanical exercises, so I can say these are the two places that I use technology. At the beginning, to create curiosity and the practice part." P6

Participant 18 demonstrated an advanced and highly integrative use of AI technologies in grammar instruction. Their use of ChatGPT for generating feedback, simplifying or upgrading student texts, creating grammar exercises, and designing visual prompts illustrates a more creative and personalized application of technology. Unlike Participants 29 and 27's perspective of technology primarily as a tool for practice or engagement, Participant 18 leverages AI as a multi-functional assistant that enhances both the content creation and instructional processes. Their perspective introduces a broader and more future-oriented dimension to how emergent technologies are reshaping classroom practices.

"As a teacher I benefit from AI a lot, even when I'm trying to give some feedback. For example, there is a text of a student. I can put the text on ChatGPT and give ChatGPT the correct instruction, for example 'Please find the mistakes' or 'Please write this text in B2 level' and then, ChatGPT gives you the feedback. So I can show the students a different version, a correct version, an upper-level version of the text. Sometimes for grammar, if I feel like the exercise is not enough, then I tell AI to prepare me and exercise on the specific structure like 10 multiple choice exercises on that level. Sometimes, I ask for a context by giving it the prompts for a story or a dialogue. I even create some videos and pictures. For example, I prepare two pictures with AI and let students describe these pictures using the specific structure. AI is like a new world." P18

Participant 27 underscored the necessity of integrating AI technology into language education by recognizing tools like ChatGPT as valuable support systems for

learners, especially in overcoming writer's block. Unlike Participants 20 and 22 who focus on gamified platforms such as Kahoot and Quizizz or Participants 13 and 24 who use organizational tools such as Google Classroom and WhatsApp, Participant 27 specifically highlighted AI as a source of idea generation and emphasized its role in scaffolding cognitive processes rather than content creation. Their approach aligns with Participant 18's use of AI but differs in scope. While Participant 18 uses AI for grammar tasks and multimodal materials, Participant 27 frames it as a thinking partner, with a clear ethical boundary against overreliance or plagiarism. This reveals Participant 27's growing awareness of AI's pedagogical potential when used responsibly.

"Technology is a must, and with AI, there are a lot of good assistance programs for language learning, so we should make more use of them. When I'm going to assign students a writing task, when they say that they don't have any ideas, I tell them that they can ask ChatGPT, but to generate ideas, not for copying. I want them to write it but they can go to ChatGPT for opinions." P27

Participant 25 presented a forward-looking and imaginative perspective on AI integration and pointed out its potential for personalized material development and interactive learning scenarios. While they admitted to not having implemented these strategies yet, they show a strong interest in leveraging AI for context-rich prompts, student-AI interaction, and narrative-based activities particularly in extensive reading and role-play tasks. This aligns with Participant 18's use of AI for customized materials and grammar support, and with Participant 27's idea generation support in writing. Additionally, Participant 25 stands out by envisioning AI as a dynamic storytelling partner which can create immersive environments such as the Harry Potter universe. This imaginative use marks a shift from passive consumption of AI-generated tasks toward active engagement and co-construction of learning experiences and suggests a high level of pedagogical creativity and future potential.

"With AI, you can definitely prepare some exercises that would have close ties to your context to your students, to your needs. Preparing materials would be the first benefit of using AI, but this is not something I have tried. I learned that you could give students a prompt, and you could just simply share it in your WhatsApp group, for example. In your prompt, you would describe what you want, what the context is and it would definitely be a paragraph at least. You would specify the students and everything. You would give those prompts to students, then they copy it and they would have a conversation with AI. Afterwards, you could ask your students to share that conversation with you, and you could actually give feedback to your students. That is one of the ways that I would love to use in my classes and

this is great especially for extensive reading. You again share a very detailed prompt with AI you create. Let's say you use Harry Potter universe, the novel, as the setting, and you ask your students to role play with the characters in the book. Then, AI prepares a text, and it creates you the scene. It asks you to do something, when you say what you want to do, AI continues the story and then the students read it, other questions come, and then it goes on like that. I would love to try it as a learner and a teacher myself, actually." P25

Participant 31 emphasized the importance of customization and authenticity in language education and highlighted AI's unique ability to generate context-specific materials tailored to both legal constraints and instructional needs. Their use of AI spans testing, teaching, and assessment, entailing comprehensive view of AI as a multi-functional educational tool. This aligns with Participant 18 and 25's emphasis on AI's adaptability and material creation capabilities. However, Participant 31 further underscored legal and originality concerns and distinguished their approach as more compliance- and authenticity-driven. Participant 31's cognitions frame AI as not just helpful but now essential for modern language learning and reinforce its inevitability and versatility in pedagogical practice.

"In our job, unique things matter. Because of some legal issues and wanting to use authentic materials, I use AI to produce specific things to that context. And I can make it as specific as I want because I give the commands. It can be used in testing and in teaching. If you're looking for a different type of exercise activity for students, you can use it. It can even evaluate students' papers. So students can write things, read things, and listen to things with AI. It's now more than necessary to learn a language, I think." P31

Participant 32 expressed ambivalence toward artificial intelligence and acknowledged a personal dislike while recognizing its inescapable role in modern education. Despite initial reluctance, they described several practical applications of AI in both student learning and assessment, such as providing writing feedback, simplifying texts, and generating exam materials. This aligns with participants like Participants 18 and 31 who also use AI for feedback and material development, but Participant 32 differs in their hesitancy and self-perceived limitations in effectively using AI tools. Their focus on student autonomy in using AI for accessible input mirrors Participant 27 and 25's learner-centered approach. Participant 32 cognitions highlight a transitional mindset and reflect both adaptation and resistance in the face of rapidly evolving technology.

"I don't like artificial intelligence, but I guess we are in the artificial intelligence era, so we cannot escape from it. We or they can use artificial intelligence. We give them some writing assignments, and they can receive feedback from AI. It's that easy and simple. When they give the right instructions, in terms of meaning, grammar structures, and vocabulary

suggestions, AI can provide some very useful feedback for them. Also, as a member of the testing unit, I can also use it to create some context and questions. Still, I'm not very good at giving the right command, but I'm working on it. From students' perspective, if they want to read a text, and the text is too difficult for them to understand, then they can make it simplified. They can also find some tips and tricks on the Internet. If they have some problems with grammar or other skills, I'm sure I can suggest some useful online resources or websites." P32

Participant 37 stated utilizing AI with their short comment, "I get ideas sometimes. As I mentioned the context, creating a context is not so easy for me, so I ask ChatGPT. I write a prompt like 'I want to teach this, give me a context'." This practical use of AI as a content generation assistant aligns with earlier excerpts by Participants 18 and 25, who also highlighted AI's utility in designing grammar exercises, crafting dialogues, or building narrative settings. However, unlike those Participant 18 who use AI more extensively and creatively across multiple modalities, Participant 37's usage appears more targeted and limited, focused primarily on supporting contextualization in grammar instruction. Their cognition set reflects a more supplementary approach to AI integration and emphasizes its value as a time-saving idea generator rather than a fully embedded instructional tool.

Participant 38 described a preliminary stage of AI integration in their teaching practice and explained that they had introduced ChatGPT to their students and provided basic guidance on its use but had not yet fully implemented it due to time constraints. Their stance shows a developing orientation toward AI, similar to Participant 32, who also expressed cautious engagement while recognizing AI's potential. Unlike Participants 18, 25, and 31 who actively use AI for material creation, grammar instruction, or student interaction, Participant 38's experience is currently more introductory and exploratory. Their learning-through-student-feedback moment of discovering while conducting research that a student was already using ChatGPT for speaking practice underscores a bottom-up influence on the Participant 38's evolving cognitions toward classroom technology use.

"I show my students the AI, ChatGPT and how they can use it. But I didn't have a lot of time to practice. Last semester, I interviewed with some students for one of my research papers. and then, one of the students said that she was doing some speaking practices with ChatGPT, and I actually didn't know that. Now, I try to focus on this and learn about AI, so I can teach my students and maybe we can do some practice in the classroom. But last semester, I just showed the website and trained them about how to use it. That's it." P38

Participant 16 emphasized the potential of corpus-based tools for teaching specific grammar structures particularly with higher-level or discovery-oriented students. They highlighted that using a corpus requires initial training but can be effective for raising accuracy by exposing learners to authentic, varied examples especially for structures like gerunds and infinitives. However, they also noted a possible limitation of corpus that examples may focus more on form than meaning due to their decontextualized nature. In addition to student use, they acknowledged the value of corpus for teachers when preparing materials, as it offers reliable, native-like language input, which they find beneficial as a non-native speaker. Their unique cognitions reflect a dual role of corpus tools as both student-facing discovery aids and teacher-support resources within the broader use of technology in grammar instruction.

“I think that we can use corpus for teaching some structures with certain groups of students. First, it needs a kind of training, so that they must know how to analyze the sentences. It might be really effective for the students who are ready for it with a certain level of English and like discovering new stuff. Because it provides lots of examples, for instance, for gerund and infinitive structures, they just need to look at it. But this is something for accuracy I think, not for the nature of the structures. It might be effective for grammar structures but that gives importance to form structure, maybe not meaning, because they only see the limited version of the sentence to analyze. But still, as a teacher, we can benefit from corpus to prepare materials, we can bring texts from corpus and modify them. Because sometimes, as a non-native teacher, my sentences may not be as sound as native-like versions, so I consult corpus.” P16

Participant 18 described an attempt to implement a flipped classroom model for grammar instruction using ‘Grammar Bites’ videos present at every proficiency level in the syllabi of the language program. They emphasized the clarity and potential effectiveness of the videos for self-study and stated that this asynchronous, student-led engagement with videos allow more classroom time for practice. However, they also expressed frustration over students’ lack of autonomous learning habits, noted that learners often ignore instructions to watch the materials beforehand acknowledged challenges when integrating digital tools outside of class time.

“Since last year, we’ve had these Grammar Bites videos, and they are actually quite good. But our students don't have the habit of learning autonomously. I try to make grammar teaching like a flipped class. I always tell them to watch the Grammar Bites videos in the syllabus before coming to class and then ask questions if they need to so that we can just directly skip to the exercises and we can practice more. I think grammar can be taught in this

way, but they never do that. They can learn it really well, because everything is so clear. But again, I don't think Turkish students are autonomous.” P18

Participant 7 supported the effectiveness of Grammar Bites videos and pointed to their clarity and usefulness for students who prefer or benefit from self-directed learning outside the classroom. They noted that these videos present grammar in a decontextualized, explicit way and offer an alternative to classroom-based instruction. This perspective aligns with Participant 18's use of the same videos in a flipped classroom model, though Participant 7 acknowledged more variation in learner response that what works for some may not work for others. Their emphasis on learner autonomy and the mixed success of technology-based resources echo Participant 18's critique that Turkish students' readiness for independent study and point to the recurring theme of technological potential being shaped by learner habits and context.

“I think the Grammar Bites videos are really effective. If a student wants to learn about a grammar structure, they can watch it, they can understand it, and they can do the exercises in their books. And this is a way of teaching grammar separately, not within a context, not in the classroom. For some classes, for some students, it works. But, for some, it doesn't.” P7

Participant 33 reflected on a decline in classroom productivity and attributed it largely to the increased use of mobile phones by students especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. They noted that in earlier years enforcing a no-phone rule led to more focused and enjoyable grammar lessons. However, post-pandemic habits have normalized constant phone use, made such enforcement difficult, and hence negatively affected student attention and classroom dynamics. Participant 33 emphasized the potential of technology to hinder learning when not properly managed and underscored the tension between embracing technology and maintaining classroom discipline.

“Last year in both terms, it was kind of not productive. First of all, the phones are always distracting students. In recent years, students are always distracted, but previously, it was really nice because I had a rule of no phones. But this cannot be done in class anymore. But unfortunately, after the pandemic, they always have to use their phones. So previously, without the distraction they could focus on and my grammar classes were really fun.” P33

Participant 35 and 17 expressed strong concerns about the negative impact of mobile phones on student motivation and classroom engagement. Participant 35 supported a ban of phone use in the class by saying, “Technology affects our motivation when I think about the situations in class. I believe we should not have those cell phones in class because they are big distractors.” In addition, Participant 17 described mobile devices as the main culprit for teenage disengagement with their short remark “Our

students are teenagers and don't have a will to do something academically. Most of the teenagers are like this because of the mobile 'killer' phones." These views contrast sharply with previous excerpts that emphasized the benefits of technology and AI in enhancing grammar instruction, promoting autonomous learning, and increasing participation. In contrast with the calls for integrating digital tools to support learning, Participants 35 and 17 highlight the demotivating and distracting aspects of constant phone use, particularly in the post-pandemic context.

In conclusion, the participants expressed diverse perspectives regarding the integration of technology in grammar instruction. While many acknowledged its potential benefits such as the motivational aspects of gamification platforms such as Kahoot and Quizizz, and the practical advantages of digital tools like Google Classroom and WhatsApp, others demonstrated hesitancy, emphasizing concerns over technological distractions, particularly mobile phone usage. Artificial Intelligence such large language models like ChatGPT emerged as a notable innovation, recognized by several teachers for its capacity to create customized exercises, offer detailed feedback, and encourage student autonomy. Nevertheless, some participants admitted their limited expertise on technological pedagogical content knowledge or personal reservations about relying heavily on technological tools. Overall, despite recognizing both opportunities and challenges, the majority agreed that thoughtful and balanced incorporation of technology can enrich grammar teaching and enhance students' language learning experiences.

5. DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the findings of the current study will be discussed in detail in relation to the existing body of research on language teacher cognition. The following subsections will be focusing on the main themes and key findings emerging out of the dataset.

5.1.Role of Grammar in Language Classes

In the cognitive landscape of tertiary EFL teachers, grammar instruction retains a central but controversial position. Similar to the anti-grammar, pro-grammar, and conciliatory cognitive positions described by Carazzai (2016), this study found that teachers expressed ambivalence regarding the dominance of grammar while acknowledging it as indispensable for language development. While teachers considered grammar instrumental to developing accuracy and achieving success in exams, they placed high emphasis on grammar enabling learners to apply grammatical knowledge in meaning-making. However, they critiqued the excessive emphasis placed on grammar and highlight its potential negative impact on communicative competence and fluency.

Majority of the teachers ardently advocated for integrated grammar instruction with language skills and underline its compatibility with authentic language use and real-world interaction. This present finding corroborates the finding of Setoodeh et al. (2020) that Iranian EFL teachers preferred a communicative focus on grammar, embedding grammar in communicative tasks rather than isolating it. However, participants' rationalizations regarding the integration of grammar primarily were comprised of experiential and practical explanations, with little reference to second language acquisition theories in line with the findings of Borg and Burns (2008) and Nishimuro and Borg (2013) that teachers in adult English classrooms based their support for grammar integration on tacit knowledge and anecdotal accounts instead of language learning literature. In addition, similar to the worldwide results of Borg and Burns (2008), no collective cognition set emerged regarding the optimal degree of integration of grammar teaching into communicative work. A possible explanation for this might be that grammar teaching methodologies and grammar's role in this particularly experienced group of teachers' prior English learning experiences could be vastly different and simply more form-oriented compared to modern paradigms. Teachers' conceptions of grammar and its role in language learning processes seemed to be influenced by their own learning

and classroom experiences instead of empirical research or formal methodology training. This particular finding corroborated the remark of Borg (2003) in their review that teacher beliefs are informed by personal learning histories and teaching experience in the class rather than scientific research or language teaching methodologies.

5.2. Autonomy and Instruction

The participants strongly advocated learner autonomy and consider it crucial but perceived significant challenges in its implementation due to limited student motivation and independence. They acknowledged learner autonomy as instrumental yet confront difficulties in fostering learner autonomy which echoed the finding of Duong's (2014) regarding EFL teachers' surface level understanding of learner autonomy in the Thai tertiary context. Teachers universally valued autonomy and believe it enhances and accelerates long-term language acquisition and expected students to take charge of their language learning processes. This finding is consistent with Al Asmari's (2013) finding that teachers' perception of learner autonomy involves learners engaging in independent study and assuming responsibility for their own learning.

Despite attempts to promote autonomous learning through learner training on how Internet-based resources can aid the learning of grammar in line with Pawlak's (2016) notion of information and communication technology integration, teachers stated that learners remain passively reliant on classroom instruction rather than take a proactive role in their language learning outside the class. This result agreed with the finding of Dwee and Anthony's (2017) finding that perceived passive attitude of learners block learner autonomy. In addition, it could conceivably be hypothesized that this limited reactive learner autonomy stems from deeply entrenched exam-oriented behaviors instilled in learner cognitions through the prioritization of grades over reflective learning within the education system.

While teachers underlined that autonomous language learning is rendered highly possible with the abundance of digital resources available such as YouTube and large language models, they articulated a notable degree of uncertainty concerning the extent to which average contemporary language learner can manage their process of language learning and point to the irreplaceability of intrinsic motivation in autonomous language learning. This finding accords with Tran and Vuong (2023)'s finding in Vietnamese

university setting that learners' aspirations for academic achievement and success in English learning is driven by an innate desire.

5.3.Methodology Related Cognitions

The cognitive spectrum of grammar instruction methodologies revealed a wide spectrum of instructional tendencies informed and shaped by a vast variety of factors such as learner profile, personal teaching styles, and contextual factors.

In connection with the tensions emerging due to learner proficiency, syllabus timing and intensity, and learners' comprehension expectations, teachers tended to adopt and utilize both inductive and deductive grammar teaching methodologies by starting lessons with collaborative discovery work and following up with prescriptive/descriptive rule presentation to ensure learner understanding of grammar input. This finding shows agreement with Önalın's (2018a) finding that experienced EFL teachers in the Turkish tertiary context flexibly maneuver between deductive and inductive grammar teaching to respond to varying learner needs and Borg's (1998a) finding that seasoned EFL teachers employed conventional grammar teaching techniques along with communicative language teaching paradigms due to the ease they provide in the retention of grammar structures. This joint appreciation of both deductive ($M=3.2609$; $SD=.51102$) and inductive approach ($M=3.6813$; $SD=.30059$) was also evident in the questionnaire results of the study. The synthesis of qualitative and quantitative findings within this study suggested that tertiary level EFL teachers are inclined integrate explicit teaching with opportunities for contextual, discovery-based learning. This hybrid model supports the gradual development of grammatical competence through communicative, real-life scenarios, aligning with both cognitive learning processes and practical language use. Lecturers appeared to value a flexible pedagogy that merges the structure of traditional methods with the adaptability of modern, learner-centered strategies to better meet students' needs. This finding showed agreement with Gerem's (2019) finding in the Turkish context that while many endorses communicative and inductive approaches, traditional deductive teaching remained prevalent due to contextual pressures of time limits, curriculum, learner expectations.

On the matter of explicit and implicit grammar instruction, lecturers collectively exhibited context-sensitive cognitions creating a link between pedagogical idealities and classroom realities. Explicit instruction was widely appreciated for its clarity and

efficiency in promoting grammatical understanding particularly in alignment with curriculum goals and assessment pressures. Explicit teaching was also considered valuable in reducing learner anxiety, meeting students' expectations for clear explanations, and laying the groundwork for academic success. Additionally, implicit instruction was praised for fostering deeper cognitive processing, long-term retention, and learner autonomy. Participants supporting this approach emphasize the benefits of allowing students to independently discover grammar through contextualized and meaningful interaction. However, some teachers acknowledged that practical constraints such as time limitations, student proficiency levels, and fixed learner expectations often leading them to adopt more explicit methods, despite their preference for implicit ones. This finding showed agreement with Smith's (2021) finding that ESL teachers employed implicit and inductive methodologies less due to its time-taking qualities and difficulties related to ensuring learner comprehension of target grammar structure. Participants advocated for a flexible and eclectic approach through the combination of implicit discovery with explicit clarification. This seemed to contrast with Önalın's (2018b) finding that non-native EFL teachers tend to combine systematic and explicit grammar teaching with skill-oriented tasks.

Over the issue of separate and integrated grammar instruction, varied yet experience-based views emerged mainly dependent on learner needs and instructional aims. Most lecturers showed support for integration of grammar with the aim of promoting real-world communication, contextual learning, and reducing anxiety. Reflecting upon their experience with a separate skill and grammar instruction curriculum model within the school, most participants pointed out the interconnected nature of language skills and systems and grammar should not be isolated in instruction. This finding showed alignment with Borg and Burns's (2008) finding that teachers of adult learners strongly opposed to isolation of grammar teaching and favor integration of grammar with language skills. However, some teachers expressed support for standalone grammar lessons due to its potential benefits of developing accuracy, more extensive grammar topic coverage, and achieving language mastery. This finding showed agreement with Alzaanin's (2020) finding that in Palestinian tertiary context, teachers driven by foundational grammar tendencies tended to adhere to explicit and separate grammar lesson flows and Graus and Coppen's (2017) finding with pre-service EFL

teachers supporting isolated and systematic grammar instruction due to cognitions regarding grammatical accuracy as indispensable to reach higher proficiency levels.

Regarding form-focused instruction, the cognitive panorama of FonF and FonFS depicted the strongest support for FonF ($M=4.0625$; $SD=.41145$) and the least score of approval for FonFS ($M=2.7956$; $SD=.47978$) among the grammar instruction methodologies included within the questionnaire of the study. This stark quantitative difference demonstrated a collective FonF tendency where grammatical form is given within meaningful contexts and practiced through communicative tasks. This cognition set of participants showed agreement with Spada and Lightbown's (2008) finding that integrated form-focused instruction is considerably effective in improving communicative use of target structures. However, the semi-structured interviews unearthed that teachers held varied views on grammar instruction that carry elements of both FonF and FonFS principles. While some tended to create context based on discrete sentences, utilize deliberate form analysis, and prioritize rule-based teaching, others showed inclination to teach contextualized grammar within meaning-oriented instruction and aim for communicative use of target language. A possible explanation of this significant disparity between qualitative and quantitative results of the study may be that what teachers routinely practice in class and what they perceive as most effective in grammar teaching, similar to the cognitive dissonance explored by Schulz (1996) that even though most foreign language teachers acknowledged the potential of FonF paradigms in fostering language learning, they were more inclined to utilize FonFS techniques due to its perceived degree of effectiveness. This cognition-practice dichotomy might be indicative of clashes emerging from enthusiastic endorsement of progressive FonF pedagogy in their minds and teachers' attachment to more conventional FonFS instruction in class similar to the finding of Sun and Zhang (2021) that despite fully supporting contextualized FonF paradigms, Chinese university EFL teachers predominantly utilized decontextualized and discrete contexts known as a FonFS strategy. It is also crucial to note that participants did not refer to form-focused instruction methodologies by their labels but praised a variety of elements from both paradigms spanning from explicit rule introduction to context-driven practice. This result might be explained by the fact that the relatively recent broader methodological shift to more meaning-centric paradigms in grammar teaching might have remained unexplored by the lecturers, leaving them to fend with more established instructional tendencies. This

speculation seems to be in alignment with Uysal and Bardakçı's (2014) finding in the Turkish EFL context that primary school teachers generally lacked familiarity with contemporary FonF instructional designs.

The synthesis of the quantitative and qualitative findings regarding drilling and practice revealed a coherent yet nuanced understanding among EFL lecturers, reflecting both evolving pedagogical orientations and contextual realities. Quantitative data showed a moderate level of agreement on the importance of drilling and practice ($M=3.1719$; $SD=.37411$) and suggested that while lecturers acknowledge their foundational role in grammar instruction, they increasingly favor learner-centered, communicative alternatives over traditional mechanical drilling. This is further reinforced by the preference for engagement-oriented activities that promote active language use, aligning with current educational trends that emphasize interaction, contextualization, and practical application. These findings show close alignment with Wong and Van Patten's (2003) finding that language acquisition relies on meaningful input, not habit formation drills and mechanical drills prove ineffective for language acquisition and fluency development. Qualitative findings provided a deeper insight into the layered perceptions underlying these preferences. Participants recognized the value of drilling for pronunciation, anxiety reduction, and scaffolding lower-level learners, yet concerns about its artificiality and limited communicative value were also raised. Some lecturers supported the use of pronunciation drills in grammar teaching but exhibited emotional unease with them as they were hesitant about their pronunciation skills. This finding showed alignment with Bai and Yuan's (2019) finding in the EFL context of Hong Kong that teachers exhibited a lack of confidence regarding pronunciation drills due to being a non-native speakers and teachers of English. In contrast with Chandler's (1998), Chappell's (2017), and Shumiye's (2024) findings involving prevalent and heavy use of prescriptive mechanical exercises in grammar instruction rather than meaning-focused interaction in ESL and EFL contexts, mechanical practice was commonly utilized to enhance accuracy and form recognition, but its place in the lesson was often carefully calibrated to allow for a smoother transition to more communicative phases. Importantly, freer practice and production emerged as key stages, perceived not only as opportunities for authentic language use but also as indicators of successful grammar acquisition which was in line with Huang's (2010) finding in the Taiwanese context that teachers aimed to achieve grammar instruction involving less grammar, simple explanations, more

examples, and more practice. Together, these findings suggest that lecturers are shifting towards a more balanced and adaptive instructional model. While foundational practices like drilling were not dismissed outright, their integration was increasingly shaped by the need to foster communicative competence, learner engagement, and contextual relevance. This reflected a broader paradigm shift in tertiary-level EFL grammar instruction, where traditional techniques are reinterpreted within more dynamic, flexible, and meaning-oriented pedagogical frameworks.

Participants' cognitions regarding feedback in grammar instruction reflected thoughtful, context-aware practices shaped by their teaching experience, instructional aims, and responsiveness to learner needs. In line with the finding of Ölmezer-Öztürk (2019) and Uysal and Aydin's (2017) in two different Turkish state universities that teachers expressed varied preferences regarding corrective feedback, participants showed diverse cognitions on feedback dependent on multiple factors. Delayed feedback was generally preferred during fluency-based activities to preserve communicative flow and minimize anxiety, often delivered later through whole-class, anonymous commentary on common grammatical issues. This result regarding the use of delayed feedback for learner comfort mirrored the finding of Mori (2011) in the Japanese EFL context that teachers prioritized building learners' confidence and communication ability over strict grammatical accuracy. Immediate feedback was commonly used during controlled, accuracy-focused tasks to prevent fossilization and reinforce correct usage, though participants remained cautious not to hinder students' confidence during communication. Teachers demonstrated balancing cognitions between fluency and accuracy dependent on lesson stage and instructional aims and utilized both types of feedback accordingly. This finding echoed the finding of Nassaji et al. (2023) within the Iranian context that teachers tended to tailor corrective feedback, often delaying it during meaning-focused productive tasks. Written feedback held significant value, especially for identifying recurring issues and providing individualized support. While some instructors favored direct correction, others employed indirect methods such as error codes to promote learner autonomy and deeper engagement, though concerns were noted about their suitability for lower-proficiency learners and direct corrective feedback was suggested for them. This result regarding the utilization of direct corrective written feedback for lower proficiency levels was also present in the study of Wei and Cao (2020) across Chinese, Vietnamese, and

Thai university EFL settings. Participants approached feedback not merely as error correction, but as a strategic and integral component of effective grammar teaching.

Participants' beliefs regarding Communicative Language Teaching reflected a strong orientation toward meaningful, contextualized, and authentic communication. Viewing grammar as a functional resource to support fluency and intelligibility rather than as an end goal, they consistently emphasized the importance of enabling learners to apply target structures in real-life contexts. While some prioritized spoken interaction over strict grammatical accuracy, others placed greater value on fostering metalinguistic awareness and showed strong tendencies for traditional approaches. The overall cognitive picture of participants revealed an ongoing tension between communicative principles and more traditional grammar-focused approaches due to factors such as exam and curricular pressures and sociocultural education norms, strongly resembling the complex interplay of pedagogical priorities in tertiary-level language instruction demonstrate in the study of Wyatt and Dikilitaş (2019) with Turkish university teachers' tendencies for traditional and contemporary grammar teaching paradigms and hence forming cognitive discord and Moodie and Feryok's (2015) results in the South Korean context that many teachers adapted Communicative Language Teaching principles to fit the demands of high-stakes exams and cultural expectations. These findings point to the broader theme of a dichotomy of practice and cognition observed in a vast body of studies such as Underwood (2012) in terms of exam pressures driving Japanese teachers to adopt more traditional grammar teaching methodologies, Zhu and Shu (2017) regarding cognitive fluctuations of methodology preferences arising from learners' exam preparation expectations in China, Sato and Oyanedel (2018) with Chilean local educational expectations molding instructional tendencies, Setoodeh et al. (2020) regarding Iranian teachers' appreciation of explicit grammar teaching and utilization of communicative teaching tasks. One possible explanation for such a diverse and incongruous collective cognition set may be that teachers' deeply entrenched attachment to more structured grammar instruction paradigms and their seemingly enthusiastic attitude for contemporary approaches which was seen among the findings of Sun et al. (2020) in the Chinese context where teachers' articulated tendencies for communicative teaching practices and their ingrained pro-traditional teaching cognitions resulted in cognitive dissonances.

Participants exhibited multifaceted cognitions regarding the Grammar Translation Method, shaped by the interaction of their own learning experiences, contextual factors, and pedagogical orientations. Although GTM is not widely regarded as a modern instructional paradigm, several instructors acknowledged its practical utility, particularly in monolingual classrooms, with lower-proficiency learners, or in situations where there is a shared preference for L1-based explanations in grammar teaching. It was perceived as an effective tool for clarifying grammatical rules and structures and for enhancing metalinguistic awareness. This result of the study points to the same direction of cognitive dissonance in Underwood's (2012) study in the Japanese context where teachers collectively showed resistance to contemporary grammar teaching paradigms in the midst of a national language teaching curriculum redesign due to high-stakes exams and personal instructional tendencies emerging out of language learning histories. Participants reported employing GTM selectively and strategically, often in response to cultural expectations and institutional practices. Thus, while GTM does not hold a central position in current grammar instruction, it remains a supplementary approach used by instructors to address specific learner needs within this language school context. These findings resemble what Chan's (2015) results in their study with university teachers in Taiwan that exam-centric cultural norms and curriculum demands often induced teachers to use GTM as part of their grammar instruction.

Overall, the range of cognitions regarding grammar teaching methodologies reflected immensely diverse instructional preferences where teachers integrate different aspects of various approaches into their teaching style dependent on contextual conditions and personal beliefs. This overall picture of methodological tendencies within the present study shares similarities with the results of Csernus (2018) that teachers of general English employed a wide repertoire of grammar teaching techniques, often combining them, with choices influenced by both content-specific beliefs and broader pedagogical principles.

5.4. Teacher Factor

The study found that a wide array of teacher factors such as language learning experiences, teaching experience, teacher emotions, self-efficacy, professional development, reflective practice, lesson planning, experiences abroad, and cognitive

dissonances constantly interplays with teacher cognitions and practices of grammar instruction.

The results indicated that university EFL instructors' cognitions about grammar instruction were strongly shaped by their prior language learning experiences. This aligned with the broader theme of apprenticeship of observation by Lortie (1975) and later explained by Borg (2004). Participants frequently shared detailed recollections from their own learning histories, often emphasizing the lasting influence of their former language teachers and instructional approaches. For some, these experiences were positive, leading them to adopt methods such as grammar translation or explicit grammar teaching, reflecting an apprenticeship of observation as observed in the study by Channa, (2020) with Pakistani EFL teachers stating that their teaching cognitions were influenced by and in line with their admired English teachers in the past. Conversely, others described formative negative experiences marked by excessive grammar drills, exam-oriented instruction, and limited communicative practice, which prompted them to develop contrasting beliefs aligned with an anti-apprenticeship of observation as observed by Moodie (2016) with South Korean teachers stating that their prior learning experiences provided them knowledge on what not to do as teachers in their classes. Many reported that grammar-heavy instruction had hindered their fluency, increased speaking anxiety, and limited their ability to apply grammatical knowledge in authentic contexts. These frustrations often motivated a shift toward more communicative, integrated, and learner-centered approaches.

The second research question aimed to examine the relationship between years of teaching experience and teacher cognitions in grammar teaching and no statistically significant difference was found between the three groups of teachers: 6 to 10 years, 11 to 15 years and more than 16 years of teaching experience. This finding resembled the findings of Kalsoom's (2013) quantitative study in the Pakistani context that years of teaching experience did not have a significant effect on teachers' cognitions. The simplest explanation for this result could be that all the participants within the study were already experienced teachers with at least 6 years of teaching and there were no novice teachers involved in the study. However, the qualitative findings highlighted the pivotal role of teaching experience in shaping and transforming language teacher cognition as Borg (1997) outlined in their doctoral dissertation and in line with the findings of Sanchez (2014) and Torres (2017) that teaching experience was a key factor influencing teacher

cognitions. Participants reflected on early career challenges and the gradual shift from teacher-centered to learner-focused approaches, driven by learner feedback, observed progress, and trial-and-error. This finding mirrored the finding of Önalın (2018b) that non-native teachers were more likely to teach grammar through indirect methodologies as they gained more teaching experience. Similar to the finding of Öztürk and Gürbüz (2017) with teachers at state universities in Turkey that teaching experience enhances flexibility in language instruction and refines teachers' principles, participants in this study stated developing greater confidence, a clearer professional identity, and more context-sensitive, flexible approaches to grammar instruction, underscoring the dynamic link between accumulated classroom experience and pedagogical growth.

The findings also revealed the intricate interplay between emotions, self-efficacy and cognitions in grammar instruction among university EFL teachers in harmony with Kubanyiova and Feryok's (2015) remarks regarding language teacher emotions, cognitions, and actions being interlinked. Participants reported emotions ranging from pride and satisfaction at student success to anxiety and discomfort when facing challenges or criticism, with these feelings closely tied to their sense of professional confidence. Self-efficacy was influenced by factors such as accumulated experience, personality, rapport with learners, and preparedness, as well as subject knowledge and adaptability. This finding showed partial agreement with Wyatt and Dikilitaş's (2019) finding with 126 EFL lecturers and 19 Turkish universities that lower self-efficacy was generally linked to traditional, form-focused approaches, whereas higher self-efficacy tended to align with more innovative, discovery-based teaching methods. Teachers identified learner scrutiny through questioning teacher performance as emotional stressors, which drew a parallel to Golombek's finding (2015) that teachers' self-regulation significantly influences learners' reflection processes of learning and may cause emotional triggers in teachers and result in teachers mediating through dialogue with learners. As stated by Shi (2021) in their review, teachers' cognitions about their capabilities and their emotional responses were deeply interconnected, shaping their approach to teaching in their contexts.

The second research question aimed to explore the relationship between professional development certificates and grammar teaching cognitions. No statistically significant difference was found in between the groups of certificate holders and non-holders. In addition, the second research question also aimed to explore the relationship between academic qualifications and grammar instruction cognitions. Similarly, no

statistically significant difference emerged between the groups of undergraduate degree holders and graduate degree holders. In contrast with the questionnaire findings, the qualitative findings on professional development indicate that structured qualifications such as CELTA, DELTA, and in-service training workshops play a significant role in shaping and reshaping EFL instructors' cognitions regarding grammar instruction. This result resonated with Borg's (2011) finding that in-service teacher training programs such as DELTA considerably affected teacher cognitions. Many participants reported a substantial shift in their pedagogical preferences after engaging in such programs, transitioning from rule-oriented, teacher-centered approaches to more contextualized, meaning-focused, and learner-centered practices. Practical input sessions and classroom observations within professional development schemes were particularly valued for prompting teachers to reassess the balance between form, meaning, and use. This cognitive shift reported by participant echoed the findings of Dimitrieska (2024) that reflective procedures in CELTA triggers teachers to reconsider their cognitions and make readjustments in their perspectives and Erol's (2018) finding in a Turkish state university that doing a CELTA course had significant influences on teachers' perceptions and boosted their morale. Nonetheless, the data suggest that professional development alone does not guarantee changes in practice unless it is accompanied by critical reflection, intrinsic motivation, and contextual adaptation. This finding aligns with the finding of Borg (2002) that despite their appreciation of learner-focused paradigms within professional development programs, trainees may not refine their entrenched beliefs. This also falls in line with Borg (1997) regarding the limited influence of professional coursework in cases where it is not acknowledged by teachers. Several participants emphasized that while these programs provided valuable insights, they selectively adapted the acquired knowledge to suit the realities of their teaching environments. This adds nuance to the overarching theme of a need for context-sensitive professional development opportunities for EFL teachers.

Reflective practice plays an important role in shaping and refining teachers' approaches to grammar instruction over time. Participants reported moving from relying on superficial measures of success to adopting a more critical focus on whether lesson objectives were met and learners could apply grammar and lesson objectives productively through reflection which resonated the finding of Özsoy (2017) that structured reflection in action enhanced the situational and self-awareness of university teachers in their

classrooms. Reflection was linked to greater awareness of learner needs, informed methodological choices, and improved decision-making, which accorded with the earlier observation by Gökçe and Keçik (2021) in a state university in the Turkish context that teachers engaged in reflective practices demonstrated a deeper comprehension of methodologies and more flexibility in their teaching to respond to contextual constraints. While a small minority actively questioned long-standing habits and shifted from teacher-centered to learner-focused evaluation, this mindset was not widespread on the collective cognition plane. Although the benefits of ongoing self-assessment through reflective practice for context-sensitive grammar teaching were recognized, it was not a dominant theme across the participant group.

Cognitive dissonance plays a significant role in university EFL instructors' professional thinking, arising from tensions between theoretical knowledge, classroom practice, exam pressures, timing issues, and personal beliefs. Some adhered to textbook structures or past learning experiences despite holding differing views on how grammar should be taught, while others struggled with mismatches between their preferred methods and lesson materials, which overlapped with the finding of Başar's (2020) results in the Turkish EFL context regarding teachers' cognitive dissonances emerging from relying on textbooks, clashes between their experiential knowledge and lacking theoretical fundamentals, and disharmony between their communicative paradigm tendencies and traditional practices. These conflicts often led to ad hoc decisions lacking clear pedagogical rationale, with deeply ingrained, outdated beliefs sometimes overriding current best practices similar to Guerra and Wubbena's (2017) results in the Chinese context that teachers' preference for communicative and learner-centric instruction was nullified through teacher-fronted tendencies ingrained by their prior learning experiences. Misunderstandings of 'context' as a key concept in grammar instruction also emerged, with some equating discrete and incoherent sentences to meaningful and cohesive contexts.

It was also found that effective grammar instruction is closely linked to deliberate and adaptive lesson planning. While experienced teachers emphasized that grammar lessons still require thorough preparation due to their complex nature involving form, meaning, and use, they showed strong tendency to move away from detailed written plans. This corroborated the finding of Enow and Goodwyn's (2018) result that experienced moved beyond formal, scripted planning and instead relied on internalized,

flexible mental frameworks of ‘invisible plans’ that enabled them to go through the lesson stages and make in-the-moment instructional decisions. However, it was also noted that over-reliance on experience could result in inadequate planning and hinder the achievement of learning goals. Moreover, many teachers highlighted the importance of flexible planning, enabling them to adjust their instruction in response to learners’ needs and classroom dynamics. Planning was found to evolve with experience but remained a critical component for successful grammar teaching, which echoed the finding of Enow and Goodwyn (2018) that veteran teachers redefined lesson planning as a dynamic, adaptive process closely linked with classroom experience and awareness of learner needs.

Participants’ immersion in authentic English-speaking environments significantly reshaped their beliefs about grammar instruction. Despite having mastered grammar through traditional form-focused methods, many teachers reported difficulties in spontaneous communication abroad. These reflective experiences highlighted the limitations of grammar-centric approaches and underscored the importance of fluency, contextual understanding, and communicative competence. Consequently, participants came to view grammar knowledge as extending beyond structural accuracy and exam success. Time spent in real-life language settings prompted a shift toward more integrated, communication-oriented grammar teaching.

5.5.Learner Factor

The study revealed that a large spectrum of learner factors including learner psychology, needs, interests, expectations, training, awareness and limited L1 competence continuously interacts with teacher cognitions and practices regarding grammar instruction.

Psychological factors play a pivotal role in shaping the grammar teaching and learning experience. Participants highlighted the influence of learner anxiety, motivation, personality, and emotional responses on engagement with grammar instruction. Explicit approaches were perceived as more suitable for anxious or introverted learners, offering clarity and reducing uncertainty. Conversely, implicit methods were seen as more effective for confident, extroverted, or risk-taking learners by fostering motivation and interaction, which shows agreement with Altunel’s (2015) finding that input-based instruction, which mainly focuses on immersing learners in target language through

reading and listening, proved more effective in terms of overall language performance for introverts compared to extroverts. Teachers also noted that emotional barriers such as frustration with exceptions or fear of making mistakes can hinder participation and reduce motivation. A psychologically safe classroom was deemed essential for lowering anxiety and enhancing resilience. This finding resonated with the remarks of Flett et al. (2016) regarding the necessity for educators to recognize learners' anxiety, fear of failure and lower self-efficacy to offer them support with strategies to reduce anxiety, normalize mistakes, and cultivate resilience. Participants recognized the necessity of addressing learners' psychological needs to optimize grammar instruction in the tertiary EFL context. These findings resonated with the finding of Alrabai (2014) in the Saudi Arabian context regarding the instrumental role of teacher behavior in handling foreign language anxiety of learner within classrooms.

Teachers' grammar instruction was strongly influenced by learners' needs, expectations, and interests. In a similar vein with Ngo's (2018) finding that learner perceptions of grammar as being crucial and exam-centric Vietnamese culture forced teachers to utilize form-focused instruction considerably more often than their preferred choice of communicative language teaching, many participants noted that students often associated grammar learning with exam performance, which significantly shaped instructional decisions. A similar finding emerged in Chappell's (2017) study in the Australian context that perceived learner expectations like direct corrective feedback, grammar-focused instruction, and exam study caused teachers to prioritize accuracy over fluency. Although some teachers expressed discomfort with exam-driven instruction, they acknowledged its impact on learners' motivation. While certain learners favored traditional, explicit grammar teaching, others responded more positively to communicative tasks that integrated grammar meaningfully and aligned with their interests. Teachers commonly reported the need to balance exam-focused demands with communicative language development, often opting for flexible, differentiated lesson planning to meet diverse learner expectations while promoting broader language competence, aligning with Phipps and Borg's (2009) finding in the similar context of a private Turkish university that teachers tended to adapt their instructions by integrating learner-centric elements of CLT with FFI to address various learner needs and expectations.

Teachers also adjusted their grammar instruction according to learner proficiency. Discovery-based approaches were favored for advanced students due to their prior grammatical knowledge, which showed marked contrast with Önalın's (2018b) finding that EFL teachers of advanced-level learners showed tendency towards direct grammar teaching. In mixed-ability classrooms, teachers employed differentiated instruction to bridge learning gaps which showed significant difference from Phipps and Borg's (2009) finding that teachers perceived learners responding better to more traditional grammar teaching at a private Turkish tertiary setting. Learner level was a central factor shaping pedagogical choices in grammar teaching.

Teachers placed paramount importance on fostering learner autonomy, reflection, and strategic engagement beyond the classroom, which pointed to the same direction with Doğan and Mirici's (2017) finding regarding learner autonomy that Turkish EFL instructors at tertiary level held highly positive attitudes towards it and acknowledged its instrumentality in effective language learning. Several teachers supported the integration of learner interests into personalized grammar learning and encouraged the use of digital tools and dictionaries for independent study. Raising awareness of learning goals and promoting reflection were viewed as effective in helping students internalize grammar. Participants underscored the role of learner training in cultivating self-directed learning and growth-oriented mindsets.

It was also found that limited grammatical competence in learners' first language (Turkish) significantly hinders their ability to grasp English grammar, as it obstructs awareness of basic concepts like parts of speech. This lack of L1 grammar knowledge was seen to restrict teachers' instructional strategies, particularly in the use of terminology and metalanguage during grammar instruction in the L2 context. Teachers' cognitions regarding cross-linguistic transfer involved foundational grammar knowledge of L1 assisting in achieving higher overall L2 proficiency, which appeared to be parallel to the findings of Sparks et al. (2009) that metalinguistic awareness developed in L1 significantly contributes to learners' ability to grasp L2 grammar.

5.6.Contextual Factors

The study revealed that a considerable span of contextual factors comprised of immediate and wider context, lesson materials, classroom dynamics, assessment, and

curriculum consistently interplays with teacher cognitions and practices regarding grammar instruction.

The immediate context involving the language school and the university revealed a fragmented cognitive landscape among teachers, characterized by a lack of shared institutional vision and coherence in grammar instruction, which pointed that teaching is a continuous, situated activity taking place within various social configurations in a community of practice where negotiation of meaning, development of shared repertoire, and identity formation all occur concurrently (Wenger, 1999). Diverging views on instructional priorities ranging from communicative competence to mechanical accuracy resulted in inconsistent practices and confusion. This influence of immediate context reiterated the overarching theme in many language teacher cognitions studies (Cross, 2010; Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015; Kalsoom, 2013; Mohammadabadi et al., 2019; Öztürk & Gürbüz; 2017) that language teaching is positioned at the cross-section of ecological systems embedded within each other. A recurrent concern was the misalignment between fluency-oriented curricula and accuracy-based assessments, which led to frustration among teachers, which resonated Öztürk and Gürbüz's (2017) finding in three state university in Turkey that EFL instructors' cognitions and practices were molded between the pressures of testing and curriculum policies. Moreover, many adapted their methods not out of pedagogical belief but due to institutional pressures, which resembled Sun and Zhang's (2021) finding that Chinese university EFL teachers attributed their methodological tendencies to institutional expectations. Despite long-standing collaboration within the language school, individual cognitions varied widely. These discrepancies highlight the urgent need for curricular alignment, institutional dialogue, and collaborative professional development to bridge gaps between individual beliefs and collective practice.

The findings related to the wider context revealed significant concerns about the exam-oriented, grammar-dominant nature of English language teaching in Turkey. Participants repeatedly emphasized that national exams heavily prioritize grammar, shaping learner expectations, institutional agendas, and classroom practices. This emphasis often marginalizes communicative competence and promotes a narrow, rule-based view of language learning. Teachers expressed frustration over students' early conditioning to equate grammar with language proficiency, which fosters misconceptions and hinders the development of functional language use at higher levels. A collective call

was made for a nationwide shift toward communicative approaches, where grammar serves as a supportive element rather than the central focus. These findings resonated with language teacher cognition studies in various contexts such as Underwood (2012) in Japan, Zhu and Shu (2017) in China, Ngo (2018) and Nguyen et al. (2023) in Vietnam, Chappell (2017) Australia, and Uysal and Bardakçı (2014) in Turkey.

Findings on lesson materials revealed varied teacher cognitions shaped by pedagogical beliefs and contextual factors. While some adhered closely to coursebooks due to concerns over fairness, syllabus requirements, and institutional norms, others exercised greater agency by adapting or supplementing materials. The data highlighted the central role of materials in grammar instruction and reflect a shared cognitive tension between institutional standardization and professional autonomy, which partly aligned with Xu's (2021) finding that accumulated teaching knowledge of language teachers deeply interacted with their material utilization by either leading them to adapt the course book or following it verbatim.

Findings related to classroom dynamics highlighted the significant impact of interpersonal relationships, learner behavior, and group atmosphere on grammar instruction, drawing a parallel to Clark and Peterson's (1986) model of teachers' thought processes and action in which teachers' actions and decision-making are strongly connected to learners' classroom behavior. Positive rapport, emotional safety, and mutual motivation were seen as key to fostering engagement and receptivity. These findings resonated with Park's (2016) study which demonstrated that language classrooms are social environments where teachers and learners go beyond constructing knowledge and build relationships. In contrast, learner disengagement, emotional barriers, and distractions like smartphones were noted to hinder grammar teaching. This finding in relation to smartphones echoed Metruk's (2022) review including various studies where negative attitudes against smartphones were exhibited by both teachers and learners due to the distracting qualities of smartphones within language classrooms. In addition, similar findings regarding motivation level and learner disengagement were found in previous studies by Gökçe and Keçik (2021) and Graus and Coppen (2017). Teachers also cited challenges such as uneven participation, diverse learner profiles, and post-pandemic social issues as factors that could disrupt instruction. Empathy, humor, and authenticity were valued for promoting trust and learner risk-taking. Grammar teaching was found to

be deeply intertwined with the emotional and social dynamics of the classroom, emphasizing their centrality in shaping instructional experiences and cognitions.

Findings on assessment revealed conflicting yet interconnected teacher cognitions regarding grammar evaluation at the preparatory school. While many acknowledged the systemic overemphasis on grammar, they admitted to perpetuating it due to institutional pressures and learner expectations. Grammar's measurability was cited as a key reason for its dominance in exams, despite concerns that it often eclipses communicative skills. This accuracy-oriented and grammar-centric collective cognition set was also seen in Phipps and Borg's (2009) study in a private university in Turkey. This misalignment between instructional aims and assessment formats created a feedback loop where teaching and testing mutually reinforced grammar-heavy practices, which was previously detected by Gökçe and Keçik (2021) in their LTC study at a Turkish university, Ngo (2018) in a Vietnamese university, and Nishimuro and Borg (2013) in Japanese secondary education. Teachers involved in test design particularly expressed frustration over the tension between personal beliefs and institutional demands. Some participants advocated for skill-based, integrated assessment models, emphasizing the need to evaluate grammar implicitly within communicative contexts. These findings resonated with Barnes et al.'s (2014) finding in their comprehensive review that teachers' beliefs about assessment are multifaceted, often containing conflicting views such as balancing formative and summative purposes or aligning personal values with institutional mandates. The data reflected a collective ambivalence and dissatisfaction with current assessment practices, shaped by a struggle between pedagogical ideals and the constraints of an exam-driven system.

Findings on curriculum revealed a tension between its intended communicative goals and the practical constraints teachers face. Participants frequently cited time limitations and a dense syllabus as factors pressuring them to prioritize explicit grammar instruction over more inductive approaches, which showed consistency with Borg's (1999c) significant remark that time and resources often led to mixed-method approaches. Timing pressures on teacher cognitions was unearthed in a vast body of LTC research (Sanchez & Borg, 2014; Wang & Ryan, 2020; Feryok, 2010; Mohammadabadi et al., 2019; Başar, 2020; Gerem & Ekşi, 2019). While some appreciated the curriculum's integration of productive skills to support language use, many felt forced to make instructional compromises. The curriculum design encourages a balance between

grammar and communication, yet external demands significantly influence teachers' choices and shape their grammar-related cognitions.

5.7. Language Related Factors

The study discovered that a broad array of language related factors such as accuracy and fluency, meaning and form, exposure, pronunciation, appropriacy and register continually interacts with teacher cognitions and practices within grammar instruction.

Findings on the accuracy versus/and fluency issue revealed diverse teacher cognitions shaped by instructional goals, learner needs, and contextual factors. Similar to the findings of Richards et al. (1992) that teachers' beliefs were shaped by exam-oriented educational culture, valuing accuracy and grammar for exam success, in this study some teachers prioritized accuracy due to academic and exam-related expectations, while others emphasized fluency for fostering authentic communication and learner confidence. A balanced view also surfaced, with teachers suggesting that the focus should shift depending on proficiency levels, lesson stages, and skill areas. It is important to note that teachers' conceptualizations of fluency resonated Tavakoli and Hunter's (2018) results in the UK that L2 teachers tended to define fluency very broadly, closely linking it with general proficiency and mastery. A complex and sometimes conflicting cognitive landscape emerged, highlighting the need for institutional dialogue to promote a more integrated approach that values both accuracy and fluency in developing communicative competence. Overly reductionist interpretations over both concepts were prevalent among the participants which contrasted with Housen and Kuiken's multidimensional, context-dependent, and interdependent conceptualization of accuracy, fluency, and complexity (2009).

Participants' cognitions regarding meaning and form revealed shared themes alongside varied preferences. Many emphasized introducing grammar through meaningful context, arguing that learners better understand and retain forms when they first grasp their communicative functions. Others favored a form-first approach, especially for lower-level learners, to build a clear structural foundation. Despite differences in sequencing, most agreed on the importance of integrating meaning, form, and context, viewing them as interdependent. A purely form-focused approach was seen as limiting authentic language use. A balanced and context-driven integration of meaning

and form emerged as a key pedagogical principle. These findings contrasted with Uysal and Bardakçı's (2014) findings in the Turkish primary-level context that teachers favored form-focused paradigms instead of meaning-focused instruction.

While participants held differing views on its practical implementation, they collectively acknowledged the importance of exposure in grammar learning. Many highlighted the value of incidental learning through reading, listening, and digital media, suggesting that grammar can be acquired naturally via authentic input. However, others stressed the need for explicit instruction due to limited exposure opportunities outside the classroom. Although there was general agreement on the theoretical benefits of naturalistic input, opinions varied regarding its feasibility in the current teaching context. Balancing limited learner exposure with effective grammar instruction emerged as a central concern, showing a resemblance with Puerto Rican teachers basing their rationale for rule-based grammar instruction on limited exposure to target language in the study by Ebsworth and Schweers (1997).

Findings revealed that pronunciation holds a relatively marginal place in the cognitive landscape of the language school. While some participants recognized its role in intelligibility and natural usage, most prioritized other areas such as form, meaning, and fluency in their grammar instruction. Pronunciation activities were often omitted, especially for advanced learners, due to exam-focused curricula, time constraints, and learner resistance. Although a few teachers valued targeted pronunciation for boosting confidence, such views were limited. Pronunciation emerged as an underemphasized component in grammar instruction within this context. These findings closely resemble Shah et al.'s (2017) and Wahid and Sulong's (2013) results in the Malaysian context that pronunciation was sidelined due to teachers' common beliefs that other language skills were more prominent due to exam purposes.

In the same manner with pronunciation, both register and appropriacy occupied a peripheral role in participants' grammar teaching cognitions and practices. While some teachers acknowledged the importance of adjusting language to context, these aspects were typically addressed incidentally rather than through planned instruction. Both appropriacy and register were conceptually recognized but remained secondary in the grammar-focused instructional landscape.

5.8. Use of Grammatical Terminology

The quantitative and qualitative findings collectively underscored a nuanced stance among EFL instructors regarding the role of grammatical terminology in grammar teaching. Quantitatively, the moderate mean score ($M=3.4401$) with a relatively high standard deviation ($SD=.62736$) suggested a balanced yet context-sensitive approach to the use of metalanguage similar to Borg's (1999b) finding in an ESL context that teachers' use of grammatical terminology was dependent on experiential, cognitive, and contextual factors. While instructors generally acknowledged the pedagogical value of terminology in fostering linguistic awareness and supporting learner autonomy, they exhibited a cautious stance to not let it overshadow communicative clarity or learner engagement. Qualitative insights further reinforced this tendency, as participants widely emphasized that complex terminology was often seen as unnecessary and potentially detrimental to students' understanding. Instead, many instructors prioritized simplified, practical explanations aligned with assessment needs and learners' existing knowledge. This showed agreement with Harris and Helks' finding in the UK that some teachers viewed terminology as essential for assessment-driven instruction and student accountability (2018). Both data strands indicated that teachers conceptualize grammatical terminology not as a central objective, but rather as a supportive tool that should be used flexibly, tailored to learners' needs and institutional demands. These findings overlapped with the findings of Basturkmen et al.'s (2002) study on the role of metalanguage in CLT that when used judiciously, metalanguage can function as a scaffold in the integration of grammar into communicative practice without interrupting the flow of communication.

5.9. Use of L1

The second research question aimed to explore the relationship between teachers' preferred language while teaching grammar and grammar teaching cognitions. No statistically significant difference was found among the groups of those who use mainly English, those who use mainly Turkish, and those who use both languages. However, the qualitative data suggested that participants expressed a pragmatic yet cautious view on the use of L1 in grammar teaching. Most acknowledged its strategic value for clarifying complex points, managing the classroom, and addressing misunderstandings, particularly with lower-level learners, similar to the findings of Wang and Ryan (2020) in the Chinese

context that L1 can assist in explanation of grammar rules, managing activities, comfort lower-proficiency learners. However, they emphasized the need for moderation to prevent overreliance and ensure sufficient English exposure, which closely resembled the finding of Yavuz (2012) that teachers cited student dependency and reduced cognitive engagement as downsides to L1 use. L1 was seen as a useful but limited tool, employed selectively to support comprehension while maintaining an English-focused learning environment. These results mirrored the findings of Sali (2014) in the Turkish secondary context that teachers deliberately utilized L1 to facilitate comprehension and reduce learner anxiety but voiced concerns over its potential to limit exposure.

Participants generally agreed that strategic L1 use can effectively support grammar instruction by bridging learners' first and second languages. Many reported using L1 to draw attention to linguistic similarities and differences, clarify persistent confusion, and deepen understanding. This finding showed consistency with İnal and Turhanlı's (2019), Sanchez and Borg's (2014) that teachers use L1 to raise learners' awareness of the differences and similarities between L1 and L2. English Common practices included selective translation, L1 and L2 comparisons, and targeted explanations in Turkish. While some favored minimal use, others considered strategic L1 integration essential. Despite varying approaches, teachers broadly acknowledged its role in enhancing comprehension and reinforcing grammatical awareness. These findings showed consistency with Timuçin and Baytar's (2015) results in the similar context of a Turkish state university that teachers mainly tended use L1 for translation and checking understanding. The selective mindset of translation observed in the study demonstrated a discrepancy with Gerem and Ekşi's (2019) finding within Turkish elementary and high school settings and Nishimuro and Borg's (2013) finding in Japanese high school contexts that teachers heavily relied on comparing grammatical structures in L1 and L2, predominantly utilizing mother tongue to explain target grammar. One possible explanation for such a stark contrast could be the nuances stemming from the teaching context and learners' age groups.

Participants viewed L1 use for social and discourse-related purposes as a valuable tool for enhancing motivation, building rapport, and fostering a supportive classroom environment in line with the remarks made by Shin et al. (2019) in their review on L1 use in foreign language classrooms regarding its enormous potential in creating classroom rapport and reducing anxiety. Many teachers used L1 to strengthen interpersonal

connections, offer emotional support, or engage learners informally. While some expressed concerns about overuse potentially limiting English exposure, most acknowledged its practical role in classroom management and student well-being. Controlled L1 use was seen as beneficial for addressing the social and emotional needs of learners.

Teachers showed varied attitudes toward linguistic diversity. While some embraced multilingualism as a resource and integrated students' L1s into instruction, others faced challenges when their monolingual-focused strategies proved insufficient. This finding resonated with Tishakov and Tsagari's (2022) finding in the Norwegian context that even though teachers endorsed multilingualism in their classes, clashes emerged between their monolingual tendencies and multilingual philosophies. Although many acknowledged the value of L1 comparisons, tensions emerged, highlighting the need for adaptive pedagogy and greater teacher awareness to effectively support multilingual learners.

5.10. Washback

Participants' reflections highlighted a notable washback effect resulting from grammar-oriented assessments within the language program and the deeply ingrained prioritization of grammar in the Turkish educational culture. Many acknowledged that such exams influence their instructional decisions, often leading to a heightened focus on explicit grammar teaching at the expense of communicative and productive skills. Learners similarly tended to prioritize grammar, drawn to its predictability in testing. While some teachers valued grammar exams for offering measurable feedback, others criticized their dominance, noting the potential restriction they impose on authentic language use and skill development. These findings point to a complex washback dynamic and underscore the need for a more balanced assessment approach that supports communicative competence alongside grammatical accuracy. The findings regarding washback in this study accorded with a significant cluster of LTC research in various contexts (Chan, 2015; Moodie & Feryok, 2015; Macalister, 2016; Ngo, 2018; Macalister, 2022; Bozorgian et al., 2023; Allahyari et al., 2023)

5.11. Use of Technology

Participants conveyed varied viewpoints on the role of technology in grammar instruction. Many highlighted its pedagogical advantages, citing the motivational impact of gamified platforms such as Kahoot and Quizizz, as well as the functional support provided by tools like Google Classroom and WhatsApp in line with the finding of Al-Dosakee and Ozdamli (2021) that gamification through digital tools generally enhanced learner motivation, engagement, and achievement in language classes. Emerging technologies, particularly AI-driven tools like ChatGPT, were acknowledged by several teachers for their ability to generate tailored materials, deliver formative feedback, and foster learner autonomy. This showed agreement with Jiang's (2022) literature review findings regarding AI use in language teaching that AI-supported tools were found to assist teachers in managing classroom instruction and tailoring grammar instruction to individual learner needs. However, concerns were also raised regarding potential distractions, especially from mobile devices, and several participants expressed uncertainty or limited confidence in integrating technology effectively due to their limited technological pedagogical content knowledge. While both the affordances and limitations of digital tools were recognized, most participants agreed that judicious and purposeful use of technology holds significant potential to support grammar instruction and improve learner engagement.

6. CONCLUSION

The concluding chapter will present a detailed overview of the current study. The main findings will be outlined in the summary of the research. Then, the pedagogical implications will be addressed in detail. Finally, the limitations involved in the study and suggestions for future empirical studies will be discussed.

6.1. Summary of the Study

The present study set out to explore tertiary-level EFL teachers' cognitions regarding grammar instruction through a mixed-methods convergent parallel design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011), combining questionnaire data with semi-structured interviews. The quantitative strand revealed general trends regarding teachers' views on the role of grammar, preferred instructional practices, and collective cognitions regarding traditional and contemporary grammar instruction methodologies while the qualitative strand provided deeper insights into the rationales behind these cognitions and the complexities teachers face in practice. For the quantitative data strand, Teachers' Cognitions About Grammar Teaching Questionnaire by Zhang and Sun (2022) was revised through EFL expert feedback and adjusted to align with the research context. Following the ethics committee approval and research permit, the 27-item Likert-scale questionnaire was implemented within the preparatory class of a state university in Turkey and completed by 128 EFL instructors teaching at the preparatory class. Descriptive and inferential analysis of the quantitative data set was run through SPSS 30 driven by the research questions of the study. For the qualitative data strand, a semi-structured interview of 12 questions was designed with the assistance of an LTC expert and feedback from EFL experts. Then, a pilot of the semi-structured interviews was implemented to ensure the validity of the interview questions. Out of 128 questionnaire participants, 64 volunteered for a semi-structured interview. With a purposive sampling, 38 of the volunteers were selected for in-depth semi-structured interviews to gain deeper insight into the cognitions of lecturers in relation to grammar instruction. Within the semi-structured interviews, the teachers were asked about their grammar teaching tendencies and cognitions in detail. Through the semi-structured interviews with 38 participants, approximately 33 hours of interview data were gathered. The semi-structured interviews were voice-recorded and transcribed. The qualitative data set was analyzed using Dedoose 10 through thematic analysis accompanied with an EFL expert. To raise the

degree of reliability of the thematic coding, Cohen's kappa (κ) test was implemented with a 40% subset of the qualitative data strand, yielding a κ value of 0.92 which amounted to almost perfect agreement between the coders by Landis and Koch's (1977) interpretative benchmarks.

The second research question aimed to explore the statistical relationship between factors of academic qualifications, professional development certificates, teaching experience and preferred language while teaching grammar and grammar instruction cognitions of tertiary-level EFL practitioners. Inferential statistics was run to detect possible differences between the groups in terms of each factor. No statistically significant difference in grammar cognitions was found regarding any of the factors.

The first research question aimed to explore tertiary-level EFL teachers' cognitions in grammar teaching. The quantitative findings revealed a generally strong recognition of grammar's role in language teaching, especially in relation to accuracy and assessment. Participants expressed clear preferences for context-based and communicative approaches to grammar instruction, while also supporting an eclectic blend of deductive and inductive methods in the questionnaire. Although grammatical terminology was viewed as pedagogically useful, it was employed selectively, primarily for examination purposes.

The qualitative findings provided deeper insights into the cognitive patterns through eleven overarching themes within the qualitative data strand. The study demonstrated the multifaceted, dynamic, and context-dependent nature of language teacher cognition in grammar teaching. Teachers' cognitions were influenced profoundly by personal learning histories, professional development, institutional contexts, and learner-related considerations. Persistent tensions between pedagogical ideals and contextual realities revealed cognitive complexity and adaptive instructional strategies among teachers.

Grammar was consistently seen as central to language instruction, yet its dominance remained contested. Teachers valued grammar as essential for accuracy and exam performance but warned against its overemphasis, which they believed undermined fluency and communicative competence. A recurring emphasis was placed on embedding grammar in meaningful, communicative contexts. While autonomy was broadly recognized as vital for long-term learning, teachers identified challenges such as low

motivation, insufficient learner training, and rigid curricular frameworks that constrained their ability to foster genuine autonomy.

Methodologically, participants endorsed communicative and contemporary approaches yet often adopted eclectic practices, combining them with more traditional methods under the pressure of the exam-driven context. This pragmatic flexibility highlighted teachers' tendency to adapt their practices to institutional demands rather than adhere to methodological purity. Teachers based their rationales behind their methodological tendencies and preferences mostly on personal learning or teaching experiences instead of second language acquisition theories. Contextual constraints, namely curriculum design and exam-driven instruction, were found to play a decisive role, often resulting in tensions between theoretical beliefs and actual practices. Teacher-related factors also strongly shaped cognitions. Professional development, reflective practice, and experiences abroad often reoriented beliefs toward communicative and functional grammar teaching, though prior exposure to traditional instruction as part of their language learning journey occasionally created dissonance in the form of anti-apprenticeship of observation. It was also found that that potential of professional development through certificates such as CELTA and DELTA could be limited to the extent that it is critically reflected upon with personal motivation and acknowledged to a certain degree.

Learner-related considerations, including anxiety, motivation, and proficiency level, were found to directly influence instructional choices. Explicit methods were perceived as appropriate for anxious or lower-level learners, whereas inductive and context-rich approaches were favored for more confident or advanced students. At the contextual level, institutional constraints, curriculum design, and exam structures emerged as powerful forces, often pulling teachers' practices toward discrete grammar instruction despite their preference for integrated approaches.

Language-related factors also featured prominently, with accuracy emphasized due to assessment demands, though many teachers increasingly recognized the importance of fluency, meaning, and context. Pronunciation and register were acknowledged but seen as peripheral to grammar teaching. Grammatical terminology, while not prioritized for its intrinsic pedagogical value, was employed pragmatically to ensure students could navigate exam instructions, with teachers advocating moderation to avoid confusion.

Teachers widely supported selective and purposeful use of L1, employing it for clarification, comparison, motivation, and management, while remaining cautious of excessive reliance that could hinder exposure to English. Washback was identified as a pervasive influence, with high-stakes examinations shaping both teachers' practices and students' expectations, reinforcing accuracy-oriented and discrete grammar teaching at the expense of communicative practice. Finally, while technology was recognized as a motivational and versatile resource, its integration into grammar instruction was inconsistent. Teachers experimented with gamification, digital platforms, and AI tools, but varying levels of expertise and concerns about distraction limited systematic use.

The findings highlighted that while teachers' cognitions generally align with contemporary views of communicative and learner-centered instruction, their practices are mediated by a complex interplay of personal, institutional, learner-related, and contextual factors. The study underscored the need for reflective teacher education and sustained institutional support to bridge the gap between cognition and practice in grammar instruction.

6.2. Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this study denote several pedagogical implications for grammar teaching in tertiary-level EFL contexts. The persistence of cognitive dissonances suggests the need for continuous reflective practice to help teachers align their beliefs with their instructional decisions. Professional development programs, therefore, should not only introduce methodological alternatives but also encourage teachers to critically evaluate their own practices and adapt them to learner needs and institutional realities. Tertiary institutions should offer context-sensitive and sustainable in-service professional development schemes to instructors with the aim of making reflective practice a permanent part of their teaching routine.

The persistence of grammar's central role in EFL instruction, despite teachers' communicative intentions, suggests a need to critically reflect on how grammar is positioned and practiced within intensive language programs within universities. While many teachers endorsed contextualized and fluency-oriented instruction, institutional constraints such as exam-oriented curricula and assessment practices and personal factors such as deeply ingrained traditional methodology tendencies often reinforced a return to structural, form-focused teaching. This highlights the importance of aligning teaching

objectives, materials, and assessment formats within curricula to support a more balanced and communicative approach to grammar.

The study highlights the importance of adoption of a balanced approach to grammar teaching by English language teachers, where explicit instruction and communicative practice are integrated rather than treated as mutually exclusive. Teachers' cognitions indicated that learners often expect and benefit from clear explanations of form yet also require meaningful contexts to transfer this knowledge into productive skills.

The study also underscores the need for ongoing support in methodology training. Teachers frequently adopted eclectic approaches, often blending deductive, inductive, and communicative methods pragmatically. While such flexibility is pedagogically valuable, it can risk inconsistency or reinforce outdated practices if not grounded in principled decision-making and theoretical frameworks. Therefore, reflective practice and continued methodological dialogue within communities of practice should be encouraged by tertiary institutions and administrators. Workshops on using inductive language teaching strategies should be provided to teachers by those in charge of professional development schemes within university contexts.

The data indicated that teachers favor learner autonomy but face difficulty operationalizing it due to low motivation, lack of learner training, and structural rigidity. Thus, teacher training programs available for university EFL teachers should include practical strategies for fostering autonomy, such as incorporating reflection, learner choice, and metacognitive awareness into grammar instruction. Moreover, professional development initiatives should address how to scaffold learner autonomy in exam-heavy contexts without compromising communicative engagement.

The role of contextual and institutional factors, such as exam washback and curriculum design, underscores the need for systemic changes. Revising assessment practices to include more productive and communicative tasks, and to mitigate the effects of high stakes exams, and redesigning curricular policies to relieve the time pressures caused by hectic syllabus content could reduce the overemphasis on accuracy and mechanical practice hence fostering a more holistic language learning experience. In addition, teacher education programs should integrate reflective modules on balancing communicative ideals with exam-driven realities to better prepare in-service and pre-service teachers for the stark realities of language classrooms.

Additionally, the pragmatic use of L1 and grammatical terminology suggests that teacher education should move beyond rigid monolingual ideologies and instead promote principled bilingual pedagogies. Teachers should be trained in how to use L1 strategically for comparison, clarification, and cognitive scaffolding, especially for lower-level learners, without undermining target language exposure. Similarly, through in-service training opportunities, teachers should be equipped with strategies for integrating grammatical terminology in a way that supports comprehension and autonomy without overwhelming students.

While many instructors recognized the potential of technology and artificial intelligence for grammar teaching, its actual integration remained inconsistent. Institutions should offer structured digital literacy training that goes beyond tool use and focuses on pedagogical applications of digital and AI-based resources. Encouraging collaborative sharing of best practices may also help close the gap between teachers' positive attitudes toward technology and their classroom practices.

In sum, these pedagogical implications emphasize the importance of coherence between teacher cognitions, institutional policy, and classroom practice. Supporting teachers with the tools, training, and curricular flexibility to act on their cognitions is vital for the effective and contextually responsive teaching of grammar in EFL contexts.

6.3.Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This study, like all empirical research, has certain limitations that need to be acknowledged. First, while the mixed-methods design enabled a comprehensive exploration of teachers' cognitions, the sample was limited to one state university in Turkey. This naturally restricts the generalizability of the findings to other institutional, cultural, or educational contexts. A wider range of institutions, including private universities or different educational levels, could yield more diverse insights pertinent to language teacher cognition.

Second, although 38 in-depth semi-structured interviews provided a rich qualitative data strand, self-reported accounts may not always reflect actual classroom practices. Classroom observations or stimulated recall protocols could complement interviews in future studies, providing a more nuanced understanding of the belief–practice relationship.

Third, the quantitative instrument, while reliable, primarily measured teachers' explicit and stated cognitions and might not have fully captured implicit beliefs or subconscious influences on pedagogy. Future research could make use of longitudinal or ethnographic methods to trace how teacher cognitions evolve over time and under varying professional pressures.

Finally, the role of emerging factors such as artificial intelligence and post-pandemic digital learning environments warrants deeper investigation. Future studies could examine how teachers' cognitions adapt to these evolving contexts and how technology-mediated practices reshape their approaches to grammar instruction.



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APPENDIX 1

Consent Form

This research is a thesis study titled **EFL Teachers' Cognitions in Grammar Teaching at the Tertiary Level** and aims to explore the cognitions of teachers of English as a foreign language at university level in relation to grammar teaching. The study is conducted by Muhammet Gökhan Gök under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Ali Merç. The study aims to uncover the origins of the concept of teacher cognition, a crucial aspect of teacher psychology, and seeks to enrich the literature on teacher cognition specifically within the context of grammar teaching.

- Your participation in this study is voluntary.
- For the purpose of the study, data will be collected from you through questionnaires, interviews and reflection reports.
- The names of the participants and the data they will share with the researcher will be kept confidential.
- The data collected within the scope of the research will only be used for scientific purposes, will not be used for purposes other than the purpose of the research or in any other research, and will not be shared with others without your (written) permission, if necessary.
- You have the right to examine the data collected from you upon your request.
- The data collected from you will be protected by encrypted filing method in line with the principle of confidentiality and will be archived or destroyed at the end of the research.
- There will be no questions/requests that may cause you discomfort during the data collection process(es). However, if you feel uncomfortable for any reason during your participation, you will be able to leave the study at any time. If you leave the study, the data collected from you will be removed from the study and destroyed.

Thank you for taking the time to read and evaluate the voluntary participation form. You can direct your questions about the study to Muhammet Gökhan Gök of Anadolu University, School of Foreign Languages.

Researcher Name: Lect. Muhammet Gökhan Gök

Address: Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages

Business Telephone Number:

Cell Phone:

I agree to participate in this study completely voluntarily, knowing that I can withdraw from the study if I wish, and that the information I provide will be used for scientific purposes. *(Please fill in and sign this form and give it to the data collector)*

☐ **I accept.**

Participant Name and Surname:

Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX 2

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Teachers' Cognitions in Grammar Teaching at the Tertiary Level

This study is designed to investigate your perspectives, beliefs, and choices in grammar instruction in university preparatory schools. To that end, your completion of the questionnaire will contribute to obtaining real data, which is crucial for more accurate findings. Participation in the study is voluntary. All the information will solely be used for research purposes and be kept strictly confidential. The questionnaire may take up to 15 minutes to complete. To further the data collected, participants are kindly invited to volunteer for an optional interview. Those interested can indicate their willingness at the end of the survey. Thank you for your contribution to the study.

Muhammet Gökhan Gök

Phone and Email:

I agree to this study with my own consent, knowing that I can leave the study if I wish, and that the information I have provided will be used for scientific purposes.

☐ I accept.

Section 1: Background Information

Please tick the appropriate choice to provide your demographic information.

1. Age range:

☐ 20-25

☐ 31-35

☐ 41-45

☐ 51+

☐ 26-30

☐ 36-40

☐ 46-50

2. Gender:

☐ Female

☐ Male

3. Academic qualifications:

☐ Bachelor's degree

☐ Master's degree

☐ Doctoral degree

4. Years of teaching experience:

☐ 0 to 5 years

☐ 11 to 15 years

☐ 6 to 10 years

☐ 16 years or more

5. Professional certificates:

☐ CELTA

☐ DELTA

☐ ICALT

☐ TESOL

☐ Others: _____

6. Time spent in an English-speaking country:

☐ No time spent

☐ 6 to 12 months

☐ Less than 6 months

☐ More than one year

7. Languages used when teaching grammar:

☐ Mainly Turkish

☐ Mainly English

☐ Both

Section 2: EFL Teachers' Cognitions about Grammar Teaching at the Tertiary Level

Here are some statements about grammar teaching. Please indicate your opinion by marking the appropriate box next to each statement. Please respond to each statement as quickly as possible.

Teachers=University teachers

Students=University students

No	Statement	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
1	Teachers should focus more on the structure and form than meaning.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
2	Students need to be consciously aware of a structure's form and its function before they can use it proficiently.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
3	Grammar explanations should be avoided by the teacher.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
4	New grammatical points should be presented and practised in contextual situations.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
5	Grammar should be taught in an explicit or direct way.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
6	Teachers should begin teaching a new grammar point by explaining the rule.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
7	Having students figure out grammatical rules can help them increase their awareness of English.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
8	Thinking about the grammar rules while talking prevents students from communicating fluently.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
9	If students memorise rules and facts about grammar, it will help them to produce correct language in spontaneous situations.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
10	It is best to give the grammatical explanation first and then practise the rule.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
11	Mechanical drilling is of no value in English teaching.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
12	Teachers should ask students to practise new grammatical structures.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree

13	Teachers should begin teaching a new grammar point by giving examples.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
14	Students should understand the common grammatical terms in English.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
15	Focusing students' attention on forms is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the acquisition of grammar.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
16	Students should be encouraged to speak/write accurately from the beginning.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
17	Grammar teaching should focus on the meaning of structures and their use in context.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
18	Students should be encouraged to create language by a process of trial and error.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
19	Drilling and memorisation are essential to the successful learning of new language forms.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
20	Teaching grammar in different units leads to language knowledge which students can use in natural contexts later.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
21	Students learn grammar best through exposure to language in natural context.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
22	When using language to communicate in English, it is more important to be grammatically accurate than socially appropriate.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
23	Teachers should teach simple grammatical structures before more complex ones.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
24	Students should be able to use the common grammatical terms in English correctly when discussing grammar.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
25	Teachers should help students to work out grammar rules for themselves.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
26	Teachers should use grammatical terms to explain grammar rules to students.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree

27	Accuracy, or correctness in linguistic form, is a primary aim in grammar teaching.	strongly disagree	disagree	undecided	agree	strongly agree
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APPENDIX 3

Warm-up Question

- Could you please talk a bit about yourself and your teaching career as an EFL teacher?

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. In your opinion, what is the role of grammar in language teaching and learning?
2. What is your general approach in grammar teaching in your grammar classes? / How do you approach grammar in your classes?
3. Can you talk about a good or bad grammar lesson you have done in your teaching career?
4. What is the place of structure/form and context/meaning in your grammar lessons?
5. What is the importance of accuracy and fluency in grammar learning and teaching in your opinion?
6. Do you teach new grammar points implicitly and by discovery or explicitly and directly?
7. Should grammar be taught separately or integrated with other skills?
8. To what extent do you use grammatical terminology in your grammar instruction? To what extent do you expect your students to understand or use grammatical terminology in grammar lessons?
9. What is the role of drilling and practice in your grammar instruction?
10. To what extent do you utilize L1 in your grammar classes?
11. Can grammar be learned autonomously? Is a teacher necessary for learning grammar?
12. What is the effect of exams (overemphasis on grammar in exams, if any) on teaching/learning grammar?

APPENDIX 4
Ethics Committee Approval

Evrak Kayıt Tarihi: 11.01.2024

Protokol No: 680381

Tarih: 29.01.2024



ANADOLU ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL VE BEŞERÎ BİLİMLER BİLİMSEL ARAŞTIRMA VE YAYIN ETİĞİ KURULU
KARAR BELGESİ

ÇALIŞMANIN TÜRÜ:	Yüksek Lisans Tez Çalışması
KONU:	Eğitim Bilimleri
BAŞLIK:	Yükseköğretim Düzeyinde Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Dilbilgisi Öğretimindeki Bilişleri (EFL Teachers' Cognitions in Grammar Teaching at the Tertiary Level)
PROJE/TEZ YÜRÜTÜCÜSÜ:	Doç. Dr. Gökhan ÖZTÜRK
TEZ YAZARI:	Muhammet Gökhan GÖK
ALT KOMİSYON GÖRÜŞÜ:	-
KARAR:	Olumlu

APPENDIX 5

Research Permit

Ana.Üni. : 13.11.2023-648990



T.C.
ANADOLU ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğü



Sayı : E-37195158-903.99-648990
Konu : Anket Uygulama İzni

13.11.2023

DAĞITIM YERLERİNE

Yüksekokulumuz İngilizce Hazırlık Programında uygulamak istediğiniz çalışmanın özü incelenmiş ve yapılması uygun görülmüştür.
Bilgilerinizi ve gereğini rica ederim.

Prof. Dr. Ümit Deniz TURAN
Müdür

Ek:

- 1- Yönetim Kurulu Kararı
- 2- Yabancı Diller Bölümü Yazısı

Dağıtım:

Gereği:

Sayın Öğr. Gör. Muhammet Gökhan GÖK

Bilgi:

Sayın Öğr. Gör. Mehmet DURANLIOĞLU

Sayın Öğr. Gör. Mehmet GÖNEN

APPENDIX 6
Factors of the Teachers' Cognitions About Grammar Teaching Questionnaire
(TCAGTQ)

Focus-on-formS instruction (six items)

1. Teachers should focus more on the structure and form than meaning.
2. Students need to be consciously aware of a structure's form and its function before they can use it proficiently.
3. If students memorize rules and facts about grammar, it will help them to produce correct language in spontaneous situations.
4. Students should be encouraged to speak/write accurately from the beginning.
5. When using language to communicate in English, it is more important to be grammatically accurate than socially appropriate.
6. Accuracy, or correctness in linguistic form, is a primary aim in grammar teaching.

Focus-on-form instruction (five items)

1. New grammatical points should be presented and practiced in contextual situations.
2. Thinking about the grammar rules while talking prevents students from communicating fluently.
3. Focusing students' attention on forms is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the acquisition of grammar.
4. Grammar teaching should focus on the meaning of structures and their use in context.
5. Students learn grammar best through exposure to language in natural context.

The deductive approach (five items)

1. Grammar should be taught in an explicit or direct way.
2. Teachers should begin teaching a new grammar point by explaining the rule.
3. It is best to give the grammatical explanation first and then practice the rule.
4. Teaching grammar in different units leads to language knowledge which students can use in natural contexts later.
5. Teachers should teach simple grammatical structures before more complex ones.

The inductive approach (five items)

1. Grammar explanations should be avoided by the teacher.

2. Having students figure out grammatical rules can help them increase their awareness of English.
3. Teachers should begin teaching a new grammar point by giving examples.
4. Students should be encouraged to create language by a process of trial and error.
5. Teachers should help students to work out grammar rules for themselves.

The value of drilling (three items)

1. Mechanical drilling is of no value in English teaching.
2. Teachers should ask students to practice new grammatical structures.
3. Drilling and memorization are essential to the successful learning of new language forms.

The importance of grammatical terminology (three items)

1. Students should understand the common grammatical terms in English.
2. Students should be able to use the common grammatical terms in English correctly when discussing grammar.
3. Teachers should use grammatical terms to explain grammar rules to students.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name Surname: Muhammet Gökhan Gök

Foreign Languages: Advanced English, Intermediate Spanish

E-mail:

EDUCATION

BA **2012** English Language Teaching, Necmettin Erbakan University

WORK EXPERIENCE

2012 – 2013 Lecturer, Kütahya Dumlupınar University

2013 – present Lecturer, Anadolu University, School of Foreign Languages

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE

2020 – 2022 Assistant Director, Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages

OTHER

2017 – 2018 Fulbright Language Teaching Assistant, University of Richmond, Richmond, VA, USA

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2015 CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults)

2021 Cambridge Train the Trainer Certificate

2023 Arizona State University TESOL Professional Certificate

2024 Google Generative AI for Educators Certificate