

The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning™2017Volume 7/Issue 2Article 9

Stated Beliefs and Classroom Practices on Grammar Teaching: The Case of Three EFL Teachers

Gökhan Öztürk, Department of Foreign Language Education, Anadolu University, Eskişehir, Turkey, gokhanoztrk@gmail.com

Elçin Ölmezer-Öztürk, Department of Foreign Language Education, Anadolu University, Eskişehir, Turkey, elcinolmezer@gmail.com

Recommended Citations:

APA

Öztürk, G. & Ölmezer-Öztürk, E. (2017). Stated Beliefs and Classroom Practices on Grammar Teaching: The Case of Three EFL Teachers. *The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning*, 7(2), 146-165.

MLA

Gökhan Öztürk, and Elçin Ölmezer-Öztürk. "Stated Beliefs And Classroom Practices On Grammar Teaching: The Case Of Three EFL Teachers." The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning 7.2 (2017): 146-165.

The JLTL is freely available online at <u>www.jltl.org</u>, with neither subscription nor membership required.

Contributors are invited to review the Submission page and manuscript templates at www.jltl.org/Submitonline



As an online journal, the JLTL adopts a green-policy journal. Please print out and copy responsibly.



The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning, 2017(2), pp. 146-165

Stated Beliefs and Classroom Practices on Grammar Teaching: The Case of Three EFL Teachers

Gökhan Öztürk¹, Elçin Ölmezer-Öztürk²

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Article History: Received May 31, 2017 Revisions completed October 5, 2017 Published October ?, 2017

Key Words: Grammar Teaching Stated Beliefs EFL Teachers Employing a qualitative multiple case design, this study examined the stated beliefs and actual practices of three EFL teachers on grammar teaching and to what extent they matched. The participants were purposefully selected and the data were collected through interviews, classroom observations and delayed interviews. Qualitative content analysis scheme and constant comparison model were used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that teachers' stated beliefs and classroom practices regarding grammar teaching were in contrast in several points which included the presentation of the target structure, grammar teaching activities and their corrective feedback preferences while teaching grammar. It was also found out that the main reasons of these mismatches were several institutional and studentrelated factors. Based on these findings, how the teachers turned their beliefs into classroom practices while teaching grammar was presented in a figurative way.

© Association of Gazi Foreign Language Teaching. All rights reserved

In the field of SLA, the role of grammar teaching has gone through certain changes, from its heyday in structural approaches to its ignorance in communicative approaches (Wach, 2013). With the emergence of communicative methods in the 1970s, the role of grammar teaching was neglected, and it was even considered as dangerous because in this method the crucial elements were the meaning, exposure to language and experience with it (Nassaji & Fotos, 2004). However, many scholars suggested that exposure, experience and meaningful input were not sufficient for learning; thus, grammar teaching was necessary for communication. Having a similar point of view, Ellis (2006) also advocated the necessity of

¹ Department of Foreign Language Education, Anadolu University, Eskişehir, Turkey, gokhanoztrk@gmail.com, +902223350580

² Department of Foreign Language Education, Anadolu University, Eskişehir, Turkey, elcinolmezer@gmail.com, +902223350580

instruction for acquiring an L2. Owing to the dissatisfaction with the communicative methods which are purely meaning-based, Long (1991) came up with two new approaches which are focus-on-forms (FonFs) and focus-on-form (FonF), covered by the umbrella term form-focused instruction. As a traditional one, focus-on-forms sees L2 as the combination of many segments that should be taught separately by teachers, and learners should synthesize all these parts to be able to speak (Long, 1991). Ellis (2006, p.100) defined it as "a structure-of-the-day approach" which focuses on activities for a single grammatical unit. DeKeyser (1998) claimed that learners' explicit knowledge will turn into implicit with enough practices in this approach. On the other hand, focus-on-form is a type of grammar teaching in which learners are presented grammatical units in a meaningful context for communication, and the teacher attracts the attention of the learners to the linguistic units while the focus is maintained on the meaning (Long, 1996). For instance, DeKeyser (1998) supported the effectiveness of focus-on-forms by stating that with the help of automatization, learners gradually learn grammatical structures; on the other hand, Long (1996) claimed that focus-on-form is more beneficial because it is learner-based. In their meta-analysis studies, Norris and Ortega (2000) and Ellis (2002a) revealed that focus-on-form had a more positive effect on language acquisition, and the accuracy rate was higher. Irrespective of controversies, in SLA literature, it is highly accepted that language learning is affected positively by formal attention to the form (Borg & Burns, 2008; Burgess & Etherington, 2002), and the advantages of focus-on-form were acknowledged when compared to other approaches (Spada & Lightbown, 2008).

Wach (2013) drew attention to teachers' beliefs in grammar teaching process and maintained that, being the basics of grammar teaching in both theoretical and practical levels, all these approaches mentioned above towards grammar teaching are reflected and realized as classroom implications through teachers' practices, and their beliefs also play a vital role in this process. Kagan (1992, p.65) defined teacher belief as "tacit often unconsciously held assumptions about students, classrooms, and the academic material to be taught". Borg (1999, p. 25) stated that grammar teaching is a "multi-faceted" decision-making process, and as a result of this process, teachers are "active, thinking decision-makers who make instructional choices by drawing on complex practically-oriented, personalized, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts, and beliefs". Since teachers are active decision-makers, they are confronted to make decisions about all the aspects of grammar teaching based on the approaches they adopt and their beliefs have a strong influence on teachers' classroom decisions and what teachers believe shapes how they behave in an educational setting. Thus, exploring "what language teachers think, know, and believe" has a pivotal role in the study of language teaching, and "its relationship to instructional decisions" has been studied recently on grammar teaching (Borg, 2003, p.96).

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of studies examining teacher beliefs and their practices regarding grammar teaching. Burgess and Etherington (2002) conducted a study with 48 EAP teachers at British universities. Employing both a quantitative and qualitative design, the researchers administered a five-point Likert type questionnaire to the teachers and some of them were also asked to comment on their answers. The results demonstrated that for most of the teachers, explicit grammar teaching during a communicative task was ideal, and they were fond of making use of presentation of the target grammatical unit in a decontextualised way (or in an isolated way). Additionally, the participants reported that their students expected them to teach grammar in an explicit and isolated way. They also had an inclination for authentic texts and real-life tasks; hence, it revealed that they tended to utilize focus-on-form approaches in their classrooms. Graus and Coppen (2015) just focused on the beliefs of student teachers who were at Dutch universities on grammar teaching. A questionnaire, which was developed by the researchers, and had four subsections (meaning vs form-focused instruction, focus-on-form vs focus-on-forms, inductive vs deductive, and explicit vs implicit), was administered to 832 student teachers. The respondents were generally inclined to form-focused, explicit, and focus-on-forms approach;

however, higher year respondents' findings were different in the sense that they displayed a preference for more meaning-focused and implicit instruction and they were in favour of focus-on-form approach more. Hence, the results yielded that there was a shift from traditional approaches to more recent developments when the years of the students were higher. Besides, it was concluded that when teaching more complicated grammar units the respondents made use of explicit and deductive approaches more. In another study, Nishimuro and Borg (2013) examined the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices of three teachers in grammar teaching. The data were collected through classroom observations and interviews which were held before and after the observations. The classroom observations showed that the participants had teacher-led classes which were mostly in students' L1, made use of grammatical terminology, and taught grammar in a decontextualised way. That is, they adopted traditional/focus-on forms approaches. While explaining their reasons, the participants stated that they made use of students' L1 because they did not want students to make an effort for understanding the teacher for the fear that their motivation would decrease. They also made use of a lot of explanations and grammatical terminology because they thought that these would provide extra support for the students. They also stated that limited time to keep up with the curriculum and cover the target of the course book were other explanations of their practices with respect to grammar teaching. They, in general, stated that grammar teaching is indispensable, and it should be done explicitly in a communicative context.

All these studies mentioned so far revealed the importance of teachers' stated beliefs and the relationship between teachers' stated beliefs and practices, and the reasons behind them. According to Borg and Burns (2008, p. 480), continuing development of research with a collaborative perspective between grammar teaching and teacher cognition will have valuable contribution to the understanding of L2 grammar teaching. In spite of this, there is a scarcity of research investigating teacher beliefs and practices with respect to grammar teaching in Turkish context. Thus, this study aims to investigate EFL teachers' stated beliefs and practices regarding grammar teaching in the light of Ur (1996) and Ellis (1998)'s foci on grammar teaching, and whether there exists a match between their stated beliefs and practices. Finally, it also aims to explore the reasons behind the mismatches (if any) between their stated beliefs and practices. The following research questions will be addressed throughout the study.

1. What are the stated beliefs of the participant EFL teachers on grammar teaching regarding

a) the presentation of the grammatical structure

- b) the types of grammar activities
- c) the correction of grammar errors

2. What are the classroom practices of the teachers on grammar teaching regarding the constructs mentioned above?

3. Do the teachers' stated beliefs and practices match or not? If yes, what are the reasons behind them?

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

Focusing on the stated beliefs and practices of EFL teachers regarding grammar teaching, the study was based on a qualitative case design. According to Mackey and Gass (2005, p.171), case studies provide a holistic perspective on the cases being studied and they have the potential to shed light on the complexities of the research matter under investigation. In addition to this, case studies can be conducted with more than one individual within their particular context and this is called as the multiple-case design. Based on this multiple case design, the participants of the study were examined with an in-depth

focus through qualitative data collection to shed light on their stated grammar teaching beliefs and actual practices.

2.2. Research Setting

The study was carried out in the English preparatory program of a state university in Turkey. There are 28 instructors working in the program with various years of teaching experience and with different majors like English language teaching, linguistics or English language and literature. English is taught in an integrative way and students, who have originally different majors such as engineering, business administration or tourism and prefer this one-year preparatory program on voluntary basis, have 25 hours of weekly course load. Some of these courses are conducted by native speaker teachers to improve students' speaking skills. The courses are mainly based on a course book that is decided by the curriculum office and followed by the teachers during the academic year. The book is composed of certain modules which present language skills integratively. At the end of an academic year, students have to take a proficiency exam and get at least 60 to go on their departments.

2.3. Participants

Employing a purposive sampling strategy, the study included 3 Turkish EFL teachers as participants who were intentionally selected by the researcher and believed to provide a rich amount of data. In addition to this, Dörnyei (2007) maintained that case studies combined with careful purposive sampling would yield valid results and appeal to a wider community. In order to achieve this, several criterion were followed to determine the participants of the study such as a) being a graduate of an ELT department, b) currently teaching at least 15 hours weekly, c) having at least 5 years of teaching experience, and d) being enthusiastic for participants and they are described below with their pseudonyms.

Ezgi is 42 years old and has been teaching English for more than 15 years in the program. She does not have any post-graduate studies in her career. At the time of the study, she has 22 hours of weekly course load and was teaching beginner level students. She is also working in the curriculum office of the program which is responsible for making required revisions in the curriculum.

Pelin, 32 years old, has been working in this department for about 9 years since she graduated from the university. Having some duties in the testing office of the program, she is both teaching elementary students in the program for 18 hours a week and the freshman students in other departments for 9 hours. She has completed her MA in sociology since she is also interested in social sciences.

Burak, who is 30 years old, has been working in the department for 6 years but he has had 8 years of experience in language teaching. He holds an MA in educational sciences but does not have any plans to continue an academic career. At the time of the study, he has 25 hours of weekly course load teaching elementary students. He does not have any office duties in the program.

2.4. Data Collection

Employing a qualitative multiple case design, the study used classroom observations and semi-structured interviews as main data collection tools. During data collection process, the researcher conducted two block sessions (equal to four class hours) of classroom observation for each participant, 12 hours in total. The participants were not told the main foci of these observations in order not to influence their practices. For these lessons, the participants were asked to teach the same grammatical structures in a detailed way in order to prevent any potential influence on their practices that would result from the teaching of

different topics. In these sessions, the teachers taught the grammar topics and conducted several exercises and activities. During the classroom observations, the researcher was a non-participant observer sitting at the back and taking detailed field notes on the classroom practices of the participant teacher regarding their grammar teaching.

The other data collection tool of the study was semi-structured interviews. In qualitative research, interviews are used to obtain detailed information about the participants encouraging them to describe and elaborate on a central issue (Creswell, 2012). In the first interviews, the participants were asked to elaborate on their grammar teaching beliefs with the help of the questions which were parallel with the research questions of the study. Besides, the researcher used some prompts to help the participants provide clearer and more detailed explanations regarding their beliefs on grammar teaching. These first interviews were conducted after the classroom observations in order not to make the participants familiar with the foci of this study and influence their teaching practices. In the final stage of the data collection process, delayed semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants to learn about their justifications and the underlying reasons regarding the mismatches between their grammar teaching beliefs and practices. All the interviews were also carried out in the mother tongue of the participants so that they could express themselves more comfortably and provide better data for the study.

2.5. Data analysis

In qualitative studies, the term belief is usually problematic (Basturkmen et. al., 2004). For this reason, the term 'stated beliefs' which refers to the statements of teachers regarding what they believe and do in their classroom atmosphere was used. Data derived from the classroom observations and the semi-structured interviews were analyzed based on the qualitative content analysis scheme of Creswell (2012) and the constant comparison model (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

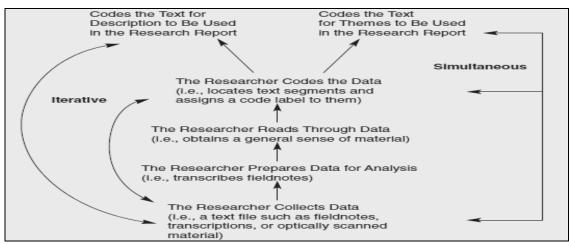


Figure 1. The qualitative content analysis scheme

First the data were transcribed verbatim and then the transcribed version was checked whether there were any missing points. Then all the transcribed data were coded and the emerging themes were labeled. After this process, the constant comparison method in Figure 1 was followed. The researcher constantly compared codes to codes and themes to themes both within cases and cross-cases to reach the emerging categories regarding the participant teachers' grammar teaching beliefs and practices in the light of the research foci of the study. In this way, the researcher prevented the redundancy in the data and obtained more consistent categories grounded in the data.

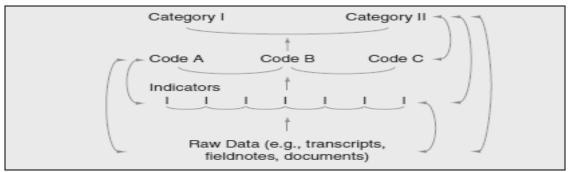


Figure 2. The constant comparison method

In order to increase the validity of the data analysis and findings, several procedures were followed. First of all, the data were triangulated by using two different data collection techniques and focusing on three different cases. The transcription of the semi-structured interviews was also checked by the participants to prevent the missing points. Finally, in order to ensure inter-rater agreement and refer to external auditing, one of the suggestions of Guba and Lincoln (1985), the coding process was also cross-checked by a colleague holding an MA in ELT and all the themes were labeled through negotiation.

3. Results

The research questions of the study aimed to investigate the stated beliefs and practices of the participant teachers on grammar teaching based on the aforementioned constructs and whether their stated beliefs and practices matched or not. The data were collected through classroom observations, first interviews on the participants' stated beliefs and delayed interviews focusing on the mismatches. The findings derived from all these data collection tools are presented case by case in the following sections.

3.1. The Case of Ezgi

3.1.1. Ezgi's stated beliefs and actual practices on grammar teaching

The first interview conducted with Ezgi, the most experienced teacher among the participants, yielded detailed information regarding her stated beliefs on grammar teaching. She stated that she taught grammatical structures in an explicit way to ensure her students' learning them. According to her, explaining the structure directly and in a detailed way helped students learn it more easily and in a better way.

"Most of the time, I directly explain the rules to my students and try to touch upon every detail. I also write the rules on the board so that they can take notes. I think that makes them cover the topic easier because they fully concentrate on what I explain at that moment"

While talking about how she presented grammatical structures in her classes, Ezgi also mentioned a usual flow of her grammar teaching. She expressed that her grammar teaching sessions included the presentation of the structure in a detailed way and doing a lot of exercises on it.

"I usually start with the presentation of the structure. I mean, I write it on the board, explain the rules and gives examples. If students ask questions, I answer them. Finally, we do a lot of exercises on the topic. You know, practice makes perfect."

In terms of the grammar teaching activities she used in her classes, Ezgi stated that drills such as fill-inthe-blanks, matching and sentence formation exercises were her favourite and she used them a lot immediately after teaching a grammatical structure. She believed that such exercises provided opportunities for students to practice what they had learnt.

"When I finish teaching the topic, I do a lot of exercises and I leave a considerable amount of grammar teaching sessions for these exercises. I think they are very useful because students not only practice but also make some mistakes and learn from them."

Finally, Ezgi was asked about how she corrected the mistakes the students made in her grammar teaching sessions. She stated that she did not directly correct her students' erroneous utterances while teaching a grammar point or doing exercises on a previously taught structure. According to her, "providing students the opportunities in which they can find and correct the mistakes themselves" was the most common strategy in her lessons because she did not like correcting them directly. The findings derived from the interview and what she actually did in her observed sessions are presented in Table 1 to present them more clearly.

Table 1

Constructs	Beliefs	Practices
a) presentation of grammatical	Explicit teaching of the structure	Explicit teachingDoing exercise to practice the
structures	 Presentation and practice 	structure
b) types of grammar activities	• Drills like fill-in-the-blanks, matching or sentence formation	 Drills like fill-in-the-blanks, or matching Emphasis on sentence formation
c) correction of grammar errors	Out-put prompting feedback types	Recasts and explicit correctionDetailed explanation of the mistakes

Ezgi's stated beliefs and actual practices on grammar teaching

During both of the block sessions in which Ezgi taught two grammar topics in her classes, she followed similar sequences in her practices. After doing the sections (independent from the grammar topic) such as vocabulary and short listening texts in the book, Ezgi started the presentation of the grammatical structures as she stated in her interviews. In both of the lessons, she said "Please open your notebooks and write with me!" and began to write the rules of the grammatical structures on the board with some examples in an explicit way. She gave some time to students to take notes and then began to explain what she had written on the board. In the first session in which she taught 'Simple Present Tense', she initially explained the rules in English. However, after a short time, she turned to speak in Turkish and explained the rules from the beginning to the end in students' L1. While doing this, she touched upon the usage of suffixes (the singular -s), the use of auxiliaries (do, does), the formation of question sentences and the use of simple present by referring to the equivalence of it in students' L1. In the second session, she almost taught the grammar point, 'present continuous', in the same way, but this time, she never used English and explained all the topic using Turkish. After she had finished presenting and explaining the grammatical structures in Turkish in an explicit way, she wanted her students to do the fill-in-the-blanks and multiple-choice exercises at the end of their course book in both of the sessions. She received students' answers one by one and provided feedback for the mistakes. After that, Ezgi distributed some worksheet which again included drills, especially sentence formation exercises, on the target structures. Again, she gave students some time to answer them, and then received the answers in the same way. In sum, all her practices in these sessions showed that Ezgi's presentation of the grammatical structure included the explicit teaching of the target point and making immediate drilling exercises on it.

Ezgi's grammar teaching sessions mostly included her lecturing and explanations on the target structure and drills on them. For this reason, the only instructional acts that could be regarded as grammar teaching activities were the exercises she did together with the students. In both of the sessions, she made the exercises at the end of the book after having finished explaining the structure and finally distributed some worksheet on it. The worksheet included fill-in-the blanks and mostly sentence formation exercises. It was clear that she paid a special attention to sentence formation because she received students' answers to these exercises one by one and provided explanations for these sentences no matter if they were formed correctly or not. In other words, she revised what she had taught with these drilling activities.

Finally, it was quite clear in her lessons that correcting students' erroneous utterances was an important part of Ezgi's grammar teaching practices. She provided the most feedback while her students were giving their answers to the exercises in both sessions. While correcting the errors in these sessions, Ezgi mostly used recasts, in which she directly uttered just the correct form of the erroneous utterance, or explicit correction, in which she provided the correct form with an explanation of it. In few instances, she used output-prompting feedback types in which she asked students to self-correct their utterances. The moments when Ezgi provided explicit correction were very noticeable during the sessions because, in her every feedback move in that way, she touched upon the related structure in detail and made very clear explanations about it. Any explicit correction as a feedback move was observed to be a teaching act for Ezgi. For this reason, it was seen that Ezgi paid attention to giving feedback to erroneous sentences of her students in her grammar teaching sessions.

3.1.2. Mismatches between Ezgi's stated beliefs and practices

The data derived from the observations on Ezgi's grammar teaching classes and from her narrations in the first interview regarding her stated beliefs on teaching grammar revealed that there was a parallelism between her stated beliefs and actual practices on grammar teaching. The only mismatch observed between her stated beliefs and practices was presented in following Table 2.

Stated beliefs	Actual practices	Underlying reasons
 Providing output- prompting feedback types 	• Using recasts and explicit correction mostly	 The affective filter of students The grammar point being taught

Table 2

The mismatch in Ezgi's stated beliefs and practices

Although she stated in the interview that she mostly preferred output prompting feedback types and provided opportunities for students to self-correct, it had been observed in the lesson that she had done this for very few times, she had used recasts and explicit correction while correcting the students and the use of explicit correction was very dominant in grammar teaching. She used that feedback type so extensively that each feedback move was a kind of explanation from smaller grammatical points. In the delayed interview, she explained the reason of this mismatch, and it was seen that the proficiency level of students and the grammar topic led to such a mismatch.

"It is again the students. In our previous sessions, I tried to encourage them to self-correct but they got very nervous or anxious, and if they were not able to do, they got discouraged and did not participate to the lesson. I mean, I experienced some problems about it. Now, I correct the mistake myself and also make a detailed explanation on it. I think it works in that way and they like it too."

"I think it is also related with the topic. I believe simple present and present continuous are very important and basic grammar topics and I think I wanted to teach every detail of it and I did not want my students to miss any small details. I think that is why I used so many explicit corrections." In general, it can be said that Ezgi performed almost all her beliefs in her grammar teaching sessions and both of her classes followed similar sequences. As for the mismatching points, she reported that the affective filter of students and the type of the grammar point were influential on her practices which did not match with her stated beliefs.

3.2. The Case of Pelin

3.2.1. Pelin's stated beliefs and actual practices on grammar teaching

During the first interview which was conducted after the observations of her grammar teaching classes, Pelin expressed her beliefs on how she covered the grammar topics in classroom atmosphere. According to her, she taught the grammatical structures using both explicit and implicit ways. She stated that she usually started teaching a grammatical structure with a short reading or listening text, or writing a paragraph or a dialogue which included some elements from the target structure so that students could be familiar with it. Then, she taught the grammatical rules directly in an explicit way. She believed that these two ways completed each other and provided a better learning for students.

"I mostly apply both because I think that they complete each other. With an explicit start, I make them familiar with the target structure, and then they have the opportunity to get all the explanations implicitly. I think that maximizes their learning of the target grammar topic."

It was also very clear from Pelin's sentences during the interview that her grammar teaching sessions usually followed a presentation-practice and production sequence. Although she did not directly state in that way, her utterances below clearly demonstrated that kind of a flow.

"I usually start with teaching the structure, as I told you how I did it. After I finish my explanations, I usually ask my students if they understand the topic or they have any questions. Then, we do some exercises on it so that they practice what I have taught. Finally, I prepare them some tasks in which they can produce sentences using the target structure. I usually cover the grammar that way."

Pelin's last words during the interview were on her correction of grammatical errors in her grammar teaching sessions. She stated that if her students had made a mistake using the grammatical structure in an exercise or activity, she first encouraged them to self-correct by providing them some clues or tips. In case of their failure to self-correct, she expressed that she directly provided the correct form by making a clear explanation on the mistake. She believed that she applied a very beneficial feedback strategy in that way.

"I do not like the way in which teachers directly give the correct form and go on. You can never be sure whether students understand it or not. For this reason, I ask them to correct the erroneous utterance on their own first and help them to do it. If they cannot, I explain their mistakes in detail so that they can learn from their mistakes. I think it is quite beneficial for my students."

During the sessions she was observed, Pelin taught two grammatical structures like the other participants and her practices were analyzed based on the grammar teaching constructs of this study. What she expressed regarding her beliefs and her actual practices during the observed session are presented in Table 3.

Constructs	Beliefs	Practices	
a) presentation of grammatical structures	 Both explicit and implicit teaching of the structure Presentation, practice and production 	 Explicit teaching of the structure Presenting and practicing the structure 	
b) types of grammar activities	 Drills like fill-in-the-blanks, matching or sentence formation Tasks in which students can produce the target structure 	• Drills like fill-in-the-blanks, matching or sentence formation	
c) correction of grammar errors	First encouraging students to self-correctIf not, explicit correction	Explicit correction	

 Table 3

 Pelin's stated beliefs and actual practices on grammar teaching

It was seen during the observations that Pelin had two different starts for her grammar teaching sessions. For the first one in which she taught simple present tense, Pelin did not make any warm-up or introduction to the topic and just said "Okay, friends. Today we are going to learn a very important topic, the simple present tense, and if you want you can take notes with me." Then she started writing the rules of simple present tense for all sentence types. In the other session which included the teaching of present continuous tense, Pelin started with a very short picture description. By showing it to the students, she told what the people in picture were doing one by one in one or two minutes. Then she said "This is present continuous; we use it to talk about what people are doing at the time speaking", and began to write the rules on the board.

The other steps of these two sessions were similar. After writing the rules on the board, Pelin began to teach the structures in an explicit way and made detailed explanations on how and where to use them and the points that students needed to be careful about while forming sentences. After these explanations, Pelin received some questions from students and they asked the points that were not clear to them. When their discussions on the topic were over, Pelin distributed two pages of worksheet which included exercises like fill-in-the-blanks, forming questions, matching and sentence formation and asked students to do them individually. She spent a considerable amount of time on waiting for students to finish them, receiving their answers and giving feedback on them. Towards the end of the session, she made a revision on the topics in general and the points students had made mistakes and needed to pay attention while answering questions in the exams.

As for the grammar teaching activities, it was observed that Pelin's grammar teaching sessions mainly included her lecturing and several exercises on the structure being taught. She spent a considerable amount of time in both of the sessions for lecturing and making explanations of the topics. In addition to this, she brought pieces of worksheet that had been prepared in advance to the classroom, asked students to do them, and then they answered and discussed on them together. For this reason, these two instructional elements were observed as the dominant points in Pelin's classes.

The last point that was observed in her grammar teaching was the corrective feedback Pelin provided for her students. Especially during the exercises which she answered with students in both sessions, it was seen that she never ignored students' mistakes and provided a considerable amount of feedback to the students. In few instances, she preferred to give output prompting feedback in which she encouraged students to correct their own mistake through elicitation or meta-linguistic feedback. In all other instances, she corrected the mistakes of students through explicit correction in which she provided the correct with a detailed explanation and attracted her students' attention to the mistake so that they would not do it again. Based on this, it was quite obvious that correcting students' grammatical errors were important for Pelin and she did this through explicit correction in most of the instances.

3.2.2. Mismatches between Pelin's stated beliefs and practices

The findings derived from the observed grammar teaching classes and the first interview revealed that most of Pelin's stated beliefs on grammar teaching and her actual practices matched. However, there were several points in which Pelin did not realize although she stated in the interviews that they were important for her. In the delayed interviews, she was asked to elaborate on these mismatches and the findings regarding them are presented below.

Table 4

The mismatches in Pelin's stated beliefs and actual practices

Stated beliefs	Actual practices	Underlying reasons
• Both explicit and implicit teaching of the structure	• Explicit teaching of the structure	Keeping the pace of curriculum
• Using tasks in the production stage of grammar teaching	 No tasks. Only drills such as fill-in-the-blanks or sentence formation 	• The question types in the exams
• First encouraging students to self-correct. If not, explicit correction	Mostly explicit correction	• The affective filter of students

The first mismatch in Pelin's stated beliefs and practices was related with how she presented the target structure. During the class hours, she had been observed to teach the topics in a completely explicit way, but she stated in the first interview that she used both explicit and implicit teaching. The reason behind this mismatch was reported as the matter of curriculum:

"I normally try to start teaching these grammar points in an implicit way. I mean I use some reading texts or I write some dialogues or sample sentences on the board before explaining the rules. However, I cannot do it on those days because we have a very intense program and all the teachers are trying to keep up with the curriculum. In this situation, I have to sacrifice some of my practices in my sessions. That is why I directly start with teaching the rules."

The findings also showed that Pelin's stated beliefs and her practices did not match in terms of the production stage of her grammar teaching. She stated in the first interviews that she prepared and applied certain tasks in which students had the opportunity to produce sentences using the target structure. However, she had not applied any tasks in her observed classes but done just the exercises. According to Pelin, the question types in the exams were the main reason of this mismatch.

"I have these tasks but I was not able to do them in the sessions you observed because of the exam on that week. Students were going to have the mid-term exam and this year our testing office is preparing more questions on sentence formations and fill-in-the-blanks. For this reason, I had to do more exercises instead of doing the tasks I mentioned in the interview."

The last mismatch was on Pelin's corrective feedback strategy while teaching grammar. She stated in the first interview that she first encouraged students to self-correct; if not, she corrected their mistakes through explicit correction. However, the observations revealed that she hardly ever provided

opportunities for self-correct and the use of explicit correction was dominant in her corrective feedback moves. As a reason for this mismatch, Pelin referred to the anxiety and tension experienced by her students while they were correcting their own mistakes.

"I know it is more beneficial if I can help them correct their own mistakes but sometimes you cannot do it as a teacher. It is very good when they can do it; otherwise, they get very anxious and nervous. Then I do it instead of them. In this class, many of the students are like that and for this reason I do not want to put them in a difficult situation in front of their friends."

It was seen that Pelin was not able to reflect some of her stated beliefs on grammar teaching into classroom practices due to several reasons. The findings from the delayed interviews revealed that two of these mismatches stemmed from two institutional factors, curriculum and testing, while the other one occurred due to the affective filter of students. Other than these three points, Pelin realized her stated beliefs as practices in her grammar teaching sessions.

3.3. The Case of Burak

3.3.1. Burak's stated beliefs on grammar teaching

Like the other participants, Burak was also interviewed regarding his beliefs on grammar teaching after his classes were observed. In the interview, he provided detailed information on how he taught grammar in his classes. The findings on his stated beliefs are presented in Table 7.

At the beginning of the interview, Burak gave some information about how he presented a grammatical structure in his classes. He stated that he always started with a warm-up in which he used a short activity to make students familiar with the structure and to help them construct initial ideas on the usage of it. He added that after this introduction, he wrote the rules on the board and made explanations explicitly. He believed that the combination of these two was quite beneficial for students

"I believe that this is the ideal way because students do not suddenly face with the rules. They first have initial ideas on how it is used and then they learn about the rules. I think this makes the structure more permanent in their mind."

Regarding the flow of his grammar teaching classes, Burak expressed that he usually made students to do some exercises immediately after teaching the target structure. He also said that he gave importance to students' production, so he applied some tasks in which students can create sentences on their own. According to him, his students learnt the topics very well and they generally had good results thanks to the effectiveness of his style.

"First they learn the topic. Then they do some exercises and I give them feedback on their mistakes and the points they had not understood. Finally, they produce their own sentences in our activities. That is how I generally cover a topic and the results of their exam say it really works."

Finally, Burak mentioned his beliefs regarding corrective feedback in his grammar sessions. He stated that he had a general tendency in assisting students to find and correct their won errors. He also added that he might sometimes correct students' errors with a detailed explanation when he thought that the mistake was a difficult one to be corrected by the students. The table below presents the summary of Burak's beliefs on grammar teaching and what he actually did in classroom atmosphere.

Constructs	Beliefs	Practices
a) presentation of grammatical structures	 Staring implicitly but explaining explicitly Presentation, practice and production 	Implicit start and explicit explanationsPresenting and practicing
b) types of grammar activities	 Productive tasks Group work activities	 Drills like fill-in-the-blanks and matching A reading text as a group work activity
c) correction of grammar errors	Output-prompting feedbackSometimes explicit correction	Recast and explicit correctionElicitation (a few times)

Table 5	
Burak's stated beliefs and actual practices on grammar teaching	

During the observed sessions, Burak started both of his grammar teaching with the same technique. In the first session which included teaching simple present he wrote the daily routines of a family on the board. While doing this, he wrote the important elements of the structure (-s, don't, doesn't, etc.) in red colour. After that, he read the text with an emphasis on the elements written in red. Similarly, in the second session, he started writing a dialogue of two friends chatting online which included their questions regarding what other family members were doing at home. Again, he wrote the important structural elements in red and read the text when he finished writing. The remaining parts of the sessions almost followed the same procedure. After making introductory warm-ups, Burak continued both of the lessons explaining the rules and the usage of both structures in a detailed explicit way. After students' questions regarding the points they did not understand, Burak wanted them to answer the exercises at the end of their book which included drills like fill-in-the-blanks and matching. After the students finished doing them, Burak answered the exercises and wanted his students to check their answers and ask the points that they did not understand. As the last activity, he distributed reading texts one of which was about the daily routines of a famous person (in simple present seesion) and the other was about some people living in the same apartment (in present continuous session). He wanted the students to form groups of three and answer the comprehension and True/False questions about the texts. It was clear from this flow that his grammar teaching mainly included the presentation of the structure in both implicit and explicit ways, and practising it through different types of exercises.

The last point that was observed regarding Burak's grammar teaching sessions was his corrective feedback practices. In fact, there were not much instances in which Burak provided feedback to his students since he gave the answers to the exercises and wanted his students just to control the answer. The time when he gave the most feedback was the exercises on the reading texts. In these moments, Burak mainly showed a tendency for providing recasts and explicit corrections and he corrected most of the mistakes made by his students except few instances in which he tried to elicit answers from the students. For this reason, it was observed that Burak preferred input-providing feedback types during his grammar teaching practices.

3.3.2. Mismatches between Burak's stated beliefs and practices

The comparison of Burak's stated beliefs in the first interview and his practices during the grammar teaching sessions yielded several mismatches between these two constructs. In the delayed interviews, he

commented on the reasons why such mismatches occurred and the findings of this interview were presented with the mismatches.

Table 6

The mismatches in I	Burak's stated	beliefs and	practices
---------------------	----------------	-------------	-----------

Stated beliefs	Actual practices	Underlying reasons
Presentation, practice and production	• Presentation and practice of the structure	• The question types in the exam
• Using productive tasks	• Doing exercises individually or as a group	• The question types in the exams
Output prompting feedback types	 Dominancy of input- providing feedback types 	• The mood of the teacher

Two mismatches between Burak's stated beliefs and his actual practices were closely related to each other. In the first interview, he stated that he conducted productive tasks after explaining the structure to provide an atmosphere for students to produce using the target structure. For this reason, it thought that his grammar teaching had production step and he used such activities in his practices. However, it was observed that his practices had lacked these elements and he had conducted only classical exercises during the sessions. For Burak, the main reason for this mismatch was the exams at school.

"Normally I do such activities and in fact I was planning to do them instead of the reading text. However, students had an exam in the following week and there might be some reading questions in that exam. That is why I had to include these reading texts and the exercises related to them in these sessions. To be honest, my real practices are different"

The other mismatch was related with Burak's feedback preferences while teaching grammar. It was found that he had generally corrected his students' mistakes through input-providing feedback types (recasts and explicit correction) though he stated in the first interview that he usually preferred out-put prompting feedback types and rarely used explicit correction. According to Burak, the reason for this mismatch was the mood of his students in these grammar teaching sessions.

"I really encourage students to self-correct their mistakes and this is usually more challenging for a teacher than just providing the correct form. However, in these sessions, I think my students were not in a good mood so that they could work out with their own mistakes. They seemed a little bit reluctant and I did not think they wanted to receive such feedback. You know, our students might sometimes be negatively different and I think it was one of these times."

In addition to the points Burak realized as practices while he was teaching grammar, the results showed that some of his stated beliefs did not match with the real practices. According to him, the main reasons for these mismatches were question types in the exams, students and their mood at the time of teaching.

3.4. Results of the Cross-Case Analysis

The data derived from the classroom observations, first interview and delayed interviews were also analyzed cross-cases through constant comparison model. The findings including the categories derived from this analysis on the stated beliefs, actual practices and the reasons for mismatches regarding grammar teaching of the participant teachers were presented in the table below.

Constructs	Stated beliefs	Actual practices	Underlying Reasons
a) presentation of grammatical structures	 Presentation, practice and production Both implicit and explicit teaching 	 Presentation and practice of the structure Mostly explicit partly implicit 	• Student-related factors (affective filter, mood, proficiency, attention)
b) types of grammar activities	 Productive tasks Drilling exercises	• Dominantly drilling exercises	• Institutional factors (exam types, curriculum)
c) correction of grammar errors	 Mostly output prompting Sometimes input- providing 	 Dominantly input providing feedback types 	

Table 7 Results (categories) derived from the cross-case analysis

The analysis above yielded important findings regarding the stated beliefs and actual practices of the teachers. It was revealed that although the teachers' stated beliefs and actual practices were partly consistent, they experienced a mismatch in their beliefs and practices in terms of the presentation of the target structure, the type of grammar activities they used in grammar teaching sessions and the corrective feedback preferences. As for the reasons of these mismatches, the findings put forward several factors such as the question types in the exam, keeping the pace of curriculum, students' affective filter, students' proficiency levels, attracting students' attention, the type of the grammar point.

4. Discussion

4.1. Teaching Grammar: Stated Beliefs, Practices and Their Mismatches

In general, this study puts forward that the teachers' practices are not always consistent with their beliefs on grammar teaching. As for presentation of the grammatical structures, the results show that the teachers' beliefs usually represent traditional approaches of grammar teaching in which they stated to use explicit teaching of the rules and partly implicit teaching of them. Their beliefs also include the classical sequence of presentation, practice and production. The important thing here is that the teachers are not able to realize the elements that can be regarded as non-classical and non-traditional in their beliefs regarding the presentation of the grammatical. That means, the teachers' practices include only the traditional approaches and lack elements like implicit teaching and production except Burak's introductory warm-ups just before his explicit teaching. In most of their lessons, the teachers embrace a focus-on-forms approach and he lessons mostly include traditional techniques like the presentation of the structure through lecturing and practicing intensively on it. In that sense, the participant teachers in this study showed a great similarity with the cases in Phipps and Borg (2009) who highly relied on the formal explanations and controlled exercises while teaching grammar in classroom atmosphere. Besides, Uysal and Bardakçı (2014) found out that both the beliefs and classroom practices of most of the teachers included traditional approaches of grammar teaching. In that sense, the findings lead to the conclusion that although they have few contemporary elements in their beliefs regarding the presentation of the grammatical structure, the participant teachers' stated beliefs and actual practices refer to a classical focuson-forms approach and include traditional elements of teaching grammar.

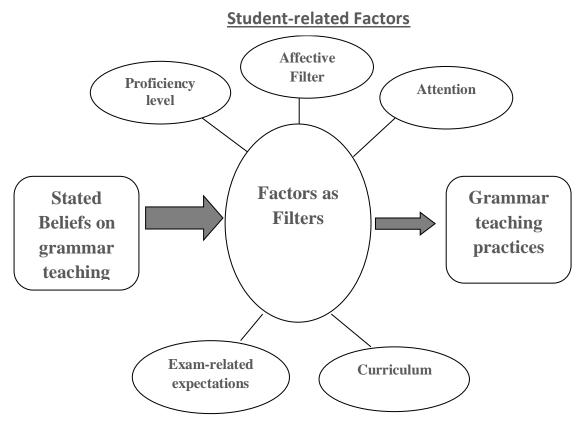
Another important point that is parallel to the one mentioned above is related to the grammar teaching activities the participant teachers believe to use and actually use. The results show that none of the productive tasks the teachers stated to use were realized as classroom practices. Besides, almost all of the grammar teaching activities they utilized in their classroom were intensively drilling exercise on the target structure. Turkish EFL teachers' high tendency on intensive practicing through drills and the lack of communicative and productive tasks in their classroom implementations are also demonstrated by Uztosun (2013) and Uysal and Bardakçı (2014). According to them, such findings point out a disconnection and a divergence between the curriculum goals and teachers' implementations in classroom atmosphere.

The findings revealed an obvious inconsistency in teachers' corrective feedback moves. They stated that they used output-prompting feedback types while correct the learners' grammatical mistakes and encouraged them to self-correct, but they mostly used input-providing types in their actual practices and corrected their students' mistakes through recasts or explicit correction. Being a controversial topic, language teachers' beliefs and practices regarding corrective feedback has been the matter of several studies in SLA literature. Whereas some of them put forward that teachers' beliefs are not aligned with their practices (Basturkmen et. al., 2004; Roothoft, 2014), some others demonstrate a hormony in their beliefs and practices regarding oral corrective feedback (Mori, 2011; Kamiya, 2014). For the discrepancy between the beliefs and practices, as revealed by this study, Basturkmen (2012, p. 291) maintains that corrective feedback is an unplanned instructional act and teachers mostly rely on their automatic behaviours while providing feedback to their students. As another explanation, Mori (2011) points out that teachers may sometimes feel the dilemma between promoting students' linguistic confidence through output-promoting and not to demolish their confidence. This might be explanation why the participants of the current study mostly relied on recasts and explicit correction thought they stated that they encouraged students to self-correct because the teachers also referred to students' anxiety level while commenting on this mismatch.

The study yielded important findings regarding the underlying reasons of the mismatches between stated beliefs and actual practices. It was found out that some of the factors, question types in the exams and keeping the pace of the curriculum, were related with the institutional factors. Burns (1996) calls such factors as 'institutional exigencies' and maintains that they have the potential to shape teachers' classroom practices. Furthermore, Nishino (2012) points out that teachers' classroom practices may also be influenced by exam-related expectations, as in the cases of Pelin and Burak. The other important factor influential on the mismatches was the learners. It was revealed the some of their practices were in a strong contrast with the teachers' stated beliefs and they referred to the attention, proficiency level and affective filter of their students as the reason of that contrast. Many studies in the literature demonstrate impact of each of these student-related factors on teachers' practices. In a more general point of view, Mullock (2006), investigating the pedagogical decision of language teachers, explored that student profile is the second most important factor in teachers' in-class decisions. As for the attention of students, Bailey (1996) highlights that teachers' classroom practices may differ from their plans to promote learners involvement and low level of students might force teachers to embrace different practices. Based on these findings of the study and the ones in the literature, it can be concluded that institutional factors and the students profile might lead to a change in language teachers' beliefs and be influential on their grammar teaching practices.

4.2. How Beliefs Turns into Practice in Teaching Grammar

Based on the findings, this study presents the following figure which simply presents a schematic conceptualization on how teachers' beliefs turn into practice while teaching grammar in classroom atmosphere.



Institutional Factors

Figure 3. How beliefs turn into practice in teaching grammar

In a simple and understandable way, the figure illustrates how the beliefs of the language teachers turn into practices while teaching grammar in classroom practices. As the findings reveal, teachers hold certain beliefs regarding how they teach grammar in class, but they sometimes have problems in reflecting these beliefs as classroom implementation while teaching. The difference in the size of the arrows in the figure represents the fact that the teachers are not always able to realize all their beliefs and the extent of this realization is shaped by several factors which are highlighted by the teachers as the main reasons of the mismatches. Teachers need to take into account these factors which include certain institutional and student-related elements, function as filters in this process, and force teachers to make in-class decisions that are different from their beliefs. In that sense, as illustrated in the figure, it can be concluded that the teachers' grammar teaching practices are the outcome of their beliefs on grammar teaching which are potentially influenced and shaped by institutional and student-related factors.

5. Conclusion and Suggestions

This study aimed to examine the stated beliefs and practices of three EFL teachers on grammar teaching and to what extent their beliefs and practices matched. The data were collected through interviews, classroom observations and delayed interviews. It was found that there were several mismatches in teachers' beliefs and practices which included the presentation of the target structure, grammar teaching activities and their corrective feedback preferences while teaching grammar. The reasons for these mismatches were found to be institutional and student-related factors.

Along with its strong sides, the study has some limitations. First of all, the researcher was able to make a limited number of classroom observations of the participants due to the time limitations. More observations on the teachers' would yield more valid results regarding their grammar teaching practices. Besides, the participants were chosen from the same context. Including participants from different institutional and teaching contexts would enrich the findings of further studies.

As Borg (2003, p.106) stated, teachers' beliefs and their actual grammar teaching practices are among the areas for continued study. Investigation of these constructs in different settings will definitely contribute to the understanding of how teachers' beliefs are realized as practices in classroom atmosphere. In addition to this, such studies have also clear implications for teacher training in the sense that teachers can learn about their practices and identify their strengths and weaknesses. For this reason, such studies should also be encouraged as reflective practice in the scope of in-service teacher training in language teaching institutions.

References

- Bailey, K. M. (1996). The best laid plans: teachers' in class decisions to depart from their lesson plans. In K. M. Bailey & D. Nunan (eds.), *Voices from the language classroom* (pp. 15–40). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Basturkmen, H. (2012). Review of research into the correspondence between language teachers' stated beliefs and practices. *System*, 40 (2), 282-295
- Basturkmen, H., Loewen, S., & Ellis, R. (2004). Teachers' stated beliefs about incidental focus on form and their classroom practices. *Applied Linguistics*, 25 (2), 243-272.
- Borg, S. (1999). Studying teacher cognition in second language grammar teaching. System, 27, 19-31.
- Borg, S. (2003). Teacher cognition in grammar teaching: A literature review. Language Awareness, 12 (2), 96-108.
- Borg, S., & Burns, A. (2008). Integrating grammar in adult TESOL classrooms. Applied Linguistics, 29 (3), 456-482.
- Burgess, J. & Etherington, S. (2002). Focus on grammatical form: explicit or implicit? System 30, 433-458.
- Burns, A. (1996). Starting all over again: From teaching adults to teaching beginners. In D. Freeman & J. C. Richards (eds.), *Teacher Learning in Language Teaching* (pp. 154–77). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Boston: Pearson Education
- DeKeyser, R. (1998). Beyond focus on form: Cognitive perspectives on learning and practicing second language grammar. In C. Doughty, & J. Williams (Eds.), Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition (pp. 42–63). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Dornyei, Z. (2007). Research methods in applied linguistics. New York: Oxford University Press
- Ellis, R. (1998). Teaching and research: Options for grammar teaching. TESOL Quarterly, 32 (1), 39-60.
- Ellis, R. (2002a). The place of grammar instruction in the second /foreign language curriculum. In E. Hinkel & Fotos, S. (Eds). *New perspectives on grammar teaching in second language classrooms* (pages 14-34). Routledge: London.
- Ellis, R. (2006). Current issues in the teaching of grammar: An SLA perspective. TESOL Quarterly, 40 (1), 83-107.
- Graus, J. & Coppen, P. A. (2015). Student teacher beliefs on grammar instruction. *Language Teaching Research*. 20 (5), 571-599.
- Kagan, D. M. (1992). Implications of research on teacher belief. Educational Psychologist, 27 (1), 65-90.
- Kamiya, N. (2014). The relationship between stated beliefs and classroom practices of oral corrective feedback. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, *10*(3), 206-2019.
- Long, M. (1991). Focus on form: A design feature in language teaching methodology. In K. De Bot, R. Ginsberg, and C. Kramsch (Eds.). *Foreign language research in cross-cultural perspective* (pp. 39-52). Amsterdam: John Benjamin.
- Long, M. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In W. C. Ritchie, & T. K. Bhatia (Eds.), Handbook of language acquisition (Vol. 2): Second language acquisition (pp. 413-468). New York: Academic Press.
- Mackey, A. & Gass, S. M. (2005). Second language research: Methodology and design. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Mori, R. (2011). Teacher cognition in corrective feedback in Japan. System, 39, 451-467.
- Mullock, B. (2006). The pedagogical knowledge base of four TESOL teachers. Modern Language Journal, 90, 48-66.
- Nassaji, H., & Fotos, S. (2004). Current developments in research on the teaching of grammar. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 24, 126-145.
- Nishimuro, M., and Borg, S. (2013). Teacher cognition and grammar teaching in a Japanese high school. *JALT Journal*, 35 (1), 29-48.
- Nishino, T. (2012). Modeling teacher beliefs and practices in context: A multimethods approach. *The Modern Language Journal*, *96* (3), 380-399.
- Norris, J. M., & Ortega, L. (2000). Effectiveness of L2 instruction: A research synthesis and quantitative meta-analysis. *Language Learning*, 50 (3), 417-528.
- Phipps, S., and Borg, S. (2009). Exploring tensions between teachers' grammar teaching beliefs and practices. System, 37,380-390.
- Roothoft, H. (2014). The relationship between adult EFL teachers' oral feedback practices and their beliefs. *System*, *46*, 65-79.

Shavelson, R. J., & Stern, P. (1981). Research on teachers' pedagogical thoughts, judgments, decisions, and behavior. *Review of Educational Research*, *51*, 455-498.

Spada, N. & Lightbown, P. (2008). Form- focused instruction: Isolated or Integrated? TESOL Quarterly, 42(2), 181-207.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ur, P. (1999). A course in language teaching. Cambidge. Cambridge University Press.

- Uysal, H. H. & Bardakci, M. (2014). Teacher beliefs and practices of grammar teaching: focusing on meaning, form, or forms? *South African Journal of Education*, 34 (1), 1-16.
- Uztosun, M. S. (2013). An interpretive study into elementary school English teachers' beliefs and practices in Turkey. *Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry*, 4(1), 20-33.
- Wach A. (2013). Teachers' beliefs about EFL grammar learning and teaching. In Piechurska-Kuciel E., Szymańska-Czaplak E. (eds) *Language in cognition and affect in second language learning and teaching* (pp. 295-214). Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg