

ESL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS, OPINIONS, AND INFLUENCES REGARDING  
GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION AND ERROR CORRECTION IN THE CLASSROOM

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**Abstract****ESL Students' Perceptions, Opinions, and Influences Regarding Grammar Instruction and Error Correction in the Classroom****Jordan Williams**

The dark cloud of grammar instruction and error correction has always followed the study of English as a Second Language. Many studies have attempted to provide the best way to teach grammar and the optimum frequency and method of error correction. Great debate still hovers over both. Rarely do the perceptions and opinions of students get studied, let alone the reasons for those perceptions. This is a qualitative multiple case study employing a questionnaire, observations, and interviews to discover the influences of students' perceptions of grammar instruction and error correction. While the study aimed to discover these influences, an unanticipated result was found. The three participants in the study had received explicit grammar instruction and error correction throughout their English language acquisition careers, resulting in a misunderstanding of grammar defined. This misunderstanding led to multiple inconsistencies in their perceptions of grammar instruction and error correction. Aligning with Ellis' (2006) ten beliefs about grammar instruction and error correction, recommendations are made based on the results of the study. Further research is required to confirm these results and answer newly considered questions regarding these methods in the English as a Second Language classroom.

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### **Introduction**

It is commonly known that what a person perceives about an experience often becomes his or her reality. This is true in the classroom setting. Students hold different perceptions of what occurs in the classroom and those ideas influence the efficacy of the given instruction. Since these perceptions can encourage or deter learning, it is vital for teachers to understand them.

Many studies that focus on the rationale for teacher choices and motivations note that teachers consider their students often when deciding on activities and instruction (Borg, 1998; Nazari & Allahyar, 2012). But how do many of those teachers actually know why their students want what they want? It is essential to the success of teachers to understand where their students are coming from. This study aims to discover what English as a second language (ESL) student perceptions are in relation to grammar instruction (GI) and error correction (EC) and why students maintain these ideals.

EC, or corrective feedback, is the verbal or written correction by a teacher to a student when erroneous utterances or writing are made. "Corrective feedback is defined as a teacher's move that invites a learner to attend to the grammatical accuracy of the utterance which is produced by the learner" (Sheen, 2007 as cited by Rassaei & Moinzadeh, 2011). In writing the corrective feedback comes in many forms: error identification, error correction with a comment, clues or directions on how to fix an error, overt correction by the teacher, and comment with no correction (Amrhein & Nassaji, 2010). When an oral error is made the error is brought to attention by a verbal reminder (occasionally producing an immediate or future miniature lesson). Lyster and Ranta (1997) detailed six types of oral correction: explicit correction, recast, metalinguistic

feedback, elicitation, repetition, and clarification request. The use of EC in pedagogy is divided into three opinion groups: overall correction (correcting every error), selective correction (choosing which errors to correct), and zero correction (the idea that students will acquire grammar as they acquire the language so no corrections should be made). Arguments for each theory have been researched repeatedly with little solid data to support one over the others.

Historically, the concept of GI within pedagogy has been debated. Lightbown and White (1987) argue that some grammatical structures must be taught because complete natural acquisition is impossible. Others view all of grammar to be naturally acquirable if enough comprehensible input is provided (Krashen, 1982). Lastly, the middle ground is explained by Larsen-Freeman (1995) who states that despite the possibility of the natural acquisition of grammar, GI is imperative for improvement.

GI can be split into two general categories: explicit instruction and implicit instruction. Explicit instruction emphasizes form over meaning. It can be taught deductively through the presentation of rules followed by examples. Alternatively, it can be taught inductively through examples from which a rule or structure is produced. In both situations the communicative output task focuses on practicing the newly learned form.

Implicit instruction, on the other hand, employs communicative tasks to create meaning-building activities through the use of multiple authentic texts. While form is still a factor, it is only processed as a means of completing the tasks and furthering the understanding of meaning. Form is also an output product in implicit instruction. It is important to note that “no rule formation discussion or activity [is] overtly encouraged or

done. It [is] hoped that the input task alone would ‘push’ the [language learners] to notice the forms” (Andrews, 2007).

The topics of GI and EC were selected due to the inconclusive data surrounding them. With little solid data to help teachers determine what is best for their classrooms, understanding student needs, and desires is a purposeful step in finding solid pedagogical ground.

### **Literature Review**

Little research has been done in the high school setting in regards to the reasons for student opinions on ESL GI and EC. A lot of research has been done to determine the factors and rationales behind teacher decision making in regards to GI and EC (Fleming, 2011; Nazari & Allahyar, 2012; Al-Mekhlafi & Nagaratnam, 2011; Borg, 1998, 1999; Johnston & Goettsch, 2000). Several studies have been done with students, and students and teachers in the university or high school setting to learn what they think, as well (Schulz, 1996, 2001; Brown, 2009; Jean & Simard, 2011; Loewen et al., 2009; Ganjabi, 2011).

Borg (1998) performed a single case study in which the participant was a native English speaker who had been teaching TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) for 15 years. The desired outcome was insight into the teacher’s classroom pedagogical reasoning and rationale in grammar teaching and overall instruction. The study yielded meaningful information through observations and interviews. The participant repeatedly notes that his decisions are based on what he thinks students enjoy or expect (Borg, 1998, p. 17, 20, 22, 23, 27). Of special note is an interview excerpt during which, in answer to a question about written grammar exercises, the teacher stated, “the main reason that I

give it [written grammar] is, 'Look, this is grammar, this is what you [the student] perceive as grammar, we're doing this too, as well'" (Borg, 1998, p. 27). He continues to state what his students think about grammar and TEFL. These perceptions are based on experience and no other reasoning for this thought process is given. Other reasons for his choices were his experiences as a student and teacher, as well as and classroom management. Borg (1998) concludes that pedagogy consists of many different facets (students, teacher experience, teaching training, etc.) and that teacher-training programs should work to help teachers examine their own purposes behind classroom, specifically grammar, instruction.

One year later, Borg (1999) published another article that looked into teacher motivations in pedagogy and grammar instruction; this time he specifically looked at the use of grammatical terminology. Four teachers were observed and interviewed in hopes of discovering the reasons for the use of terminology in second languages and how the teachers' knowledge about grammar (KAG) influenced their teaching. The study produced data revealing that a teacher's KAG can determine his or her grammar instruction, grammar discussion, use of rules and terminology, and ability to correct student errors. Borg (1999) proposed that his findings brought up new questions to be asked of teachers: "how is it actually used in the classroom?; why do teachers use it in the way they do?; how have teachers come to assume their current stance on this issue?" (p. 121). Lastly, he calls for more research, specifically in terms of a long-term study following a teacher's pedagogy and KAG development over a period of several years (Borg, 1999).

Johnston and Goettsch (2000) did a four participant case study looking at content knowledge (knowledge about their content), pedagogical content knowledge (the use of knowledge), and knowledge of learners (understanding students). They found that content knowledge was based mostly on teacher education and experience; also, teachers' claimed that information on content was stored in their heads (Johnston & Goettsch, 2000). Of interest as well was the shared idea that the "teachers do not regard possession of this [grammar] knowledge as anything special" (Johnston & Goettsch, 2000, p. 449). Overall, the conclusion was that these three aspects of teacher knowledge are intricately complex and that all four teachers maintained a process-oriented nature of their own knowledge base (Johnston & Goettsch, 2000, p. 465).

Nazari and Allahyar (2012) also did a four participant case study with the focus on grammar instruction in the classroom. Overall Nazari and Allahyar found that, "it would be fair to say that teachers' practical and pedagogical knowledge has an influence on the way they teach grammar" (Nazari & Allahyar, 2012, p. 83). They also concluded that teachers with more KAG included more grammar instruction in their teacher and used more grammar terminology. Teachers with low grammar confidence, on the other hand, tended to avoid grammar discussion whether planned or spontaneous. Another concept addressed by the teachers was the idea of what a high-quality class looks like. The teachers who used more blatant grammar instruction –inductive – reasoned that it gave the appearance of higher quality teaching. Nazari and Allahyar (2012) noted, "Limited knowledge of grammar on the part of the teacher and uncertainty about errors seemed to be among the factors that resulted in overlooking the students' grammar errors" (p. 84). The teachers with greater KAG also varied on their responses to errors,

claiming that avoiding frustration amongst students and themselves is the reason to limit error correction. The last conclusion discussed was that the amount of tasks and pressures placed on teachers may keep them from properly implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as they were taught – deductively. It is with this in mind that Nazari and Allahyar (2012) suggest that teacher training in CLT programs should involve more real-life experiences to properly prepare teachers for the reality of teaching. They call teaching educators to provide authentic programs to enable CLT teachers.

As a subtle move into involving student insights, Al-Mekhlafi and Nagaratnam (2011) surveyed 90 EFL teachers in Omani in regards to the difficulties of teaching and learning grammar. This study, however, only discusses student difficulties with grammar as perceived by their teachers. Implications from the study include understanding the difficulties of teaching grammar for both the teacher and the student as well as employing multiple methods for teaching grammar.

Schulz (1996, 2001) has been the primary source for information on student and teacher perceptions in foreign language learning. His work has laid a foundation for study in the area of comparing teacher GI and EC views with student perceptions in the same areas. In his 1996 study, Schulz developed a 13-item questionnaire employing a 5-point Likert scale to quantify the differences between student and teacher beliefs about language acquisition. Over 800 American university students and 94 teachers participated with the conclusion that students prefer formal grammar instruction and consistent error correction more than their teachers. 94% of students disagreed with the item, “teachers should *not* correct students when they make errors in class,” versus only 48% agreement from teachers (Schulz, 1996, p. 356). Schulz (1996) calls teachers to

discuss GI and EC in their classrooms in order to meet students in the middle, between their preferences and the teacher's pedagogical convictions. His 2001 study employed the same methodology but included students in Colombia with the intention of finding cultural differences. The results were the same, however, and he suggested that teachers "make efforts to deal with potential conflicts between student beliefs and instructional practices" (Schulz, 2001, p. 244).

This finding is not uncommon. Teachers tend to see second language acquisition as best accomplished through meaningful learning and communicative instruction with a lesser devotion to EC (Borg, 1998, 1999; Johnston & Goettsch, 2000). Brown's (2009) study of university level second language learners confirmed that teachers understand the importance of GI and EC but tend to look towards communicative instruction more than their students. "The students seemed to favor a grammar-based approach, whereas their teachers preferred a more communicative classroom" (Brown, 2009, p. 46). This communicative classroom is characterized by discussion and discovery based grammar instruction with little to no use of worksheets or formal memorization (deductively taught explicit instruction). Teachers were challenged to analyze their own view of grammar in the classroom followed by short conversations with students on the rationale for any given instructional strategy (Brown, 2009).

These findings were echoed by Jean & Simard (2011) in their Canada-based survey of high school students in English as a second language (ESL) and French as a second language (FSL) classrooms. Over 2,300 students and 45 teachers were surveyed concluding again that students opted for a more grammar-based approach with consistent

EC in both oral and written instances. Over and over again it is shown that students, even more than teachers, view the traditional, formal grammar instruction as beneficial.

Loewen et al. (2009) carried the research on after Schulz (1996, 2001) adapting his survey into a 37-item Likert scale questionnaire with four open-ended questions. This newly situated questionnaire was given to 754 university level second language learners. The participants were spread across 14 different languages and varied beliefs about GI and EC were found. Students found grammar instruction to be important but in varying degrees. Of note, was the differentiation that the students placed on GI and EC, revealing that EC was considered separate from GC. ESL students were found to have less desire for grammar instruction and more enthusiasm for improved communication skills than foreign language learners (Loewen et al., 2009). Finally, the primary reason for students' dislike of grammar was, "that learners clearly viewed grammar study as boring" (Loewen et al., 2009, p. 102).

More recently, Ganjabi (2011) reused Loewen et al's (2009) questionnaire to perform a study in Oman, Iran. After removing the 13 distracter questions in the questionnaire, he surveyed 214 female high school students. Unlike some studies that found student tendencies towards formal grammar instruction, this study found varied perspectives on the use of grammar instruction. Ganjabi (2011) shows this in the following quote:

[The participants'] ideas regarding the role of grammar ranged from its use in communication to the mere use of grammar in learning English for academic purposes. Also, the activities preferred by the students included a range of both mechanical and meaningful drills. (p. 1303)



From these conclusions, Ganjabi (2011) proposes that teachers keep student interest through a variation of activities and grammar instruction methods. Lastly, he compelled teachers to constantly consider student attitudes.

Overall, GI has been well researched and documented with numerous other studies to cite. It is the gap, however, that is obvious. What do students think about grammar instruction? How do they want to be taught? More specifically, as the focus of this study, why do students feel this way about GI and EC? Also important to note is the lack of research in the area of high school ESL students. It is during these school years that many students are receiving ESL education which is why a study of this nature is valuable.

### **Research Question**

The research study is based on the following two questions:

1. What are high school ESL students' perceptions of grammar instruction and error correction in the ESL classroom?
2. Why do students maintain these perceptions?

### **Methodology**

#### **Method and Rationale**

This study employed both quantitative and qualitative research methods, with the majority being a multiple participant case study. The quantitative portion of the research was limited to a questionnaire given to each of the participants. The qualitative portion of the study included classroom observations and interviews.

The qualitative research method was selected based on the research questions. The nature of the questions required the study to go beyond the surface of a survey and

request information from the participants that could only be articulated in their own words. The decision to use interviews as the main portion of the research hinged on the students' abilities to communicate verbally; written communication would have been an inappropriate method of discussion and likely would not have yielded honest and reactive insights.

### **Sample**

I used purposive sampling based in a convenient location in an intact classroom in western Washington. I selected this location because it was the assigned school for my student teaching requirement. Once placed, I corresponded with the cooperating teacher (CT). Based on the CT's knowledge of the students each of the beginning, intermediate, and advanced level ESL classrooms, it was decided to request assent from students in the advanced class. This was meant to avoid researcher bias as I was not teaching this class. Another purpose for this selection was communication ability. It was important that the students have an adequate level of English language communication to facilitate the interviews. This yielded the richest and most holistic data possible. Through discussion with the CT, a ranked pool of 5 students was selected as possible participants based on communicative abilities, English language history, and the goal of having participants from varying cultural and academic backgrounds. The top three students were asked, and all gave assent to participate; parent consent forms were given out and returned, thereby confirming the three students' roles as study participants.

### **Instrumentation**

Data was collected by three different means: questionnaires, observations, and interviews. The first to be used was the questionnaire (see Appendix 1). This

questionnaire was the same one used by Ganjabi (2011) consisting of two parts: a 24-item Likert scale questionnaire (quantitative) and the four open-ended questions (qualitative). This questionnaire started as a 13-item survey developed and used by Schulz (1996, 2001). Loewen et al (2009) developed 11 additional items, 13 distracters, and four qualitative questions. For the purposes of Ganjabi (2011) and this study, the 13 distracters were removed. Due to the addition of interviews, the four open-ended questions were deemed unnecessary and were also removed. The remaining questions are separated into six categories: efficacy of grammar, negative attitude to error correction, priority of communication, importance of grammar, importance of grammatical accuracy, and negative attitudes to grammar instruction (Loewen et al, 2009). The purpose for the questionnaire was to develop a baseline for the students' beliefs from which interview questions were created.

Following the completion of the questionnaire, four class periods were observed and recorded. Each period lasted 50 minutes and the recordings included both video and audio. These recordings were used to create interview questions and help triangulate the data. After the periods concluded, I watched the videos and noted key events. These events included instances of error correction (by the teacher, other students, or the speaker him/herself), pre-error solicitation of help, grammar instruction, and any other occurrences relating to GI or EC. When a key event occurred I noted the time it occurred and which participant(s) it involved. These events were referred to during interviews to gain information on student opinions and reasoning in regards to the specific instances. Overall the data collected in the recordings opened up opportunities for more specific questions as well as increasing reliability.

Each participant answered questions during two interviews. The length of the interviews was determined by the participants' responses and whether additional questions were necessary. From the data collected in the questionnaires and the observations a generic set of interview questions was formed. These questions focused most on participant demographic, background, academic history/experiences, and what they think about GI and EC. The first interview gathered personal background information about the participants (nationality, age, first language, etc.) as well as addressing the observations and survey responses. For the second interview, the questions consisted of follow up ideas from the previous interview. In order to gain insight into student perceptions, questions asked them to explain different ideas they had, whether they liked or did not like certain GI or EC techniques, and what they were used to/had experienced in an academic setting.

The questions about student backgrounds were used to help direct further inquiries and gain demographic information. In order to have a full understanding of the student, questions about academic and language history were important as well. Once student backgrounds and general perceptions about GI and EC were discussed, the focus of the interviews turned to understanding why students held these opinions. Participants answered questions about teachers, family, peers, experiences, and various academic elements in order to bring in-depth understanding. As a whole, the participants responded to the questions fully and with perceived understating. Of all three sets of data, the interviews produced the most essential information for the study (supported by the questionnaires and classroom observations).

**Analysis/Validity**

In order to analyze the data, I used coding within each data source as well as between the sources. Initially, I read through or watched each source after transcribing them into written form. The goal was to discover various themes and patterns throughout the data. Various highlighting represented different themes and patterns within each source. After coding each individual source, the three sets of data from each participant were analyzed for consistency in answers and behaviors. When an inconsistency was located, it was noted. Once the data from all three participants was individually checked for consistency, all nine pieces of data were analyzed together. Questions such as the following were asked: What is similar between each participant? What is different? Where do these similarities/differences come from? How are they influenced? Are the influences the same? What wording is used for each participant and how does it match/differ from the others? These questions focused the data towards the two research questions.

While analyzing and coding, I looked for a few different pre-determined themes. These themes included influences by parents, teachers, and peers/others, as well as participant perceptions of grammar as confusing, boring, or enjoyable. Also, the ideas of error correction as useful and necessary were considered while coding. These pre-determined ideas were based off of research (see Literature Review) as well as understanding from the data sources as they were collected.

The process of looking at the three data sources from each individual participant brought triangulation into the process. Laying out all of one participant's data (questionnaire, observation notes, and interview transcriptions) at once allowed me to confirm his answers within each other and guarantee the reliability of those sets of data.

The same was done for the other two participants. Triangulation was also used to decrease the likelihood of researcher bias. I looked for specific, pre-determined ideas and new insights as I coded and cataloged data, but the triangulation kept me from seeing patterns that did not exist.

As various themes and insights arose, they were noted and reviewed for reliability through triangulation and checks with the other data sources. Concepts that were unrelated to the research questions but revealed insight into the thoughts and minds of students' considerations of GI and EC were individually coded. Through these methods researcher bias was hindered and the data spoke on behalf of the participants.

### **Data**

#### **Participant Demographic**

Participant 1 (P1) is a 17-year-old male who was born in India. His first language is Malayalam. While in India, he was taught English (explicit instruction taught deductively) in school starting at the age of 7-years-old. In October of 2010, P1 moved to the United States where he lives with his aunt and uncle. Currently a junior in high school, P1 is on track to be the first one in his family to graduate high school. His father is a carpenter and his mother stays at home.

Participant 2 (P2) is a 15-year-old male who was born in Venezuela. A native Spanish-speaker, he began learning simple English grammar and phrases when he was in Venezuelan elementary school. In June of 2010, P2 and his family (father, mother, and sister) moved to the United States. His father, who speaks Spanish and English fluently, is a businessman and is often away for work. P2 is a freshman currently.

Participant 3 (P3) is a 19-year-old female who was born in Vietnam. A native Vietnamese speaker, she moved to the United States in October of 2011. She lives with her sister and brother-in-law, a native English speaker. In Vietnam, they taught her English starting at age 10 (explicit grammar instruction taught deductively). P3 is graduating high school in June of 2013.

### **Questionnaire**

Table 1 shows each participant's answers marked by a number (P1=1; P2=2; P3=3). Overall, the responses from each participant on the questionnaire align with the other participants. The Appendix 1 provides the questionnaire in its entirety. A few key deviations from this generalization are of note. Question 6 is one of only two questions in which each participant supplied a different answer. P2 selected "strongly disagree" stating that knowing grammar rules is essential to communicating in a second language. Question 10 has P1 providing a different answer from the other two participants; P2 and P3 "like to be corrected by [their] classmates in a small group setting," while P1 does not. The third question with a variety of answers is question 12: "knowing grammar rules helps communication in a second language." Question 12 parallels question 6 by asking about the relationship between grammar rules and communication. The answers from P2 and P3 are consistent with those presented in question 6, while P1 changes his response. P1's response in question 12 implies the need for grammar rules in communication, but his answer in question 6 is the opposite. Question 21 states, "When I read a sentence in a second language, I try to figure out the grammar." P2 and P3 "strongly agree," with P1 disagreeing. Next, question 22 shows further consistency in P2 and P3's answers while

Table 1

| Question                                     | Strongly Agree | Agree   | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | N/A |
|--|----------------|---------|----------|-------------------|-----|
| I. Efficacy of Grammar                       |                |         |          |                   |     |
| 1  | 1, 2, 3        |         |          |                   |     |
| 2  | 1, 2, 3        |         |          |                   |     |
| 3  | 1, 2           | 3       |          |                   |     |
| 5  | 1, 3           | 2       |          |                   |     |
| 8  | 1              | 2, 3    |          |                   |     |
| 14   | 1, 2, 3        |         |          |                   |     |
| 18   | 1, 2           | 2       |          |                   |     |
| 21   | 2, 3           |         | 1        |                   |     |
| 24   | 2              |         | 1, 3     |                   |     |
| II. Negative Attitude to Error Correction    |                |         |          |                   |     |
| 4  | 2, 3           | 1       |          |                   |     |
| 7  |                |         |          | 2, 3              | 1   |
| 10   |                | 2, 3    | 1        |                   |     |
| 19   |                |         |          | 2, 3              | 1   |
| 20   | 1, 2, 3        |         |          |                   |     |
| III. Priority of Communication               |                |         |          |                   |     |
| 6  | 3              | 1       |          | 2                 |     |
| 15   | 3              | 1, 2    |          |                   |     |
| IV. Importance of Grammar                    |                |         |          |                   |     |
| 11   | 3              | 1, 2    |          |                   |     |
| 12   | 1              | 2       | 3        |                   |     |
| V. Importance of Grammatical Accuracy        |                |         |          |                   |     |
| 9  | 1              | 2, 3    |          |                   |     |
| 22   |                | 2, 3    |          |                   | 1   |
| 23   | 1, 2, 3        |         |          |                   |     |
| VI. Negative Attitude to Grammar Instruction |                |         |          |                   |     |
| 13   | 1, 2           | 3       |          |                   |     |
| 16   |                | 1, 2, 3 |          |                   |     |
| 17   | 1              | 2, 3    |          |                   |     |

Table 1. Questionnaire Results



P1 marks “Not Applicable.” Lastly, question 24 shows that P2 “strongly agrees” while P1 and P3 “disagree.”

Three questions with similar answers from all participants are also worth mentioning. All three participants agree that “knowing a lot about grammar helps [their] reading,” with P1 and P2 strongly agreeing (question 3). Question 9 brings to light the perception of how others view grammar usage, “People will respect me if I use correct grammar when speaking a second language.” All three participants selected either “strongly agree” or “agree.” Finally, question 15 asks students to consider the type of activities and language interactions they experience with all three participants agreeing that practicing “a second language in real-life situations [is better than practicing] grammar rules.”

Once the questionnaires were completed, observations and classroom recordings began.

### **Observations/Recordings**

Four class periods were observed and recorded to collect data on key events to be discussed in interviews, as well as a part of triangulating the data. During all four recorded periods the class was reading through *Code Talkers*. Of the 200 minutes of video and audio recording, approximately 160 minutes was spent with students taking turns reading the book aloud. This produced no written work to observe and very little opportunity for observable authentic communication. Also important is the fact that only P1 and P2 participated in this activity and therefore, no observation data is available for P3 apart from her abstinence from participating in class. Five types of correction were observed throughout the recordings: no correction, classmate correction, teacher

correction, self-correction, and pre-error solicitation of help. Half of the key events involved mispronunciation and two involved students asking about pronunciation before reading a word. The remaining five events regarded grammatical errors or mis-readings.

Of the 14 key events observed and noted, four events involved no correction; two of these were pronunciation errors while reading aloud and two were grammatical errors during a discussion. For example, P1 read the sentence, "...those who were called to the Geneva Convention..." in which he mispronounced the word "Geneva." No correction was made. P2 spoke an erroneous utterance during a class discussion in which he said, "you know how all their food were in cans?" This subject-verb agreement error went uncorrected as well. There were two more instances of no correction, both nearly identical to those listed above.

The correction came from other students in only two of the recorded events. One involved P1 mispronouncing a word while reading, and P2 and the teacher recasting the language as correction. The second time P1 mispronounced a word and the other students offered up alternative incorrect suggestions for pronunciation. The teacher interjected and properly recast the phrase. No other corrections were made or attempted by classmates in the observations.

Four events produced corrective feedback from the teacher, all four pertaining to a mispronunciation or a miss-read. Two of these events need noting. The first is while P1 was reading from *Code Talkers*:

P1: "...Of kamikaze [mispronounced]..."

Teacher: "Kamikaze."

P1: "... Of kamikaze..."

The teacher corrects P1's initial mispronunciation through a recast. He then repeats the phrase properly and continues reading. A few minutes later, the word "kamikaze" reappears and P1 pronounces it accurately. The second event with teacher correction is as follows:

P1: "...We were the largest armada [mispronounced]..."

Classmate 1: "Armada [mispronounced]."

Classmate 2: "Armada [mispronounced]."

Teacher: "Armada."

P1: "...We were the largest armada..."

P1 initially mispronounces "armada" followed by two incorrect suggestions from classmates. These continued errors were again recast by the teacher to the proper pronunciation of "armada" which P1 then repeated as he continued reading.

The fourth type of correction was self-correction which occurred during two of the 14 observable events. Both cases involved mispronunciation and then repeated reading of the line as initiated by the reader himself. P1 and P2 each experienced one of these self-correction opportunities.

Lastly, there were three occurrences of the students requesting help before reading or continuing in order to avoid errors. P1 was the first to display this concept. While reading he came across the word, "scalpel," which he had never seen before. He read until the word, paused, tried to pronounce it while speaking with the verbal inflection that implied a question. The teacher responded with the correct pronunciation and the class began a discussion to determine what a scalpel is. After the discussion ended, P1 requested a second clarification of the pronunciation and continued reading. Another instance of this happened with P2 while he was reading: "... that's why they fought until every one of their 20,000 soldiers was dead..." wait, why is that 'was' instead of 'were';

there's more than one soldier." This gave the teacher the opportunity to metalinguistically explain the concepts of verb-number agreement as well as prepositional phrases. P2's initiative to understanding the working the sentence reflects some of his perceptions and ideas as discussed in the interviews.

## **Interviews**

### **Perceptions/Opinions.**

Aligned with research question number one, the following presents the general perceptions of all three participants in relation to GI and EC. Initially important are their ideas concerning grammar; specifically, "when you hear the word grammar, what does that mean to you?"

- P1: "To me, grammar means, it's the rule of English, I think. ... I think it's like a rule that you have to like learn, understand before you do stuff."
- P2: "Like, the way, writing or speaking, like the rules, like what's a verb and how to use it, and like when to use it. Things like that."
- P3: "It means mainly like speaking in like present, past, and then usually you use it while writing."

When asked why he thinks "rules" when he hears the word "grammar," P1 was unable to provide an explanation after repeated rephrasing of the question. After five attempts to ask the question he supplied the following answer:

Every time you write something you kind of like follow the grammar, you know?  
It's like a rule. I think... you kind of write it with grammar. ... Grammar is something that you have to like always think about. ... So I feel like that's how it

is. You kind of like follow the grammar. You know, like, rules – I follow the rules.

While P1 refers primarily to the use of grammar in writing, P2 brings speaking into the equation as well.

When you're talking or writing a letter you need good grammar to write it, and like, so it makes sense. And so like with talking you need to know the rules so ... you don't like say past tense twice in the same sentence. Like, "how did you fell?"

Similar to P2's verb usage example, P3 consistently refers to verbs when discussing grammar. P3 used verb usage, conjugation, and tense labels to give examples of grammar in general in seven different thoughts and sometimes more than once per thought. For all three participants grammar relates to rules for speaking and writing. P1 stated that grammar is more important for writing than speaking. The other two participants shared this opinion as well.

- P1: "But writing is more important than speaking..."
- P2: "I mean, it helps more on the writing. I've been thinking about this, like when you write a letter, when you're writing, you use more grammar and like when you're speaking you use more like slang words and something like that. And kind of like, speak in a broken way..."
- P3: "Some people don't really like care about [grammar in speaking]... I think it's all important when you're writing. ... When you speak ... it's different than when you do in front of people, and they can talk, and they not really care about my grammar."

Each participant expressed that grammar is useful while reading but not as important as it is for writing and speaking. They all contradicted this viewpoint on more than one occasion and disagreed with their own answers on the survey for questions 3 and 21 regarding the use of grammar with reading. P2's interview responses regarding the use of grammar in reading contradicted questionnaire item 24 as well. All three also said that perfect grammar is unnecessary when speaking.

The perceptions of grammar as it was taught in their home countries varies, however. P1 said that the grammar of his first language was hardly taught while English grammar was of high priority. The teachers in India were strict about providing the right answer. In Venezuela, P2 experienced minimal grammar instruction with the English language teaching focused mainly on conversational phrases and surface level structures. He also said that Spanish grammar is more difficult, but both languages were taught the same way. P3 expressed that English language instruction in Vietnam was purposeful, but she appreciated it more for the ability to be taught in her first language as opposed to the style of the instruction itself.

The participants also voiced similar affective opinions in regards to grammar and its instruction. P1 articulated the following opinions about grammar:

- "I'm a big fan of grammar. But, I hate learning [grammar], it's hard. But, I think grammar really, really helps so I like it."
- "I realized grammar is very important so like every time a teacher is teaching grammar I try to improve my whole attention to it and just kind of learn more of it."

- “I mean grammar is really confusing. So I never like try to figure it out [on my own].”

Below are P2’s opinions about grammar:

- “Sometimes [I enjoy learning grammar]. I know it’s necessary so I’ll do it anyways.”
- “Grammar... though it’s kind of annoying sometimes, it’s pretty amazing sometimes, or ... it like intrigues me... Sometimes I want to learn more about it.”

P3’s opinions are as follows:

- “[I liked learning about grammar] a lot, like for my writing and reading.”
- “I think grammar is really important...”

Many adjectives are used to describe grammar in the above comments. Despite any negative feeling towards grammar, all three participants profess understanding of the importance and usefulness of grammar.

When posed with a question regarding the role of grammar in communication the three participants referred to four ideas: perfect grammar is not necessary in communication; grammar errors hinder communication; the perception of spoken errors; types of listeners. The first of these ideas has support from previously displayed quotes. Various examples are available for the participants’ perception of communication and grammar:

- P1: “You know you’re not always writing or reading, always you’re communicating with people... And you want to make sure everything is right and you want to make sure there’s no misunderstanding between you and the person

you're talking to. And so you want to ... speak good grammar so that the person understands what you're trying to say."

- P2: "You need to know what you're saying and how to say it so people can understand you."
- P3: "I think [grammar helps you communicate], but some people they don't really care about that. ... But it's good for me to know. Sometimes you know like when they don't understand me."

When the participants discussed how errors are perceived by others, they all considered the perceptions based on the listener. Grammar was less necessary for communication when talking to, "[the researcher]" (P1), or to "[the researcher's] style teacher" (P3), because they try harder to listen and understand. They think that native English speakers who are not ESL teachers will not try to understand them and so their grammar is more important in those situations. Also, all three participants think that some people view grammar errors as a sign of unintelligence: "So like some people ... might think, 'oh, he's stupid. He doesn't know English'" (P1). P1 notes, however, "it depends on the person who is listening." P2 stated, "I think sometimes they'll think like I'm not that smart or I don't know what I'm saying." P2 also voiced his opinion that, "it depends on who you're talking to. If the person speaks Spanish you should know the rules of Spanish, and if you're speaking English, you should know the rules." P3 agrees, "I think [it] really depends on like the people. If like the teacher, he or she, like to in academic ways ... in the way I talk. So it really depends on the people." These are the overall perceptions of grammar and grammar instruction by the participants.



All three participants agreed that they want to be corrected every time they speak or write an error. The opinion that one correction will hinder the reoccurrence of the error forever is consistent throughout all three. P1 said that he was corrected more in India when speaking English than he is here in the United States. In his writing they would cross out the error (identify it) and then write the correct answer in (overt correction). When he spoke an error the teacher would either correct it him/herself or ask another student to correct him. P2 was only occasionally corrected while learning English in Venezuela. In Vietnam, P3 was corrected every time she made a mistake. Erroneous utterances were explicitly corrected, usually without any metalinguistic explanation. From the history of their error correction to their current situations very little has changed.

After a spoken error occurs, P1 wants his teacher to employ recasting to help him. In writing, he would like the error to be identified and a hint to be written so he can attempt the correction himself. He also believes that "it's good to learn from anybody." When classmates correct him he will occasionally check the answer with the teacher for accuracy. Similar to P1, P2 appreciates the correction of classmates and even finds usefulness in hearing others be corrected. Instead of recasts, however, P2 prefers explicit error correction for verbal mistakes and would like the teacher to identify and overtly correct his written errors. P3 wants immediate corrective feedback and thinks learning from others is helpful as well as from the teacher. Like P1, she would like verbal correction through recasts and written errors to be identified but not corrected. P3 confirms, "I want to [think] about my mistake first and then [find] the answer. It will always like help me to remember it." Lastly, she mentions the desire for revision

opportunities in her homework. These are the thoughts about error correction from each participant.

### **Influences.**

Once initial understanding of the participants' perceptions was gained, a look into the possible influences was necessary in order to answer the second research question. Five different patterns of influences arose in the data: instruction/correction techniques/frequency, teachers, others/emotions, family, and self (intrinsic motivation/initiative).

P1 started off by saying that, "Talking to people and writing like essays and like writing papers... you know if you mess up grammar it could be hard for the reader to understand what you're saying. So I realized that grammar is very important...." Also, his grammar instruction has consisted of learning a grammar rule then practicing and using it. The goal was to use it correctly and "see if you're getting it right." The following quote refers to this instructional influence: "In India, grammar is a big deal." This, of course, is impacted not only by the instruction, but also by the teachers.

[The teachers] were strict about it. It was like, "you gotta learn, man." So it... wasn't like "okay, you just watch the teacher do something and don't have to like pay attention or something." They gonna ask you questions like you need to know the answers.

Another method of instruction employed by his teacher was to randomly ask students questions regarding the grammar rules. A wrong answer solicited an instant correction or the teacher asking another student for the answer. P1 also said, "In some ways they ... made me understand it's important like the way they taught me."

Talking to other people and knowing that grammar is important for proper understanding guided P1 to his perceptions as well. The influence of others and his emotions is communicated in the following quote:

I have made a lot of mistake learning when I got here first. Talking to my friends, my uncle, everybody. You know, felt kind of bad sometimes. You know, sometimes is very embarrassing in front of a lot of kids in class and stuff. So I want to make sure that you know, I'm getting it right, that you know, nobody's like laughing at me. ... And I don't want to like get embarrassed in front of anybody talking wrong and stuff so I make sure I'm getting it right. ... I might be like asking it in the wrong way and my friend next to me, he would like laugh at me. I think, just little funny stuff but it make you want to learn better.

Also, the perception that other people perceive errors as a sign of unintelligence plays a role in the embarrassed feeling P1 experiences. Further, P1 considers communication to be the “main reason [he finds] grammar to be important[.]” Understanding and being right are factors influenced by others and his own personal impression upon himself.

P1's parents always knew he would come to the United States and so they would encourage him in his English studies. The following are some examples of things they would tell him:

- “If you don't study, you're making a big mistake.”
- “Do your best at school and everything. ... Get good grades.”
- “Learn good.”
- “You're going to have to go speak English all the time in America so make sure you learn.”

Regardless of his teachers, parents, and others, P1 states that he decided that grammar was important anyway.

P1 believes that “you’ll be able to write better and speak better,” with grammar. He also explained that during classes he asks questions before speaking an error because “[he] wanted to know how to say it. [He] was reading it, that word came up. It was a new word ... and [he] didn’t know how to say it so [he] asked.”

For P2, “the way that it’s taught” made a difference in his perception of GI. Also, the homework would require knowledge of grammar rules. The instructional sequence was also discussed: “They would make us talk and then write a couple of sentences with the... rule that we’re practicing, so that we’ll have it in our minds. And then test us later on.” P2 considered also, the role his teachers played in his understanding of GI and EC. “Sometimes teacher just do their jobs so they can get it over with. Some teachers want to actually teach and want to make them learn, have their kids to learn and not make the mistakes they are making.”

The effect of others comes in a few different ways. Initially, P2 acknowledges the need for others to understand the speaker. Unlike, P1, however, P2 has a great pride in his bilingual abilities and exerts the following:

I think sometimes [others will] think like I’m not that smart or I don’t know what I’m saying [when I make a mistake]. And like they don’t know that it’s just like I’m still learning. So, I mean I guess they shouldn’t be judging me so much because they also make a lot of mistakes. ... I mean, I’m still learning. So I mean, I speak two languages. I’m able to switch one to another so I don’t have anything

to be embarrassed of. Okay, so I don't speak English that well, but I speak Spanish full on so what are you going to say about that?

There is no consideration for the thoughts of others towards himself on P2's part.

P2's family told him outright that grammar was important. "They would tell me, 'you need to learn grammar.' You need to learn how to speak right language..." His parents said that when he speaks properly people will consider him capable and try to get him a job.

Lastly, like P1, P2 considers the idea that grammar is important to be something he thought of on his own. The following are quotes pertaining to his intrinsic motivation and initiate towards GI and EC:

- "I always thought it was necessary."
- "I think if I get corrected I won't say it again. I won't make the same mistake."
- "Sometimes I think about it and it's like... this whole thing that's, you know, switch to Spanish, switch to English... it's so different and the culture, I mean... I think it's inspired me to, like, learn more. ... And you know, sometimes, the grammar too, ... it's kind of annoying sometimes, it's pretty amazing sometimes... I don't know, it, like, intrigues me... I don't know, sometimes I want to learn more about it."
- "Right now, I'm writing a book and sometimes I got to go back and kind of see if the sentence kind of makes sense and try to fix it. ... I need to correct myself more on the writing part."

His personal initiative is a vast part of his various perceptions about EC and GI.

P3 experienced grammar-focused English instruction in Vietnam. Her Vietnamese teachers corrected every mistake and did so explicitly. The GI involved grammar books, worksheets, and various assignments. To P3, grammar is more important when you write because, “[teachers] will mark you for everything when you’re writing. You have to be ... able to explain what you want to.” However, when speaking, “[teachers] really don’t care about what you use.” Her teachers also spoke outright saying, “that grammar is very important so you have to practice like every single day when you study English.” The instruction is reconfirmed as important when P3 states that, “If you don’t get the grammar basics then you cannot do like any assignment.” Also the way “they teach me directly grammar... reminds me have to know the grammar stuff.” For P3, teachers and instruction both have an intertwined influence on her perceptions.

The only influence by family is made through P3’s brother-in-law who she lives with along with her sister. “My sister’s husband, he is American. So like he talk English everyday. And then sometimes he asks me to if I do like any essays then I can give them to him.” The influence of help from a native speaker is evident here.

Finally, P3’s emotions and personal motivation/influence is shown in two clear statements:

- Emotions: “Yes, [I get embarrassed when I make a mistake]. ... I think when I was like my English like was limited and then I really don’t know how to say it, then I feel not really comfortable with that.”
- Personal Influence: “I think I just decided it’s important for me to speak like, you know, correctly.”

The above is an explanation of the data accumulated through the three different sources with the addition of the participant demographic (information gathered from the interviews).

### **Analysis**

The data collect clearly answers the first research question. Simply examining the participant feedback through the questionnaires, observations, and interviews reveals how and what these three students think and feel about GI and EC. What is less certain is “why.” What influences their viewpoints? Why do they believe what they do about GI and EC? Who/what taught them these ideas? In the data section, five patterns of influence were laid out. What I found is that personal experiences with GI, EC, and the English language are the foundational influences for these perceptions. The style of GI they grew up with, the frequency of the error correction, the experience of what works for each student, and the verbal and nonverbal input of others are all examples of these key influences. These are all expected concepts that logically melded the perceptions of the participants.

Unexpectedly, I discovered a vital misconception held by all three students, supported by their language acquisition experiences. Amongst the three participants dwelled three variations of a gross misunderstanding of what grammar is. P1 considers grammar to be rules, so much so, that the two are synonymous. P2 views grammar as rules as well; however, he understands that to include how and when to use verbs, as well. P3’s definition of grammar is based solely on verbs, verb conjugation, and verb tenses. None of these are accurate representations of what grammar actually is. Grammar is the structural framework of a language from which communication is based.

It is a means by which we relay and process information received and relate to one another as human beings; it is the building blocks to personal expression. Absolutely it involves rules and verb tenses, but that is not all. I believe the data suggests that this error in the conceptual development of grammar defined is based in the GI and EC received by these three participants.

Based on the descriptions of the GI received in P1 and P3's home countries, it is reasonable to state that they experienced purely explicit GI and EC. This is supported by the examples of rule explanation, grammar books, worksheet use, rule-based assignments, and outright verbal and written correction discussed in the interview process. P2 experienced little GI while learning English as a foreign language in Venezuela and perhaps has a more well rounded conceptualization of grammar as a whole. However, due to his description of GI as employed in the United States, his experiences also involve a large amount of explicit GI and EC. In these situations, the emphasis for GI was set in rules and structures; the emphasis for EC was explicit accuracy and correctness.

The participants' definitions of grammar in addition to their second language acquisition (SLA) history (full of explicit GI and EC) produce a disconnection. If explicit instruction is how they were taught, and the product of that teaching was a miscalculation of grammar as a whole, then there is a problem with the method. The proof is suggested by a number of contradictions found in the students' responses to the three forms of data collection. I suggest that if all three participants grasped a comprehensive and complete understanding of grammar, they would have fewer or no contradictions in their perceptions of GI and EC.



The first conceptual chasm forged within the participants' perceptions relates to their feelings towards grammar in conjunction with the necessity of grammar. None stated enjoyment or preference toward grammar on an affective level but all viewed grammar as an essential to language. I propose that a thorough understanding of grammar as more than a set of rules would present students with a varied affective attitude toward it. Not only would they recognize the necessity, but the negative affect towards it would diminish.

Another break in consistency regards the importance of grammar in communication. Each student stated that grammar is necessary for communication (questionnaire items 12 and 18 as well as interview data) but also unnecessary depending on whom they are speaking to. P1 even went as far as saying that communication is the main reason he views grammar as important. They also relay the idea that perfect grammar is not required but errors hinder the understanding of language. While as a whole these ideas are consistent with reality, the lack of connection between them in the minds of the participants renders these thoughts contradictory.

Again disconnection arises when reading and grammar are considered. All three participants agreed (or strongly agreed) with the statement, "Knowing a lot about grammar helps my reading" (questionnaire item 3). Contrasting ideas were presented in the interviews, however, with students saying that grammar only matters a little when reading. While P2 and P3 both strongly agreed with questionnaire item 21, "When I read a sentence in a second language, I try to figure out the grammar," their verbal communication about this idea opposed this statement. Proper synthesis of grammar into the language learning process would likely clarify these ideas for the participants.

Lastly, students understand the need for authentic language practice while studying English but do not seem to have received it. Questionnaire item 15 reads, “It is more important to practice a second language in real-life situations than to practice grammar rules.” This understanding is impressive considering the amount of explicit deductive grammar instruction they received since beginning SLA. Their ability to see the value in real-life situations shows their desire for a consistent mental framework of grammar.

The data supports the ideas of multiple forms of influence defining a student’s perceptions and opinions of GI and EC, the bulk of this influence residing in past GI and EC experience. Students also gain insight from parents, peers, teachers, and what they have learned works for them. This student understanding is pertinent to teachers everywhere as it reflects the way that they ought to teach. The main insight from this study was a surprise, however, and it calls teachers to further action in GI and EC.

### **Implications and Recommendations**

This survey suggests two sets of data: the set that answers the research questions and the set that came about unexpectedly. However, both seem to yield aligning steps forward. Initial contemplation of the data and analysis shows that teachers ought to simply be aware of where students come from and what mentalities they bring to the table. While this is true, a deeper understanding, especially in terms of past English language acquisition experiences, is necessary. This leads into the essential review of one’s GI and EC practices in relationship to the students’ past experiences.

The idea of knowing your students is commonly taught and understood. Generally this idea revolves around the students’ interests, hobbies, academic successes,

learning styles, and behavioral tendencies. I propose, based on the findings of this study, that teachers need to take an in depth look at what the SLA experience has been for each student. How have they experienced language? What was the role of GI in past language classrooms? What kind of corrective feedback did they receive? Did they find these methods useful? In what contexts have they studied English? All of these questions shed light on the students' academic history. With these pieces of information, the teacher can make a decision based on the general class of how to proceed in teaching English as a second language.

Additionally, the experience of these three participants centered on explicit deductive GI. This background plus the misunderstanding of grammar imply a need to reevaluate how grammar is taught and corrected. Ellis (2006) proposed ten "beliefs about grammar teaching." All ten of these beliefs are found in Appendix 2. While all are relevant, I would like to highlight four with special relation to this study (4, 7, 9, 10).

- A focus-on-forms [explicit] approach is valid as long as it includes an opportunity for learners to practice behavior in communicative tasks.
- A case exists for teaching explicit grammatical knowledge as a means of assisting subsequent acquisition of implicit knowledge. Teaching explicit knowledge can be incorporated into both a focus-on-forms and focus-on-form approach. In the case of a focus-on-forms approach, a differentiated approach involving sometimes deductive and sometimes inductive instruction may work best.
- Corrective feedback is important for learning grammar. It is best conducted using a mixture of implicit and explicit feedback types that are both input and output based.

- In accordance with these beliefs, grammar instruction should take the form of separate grammar lessons (a focus-on-forms approach) and should also be integrated into communicative activities (a focus-on-form approach).

Ellis (2006) suggests the melding of two approaches – explicit and implicit; deductive and inductive; focus-on-forms and focus-on-form. It is up to the teacher to determine the balance of the two that will best suit the learning history and language needs of his/her classroom.

This study leaves many questions unanswered, especially as they relate to the addition of unexpected findings.

- How do English language acquisition experiences influence student affect towards GI and EC?
- What are the perceptions and opinions of native English speakers in regards to GI and EC and why?
- What are the common definitions/understanding of grammar held by ESL students? What about native English speakers?
- Why do students dislike grammar?
- How do we teach grammar as more than just rules and verb conjugations?

These questions, as well as the results of this study, require further research. A repeat of this study focused more on the definition of grammar would be useful in order to create the basis of a quantitative study to survey many students across English-speaking countries. Multiple studies can springboard from this one and any to follow it.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study is qualitative in methodology and therefore is not generalizable. Due to the small sample size and localized nature of the study, more research would be needed to produce generalizable results. Also, the first interviews of P1 and P2 were lost due to technical issues and so the data may be influenced by the repeating of questions and answers from the lost interview recording. Researcher bias is a possibility as I was the only one to gather, code, and analyze the data. Triangulation was used to decrease the chances of bias affecting the study or results. Lastly, because the findings were unanticipated, more research is needed to confirm their reliability.

### **Conclusion**

This study began with the goal to connect student opinions and perceptions of GI and EC to their influences. While that goal was reached, an even bigger result was found: a misconception of grammar defined. This result opens the door to further studies regarding the formation and teaching of what grammar truly is. Teachers should consider what message they are sending about grammar through the way they utilize GI and EC as well as make an effort to learn more about student language learning histories. These two steps will likely improve the affect of students towards GI and EC. Consider the findings as they relate to you, your classroom, and your teaching pedagogy.

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## Appendix 1

## Grammar Instruction and Error Correction Questionnaire

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: The questions ask you what you think about studying grammar rules and about your motivation for learning a second language. Read each statement and decide how strongly you agree or disagree, placing a mark in the appropriate number's box. If a question doesn't apply to you, you can mark "not applicable"

| Question:   | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | N/A |
|---|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|-----|
| 1. Studying grammar formally is essential for mastering a second language.              |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 2. I usually keep grammar rules in mind when I write in a second language.              |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 3. Knowing a lot about grammar helps my reading.  |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 4. When I make errors in speaking a second language, I like my teacher to correct them. |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 5. My second language improves most quickly if I study the grammar of the language.     |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 6. I can communicate in a second language without knowing the grammar rules.            |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 7. Teachers should not correct students when they make errors in class.                 |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 8. I like studying grammar.   |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 9. People will respect me if I use correct grammar when speaking a second language.     |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 10. I like to be corrected by my classmates in a small group setting.                   |                |       |          |                   |     |

| Question:   | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | N/A |
|---|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|-----|
| 11. Good learners of a second language usually know a lot of grammar rules.                                     |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 12. Knowing grammar rules helps communication in a second language.   |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 13. I like it when my teacher explains grammar rules.   |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 14. The study of grammar helps in learning a second language.   |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 15. It is more important to practice a second language in real-life situations than to practice grammar rules.  |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 16. When I have a problem during conversation activities, it helps me to have my teacher explain grammar rules. |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 17. There should be more formal study of grammar in my second language class.                                   |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 18. Knowledge about grammar rules helps in understanding other people's speech.                                 |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 19. I dislike it when I am corrected in class.  |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 20. When I make grammar errors in writing in a second language, I like my teacher to correct them.              |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 21. When I read a sentence in a second language, I try to figure out the grammar.                               |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 22. I feel cheated if a teacher does not correct the written work I hand in.                                    |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 23. Second language writing is not good if it has a lot of grammar mistakes.                                    |                |       |          |                   |     |
| 24. One way to improve my reading ability is to increase my knowledge of grammar.                               |                |       |          |                   |     |

## Appendix 2

1. The grammar taught should be one that emphasises not just form but also the meanings and uses of different grammatical structures.
2. Teachers should endeavour to focus on those grammatical structures that are known to be problematic to learners rather than try to teach the whole of grammar.
3. Grammar is best taught to learners who have already acquired some ability to use the language (i.e., intermediate level) rather than to complete beginners. However, grammar can be taught through corrective feedback as soon as learners begin to use the language productively.
4. A focus-on-forms approach is valid as long as it includes an opportunity for learners to practise behaviour in communicative tasks.
5. Consideration should be given to experimenting with a massed rather than distributed approach to teaching grammar.
6. Use should be made of both input-based and output-based instructional options.
7. A case exists for teaching explicit grammatical knowledge as a means of assisting subsequent acquisition of implicit knowledge. Teaching explicit knowledge can be incorporated into both a focus-on-forms and a focus-on-form approach. In the case of a focus-on-forms approach, a differentiated approach involving sometimes deductive and sometimes inductive instruction may work best.
8. An incidental focus-on-form approach is of special value because it affords an opportunity for extensive treatment of grammatical problems (in contrast to the intensive treatment afforded by a focus-on-forms approach).
9. Corrective feedback is important for learning grammar. It is best conducted using a

mixture of implicit and explicit feedback types that are both input based and output based.

10. In accordance with these beliefs, grammar instruction should take the form of separate grammar lessons (a focus-on-forms approach) and should also be integrated into communicative activities (a focus-on-form approach).

Ellis (2006)