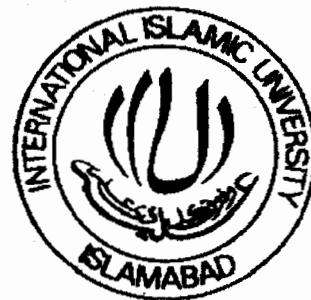


**TEACHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT GRAMMAR TEACHING AND  
THEIR CLASSROOM PRACTICES: A STUDY OF  
GRAMMAR TEACHING AT THE DEPARTMENT OF  
ENGLISH AT THE INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC  
UNIVERSITY, ISLAMABAD**

7-6503



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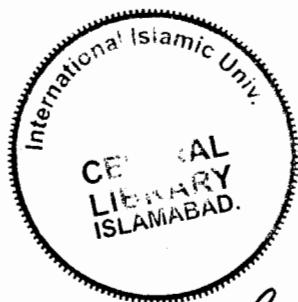
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UNIVERSITY, ISLAMABAD**

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**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of Master of Philosophy in English**

Department of English  
Faculty of Languages and Literature  
International Islamic University, Islamabad

**OCTOBER, 2009**

## **ATTRIBUTION**

*I ATTRIBUTE THIS HUMBLE RESEARCH WORK AND MY OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS  
IN LIFE TO THE MERCY OF ALLAH ALMIGHTY AND HUMBLY THANK HIM FOR  
EVERYTHING THAT HE HAS GRANTED ME.*

## **ACCEPTANCE BY THE VIVA VOCE COMMITTEE**

**Title of the Thesis:** Teachers' Beliefs about Grammar Teaching and their Classroom Practices: A Study of Grammar Teaching at the Department of English at the International Islamic University, Islamabad

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**Supervisor**

**16 November, 2009**

## **CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION FORM**

I, Faisal Rasheed Sheikh S/O Abdul Rasheed Sheikh , Registration No: 34-FLL/M.Phil-Eng / F06 , a student of M.Phil/MS in English at the International Islamic University, Islamabad do hereby solemnly declare that the thesis titled "Teachers' Beliefs About Grammar Teaching and their Classroom Practices: A Study of Grammar Teaching at the Department of English at the International Islamic University , Islamabad" submitted by me in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in English is my original work, and has not been submitted for obtaining any degree from this or any other university.

---

Faisal Rasheed Sheikh

October , 2009

## ABSTRACT

This study attempts to explore the grammar teaching beliefs of ESL teachers in the Department of English at the International Islamic University, and investigate as to what extent teachers' beliefs are reflected in their instructional practices. Despite the centrality of grammar in L2 education, research on L2 teachers' beliefs about grammar teaching and their influence on the classroom practice represents a relatively an under researched area especially in the context of Pakistan. The participants in this study consist of 36 teachers both male and female teaching at elementary, intermediate and advanced levels. Detailed questionnaires about beliefs are administrated to the participants to investigate their beliefs about different controversial issues in grammar pedagogy. Later, non-participant classroom observation of five, randomly selected, teachers are conducted to identify whether the teachers' beliefs influenced their classroom practice or not. The findings demonstrate that teachers hold many conflicting beliefs about grammar teaching. Majority of the teachers advocate the principles of communicative language teaching but at the same time strongly approve the need of meticulous error correction and use of students' L1. The observational data demonstrates first, that despite the introduction of integrated grammar books in language classes, grammar teaching at IIUI is by and large rule-based, form-focussed and textbook-oriented, and second, that several disparities exist between teachers' stated beliefs about grammar teaching and their classroom practices.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Nature and Background of the Study**

Under the auspices of behaviourism, the research in language teaching/ learning has been focused on the actions of teachers rather than their professional judgments. After the paradigm shift that took place in 1970s, the researchers started considering that it was more significant to investigate the processes of teaching and learning than a narrow focus only on what teachers do in the classroom. According to Calderhead, there were three major reasons due to which this new line of research emerged. First, the dissatisfaction with the behaviourist tradition, second, developments in cognitive psychology which led to the realization that teaching was a thoughtful process, and third, the ethnographic and qualitative methodology which started prevailing the educational research (710).

Since 1970s onward, many researches have been produced to correlate teachers' beliefs and their practices in the field of general education but in the area of L2 teaching only few studies have investigated the impact of L2 teachers' beliefs, assumptions and attitudes on their instructional decisions (Johnson, 1994; Smith, 1996; Woods, 1996; Borg, 2003a). Particularly, only few studies have explored the perception of L2 teachers about the role of grammar teaching in their work and the manner in which their instructional decisions and preference for certain instructional practices in L2 grammar teaching are influenced by teachers' personal pedagogical systems. Since grammar has occupied a central position in the studies of L2 acquisition and in the debates of L2 teaching methodology, cognitive bases of teachers' pedagogical practices is relatively an under-researched areas in the context of Pakistan.

The selection of grammar as the focus of investigation in the present study is triggered by re-assertion of the pivotal importance of grammar in second language teaching and learning after a period of decline during communicative language teaching. Recent research has proved that “focused L2 instruction results in large target-oriented gains” (Norris and Ortega 417) and that “focus on grammar might push learners beyond fluent language towards target-like second language ability” (Doughty and Williams “Pedagogical Choices in Focus on Form” 211). Grammar is, no doubt, an indispensable organizer of other components of language. However, the teaching of grammar to second language learners has been surrounded by multiple controversies and paradoxes particularly the inconclusive nature of L2 acquisition studies regarding the best way to teach grammar. Although L2 researchers have propounded a range of pedagogical options in L2 grammar teaching, yet a major review of these options has indicated that it might be quite premature to reach any definite conclusions concerning what type of formal instruction was the most effective one (Ellis, “Study of Second Language Acquisition” 646). In the absence of well-substantiated guidelines regarding L2 grammar teaching from L2 research, “teachers create and internalise their own maps” to cope with such ‘ill-defined situations’ (Kagan 80). The present study explores the nature of these maps or beliefs and investigates how ESL teachers’ beliefs about second language grammar instruction influence their pedagogical practice in the context of International Islamic University.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

This study seeks answers to questions given below:

1. What are the teachers’ beliefs about grammar and grammar teaching?
2. What is the relationship between teachers’ pedagogical beliefs and their grammar teaching practice?

### **1.3 Hypotheses**

In seeking to answer these questions, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- a) At the level of beliefs teachers are influenced by the principles of the communicative approach.
- b) Teachers' beliefs about grammar teaching consciously or unconsciously influence their classroom practice.

### **1.4 The Context of the Study**

As environmental constraints and opportunities are regarded as significant factors in any model of teachers' thoughts and actions (Clark and Peterson 260), an understanding of the context is considered to be an essential requirement for developing a comprehension of teachers' beliefs and practices ( Pajares 27). Thus, the present study was carried out only in a specific teaching context with the intention of making a closer connection between teachers and their practical experience. The context chosen was that of English Language Teaching at the International Islamic University, Islamabad.

The present study is based on the teaching of Grammar in the department of English at IIUI. So the current educational context provides a better understanding of teachers' thoughts and their classroom practices. Most of the English language learners at the International Islamic University Islamabad are adults having mixed linguistic abilities and varied cultural backgrounds. They come from different countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, China, Thailand, Afghanistan, Somalia, Palestine etc. These students come to study different subjects such as Shariah and Law, Usuluddin, Arabic, Economics, Islamic Studies etc. Since English and Arabic are the major media of instruction, the students are taught English language for three semesters; Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced levels so that they

could attain a reasonable command over English language to cope with their studies. Besides the four basic skills of language, listening, speaking, reading and writing, they are taught grammar as well. The time allocated to the above mentioned skills is as under:

<b>Skills</b>	<b>Time Allocated</b>
1) Reading skills	(8hrs)
2) Writing skills	(8hrs)
3) Listening& Speaking (2+2=4hrs)	
4) Grammar	(4hrs)
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>

Most of the teachers use the textbooks recommended by the department in order to fulfill the objectives of the study. The grammar textbooks for the students of Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced Levels at have been reviewed time and again to improve the English proficiency of the students but the results have not been encouraging as most of the teachers complain that the students at the Advanced and the Intermediate levels make basic grammatical errors in their written and oral work. Before fall semester 2007, most of the grammar textbooks provided for the students were compiled in the format of explanation of sets of rules accompanied by some example sentences, which were completely isolated from the discourse or context. Learners were expected to internalize these grammatical rules through exercises involving repetition, manipulation, and grammatical transformation. They mainly relied on language classroom for exposure to the target language and for corrective feedback. The students were expected to show reasonable proficiency both in oral and written communication whereas they often failed to give the desired output in both the domains. To make up for this deficiency, in the Fall Semester 2007, the department introduced a partially integrated grammar book series titled Grammar Book1,Book 2,Book 3 by Jennifer Seidl for Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced levels respectively but the results have been little

different. Even after having studied grammar for the whole semester, they would frequently make grammatical errors both in speaking and writing. This phenomenon provided me an impetus to explore the issue from the teachers' perspective, how the teachers perceived grammar teaching and what they actually did in the classroom.

There is no gainsaying the fact that teachers play an instrumental role in the implementation of an educational policy. Especially, in the context of language teaching any change in the syllabus bears no significant results unless the teachers' existing beliefs about particular language skill are explored, analyzed and then reformed if necessary. Since grammar furnishes the basis of the four language skills, the teaching of grammar requires an immediate reevaluation in the context of IIUI.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Teacher beliefs are known to have effect on classroom practice. During the last few years, the research on teachers' beliefs has gained attention both in general education and second language teaching research. According to Clark, 'teachers' beliefs influence their understanding and judgment which consequently has an effect what teachers state and practise in classrooms' ("Asking the Right Questions" 9). The present research may be of immediate importance to language teachers. They may reflect upon their beliefs about grammar teaching and their classroom practice and may be able to remove any incongruity between their beliefs and pedagogical practice. Secondly, this research may hold significance for language teacher trainers. They may, in future, conduct workshops geared towards harmonizing teachers' beliefs and classroom practice, which may contribute to the professional development of the teachers.

## **1.6 Organization of the Thesis**

The structure of the thesis is as under:

Chapter one describes the background of the study, its rationale, research questions and hypothesis. It explains the aims and objectives of the current investigation and presents an overview of the thesis.

Chapter two presents the nature, origins and contents of teachers' beliefs and relationship between beliefs and practice. Then the role of grammar teaching in foreign language context is presented followed by the critical review of the research studies on teachers' beliefs about grammar teaching and their classroom.

Chapter three explains the research methodology and data collection procedures. It specifies the research design, instruments used for the acquisition of data, population and sampling and data collection procedures that were adopted. It also describes how the data were coded, analysed and interpreted. It also outlines the steps taken to safeguard the validity and reliability of the findings. The aim of the chapter is to provide full details of the methodology so that the reliability of the present investigation can be assessed.

Chapter four presents an analysis of the data collected through questionnaires to ascertain the espoused beliefs from the English teachers at IIUI and class observations to actually see their existing pedagogical practices, and then finally shows the relationship among them.

Chapter five highlights the findings of the research, its contribution to the already existing knowledge, some practical recommendations, the limitations of the thesis, and possibilities for further research.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The present review encompasses the nature, origins, content of teachers' beliefs, relationship between beliefs and practice and then presents in detail the research on teachers' beliefs and classroom practice. The aim of the review is to establish that to make sense of teachers' instructional practice we need to be aware of their beliefs that underlie their classroom actions.

#### 2.1 Nature of Teachers' Beliefs

##### 2.1.1 Definition of Teachers' Beliefs

Although the study of beliefs constitutes one of the most valuable psychological construct to teachers' education, they are acknowledged as being difficult to define because they are not directly observable. The difficulty in studying teachers' belief has been caused by definitional problems, deficient conceptualizations, conflicting understandings of beliefs and belief structures (Pajares 307). Belief has been defined as a "messy construct that travels in disguise and often under the alias of judgements, opinions, personal theories, internal mental processes, action strategies, practical principles" (Pajares 309). In spite of the terminological confusion, however, there has been some consensus among the researchers about the nature of beliefs and their effects on action.

Rokeach characterizes beliefs as "containing a cognitive, an affective, and a behavioural component, thus influencing what one knows, feels, and does" (qtd. in Levy 14). Richardson maintains that beliefs are "an individual's understandings of the world and the way it works or should work, may be consciously or unconsciously held, and guide one's actions" (91). Eisenhart *et al* define belief as "an attitude consistently applied to an activity" (54). They suggest that beliefs affect our perception of reality and determine both our thoughts and

behaviour. Richards, Gallo and Renandya think that the study of teachers' beliefs assists us in understanding how teachers conceptualize their work" (42). From the field of second language teaching, Richards thinks that teachers' beliefs consist of "information, theories, attitudes and assumptions regarding teaching and learning which teachers develop over time and bring with them in their classroom" (66). Shavelson and Stern perceive "teachers' beliefs function as filters through which teachers process information, interpret experience, and make instructional judgements and decisions" (qtd. in Farrell and Lim 2). However, in the ESL research context, teachers' beliefs refer to teachers' educational beliefs rather than the teachers' broader general belief system of which educational beliefs were but a part (Borg "Teacher Cognition and Language Education" 25). Borg defines beliefs as "an often tacit, personally-held, practical system of mental constructs held by teachers and which are dynamic." Borg further defines that teachers' educational and professional experiences define and refine teachers' beliefs ("Teacher Cognition and Language Education" 35). In short, beliefs are personal, diverse, idiosyncratic and experiential. They encompass values, theories, assumptions and so on and influence thinking and action.

### **2.1.2 Characteristics of Teachers' Beliefs**

Richards and Lockhart consider that beliefs develop steadily over time (30). They argue that beliefs consist of both subjective and objective dimensions. Some beliefs may be quite straightforward, for instance, the opinion that teacher should identify all grammatical error in students' written work. Others may be more complex, for example that language learning is "more effective when both form and meaning are combined and this conception may provide us an insight into the background of teachers' instructional decision making and classroom actions" (*Ibid* 30).

Beliefs are always accepted as true by the individual. They are not only 'imbued with

emotive commitment' but also serve as a 'guide to thought and behaviour' (Borg, "Self-perception and Practice in Teaching Grammar" 18). The structure of teachers' beliefs seems quite complicated and diverse because they appear to be interconnected and multi-faceted. Beliefs strongly affect our behaviour and perception and, as Pajares claims, that their filtering effect "ultimately examines, redefines, deforms, or reshapes subsequent thinking and information processing" (324). Beliefs exist in connection to other beliefs and might, in fact, contradict one another which reflect the complexity of belief systems (Breen *et al.* 471).

Green suggests that people hold beliefs in clusters, and each cluster may contain numerous belief clusters within a belief system of a person. He further maintains that there is "little cross-fertilisation between clusters, and that incompatible beliefs exist side by side unless these are analysed for consistency" (47). Clark and Peterson agree that beliefs are 'complicated and eclectic' and indicate that teachers who demonstrate similar educational practice may demonstrate wide variations in their belief systems (260).

Abelson has described numerous characteristics of teachers' educational beliefs which provide an overall sense of a belief system. He thinks that beliefs are non consensual because Teachers may have diverse beliefs on the same issue. All beliefs do not possess the same degree of strength as some beliefs are strong and some are weak. Abelson further indicates that some belief systems have unclear boundaries as they often overlap with beliefs of other areas (356).

We can conclude, first, that a teacher's beliefs represent an intricate, interconnected system of often implicitly held theories, values and assumptions that a teacher thinks to be true. Second, these beliefs serve as cognitive filters that account for new experiences and guide the teacher's perception and practice.

### **2.1.3 Sources of Teachers' Beliefs**

Teachers' belief systems are established on the 'goals, values and beliefs teachers possess in relation to the content and process of teaching (Richards and Lockhart 29-31). These beliefs and values provide us background information about teachers' decision making and action. According to Richards and Lockhart, the research on teachers' belief systems suggests that they are derived from a number of different sources which have been summed up as under;

First, teachers' beliefs are formed through their own experience as language learners. All teachers were once students, and their beliefs about teaching are often a reflection of how they themselves were taught. Second, the experience of what worked best is the primary source of beliefs about teaching. A teacher might have found that some teaching strategies worked well and some did not. Third, the established practice is another source of teachers' beliefs. Within a school, an institution, or a school district, certain teaching styles and practices might be preferred for example group learning etc. Fourth, personality factors do play an important role in forming teachers' beliefs. Some teachers may have a personal preference for a particular teaching pattern, arrangement or activity because it matched their personality. For example, a teacher may love to do a lot of drama in his conversation classes because he is an outgoing kind of person and it suited the way he used to teach. Fifth, education-based or research-based principles are another important source of teachers' beliefs. Teachers might have drawn on their understanding of a learning principle in psychology, second language acquisition or education and tried to apply it in the classroom. Sixth, the principles derived from an approach or method also contribute to the formation of teachers' beliefs. Teachers might have "believed in the effectiveness of a particular approach or method of teaching and might have consistently tried to implement it in the classroom" (30). For example, a teacher who believes in communicative language teaching will try to

make communicative use of language in his class. Or teacher will use the process approach in teaching writing and make a lot of use of peer feedback rather than a teacher's feedback in students' writing (30-31).

#### **2.1.4 Contents of Teachers' Beliefs**

Calderhead points out five main areas in which teachers hold significant beliefs:

- a) Beliefs about learners and learning: the assumptions teachers make about their students and how their students learn.
- b) Beliefs about teaching: nature and purpose of teaching
- c) Beliefs about subject: what the subject is about
- d) Beliefs about learning to teach: the importance of learning from experience
- e) Beliefs about self and the teaching role: how teachers project themselves in practical roles.

(719)

Calderhead asserts that the above areas may be interconnected. In this study, the focus is on exploring L2 teachers' beliefs in English grammar teaching i.e. the educational beliefs and this is also related to teachers' beliefs about their teaching role as well as their beliefs about learners and learning.

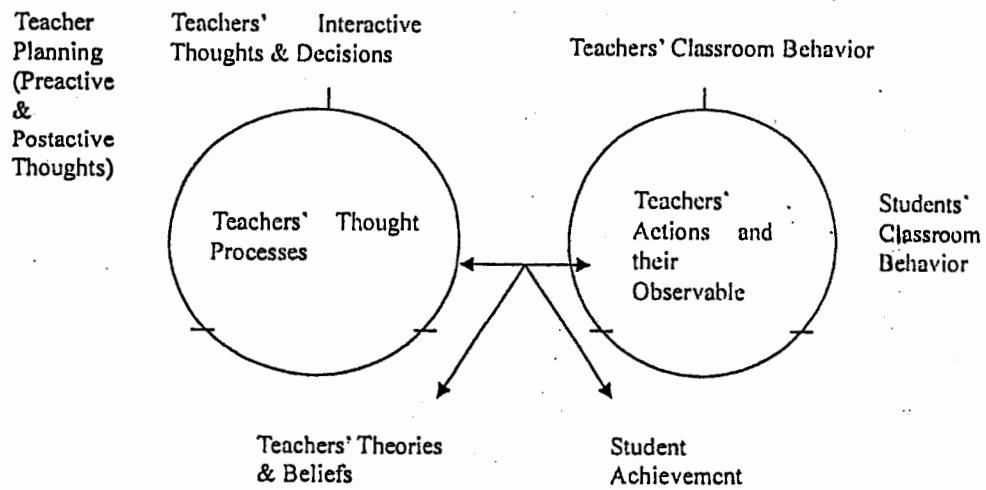
#### **2.1.5 Teachers' Beliefs and Classroom Practice**

Beliefs have been characterized as having a behavioural component which drives people's actions. According to Foss and Kleinsasser, teachers' cognition and their classroom practice exist in 'symbiotic relationships' (441) because they are inseparable. As teachers' educational

beliefs influence their classroom teaching and the experience of teaching, in turn, contributes to the formation of new beliefs or change in the existing ones. According to Johnson, educational research on teachers' beliefs shares three basic assumptions:

- (i) Teachers' beliefs influence their perception and judgment.
- (ii) Teachers' beliefs play a vital role in determining their classroom practices.
- (iii) Understanding teachers' beliefs is essential in improving teaching practices and teachers' education programs (439). Realizing the importance of teachers' beliefs and their subsequent influence on pedagogy, Clark and Peterson have presented a model of a teacher's thought and action. The model has visualized the processes of teachers' thinking and observable behaviour in classrooms. The model is given below:

**Figure 1 A Model of a Teacher's Thought and Action (Clark and Peterson, 1986, 257  
qtd. in Chou 187)**



The model has indicated two domains:

- a) Teachers' thought processes,
- b) Teachers' actions and their observable effects which are important in the process of teaching.

The first domain contains three unobservable elements, such as teachers' preparation, teachers' theories and beliefs and teachers' interactive thoughts and decisions. In contrast, the latter domain encompasses elements, such as teachers' classroom behaviour, students' classroom behaviour, and students' achievement which are in turn observable. A double-headed arrow placed between these two domains calls attention to 'reciprocal relationship between teachers' thought and action'. Clark and Peterson have explained that "teachers' actions are mostly caused by their thought processes, which, in turn, influence teachers' actions" (258). The figure demonstrates that both the domains influence each other and form different types of behaviour teachers displayed in their practices. Other constraints such as class size, physical surroundings, or external pressure from schools also have a bearing on the processes of teachers' thoughts and actions (qtd. in Chou 186).

## **2.2 Grammar Teaching in Foreign Language Teaching Context**

Grammar has experienced many vicissitudes in the course of language instruction during the last four decades. It has generated a diversity of theoretical positions and models, resulting in a number of empirical investigations. To gain an insight into the present scenario of grammar teaching, it is worthwhile to consider briefly some of the most significant developments in its history. The reason for looking back is that history gives us perspective and past experiences give us an opportunity to better perceive tendencies in today's grammar teaching methodology. According to Saraceni, during the last forty years, the role of grammar has passed through three main phases: 'absolute prominence, exclusion, re-introduction with

caution' (1). These three stages have been associated respectively to the following taxonomies for grammar instruction as propounded by Long (1991):

- Focus on FormS' Approach
- 'Focus on Meaning' Approach
- 'Focus on Form' Approach (39)

### **2.2.1 Focus on FormS Approach**

The '*focus on formS*' approach was characterized by a structuralist and synthetic approach to language teaching , in which primary focus of classroom activity was on language forms rather than the meanings they convey (Long, "Focus on Form" 40). This approach was dominant in Grammar-Translation and especially in Audio-lingual classes. It was based on the behaviourist ideas which accounted for language learning in terms of imitation, practice, reinforcement and habit formation. It regarded language as an object to be studied rather than a tool to be used. It considered that language learning implied learning the rules, memorizing patterns and translating sentences and passages from one language to another (Celce-Murcia "Grammar Pedagogy" 458). But soon this decontextualized teaching of grammar received fierce attack. Doughty criticised the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) for ignoring the existence and ordering of natural acquisition processes. He further criticised GTM for giving decontextualised practice of linguistics forms which students could hardly use for real communication ("Acquiring Competence" 134-135). However, Fotos states that the practice of teaching grammatical rules usually fails to develop the ability of learners to communicate effectively (615). In addition, Seedhouse argues that the "intense form-focussed classroom activity is not natural because such transformation sequences do not take place outside the classroom" (338).

## 2.2.2 Focus on Meaning

As a reaction to behaviourist and structuralist view of grammar teaching, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) emerged in the late 1970s. Traditional methodologies based on grammar and translation and mechanical practice of drills were heavily criticized for focussing on developing linguistic competence rather than on communicative competence. The advocates of this approach did not consider accuracy as essential as the ability to communicate fluently and effectively. Thus, the '*focus on meaning*' approach was advocated by early followers of communicative methodology during 1970s. In this approach, primary focus was on meaning and natural communication itself rather than on grammatical forms. The focus on meaning approach had its theoretical support from the works of anthropological linguist in the U.S. (Hymes, 1972) and functional linguist in Britain (Halliday, 1973), who viewed "language as an instrument of communication" (Lightbown and Spada 36).

Communicative Language Teaching focussed on language as a medium of communication and recognised that all communication had a social purpose - learner has something to say or ask. Therefore, teachers had to create multiple situations to give rehearsal of real-life situations and provide opportunities for real communication. The classroom activities provided opportunities for the learners to use the target language in a communicative way. It emphasised on developing the oral and aural skills of the learners by using authentic resources. The advocates of communicative approach emphasized on exposure to the target language as they believed that language learners arrive at "intuitive correctness" of their language, if they are given direct exposure to L2, and that explicit grammar teaching was not required (Krashen "The Natural Approach" 58). Thus, "formal instruction in grammar was not needed in first language, nor was in second language acquisition" (*Ibid* 58). Prabhu succeeded Krashen by expressing that "learners can acquire an

L2 grammar naturalistically" by attending classroom "meaning-focused tasks" (qtd. in Ellis, "Grammar Teaching" 232).

Communicative approach was much more pupil-orientated and errors made by pupils were no longer considered as signs of bad habits as the structuralist/behaviourists had thought. It emphasised that error correction obstructed second language learning as it might raise affective filter in language learner (Krashen, 1982). In other words, language instruction was "content-based, meaningful, contextualized, and discourse-based rather than sentence-based and the primary role of teacher was to facilitate language use and communication whereas his secondary role was to provide feedback and correct learner errors" (Celce-Murcia, "Grammar Pedagogy" 463).

In the 1980s the SLT/FLT (second or foreign language teaching) profession experienced an anti-grammar movement whom Ellis (1994) called the "zero position" (652). The anti-grammarians advocated the abandonment of formal instruction of grammatical forms from the language classes because they strongly believed that children could acquire their mother tongue without explicit grammar instruction. They expected foreign language learners to learn their second language as they acquired L1. They assumed that the students would unconsciously absorb grammatical rules as they hear, read, and practise the language in communication activities. Brumfit (1984) Van Patten (1990) and David Nunan (2003) were the major supporters of this stance.

Howatt (1984) has divided CLT into strong and weak versions. The strong version of the approach claimed that grammar had no place at all in the curriculum because communication activities such as problem-solving tasks, role-plays and information-gap activities took up nearly all the learning time. While the weak version considered grammar as a means to an end (opposite to the grammar-translation method, which saw grammar as an

end in itself). In both the versions, the role of formal instruction was downplayed, and grammar lost the overriding position it once occupied (Hinkel and Fotos 8).

### 2.2.3 Focus on Form

‘*Focus-on-form*’ approach combines both form and meaning. In the ‘*focus on form*’ approach, according to Burgess and Etherington, “learners’ attention is drawn specifically to a linguistic feature as necessitated by a communicative demand” (435) . According to Long, the teacher explicitly draws students’ attention to linguistic elements as they come up incidentally in lessons whose dominant focus is on meaning or communication (Long, “Focus on Form” 45-46) . In other words, communication comes first and focus on form comes second.

Focus on form approach emerged as a result of severe criticism on communicative approach due to (a) developments in cognitive psychology and (b) evaluation of French immersion classes.

First, in the early 1990s, L2 researchers, methodologists, and practitioners realized that “grammatical competence was essential for communication but could not be attained solely through exposure to meaningful input” (*Ibid* 8). The L2 researchers such as Celce-Murcia realized the importance of focus on form for learners to achieve both accuracy and fluency because “a grammarless approach could lead to the formation of a muddled, ungrammatical pidginized form of the target language beyond which learners hardly ever develop” (“Grammar Pedagogy” 465). Some researchers, such as Schmidt proved that ‘noticing’ is important because acquisition can only occur if learners attend to form ‘consciously in the input’ (135).

Second, according to Swain, the research related to second language development of

English learners in “immersion programmes” in Canada (Harley and Swain, 1984; Wesche 1993a, 2001, 2002) made clear that “an Input-rich, communicatively oriented classroom” did not provide all that was needed for the development of target-like proficiency and that teaching grammar lessons out of context was also insufficient (“Communicative Competence” 65, qtd. in Byrd 552). Fotos also endorsed the view that ‘purely communicative instruction alone’ was equally inadequate as long as grammatical instruction was neglected (“Shifting the Focus” 616).

According to Stein, a balanced attention to both accuracy and fluency facilitated the negotiation of meaning in spoken and written discourse (1-2). The research studies (Harley and Swain 1984, Lightbown and Spada 1994, Harley et al. 1995) also demonstrated that language could not be learnt accurately without attention to form (Stein 1-2). Thus, the role of grammar was re-examined and the language theorists reached a consensus on two fundamental points:

- i- Grammar cannot be excluded from foreign language pedagogy
- ii- Form and meaning have to be combined (Burgess and Etherington 440).

Researchers and language theorists (such as Burgess and Etherington 2002; Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, Thurrell 1997; Ellis 1998, 1994; Larsen-Freeman 2003; Lightbown and Spada 1990; Musumeci 1997; Nunan 2003, 1991; Skehan 1996; Weaver 1996; Willis 1996) felt the need of linguistic accuracy within a communicative context. They reached two standpoints. First, that the second language learners benefitted more from form-focussed instruction and corrective feedback provided within communicative contexts and second that the learners assimilated grammar more durably when ‘form, meaning, and use’ were integrated. Doughty and Williams who had done extensive research on this subject proved that focus on grammar might push learners beyond fluent language towards target-like second

language ability. Even if such a focus might not be absolutely necessary, it could “speed up natural acquisition processes” (“Pedagogical Choices in Focus on Form” 211). Nunan has concluded that it makes little sense that “learners are left to discover form-function relationships and the intricacies of a new linguistic system wholly on their own” (“Classroom Research” 232). The degree of ‘carefully timed focus on form’ is probably appropriate in most cases of L2 learning difficulty (*Ibid* 232). According to Ellis, it is difficult to attain certain types of language knowledge and skills in the ‘process of naturalistic learning’, for instance academic and professional speaking and writing. So in order to attain high levels of ‘language competence and performance’ instructed learning is a prerequisite for L2 Learners (“Direct Intervention in Language Learning” 50). Thus, as a consequence to this realization, grammar was reinstated in the curriculum and taught as the need arose during communicative tasks. Moreover, grammatical accuracy was considered essential to language and communication, not an “optional add-on after the basic communication has been achieved” (Burgess and Etherington 443).

Although the role of grammar has been questioned from time to time, grammar teaching tends to prevail in actual classroom practice. Teachers have never really abandoned grammar teaching over the years even when it was not in vogue. Thornbury has suggested three reasons of this phenomenon:

- Many teaching programmes define their objectives primarily in linguistic terms and organize their syllabi around grammatical items.
- Many practicing teachers, especially those new to the profession, require simple solutions to complex problems. To maintain class control and to obviate the need to respond spontaneously to learners’ unpredictable linguistic needs during

communicative activities, grammar is seen as offering workable routines that impose order on potential chaos.

- Many learners expect and even demand the direct teaching of grammar (112).

However, despite the persistence of grammar-based instruction, a few studies have been conducted to investigate teachers' grammar pedagogy and the beliefs that underline their practice. Earlier research on grammar teaching has three basic characteristics.

First, despite the realization that formal instruction facilitates the process of learning L2 no consensus has been reached about how best to teach grammar (Ellis, "Study of Second Language" 646). For instance, Garrett opposes the use of grammatical terminology in L2 teaching (133) but Berman outlines the value of doing so (280). Johnson argues that grammar practice activities enhance L2 acquisition (440) whereas Ellis argues against this stance ("Study of Second Language" 645). Krashen considers grammar teaching as redundant whereas Pienemann considers that grammar instruction can accelerate the process of learning some structures (187). Similarly, Tang considers the use of L1 as "supportive and facilitative in the classroom (38) but Cook argues that L2 teacher should show the importance of L2 to their students through its continual use (412). Thus, even after the research of 20 years, "no firm conclusions have been drawn regarding what type of formal instruction works best" (Ellis, "Study of Second Language" 646).

Second, much of the research on grammar teaching has been experimental in nature. It has focussed on identifying effective strategies for teaching grammar by setting up instructional contexts in which the effects of different strategies on students' achievement can be compared (e.g. DeKeyser, 1995). Such research has not examined the decision-making processes of L2 teachers while teaching grammar in natural settings.

Finally, a considerable volume of descriptive research on grammar teaching has also been conducted (e.g. Lightbown and Spada, 1990; Lyster and Ranta, 1997) but none of these studies have investigated teachers' cognitions about grammar teaching which underlay their classroom practices.

### **2.3 Research on Teachers' Beliefs about Grammar Teaching and their Classroom Practices**

There is a large volume of research on formal instruction which does not shed any light on exploring grammar teaching process as it is perceived by teachers. Earlier research on teacher cognition about grammar teaching mainly focussed on teachers' declarative knowledge. Some early studies in grammar teaching studies examined declarative knowledge about language held by prospective and practising language teachers. In a study, Bloor (1986) employed a questionnaire to assess the metalinguistic knowledge of 63 students joining linguistics courses at two British universities. The questionnaire intended 'to give students the opportunity to display their acquaintance with grammatical terms and concepts and allied linguistic issues' (Bloor 158). The Key findings were that the majority of the students identified only few grammatical terms successfully such as verb and noun, and that the students demonstrated 'fairly wide- spread ignorance' (Bloor 159) when they were asked to identify functional elements such as subject and object.

In another study conducted in the context of the UK National Curriculum, Chandler (1988) examined the practising English teachers' attitudes to language work by employing a postal questionnaire. Fifty teachers responded to the questionnaire. After examining the responses Chandler reported that although 84% teachers were involved in grammar teaching one way or the other. Majority of the respondents proclaimed that their personal language learning experiences at school had formed their grammatical knowledge. Another interesting

finding surfaced from teachers' responses to questions concerning the importance of metalinguistic awareness for their work. Majority of the teachers showed insignificant awareness' regarding the role of language understanding in teaching practice. Chandler described this attitude of teachers in his study as one of 'confident ignorance' (Chandler 23).

Johnson (1994) conducted a qualitative study of the beliefs of four pre-service English teachers. He examined how teachers' belief formed the way teachers conceptualized their instructional practice. The findings showed a striking pattern that although the teachers had an awareness of their own teacher-directed instructional practices, they expressed their powerlessness to change their instructional practices because they had only few alternative teaching models in their minds " (449 qtd. in Kalaja *et al* 72-73).

One such study was carried out by Eisenstein, Ebsworth and Schweers (1997), who used a questionnaire and post-hoc interviews to explore the views regarding conscious grammar teaching of 60 university teachers of ESL from Puerto Rico and the New York area. The majority of the teachers felt grammar that should be taught at least sometimes but the Puerto Rico teachers demonstrated more inclination towards conscious instruction than the New York teachers. As one of the teachers explained, 'grammar has always been an integral part of our language learning experience, we see no reason to discard it completely' (Eisenstein-Ebsworth and Schweers 247). The findings showed that forty-one of the teachers did possess a set of well developed beliefs about grammar teaching as they expressed clear and coherent rationales for their approaches to curriculum and pedagogy (Eisenstein-Ebsworth and Schweers 251). Teachers also referred to numerous factors which had shaped their views, such as students' wants and syllabus expectations. However, the experience in teaching grammar emerged as a powerful influence in shaping teachers' views about grammar teaching. The study concluded that "it was interesting that the participants in the study

seldom gave justification of their approaches by alluding to research studies or any specific methodology or on formal theories debated in the literature" (Eisentein-Ebsworth and Schweers 255). They were derived from their own experience as teachers and learners.

In conclusion, a major contribution of Ebsworth and Schweers's (1997) study is that it has demonstrated that teachers do possess a set of well developed beliefs about grammar teaching and that such beliefs may not be based on formal theories discussed in the literature. However, a limitation of the study was that it separated cognition from behaviour by addressing only the reported beliefs of the teachers. Thus, the relationship between the teachers' personal theories of grammar teaching and their actual classroom practice remained an unexplored question.

The two large-scale studies by Schulz (1996, 2001) provided further insight into teachers' beliefs about formal instruction. In the first study, Schulz (1996) compared the attitudes of 92 FL teachers and 82 language learners at an American University to grammar teaching and corrective feedback. This study revealed significant differences between teachers' and students' views about error correction. For example, 94% of the students disagreed with the statement that teachers should avoid correcting errors of their students in class, whereas only 48% of teachers supported this view. Moreover, 90% of the students supported that their spoken errors should be corrected, whereas only 42% of the teachers realised that students' oral errors should be identified and corrected.

In the second study, Schulz (2001) replicated this study with 122 FL teachers in Colombia, together with 607 of their students. The study demonstrated result patterns similar to the US study. Besides comparing teachers' and students' views on error correction, Schulz also investigated respondents' opinions about how foreign languages were learnt. Her US study revealed 'perturbing differences' (Schulz 348) between students' and teachers' views

on this issue. For instance, 80% of the students thought that 'the formal study of grammar was essential to the eventual mastery of the language' but only 64% of the teachers supported this view. In the follow-up study with Colombian participants, the differences in teachers' and students' beliefs about how foreign languages are learnt became more evident. For example, 76% of the students claimed that they liked grammar whereas only 30% of the teachers felt that students really did so. On the basis of these findings, Schulz argued that these disparities between teachers' and students' views about the contribution of formal instruction and error correction might decrease the "pedagogical face validity of instruction in front of the learners, and exert a negative influence on students' motivation, and consequently be detrimental to learning" (Schulz 349).

Another study that examined teachers' grammar-related cognitions was undertaken by Burgess and Etherington (2002) who used a questionnaire to examine the beliefs about grammar and grammar teaching possessed by 48 teachers of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in the UK universities. By and large, the teachers in this study reported positive attitudes towards formal instruction. They realised that formal grammar instruction contributed to the development of their (normally advanced) EAP students' proficiency and that explicit knowledge of grammar had an influence on these students' use of language. Over 90% of the teachers in this study realised that their students expected explicit presentation of grammatical points. Moreover, the study concluded that the teachers were more inclined towards an integrated, 'focus-on-form approach' to teaching grammar in which grammatical points were elaborated as necessitated by communicative demand (Burgess and Etherington 450). Another finding was that teachers' views about suitable approaches to grammar teaching were formed by their consciousness of students' variables such as their past experience of language learning. This was in contrast to Schulz's (2001) findings which

were established on the questionnaire responses of 607 foreign language students in Columbia and their 122 teachers as well as the 824 foreign language students in USA and their 92 teachers. Schultz's study indicated that a large number of students had a strong liking for grammar and they deemed it indispensable for eventual mastery of the language but a relatively small number of teachers differed with these views ("Cultural Differences" 250). The major limitation of the study by Burgess and Etherington was that no observation of teaching was conducted to see the influence of teachers' beliefs on their pedagogical practice. Despite this limitation, the above mentioned study provided a framework for the present study.

In a later exploratory case study, Farrell and Lim (2005) explored the relationship between the beliefs and actual classroom teaching of two experienced teachers of English language teaching in a primary school in Singapore. The results demonstrated that "teachers did have a set of complex beliefs systems that were sometimes not reflected in their classroom practices" (Farrell and Lim 9). The researcher demonstrated instances of both consistency and inconsistency between teachers' beliefs and their instructional practices. As Daphne, one of the teachers, firmly believed in the "effectiveness of traditional approach to grammar teaching" (Farrell and Lim 5), she provided explicit explanations and instructions on grammatical items and structures. Similarly the actual classroom practice of another teacher named Velma partially matched her belief that "teaching of grammar should be incorporated into the teaching of four language skills" (Farrell and Lim 7). Some instances of divergence between belief and practice were identified as well. For example, contrary to her belief, Velma made explicit grammar explanations and used activities which were not contextualized into meaningful communicative situations. In reality, her grammar teaching was "not incidental but structured and prescriptive" (Farrell and Lim 10).

In a series of papers, Andrews (1997, 1999a, 2001, 2003,) investigated the metalinguistic awareness of second language teachers in Hong Kong. In his 1997 investigation, he explored the relationship between teachers' knowledge of language and their ability to explain grammar points by asking 14 teachers to take part in a role play where they were invited to identify grammatical errors in texts and then to mime the explanations to learners. The results revealed evident inadequacies and misconceptions in the participants' knowledge. Some teachers demonstrated thorough understanding of the grammar related points but failed to explain them in an understandable way to the target students. This finding revealed that any serious analysis of teachers' metalinguistic awareness should address "both its declarative and procedural dimensions" (Andrews 159)

In another study Andrews (1999a) drew comparison between the explicit knowledge of grammar and grammatical terminology of four groups of teachers: non-native speaker teachers of English, (NNS), non-native speakers' future teachers of English, English native speaker prospective teachers (NS), and English native-speaker prospective teachers of modern languages. The instrument employed was a 60-item test which aimed at measuring explicit knowledge about language including the knowledge of grammatical terminology and also the ability to describe grammatical rules. The non-native teachers of English who had got the experience of two years demonstrated significantly better results in the test and excelled the other three groups. The researcher concluded that non-native speaker teachers might possess a better level of explicit knowledge of grammar and grammatical terminology. Moreover, teaching experience seemed to be an influential factor in the development of teachers' explicit knowledge of grammar and terminology.

In another study, Andrews (2001) explored the evolution of three second language teachers' cognition about subject matter which he termed as "language teacher's

awareness" (Andrews 83). Employing a range of research methods including interviews, classroom observation and teacher narrative, he attempted to determine the ways in which each teacher's grammar-related cognitions and practices had evolved over the period of eight years. One significant finding was that while all three teachers' subject-matter cognitions had changed in some ways (e.g. two of them had developed an enhanced awareness of the role of grammar in discourse), the actual knowledge of the subject matter of the three teachers (as measured by a test) had not changed at all. Andrews' explained this phenomenon by stating that, first, the teachers did not actively seek to improve their knowledge of grammar through either formal or informal study and second, those teachers' working conditions might have hampered their way. Another finding demonstrated how "teachers' interaction with their contexts could directly influence their classroom practices" (Andrews 83). Two of the teachers were found to have been "actively involved in working towards a satisfactory compromise between their educational beliefs and the constraints of their contexts" (Andrews 83). For example, one of the teachers negotiated for a timetable which demanded minimum focus on grammar teaching while another teacher (who was a Panel Head) assigned herself classes with the most senior forms so that she could teach in accordance with her principles. Before their interaction with their contexts, the two teachers' classroom practices were largely consistent with their beliefs. In contrast, the other teacher of the study did not make a deliberate attempt to "act on his social environment" (Andrews 85). Consequently, he had to adjust himself according to the expectations of the school rather than be guided by his grammar-related cognitions.

Expanding his earlier research, Andrews (2003) also focussed on the teachers' subject matter knowledge in grammar teaching. He employed a variety of interviews, surveys, tests and observation data in investigating the beliefs about grammar pedagogy held by 170

teachers of English in Hong Kong. He sought the relationship among these cognitions such as “teachers’ background variables and teacher subject matter knowledge” in relation to their explicit knowledge of grammar and grammatical terminology (Andrews 361-2). Little statistical evidence was found that teacher background factors such as years of experience or nature of the first degree were related with teacher’s beliefs about teaching and learning grammar. The study, on the one hand, demonstrated relationships between levels of proficiency and explicit grammar knowledge and, on the other hand, between beliefs about grammar and language pedagogy. The teachers who preferred an inductive approach to grammar teaching tended to have higher levels of explicit grammar knowledge while those who favoured a deductive approach tended to have lower levels of explicit grammar knowledge. Moreover, support for communicative language teaching appeared to be associated with higher levels of language proficiency. Out of 170 teachers in this study, 17 teachers were studied in more depth through interviews and classroom observations. The analyses of data demonstrated that majority of the teachers considered grammar teaching as a “boring necessity” (Andrews 370). In terms of classroom practice, “Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) approach was predominant and teachers were found having adopted deductive approach to the presentation of new grammar point. Moreover, teachers were influenced by some elements of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) but these were not significantly reflected in the teachers’ classroom practice. Despite the “global patterns of cognition and practice” found in this study, the study demonstrated an “element of individuality” in teachers’ responses (Andrews 371) which could be partly ascribed to the variations in teaching conditions. Andrews drew attention to one teacher whose beliefs and practices in relation to grammar had changed noticeably as a result of her transfer from traditional secondary school to a less traditional college.

Another series of studies on teacher cognition in grammar teaching was carried out by Simon Borg (1998a, 1998b, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 2001). These research papers containing in-depth case studies of EFL teachers in private language schools in Malta provided key insights into teachers' beliefs about grammar and how these beliefs influenced their practices. In a study, Borg (1998a) investigated the approaches to 'meta talk' (instructional talk about language) adopted by two teachers. He analysed different features of metatalk in teachers' practices: teachers' perception of metatalk, the modes of interaction used during such talk, the methods adopted in evaluating language, the occurrence of metalanguage, and the nature of the results of Meta talk. His first subject, Eric, valued the use of metalanguage in his teaching whereas second subject, Martha's favoured the minimum use of grammatical terminology while teaching grammar ("Talking about Grammar"166). The detailed analysis of these practices along with psychological, pedagogical and situational factors which shaped these practices demonstrated that "meta talk in the FL classroom was by no means a monolithic phenomenon (Faerch 197). Differences were highlighted between teachers' beliefs and practices.

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In another study, Borg (1998b) presented an analysis of grammar teaching from the perspective of the personal pedagogical systems of an experienced EFL teacher in a Mediterranean centre for TEFL in Malta. The study illustrated how the teacher's instructional decisions while teaching grammar were shaped by his pedagogical system, educational and professional experiences and his teaching context. The researchers employed detailed background interviews and non participant classroom observations to obtain a detailed account of classroom events. To identify key instructional episodes, the observational data was analysed after each lesson for instance, the use of a particular grammar teaching

activity, the explanation of a grammar rule, a response to a student's question about grammar, or a reaction to a student's grammatical error etc.

While talking about his work, the teacher revealed a network of interacting and potentially conflicting beliefs about various issues related to both L2 grammar teaching as well as teaching and learning in general. For instance,

- Grammar work based on students' errors makes it more relevant to the students.
- Students enjoy the intellectual challenge inductive grammar work provides. This approach to grammar also enhances students' sense of achievement.
- Grammar work helps students perceive patterns in the language, which can facilitate learning. Encouraging an awareness of grammar rules or asking students to compare their L1 to English can, thus, be useful in this respect.

Besides providing an insight into grammar-related instructional decisions, the study revealed that the beliefs instilled by the teacher's initial training were so firmly rooted that contextual factors did not appear to interfere with the implementation of the teacher's pedagogical system.

In another paper, Borg (1999a) established a rationale for the enquiry of teachers' cognition in L2 grammar teaching. He also presented findings from a recent project on teacher's theories in grammar teaching (discussed in Borg 1999b) to demonstrate the potential of this study for expanding existing perception of the processes of formal instruction. Borg acknowledged the central importance of grammar in L2 teaching and teachers' cognition in the study of grammar instruction. Borg argued that this research perspective allowed us to become aware of the cognitive foundation of teachers' classroom actions and form a deeper conception of L2 grammar teaching than the existing one. Borg

illustrated this point by referring to his findings emerging from research paper titled “Teachers’ Theories in Grammar Teaching”.

1. It is evident that grammar teaching is a “truly multi-faceted decision-making process”.

While talking about their practices in teaching grammar, both the teachers Eric and Tina explicitly or implicitly made decisions about the following:

- what language points to focus on,
- how to structure grammar lessons,
- how to present and analyze grammar,
- how metalinguistically explicit to be,
- what kind of grammar practice activities to utilize,
- how to deal with students’ grammatical errors.

(Borg, “Studying teacher Cognition” 25)

2. Teachers often blended or used alternately certain pedagogical dichotomies (such as inductive/ deductive methods) due to specific instructional factors. For example, Eric felt that inductive learning was more appropriate but he would often deliver short-lectures on different grammatical points such as the “syntax of multi-word verbs”. Tina also preferred discovery method for grammar teaching but she would often explain grammatical points. Apparently, such pedagogical decisions might be interpreted as methodological inconsistencies, but insight into the teachers’ cognitions might enable us to make sense of their behaviours (Borg 25).

3. Teachers’ decisions in teaching grammar were influenced by their often-contradictory cognitions about language, L2 learning, learning in general, grammar teaching, students and

self. Borg argued that it was only by studying teacher's cognition that we could gain access to these hidden motivations underlying teachers' instructional decisions (26).

4- Borg also found that certain educational and professional experiences in the teachers' lives generate teachers' cognition about formal instruction so the exploration into their cognition could help us study their actions (26).

In another study, Borg (1999b) provided an insight into teachers' theories of grammar teaching and their influence on teachers' instructional decisions. Borg defined that teachers' theories often consisted of implicit personal understandings of teaching and learning which teachers developed through educational and professional experiences in their lives (Borg 157). Borg illustrated the nature of teachers' theories about grammar teaching by exploring understanding of the two teachers about two issues in formal instruction which are as follows;

- Does grammar instruction play any role in second and foreign language learning?
- Is grammar best learnt through a process of discovery or through expository teaching?(159)

First, he investigated Eric's personal theories regarding the role of grammar after observing his classroom practices. Eric recurrently noted students' errors during oral fluency activities and then shared these notes with their students for subsequent analysis, discussion and self-correction. In discussing grammar, he also encouraged students to compare English grammar with that of their first language. He generally provided oral practice activities following the analysis of grammar. When interviewed he articulated a clear rationale for his position that formal instruction in ELT has been assessed in terms of its contribution to the development of students' competence to use the language communicatively. Eric's theory, however, illustrated that teachers' decisions in grammar teaching were not solely influenced

by such considerations. He believed that analysing and practising grammar contributed to the development of an understanding about the working of language among the students but he did not feel that such work would improve their ability to use the target grammar. Moreover, Tina's work provided an insight into her perspective on comparative effectiveness of discovery and expository teaching. As Tina had found the effectiveness of discovery method both from her experiences as a learner and her professional training, she utilized grammar discovery activities. However, she also felt that students expected some expository work, so she delivered short lectures on different aspects of grammar such as the "syntax of multi-word verbs" (Borg 159). Tina's decisions about discovery and exposition in grammar teaching were influenced by "a set of interacting thoughts about pedagogical ideals, instructional content, students, and context" (Borg 160). Insight into these factors greatly clarifies our understanding of this teacher's work. Borg concluded that "grammar teaching was a complex decision-making process, rather than the unthinking application of the best method" (Borg 160). The research data clearly indicated that an awareness of teachers' theories could enhance our understanding of teachers' instructional decisions in a grammar class. In the end of this research paper, Borg outlined a teachers' development strategy through which teachers could research the theories underlying their own grammar teaching practices.

Another perspective on teachers' beliefs about grammar teaching and their classroom practices is provided by Borg's empirical study (1999c) on the use of L2 grammatical terminology in the practices of four L2 teachers named Martha, Eric, Hanna, Tina belonging to two schools in Malta and discussed the motivations for the teachers' decisions regarding the use of grammatical terminology. The instruments for data collection included background interview, classroom observation and pre and post observation interviews. The analysis

highlighted that various experiential, cognitive and contextual factors determine teachers' use of terminology" (Borg 110). Another finding demonstrated that teachers' decisions about terminology were not related directly to their beliefs about one particular issue but other factors such as teachers' beliefs about the best way to learn grammar, the value of meta talk, and students' prior knowledge of terminology also influenced their instructional decisions (Borg 116). In brief, the present study highlighted a variety of practices as well as personalised stances towards the use of terminology shaped by unique educational biographies. This study also provided some support to the possibility that the teacher's instructional decisions may have been shaped by his own knowledge of terminology.

This paper provided a deeper insight into unexplored facets of this issue-the cognitions which guide teachers' use of terminology, the sources of these cognitions as well as the manner in which they determine teachers' instructional decisions.

These connections between teachers' grammatical knowledge and their approach towards formal instruction were investigated further in Borg's (2001) study in which two experienced EFL teachers were compared. The first teacher was generally confident about grammatical knowledge as it was demonstrated by his willingness to conduct spontaneous grammar work and to use students' questions about grammatical points for unplanned class discussions. The second teacher never conducted grammar work unless he was fully prepared. The fear of not answering the students' questions and the consequent embarrassment were the main influences behind this stance. This fear was triggered by a negative experience much earlier in his career. The data suggested that teachers' self-perception of their knowledge of grammar motivated their pedagogical decisions.

Following the work of Borg, Johnson and Goetsch (2000) examined the knowledge base underlying the explanations of grammatical points given by four experienced ESL teachers in

the USA. The study focussed specifically on teachers' content knowledge (teachers' declarative knowledge of language), pedagogical content knowledge (knowledge of effective methodology to present subject matter to learners) and knowledge of learners. Examining the sources of teachers' content knowledge of the four teachers, these researchers found similar results as given in other studies (Borg, 1998a; Chandler, 1988; Eisenstein-Ebsworth and Schweers, 1997; Farrell, 1999). They found teachers' education and their experience in teaching as the two major influences on the development of teachers' content knowledge. Moreover, they highlighted the dynamic nature of the teachers' knowledge about language. In analysing teachers' explanations, the study found that "teachers' beliefs about how learners learn and what they know affected their pedagogical strategies" (Johnston and Goettsch 455). Although Johnson and Goettsch discussed content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and knowledge of students separately, they acknowledged that "in reality, these categories merge together in inextricable ways and generate multifaceted, holistic accounts of, and actions in, language teaching" (Johnston and Goettsch 461).

Farrell (1999) provided another perspective on the relationship between cognition and practice. He asked 34 pre-service teachers of English in Singapore to write about their initial experience of learning English language as well as about their personal views about teaching grammar (inductive or deductive method). This study reported how the respondents' choices were influenced by their own language learning experiences. Some student-teachers wrote that as teachers they rejected the deductive system of learning grammar they had experienced themselves because it had not helped them effectively in language learning. Others were inclined to teach grammar the way they had been taught because they found it very effective as learners (even though in some cases it was boring). Findings of the research showed that teachers' grammar teaching practices were influenced by their own language learning

experiences (qtd. in Borg, "Teacher Cognition in Grammar Teaching: A Literature Review" 102).

Another major study of teacher beliefs/cognition in grammar teaching was conducted by Basturkmen, Loewen and Ellis (2004). This study focussed on teachers' beliefs and practices in relation to incidental focus on form. The researchers conducted different forms of interviews to elicit teachers' beliefs about focus on form and later conducted several observations to evaluate their practice in relation to their espoused approach to grammar teaching. The finding indicated instances of both congruence and incongruence between teachers' stated beliefs and actual practices. These inconsistencies related primarily to when it was pertinent to concentrate on form during a meaning-focused lesson and the kind of error correction techniques to be employed. For example, as one of the teachers believed that his role in the class was to be the "resource for the learners: not to direct their lessons" (Basturkmen *et al* 6) he allocated significant amount of time for group work. However, the same teacher believed that students should be encouraged to self correct when they committed errors and that communicative activities should not be interrupted to deal with errors unless these interfered with the meaning but the classroom practice of teacher was contrary to his stated beliefs. Similar instances of incongruence were evident in the stated beliefs and practices of other two teachers in this study. In attempting to interpret this finding, the researchers drew a distinction between "technical knowledge and practical knowledge" (Eraut 1994) as well as between "espoused theories and theories in use" (Argyris and Schon 1974). Basturkmen *et al* explained it as under:

When teacher are asked to comment on their beliefs abstractly (that is without reference to concrete events or experiences), they may draw on their "technical knowledge" and articulate their "espoused theories". However, when teachers comment on their beliefs with reference to concrete classroom events, they may draw

on their “practical knowledge- the experiential understanding of teaching”- and thus articulate their “theories in use” (Basturkmen *et al* 8).

In this study the least experienced teacher was the one who exhibited most inconsistency between beliefs and practice. The researchers suggested that it might be better to view the teachers’ beliefs to be “potentially conflictual rather than inherently inconsistent” (Basturkmen *et al* 9) suggesting that the differences between beliefs and practices were challenges that teachers needed to resolve.

Another perspective on teachers’ beliefs about grammar teaching and their classroom practices was provided by Yin (2006). This study investigated the beliefs and classroom practices in grammar teaching of four in-service ESL Chinese teachers in Hong Kong secondary schools. It also examined why teachers hold conflicting beliefs and how culture shaped teachers’ thinking and actions. It employed a blend of qualitative techniques such as in-depth interviews with the teachers, classroom observations and audio recordings of the teachers’ lessons to gain access to the mental worlds of these teachers and to examine the relationship between thought and action. One of the key findings was that as the teachers had different professional training and teaching and learning experiences, they all espoused a unique system of beliefs. The teachers were found to hold more than one belief about certain issues but the teachers were not aware of all of their beliefs at the same time. At any given time, one belief might come to the fore of a teacher’s awareness while the other beliefs receded into the background. This situation explained why conflicting beliefs could be espoused by the same teacher (Yin 390). Although the beliefs of the four teachers were unique, some similarities could be identified across them. First, all the four teachers assigned great importance to establishing a solid linguistic foundation for their students, and second, all the four teachers considered that “memorization could promote understanding and facilitate students in laying the essential groundwork” (Yin 390). Another important finding

was that the beliefs of four teachers about language had a significant impact on their grammar teaching practices. For example, Brenda, one of the teachers, who perceived language as resource, adopted a “focus on form” approach to formal instruction. On the contrary, other teachers such as Margaret, Eva and Ronald perceived language essentially as rules which led them to adopt “focus on formS” approach.

Another perspective on teachers’ beliefs about grammar teaching and their classroom practices was provided by Mohamed (2006). The study combined descriptive ethnography with a quasi-experimental design. It explored the extent to which the introduction of an innovative grammar teaching approach influenced teachers’ beliefs and behaviour. It focussed particularly on grammar teaching within the context of English teaching at the secondary schools in Maldives. The study was carried out in two phases. In the first phase the researcher analysed questionnaire data from 197 teachers from 51 schools to explore teachers’ beliefs and their self reported practices. The findings indicated teachers’ great emphasis on grammar and their unfamiliarity with inductive approaches to grammar instruction. In the second phase, 14 teachers from two schools were introduced to inductive grammar teaching methods in a 12 week professional development programme. But the observational data revealed only limited changes to beliefs and practices of the subjects. The researcher hinted at various impediments which constrained change efforts such as unsupportive school culture, large classes and uncongenial working conditions, teachers’ resistance to change and their low professional motivation (Mohamed 271).

The existing research on L2 teachers’ beliefs has been inadequate in two ways. First, in terms of context as great volume of the research has been carried out in Western or developed countries with mainly native teachers of the target language teaching small groups of motivated adult learners. As the majority of English teachers comprise non-native

speakers, the existing research does not fully represent the majority of language teaching settings across the world. Due to such contextual gaps in the literature, there was an imperative need for research into the beliefs of non native teachers in other less developed, non-Western contexts. There was a need to conduct such study in a non English country like Pakistan to see what results such study demonstrates in our context where even after 60 years of independence issue of teaching and learning of English grammar is still alive.

Second, research effort has been limited on the relationship between beliefs and practice. To a large extent the existing research on teacher's educational beliefs has concentrated only on self-reported beliefs through questionnaires and interviews whereas only a few studies have investigated how teachers' beliefs shape their planning and classroom teaching by observing classroom teaching.

Calderhead points out that "although it is readily acknowledged that teachers possess various beliefs about their work, it has been a controversial issue whether or not such beliefs influence their classroom practice" (721). Therefore, the present study attempts to examine the beliefs of ESL teachers in grammar teaching and to see whether these beliefs are reflected in teachers' instructional decision and practice.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter describes the methodology that was adopted in this study, describing the overall design, the processes of sampling, the instruments that were used and the procedure for data collection and the measures taken to enhance the content validity of the data.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The present study employs both qualitative and quantitative methods of research. Following Pajares' argument that belief inventories require additional measures such as interviews and observation of behaviour (310), the present study attempts to partially follow these guidelines. Data for this study came from two sources: belief questionnaire and observation of classes focusing on grammar explanations. A questionnaire-based survey was employed to easily obtain information from 45 participants in order to develop an understanding of the beliefs of teachers in the context being investigated. This was followed by exploring teaching through observation, as a means of understanding the beliefs that underlay teachers' practice. All the data were collected during the Spring Semester, 2009. Anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed.

#### **3.2 Population and Sampling**

The sample for the teachers' beliefs questionnaire survey consisted of all English teachers in the Department of English at IIUI (estimated to be 45 teachers both male and female) who were currently or had been teaching grammar in the previous semesters at the Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced levels. The main objective of targeting the whole population in the survey study was to make sure that the results acquired could be generalisable to the greater extent. Completed questionnaires were received from 36 teachers out of 45,

representing the response rate of 80.7%. The reason for selecting grammar teachers at all acquire levels was that most of the teachers had been involved in teaching grammar simultaneously at all the levels mentioned above. Moreover, the number of teachers engaged at one level was between 13-16 which was not a sufficient number of participants to provide generalisable results.

As regards selecting teachers for participation in the observation, only those teachers were selected who had responded to the questionnaire and were currently involved in the teaching of grammar at the Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced classes in the Department of English IIUI. Randomization was employed in selecting teachers for class room observation out of these teachers. A table comprising teachers' names, their level and section was formulated in the descending order i.e. from Advanced to Elementary. Then the teachers' names falling on odd serial number were marked for observation. Thus seven teachers were selected for class observation. The table is as follows:

**Table 1 Grammar Teachers in Spring Semester 2009**

S.No	Level	Name
1	Adv.1	A.M.
2	Adv.2	M.H.1
3	Adv.3	M.H.2
4	Adv.4	A.I.
5	Inter.1	M.N.
6	Inter.2	A.K.
7	Inter.3	R.K.
8	Inter.4	M.A.
9	Inter.5	A.S.
10	Ele.1	R.A.
11	Ele.2	S.A.
12	Credit(equivalent to the Advanced level)	A.H.
13	Credit ((equivalent to the Advanced level)	K.M.

Out of seven, five teachers consented to participate in the observation part of this study. Each observation lasted for two hours. In chapter two, it has been pointed out that beliefs of teachers can not be measured or observed directly rather they must be deduced from what teachers say, intend and do.

### **3.2.1 Limitation of the Sample of Observational Data**

The main intention behind selecting teachers for classroom observation from the male campus was that the researcher had been on friendly terms with them for the last 6-9 years and there was not any administrative constraint involved in approaching their classes whereas due to some administrative restrictions regarding access to the classrooms of female teachers for observation, the researcher included the female participants only in the questionnaire study. The turnout of the male teachers was 91% whereas with the female teachers it was only 9%. The reason for low turnout of the female teachers can be ascribed to administrative constraints involved in accessing them directly and reminding them to return the filled questionnaire.

Out of 36 participants in the survey study, only thirteen teachers were involved in grammar teaching at the Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced Levels during the Spring Semester, 2009 and their classes were available for observation. Out of this little population teachers were selected randomly for classroom observation in a way that teachers selected could represent all levels of classes.

### **3.3 Instruments**

This study utilised the following instruments for the acquisition of data:

#### **i. Belief Questionnaire**

## ii. Classroom Observation

### 3.3.1 Belief Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a self report instrument useful for obtaining data “economically and speedily from a large number of respondents” (Brown, “Using surveys” 15). Questionnaires have been frequently used in the study of teachers’ beliefs and practices (e.g. Burgess and Etherington 2002, Mohamed 2006). They are considered to be the least threatening tool as they ensure confidentiality. Although questionnaires may be cheap to administer as compared to other methods of data collection, they are every bit as expensive in terms of designing and interpretation. As questionnaires can be employed to obtain both qualitative and quantitative data, the questionnaire used for the present study was intended to get both types of data. It contained a close-ended section that required teachers to respond to statements on a five point Likert-Scale as well as few open-ended questions that invited teachers to express their comments on an issue.

#### 3.3.1.1 Design of the Questionnaire

The development of belief questionnaire used for the collection of data took place in several stages. First, background reading on grammar pedagogy led to the identification of certain dichotomies within the teaching of grammar. Key characteristics of each were identified and used as the basis for formulating statements about classroom implementation of grammar teaching principles. The statements were intended to explore teachers’ beliefs or assumptions about options in grammar pedagogy stated as follows;

- Importance of teaching grammar
- Formal instruction or direct exposure to L2

- Declarative or procedural knowledge
- Inductive or deductive approach to grammar teaching
- Use of Learners' L1 in L2 grammar class
- Use of grammatical terminology
- Error correction
- Grammar practice

The survey was not confined to statements concerning only one approach to grammar instruction. It encompassed varied options within different methodologies. Therefore, it seemed quite difficult to construct a questionnaire in compliance with strict Likert-scale methodology. However, certain statements were put together to ensure the consistency of teachers' responses in certain areas. Therefore, the inclusion of statements concerning different approaches to grammar teaching within one questionnaire provides quite a realistic view of teachers' beliefs.

### 3.3.1.2 Content validity

The researcher employed a review of the survey instrument by three colleagues and later a pilot test to establish content validity for the survey instrument. These colleagues were asked to examine the appropriateness, clarity and validity of the instrument. The questionnaire was modified on their recommendations. Some of these modifications included the question wording (e.g. changing the statement "in-depth knowledge of grammatical rules is important for the mastery of language to 'Explicit knowledge of grammatical rules is essential for the mastery of language. Second, the statement "It is vital to pinpoint all grammatical errors in

whatever student write" to "It is important to identify all grammatical errors in students' written work"). The reviewers gave some suggestions regarding the overall organisation of the questionnaire. The researcher added some new questions considering the feedback from the reviewers (for example 'It is important for students to be given the right answers after a written exercise or test.' was a statement added to the questionnaire)

The revised questionnaire was piloted in the department of English with four teachers. Besides, completing the questionnaire, these teachers were also asked to give some remarks about the suitability, clarity and user-friendliness of the instrument. Their answers and comments further indicated confusing statements and terms which were revised in the final questionnaire. Moreover, regarding the definition of grammar, one of my colleagues suggested converting it into an open ended question stating, "What does the word 'grammar' mean to you?" Instead of "Which definition of grammar do you agree and disagree most?"

The description of the final instrument used in the study is as under:

The four-page questionnaire (see Appendix A for complete questionnaire) consisted of a mix of close and open-ended questions.

**Section A** focussed on participants' opinions about their own knowledge of grammar and about any difficulties they had experienced while teaching grammar.

**Section B** consisted of two parts. In Part A the teachers were asked to define what grammar meant to them whereas in Part B twenty nine statements were set concerning the teaching and learning of grammar. The respondents were required to rate each statement on a given five point Likert-Scale, ranging from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*. The Likert-type scale is the most frequently used method of scale construction because of its

versatility and reliability (Karavas-Doukas 188). In the data regarding teacher's beliefs, areas where some inferences can be made are:

- Importance of teaching grammar
- Formal instruction or direct exposure to L2
- Declarative or procedural knowledge
- Inductive or deductive approach to grammar teaching
- Use of learners' L1 in L2 grammar class
- Use of grammatical terminology
- Error correction
- Grammar practice

Within these groups many statements overlapped in content but their wordings were different. The items were placed randomly in the final questionnaire to examine whether the respondents would give consistent answers to the belief statements regarding different issues in grammar pedagogy.

**Section C** invited the teachers to give reasons in favour of /against teaching/learning grammar at International Islamic University.

Since the questionnaire targeted all English teachers at IIUI, it was expected that the data obtained from it might provide an insight into teachers' belief about grammar teaching in this context. The questionnaire was also expected to assist in finding out common approaches to grammar instruction and identify how familiar teachers in general were with communicative approach to teaching grammar.

### **3.3.2 Classroom Observation**

Research into teachers' beliefs, attitudes and conceptions of teaching as well as their teaching approaches has employed a combination of methods such as questionnaires, interviews and observations. According to Pajares, belief inventories require additional measures such as interviews and observation of behaviour because they help us gain a 'more fine-grained picture of teachers' beliefs' (314). Therefore, the rationale of including observation in the context of the present study was not to assess the teaching. Rather, observing the teachers in their classes enabled the researcher to examine as to what extent teachers' beliefs corresponded with their classroom practice. Gebhard defines classroom observation as "non judgemental description of classroom events that can be analysed and given interpretation" (35). Therefore, the respective classes of the randomly selected subjects were observed to identify key instructional episodes in their actual grammar teaching such as the use of a particular grammar teaching approach, the use of grammatical terminology, correction of grammatical error, use of learners' L1 and use of grammar practice activities. The rationale behind classroom observation was to help the researcher gain an insight into the teachers' behaviour. Each teacher was observed for two hours in which he taught the specific grammatical item. The total of 10 hours observational data was collected for the study. The observations were recorded on the structured sheet. The seven teachers participating in the observation were informed about the rationale of the research before the observations started.

#### **3.3.2.1 Design of the Observation Sheet**

With the aim of revealing the rationale behind the teachers' classroom practices, an observation instrument was used (Appendix B). The observation sheet was designed to reveal

the rationale behind the teachers' behaviour. The observation sheet was divided into six parts which are as follows:

- i. Preparation of the Teacher
- ii. Presentation
- iii. Teachers' Use of L1
- iv. Teacher's Use of Grammatical Terminology
- v. Teacher's Treatment of Errors
- vi. Grammar Practice Activities

Each part consisted of further sub parts and provided space for a description of the activity the teacher used and the type of approach he applied. The observation sheet recorded essential information such as name of the teacher observed, level and section, date of observation, topic, number of students and brief description of students' background in the observed class. The design of the observation sheet was based on Section B of the questionnaire. The rationale behind this was to observe precisely their classroom practice in relation with what they had reported in the questionnaire.

The researcher's role was a non-participant observer during the observations which involved observing classroom interaction and make a written record but 'not contributing to the interaction itself' (Van Lier 783). The researcher entered the classroom with the teacher and then sat at the back of the class and took specific notes on the structured observation sheet. The researcher also copied down material from the blackboard if that was deemed necessary and useful for later analysis. If any handouts were given, the researcher was also given a copy. Sometimes, notebooks of the students were collected randomly at the end of the lesson to see the teacher's feedback (e.g. underlining, corrections and comments). I explained

to all my colleagues that the present study was conducted solely for the purpose of my research as part of my M.Phil Degree and not as an evaluation of them as teachers. This assurance helped me maintain an affable relationship with the teachers.

### **3.4 Validity of the Study**

Various steps were taken to maximise the validity of the data collected for the present study.

The principle measures adopted are described below:

- i) The teachers joined the study on the voluntary basis. Their willingness to participate meant that they might be less likely to feel obliged to justify any belief or action.
- ii) I assured the teachers that all data would be kept confidential and that it would be drawn on exclusively for research purposes. Throughout the entire fieldwork, I also stressed that my purpose was to understand rather than to make any pedagogical judgment about their beliefs or classroom practices.
- iii) I explained the broad aims of the study to the teachers to make them sympathetic participants.
- iv) I didn't use recorders to record the classroom data as some of the teachers showed their hesitation for the audio-recording of their lecture.
- v) I assured all participants of the study that I would remain unobtrusive during the lesson observations.

In conclusion, the above-mentioned steps enabled me to develop a cooperative approach with the teachers. They knew that I was interested in understanding their work and their perspectives, and that I would not be making any judgment on their teaching. Thus, they became sympathetic and cooperative towards my current study, and it enabled me to carry out the research with enviable ease.

# **CHAPTER 4**

## **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

In this chapter the belief questionnaire data has been reported, analysed and interpreted so that the results could be assessed. Raw data yielded by the questionnaires was entered into the Microsoft excel and analysed and presented in the form of tables and figures.

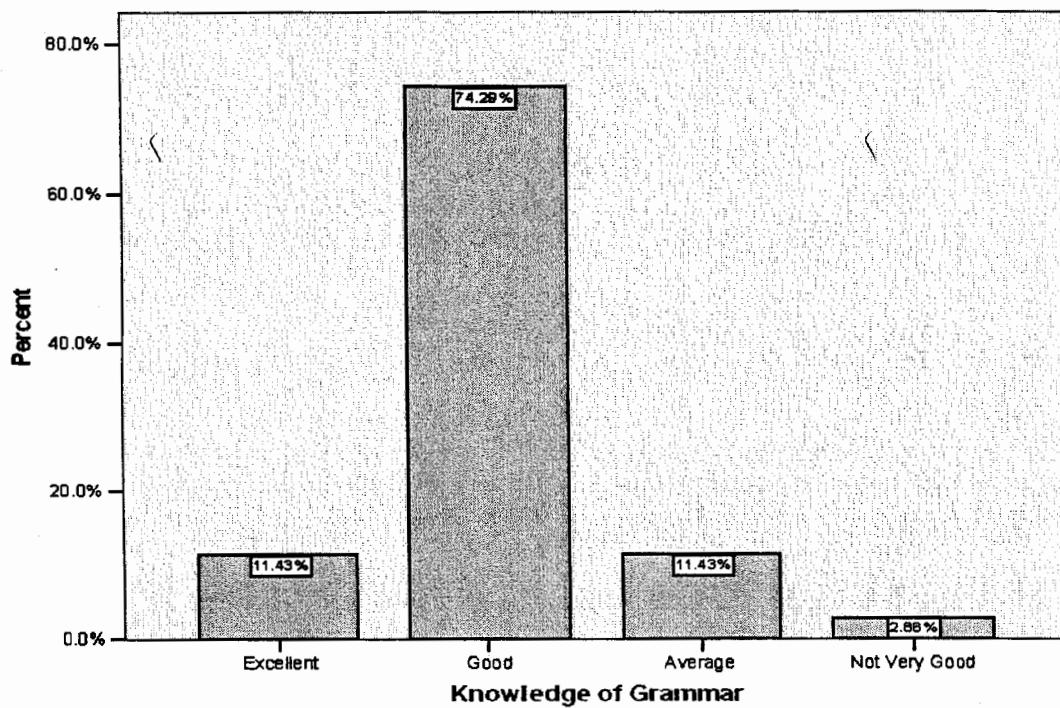
### **4.1 Questionnaire Results**

In this section the belief inventory questionnaire data was reported, analysed and interpreted. The data provides an insight into teachers' beliefs concerning grammar pedagogy and classroom implementation of these beliefs. Implications of the results for both areas have been discussed together with findings. Since qualitative comments often provide further insight into individual teachers' beliefs, they are presented and discussed separately.

#### **4.1.1 Quantitative Results**

##### **4.1.1.1 Teachers' Knowledge about Grammar**

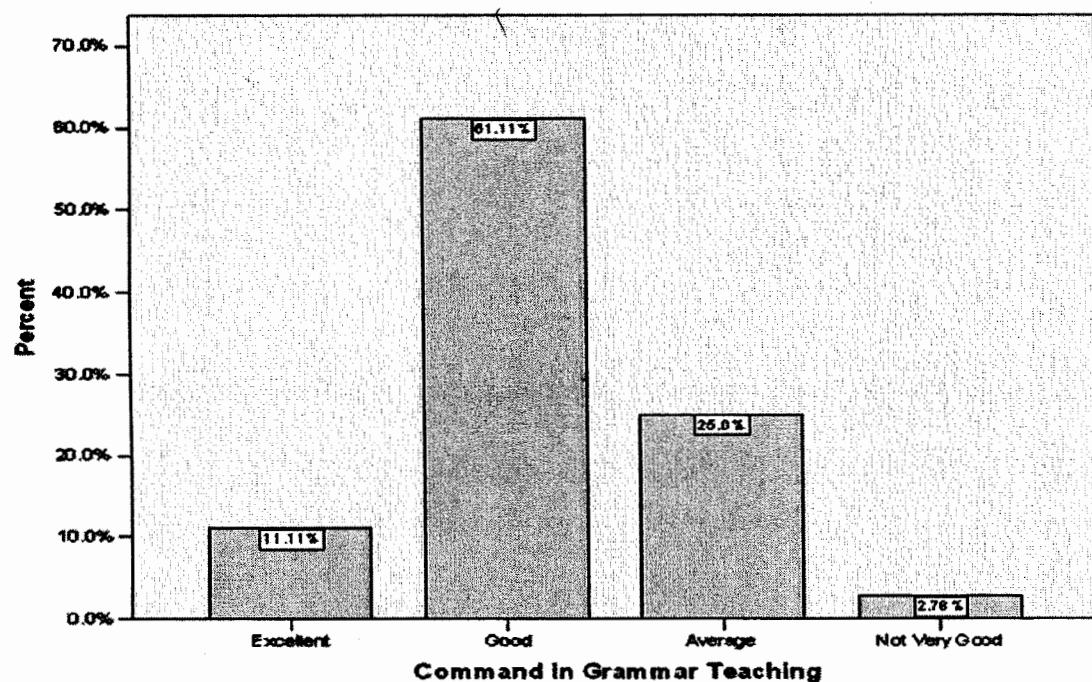
Teachers' perception of their own knowledge about grammatical rules and terminology does influence their confidence while teaching grammar. The following figure demonstrates the teachers' perception of their own knowledge about grammatical rules.



**Figure 2 Teachers' Knowledge of Grammar**

Figure 2 demonstrates that 74% of the teachers think that they have a good knowledge of grammar and 11% consider it to be excellent, whereas 11% proclaim it to be average. It shows that majority of the teachers have confidence about their in-depth knowledge of grammar which they might have either acquired at the school or college level or through long practice of teaching.

#### 4.1.1.2 Teachers' Command in Teaching Grammar



**Figure 3 Teachers' Command in Teaching Grammar.**

Regarding command in grammar teaching, 61% of the teachers claim to have good command and 11% to be excellent whereas 25% consider it to be average. These results demonstrate that they are quite confident about their knowledge of grammar, however, less confident about their command in teaching grammar.

#### 4.1.1.3 Teachers' Difficulty in Teaching Grammar

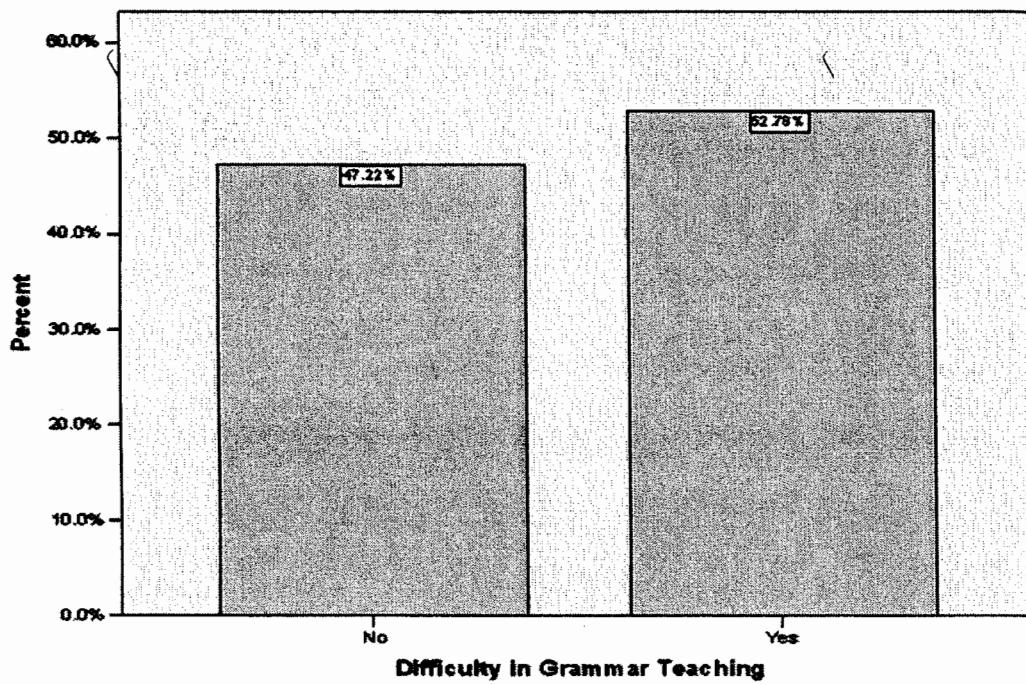


Figure 4 Difficulty in Teaching Grammar

#### 4.1.1.4 Teachers' Change in Grammar Teaching Approach

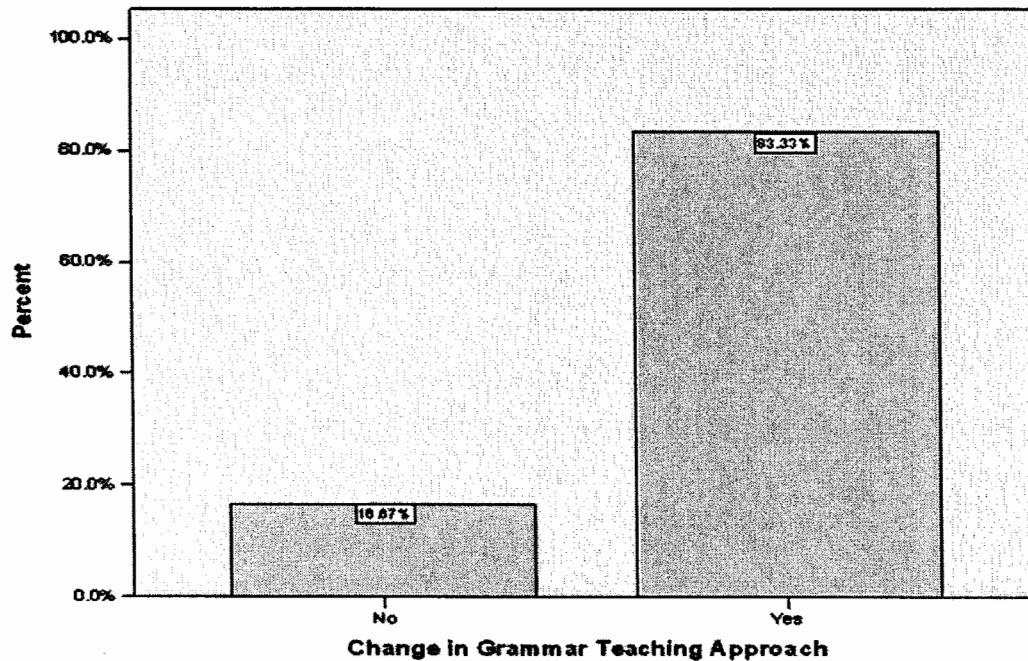


Figure 5 Change in Grammar Teaching Approach

Figure 4 demonstrates that almost 53% teachers have faced no difficulty in teaching grammar whereas 47% think they have. But the results regarding change in grammar teaching approach( Figure 5) show that 83% respondents think that their approach has not changed whereas almost 17% think that their approach has changed over the years which connotes that teachers regard their traditional knowledge about grammar as good.

**Section B** of the questionnaire consists of a Likert type scale, where respondents had to show their agreement or disagreement regarding twenty nine different statements about grammar. As a first step, frequencies were computed to identify teachers' preferences concerning the importance of grammar teaching, formal instruction or direct exposure to L2, use of deductive and inductive approaches, declarative or procedural knowledge of grammar, use of L1, use of grammatical terminology, correction of grammatical errors and use of grammar practice activities. The first area to be investigated is teacher's perception regarding the importance of grammar

#### **4.1.1.5 Importance of Grammar Teaching**

The role of grammatical instruction in foreign language learning and teaching context has been the subject of second language acquisition research during the last 40 years (Ellis, "Teaching and Research"39). The language researchers have developed many methodologies for effective grammar teaching. The academic debate about grammar pedagogy has been focussed on the comparison of teaching methodologies (e.g. Grammar-Translation and Audio-Lingual) and on different classifications of approaches (focus on forms/form/meaning distinction as propounded by Long). In recent years the role of grammar has been re-examined and the language theorists have now reached a consensus on two fundamental points:

i- Grammar cannot be discarded from foreign language pedagogy

ii-Form and meaning have to be combined

(Burgess and Etherington 440)

The L2 researchers such as Celce-Murcia realized that “grammarless approach ... could lead to the formation of a muddled, ungrammatical pidginized form of the target language beyond which learners hardly ever develop (“Grammar Pedagogy” 465). Six of the statements in the questionnaire were designed to explore teachers' beliefs concerning the importance of grammar teaching in a foreign language teaching context. These statements asked for reaction to different views about grammar teaching: as an integral part of all English lessons at all levels i.e. beginner, intermediate and advanced); as a subject to be taught to the elementary learners than the intermediate/advanced learners; as a tool enabling the learners to self correct their errors; framework furnishing the basis of four language skills.

The responses of IIUI teachers to those six statements are as follows:

**Table 2 Descriptive Statistics for the Importance of Grammar**

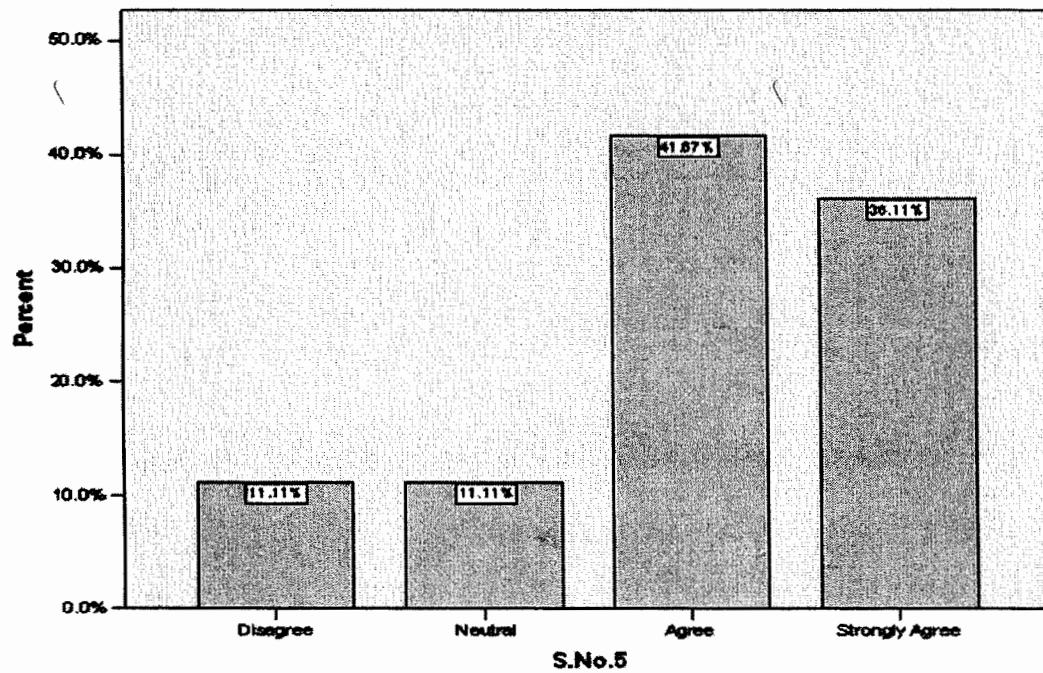
NO	DESCRIPTION	N	SD	D	NE	A	SA
5	Grammar should be taught at all levels (i.e. beginner, intermediate and advanced).	36	0	4	4	15	13
6	Teaching grammar enables students to produce more complex sentences.	36	0	12	5	13	6
7	If learners receive grammar instruction, they are more likely to be able to correct their errors.	36	0	6	4	23	3
12	It is important to focus on grammar in all English lessons.	36	1	21	3	9	2
14	It is more important to teach grammar to beginners than to intermediate/advanced learners.	36	2	13	5	9	7
23	Grammar teaching furnishes the basis of four language skills.	36	1	9	5	18	3

**Note.** No. refers to the number in the original questionnaire. N = Number of responses.

**SD =Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree; NE = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.**

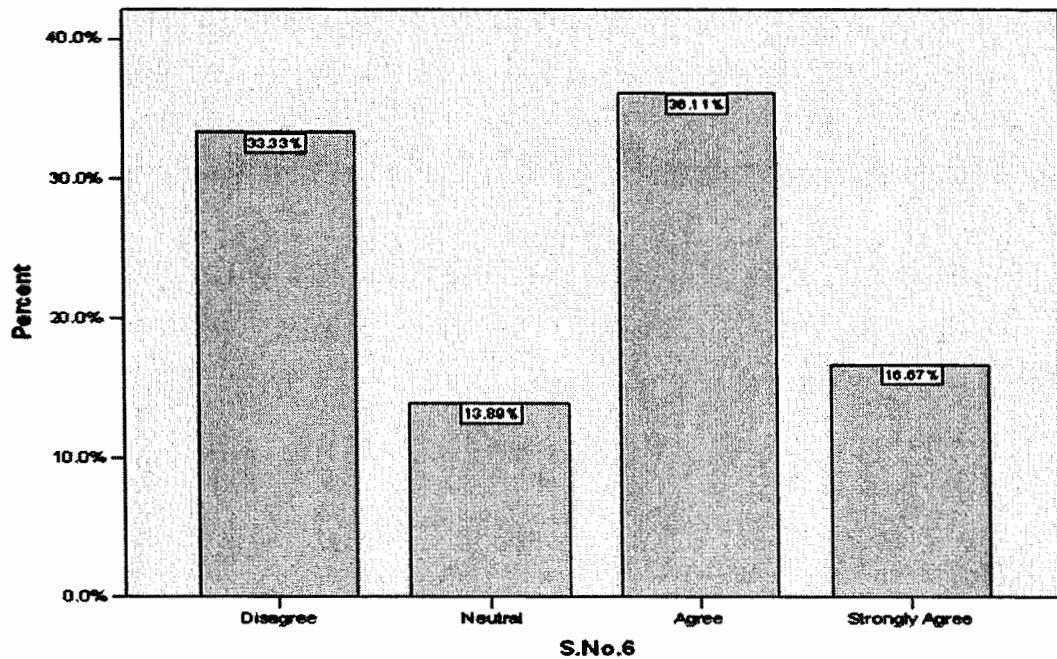
The above mentioned results are shown in the following figures:

5) Grammar should be taught at all levels (i.e. beginner, intermediate and advanced).



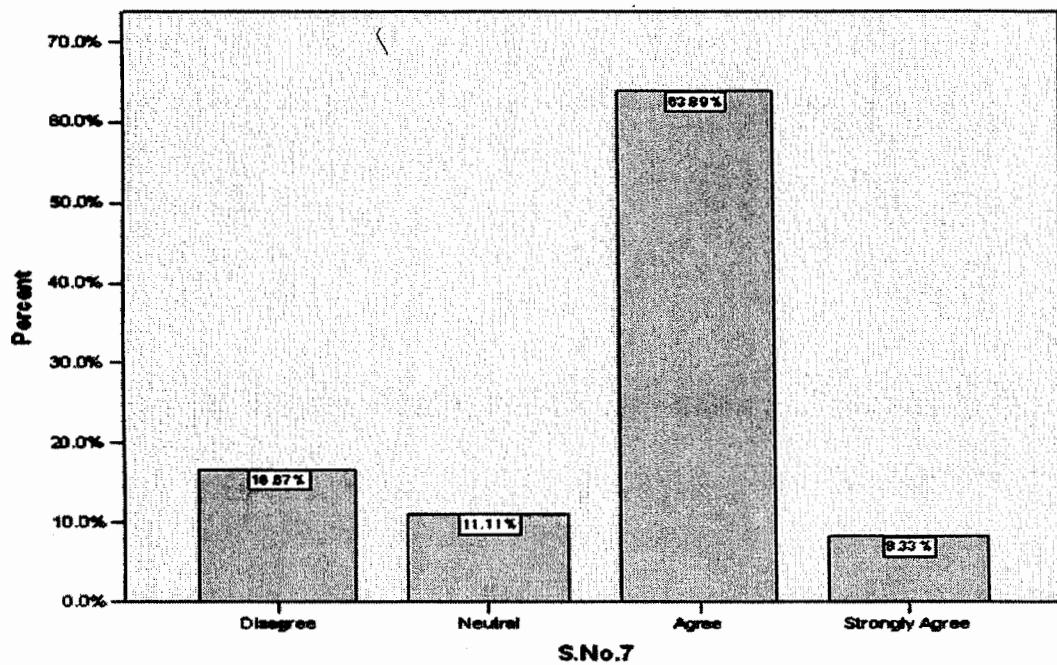
**Figure 6 Teaching of Grammar at all Levels**

6) Teaching grammar enables students to produce more complex sentences.



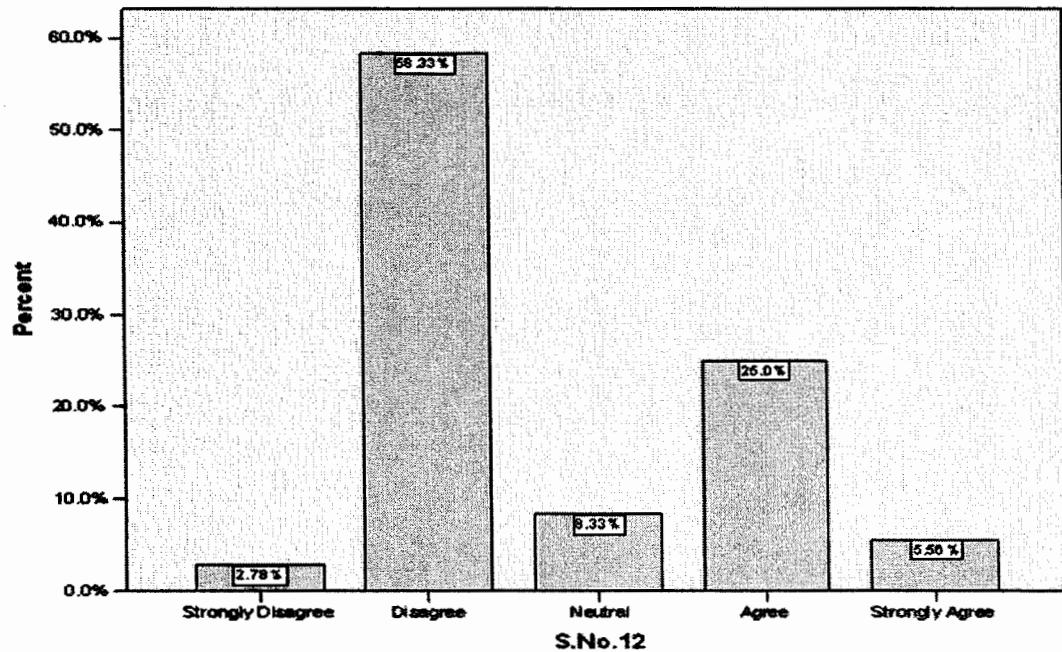
**Figure 7 Knowledge of Grammar as a Help to Students to Produce More Complete Sentences**

7) If learners receive grammar instruction, they are more likely to be able to correct their errors.



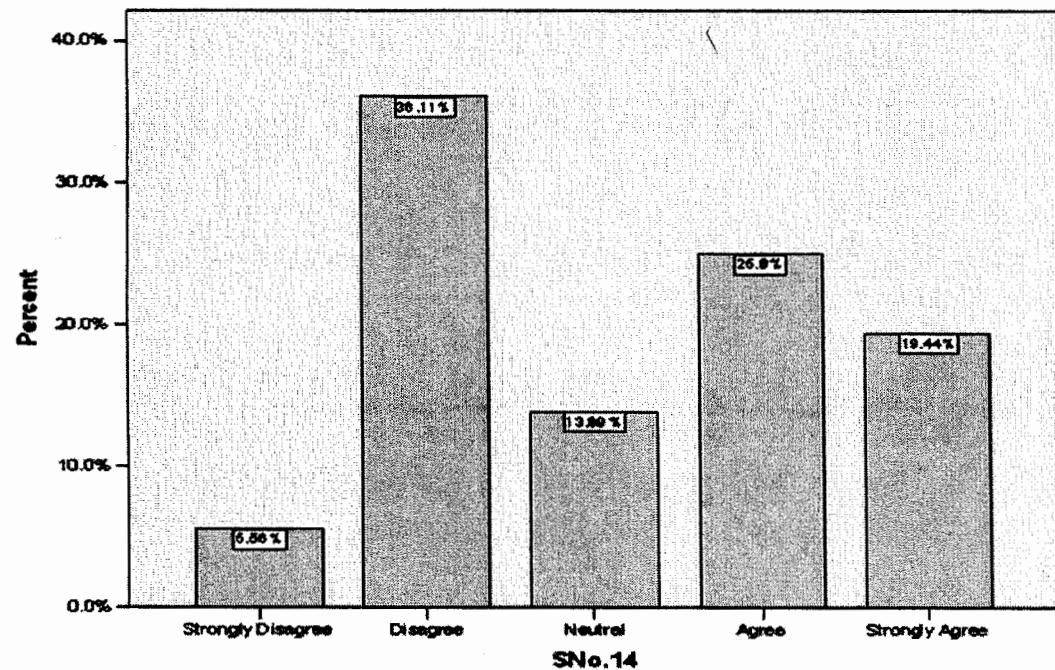
**Figure 8 Grammar Instructions and Error Correction**

12) It is important to focus on grammar in all English lessons



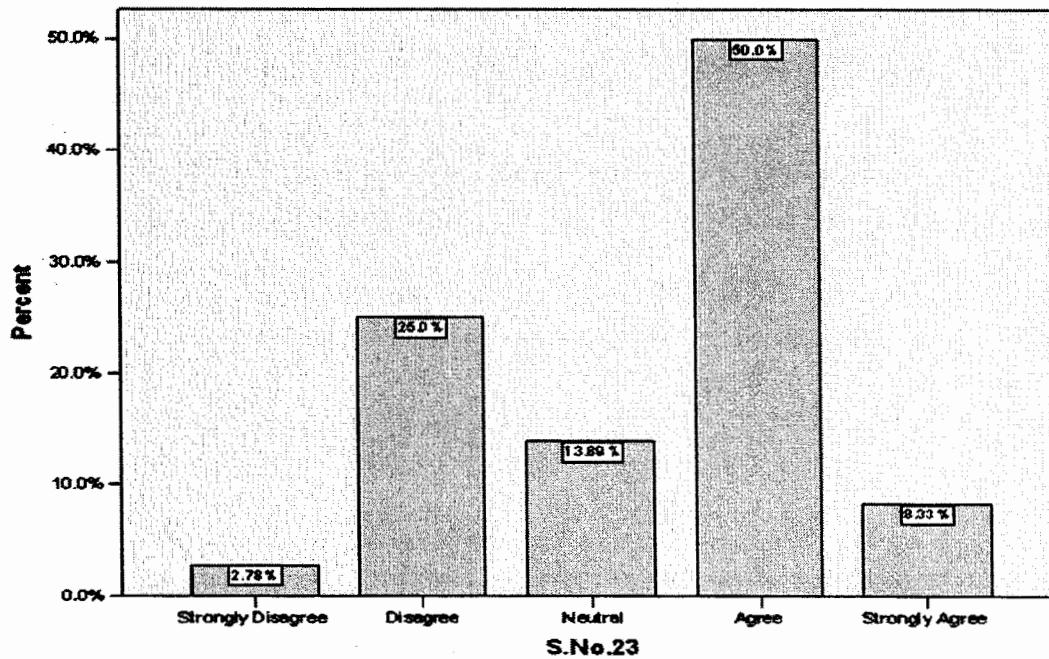
**Figure 9 Focus on Grammar in all English Lessons**

14) It is more important to teach grammar to beginners than to intermediate/advanced learners.



**Figure 10 Grammar Teaching to the Beginners than to the Intermediate/Advanced Learners**

23) Grammar furnishes the basis of four language skills.



**Figure 11 Role of Grammar in Furnishing the Basis of Four Language Skills**

Of these six statements, two provoked a clear pattern. Almost 36% people strongly agreed and almost 42% people agreed that grammar should be taught at all levels (i.e. beginner, intermediate and advanced) whereas 11% disagreed with this view. But 61% of the teachers clearly showed their strong disagreement and disagreement to the view that grammar should be focussed in all lessons. Similarly 64% teachers agreed and 8% strongly agreed that grammar instruction helps learners correct their errors. Another statement suggesting grammar as a subject to be taught to the elementary learners than to the intermediate/advanced learners receives mixed response as almost 42% respondents showed their strong disagreement and disagreement whereas 44% demonstrated their strong agreement and agreement. Respondents understand the importance of grammar as it furnishes the basis of four language skills. The results demonstrate that 58% of the respondents showed their strong agreement and agreement with Item no. 23 whereas the total of almost 28% of the respondents differed with the role of grammar as the foundation of four language skills.

It seems that this group of teachers view that grammatical instruction is essential for language accuracy and to some extent helpful in producing more complex structures than being merely a tool for communication. It can be inferred from these responses that teachers at IIUI consider the teaching of grammar as of paramount importance at all levels but at the same time would not feel comfortable with a syllabus that is primarily focussed on grammar teaching.

#### **4.1.1.6 Formal Instruction or Direct Exposure to L2**

The second area to be investigated is teachers' beliefs regarding role of grammar in second language acquisition. The proponents of the traditional approach emphasised the role of formal grammar instruction as being essential to second language learning and writing error

free language whereas the major proponents of the communicative approach equated the learning of L2 with L1 acquisition and believed that language learners attain intuitive "correctness" of their language if they are given direct exposure to L2, and that formal instruction was not required (Krashen, "The Natural Approach" 58). Moreover, they advocated that communicative competence was more important than the memorisation of decontextualised grammatical forms. Prabhu succeeded Krashen by showing that "learners could acquire an L2 grammar naturalistically" by attending classroom "meaning-focussed tasks" (qtd. in Ellis, "Grammar Teaching" 232).

Four questions were framed to determine whether the teachers believed in traditional formal instruction or direct exposure to L2 as means of second language learning. Teachers' responses on this issue provided a clearer indication of their orientation. The responses to the four statements are as under:

**Table 3 Descriptive Statistics for Formal Instruction or Direct Exposure to L2**

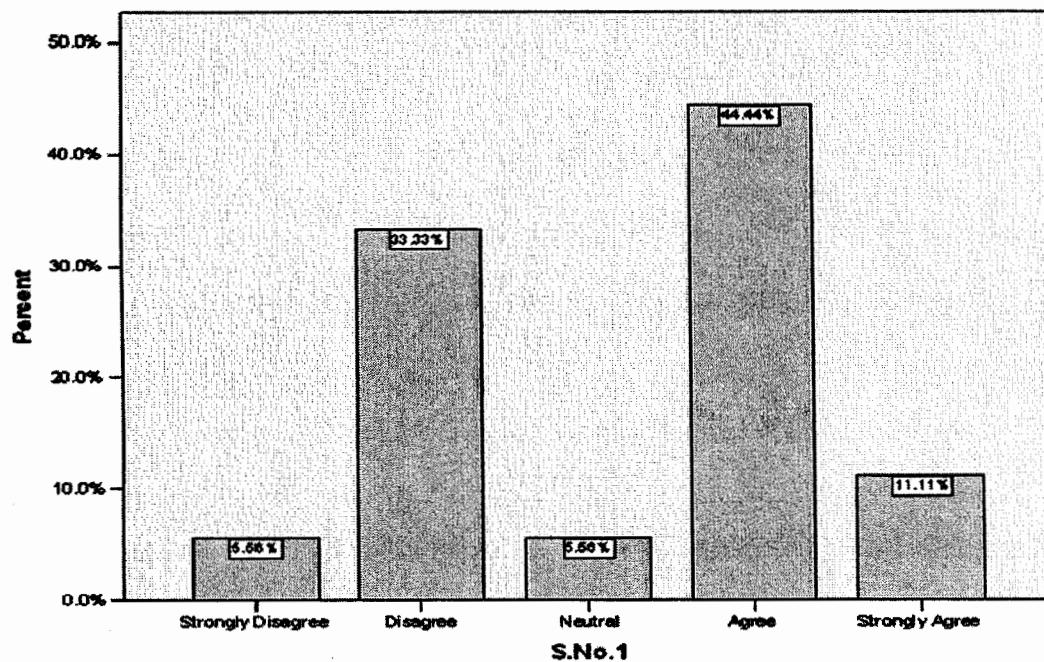
NO	DESCRIPTION	N	SD	D	NE	A	SA
1	A learner can acquire a second or foreign language without grammar instruction (i.e. similar to how children learn their mother tongue).	36	2	12	2	16	4
3	Explicit knowledge of grammatical rules is essential for the mastery of language.	36	2	9	2	11	12
19	Students can learn grammar through exposure to language in natural use.	36	1	3	2	23	7
22	You do not need to speak grammatically in order to communicate well.	36	5	10	6	12	3
27	Formal instruction helps learners produce grammatically correct language.	36	0	1	2	26	7

**Note.** No. refers to the number in the original questionnaire. N = Number of responses.

SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree; Ne = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.

These results are shown in the figures below:

- 1) A learner can acquire a second or foreign language without grammar instruction (i.e. similar to how children learn their mother tongue).



**Figure 12 L2 Acquisition as Without Grammar Instruction (i.e. Similar to how Children Learn their Mother Tongue)**

3) Explicit knowledge of grammatical rules is essential for the mastery of language.

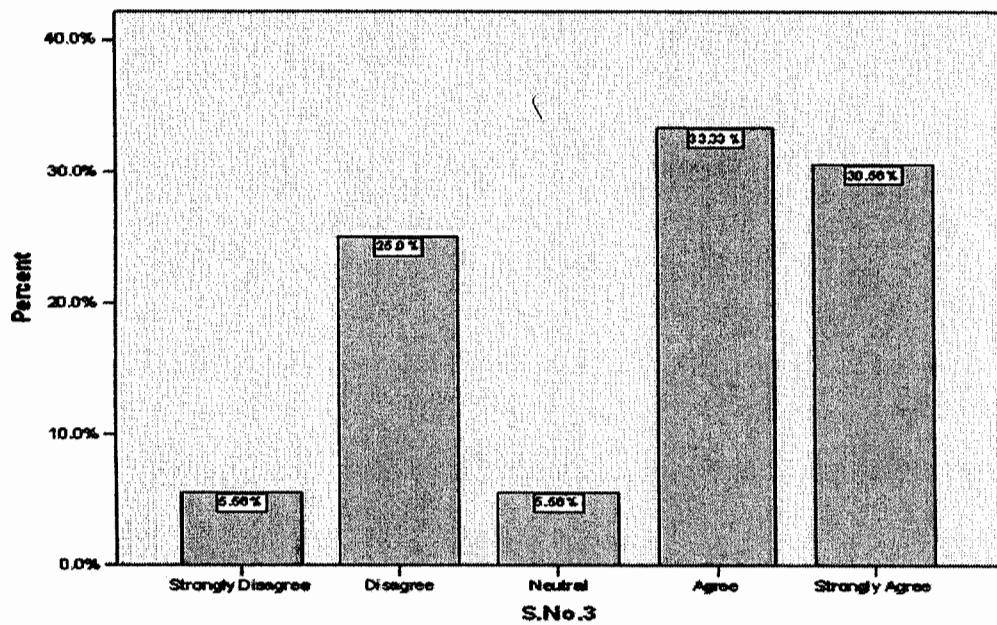


Figure 13 Role of Explicit Knowledge of Grammar in Mastering L2

19) Students can learn grammar through exposure to language in natural use.

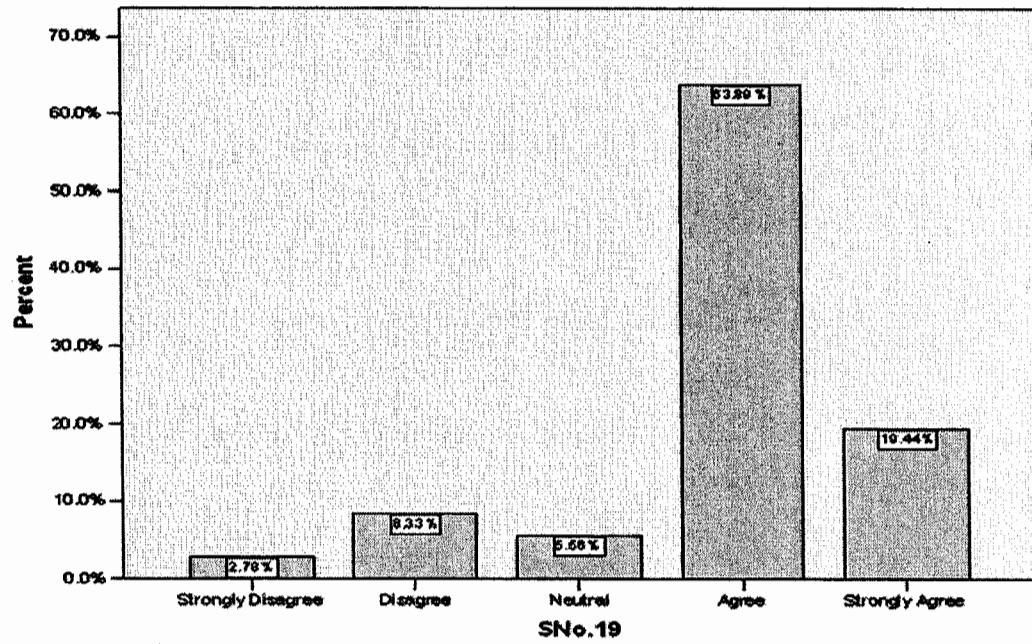


Figure14 Grammar Learning through Exposure to Language in Natural Use

22) You do not need to speak grammatically in order to communicate well.

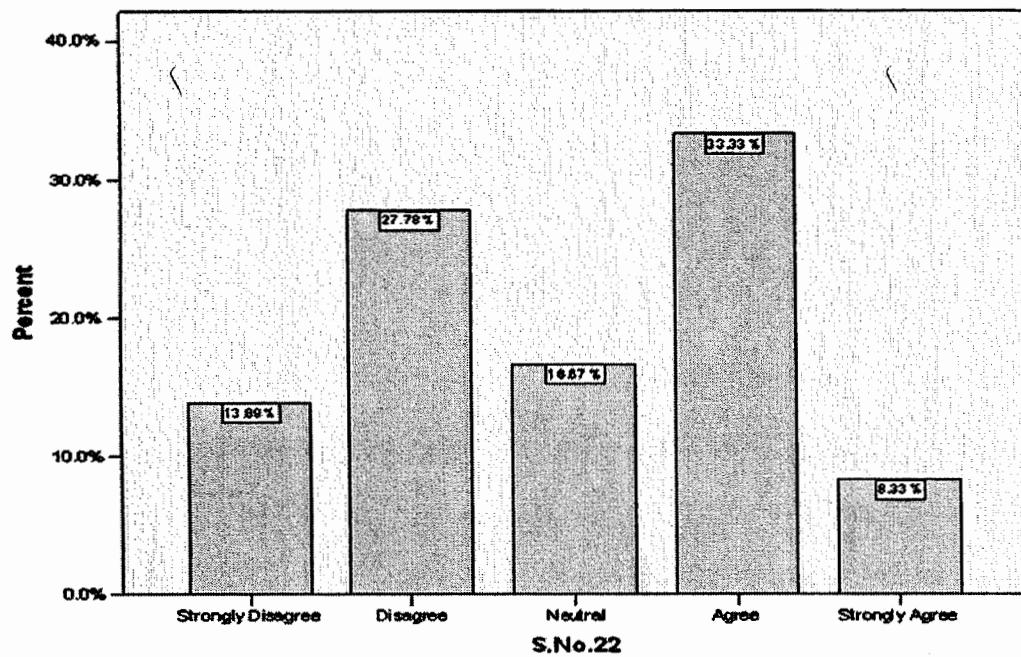


Figure 15 Need to Speak Grammatically correct in Order to Communicate Well

27) Formal instruction helps learners produce grammatically correct language.

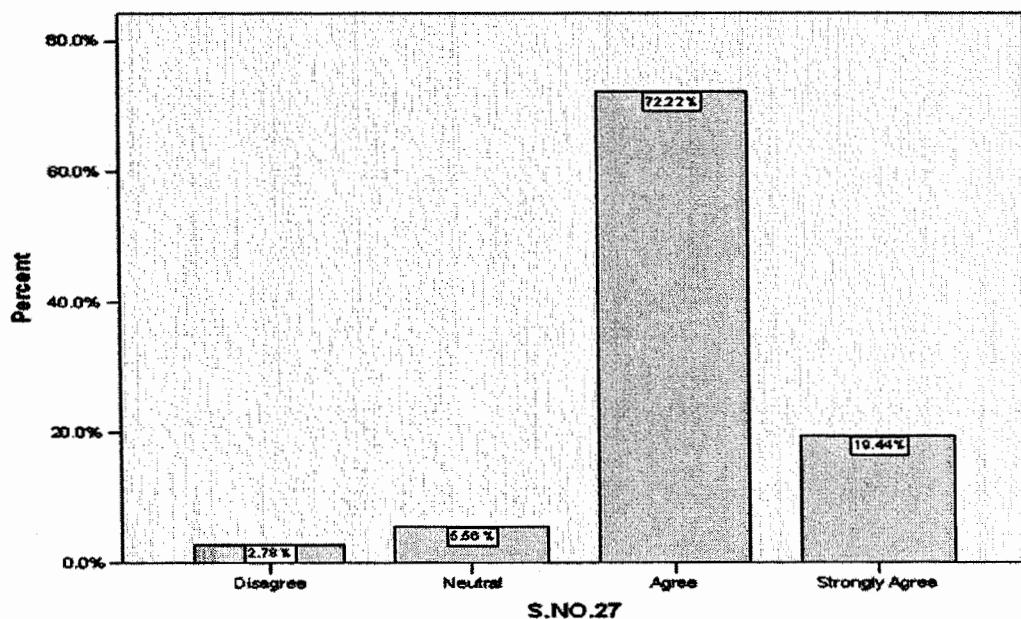


Figure 16 Role of Formal Instruction in Helping Learners Produce Grammatically Correct Language

The responses to item No 1 and 19 indicate that majority of the teachers agree on the possibility of learning grammar through direct and natural exposure to language as 83% gave positive response to the view that students can unconsciously acquire L2 grammar through exposure to language in natural use (item.19) and 55% of teachers responded positively to the view that an L2 learner can acquire a second or foreign language unconsciously without explicit grammar instruction (i.e. similar to how children learn their mother tongue) (Item no.1). Moreover, the responses to Item no. 22 (You do not need to speak grammatically in order to communicate well) demonstrate that the teachers seem to be clearly divided on the issue that we need not be strictly grammatical in order to communicate well as around 42% agreed and 42% disagreed whereas almost 17% held neutral response. Although respondents seem to favour the possibility of learning language through exposure to it, majority of them appear to agree with the view that instruction assists learners in producing grammatically correct language as almost 92 % of the responses demonstrate strong agreement and agreement on this view (item no.27). This stance is further supported by the responses to Item no. 3 as 64% of respondents showed their strong agreement and agreement with the importance of explicit knowledge of grammatical rules as being essential for the mastery of language .These results demonstrate a clear response in favour of the formal instruction. One possible reason may be that these teachers might have recalled their own experience of learning English which is in most cases through traditional methods or they might have thought of some non native speakers living in an English speaking country who had learnt to speak that language fluently.

#### **4.1.1.7 Declarative and Procedural Knowledge**

It is often frustrating for language teachers and language learners to be unable to apply their knowledge of grammatical rules in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This detachment

reflects a separation between declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge. The former can be defined as knowledge about something which assists a student in describing a rule of grammar and later applying it in pattern practice drills whereas procedural knowledge can be defined as practical knowledge which guides a student to applying a rule of grammar in real life communication. Teachers' responses to the statement describing the dichotomy of procedural and declarative knowledge are as under:

**Table 4 Descriptive statistics for Declarative and Procedural Knowledge**

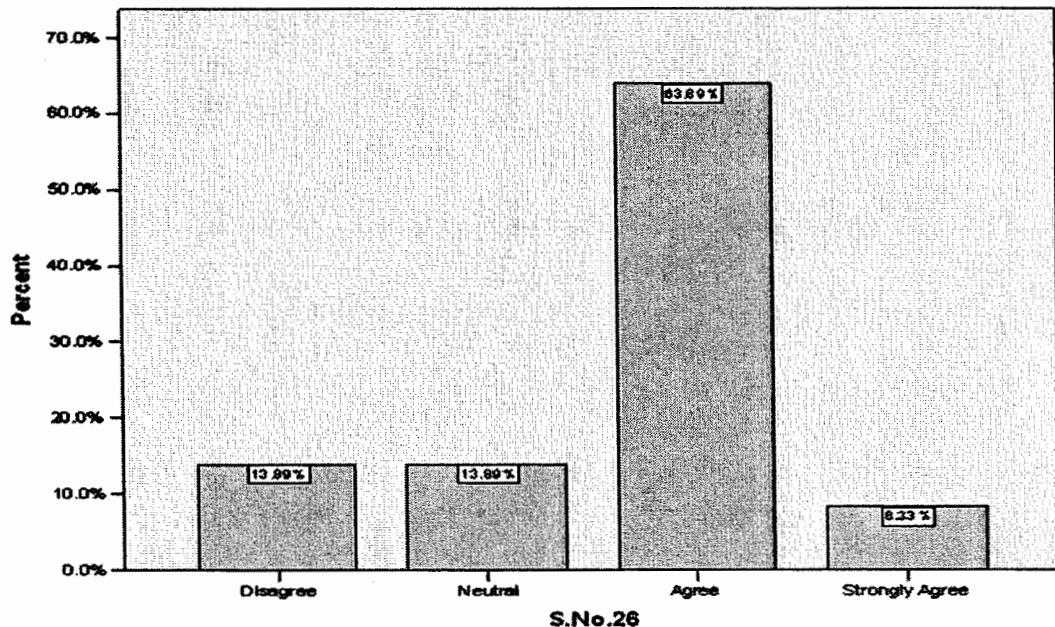
NO	DESCRIPTION	N	SD	D	NE	A	SA
26	Separate treatment of grammar fails to produce language knowledge which students can use in natural communication	36	0	5	5	23	3

**Note.** No. refers to the number in the original questionnaire. N = Number of responses.

SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree; Ne = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.

These results are shown in the figures below:

**26) Separate treatment of grammar fails to produce language knowledge which students can use in natural communication.**



**Figure 17 Students' Inability to Use their Knowledge of Grammar in Natural Communication**

Statement no.26 (Separate treatment of grammar fails to produce language knowledge which students can use in natural communication) was designed to identify teachers' beliefs about the possible application of declarative knowledge (knowledge about grammatical rules) into procedural use (use actual in communication). Teachers' responses here indicate teachers' recognise this process as a problem snagging majority of their students as there is no evidence of strong disagreement and over 72 % of replies are of agreement or strong agreement.

Teachers' perception of students' lack of ability to transfer their theoretical knowledge of grammar into an appropriate and contextualised use of language is, perhaps, not surprising for anyone especially who has taught language skills. Majority of the teachers especially at IIUI may relate many examples of students who have memorised grammatical rules perfectly, but have great difficulty putting them into appropriate use. Moreover, it would be interesting to discover through interviews about an appropriate method they would adopt to overcome this shortcoming in their students. They may be more likely to use an integrated approach to grammar pedagogy as a way of overcoming such problems. This may be possible direction for future research.

#### **4.1.1.8 Deductive and Inductive Teaching Methods**

The dichotomy of inductive/deductive teaching methods has been one of the debated issues in grammar teaching. According to Ellis, deductive teaching implies the direct presentation of grammatical structure followed by its practice in one way or the other whereas inductive teaching implies learners' exposure to the examples of the grammatical structure followed by their own deduction of "metalinguistic generalization" from the given examples ("Current Issues in the Teaching of Grammar" 97).

Three statements were formulated to investigate the teachers' attitude to inductive and deductive methods of grammar teaching. The Grammar Translation method is characterised by deductive method, but nowadays the inductive method has clearly a higher estimation (Brown, "Teaching by Principles" 92 qtd. in Ur 83). Ellis, on the contrary, recognizes that no consensus has been reached among the researchers regarding the efficacy of either of the approaches to grammar instruction. He rather suggests "a differentiated approach" (Current Issues in the Teaching of Grammar 98). However, Burgess and Etherington do not differentiate between explicit and implicit teaching as conflicting methods, rather as "points on a continuum of options" (440). The responses to these statements are as follows:

**Table 5 Descriptive Statistics for Deductive and Inductive Teaching Methods**

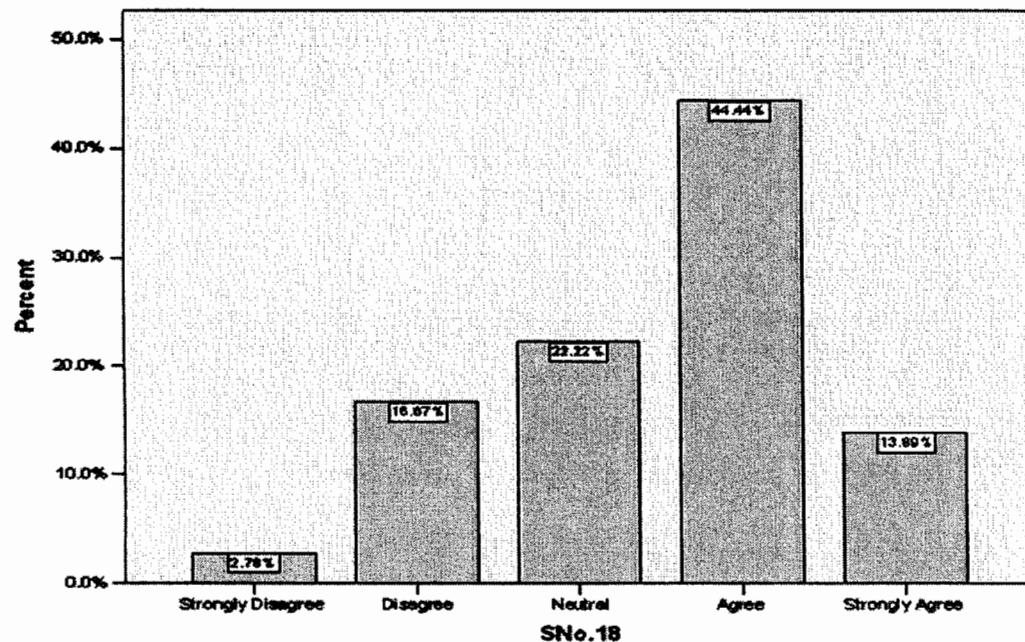
NO	DESCRIPTION	N	SD	D	NE	A	SA
	<b>Use Of Deductive Approach</b>						
18	Teachers should begin a grammar lesson by explaining how a particular structure works.	36	1	6	8	16	5
20	The primary role of the teacher in a grammar lesson is to explain a grammar point.	36	2	4	5	22	3
	<b>Use of inductive approach</b>						
15	Students should be given the opportunity to work out grammar rules from examples.	36	0	1	1	20	14

**Note. No. refers to the number in the original questionnaire. N = Number of responses.**

**SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree; Ne = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree**

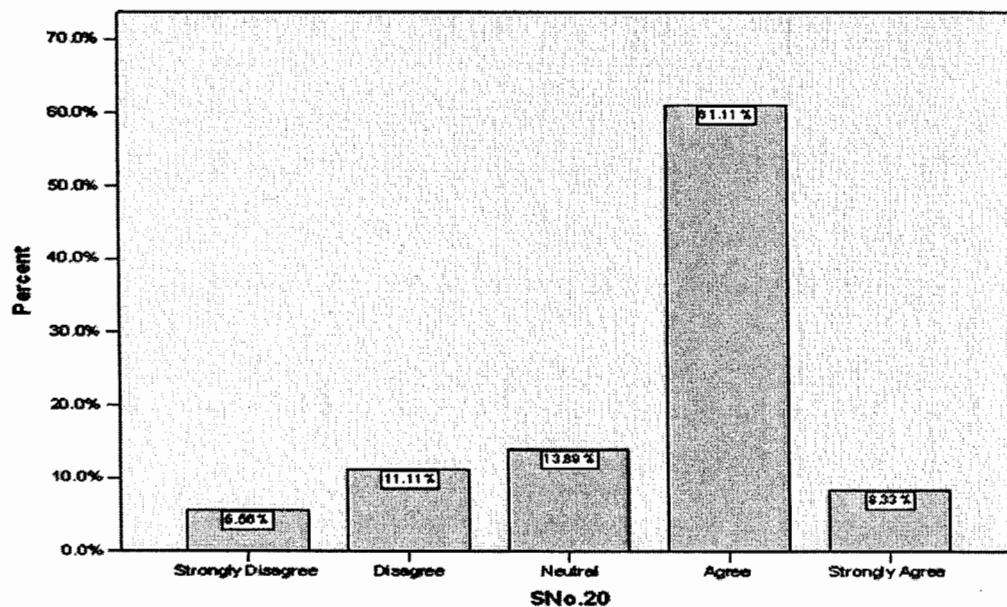
These results are shown in the figures below:

18) Teachers should begin a grammar lesson by explaining how a particular structure works.



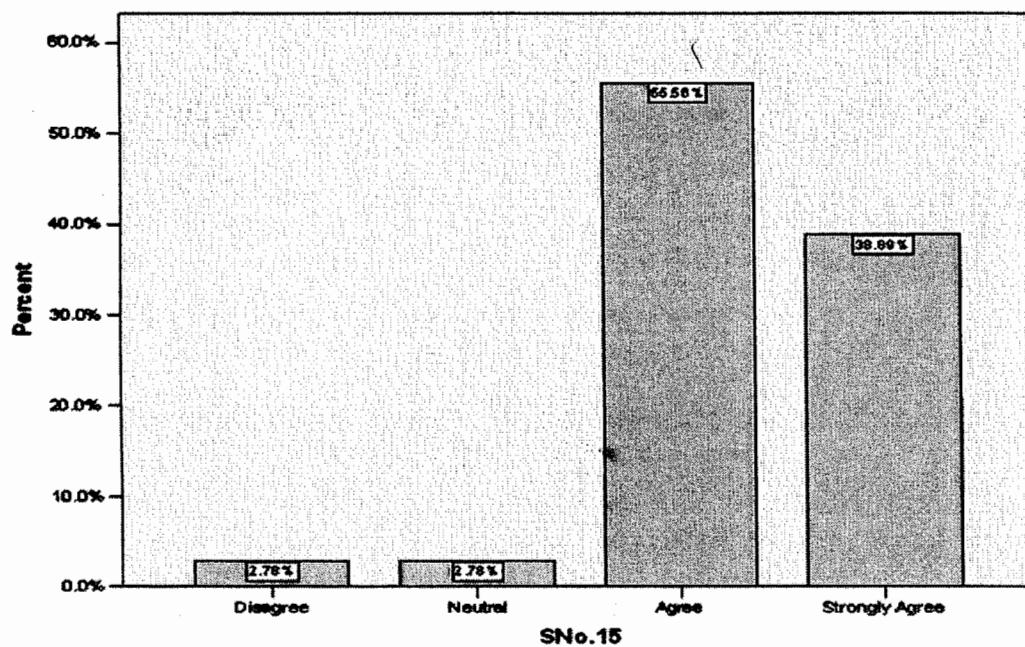
**Figure 18 Use of Deductive Approach 1**

20) The primary role of the teacher in a grammar lesson is to explain a grammar point.  
(Deductive approach 2)



**Figure 19 Use of Deductive Approach 2**

15) Students should be given the opportunity to work out grammar rules from examples.



**Figure 20 Use of Inductive Approach**

A strong indication of agreement in the survey came on the view that the teacher should give an opportunity to his students to discover grammatical rules from examples (item no.15) over 94% of responses were of agreement or strong agreement. This result can be contrasted with finding in a survey study conducted by Burgess and Etherington in which 90% respondents favoured explicit grammar teaching (441).

The response indicates that teachers at IIUI consider the inductive method of grammar teaching as being essential and useful to their students. But the responses to item no. 18 and item no. 20 do not support the view that students should be given a chance to deduce grammar rules from examples. Here 58% of responses to item no.18 (Teachers should begin a grammar lesson by explaining how a particular structure works.) and around 69% of responses to item no.20 (The primary role of the teacher in a grammar lesson is to explain a grammar point.) indicate agreement or strong agreement with the implementation of

deductive approach to grammar pedagogy. A favourable response to these two items may not be surprising because students' expectations of traditional, explicit grammar teaching are well-known to many teachers (Borg "Teachers theories of Grammar Teaching" 162).

From the analysis of these results it may be logical to conclude that these teachers do not see inductive /deductive divide as mutually excluding but rather as 'points on a continuum of options' (Burgess and Etherington 440). Another inference from these results may indicate teachers' ignorance of the difference between these methods for the presentation of grammatical items.

#### **4.1.1.9 Use of Learners' L1 in L2 Grammar Teaching**

It has been contentious issue for a long time whether students' native language should be included or excluded in English language classrooms (Brown "Principles of Language" 195), but the research findings have not demonstrated any persuasive conclusion up to the present time. The researchers have expressed divergent opinions regarding the Use of Learners' L1 in L2 Grammar Teaching. The proponent of monolingual approach believe that the separation and distinction of L1 and L2 lead to successful learning (Cook 412) and teacher must demonstrate the importance of the L2 to their students through its continual use (ibid 412). Whereas the proponents of bilingual approach believe that the use of learners' L1 serves a "supportive and facilitating role in the classroom" because it helps teachers in giving instructions, explaining meanings of unfamiliar words and complex ideas and elaborating complex grammar points (Tang 38). Three statements were formulated to probe into teachers' view on this issue. The results to the use of learners' L1 in L2 grammar class are as under:

**Table 6 Descriptive Statistics for the Use of Learners L1 in an L2 Grammar Class**

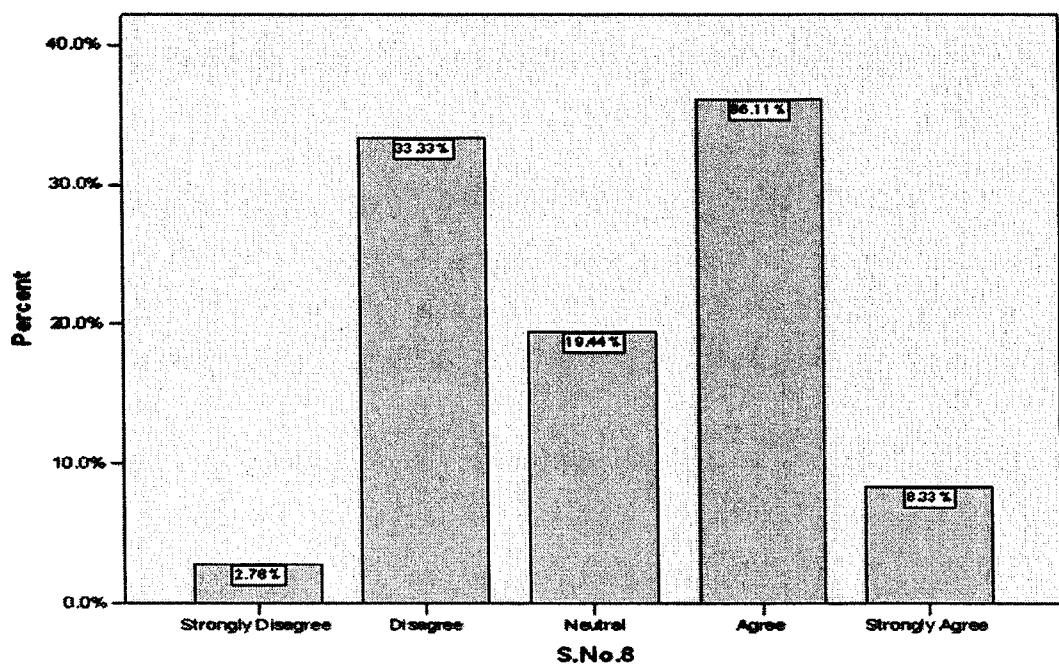
NO	DESCRIPTION	N	SD	D	NE	A	SA
8)	Teachers should use the learners' L1 to explain grammar rules.	36	1	12	7	13	3
21)	The use of L1 is detrimental to the students' language learning process.	36	4	8	9	13	2
25)	The use of the mother tongue facilitates second language teaching and learning.	36	3	11	5	16	1

**Note.** No. refers to the number in the original questionnaire. N = Number of responses.

**SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree; Ne = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.**

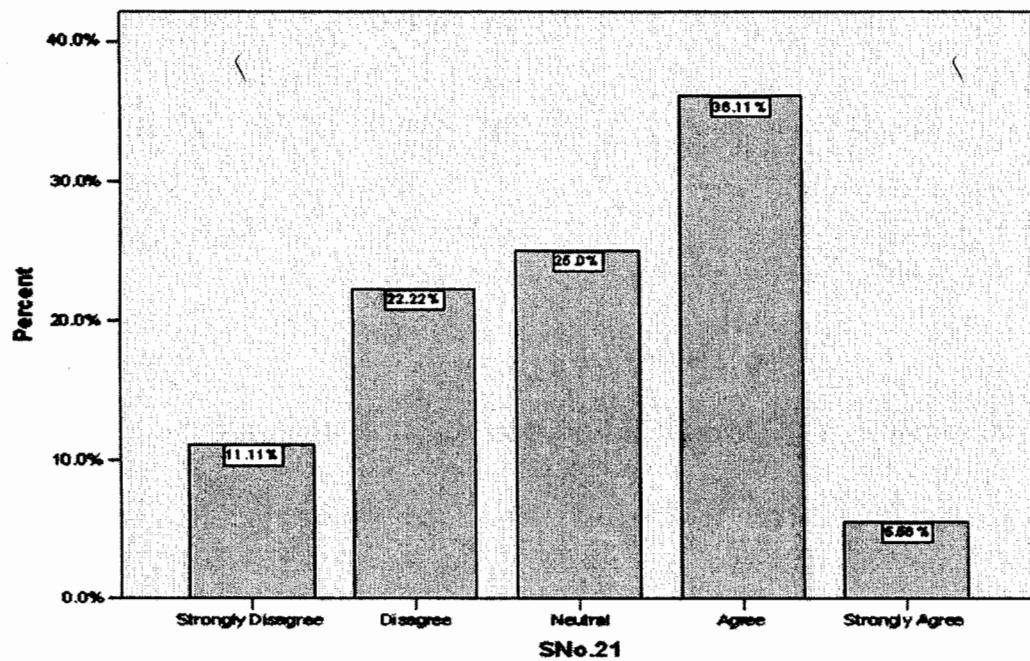
The above mentioned results have been shown in the figures given:

**8) Teachers should use the learners' L1 to explain grammar rules.**



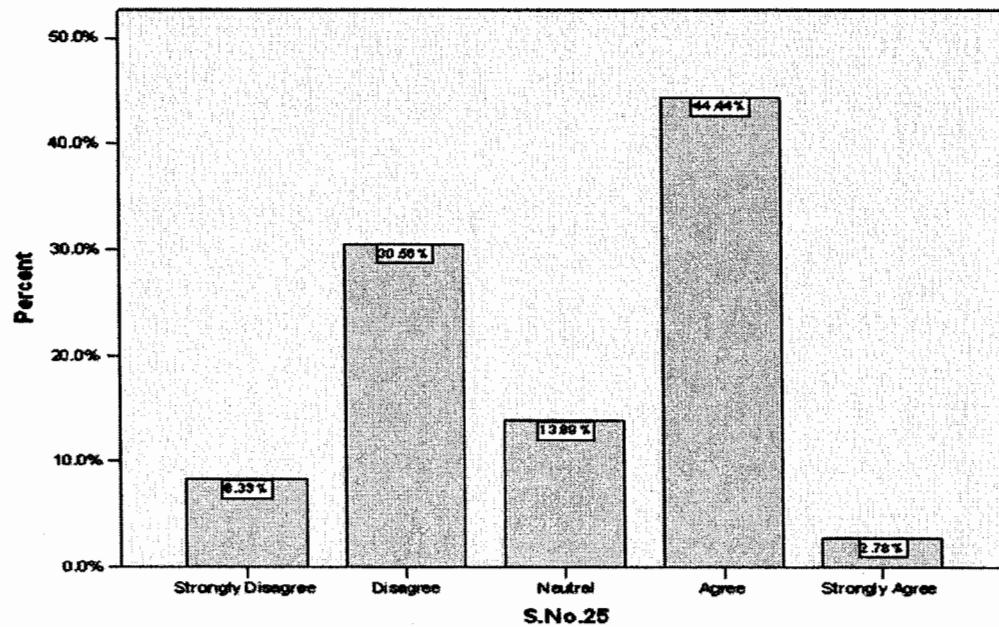
**Figure 21 Teachers' Use of Learners' L1 to Explain Grammar Rules**

21) The use of L1 is detrimental to the students' language learning process.



**Figure 22 Use of L1 as Detrimental to the Students' Language Learning Process**

25) The use of the mother tongue facilitates second language teaching and learning.



**Figure 23 Facilitative Role of Mother Tongue in Second Language Teaching and Learning**

Responses to item no.21 and item no.25 do not demonstrate any clear agreement or disagreement on the role of L1 in students' second language learning process. Positive responses to item no.21 (The use of L1 is detrimental to the students' language learning process.) totalled 44% replies whereas positive responses to item no.25 (The use of the mother tongue facilitates second language teaching and learning) totalled almost 47% which does not show any significant pattern. Similarly, results of item no.8 (Teachers should use the learners' L1 to explain grammar rules.) do not demonstrate any clear response. Significantly enough, 25% teachers held neutral response to item no.21, almost 20% to item no.8 and almost 14% to item no. 25. One possible interpretation is that teachers hold 'it depends' type of view on the use of L1 in L2 grammar class. The use learners' L1 is necessitated by students' inability to understand certain grammatical rules or meaning of difficult words or follow instruction for textbook activities as indicated during the classroom observation of some IIUI teachers.

#### **4.1.1.10 Use of Grammatical Terminology**

The use of grammatical terminology in the classroom is seen as one of the characteristics of explicit language teaching (Stern 327). But it is a controversial issue as to what extent grammatical terminology is required during L2 instruction and how much metalinguistic awareness and instruction based on promoting this awareness, actually contribute to the development of spontaneous use of language (Sharwood Smith 172). According to Borg, the commentators have assumed three positions in discussing the role of terminology in L2 instruction ("The Use of Grammatical Terminology" 96). First, those who strongly disapprove the use of grammatical terminology in L2 grammar teaching believe terminology creates a level of 'abstraction' which can add to the burden of L2 learning and make the process of understanding grammar rules harder (Corder qtd. in Borg "The Use of

Grammatical Terminology" 96). Second, those who strongly argue that metalinguistic awareness enables learners to shift their attention from message content to the properties of language used to convey content (Rakab 2). According to Basturkmen, Loewen and Ellis, if a linguistic item is addressed explicitly, the students are more likely to notice and incorporate it in their language production (11). Third, there are those who believe that the use of grammatical terminology depends on the learners' variables. According to Chalker, learners at lower levels should not be exposed to terminology of any sort but at advanced levels terminology can facilitate learners in identifying and grasping grammatical notions easily (81). Stern recommends that the decisions regarding the use of grammatical terminology must be related to learners' maturity and background. Background includes learners' first language education; when this has been 'metalinguistically' rich, the learners are likely to face lesser problems in grasping grammatical terminology during L2 instruction (qtd. in Borg "Use of Grammatical Terminology" 107)

The statements mentioned under have been deduced from the above mentioned debate regarding the use of grammatical terminology in an EFL class. The results to the use of grammatical terminology are as under:

**Table 7 Descriptive Statistics for the Use of Grammatical Terminology**

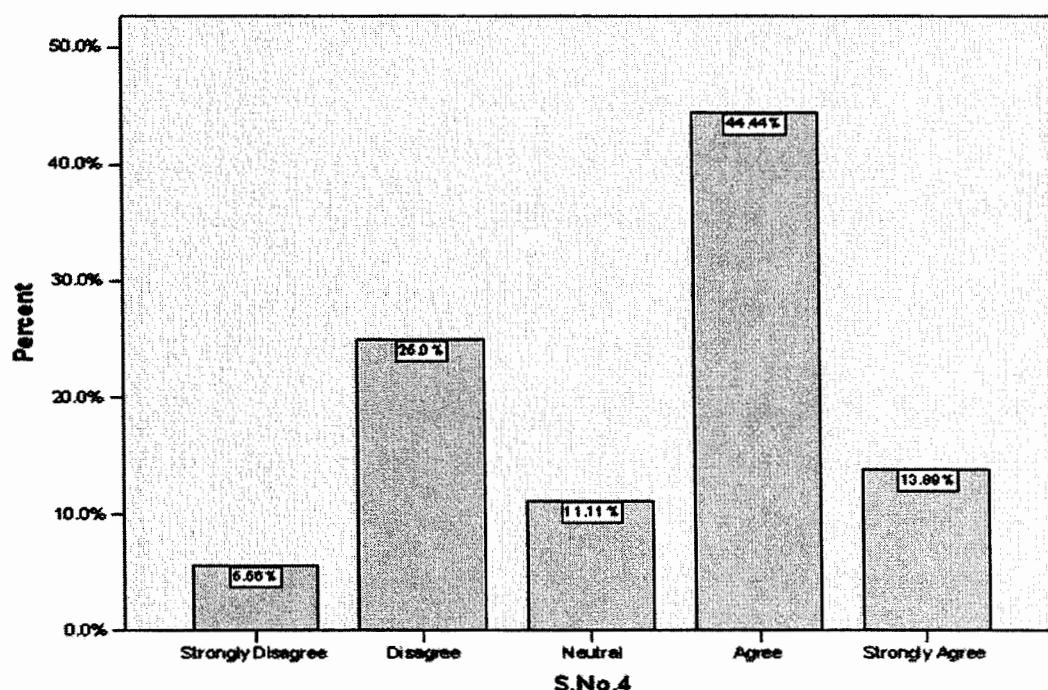
NO	DESCRIPTION	N	SD	D	NE	A	SA
4	Grammar can be successfully taught without extensive use of grammatical terminology.	36	2	9	4	16	5
9	It is essential that students are familiar with the correct grammatical terminology.	36	0	13	6	14	3
17	Students will learn grammar better if they understand grammatical terminology.	36	0	12	8	10	6

Note. No. refers to the number in the original questionnaire. N = Number of responses.

SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree; Ne = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.

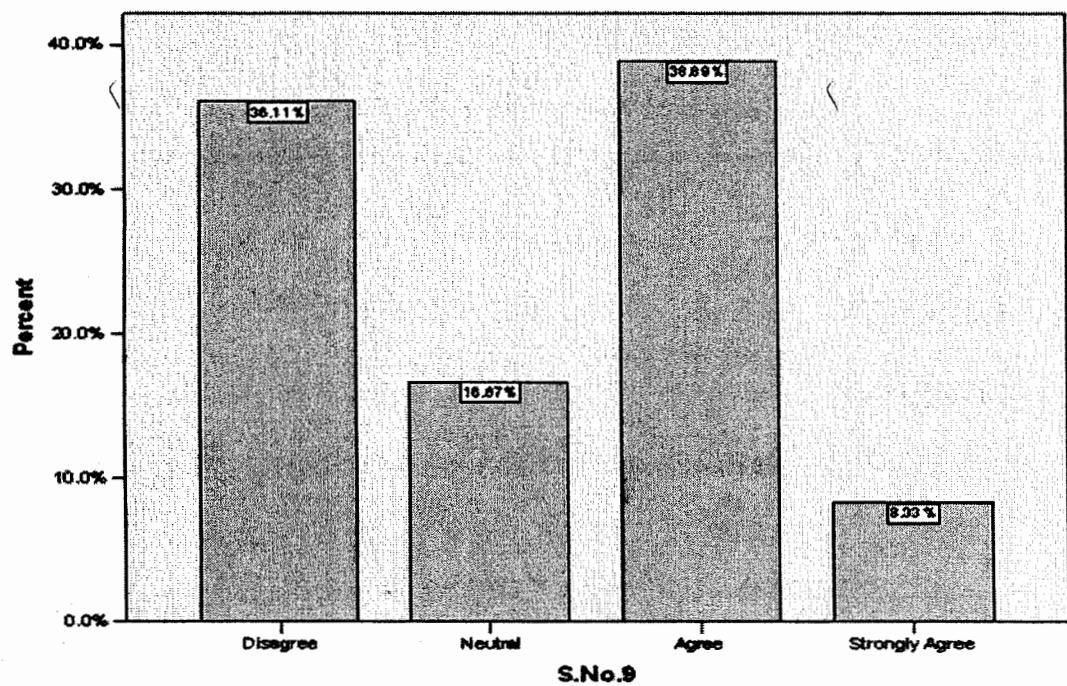
The above mentioned results have been shown in the following figures:

4) Grammar can be successfully taught without extensive use of grammatical terminology.



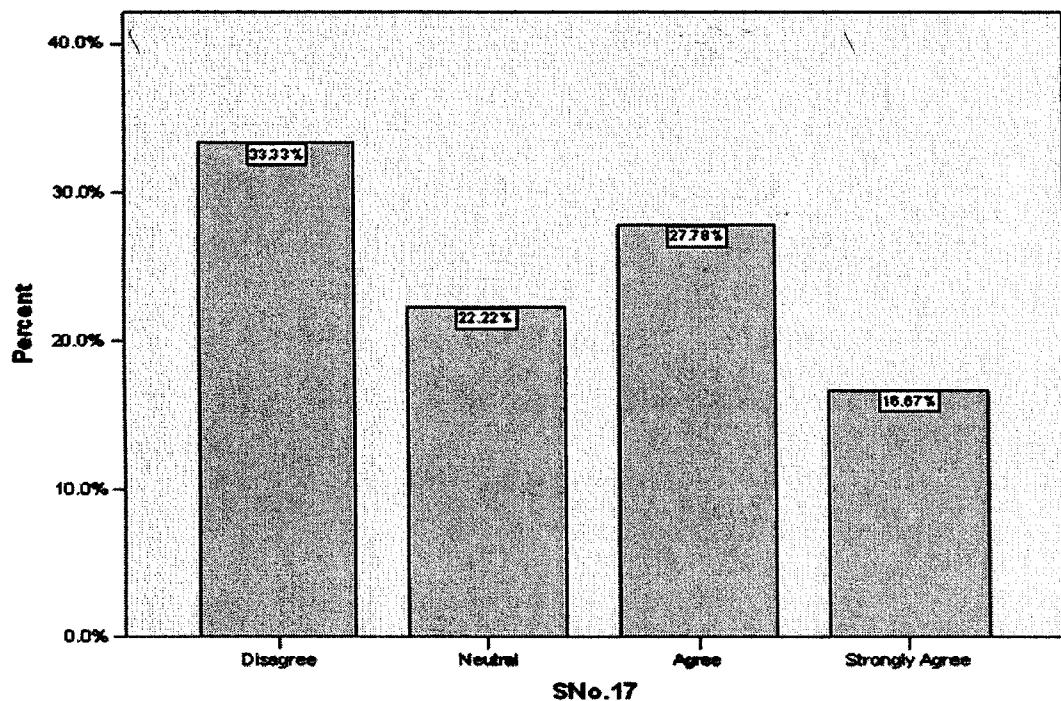
**Figure 24 Grammar Teaching Without Extensive Use of Grammatical Terminology**

9) It is essential that students are familiar with the correct grammatical terminology.



**Figure 25 Students' Need of Being Familiar with the Correct Grammatical Terminology**

17) Students will learn grammar better if they understand grammatical terminology



**Figure 26 Need of Understanding Grammatical Terminology to Learn Grammar**

Three statements (item no.4, item no. 9, item no. 17) were formulated to explore teachers' beliefs about the use of grammatical terms. There is a clear trend in response to item no.4 (Grammar can be successfully taught without extensive use of grammatical terminology.) This demonstrates the total of 58% response comprising both agreement and strong agreement with the possibility of teaching without frequent use of grammatical terminology.

But at the same time the importance of grammatical terminology in learning grammar is not ignored as 31% respondents showed their disagreement with item no.4. For both Item no.9 (It is essential that students are familiar with the correct grammatical terminology) and item no.17 (Students will learn grammar better if they understand grammatical terminology); there was no clear-cut trend in responses. The findings to item no. 9 indicated 47% of the replies showing both strong agreement and agreement with the view that students' familiarity

with grammatical terminology is quite essential. Similarly, 45% of the responses to item no.17 comprising both strong agreement and agreement demonstrate that students learn grammar better if they understand the grammatical terminology. Although the results show greater agreement with the view that grammar can be taught successfully without employing grammatical terminology extensively, the importance of students' familiarity with the grammatical terminology is not clearly negated. It seems that the use of grammatical terminology does not pose any greater challenge to the students. It may also be related to teachers' previous language learning experience. If this is rooted in the grammar-translation method, teacher will feel at home with this use of terminology and will deem it important for his students. This finding seems to link to teachers' preferences for explicit grammar teaching.

#### **4.1.1.11 Error Correction**

According to Allright and Bailey, the treatment of errors is a 'complex business.' In handling errors, a teacher has to decide first of all whether to treat errors or not, when, what treatment to provide and who will treat the errors (103). Error correction can be "described on a continuum ranging from ineffective and possibly harmful to beneficial and possibly even essential for some grammatical structures" (Loewen 1). Cognitive linguistics support error correction on two grounds. First, that negative feedback helps learners notice the gap between inter-language forms and target forms, and contributes to their interlanguage development (Schmidt "The Role of Consciousness" qtd. in Basturkmen, Loewen and Ellis 4). Second, when L2 learners are not corrected, their errors tend to be stabilized and eventually fossilized. Stern considers that errors can not be dissociated from language learning and error correction significantly enhances writing accuracy of the learners (51). On the other hand, supporters of a strong version of CLT, such as Krashen 1992; Leki 1991; Truscott 1996) have contended

that grammar correction in L2 writing classes should be discarded because of its ineffectiveness and negative effects on students' attitudes toward language learning. According to Krashen and Terrell grammar knowledge only serves as a monitor which may impede the fluency of language production. Error correction, in their view, may raise learners' affective filters (or anxiety levels) and this factor alone outweighs any possible effects, if any" (58). The statements (10, 11, 13 24) for survey have been deduced from different standpoints on error correction. The results are as follows:

**Table 8 Descriptive Statistics for Error Correction**

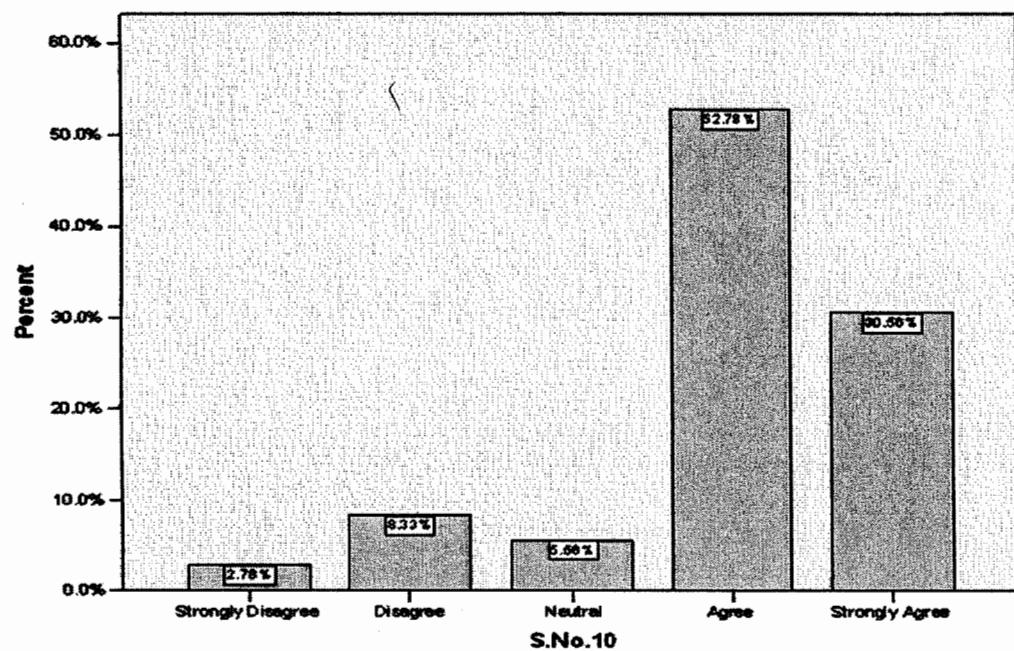
NO	DESCRIPTION	N	SD	D	NE	A	SA
10	It is important for students to be given the right answers after a written exercise or test.	36	1	3	2	19	11
11	It is important to correct all grammatical errors in students' oral work.	36	2	21	7	5	1
13	It is important to identify all grammatical errors in students' written work	36	2	14	2	11	7
24	Learners' mistakes should always be corrected as soon as possible to prevent the formation of bad habits.	36	2	13	4	12	5

**Note.** No. refers to the number in the original questionnaire. N = Number of responses.

**SD** = Strongly Disagree, **D** = Disagree; **Ne** = Neutral, **A** = Agree, **SA** = Strongly Agree.

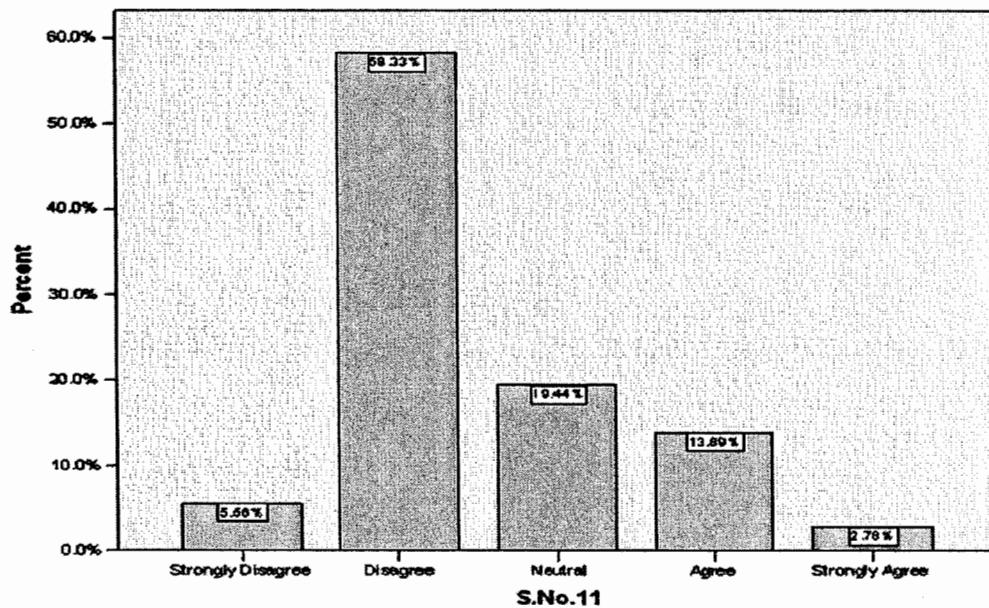
The above mentioned results have been shown in the following figures:

10) It is important for students to be given the right answers after a written exercise or test.



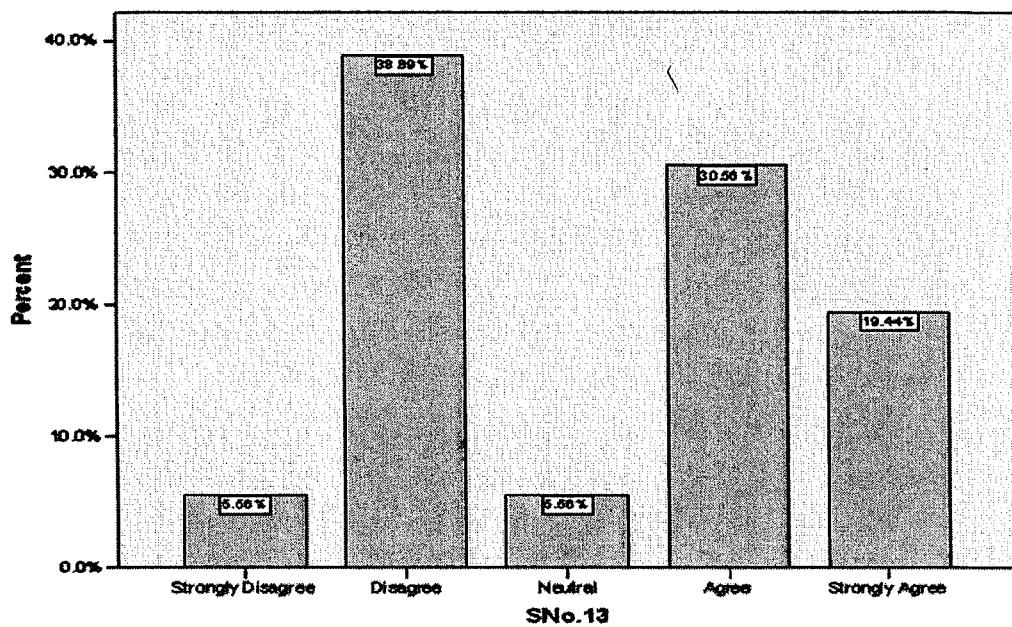
**Figure 27 Need of Giving Right Answers after a Written Exercise or Test**

11) It is important to correct all grammatical errors in students' oral work.



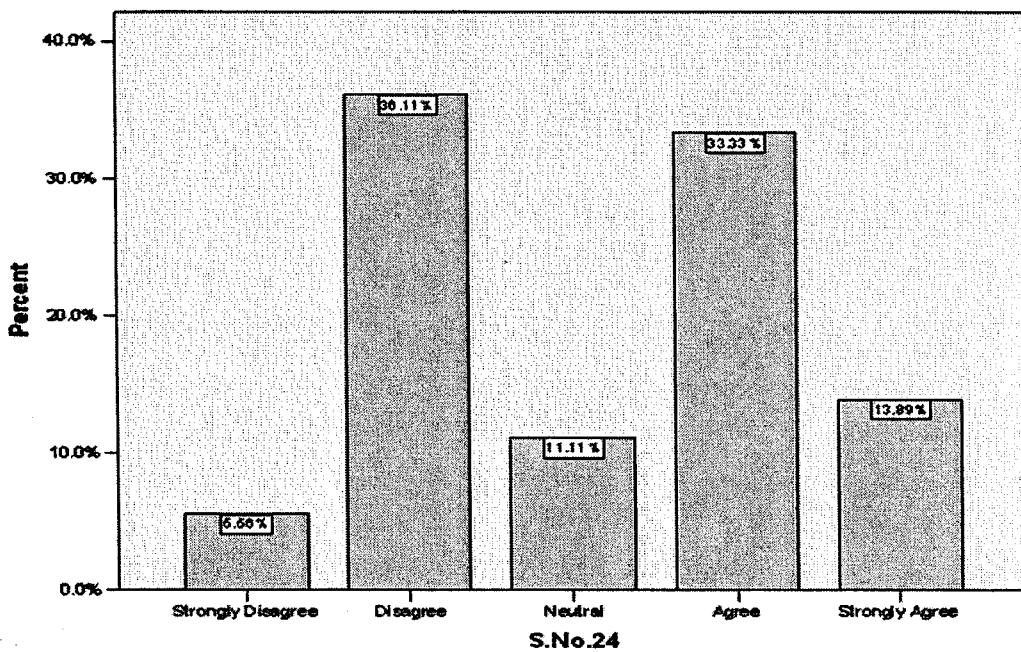
**Figure 28 Importance of Correcting All Grammatical Errors in Students' Oral Work**

13) It is important to identify all grammatical errors in students' written work.



**Figure 29 Importance of Correcting all Grammatical Errors in Students' Written Work**

24) Learners' mistakes should always be corrected as soon as possible to prevent the formation of bad habits.



**Figure 30 Need of Error Correction to Prevent the Formation of Bad Habits**

A stronger indication of agreement in the survey came on item no. 10 (It is important for students to be given the right answers after a written exercise or test.). Over 84% of responses were of agreement or strong agreement with the view of providing the correct answers to the students after a written exercise or class test. This result is not particularly surprising because students' expectations of explicit (traditional) teaching of grammar are well-known to the majority of L2 teachers (Borg "Teachers' Theories in Grammar Teaching", 162). Teachers do not seem to support correcting errors in the oral work of the students. They tended to disagree with item no.11 (It is important to correct all grammatical errors in students' oral work.) with 64% of respondents showing negative replies and only 17% of respondents showing positive replies regarding the correction of all grammatical errors in students' oral work. This finding is moderately supported by result for item no. 22(You do not need to speak grammatically in order to communicate well.) with 41% of the respondents showing strong agreement and agreement with the view that grammatical accuracy is not to be taken care of in order to communicate effectively. Replies to item no. 13 show that teachers are almost divided on the importance of corrective feedback in students' written work as 50% of the responses were of strong agreement and agreement whereas 44% of the responses were of strong disagreement and disagreement. It is interesting to compare responses to Item no.11 with those to item no.13. Here a large number of respondents (50%) feel that errors should be identified in students' written work whereas only 17% of the respondents demonstrate their strong agreement and agreement to identifying errors in students' oral work. It can be concluded that teachers weigh accuracy more in written communication than in oral communication because students are evaluated on the basis of written English and that speaking constitutes an insignificant part of the terminal examination as it carries only 20 marks in the terminal examination of language students at IIUI.

Interestingly enough responses to item no. 24 ( Learners' mistakes should always be corrected as soon as possible to prevent the formation of bad habits.) do not demonstrate any clear pattern as response rate of 47% shows strong agreement and agreement whereas response rate of 42% shows strong disagreement and disagreement to the statement. It can also be inferred from this result that teachers do not underestimate the practice of error correction as overlooking students errors may lead to fossilization of errors in learners' interlanguage.

#### 4.1.1.12 Grammar Practice

The teachers were asked to comment on statements concerning both the role of practice and the types of practice which might prove more beneficial for learners. The responses to item no.28 and item no.29 are as under:

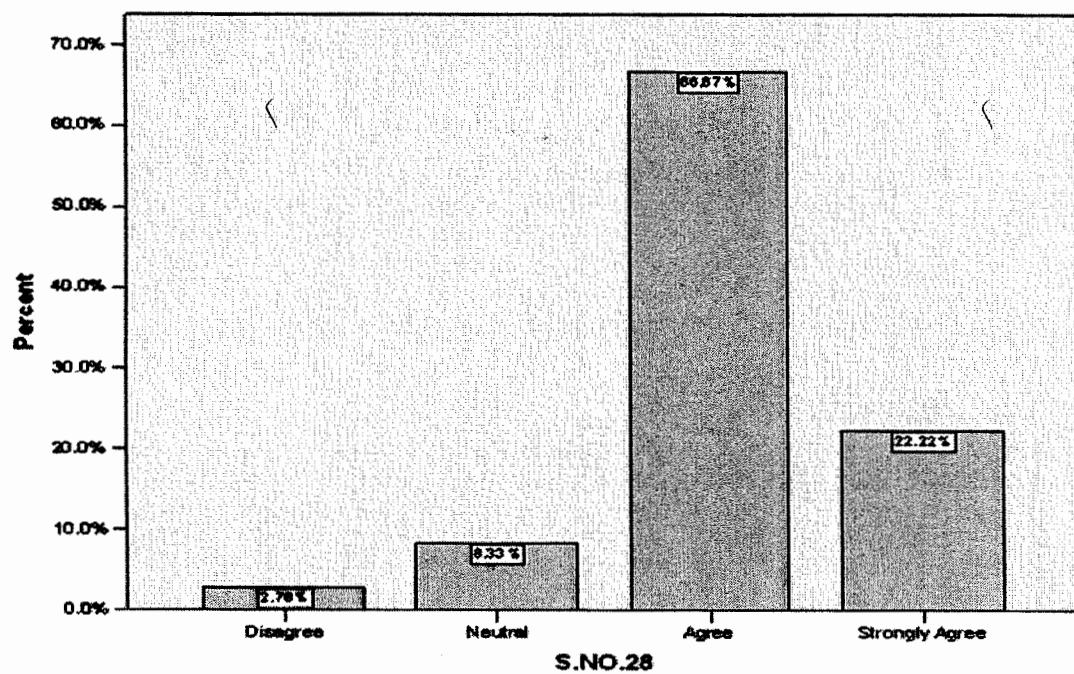
**Table 9 Descriptive Statistics for Grammar Practice**

NO	DESCRIPTION	N	SD	D	NE	A	SA
28	Students can improve their grammatical accuracy through frequent practice of structure.	36	0	1	2	26	7
29	Participating in real-life tasks with language is the best way for students to develop their grammatical knowledge.	36	2	17	9	8	0

**Note.** No. refers to the number in the original questionnaire. N = Number of responses.

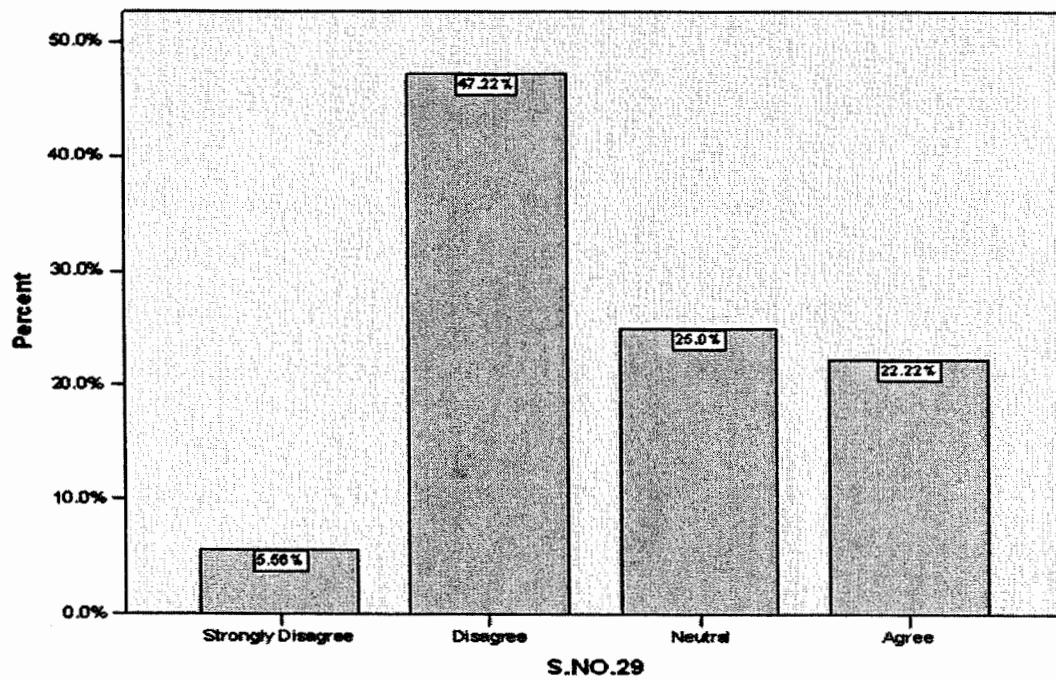
**SD** = Strongly Disagree, **D** = Disagree; **Ne** = Neutral, **A** = Agree, **SA** = Strongly Agree

28) Students can improve their grammatical accuracy through frequent practice of structure.



**Figure 31 Improvement in Students 'Grammatical Accuracy through Frequent Practice of Structure'**

29) Participating in real-life tasks with language is the best way for students to develop their grammatical knowledge



**Figure 32 Improvement in Students 'Grammatical Accuracy through participation in Real-life Tasks'**

Responses to item no. 28 (Students can improve their grammatical accuracy through frequent practice of structure) provide substantial evidence of teachers' belief that practice of structures is essential for learning grammar and enhancing grammatical accuracy. Ninety-one percent of replies indicate agreement and strong agreement with this statement. It is important here to see the type of practice used. The phrase 'practice of structures' could suggest both an 'analytical and experiential approach' to the learning of grammar (Stern 327).

The responses to item no.29 (Participating in real-life tasks with language is the best way for students to develop their grammatical knowledge) may shed further light on this area. Although the data does not show any clear-cut pattern as in item no. 28, the teachers seem to have lesser preference for real-life tasks for the improvement of grammatical knowledge: just over 22% of replies agree with the statement. There might be a possible confusion here about the meaning of 'real-life' tasks (follow-up interviews with teachers may have reduced this uncertainty). However, the data seem to indicate that teachers understand the importance of drawing on language for actual communication. The smaller numbers of positive responses to item no.29 may demonstrate some teachers' concern about an insufficient 'focus on form' (see focus on form in Chapter 2) in their context for the development of students' grammatical knowledge, something which may be connected with entirely communicative tasks (Batstone 229 ).

#### **4.1.2 Qualitative Results**

The qualitative data supports the conclusions drawn earlier. Section C of the questionnaire contains reasons given by respondents in favour of /against teaching and learning grammar. Each teacher is asked to give two reasons in favour of /against teaching and learning

grammar. Out of 36, 24 teachers responded to this question showing the response rate of 66%.

#### **4.1.2.1 Arguments in Favour of Grammar Teaching and Learning Grammar**

The arguments given by language teachers in favour of grammar teaching can be put in the following categories. First, nine respondents support grammar teaching and learning as it promotes accuracy in language use and polishes the writing skills of the learners. Second, five teachers regard grammar teaching and learning as being facilitative in effective communication. Third, five respondents advocate grammar teaching and learning at all levels as being essential to any language teaching course for it improves their language proficiency. Fourth, three respondents consider that good command over grammar instils confidence in the students about language use and make them efficient learners. Fifth, three respondents consider that knowledge of grammar can facilitate and enhance the process of second language learning. Sixth, interestingly enough only one respondent advocates the teaching of grammar in integration with other skills or communicatively because “its function is to polish your language skills.”

The above mentioned arguments demonstrate that teachers recognise the significance of grammar teaching in promoting accuracy both in written and oral communication. The response rate of 72% in favour of item no. 7 (If learners receive grammar instruction, they are more likely to be able to correct their errors) is supported by these arguments in favour of grammar teaching. Similarly, grammatical knowledge is not considered redundant rather as knowledge which instils confidence in the L2 learners about language use and facilitates their second language learning process. Similarly, arguments mentioned in the third category, in favour of grammar teaching and learning at all levels as being essential to any language

teaching course are supported by the results to item no. 5. Grammar should be taught at all levels (i.e. beginner, intermediate and advanced) showing the response rate of 78% in favour.

#### **4.1.2.2 Arguments against Grammar Teaching**

Only three respondents consider grammar teaching and learning as being redundant and a sheer waste of time. Such responses are as under:

Grammar is learnt automatically only the exposure to language is important. Explicit grammar teaching using grammatical terminology makes your students more confused.

Teaching grammatical rules is a waste of time.

At IIUI communicative approach should be adopted to teach grammar not the traditional one which is the waste of time.

Only few teachers recognize that grammar teaching is not required as was advocated by the strong version of communicative approach. These responses do not support high response rate in favour of item no 19 (Students can learn grammar through exposure to language in natural use.) showing the response rate of 83% comprising both strong agreement and agreement.

#### **4.1.2.3 Meaning of Grammar**

All 36 teachers respond to the question 'What does the word 'grammar' mean to you?' These responses fall into five main categories. First, the most notable of these, is the category of rules, which equate grammar with rules of a language. Seventeen teachers (52%) describe grammar as 'a set of rules helpful in learning correct English'. The result demonstrate teachers' traditional perception about grammar as they consider the role of grammar as set of rules to be memorised and used for writing correct English. Second, the responses of five teachers propound the idea of grammar being fundamental to language. Third, the responses of six teachers deal with the idea of grammatical knowledge leading to the use of error-free

language use. Fourth, four teachers see grammar to be a tool that enables effective communication as the following examples illustrate this:

It is the knowledge of grammar that enables one to communicate clearly, coherently, efficiently and effectively.

Fifth, the concept of grammar as the arrangement of words in a sentence has been described by four teachers. Example of such response is as under;

Grammar tells you the mechanism of parts of speech and how they are joined in syntactic structures to make phrases, clauses and understandable sentences.

The qualitative data demonstrates diverse perceptions of the word 'grammar'. Majority of respondents perceive grammar as a set of rules to be learnt to acquire accuracy in language use. Grammar is also perceived as a tool that helps in effective communication. Moreover, besides perceiving grammar as a basic skeleton of the body of a language respondents also perceive it as arrangement of words in a sentence. The comment in the qualitative data about grammar as knowledge which enables the learners to use an error free language substantiates high response rate to item no. 7 in the quantitative data.

#### **4.1.2.4 Difficulties in Teaching Grammar**

Almost half of the teachers 17 (47 %) admit that they have experienced difficulties in teaching grammar at some point in their teaching career. But most of the respondents do not explain the difficulties they experienced. Details of fragmentary information regarding the difficulties in grammar teaching fall into four main categories. The highest number of 41% of the respondents have expressed that their difficulties arise out of the lack of thorough grammatical knowledge for example , grammatical terminology and technical description of rules for the formation of different structure etc. Thirty five percent of the respondents consider the lack appropriate grammar teaching methodology to different types of language

learners such as foreign students, multilingual students or adult language learners as the major obstruction in their grammar teaching. Some 11% respondents express that their difficulties arise from the lack of understanding on students' part as in most cases students do not pick writing structure easily due to previous scanty knowledge of grammar. Teachers (11%) also regard the lack of interesting activities in grammar textbooks and their execution in a big class as a hindrance in their grammar teaching.

## 4.2 Analysis of the Observational Data

After getting the questionnaires, I observed the teachers while teaching grammar in their classes as a non- participant observer. I stayed in each classroom for almost two hours for observing the teaching. A total of 5 lessons were observed. Although the duration of each grammar class ranged from 2 to 4 hours a week, each teacher was observed for 2-hours session in which he would complete one unit from the book.

While the lesson was in progress I noted down my comments on a structured observation sheet. The observation sheet was designed to validate the data acquired from the questionnaire. It aimed at identifying significant instructional episodes regarding grammar teaching such as the presentation of grammar, explicit or implicit grammar teaching(formal instruction or direct exposure) use of grammatical terminology, reference to learners' L1, grammar practice activities and error correction as they generated questions through which I could gain insight into the factors behind the teacher's behaviour. The key notes of each lesson were taken down and later compared with the data obtained through questionnaires. The observational data was analysed after each lesson for key instructional episodes-classroom incidents that generated questions about the rationale for the teacher's approach to grammar. The beliefs stated by the five teachers regarding different issues in grammar teaching are mentioned in the following table:

### Table of Stated Beliefs of Five Teachers

No	Statement	T.1	T.2	T.3	T.4	T.5
	<b>Importance Of Grammar</b>					
5	Grammar should be taught at all levels (i.e. beginner, intermediate and advanced).	D	SA	D	A	SA
6	Teaching grammar enables students to produce more complex sentences.	D	D	A	A	A
7	If learners receive grammar instruction, they are more likely to be able to correct their errors.	A	A	A	A	A
12	It is important to focus on grammar in all English lessons.	D	SD	D	A	D
14	It is more important to teach grammar to beginners than to intermediate/advanced learners.	D	D	A	A	A
23	Grammar furnishes the basis of four language skills.	A	D	D	A	SA
	<b>Formal Instruction or Direct Exposure to L2</b>					
1	A learner can acquire a second or foreign language without grammar instruction (i.e. similar to how children learn their mother tongue).	A	D	A	A	SD
3	Explicit knowledge of grammatical rules is essential for the mastery of language.	SA	SD	SA	A	A
19	Students can learn grammar through exposure to language in natural use.	A	A	D	N	A
22	You do not need to speak grammatically in order to communicate well.	D	D	D	A	A
27	Formal instruction helps learners produce grammatically correct language.	A	A	A	A	SA
	<b>Declarative and Procedural Knowledge</b>					
26	Separate treatment of grammar fails to produce language knowledge which students can use in natural communication	A	SA	SA	N	A
	<b>Deductive and Inductive approach to Grammar Teaching</b>					
	<b>Use of Deductive Approach</b>					
18	Teachers should begin a grammar lesson by explaining how a particular structure works.	A	A	A	A	A
20	The primary role of the teacher in a grammar lesson is to	A	SD	A	N	SA

	explain a grammar point.					
	<b>Use of inductive approach</b>					
15	Students should be given the opportunity to work out grammar rules from examples.	SA	A	A	A	SA
	<b>Use of Learners' L1 in L2 Grammar Class L1</b>					
8	Teachers should use the learners' L1 to explain grammar rules.	N	N	A	A	D
21	The use of L1 is detrimental to the students' language learning process.	A	D	SD	N	D
25	The use of the mother tongue facilitates second language teaching and learning.	D	D	SD	A	N
	<b>Use of Grammatical Terminology</b>					
4	Grammar can be successfully taught without extensive use of grammatical terminology.	A	SA	D	N	D
9	It is essential that students are familiar with the correct grammatical terminology.	D	D	A	N	A
17	Students will learn grammar better if they understand grammatical terminology	D	D	A	A	N
	<b>Error Correction</b>					
10	It is important for students to be given the right answers after a written exercise or test.	SA	A	SA	N	A
11	It is important to correct all grammatical errors in students' oral work.	N	D	D	D	SD
13	It is important to identify all grammatical errors in students' written work	A	SD	SA	A	D
24	Learners' mistakes should always be corrected as soon as possible to prevent the formation of bad habits.	A	D	SA	N	A
	<b>Grammar Practice</b>					
28	Students can improve their grammatical accuracy through frequent practice of structure.	A	A	A	A	SA
29	Participating in real-life tasks with language is the best way for students to develop their grammatical knowledge.	A	SD	SA	A	A

SD= strongly disagree   D = disagree   N= neutral   A =agree   SA=strongly agree

#### **4.2.1 Class Observation of Teacher One**

The first observation of the teacher teaching grammar class was conducted in Advanced Section One, on 6<sup>th</sup> of May, 2009. The observation lasted for two hours. The topic of his lesson was 'The Passive: Simple Forms' from Grammar Three by Jennifer Seidl. The class consisted of 18 students in total; 11 Pakistanis, 2 Chinese and 5 Afghans.

The Teacher has shown his knowledge of grammar and command in teaching grammar as 'average' on the Likert Scale. He considers the lack of sufficient exposure of the target language the major obstruction in language learning. According to the Teacher, the word grammar meant 'the rule that enable one to write and speak language accurately and effectively.'

#### **4.2.1 Importance of Grammar**

Teacher One disagreed that grammar should be taught at all levels (i.e. elementary, intermediate and advanced) or it should be the main component of any teaching syllabus. Although he believed that grammar furnished the basis of four language skills and helped learners correct themselves, he did not deem it important enough to be the main component of any language course.

#### **4.2.2 Formal Instruction or Direct Exposure to L2**

As the responses revealed, Teacher One believed that a learner could acquire a second or foreign language without L2 grammar instruction. He agreed that direct exposure to language in natural use was the best way a learner can learn L2 but disagreed with the complete abandonment of grammar by learners as he did not approve the view that grammatical accuracy is not a prerequisite for effective communication (item no.22). At the same time Teacher One favours formal instruction as being helpful to learners in producing

grammatically correct language. These responses demonstrate his preference for both formal instruction and direct exposure to L2 in mastering the use of language. The classroom observation provided substantial evidence of teacher's inclination towards formal instruction as he recurrently employed grammatical terminology and treated students' error immediately and even discussed them with the class so that any fossilization of errors could be avoided. The observational data does not offer any significant illustration of teacher belief in the principles of communicative approach mentioned above. Although Teacher One avoided the use of learner's L1 and employed discovery method, he made recurrent use of grammatical terminology and meticulous error correction.

#### **4.2.3 Deductive or Inductive Approach to Grammar Teaching**

Interestingly enough, Teacher One approved both deductive and inductive approaches to the presentation of a grammatical item. He tried to establish the context for the lesson by asking students questions about the ongoing military operation in Swat.

'The teacher asked, 'How many people were killed in Mangora?'

'Has the area been cleaned from terrorists?'

'Are more troops being sent to Swat?'

These questions triggered a discussion in the class. The students shared the pieces of information they had. Then the teacher distributed news clipping comprising 12 lines in the class and asked the students to read it. He had already highlighted the passive forms used in the text. Immediately after that he asked the students to open their books and read a dialogue between friends about a theft in their area. The 'passive forms' had already been written in bold. The teacher asked questions such as, 'What was stolen?' 'Who was robbed?' 'Was the thief caught?' The students scanned the dialogues to find answers. The teacher wrote their

answers on the white board such as 'about 850 were stolen', 'a newsagent has been broken into, etc. Then the teacher directed their attention to the 'form used in these answers and turned to the formation and usage of 'The Passive; Simple forms' given in the book. The teacher wrote the forms on the white board and elaborated them with few more examples as under:

'We use 'be +past participle' to make passive form as you can see in the examples in the book.'

'The classroom has been cleaned.'

'The AC was switched off in the morning.' The doer is not important or necessary. Here the action is important.'

It is significant that the Teacher did not obstruct the discussion by revealing the rules to the students. He encouraged students to think about the issue under focus. In accordance with his approach to grammar illustrated above, the teacher aimed to elicit the rule through an interactive class discussion rather than simply supplying the rule himself.

Although the Teacher was inclined towards discovery-oriented work in grammar teaching, it did not prevent him from changing his strategies according to the realities of classroom life. At times students were unable to comprehend a grammatical point, and in such cases he was flexible to assume responsibility for providing this knowledge. The episodes from his practice mentioned illustrate this point. The presentation stage lasted for 15-17 minutes. The pace of lesson was appropriate. The students were attentive. The teacher moved to the activities given in the book. Time allotted for the first activity was a bit more as some students completed in 8 minutes and started sharing answers which created some disturbance in the class. Then the Teacher started other activities.

#### **4.2.4 Use of Learners' L1 in L2 Grammar Class**

Strictly in accordance with his belief regarding the use of learners' L1 in L2 grammar class, Teacher One strictly avoided reference to learners L1 in L2 grammar class and even did not encourage it. Teacher One deemed the use of L1 as being detrimental to students' language learning process. One of the weak student asked the teacher (in Urdu) to briefly explain the difference between 'had killed' and 'had been killed' but Teacher One dexterously eluded the use of L1 and explained the difference in English as under:

In 'had killed' for example, one of the passenger on the plane had killed the hijacker before the commandos arrived. "In this active voice sentence the doer is the 'passenger' but in 'had been killed' for example 'The hijacker had been killed before the commandos arrived.'

It demonstrates that grammatical rules can be explained in simple terms and that direct exposure to target language pushes the learners to make an effort to use the target language even when they have to explain the grammatical rules.

#### **4.2.5 Use of Grammatical Terminology**

Explicit discussions of grammatical issues were another recurrent feature of the teacher's work. The teacher used grammatical terminology recurrently in these discussions, suggesting that the teacher had positive feelings about metalinguistic awareness in L2 learning. However, the study of his beliefs demonstrated his staunch opposition regarding the use of grammatical terminology. As the Teacher believed that grammar could be successfully taught without extensive use of grammatical terminology, he differed with the concept that students should be essentially familiar with the correct grammatical terminology. He also disagreed with the idea that students would learn grammar better if they understood the grammatical terminology. But the classroom practice of the teacher was not fully congruent with his belief. He frequently used 'past participle', 'agent', 'object', 'subject',

‘definite article’, ‘irregular forms’, ‘past simple passive’, ‘past perfect passive’ etc. He used these technical terms while correcting students’ errors. However, there was one particular incident which demonstrated a conflict between teacher’s belief and his practice. As one of the students wrote,

When students went to the college after the summer vacation, a lot of things have been changed.

The Teacher read out the sentence and explained its usage in the following way:

When students went to the college after the summer vacation, a lot of things have been changed. We should use past perfect passive form here. Not the present perfect passive form.

In short, the Teacher apparently seemed to consider the use of grammatical terminology as unimportant for L2 learners in understanding grammar but he recurrently employed grammatical terminology in the class. This phenomenon may indicate the indelible imprints of his grammar learning experience as a student.

#### **4.2.6 Error Correction**

Teacher One demonstrated a traditional approach towards error correction. He agreed that teacher should identify all grammatical errors in students’ written work to prevent the fossilization of errors or formation of bad habits. He deemed it important for students to be provided with the correct answers after the completion of written grammatical exercises or class tests. But he adopted neutral response regarding the correction of all grammatical errors in students’ oral work. The classroom practice demonstrated recurrent analysis of students’ grammatical errors. Teacher was strict and immediate in correcting grammatical errors in written work. He checked the solved exercises of each student with a lead pencil and encircled the wrong answers as I happened to see the books of two students sitting nearby.

At the end of each activity the teacher imparted the right answers to the students one by one

and asked them to make corrections in their books. In the end, the teacher asked the student to put the right 'passive forms' in the paragraph titled 'The Olympic Games.' In this controlled activity all passive forms were mixed. The teacher allocated 15 minute for this activity and then thoroughly checked each notebook. He discussed the common errors with the rest of the class but he did not name anybody to avoid any embarrassment among the students. On one occasion the teacher became a bit aggressive and snubbed one of the students who had made many errors.

You should be mentally here when your teacher is teaching you something important! When you fail in the exam you tell everybody, 'We were not taught this topic!' when the teacher is explain some grammatical point, you should keep your EYES AND EARS OPEN...

The teacher demonstrated a traditional attitude towards error correction and made any possible effort to develop students' consciousness about their grammatical errors so that they might avoid such errors in future.

#### **4.2.7 Grammar Practice Activities**

The use of practice activities revealed another mode of grammar teaching in teachers' work in which the students were encouraged to use specific grammatical items. Such activities constituted an integral part of the teacher's approach to grammar. Teacher One gave a positive response to the view that frequent practice of structure can improve the students' grammatical accuracy (item no.28) and that students' participation in real-life tasks with language is really beneficial for the development of their grammatical knowledge (item no. 29) He used the semi contextualized exercises given in the book and did not utilize any game or puzzle outside the book. The teacher focused more on the written exercises given in the books than on oral practice of short dialogues given in the book.

#### 4.2.8 Relationship between Belief and Practice

The data showed that, in some cases, the beliefs of Teacher One corresponded with his classroom practice. For instance, as Teacher One deemed the use of L1 detrimental to students' language learning process, he strictly avoided the use of L1 in his class. Moreover, Teacher One considered it essential to identify all grammatical errors in students' written work to prevent the fossilization or formation of bad habits. Therefore, he strictly checked the notebooks of the students and even discussed those errors with the class. At the end of each activity the teacher provided students with the right answers one by one and asked them to make corrections on their books because he considered it essential for the students to be provided with the correct answers after the completion of a written grammatical exercise or a class test. Strictly in accordance with his reported practice there was no reference to L2 grammar or any translation task in the pedagogical practice

In other instances, there appeared to be disparity between beliefs and practice. For instance, Teacher One strongly disapproved the extensive use of grammatical terminology but he frequently used 'past participle', 'agent', 'object', 'subject', 'definite article', 'irregular forms', 'past simple passive', 'past perfect passive' etc. He used these technical terms while correcting students' errors. As Teacher One held neutral response to the statement that teacher should correct all grammatical errors in students' oral work, he focused more on the written exercises than on oral practice of short dialogues given in the book.

At another place I found some contradictory beliefs as Teacher One approved both deductive and inductive approaches to the presentation of a grammatical item but he employed inductive method in the classroom. To him the word 'grammar' meant 'the rules that enable one to write and speak language accurately and effectively,' yet he disapproved the idea that grammar should be taught at all levels (i.e. Elementary, Intermediate and

Advanced) or that it should be the main component of any teaching syllabus. Although he believed that grammar furnishes the basis of four language skills and helped learners correct themselves, he did not deem it important enough to be main component of any language course. Teacher One seemed to support the communicative approach as he believed that a learner could acquire a second or foreign language not by explicit grammar instruction but by direct exposure to language in natural use. But at the same time he believed that formal instruction assists the learners in producing grammatically correct language (item no. 27) and disagreed with the complete abandonment of grammar by learners as he disapproved the view in item no.22. But the pedagogical practice of Teacher One showed his inclination towards the traditional method of grammar teaching. For instance, in the communicative approach error is a sign of learning and error correction obstructed language acquisition by raising learners' affective filter (Krashen and Terrell 58). But Teacher One thoroughly checked the notebooks of the students and identified all error in their written work. Moreover, his strong belief in the accuracy rather than fluency further highlighted a contradiction in his belief in the communicative approach.

#### **4.2.2 Class Observation of Teacher Two**

The second observation of the teacher teaching grammar class was conducted in Intermediate Section One, on 9<sup>th</sup> of May 2009. The observation lasted for almost two hours. The topic selected for teaching on that day was the use of 'Conditional Type 1' from Grammar Two by Jennifer Seidl. The class comprised of 20 students: 15 Pakistanis, 2 Chinese and 3 Afghans.

The Teacher has shown his knowledge of grammar and command in teaching grammar as 'average' on the Likert-Scale. He had experienced some difficulty in teaching grammar as he was 'unable to create a situation (context) for effective teaching of a structure'. According to the Teacher, the word 'grammar' meant 'the ability to speak, read

and write language correct enough to communicate'. The beliefs stated by teacher two regarding the different issues in grammar teaching and his classroom practices are discussed below;

#### **4.2.2.1 Importance of Grammar**

The Teacher staunchly believed that grammar should be taught at all levels (i.e. beginner, intermediate and advanced). He advocated the importance of grammar instruction as it enabled learners to correct their errors. He strongly differed that grammar furnishes the basis of four language skills and should be the main component of any teaching syllabus. He diverged from the view that all English lessons should focus on grammar or that the major segment of a language course should be focussed on teaching and practicing grammar. He rejected the view that it was more essential to give grammatical instruction to beginners than to intermediate/advanced learners.

#### **4.2.2.2 Formal Instruction or Direct Exposure to L2**

The Teacher disagreed that a learner could acquire a second or foreign language without grammar instruction of L2 but he agreed that direct exposure to language in natural use helps learner in learning L2. He disapproved that it was not essential to speak grammatically in order to communicate well which showed his preference for accuracy over fluency. This view is further substantiated by his favourable response in favour of formal instruction as being helpful for learners in producing grammatically correct language (item no. 27). But interestingly enough the strong disagreement with the need of explicit knowledge of grammatical rules as being essential for the mastery of language(item no. 3) further demonstrates the confusion in the mind of the Teacher. The observational data demonstrated

that the teacher was more inclined towards formal instruction as he corrected all grammatical errors in students' writings and explained the grammatical rules both in English and Urdu.

#### **4.2.2.3 Deductive or Inductive Approach to Grammar Teaching**

The responses of Teacher Two demonstrate a contradiction in his belief as he strongly believed in the implementation of both deductive and inductive approaches to the presentation of a grammatical item. At the same time he strongly differs that the primary role of the teacher in a grammar lesson was to explain a grammatical point. He hardly spent any time on establishing context for the new grammar point. He abruptly started and asked the students to open their books to Unit 27. He read out the dialogue given in the beginning of the unit and then asked the students:

'If you get a holiday tomorrow where will you go?'

The students raised their hands and the teacher asked one of the students to answer.

'If we will get a holiday tomorrow, we will go to our homes.' a student answered.

This answer made the atmosphere of the class a bit candid. The teacher added,

'But if I get a holiday tomorrow I will take my family to Murree.'

The Teacher asked further, 'If you go home what will you do there?' One of the students responded.

'If I am going home, I will visit my uncle in the hospital.'

The Teacher wrote both the sentences on the white board and highlighted what those sentences had in common.

Both start with 'if' and both have two 'clauses'. Moreover, both sentences refer to 'future possibility'. Such sentences are called conditional sentences. It has three types. This is Type 1.

Then the teacher explained the sentence structure and usage of conditional type 1 as was given in the book. The teacher briefly explained the instruction for each activity and gave correct answers to the students after each exercise.

The Teacher encouraged the students to make endeavours to make sense of grammar but it is worth indicating that the Teacher's belief in the discovery-oriented work did not imply an unwillingness on his part to provide direct guidance whenever it was required. The teacher's response to the students' questions was very kind and encouraging as one of the students asked, 'Teacher! Why don't we use 'will' in both parts of the sentence because Urdu translation goes like this (give Urdu sentence agar mien Peshawar Joan gab to mien any Dotson say melon gab)

Teacher answered, 'Brother! You are right but rules of English grammar are different from Urdu. We can't apply sentence structure of Urdu on English' it will create a lot of confusion.'

The pace of lesson was a bit slower. As some of the Chinese and Pakistani students completed the exercises hurriedly, they started making noise to which the teacher said, 'Quiet' (3 times).

#### **4.2.2.4 Use of Learners' L1 in L2 Grammar Class**

Teacher Two counted on learners' L1 to elucidate the meaning of difficult words such as 'sunburned', 'ghost', 'floating' etc as well as to clarify instruction for an activity titled 'Tricks with Science' when two students raised their hands to get the teacher's attention. The Teacher responded to their call immediately and explained the instructions in Urdu which reflected the neutral stance of teacher two regarding the use of L1. On the one hand, he disagreed that the use of L1 was detrimental to students' language learning process. On the other hand, he rejected the concept that the use of L1 facilitated the second language learning and teaching.

#### **4.2.2.5 Use of Grammatical Terminology**

Teacher Two firmly believed that grammar could be successfully taught without extensive use of grammatical terminology. He diverged from the views that the students' familiarity

with the correct grammatical terminology would assist in their learning English well or their proper understanding grammatical terminology would accelerate the grammar learning process in the learners. The classroom practice of the teacher corresponded with his beliefs. He adeptly avoided the use of grammatical terminology. Instead of employing technical terms he made use of simple versions as he used 'third form' for 'past participle', 'short form' for 'contracted form', 'if part of the sentences' for 'if-clause'. During the whole session he did not ask any student to repeat and memorize any grammatical terminology.

#### **4.2.2.6 Error Correction**

Teacher Two agreed that the teacher should provide students should be given the right answers after a written exercise or test. But he strongly disagreed that a teacher should identify all grammatical errors in students' written work and oral work. His belief was also at variance with the view that the learners' mistakes should always be corrected as soon as possible to prevent the formation of bad habits. But the classroom practice of Teacher Two was not fully congruent with his beliefs. He corrected all the grammatical errors made by the students in the activities. He noted down most of the errors on the whiteboard and discussed them in the class. As one of the students made a sentence 'If I lie in the sun, I get sunburned.' he immediately wrote it on the whiteboard, and asked the class 'Is the sentence grammatically correct?'

Most of the boys said, 'No'. The teacher asked one of the students to come forward and correct the sentence. The teacher appreciated as the student gave the correct answer.

'If I lie in the sun, I will get sunburned.'

Another student made a sentence 'If I will have time, I will go the job fair.' As only few students could answer, the teacher himself corrected the sentence and elucidated the use of

'have' as 'main verb' in the sentence not as an 'auxiliary verb' and explained that 'will' can be used only in one clause.

#### **4.2.2.7 Grammar Practice Activities**

Teacher Two agreed that Students can improve their grammatical accuracy through frequent practice of structure but strongly rejected the role of real-life tasks or contextualised activities in improving language proficiency of the students. The pedagogical practices of Teacher Two were partially compatible with this report. The teacher used written grammar exercises given in the book as well as explained the grammatical points but seldom used real-life tasks in the class.

#### **4.2.2.8 Relationship between Belief and Practice**

The data demonstrated some inconsistencies in the responses of Teacher Two. Two statements (item no.18 and item no.22) thematically the same received opposite responses. He agreed that teachers should begin a grammar lesson by explaining how a particular structure worked (item no.18) but strongly disagreed that the primary role of the teacher in a grammar lesson was to explain a grammar point (item no.20).

Similarly, results to item no.1 and item no.19 revealed some inconsistency in responses. Teacher Two disagreed with item no. 1 (A learner could acquire a second or foreign language without grammar instruction of L2) but agreed with item no. 19 (Students can learn grammar through exposure to language in natural use.) whereas both the items were thematically the same.

As teacher two disapproved the use of grammatical terminology, he skilfully evaded the use of grammatical terminology. Instead of using technical terms he relied on simple

versions. He employed 'third form' for 'past participle', 'short form' for 'contracted form', 'if part of the sentences' for 'if-clause'. During the whole session he did not ask any student to repeat and memorize any grammatical terminology.

In other instances, there appeared to be disparity between beliefs and practice. For instance, Teacher Two vehemently disapproved the ideas that a teacher should identify all grammatical errors in students' written and oral work, and that the learners' mistakes should always be corrected as soon as possible to prevent the formation of bad habits. The classroom practice was not fully congruent with the beliefs of Teacher Two. He corrected all the grammatical errors made by students in the activities. He wrote most of the errors on the whiteboard and discussed them in the class.

As teacher two reported that he used to discuss students' errors in the class as mentioned in detail in 'Handling of Errors'. Moreover, he skipped 'Class Game' given in the book. He rather asked the student to write ten sentences each starting with 'if I..... I will/wont....' The teacher used written grammar exercises given in the book as well explained the grammar point but seldom used translation exercises or asked his students to memorise the grammatical rules.

#### **4.2.3 Class Observation of Teacher Three**

The third observation of the teacher teaching grammar was conducted in Intermediate Section Five, on 11<sup>th</sup> of May 2009. The observation lasted for two hours. The topic selected for teaching on that day was the 'Use of Comparative and Superlative Forms' from Grammar Two by Jennifer Seidl. The class comprised 22 students; 12 Pakistanis, 5 Chinese and 5 Afghans.

The teacher showed his knowledge of grammar and command in teaching grammar as 'good' on the Likert-Scale and had experienced no difficulty in teaching grammar. He deemed the ways of class instruction as the major obstruction in language learning. According to the Teacher, the word 'grammar' meant 'the study of rules which are required to use language appropriately'. The beliefs maintained by the Teacher regarding the different issues in grammar teaching and his classroom practices are described here;

#### **4.2.3.1 Importance of Grammar**

Teacher Three disagreed with item no.5 (Grammar should be taught at all levels (i.e. beginner, intermediate and advanced) and item no.12 (It is important to focus on grammar in all English lessons). He rather believed that grammar should be taught to the beginners than to intermediate/advanced learners. Although he also opposed the views that grammar furnishes the basis of four language skills but agreed that grammar instruction enabled learners' to correct their errors (Item no.7) and that Teaching grammar enabled students to produce more complex sentences (Item no.6). These responses demonstrated that teacher three considered grammar instruction as essential for linguistic accuracy at the beginners' level rather at the advanced level.

#### **4.2.3.2 Formal Instruction or Direct Exposure to L2**

Like Teacher One and Two, Teacher Three also believed that a learner could acquire a second or foreign language without L2 grammar instruction. He firmly believed that direct exposure to language in natural use helped learner learn L2. But he disapproved the view that it was not essential to speak grammatically in order to communicate well which showed his preference for accuracy over fluency. His preference for accuracy is further supported by his strong agreement with the statement no.27 (Formal instruction helps learners produce

grammatically correct language.) The responses to the above mentioned statements reveal that teacher three considered that both formal instruction and exposure are necessary for learning a language. But the classroom practice showed that Teacher Three was more inclined toward formal instruction than to the exposure to L2 as he thoroughly checked the notebooks of the students and made recurrent use of learners L1 to explain the meanings, explain the rules and maintain discipline.

#### **4.2.3.3 Deductive or Inductive Approach to Grammar Teaching**

The pedagogical practice revealed that Teacher Three properly established context for the presentation of comparatives and superlatives. He adopted inductive method for the presentation of comparatives and superlatives. The introduction lasted for 14 minutes.

The teacher said, 'Today the weather is hotter than yesterday.' Then he turned to a Chinese student and asked, 'Is the weather of your country similar to Pakistan?'

He answered, 'Weather is different in different parts of China. In my city named ----- weather is more good.'

Teacher added, 'You mean better'

Then the teacher asked an Afghani student, 'How is the weather of your city?'

The students answered, 'Teacher! I'm from Kabul which is very cold'

Teacher interrupted, 'Colder than Murree?'

The student answered, 'No teacher Kabul is more cold'.

The teacher appreciated the accent of the Afghani student and asked if he had learnt English before. He told that he had done three month's Certificate from Peshawar.

The teacher asked, 'Were the teachers better there?'

The student answered, 'Yes their speaking style was like British.'

The teacher added, 'More British than your teachers here.'

The teacher wrote, 'hotter', 'more good' (? better), 'more cold' (?) and 'more British' on the white board. Then he directed students' attention to 'ter' in hotter and better by encircling them.

The teacher called two students (one Pakistani and one Chinese) in front of the class and asked them. Are they similar?

As the students started speaking, the teacher made two columns on the white board titled student A and student B. Then he asked questions about their height, colour, and physique. He was writing as the students were giving comments. The words he wrote included, 'more tall', 'more white', 'more smart' etc.

Then he asked the students to open the grammar textbooks and told them that they would study the formation and usage of the forms on the white board. The teacher read the dialogues in the books and asked the students to look at the comparative and superlative adjectives in bold font. He explained the usage and formation of comparative and superlative adjectives as given in the book. But he did not add any examples to the ones already given in the book.

It demonstrates that the teacher did not obstruct that the discussion by telling rules immediately. In accordance with the approach to grammar illustrated above, the teacher aimed to elicit the rule through an interactive class discussion rather than explicitly providing the rule himself.

Then the teacher moved onto the exercises given. The first activity 'complete the comparisons table' was assigned 10 minutes which was too short for a few students. The teacher moved robustly in the class and checked the note books of those who had completed their exercise. The pace of lesson was faster in the beginning of the lesson. But after the first

activity, teacher slowed down as one of the student said, 'Teacher! Give me two minutes.'

The students were fully attentive except the few back benchers.

#### **4.2.3.4 Use of Learners' L1 in L2 Grammar Class**

The pedagogical practice of the teacher demonstrated that he made recurrent use of L1 for the following purposes.

First, while checking students' notebooks he recurrently used Urdu language to explain comparative and superlative forms. He illustrated the concept by drawing comparison with Urdu grammar as under:

Urdu mein kahtay hein kay 'Ahmed akram say muqablatan ziyada sharif hay to English mein is surat mein adjective kay sath 'er' luga kay mua 'azna kartay hain. Superlative means sub say sharif yani jis ka koi muazna na ho.

Second, as one of the students read out a sentences from the solved exercise 'His health is getting bad than before.' The teacher snubbed and said, 'Bad' kia hota hay. Iss ki dosri degree 'worse' hay. Dimagh kahan hay.

Third, as some students were gossiping the teacher used LI to maintain discipline in the class. As the example showed

Mr. kiani tum kia kar rahay ho. Chup ho jao, 'ghadday kay buchay'

The classroom practice reflected his belief in favour of the use of learners' L1 for the explanation of grammatical rules.

#### **4.2.3.5 Use of Grammatical Terminology**

The Teacher strongly believed that grammar could be successfully taught without extensive use of grammatical terminology. He did not endorse the view that the students should be

familiar with the correct grammatical terminology in order to learn English well. But the classroom practice of Teacher Three did not fully correspond with his beliefs. He tried to avoid use of grammatical terminology at the presentation stage. But when students asked some explanation he relied on grammatical terminology. For example, he used 'definite article' instead of 'the', 'comparatives adjectives' instead of second degree adjectives. He elaborated the use of 'comparative and superlative adjectives' as under:

Comparative adjectives that are followed by 'than' and a pronoun or noun group, in order to describe who the other person or thing involved in the comparison are, e.g.:

'Abdullah is taller than me.'

And while using superlative adjectives definite article occurs before superlative form. But sometimes he used '2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree' for comparative and superlative forms respectively. Although the teacher did not support the use of grammatical terminology in the class, he showed some flexibility in the face of classroom reality.

#### **4.2.3.6 Error Correction**

Teacher Three held an unyielding traditional approach towards grammatical error correction. He intensely believed that teacher should identify all grammatical errors in students' written and oral work, and that the correction of errors prevented the fossilization or formation of bad habits. He did deem it important that teacher should give right answers to the students after the completion of a written exercise or test. The class room practice was in congruence with his beliefs. His attitude towards error was a bit aggressive because he immediately corrected students' errors and repeated the corrected forms after the treatment. For example

'It is not teller, it is t-a-l-l-e-r.' 'More good' is wrong. You have to use comparative form that is 'better'. Why do you write the 'most smallest' in this blank. The right form is 'the smallest', not the most smallest.' Correcting another student he said, 'Most attractive' is the superlative form you should use the comparative (in Urdu).

The teacher's classroom practice showed a cautious attitude towards error correction as he did not overlook any grammatical errors and tried to ensure in every possible way that the students had understood the grammatical point.

#### **4.2.3.7 Grammar Practice Activities**

Teacher Three gave positive response to both item no 28 and item no 29 which showed his preference for both accuracy and fluency. The classroom observation revealed that used he written grammar exercises given in the grammar book and explained grammatical points to the whole class. Teacher Three did discuss student's errors with the class but indirectly without pointing or naming the student. The teacher also conducted a communicative activity named, 'At the Grocery Shop'. The teacher described the situation in front of the students and asked them to use comparatives and superlatives in their utterances. The divided them into pairs and then each pair was called in front of the class and asked to perform as 'shopkeeper' and 'customer'. Although the activity was not skilfully handled, it triggered an element of interest among the students.

#### **4.2.3.8 Relationship between Belief and Practice**

The data revealed some inconsistency in results. For instance, like Teacher One and Two, Teacher Three also demonstrated his strong agreement with the communicative approach (item no.1 and Item no.19) but at the same time gave a favourable response to item no.27 and showed his disagreement with ungrammatical communication (Item no. 22). His claim in the communicative approach is further weakened by his positive response to item no.9, item no.13 and item no.8.

Teacher Three firmly believed that grammar could be successfully taught without extensive use of grammatical terminology and that language learners need not be familiar

with the correct grammatical terminology in order to learn English well. But the classroom practice of Teacher Three was not fully consistent with his beliefs. He deliberately avoided the use of grammatical terminology at the presentation stage. But when students asked some explanation, he relied on grammatical terminology. For example, he used 'definite article' instead of 'the', 'comparatives adjectives' instead of second degree adjectives. He elaborated the use of comparative and superlative adjectives as under:

Comparative adjectives are followed by 'than' and a pronoun or noun group, in order to describe who the other person or thing involved in the comparison is.

Teacher Three agreed that teachers should use the learners' L1 to explain grammar rules. On the one hand, he strongly disagreed with the view that the use of L1 was detrimental to students' language learning process. On the other hand, he strongly disagreed with the concept that the use of L1 facilitates the second language learning and teaching. This showed an inconsistency in the response regarding the use of L1. The pedagogical practice of the teacher demonstrated that he made recurrent use of L1. While checking students' notebooks, he repeatedly used Urdu language to explain comparative and superlative forms. Moreover, as some students were gossiping, he used students' L1 to maintain discipline in the class.

In handling errors, he staunchly believed that teacher should identify all grammatical errors in students' written and oral work and that the correction of errors prevented the fossilization or formation of bad habits. He deemed it important that teacher should provide correct answers to students after their completion of a written exercise or a class test. The classroom practice of Teacher Three was in congruence with his beliefs. His attitude towards errors was a bit aggressive as he instantly corrected students' errors and repeated the corrected form after the treatment.

#### **4.2.4 Class Observation of Teacher Four**

The fourth class observation of teacher teaching grammar class was conducted in Elementary Section One, on 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2009. The observation lasted for two hours. The topic selected for teaching on that day was the use of 'Present Simple' from Grammar One by Jennifer Seidl. The class comprised 22 students; 12 Pakistanis, 5 Chinese and 5 Afghans.

The teacher has shown his knowledge of grammar and command in teaching grammar as 'good' on the Likert Scale. He had experienced some difficulty in teaching 'narrative forms.' According to the teacher, the word 'grammar' meant 'speaking and writing under certain rules'. The beliefs stated by Teacher Four regarding the different issues in grammar teaching and their classroom practices are discussed here:

##### **4.2.4.1 Importance of Grammar**

Teacher Four assented to the idea that grammar should be taught at all levels (i.e. beginner, intermediate and advanced) and that it should be the main component of any teaching syllabus. He regarded the grammar instruction as vital for enabling language learners to correct their errors. He approved the idea that grammar should be taught to the beginners than to intermediate/advanced learners. He endorsed the view that grammar furnished the basis of four language skills and that the major segment of a language course should be focussed on teaching and practicing grammar.

##### **4.2.4.2 Formal Instruction or Direct Exposure to L2**

The responses of Teacher Four demonstrated his preference for both formal instruction and direct exposure to the target language in second language learning .Teacher Four believed that a learner could acquire a second or foreign language without grammar instruction grammar of L2 and this view is further substantiated by his positive response to item no.22.

But at the same time his positive responses to item no 3 and item no. 27 demonstrate his inclination towards formal instruction as being essential in language learning. Moreover, the response may also indicate teacher's lack of awareness with the processes involved in second language learning. The classroom practice of Teacher Four revealed his obvious inclination towards formal instruction. He explained the grammatical rules to the students both in English and Urdu and checked the notebooks of the students thoroughly. Like a traditional GTM, he made use of deductive approach to the presentation of new grammar points and made recurrent use of grammatical terminology. Although Teacher Four showed some preference for learning language by direct exposure to L2 his classroom practice was thoroughly forms-focussed.

#### **4.2.4.3 Deductive or Inductive Approach to Grammar Teaching**

The responses of Teacher Four demonstrated a contradiction in his belief as he simultaneously believed in the implementation of both deductive and inductive approaches to the presentation of a grammatical item. Teacher Four adopted the deductive method for the presentation of 'Present Simple.' He abruptly asked the students to open their books to Unit 9 in the grammar book. He did not establish any context for the topic. He read out the short dialogue given in the beginning of the lesson and then moved onto explaining the formation and usage of 'present simple'. Some of the students were still unable to find what the teacher was reading from the book. As the teacher realized, he paused and told them the page number. One point also emerges from this episode that teacher seems more enthusiastic in completing the grammar textbook than wasting time in any mental jugglery involved in discovery approach.

#### **4.2.4.4 Use of Learners' L1 in L2 Grammar Class**

Teacher Four agreed that the teachers should use the learners' L1 to explain grammar rules. He also agreed that the use of learners' L1 facilitated the second language learning and teaching. But he held neutral view to the statement that the use of L1 is detrimental to the students' language learning process. The pedagogical practice of Teacher Four showed that he used L1 to explain the usage of 'present simple' to some Pakistani students. His comments were as under:

As in Urdu, wo sentences jo ta hay tay hain, tee hay pay khatum hotay hain wo simple present kay sentences hotay hain. For example suuraj mushriq say nikalta hay, larkay har roz sham ko kriket ghailtay hain.

Similarly, he quoted an example from Arabic grammar, 'simple present' is just like *muzaaray* in Arabic like *ya'akolo*, (he eats), *yazhabo* (he goes), *yamshee* (he runs). The use of learners' L1 triggered an element of interest among the student. Moreover, Teacher Four snubbed the students twice in Urdu language as under;

Chup kar jao. Warna class say bahir nikal dun ga. Ya tum aik hi mistake bar bar kyun kartay ho. Ankhin khol kar dekho kay katab mein kiya likkah hay.

In brief, the teacher's practice of error correction were typically traditional as he switched on to students' L1 (Urdu and Arabic language) to bring home the grammatical point and even reprimanded them as they repeated an error.

#### **4.2.4.5 Use of Grammatical Terminology**

Teacher Four agreed that the students should be familiar with the correct grammatical terminology in order to learn English well. But he held neutral view to the belief that grammar could be successfully taught without extensive use of grammatical terminology and that it was essential for students to be familiar with the correct grammatical terminology.

The classroom practice of Teacher Four demonstrated that he used grammatical terminology

recurrently. He used the technical terms such as 'first person pronoun', 'third persons pronoun', 'affirmative sentences', 'interrogative,' 'state verbs,' 'auxiliary verbs,' 'contractions,' 'present simple' etc. While correcting students' errors the teacher employed grammatical terminology regardless of students' understanding. Some of the students did not appear to be satisfied as he commented.

'In the interrogative sentences we put the auxiliary in the beginning position and in that case 's' or 'es' with the main verb are omitted.'

At another place, he explained:

'When we use the contracted form of 'do not' we say don't, with an apostrophe between 'n' and 't'.'

As one of the students asked, 'What is an apostrophe?' The teacher answered:

'It is punctuation mark which is used for making contractions and showing possession.'

Such complicated explanation of grammatical points seemed to baffle the students more but the teacher did not take notice to it. The excessive use of grammatical terminology may indicate teachers' inclination towards '*focus on formS*' approach. He may have considered that the students' familiarity with the grammatical terminology may enhance their linguistic competence.

#### **2.4.6 Error Correction**

Teacher Four agreed that the teacher should identify all grammatical errors in students' written work but disagreed that the same approach should be adopted toward oral work. Moreover, he held a neutral response regarding the views that the correction of errors prevented the fossilization or formation of bad habits and that the students should be provided with the correct answers after their completion of written grammatical exercises or tests. The

classroom practice was not fully consistent with his beliefs. His attitude towards error was slightly threatening. While checking notebooks of the students he encircled almost all the errors and even passed a bit pungent remarks. He even used L1 to explain the grammatical rules as under:

Negative sentences mein 'he' 'she' 'it' or 'singular' jaisy Javed, A car, An aeroplane, A country kay saath does not istemaal hota hay. Laikin is surat mein verb kay saath 's' ya 'es' nahin lugta .for example, 'Javed works in Mobile company' is changed in 'Javed doesn't work in mobile company. Similarly 'goes' 'does not go' mein change ho jata hay.

He checked the notebooks of the students thoroughly and even provided right answers to the students when they had finished correcting their errors. Teacher Four conducted an activity named 'My Introduction.' He divided the class into pairs and called each pair in front of the class to practice the dialogue given as under:

*S-1 what is your name?*

*S-2 my name is-----.*

*S-1 where do you belong to?*

*S-2 I belong to -----*

*S-1 where do you study?*

*S-2 I study in-----.*

*S-1 when do you get up?*

*S-2 I get up-----.*

The teacher readily snubbed as one of the weak students said, 'I belongs to'.

"You should say 'I belong to"

#### **4.2.4.7 Grammar Practice Activities**

Like Teacher Three, Teacher Four also gave positive response to the views that frequent practice of structure can improve the students' grammatical accuracy (item no.28) and that students' participation in real-life tasks with language is really beneficial for the development of their grammatical knowledge (item no. 29) which shows his preference for both language learning drills and their contextualised practice. But the classroom practice of Teacher Four provided much provided much evidence in favour of item no.28. He repeatedly discussed students' errors in the class, drew comparison with mother tongue grammar and emphasized on memorising grammatical rules. He laid much emphasis on the explanation of grammatical points and least on communicative tasks as there was hardly any real life tasks enabling the students to apply their declarative knowledge of grammar into practical use. The teacher remained focussed on the written exercises in the grammar textbook and conducted the spoken exercises either in a traditional way or skipped them by saying, 'it's not very important.'

#### **4.2.4.8 Relationship between Belief and Practice**

The data showed some degree of correspondence between the pedagogical beliefs and instructional practices of Teacher Four. First, Teacher Four agreed that the students should be familiar with the correct grammatical terminology in order to learn English well. Therefore, he employed grammatical terminology recurrently such as 'first person pronoun', 'third persons pronoun', 'affirmative sentences', 'interrogative,' 'state verbs,' 'auxiliary verbs,' 'contractions,' 'present simple' etc. While correcting students' errors the teacher did use grammatical terminology regardless of students' understanding.

Second, Teacher Four emphasised on the teachers' should use of learners' L1 to explain grammar rules because it facilitated the second language learning and teaching. But he held neutral response to the statement that the use of L1 was detrimental to the students' language learning process. The pedagogical practice of Teacher Four showed that he used L1 to explain the usage of 'present simple' to some Pakistani students. Similarly, he quoted examples from Arabic grammar to explain 'simple present.'

Third, Teacher Four emphasized on identifying all grammatical errors in students' written work only (not in the oral work) Moreover, he held a neutral response regarding the views that the correction of errors prevented the fossilization or formation of bad habits and that the teacher should provide correct answers to the students after their completion of written exercises or tests. While checking notebooks of the students he encircled almost all the errors and even passed a bit pungent remarks. He even used L1 to explain the grammatical rules as quoted above. He checked the notebooks of the students thoroughly and even provided right answers to the students when they had finished correcting their errors.

There existed a contradiction among the beliefs as well as between beliefs and classroom practice of Teacher Four. On theoretical level he seemed to believe in the communicative approach as he gave positive responses to item no.1, item no .19, item no.22 and item no.29 But at the same time he favoured item no.27, item no 13 item no.17 which may indicate teachers' lack of thorough understanding of the practical implementation of communicative approach in an L2 grammar class. Similar inference can be made from positive responses of Teacher Four to the implementation of both deductive and inductive methods to the presentation of a grammatical item.

#### **4.2.5 Class Observation of Teacher Five**

The fifth class observation of teacher teaching grammar class was conducted in Elementary Section three, on 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2009. The observation lasted almost two hours. The topic selected for teaching on that day was the use of 'Present Progressive' from Grammar One by Jennifer Seidl. The class comprised 18 students; 9 Pakistanis, 5 Chinese and 4 Afghans. Teacher Five has shown his knowledge of grammar as 'good' and his command in teaching grammar as 'average' on the Likert-Scale. He had experienced some difficulty regarding grammar teaching methodology. For the Teacher, the word 'grammar' meant 'the accuracy of speech with effective communication.' The beliefs revealed by Teacher Five regarding the different issues in grammar teaching and his classroom practices are discussed here.

##### **4.2.5.1 Importance of Grammar**

Teacher Five strongly advocated that grammar should be taught at all levels (i.e. beginner, intermediate and advanced) because it furnished the basis of four language skills. He believed grammar instruction enables students to produce more complex sentences and correct their errors. He also deemed it comparatively more important to teach grammar to the beginners than to intermediate/advanced learners. Although Teacher Five believed that Grammar should be taught at all levels (i.e. beginner, intermediate and advanced), he rejected the idea the view that grammar should be focussed in all English lessons.

##### **4.2.5.2 Formal Instruction or Direct Exposure to L2**

Unlike other teachers, Teacher Five strongly disagreed with the view that a learner could acquire a second or foreign language without grammar instruction grammar of L2. But at the same time he agreed that direct exposure to language in natural use helped learner learn L2 and that it was unessential to speak grammatically in order to communicate well which

showed his preference for fluency over accuracy. But strong agreement in favour of item no. 27 (Formal instruction helps learners produce grammatically correct language.) demonstrated further confuses the matter. These responses may indicate either the teacher's preference for both formal instruction and direct exposure to L2 in language learning or indicate teacher's lack of awareness with the processes involved in second language learning. The classroom practice of Teacher Five revealed his obvious inclination towards formal instruction. He explained the grammatical rules to the students both in English and Urdu and thoroughly checked the notebooks of the students. Although unlike a traditional GTM, he relied on the deductive approach to the presentation of new grammar points, he made recurrent use of grammatical terminology and learners' L1. Moreover, despite showing some preference for learning language by direct exposure to L2, his classroom practice was thoroughly forms-focussed.

#### **4.2.5.3 Deductive or Inductive Approach to Grammar Teaching**

The responses of Teacher Five demonstrated a contradiction in his belief as he staunchly believed in the implementation of both deductive and inductive approaches simultaneously to the presentation of grammatical item. Teacher Five adopted the inductive method for the presentation of 'present progressive'. He moved around in the class and asked questions from different students, such as, 'Brother! What are you doing? , 'Are you studying?', 'Are you playing with your mobile?' 'Is the AC (Air-Conditioner) working?' 'How are you feeling today?' 'Are you preparing for the terminal exam?' 'Are you working?'

He showed them some pictures demonstrating activities such as watering a plant, washing a car, climbing a mountain, catching a fish, eating an ice cream. These pictures triggered the interest of the students and every one was trying to excel each other in giving answer to the teacher. The Teacher controlled the students quite nobly. He repeated students'

answers with some treatment and wrote them on the white board. He split the verbs as he wrote them on the white board. For example 'wash—ing' , 'eat—ing' etc Then he asked the students to open their books to the said page , have a look at the pictures given and read the line under each pictures using 'progressive form' to describe the action shown in the pictures. He asked the students to focus on the formation of verbs.

'You see that when we put 'ing' with a verb it shows something that is 'going on' at the time of speaking. For example 'I am teaching.' Is it right?' The students quickly responded, 'No, teacher.' After giving such examples he presented the rule and explained in detail as given in the book. He asked the students to repeat the 'long forms' and 'short forms' after him, such as I am—I'm, they are—they're etc.

The pace of lesson was appropriate. Both teacher and students were attentive. The transition from the presentation to the practice stage was smooth. The classroom environment seemed to be linguistically rich. The teacher repeated the new concept for seven times in the class.

#### **4.2.5.4 Use of Learners' L1 in L2 Grammar Class**

Teacher Five held contradictory beliefs regarding the use of L1. On the one hand, he believed that L1 should not be used to explain grammar rules. On the other hand, he regarded the use of L1 quite beneficial to the students' language learning process. He held neutral response to the view that the use of L1 facilitated the second language learning and teaching.

The classroom practice demonstrated that he relied on the use of English language for the introduction of new grammatical points. But while checking students' notebooks, he used Urdu and Arabic languages to explain some grammatical points. He explained the difference between 'he runs' and 'he is running' as under;

Second one (fail haal jari and the first one is ----- yani wo dorta hai (pata nahi kub) or w odor raha hay (ap dekh saktain hain). While explaining the meaning of 'shouting' and 'hitting' he said , cheekh ceekh kay bolnaya chillana and in Arabic we call it ( ) hitting in Urdu means kisi cheez ko zarab lagana and in Arabic we call it ( ) ( as most of the Chinese students understood Arabic language they nodded their heads ).

Teacher Five made use of Urdu language to explain instructions for the 'miming game' to one weak student who could not grasp what the activity was about.

Is activity mein aap nay acting karnay hay laikin bolna nahin hay.jaisay aksar aap T.V. pay daikhtay hain.jaisay agar aap 'driving' ki acting istarha kartain hain ( as Teacher demonstrated it in front of the student, he nodded his head in the affirmative)

The teacher showed flexibility in the use of learners L1 as he switched on from English to Urdu and even to Arabic to make students understand grammatical concepts or instructions for some activities given in the book.

#### **4.2.5.5 Use of Grammatical Terminology**

Teacher Five disagreed that grammar could be successfully taught without extensive use of grammatical terminology and deemed it essential for students to be familiar with the correct grammatical terminology in order to learn English well. He held neutral response to the view that students would learn grammar better if they understood grammatical terminology. The classroom practice of Teacher Five provided substantiating evidence to his beliefs. He recurrently employed grammatical terminology while giving explanation to the students' errors. His lectures abounded in the use of grammatical terms such as 'present progressive', 'present participle', 'indefinite articles', 'count nouns or non-count nouns', 'auxiliary verbs', 'interrogative', 'S+Ving+ O sentence construction.'

#### **4.2.5.6 Error Correction**

Teacher Five deemed it essential for students to be provided with the correct answers after a written grammatical exercise or test. He believed that the correction of errors prevented the fossilization or formation of bad habits but, on the contrary, he strongly discarded the view that the teacher should identify all grammatical errors in students' written and oral work. The attitude of Teacher Five towards errors was non-threatening but he treated them immediately. Throughout the lecture he did not neglect any grammatical error made by the students. He

provided answers to the students after they had completed the written exercises given in the book. He stated each answer twice so that weak students could pull along. He showed a picture and asked one of the students, 'Imran! What is umpire doing in the picture?' the student answered hesitantly, 'the umpire is...is bellowing a whistle.' The teacher responded immediately, 'You mean the umpire is BLOWING a whistle with silent 't'. Means 't' is not to be pronounced. So should say, 'The umpire is blowing a whistle.' Another student said 'He is holding football.' The teacher immediately corrected him; 'you should say, He is HOLDING NOT HELDING football.' Moreover, the class room practice is consistent with his beliefs

#### **4.2.5.7 Grammar Practice Activities**

Teacher Five demonstrated his strong agreement to the view that frequent practice of structure can improve the students' grammatical accuracy (item no.28) and agreement to the view that students' participation in real-life tasks with language is really beneficial for the development of their grammatical knowledge (item no. 29) which shows his preference for both language learning drills and their contextualised practice. The classroom practice of Teacher Five provided some evidence in favour of item no.28 and item no. 29. He thoroughly explained the present progressive with numerous examples. Besides, laying emphasis on the explanation of grammatical points he used some communicative tasks enabling the students to apply their declarative knowledge of grammar into practical use. He used a 'miming game' in the class which generated a lot of enthusiasm in the students. The classroom environment turned out to be very candid and lively. He employed role-plays or simulations as well. He had brought some photocopied dialogues with him. He called two students in front of the class and gave them a dialogue between a husband and wife. The husband was asking for meal but she was busy in households. The students burst into laughter as the students performed.

#### **4.2.5.8 Relationship between Belief and Practice**

Although Teacher Five demonstrated strong agreement in the implementation of both deductive and inductive approaches simultaneously to the presentation of a grammatical item, he adopted the inductive method for the presentation of 'present progressive.' (As mentioned earlier in detail). Similarly, on the one hand, he strongly diverged from the view that a learner could acquire a second or foreign language without grammar instruction grammar of L2. On the other hand, he accepted that direct exposures to language in natural use helped learner learn L2 and that the contextualized treatment of grammar assisted in natural communication which demonstrated an inconsistency in response. It may indicate the teacher's lack of understanding statement no. 1. Moreover, he regarded it as unessential to speak grammatically in order to communicate well which showed his preference for fluency over accuracy. But these beliefs about the communicative approach were strongly in conflict with the beliefs regarding the use of learners' L1 in L2 grammar class, use of grammatical terminology and explicit treatment of grammar.

The classroom data revealed that in some cases, there existed a correspondence between the pedagogical beliefs and instructional practices of Teacher Five. For instance, first, Teacher Five advocated the extensive use of grammatical terminology in L2 grammar class and considered it imperative for students to be familiar with the correct grammatical terminology in order to learn English well. The classroom observation provided substantial evidence to the statements of Teacher Five. He repeatedly used grammatical terminology while giving explanation to the errors made by students. Second, he provided answers to the students after they had completed the written exercises given in the book strictly in accordance of his belief. He stated each answer twice so that weak students could pull along.

A contradiction could be identified in the beliefs of Teacher Five about the use of L1. On the one hand, he believed that L1 should not be used to explain grammar rules. On the other hand, he regarded the use of L1 quite beneficial to the students' language learning process. He held neutral response to the view that the use of L1 facilitated the second language learning and teaching. The classroom practice demonstrated that he relied on the use of English language for the introduction of new grammatical points. But while checking students' notebooks, he used Urdu and Arabic languages to explain some grammatical points. Teacher Five made use of Urdu language to explain instructions for the 'miming game' to one weak student who could not grasp what the activity was about.

Another contradiction can be identified regarding the beliefs of Teacher Five about the correction of errors. He believed that the correction of errors prevented the fossilization or formation of bad habits and at the same time he strongly discarded the view that the Teacher should identify all grammatical errors in students' written and oral work. The classroom observation showed a disparity between the stated belief and classroom practice. He did not neglect any error both in written and oral work of the students. The attitude of Teacher Five towards errors was non-threatening but he treated them immediately.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This concluding chapter presents the summary of the main findings highlights the implications of the current study and discusses the contribution the current research makes to the existing theory and research. In the end, it draws attention to the limitations of the study and gives recommendations for future research in this area.

The current study sought answers to the research questions mentioned below.

1. What are the teachers' beliefs about grammar and grammar teaching?
2. What is the relationship between teachers' pedagogical beliefs and their grammar teaching practice?

In seeking to answer these questions, the following hypotheses were formulated:

- a) At the level of beliefs teachers are influenced by the principles of the communicative approach.
- b) Teachers' beliefs about grammar teaching consciously or unconsciously influence their classroom practice

#### 5.1 Main Findings in Relation to the Research Questions

To the large extent, these questions have been addressed. The findings in relation to question 1 have highlighted typical patterns of teachers' beliefs about grammar and its teaching. The findings suggested that grammar was regarded by 17 teachers as a set of rules to be learnt. The teachers appeared to draw connection between grammar instruction and students' language proficiency. One strong belief that almost all the teachers shared was that the grammar instruction was essential and that it should constitute a significant segment of the

curriculum at all levels because it assisted learners in maintaining accuracy in language use both in writing and speaking. Grammar as a skeleton of four language skills was supported by 58% of the respondents. (

Majority of the teachers (72%) perceive that students lack the ability to transfer their theoretical knowledge of grammar into an appropriate and contextualised use of language. Majority of the teachers at IIUI may relate many examples of students who have memorised grammatical rules perfectly, but have great difficulty in putting them to appropriate use.

Teachers' concern for formal instruction (Item no.27) and thorough error correction with an apparent inclination towards frequent practice of structures (Item no.28) may indicate that these teachers are supportive of Focus-on-FormS approach (for details see Chapter Two). Qualitative comments regarding arguments in favour of grammar teaching reinforce this view, particularly those suggesting that grammar instruction leads to accurate use of language. It can be argued that *focus on formS* teaching is purely found in the Grammar Translation Method and Audio-lingual Method.

The observational data revealed grammar teaching at IIUI involved a monotonous pattern of rule-explanation followed by practice exercises and stringent error correction. A student's ability to complete an exercise correctly was considered an evidence of successful learning. Subsequent errors while using that particular structure were often construed as negligence on the part of the student and were snubbed for this. The teachers strictly followed the prescribed grammar textbooks and hardly utilized any supplementary material to give contextualised practice to the students. Even communicative activities given in the book were either skipped or handled incompetently (for details see "Analysis of the Observational Data, in Chapter Four)

The teachers, both in the questionnaire survey and class observation, generally appeared to be unfamiliar with inductive approaches to grammar instruction. The teachers also relied on the learners' L1 confidently and recurrently to explain grammatical rules, correct students' errors, explain meanings of difficult words and explain instructions for different grammatical activities.

Other significant patterns identified in teachers' beliefs about grammar pedagogy were as under:

Majority of the teachers (86%) were quite confident about their knowledge of grammar, however, less confident (72%) about their command in teaching grammar. At the level of beliefs practicing teachers seemed to accept certain principles communicative approach such as preference for inductive approach, avoidance from explicit error correction, avoidance from the use of learners' L1 and use of grammatical terminology. Majority of the teachers (83%) believed that learners could acquire L2 through exposure to language in natural use but at the same time majority of the teachers (91%) favoured the necessity of formal instruction.

The teachers at IIUI assigned paramount importance to the teaching of grammar at all levels but at the same time would not feel comfortable with a syllabus that is primarily focussed on grammar. Majority of the teachers (72%) considered that grammar instruction would help learners correct their own errors. Another commonly held belief (84%) was that the students should be provided with the correct answers after a written exercise or class test because they considered that neglecting students would lead to fossilization of errors. Majority of the teachers (50%) believed that error should be indicated more meticulously in the written work than in the oral work (17%) because they thought that pointing out learners mistakes in the oral discourse might shatter their confidence to speak.

The teachers seemed to believe that grammar could be successfully taught without the extensive use of grammatical terminology whereas the opinions regarding the importance of students' awareness of grammatical terminology were divided. The responses regarding the use of L1 in L2 grammar class did not demonstrate any significant belief pattern. The respondents seemed to be divided on the facilitative or detrimental role of the use of L1 while teaching L2 grammar.

This study supports this notion of complex and personalised nature of teachers pedagogical beliefs, and illustrates the manner in which these beliefs impinged on the work of an L2 teacher with specific reference to the teaching of grammar. While showing their beliefs on the Likert Scale about grammar teaching, the teacher revealed a network of interacting and potentially conflicting beliefs about a wide variety of issues related to L2 grammar teaching. Such mismatched beliefs were found both at the collective and individual level but few teachers appeared to be aware of these inconsistencies among their beliefs. At the collective level, 69% teachers believed in the deductive approach but at the same time 94% believed in the inductive approach. Similarly, 83% teachers believed that students could learn grammar through exposure to language in natural use, but at the same time 91 % of the responses demonstrate strong agreement and agreement in favour of formal instruction.

At the individual level conflicts between beliefs were apparent within a teachers' own belief system. Teacher One seemed to believe in the principles of communicative approach that learner could acquire a second or foreign language without grammar instruction because he considered the direct exposure to language in natural use as the best way to learn L2. But at the same time he favoured the identification of grammatical errors in written work to prevent any fossilization which demonstrated a contradiction in his beliefs. Teacher Two demonstrated a contradiction as he agreed that students could learn grammar through

exposure to language in natural use but disagreed that a learner could acquire a second or foreign language without grammar instruction. Similarly, Teacher Two advocated the implementation of both deductive and inductive approaches simultaneously which revealed another contradiction.

Teacher Three seemed to favour the communicative approach as he strongly believed that a learner could acquire a second or foreign language without grammar instruction because students could learn grammar through exposure to language in natural use. But, on the contrary, he considered it essential for students to be thoroughly familiar with the grammatical terminology and firmly believed in the traditional practice of identifying all grammatical errors in the written work of the students so that the fossilization could be averted. Teacher Three approved the use of learners' L1 for explaining the grammar rules but he disapproved the use of L1 as being detrimental to students' language learning process which demonstrated an inconsistency in the belief of Teacher Three regarding the use of L1.

Some contradiction could be identified in the belief system of Teacher Five as well. He strongly disagreed that a learner could acquire a second or foreign language without grammar instruction grammar of L2 but accepted that direct exposure to language in natural use helped learners learn L2 which showed a contradiction. Similarly his beliefs about the communicative approach were strongly in conflict with the beliefs regarding the use of learners' L1 in L2 grammar class, use of grammatical terminology and explicit treatment of grammar.

The existence of such contradictory beliefs can be caused by the beliefs derived from different sources, such as current language teaching experiences as well as previous language learning experiences. This demonstrated that teachers did not have any established belief system and even they themselves were unaware of this phenomenon.

The findings in relation to Question 2 demonstrated that the teachers' beliefs had an impact on their grammar teaching practices. Several instances of both similarity and difference between teachers' beliefs and their actual classroom practice were identified.

Observation of classroom practice of the five teachers revealed some correspondence between their beliefs and their actual classroom practice. For example, Teacher One considered it essential to identify all grammatical errors in students' written work to prevent the fossilization or formation of bad habits. Therefore, he strictly checked the notebooks of the students and even discussed those errors with the class. Moreover, in accordance with his belief, he provided the students with the right answers after a written exercise or test. Following his stated belief, there was no reference to L2 grammar or any translation task in the pedagogical practice.

As Teacher Two disapproved the use of grammatical terminology, he skilfully evaded the use of grammatical terminology in the class. He staunchly believed in identifying all grammatical errors in students' written and oral work so he instantly corrected students' errors and repeated the corrected form after the treatment. Strictly following his belief Teacher four repeatedly employed grammatical terminology while teaching grammar. Teacher Four emphasised on the teachers' use of learners' L1 to explain grammar rules because it facilitated the second language learning and teaching. The pedagogical practice corresponded with this belief. Teacher Four emphasized on identifying all grammatical errors in students' written work only (not in the oral work). Therefore, he checked notebooks of the students quite exhaustively. Teacher Five advocated the extensive use of grammatical terminology in L2 grammar class and considered it essential for students. Therefore, he repeatedly used grammatical terminology while giving explanation of the errors made by the students.

Several mismatches between the teachers' beliefs and classroom practice were also identified. In most instances the teachers projected themselves as if they were aware of the communicative approach to grammar teaching but their classroom practices were teacher-dominant and grammar-focused giving little opportunity to students for using language. They focussed more on accuracy rather than fluency. The beliefs regarding the use of grammatical terminology illustrated this mismatch between stated belief and actual practice. Teacher One regarded the use of grammatical terminology as redundant and extraneous but he recurrently employed technical terms while correcting students' errors.

Teacher Two vehemently disapproved the practice of identifying and correcting all grammatical errors in students' written and oral work to prevent the formation of bad habits. But he rigorously corrected all the grammatical errors made by students in the activities and even discussed them in the class. Like Teacher One, Teacher Three also regarded the use of grammatical terminology as being irrelevant. He deliberately eluded the use of grammatical terminology at the presentation stage but he relied on grammatical terminology when students asked some explanation. Teacher Five disapproved the use of L1 for explaining grammar rules. On the contrary, the classroom practice demonstrated considerable use of Urdu and Arabic languages for explaining some grammatical points to the students as well as explaining instructions for the 'miming game.' Teacher Five strongly believed that the teacher should not identify all grammatical errors in students' written and oral work. But the classroom observation demonstrated thorough error correction both in written and oral work of the students. Although the attitude of Teacher Five towards errors was non-threatening, he treated them immediately.

## **5.2 Possible Factors that Restrain Teachers from Practising their Beliefs**

We can identify a number of possibilities behind teachers' inability to implement their beliefs in their teaching. The possibilities could be as follows:

First, the curricular requirements may have compelled them to adopt traditional approach (Focus on FormS) because the tasks used in communicative language teaching are time consuming. They might have considered it better to give explicit knowledge about grammar in a controlled environment and produce the same results in a short time.

Second, teachers may have wished to take on Communicative Language Teaching and Task Based Language Learning, but their unfamiliarity with such approaches may have led them to teach differently. The high number of contradictory beliefs regarding the communicative approach provides strong evidence to this possibility. Although some teachers advocated the principles of communicative approach, they lacked practical knowledge to implement their beliefs.

Third, large workload and difficult working conditions and curricular constraints, exam oriented approach and the fear of complaint by the students regarding their teaching methodology could be seen as possible hindrances in implementing their beliefs.

Fourth, the issue of maintaining discipline may have refrained teachers from any experimentation or innovation. A teacher-dominant and textbook-oriented teaching may have appeared easier to minimise student talk and maintain discipline.

Fifth, the mismatch between beliefs and practices may be attributed to the difference between teachers' "espoused theories and their theories-in-use" (Argyris and Schon 1974).

*Basturkmen et al* explains it as under:

When teachers are asked to comment on their beliefs abstractly (that is without reference to concrete events or experiences), they articulate their “espoused theories”. However, when teachers comment on their beliefs with reference to concrete classroom events, and draw on the experiential understanding of teaching they articulate their “theories in use” (8).

This difference may give us an explanation of teachers’ inability to express the logic behind their usual teaching practices, and articulate the beliefs that trigger their actions. Lastly, it was also likely that teachers presented themselves in a more favourable light in answering the questionnaire as it is human nature to portray oneself in the most positive manner.

### **5.3 Implications**

Implications of the current study are as under.

This study focuses on teaching processes rather than outcomes and represents a conceptual shift in research on L2 grammar instruction by providing an insight into the behavioural and psychological dimensions of grammar teaching unlike the traditional approaches to research in this field. It provides realistic accounts of teachers’ thinking and action regarding L2 grammar teaching which can be of particular benefit to L2 teacher educators in conducting intensive workshops on grammar teaching which may give teachers an opportunity to re-conceptualise their theories of language learning and teaching. It may further make them aware of alternative models and approaches and provide them with practical training to put these into practice.

Several teachers are still unaware of their own shortcomings and strengths. If teachers are given an awareness of their skills and weaknesses they may begin to reflect on ways to improve their practices. This practice of self reflection can be triggered by regular peer observation or observation by senior colleagues. The feedback of peers or senior faculty

members may give teachers an understanding of their practice from an external perspective. In this way they will learn from their own teaching experiences and try to improve practice and maintain quality instruction.

There is a need to set a knowledge sharing tradition in order to help teachers appreciate and become aware of second language teaching models and theories as well as develop consciousness of their own personal theories and teaching behaviours. Such practice will enable the teacher to reflect on their understanding of different paradigms in grammar teaching and see which model they are following. It is hoped that this study can also encourage teachers to analyse their own beliefs towards grammar teaching so that they can understand themselves in a better way. It is hoped that other teachers will also review and reflect on their teaching beliefs and classroom practices.

#### **5.4 Limitation of the Present Study**

This study employed a belief questionnaire to obtain data about ESL teachers' beliefs at IIUI. But it may not be claimed with assurance that the questions were answered truthfully. There is a possibility that teachers may have interpreted questions in a different way from what the researcher intended, and may have inadvertently provided inaccurate answers.

The absence of follow-up interviews is a major limitation of the present study. The follow-up interviews especially with teachers whose classes were observed might have given greater reliability to results.

There is a strong possibility of a response effect in the present study. Teachers may have given replies which do not represent accurately their actual beliefs or assumptions, but are intended to present a positive impression to the researcher. However, Davies argues that such data are, however, useful since they reflect beliefs and feelings about an ideal

professional situation (154). Similarly, Block maintains that such responses may denote the kind of discourse which is “allowed within one discourse community and is largely representative of that community” (151-152). Moreover, teachers may have based their responses on particular class which they teach. Further research within a tighter context (only one level e.g. elementary intermediate or advanced levels) may be desirable. Even with these limitations, the present study may denote a step towards development of an enhanced understanding of teachers’ beliefs and practices about grammar teaching in the context of IIUI.

The study targeted the whole population of English teachers at IIUI. Since the study was based on a specific context, I can only make humble claims about the generalisability of my findings to all teachers and contexts. However, the triangulation, and thorough description of the data enhances the validity of the data analysis and makes it possible for others to judge how far these findings may be applicable to their own contexts.

### **5.5 Recommendations for Further Research**

The current study is limited in scope and due to various constraints only examined teachers’ beliefs towards grammar teaching at IIUI .This study mainly focussed on inferring teachers’ beliefs towards grammar teaching and investigated whether their beliefs affected their instructional decisions and practices in grammar lessons. It would be interesting to explore teachers’ beliefs in other areas as vocabulary and pronunciation teaching as well the teaching of four language skills. Moreover, since the population in the current study consisted of university teachers, similar research can be carried out on college or school teachers. In addition, the sample in this study is small and it will be interesting to see if the findings will be the same for a larger sample. The period of observation can be extended to a longer period

of time. For example, three sessions per teacher so that a more detailed analysis of teachers' belief towards grammar teaching could be conducted.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

## **BELIEF QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS**

This questionnaire is part of my M.Phil thesis at IIUI. The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain information about your views on the role of grammar in the language classroom. It is neither an evaluation of you as a teacher nor a test. There are no right or wrong answers. All your responses will be kept confidential.

Faisal Rasheed Sheikh

M.Phil English, IIUI

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

## Section A

**Please evaluate yourself on a scale by encircling the appropriate choice. The scale is as follows; excellent good average not very good poor**

### 1. What do you think about your own knowledge of grammar?

excellent      good      average      not very good      poor

## 2. What do you think about your command in teaching grammar?

excellent good average not very good poor

3. Have you ever experienced any difficulty in teaching grammar? (Please tick).

**b. If 'yes', please describe them briefly.**

## SECTION B

**(a) 1. What does the word 'grammar' mean to you?**

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**(b) Rate each of the following statements by circling the most appropriate answer on the given scale.**

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

**1) A learner can acquire a second or foreign language without grammar instruction (i.e. similar to how children learn their mother tongue).**

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

**2) Attention to grammar ensures that students become aware of how the language works.**

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

**3) Explicit knowledge of grammatical rules is essential for the mastery of language.**

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

**4) Grammar can be successfully taught without extensive use of grammatical terminology.**

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

**5) Grammar should be taught at all levels (i.e. beginner, intermediate and advanced).**

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

**6) Teaching grammar enables students to produce more complex sentences.**

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

**7) If learners receive grammar instruction, they are more likely to be able to correct their errors.**

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

**8) Teachers should use the learners' L1 to explain grammar rules.**

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

**9) It is essential that students are familiar with the correct grammatical terminology.**

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

**10) It is important for students to be given the right answers after a written exercise or test.**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**11) It is important to correct all grammatical errors in students' oral work.**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**12) It is important to focus on grammar in all English lessons.**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**13) It is important to identify all grammatical errors in students' written work**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**14) It is more important to teach grammar to beginners than to intermediate/advanced learners.**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**15) Students should be given the opportunity to work out grammar rules from examples.**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**16) Students need to be consciously aware of a structure's form and its function before they can use it proficiently**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**17) Students will learn grammar better if they understand grammatical terminology**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**18) Teachers should begin a grammar lesson by explaining how a particular structure works.**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**19) Students can learn grammar through exposure to language in natural use**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**20) The primary role of the teacher in a grammar lesson is to explain a grammar point.**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**21) The use of L1 is detrimental to the students' language learning process.**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**22) You do not need to speak grammatically in order to communicate well.**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**23) Grammar furnishes the basis of four language skills.**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**24) Learners' mistakes should always be corrected as soon as possible to prevent the formation of bad habits.**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**25) The use of the mother tongue facilitates second language teaching and learning.**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**26) Separate treatment of grammar fails to produce language knowledge which students can use in natural communication**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**27) Formal instruction helps learners produce grammatically correct language.**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**28) Students can improve their grammatical accuracy through frequent practice of structure.**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

**29) Participating in real-life tasks with language is the best way for students to develop their grammatical knowledge.**

strongly disagree    disagree    neutral    agree    strongly agree

## SECTION C

Give two reasons in favour of /against teaching/learning grammar at international Islamic university.

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

## APPENDIX B

### CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SHEET

Teacher Observed: \_\_\_\_\_ Class observed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(level&Section)

Date of Observation: \_\_\_\_\_ Length of Observation: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_ Textbook: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of students: \_\_\_\_\_

Students' Background: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **A-Preparation**

##### 1-Goals and Objectives of the Lesson

Comments

##### 2-Teacher's Lesson Plan

Comments

##### 3-Availability and Organization of the Material

Comments

##### 4-Materials used

Comment

#### **B-Presentation**

##### 1-Establishing Context for the New Grammar Point

Comments

2-Introduction And Explanation of a New Grammatical Point (long or short/direct or indirect)

Comments

3-Pace of the Lesson

Comments

4-Transitions between Different Activities

Comments

5-Language of Instruction

Comments

6-Teacher's Response to Students' Questions

Comments

7-How many times does the T. check/repeat the new concept in class?

Comments

### **C-Grammar Practice Activities**

1-Teacher explains instructions for doing grammar activities.

Comments

2-Grammar Practice Activities

Comments

3-Teacher Guided Practice

Comments

**4-Use of Learning Materials and Resources**

Comments

**5-Instructional Strategies i e Group work, Pair work or Individual Work, Games Presentation, Simulations etc**

Comments

**D-Teacher's Use of Students' L1**

**1-Does the teacher use L1?**

a- Yes      b- No

If 'yes' then the purpose was to

**1-Explain a grammatical point.**

Comments

**2-Explain instruction for activities.**

Comments

**3-Maintain discipline in the class.**

Comments

**4- Draw comparison with mother tongue.**

Comments

Anyother

Comments

**E-Focus on the use grammatical terminology**

**1-Use of Grammatical Terminology during the Lesson**

Comments

**2-Teacher's Encouragement of the Student on the Use of Grammatical Terminology**

Comments

3-Teacher's Use of Grammatical Terminology while Correcting Errors of the Student

Comments

#### **F-Treatment of Errors**

1-Teacher's Attitude Towards Errors

Comments

2-Teacher's Attitude Towards Error Treatment

Comments

3-Correction of Students' Errors in the oral Work

Comments

4-Correction Of Students' Errors in the Written Work

Comments

5-Giving the Right Answers to the Students after Written Exercises

Comments

6-Teacher's Knowledge of Grammar

Comments

Overall Comments/Observation

