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**Exploring EFL Teachers' Techniques of Addressing Grammar in Communicative  
Instruction: A Qualitative study**

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## **Dedication**

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## Exploring EFL Teachers' Techniques of Addressing Grammar in Communicative Instruction: A Qualitative study

تحت راهنمایی جناب آقای دکتر سید علی استوار نامقی متعهد میشوم.

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## **Abstract**

Learners who learned English through Audio-lingual method had a profound knowledge of grammar, but they could not use it to communicate their knowledge and experience fluently. Consequently, there was a shift towards communicative language teaching (CLT). This shift towards CLT solved the fluency problem but created another unwanted effect. Although CLT learners became fluent speakers of a given language, they made lots of mistakes, sometimes hindering communication. That is, they were communicatively competent but linguistically incompetent. The reason is that many CLT teachers ignore grammar. This study aims at uncovering EFL teachers' strategies in addressing grammar in communicative instruction. The techniques were extracted from 12 participants' expression in terms of their success in teaching grammar in communication instruction. Following the constructivist grounded theory procedures, participants' perspective on techniques of teaching grammar were theoretically sampled through in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Moreover, one more method, memo writing, was also applied to gather the intended and related data. Finally, the expressions of the participants were analyzed based on the data analysis method in constructivist research design. All of the uncovered strategies were obtained through two categories: focus on form instruction and focus on forms instruction. These are two categories which were derived from this study. Many different strategies which have been put under focus on form instruction category are those strategies used by many EFL teachers owing to their skills and experiences in teaching grammar structures in their years.

**Keywords:** Teachers' strategies, grammar instruction, communicative instruction



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# **Chapter One:**

# **Introduction**

## 1.1. Overview

The history of language teaching is filled with the names of numerous methods and approaches regarding the teaching of grammar. These approaches and methods offer strategies to facilitate the presentation of grammar forms, making this sub-skill more pleasant for learners the majority of whom consider grammar lessons dull and monotonous. In view of the fact that learning the structure of a language is one of the main components of language programs, students tend to spend much time and effort learning them. As a result, knowing effective and useful strategies to meet this goal is of utmost importance for teachers. One of the most important sub skills, grammar is not treated with the respect it deserves by many teachers, institutes, pupils, and schools; it is sometimes evident that a myriad of EFL learners are communicatively competent but linguistically limited if not incompetent. Their discourse encompasses faulty grammatical structures even after years of formal education. Ellis (2006) raises the following question with this regard:

Should grammar ever be taught? If so, how and when? Should the grammar instruction be massed or distributed, intensive or extensive, explicit or implicit, in separate lessons or integrated into communicative activities? From a technical point of view, Azar (2007) states, “one important aspect of grammar teaching is that it helps learners discover the nature of language, i.e., that language consists of predictable patterns that make what we say, read, hear, and write intelligible. Without grammar, we would have only individual words or sounds, pictures, and body expressions to communicate meaning (p. 2)”. Put it differently, grammar is a dynamic system of lexicogrammatical patterns used to make meaning in appropriate ways. According to Krashen (1982) provided the input is comprehensible and sufficient, learners will unconsciously acquire the necessary grammar, like children who learn grammar forms of their native language. In addition, Ellis (1993) believes that grammar cannot be learned in a linear and atomistic fashion.

In addition, Grammar is rules of a language. “Grammar is a system of meaningful structures and patterns that are governed by particular pragmatic constraints” (Larsen-Freeman, 2001). In another definition “grammar is a description of the rules for forming sentences, including an account of the meanings that these forms convey” (Thornbury, 1999, p.13). In foreign language acquisition proper

understanding of the language structures is the key part so teaching grammar is an essential aspect of foreign language instruction. There has always been a debate about the most effective way of teaching grammar. Grammar instruction through context positively affects learners' competence to use grammatical structures accurately in language skills. It is always useful for learners to see how language works in sentences or paragraphs; therefore, teaching grammar in context will give learners opportunities to see how grammatical structures function in sentences. Teaching grammar in context will help learners to acquire nature of the language which will facilitate their understanding of the language.

Grammar instruction should not be ignored. About grammar teaching, Krahnke (1985, p.598) suggests that "much of the effort spent arguing against the teaching of grammar might be better spent on convincing true believers in grammar instruction that grammar has a newly defined but useful role to play in language teaching and in showing them what it is" (Terrell, 1991, p.54). For a better language improvement, grammar plays a crucial role. To be an effective language user, learners should study grammar because grammar skills will help learners to organize words and messages and make them meaningful. Knowing more about grammar will enable learners to build better sentences in speaking and writing performances. A good knowledge of grammar helps learners to make sentences clear enough to understand. Improper use of grammar will not convey meaningful messages. Tabbert (1984) stresses the importance of grammar simply as: "It is frequently pointed out that students confuse lie and lay, do not choose who and whom correctly, say infer instead of imply, mismatch subjects and verbs, mix up pronoun reference, use double negatives, etc., and that these mistakes are evidence of their need to study grammar" (p.39).

To establish an effective communication, learners need grammar skills; therefore, without grammar, speech gets meaningless. Grammar is an essential aspect to communicate effectively. Moreover, grammar simply is creating well-organized reading and writing performances. John Warriner supporting this idea (n.d., p. 8) writes: "The chief usefulness of grammar is that it provides a convenient and, indeed, as English is taught today, an almost indispensable set of terms to use in talking about Language" (Tabbert, 1984, p. 40).

These days professional development has lead teachers to seek effective ways to improve their knowledge about proper techniques and strategies concerning grammar teaching; therefore, there is a need for further investigations into such techniques and strategies. To do so, teachers should explore and apply these strategies so as to reinforce their knowledge about grammar instruction. One way thru which teachers can deepen their insight is by delving into the strategies and techniques which successful teachers integrate into their teaching repertoire. The purpose of the current study is to shed light on the strategies teachers apply when addressing grammar in communicative instruction.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Learning grammar is an essential part of learning any language in many teaching programs, be it a means or an end. The speech of many EFL learners suffers from inappropriate grammar forms. They tend to complain about grammar instruction in their schools. This has caused teachers and practitioners to think about possible strategies to ameliorate the situation.

The history of English language teaching includes a large number of names each of which summarizes a teaching method or approach. Grammar-translation method (GTM) was a perspective to teaching a foreign language which emphasized explicit grammar instruction in translation and out of context. Later, the audio-lingual method took the lead and trained learners who had a deep knowledge of grammar, still unable to communicate fluently. Thus, there was a shifts towards communicative language teaching (CLT). This shift towards CLT solved the fluency problem but created another unwanted effect. Although CLT learners spoke fluently, they made lots of mistakes. That is, they were communicatively competent but linguistically incompetent. The reason is that many proponents of CLT, in particular the strong version, ignore grammar.

## **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

Although many CLT teachers ignore grammar by focusing exclusively on communication, there are teachers who address grammar while engaging learners in communicative activities. The former is exclusively meaning-based, while the latter is



meaning-form-based. Accordingly, this study aims at uncovering the techniques language teachers use in addressing grammar in CLT classes. In order to meet this goal, the following question was raised:

1. What techniques do ELF teachers use to solve students' grammatical problems?

#### **1.4. Limitations of the Study**

This study was prone to some limitations. Access to native-speaker teachers was impossible in this study. Also, since the study was based on grounded theory, it included many interviews; it is difficult for a person to remember sufficient facts in such an occasion.

#### **1.5. Delimitations of the Study**

In order to decrease the limitation of this study, the researcher tried to uncover the strategies used by non-native teachers who had taught grammar in private institutes. To elicit sufficient information, detailed questions were designed and asked of the interviewees.



## **Chapter two:**

# **Review of the Related Literature**

## **2.1. Overview**

This study attempts to explore various strategies in teaching grammar in communicative instruction (CLT). To meet this end, this chapter aims at presenting the theoretical perspectives and empirical findings of grammar teaching strategies in communication instruction in a number of parts. In the first part, theories underlying consciousness raising tasks, focused tasks, input flood, input enhancement, communication-based approaches and presentation, practice, production model (PPP) will be discussed. This is followed by the empirical findings of the previously published works about these six areas.

## **2.2. Theoretical perspectives**

Three different sections will be discussed separately to elaborate on the theoretical underpinnings of consciousness raising tasks, focused tasks, input flood, input enhancement, communication-based approaches and presentation-practice-production(PPP) model of teaching grammar in communication instruction.

### **2.2.1. Consciousness Raising Tasks**

Since grammar is an integral part of language learning, there have been some controversies on how grammar should be taught in EFL classroom. Crivos and Luchini (2012) discussed that the emphasis has shifted from the teachers, who are considered the presenter of tasks, to learners, responsible for discovering, learning, and applying rules. A shift from what grammar is to how it can be taught to students. Larsen Freeman (2003) argued that learning about the form of language is very substantial for EFL learners and that deductive approaches to grammar rules are considered as an effective pedagogical perspective. Hence, enabling learners to notice the linguistic features via grammar consciousness-raising tasks (CR) has proved to be more effective and useful than an explicit presentation of rules through deductive approach.

Richards and Schmidt (2002) defined consciousness-raising as: “techniques that encourage learners to pay attention to language form in the belief that an awareness of form will contribute indirectly to language acquisition. Techniques

include having students infer grammatical rules from examples, compare differences between two or more different ways of saying something, observe differences between a learner's use of a grammar item and its use by native speakers. A consciousness-raising approach is contrasted with traditional approaches to the teaching of grammar (drilling, sentence practice, sentence combining), in which the goal is to establish a rule or instill a grammatical pattern directly.” (p. 109). Consciousness-raising tasks also assist EFL learners with discovering the rules inductively from implicit knowledge, making them acquire the language successfully and felicitously. Furthermore, it provides a situation in which they can use the language (Ellis, 2003). As Ellis (2003) claims, this approach leads to learners to think about a language and also to communicate it. Then, CR tasks are communicative tasks which learners use in order to discover the target patterns themselves by thinking about various grammatical forms. In contrast with traditional approaches to teaching grammar, learners are not forced to practice and produce the forms in consciousness raising task. Therefore, EFL learners would improve their grammar knowledge through communication (Fotos, 1994).

Some other scholars define consciousness raising task through other perspectives as an approach to language teaching. According to Smith (2003) we can define it as “the conveying of a rule to draw the learner’s attention to structural regularities... revealing some pattern or system in the target language that learner is being made conscious of some aspect of the language itself, but the manner varies” (pp. 160-162). Learners use their cognitive modes in order to discover the rules and forms during the learning processes and strategies. Therefore, it is a learner-centered orientation. In addition, Nassaji and Fotos (2004) stated that consciousness-raising (CR) is one of the most famous ways of teaching grammar in language classroom, a method used in task-based approach. Ellis (2002, p. 169) describes that the purpose of CR is “not to enable learners to perform a structure correctly but simply to help him/her to know about it”. It is fully defined as “a pedagogic activity where the learners are provided with L2 data in some forms and required to perform some operation on or with it, the purpose of which is to arrive at an explicit understanding of some linguistic property or properties of the target language” (Ellis, 2003, p. 160). The focus of this kind of task is improving correct understanding than correct production of target forms (Ellis, 2003).

CR is a device for facilitating the teaching of grammar knowledge required for communication. Ellis (2002) believes that presenting CR tasks involves: (1) isolating a specific feature for focused attention; (2) providing the learners with data which illustrate the target feature and an explicit rule describing or explaining the feature; (3) involving learners in an intellectual effort to understand the target feature; (4) clarifying misunderstandings or misconceptions in the form of data, description or explanation, and (5) encouraging learners to articulate the rule describing the grammatical structure.

It is believed that CR tasks lead learners to acquire the grammar of the target language by providing them with data and by developing learners' explicit knowledge of its grammar; this explicit knowledge helps learners with noticing and comparing. As McNicoll and Lee suggest (2011) CR plays an important role in L2 development and therefore, learners become prepared for the integration of new linguistic feature. According to Ellis (2002) integration is the last step in the three-step process of L2 development: (1) noticing, i.e., the learner becomes consciously aware of a linguistic feature; (2) comparing, i.e., the learner compares his or her new understanding of the feature with his or her mental grammar and identifies the gap between them; and (3) integrating, i.e., the learner integrates the new feature into her or his mental grammar.

Scholars' ideas regarding CR varies. For example, Eckerth (2008) believed that consciousness raising is a grammar approach which encourages EFL learners to focus on forms indirectly and leads to the acquisition of rules and forms. In addition, learners would acquire explicit knowledge about these forms in the middle of problem solving activities (Fotos, 1994). Moreover, Yip (1994) stated that consciousness-raising tasks holds a middle ground situation for grammar teaching which starts from zero approach (no need for instruction) to traditional approaches (explicit instruction). According to Ellis (1997) discriminating some linguistic features in order to obtain learners' attention, marking some data which show the target features, and utilizing learners' effort are some important characteristics of consciousness- raising tasks. Furthermore, Fotos and Ellis (1991) suggest a task-based approach for teaching grammar rules which helps learners to solve their grammatical problem interactively. Although EFL learners concentrate on the form of grammar structure, they are also

involved in meaning-focused use in the target language as they solve the grammar problems; they improve grammatical knowledge while they are communicating.

Consciousness-raising tasks are of two types. They can be indirect or direct CR tasks. Ellis (1997) discussed the main aim of indirect CR is to get explicit knowledge of target features. He also expressed that L2 data are supplied for EFL learners in order to perform them. In this type of consciousness-raising tasks the teacher's focus is only on tasks in contrast with the direct one. In direct consciousness-raising tasks teachers focus on the explanation of grammar rules. Besides, Ellis (cited in Richards & Renandya, 2002) explained that CR tasks can be inductive or deductive. In the case of the former, teacher presents the data and learners discover the rule. In the case of the latter, EFL teachers present the data and then practice the rules via some tasks. Both of these two models have benefits.

As a new approach introduced to grammar teaching, CR tasks are categorized under form-focused tasks, introduced by Ellis (2003). Ellis (1997) has defined grammar consciousness-raising tasks as: a pedagogic activity where the learners are provided with L2 data in some form and required to perform some operation on or with them. The purpose of this is to arrive at an explicit understanding of some linguistic properties of the target language (Cited in Nitta & Gardner, 2005, p.3). According to Ellis (2005b) consciousness-raising task is "a task that engages learners in thinking and communicating about language (often grammar). Thus, a language point becomes the topic that is talked about" (p. 47). With regard to discovery approach, Bankier (2010) stated that learners will enjoy every moment of class via discovery approach. Similarly, Ellis (2003) stated that EFL learners acquire grammatical structure by using these kinds of tasks through interaction and communication.

### **2.2.2. Focused Tasks**

Focused tasks are tasks "aimed to predispose learners to process, receptively or productively, some particular linguistic feature, for example a grammatical structure" (Ellis, 2003, p. 16). This kind of processing would be occurring in order that pupils

acquire non-linguistic features of target language. As a result, there are two main kinds of focused tasks. The first one concentrates on communicative language use while the second one is to focus on target features. Furthermore, there are two ways in which a task can acquire a focus. When learners can utilize linguistic features, the first one is designed. The second one is constructed by producing language itself through the content of a task like consciousness-raising task.

Concerning various ways in which scholars have set about designing focused task, Ellis (2003) assumed three principles: (1) structured-based production tasks, (2) comprehension tasks, and (3) consciousness-raising tasks. As for structured-based production tasks, Loschky and Bley-Vroman (1993) differentiate three ways for designing a task for teaching specific target language feature. The name of the first one is ‘task-naturalness’ in which learners utilize the language but target structures are not necessary in order to end up a task. An example is the exchange information about travel itinerary. The name of second way is ‘task utility’. In this kind of structured-based production task the target structure is not necessary in doing a task but is deemed useful. For example, spot the difference task by using different prepositions. The last one is ‘task-essentialness’. In this type learners must use special features in order to do a task because a feature becomes the essence of the task.

Tasks may fulfill their aims differently. Comprehension tasks may be more successful in eliciting attention to a targeted feature than production-based tasks because learners cannot avoid processing them (Ellis 2003, p. 157). There are two ways for attempting comprehension tasks. Input enrichment which involves designing tasks in such a way that the targeted feature is “(1) frequent and/or (2) salient in the input provided” (Ellis 2003, p. 158). Input processing was coined by Van Patten (1996). The aim of input processing is to direct learners to the processing strategies which they take for comprehending a task and also boost them to create better form-meaning connection. It also has three components. (1) a clarification of form-meaning relationship, such as, when we want to utilize passive sentences in order to topicalize the patient of a sentence by putting it on the ground of subject position, (2) information about processing strategies, and (3) structured-input activities.



The last principle about designing focused task is consciousness raising tasks. The main purpose of consciousness-raising (C-R) is to develop explicit knowledge of grammar. It is intended to develop awareness at the level of 'understanding' rather than awareness at the level of 'noticing' like input enrichment task (Ellis, 2003, p. 163). Even, the content of them will refer to general nature like stories and picture of objects. Anderson's skill acquisition theory (1993, 1995) stated that practice or focused tasks have an important role in learning a second language, helping the improvement of declarative knowledge into procedural knowledge.

Regarding the psycholinguistic rationale for focused tasks, Ellis (2003) states two psycholinguistic for communicative focused tasks: (1) skill building theories and the notion of automatic processing, and (2) implicit learning. Automatic processing involves the activation of certain nodes in memory each time the appropriate inputs are present (Mclaughlin & Heredia, 1996, p.214). Shiffrin and Schneider (1977) discusses that automatic processing differentiates with controlled processing. A key different between them is that whereas automatic processing happens automatically and in a parallel form, the second one occurs more slowly and acts serially. Skill development contains altering the controlled processing into automatic processing. Put it differently, it is the proceduralization of declarative knowledge (Anderson, 1993, 2000). Declarative knowledge involves explicit knowledge of grammatical rules. We can also define procedural knowledge as declarative knowledge which has turned fully automatized.

It has been recognized that, focused tasks can be implicit grammar-focused tasks and explicit grammar-focused tasks. In the case of former, tasks add themselves to a collection of grammatical structures and task content. Learners are needed to solve grammar problems throughout meaning-focused interaction and task cards are given to them in order to read for other member of group.

In a similar vein, this kind of task can be information-gap tasks, where EFL learners listen carefully to their task members showing information which they do not have and take note of that information (Ellis, 2002). As Ellis (1993a, p. 72) noted, "these are tasks designed to make the learners think about a particular grammatical

feature in order to develop some degree of cognitive understanding.” They can be designed in the form of deductive tasks, “where the learners are given a rule which they then apply (and possibly amend) to data provided.” Or they can be inductive, “where they [learners] discover the rule for themselves by analyzing the data provided.” Consequently, an explicit structured grammar-focused task improves EFL learners’ consciousness of grammatical problem as they can be aware of them and also produce output accuracy.

### **2.2.3. Input Flood**

Input flood is a kind of treatment which includes the marked incidence of the target form in the audio and visual texts which learners are exposed to without any explicit instruction or feedback (Öztina, 2009). In other words, it consists of an input which has been enriched by including a lot of examples of the target structure without any additional devices to draw students’ attention to the structure. Furthermore, Wong (2005) described input flooding as follows: “in input flood, the input learners receive is saturated with the form that we hope learners will notice and possibly acquire. We do not usually highlight the form in any way to draw students’ attention to it nor do we tell learners to pay attention to the form” (p.37). In tandem with Wong (2005) an input flood can be both oral and written. In the case of former, the target linguistic form is utilized frequently in natural speech and in the case of the latter, a text is written down including the target form and then read aloud for students. On the other hand, the form is more salient to learners and will also be noticed (Han, Park, & Combs, 2008) (Gass, 1997; Schmidt, 1993; Williams & Evans, 1998).

Likewise, input flood is a kind of implicit technique with regard to focusing on form; it aims to attract learners’ attention to grammatical forms with implicit and explicit activities. Subsequently, Spada (1997) declared that form-focused instruction refers to pedagogical efforts used to attract students’ attention to the target L2 forms both implicitly or explicitly. In the process of input flooding, EFL learners are exposed to saturated target forms with ample examples along with oral and written forms in order to facilitate their acquisition. According to Gass (1997) the frequency of students’ exposure to L2 forms shall significantly affect their learning. Even, this kind

of input enhancement, which focuses on meaningful interaction, aids incidental acquisition. Further, teachers do not need to stop a special activity to mention something, rather they can leave students on their own to create connection between form and meaning. Wong (2005) discussed that if learners are not be able to notice the new target form, input flood will be too implicit. Also, Doughty and Williams (1998) argued that “it is sometimes possible to aim more or less implicitly to attract learners’ attention to linguistic features and promote the processing of these features without providing any sort of explicit guidance” (p. 236). Moreover, input flooding technique, as Wong (2005) stated, is the input, which is “saturated with the form that learners are expected to notice and learn.

#### **2.2.4. Input Enhancement**

This is a strategy which EFL teachers use in order to attract students’ attention to the target linguistic forms. Sharwood Smith (1993) defined input enhancement as “the process by which language input becomes salient to learners” (p.118). In addition, he concluded that EFL learners would not pay attention and notice target forms when they were inevitably non-salient in input. To put it differently, it refers to any effort to speed the rate of noticing to the target forms. Therefore, highlighting important grammar points or lexical items would be a proactive way to improve students’ understanding of a particular grammatical structure in a given text. Also, Smith (1993) declared that input enhancement was an effective way to direct EFL learners’ focus to target forms. Similarly, it contains some effort to highlight a specific target feature so as to draw learners’ attention to it. In connection with Sharwood Smith (1993) input enhancement has a significant role in the input the learners receive and cause L2 proficiency to improve. He also believes that has an important role in facilitating the process which L2 learners select.

Input flood is a process by which input is made more noticeable to the learner. This definition can be very different from some forms in pedagogical contexts, which has two basic dimensions. Therefore, Sharwood Smith (1991) called this dimension explicitness and elaboration. In the case of the former, it concerns the degree of directness in how attention is drawn to the form. In the case of the latter, it has to do

with the period or intensity with which enhancement procedures occur. In explicit enhancement the teacher tries to attract learners' attention to target grammatical forms through different forms of metalinguistic explanation and rule presentation. Implicit enhancement happens when students' attention is drawn to grammatical forms while their main focus is on meaning. In addition, enhancement may differ in terms of intensity or elaboration. Even, it can be positive and negative (Sharwood Smith, 1991). The first one refers to some strategies that make a correct form salient, thus, highlighting what is correct in the language. For instance, utilizing stress to highlight a given correct form in the language. In such cases "if the learner has a different perception of the L2 grammar than is evidenced by the input, then positive evidence may serve as a trigger to change that grammar and bring it in line with the native-speaker grammar" (Sharwood Smith, 1991, pp. 122–23). Negative input enhancement highlights "given forms as incorrect, thus signaling to the learner that they have violated the target norms" (p. 177). An example of this would be the use of corrective feedback.

Input enhancement can be done internally or externally (Sharwood Smith, 1991). Internal enhancement occurs when EFL learners notice the target forms themselves. Moreover, input enhancement can be utilized with both written and oral texts. In written texts, this can be done by typographically highlighting specific target words embedded in the text with textual modification, like underlining, boldfacing, italicizing, capitalizing, color coding or a combination of these. For instance, learners can be shown a reading comprehension text in which the teacher identifies grammatical forms as problematic. As the text involves enough examples of the target forms, it can be authentic.

### **2.2.5. Communication-based Approaches**

According to Widdowson (1978) the aim of communicative approaches is the attainment of the competence to use and interpret meaning in real-life communication, not only learning formal grammatical rules and structures. This kind of approach was theoretically motivated by developments in linguistics and sociolinguistics in Europe and North America (Savignon, 2001). It was also influenced by the work of the

Europe, which attempted to develop syllabi for EFL learners based on the functional use of language, and also the work of other British applied linguists like Halliday, Firth, Austin and Searle (e.g., Austin, 1962; Firth, 1957; Halliday, 1978, 1984; Searle, 1969) as well as American sociolinguists such as Gumperz and Labov (e.g., Gumperz & Hymes, 1972; Labov, 1972). These researchers also highlighted the importance of studying language use and function in social contexts.

Further, according to Krashen (1981, 1985) acquisition is an unconscious and implicit process and learning is a conscious and explicit one. He also discussed (Krashen, 2008) that EFL learners “acquire” target forms unconsciously and implicitly when they receive input instead of learning it consciously through explicit teaching of grammatical rules (Krashen, 1981; Krashen & Terrell, 1983). Although this view of L2 learning is not directly associated with communicative language teaching, there are sufficient number of theories supporting its principles; grammar has also been addressed in these writings (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Although the emphasis of communicative approach is on meaning-focused language use, it does not associate with traditional approaches such as grammar translation and Audio-Lingual method. Savignon (2001, p. 27) characterized it as “a theory of communicative competence to be used in developing materials and methods appropriate to a given context.”

Other scholars relate communicative approach to the family of teaching methodologies and syllabi which accentuate activities that improve learner abilities in the communication of meaning (Nunan, 2004). A differentiation has been made between a weak and strong version of CLT (Howatt, 1984). The strong version declares we learn language through communication; hence, the best way of teaching a target language is through various activities that are exclusively meaning focused. The weak version of CLT views the teaching of forms possible in the context of meaning. The aim and the means of language instruction is communication. In the weak version of CLT, communication is the last purpose but students learn a language by utilizing and practicing it in communicative contexts in a more controlled manner. The strong version of CLT emphasizes meaning-focused methods. This involves the notional – functional curriculums (e.g., Brumfit, 1984; DiPietro, 1987; Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983). It is a new view about grammar instruction which emphasizes language

functions such as greetings, requests, apologies, etc., and also the procedural (Prabhu, 1987) and process-based syllabuses (Breen, 1984; Breen & Candlin, 1980). Furthermore, it focuses on recent content-based and immersion version of L2 learning that emphasize learning language through subject matter or integrating language and content (see Snow, 2001; Snow, Met, & Genesee, 1992).

Similarly, the strong version of CLT focuses on task-based language instruction. These are some activities which are meaning –focused and are very similar to real-life activities. These activities are called “task”. Common characteristics of these tasks are emphasis on involvement with other activities that boost communicative language use and concentration on meaning instead of grammatical forms (Nunan, 2006). They all show what Batstone (1994, p. 5) termed “teaching as process,” where the focus is on “the process of language use,” rather than on product, or what Wilkins (1976, p. 13) characterized as an analytic approach, whereby instruction is organized in terms of the purposes for which language is used rather than in terms of its constituent forms. Although some various approaches to task-based instruction support exclusive attention to meaning (Prabhu, 1984, 1987) more recent notions do not prevent the possibility of focus on linguistics forms. Indeed, many proposals have insisted on the need for attention to L2 task-based teaching (Ellis, 2003; Long, 2000; Skehan, 1996a, 1996b, 1998b).

#### **2.2.6. Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) Model**

This traditional grammar teaching has applied a structural syllabus; lessons encompass three phases: presentation, practice, production. In the first phase, the comprehension of grammatical rules is required with little attention to the difference between L1 and L2. In the next phase, some oral and written exercises are given to learners in order that they get sufficient practice. In the last phase, students are provided with “frequent opportunities for the communicative use of grammar to promote automatic and accurate use” (Sheen, 2003, p.226). Moreover, DeKeyser (1998, 2007) suggests J. R Anderson’s (1990) skill-based approach to clarify how grammar practice could work in the practice phase. First of all, the rules are given to learners (declarative knowledge) and they practice the output which will help them to

proceduralize their knowledge. As Doughty and Williams (1998a) mention, “proceduralization is achieved by engaging students in the target behavior or procedures while temporarily learning or declarative crutches...” (p.49).

Similarly, this kind of strategy about grammar teaching consists of three stages. A presentation stage, a practice stage, and a production stage. In the first stage, some grammar rules or structures are introduced in the middle of a text, a dialogue, or a story which includes the structures. The most important part of this stage is to warn EFL learners of some new grammatical structures, asking them keep the structures in their short-term memory (Ur, 1988). In the second stage, some kinds of written and spoken exercises are supplied for them so they repeat, manipulate, or reproduce the new forms. This stage usually starts with some practice such as controlled practices which direct learners’ attention to some special structures and then moves to less controlled practice with more open ended activities. The main purpose of this stage is to help EFL learners to obtain control of the knowledge they got familiarized with in the first stage, receive it, and to transfer it from their short term memory to their long term memory (Ur, 1988). Using the rules which learners have learned in order to develop their fluency is the scope of production stage.

Further, this PPP model of grammar teaching is instructed with information processing and the skill acquisition model of learning, affirming that language learning is a cognitive skill like other learning theories. With this regard, the input was given to EFL learners through processing stages and eventually, it will be comprehended and produced by learners. In part with some theories (e.g., Anderson, 1982, 1983) about skill acquisition, we move from declarative knowledge toward procedural knowledge. Accordingly, EFL learners learn some new target rules and structures during the development of conscious knowledge and follow practicing them so they gain control of them. Then, the first two stages have an important function in the acquisition of a language. It is believed that “it is through practice that the material is most thoroughly and permanently learned” (Ur, 1988, p. 10).

On a part with Skehen (1998) these three phases are summarized as follows: “the first stage is generally focused on a single point of grammar which is presented

explicitly or implicitly to maximize the chances that the underlying rule will be understood and internalized. This would essentially aim at the development of declarative knowledge” (p. 9). Following this, learners move on to a practice phase. The focus of this phase is an accuracy which is aimed at changing declarative knowledge to procedural knowledge. Finally, learners will lose control when they move to the next phase, production. In the last phase, they are provided with opportunities to produce the target forms, sometimes via communicative activities. Skehan said that “learners would be required to produce language more spontaneously, based on the meanings the learner himself or herself would want to express” (p. 93). Willis (1996) also asserts that “language learning rarely happens in an additive fashion” (p. 135). Skehan (1998) states that “such an approach [i.e., PPP] is now out of fashion” (p. 94) and White (1988) discredits the PPP approach as a meaning-impooverished methodology.

### **2.3. Empirical Findings**

In the previous segments we discussed theories of consciousness raising tasks, focused tasks input flood, input enhancement, communication-based approaches and presentation- practice- production (PPP) model of teaching grammar in communication instruction. In this segment, we will present the empirical findings of the above mentioned theories separately.

#### **2.3.1. Consciousness Raising Tasks**

This kind of tasks have important roles in teaching and learning grammatical features in second language acquisition. For this aim, some researchers have investigated the effects of two types of consciousness raising tasks in L2 grammar teaching. For instance, Fotos and Ellis (1991) focused on two groups of Japanese EFL College students. The results clearly showed that both groups composed significant gains on grammatical judgment test with more durable gains composed by participants who were exposed to the direct type. Following this, Fotos (1994) compared the same study on Japanese EFL learners. The results indicated there was no significant difference between these two groups. As for the results of two studies, Fotos and Ellis



(1991) and Fotos (1994) concluded that consciousness raising tasks are very effective because they improve noticing and proficiency gains. In addition, Sheen (1992) in a similar study, set out to measure direct and indirect consciousness raising tasks. It happened through six-weeks with beginner's French course for Japanese students. The findings revealed that two groups of students did well in a written post-test of the structures taught.

Further, in another experimental study, Fotos (1994) explored learners' noticing which was obtained via two types of grammar CR treatments: teacher-fronted grammar lessons that was interactive and grammar problem-solving tasks. 160 Japanese English students attended this study. Fotos divided the subjects into three various treatment groups, which the input covered indirect object placement, adverb placement, and relative clause usage in communicative use. The findings of this study showed that both teacher-fronted grammar lessons and grammar problem-solving tasks were effective on improving significant level of noticing the target language structures in communicative input.

Some other scholars (e.g., Fotos & Ellis, 1991; Mohamed, 2001; Shak & Gardner, 2008) have tried to test the effect of consciousness raising tasks on the improvement of grammatical knowledge. For example, Fotos and Ellis (1991) explored the effect of traditional instruction and consciousness raising tasks on learning dative alternation by Japanese learners of English. The findings indicated that both traditional instruction and CRT had significant effects on promoting the learners' scores on the immediate comprehension posttest although learners in the first group can maintain the important effects on delayed posttest. In contrast to this findings, Mohamad (2001) found that CRT tasks were more fruitful than traditional instruction when we apply these tasks to high intermediate ESL learners in comparison with low intermediate learners, proposing that learners' proficiency level can impress the effectiveness of CRT tasks.

Considering the importance of using consciousness raising tasks in teaching grammar instruction such as subject-verb agreement. Maros et al. (2007) concluded a study to find out that a major grammatical error which students make is SVA. He

chose 120 students from six rural schools in Pahang, Selangor and Melaka. Similarly, Hashimah et al. (2008) set out a research on 315 students and found that some Malaysian students cannot make correct sentences owing to their lack of competence in SVA. They are not aware of forms and functions of SVA. Although they have the ability to arrange words in connection with subject-verb-object or subject- predicate (Abdul Rashid Mohamed et al., 2004) they are unable to progress into mastering SVA. The reason is that they are not aware of the characteristics of SVA, which had not been seen in their first language (Wee, 2009). This lack of awareness about the characteristics of SVA lead them to use first language and hinder their learning (Surina & Kamaruzaman, 2009). So, learners should be aware and sensitive to what they are learning (Schmidt, 1990). A study was conducted by Ming and Nooreiny (2010) about using CR activities with personal pronouns (“I” and “we”) as the target form. The results from this study showed that students’ knowledge increased after the treatment. It means that CR activities helps learners to recognize and investigate the target forms.

Another study done with Amirian and Sadeghi (2012) in order to investigate the influence of grammar consciousness- raising tasks on EFL learners’ performance. They exposed the control group to pattern drill practice and the experimental group to grammatical consciousness-raising tasks and found that experimental group outperformed the control group. Moreover, in another study, Doan Dang and Nguyen (2012) compared the differential effects of CR and the deductive approach under experimental conditions. In the control group learners received grammar rules deductively while the experimental group first read or listened to a passage and then interacted with the teacher based on the presented grammar rules in context to enable learners to notice the grammatical structure. The results revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control group in the analysis of grammar rules and the oral proficiency. In a pre-experimental static group design, Sugiharto (2006) compared students’ performance in pre-test and post-test and found that consciousness-raising activities produced a significant difference in learners’ internalization and use of present tense. In another experiment, Moradkhan and Sohrabian (2009) exposed the experimental group to grammatical consciousness-raising activities to reinforce the grammar points, and the control group practiced the grammar through the use of

communicative techniques. A comparison between learners' performance in the post test showed that the experimental group performed better than the control group.

### **2.3.2. Focused Tasks**

Learners need to notice and be conscious of grammar points in subsequent communicative input in focused tasks. Fotos (1993, 1994) conducted a study on noticing. For this aim, he chose learners who either performed grammar tasks or obtained grammar lessons. Learners noticed the target structures in communicative input and then compared it with control group two weeks later. The control group did not receive grammar instruction and also did not do grammar-based tasks. Findings showed that noticing was on high level of proficiency.

Fotos (1993) set out a study to explore implicit structured grammar focused-tasks. It was one kind of grammar task about locative prepositions. The learners drew a picture of various shapes inside a picture frame. When they were performed, they helped their partners on how to compare the same picture. Following this, they compared their pictures. This kind of implicit task was used in EFL classrooms in order to make gains in learner accuracy on the grammar point built into the task. Another task was designed based on (Fotos, Homan, & Poel, 1994) some English adjective and adverb forms. Groups of three or four EFL learners showed the features of cities they had known to the other members of group. Then, they wrote some sentences to compare two cities by using English sentences. However, target forms were not mentioned, EFL learners had to understand and produce several different comparative forms to finish the task.

Since past conditional sentences include a wide range of functions and their form also results in clauses which are very long and difficult for EFL learners to process and remember (Parrot, 2000; Thornbury, 2001) "the so-called third conditional is typically taught at a relatively advanced stage, both because its syntax is complex and because it expresses a concept that is itself fairly opaque, that is, hypothetical past time" (Thornbury, 2000, p. 97). Ellis (1995) suggested that in order to solve this problem, grammar focused task should be applied to draw learners' attention to how

the form and meaning interact. In addition, Fotos (1995, 2002) did a research to find EFL learners' consciousness of the use of the correct form of present and future conditional forms. Finally, she indicated that focused tasks were very fruitful communicative activities to develop proficiency and interaction. Another study which was done by Pawlak (2007) was about past unreal conditionals. Conditional type three was taught with two kinds of approaches to grammar teaching. The participants of the study were 102 senior high school students who were divided into two experimental groups and a control group. He finally hypothesized that "focus on form and focus on forms should be combined in classroom practice rather than viewed as mutually exclusive" (Pawlak, 2007, p. 186).

### **2.3.3. Input Flood**

There are various studies which showed the role of input flood in learning different features of language. For instance, Lee (2002) reflected the efficiency of input flooding in the acquisition of Spanish future tense. Trahey and White (1993) also indicated input flood effectiveness in learning the meaning and placements of English adverbs. Similarly, Rikhtegar and Gholami (2015) found that input flooding improves the acquisition of English simple past tense. Tabatabaei and Yakhabi (2009) found that although students' language production would enhance the accurate use of grammar, input flooding plays a decisive role in speech complexity. Hernandez (2008) also indicated that the combination of input flood with explicit instruction was more successful than input flood alone in promoting learners' use of discourse markers.

In addition, Balcom and Bouffard (2015) did a research in order to indicate the role of input flood and explicit instruction on learning adverb placement in L3 French. He finally found that input flood helps them to learn adverb placement. Moreover, Nemati and Motallebzade (2013) explored the effects of input flooding on enhancing EFL learners' structural accuracy. The results of their study indicated that input flood did not have an important effect on the acquisition of the target forms. Further, Trahey and White (1993) and Trahey (1996) developed some materials like stories, games and exercises with the purpose of exposing students to adverbs. He found that acquisition happens when EFL learners are exposed to the target structure frequently. Mahvelati and Mukundan (2012) investigated a study about cognitive style

in the collocational knowledge of Iranian EFL learners. Two classes of upper-intermediate learners with the same level of language proficiency participated in this study. One class was allocated to the experimental group and the other class to the control group. The result showed that input flood treatment enhanced the performance of the experimental group at the post-test stage.

Moreover, Webb (2007) investigated the advantages of diverse aspects of lexical knowledge and found that repetition had an important influence on students' outcome at both productive and receptive levels. Carter (2014) investigated students' learning of verb-noun and adjective-noun collocations according to two instructional strategies: input flood only and integration of input flood and input enhancement. He found that the combination of input flood and input enhancement could improve learners' L2 collocational knowledge. Spada and Lightbown (1993) and Trahey and White (1993) found oral input flooding to be more effective among elementary-school students whose L1 was French and who were learning ESL.

#### **2.3.4. Input Enhancement**

There are some investigations about the role of input enhancement in acquiring target forms. For example, Dastjerdi (2011) examined the role of input enhancement in teaching compliments. Two main groups were chosen as a control and experimental groups. The first one was taught through form Comparison procedure and the second one by means of Wolfson and Manes (1980) formula of compliment giving. The result showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group. Furthermore, Rezvani (2011) did a study about output task and input enhancement in the acquisition of collocation. The findings indicated that both output task and input enhancement had an important effect on the acquisition of grammatical collocation by learners. And, it was found that the input enhancement group outperformed the output group.

Similarly, Nahavandi and Mukundan (2013) conducted a study to investigate the effect of textual input enhancement and explicit rule presentation on Iranian students' intake of simple past tense. Ninety-three Iranian EFL learners were chosen

with three groups. And the input was enhanced through bolding for participants in groups two and three. Participants in group three enhanced explicit rule presentation of simple past tense. The result indicated that there was a significant difference through the pretest, first posttest and delayed posttest. Also, posttest 1 was higher than posttest2 and, TE+ rule presentation group outperformed the other.

Some studies like (Leow et al., 2003; Shook, 1999) investigated the effect of textual input enhancement on a morphologically relative salient features of Spanish present perfect (e.g., *haterminado* ‘has finished’) and also less salient morpheme, the Spanish subjunctive (e.g., *termine* ‘should finish’). Finally, they found that students can benefit from textual input enhancement with a more salient structure than a less salient one. Moreover, the result revealed that both enhanced and unenhanced group indicated more noticing of the more salient structure than a less salient structure.

There were mixed results in research conducted about input enhancement. Some studies indicated a beneficial effect for input enhancement (e.g., Lee, 2007) while others found no advantageous effect (e.g., Izumi, 2002; Leow, 2001; Leow, Egi, Nuevo, & Tsai, 2003; Williams & Evans, 1998). A number of elements were introduced to account for the absence of significant results, including a lack of salience of the target form (Leow, 2001; Leow et al., 2003) the complexity of the target form (Williams & Evans, 1998) and the need for pushed output to improve deeper levels of processing required for input to become intake (Izumi, 2002).

Likewise, some other studies juxtapose the effect of input enhancement alone with input enhancement coupled with focus on form instruction, but people who did so concluded that the input enhancement with focus on form instruction was more effective. Shook (1994) indicated that textual enhancement has less effect on its own than textual enhancement together. Alanen (1995) found that EFL learners who had been acquainted with a rule, with or without textual enhancement outperformed a textual enhancement group. These are in contrast with Doughty (1991) who found both treatments equally effective.

### **2.3.5. Communication- Based Approaches**

There are some empirical findings about communication-based approaches. Some scholars (e.g., Alkhayyat, 2009; Aubrey, 2010; Chung & Huang, 2009; İnceçay & İnceçay, 2009; Matsuura, Chiba, & Hilderbrandt, 2001; Rao, 2002; Savignon & Wang, 2003) found that both communicative and non-communicative activities are beneficial for learners. For instance, Rao (2002) conducted a study with thirty Chinese EFL learners; concerning their perception of communicative and non-communicative activities using quantitative and qualitative data. Participants declared favoring some communicative (e.g., student-student and student-teacher interaction, personal responses to students' exercises, and songs) and other non-communicative activities (e.g., audio-lingual drills, dictionary exercises, teacher's explanations of grammatical rules, error correction, and obedience to teacher's instruction). A combination of both activities was useful.

Further, Chung and Huang (2009) explored EFL learners' attitude toward classroom learning experience focusing on CLT. They found that it is difficult to integrate CLT with traditional approaches. The concentration of English teaching practice must shift toward developing students' communicative competence. In addition, Aubrey (2010) found that CLT approach promotes learners' willingness to communicate when students had a positive attitude toward CLT. In addition, Matsuura, Chiba, and Hilderbrandt (2001) conducted a study on some Japanese students and teachers. They said that Japanese students tended to consider function, speaking, grammar, listening, cultural differences, reading, nonverbal cues, pronunciation and writing as significant for learning communicative English. The result showed ample number of students who believed that it was necessary to respond to each other and interact with their teachers.

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### **2.3.6. Presentation –Practice- Production (PPP) Model**

In part with DeKeyser (1998) EFL learners should be given a cognitive stage including grammar targets, followed by activities and practice to develop declarative knowledge to procedural knowledge. A study was done in order to examine students' ability in using progressive and simple form after teaching grammatical rules with PPP model. The findings showed that the students' scores increased during this strategy. Carless (2009) pointed out that PPP model is teacher controlled and teachers have an important role in controlling the pace of the lesson. Then, it is an easy method because learners understand the lessons and exercises very well. Since PPP model is an explicit form of language learning, Sheen (1994) found that explicit methods are better than implicit methods of teaching. In addition, he expressed that deductive method is more effective than inductive method especially in writing and speaking. In another study, he found that traditional methods such as (PPP) are more fruitful than audio-lingual.

Khatib and Nikouee (2012) were interested in finding the extent to which declarative knowledge of the present perfect can be automatized during the limited time of classrooms. For this purpose, they choose 20 Iranian EFL learners at five language school. The first group of students received explicit instruction including three phases of (PPP) model. The second group received two stages of instruction through the presentation-practice (PPP) model. The results from this study showed that the first group of students were more successful in automatizing their knowledge of present perfect than the second group. Further, they were successful in retaining their knowledge of the present perfect. They also concluded that explicit grammar instruction like communicative, meaning-based tasks are more fruitful by means of PPP model regarding the automatization of proceduralized knowledge of grammatical structures.

Moreover, Mochizuki and Ortega (2008) investigated a study of guided pre-task planning which would help pupils with drawing EFL learners' attention to the target structure and elicit more production from them. For this aim, 56 Japanese high school EFL learners were divided into three groups. One group received pre-task guided planning, the other group received pre-task unguided planning and the last group did not receive any instruction regarding planning. The three groups received explicit



instruction for relative clauses. The findings showed that EFL learners in the guided planning group paid more attention to form and they could also produce longer oral narratives. So, the pre-task guided planning had positive effects on learners' performance in oral communicative tasks which encouraged them to produce target language features.

#### **2.4. Summary of the Empirical Findings**

In brief, empirical findings can be categorized in three sub-categories of consciousness-raising tasks, presentation, practice, production model of teaching grammar, and communication instruction. In the first category some strategies were found by some scholars (Abdul Rashid Mohamed et al., 2004; Amirian & Sadeghi 2012; Doan Dang ,2012; Fotos & Ellis, 1991; Fotos, 1994; Hashimah et al., 2008; Maros et al. ,2007; Ming & Nooreiny, 2010; Moradkhan & Sohrabian ,2009; Shak & Gardner, 2008; Sheen, 1992; Sugiharto ,2006; Surina & Kamaruzaman, 2009; Wee, 2009). The second category was done by other researchers in line with the findings of important strategies in grammar teaching (Ellis, 1995; Ellis, 2002; Fotos,1993, 1994; Fotos, Homan, & Poel, 1994; Fotos, 1995, 2002; Parrot, 2000; Pawlak, 2007, p. 186; Takashima, 2005; Thornbury, 2001 Thornbury, 2000, p. 97). As for the last category, researches like Carless, 2009; DeKeyser, 1998; Khatib & Nikouee, 2012; Mochizuki & Ortega, 2008; Sheen, 1994) investigated some different studies.

Prior studies investigated different useful strategies which can help EFL learners to teach more effectively. Even though they are information rich, they did not introduce the best and more applicable strategies for teaching linguistics features. Only some studies investigated and introduced fruitful strategies which could assist EFL teachers. The deficiency of these studies was a lack of elaboration on the appropriate ways of applying the techniques. Nowadays, most EFL teachers in institutes are not familiar with new strategies for teaching linguistics features. Further, they just teach grammatical rules and they are not aware of a strategy which they apply for forms or rules.



# **Chapter Three:**

# **Methodology**

### **3.1. Overview**

In this study the researcher followed the constructivist research design which is a branch of grounded theory. Throughout the constructivist grounded theory, the meanings underlying participants' experiences were uncovered. The processes of sampling procedure, data collection, and data analysis were applied based on the suggested rules in the constructivist research method.

### **3.2. Constructivist Research Method**

Constructivist grounded theory is a branch of grounded theory which relates to the constructivist philosophical approach wherein both participants and researcher co-construct the meaning through data collection and analysis. According to Charmaz (2006, p.131) "the positivist approach to grounded theory lends itself to the objectivist and deterministic approach to research, where it considers the existence of a single interpretation to reality". With contrast to this objective approach, Charmaz (2006) and Mills, Bonner and Francis (2006) accept a constructivist approach to grounded theory, in which the interaction between the investigator and participants in interview cannot be neutral. Contrary to this, (Mills, Bonner & Francis ,2006, p. 9) argue that through active engagements during the interview process, ideas are raised, discussed and knowledge is mutually constructed. According to this view, the researcher and the participants co-construct data, in a process known as data generation. In complete agreement with Charmaz (2006), Mills, Bonner and Francis (2006, p.10) "advocate non-hierarchical intimacy, reciprocity, open interchange of ideas and negotiation" (including consensus on the location and time of interview) between the researcher and participants. In addition, the research has an important role in the interview. For example, expressing and reflecting upon his/ her viewpoints and perspectives like other kinds of conventional conversations and academic discussions. The interviewer also voices his opinion while permitting the voices of interviewees to be heard.

Moreover, grounded theorists discuss that the method should be allowed to work without losing its main tenets, namely, simultaneous data collection, and avoidance of pre-formulated hypothesis, systematic coding, constant comparisons, theoretical sampling and theoretical saturation (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007a, 2007b). Similarly, Unlike Glaser, Charmaz claims the voice of the inquiry participant should

be part and parcel of the different stages of analysis embracing the final writing up process. Allan (2007) also argues that grounded theory is a kind of systematic and difficult method for inquiry information system. He also declares that however different its procedures, such as open coding, constant comparison, memo writing and theoretical coding, it can be utilized when conceptualizing real-world problems in information science research and can assist in generating theory that explains patterns in behavior, users' satisfaction or other relevant research issues. It has been recognized that the method is mainly pertinent in domains where there is scarcity of theoretical foundations. Andersen and Skouvig (2006, p. 318) assert that "for knowledge organization to uphold significance recognizable by society, it needs to engage in and be informed by theories and understandings that locate and analyze society and its historically developed forms of organization".

### **3.3. Philosophical Underpins**

Grounded theory gets its theoretical underpinnings from pragmatism and symbolical interactionism. There are two main principles that are driven from philosophical and sociological orientation the first of which pertains to change since phenomena are not designed to be fixed but continue to change in response to developing conditions. The second element is about "determinism." Actors can choose their perceptions about the options they strive.

#### **3.3.1. Symbolic Interactionism**

It is a theory that explains human behavior and human group life (Chenitz & Swanson 1986). The focus of symbolic interactionism is on the experiential aspect of human behavior (Chenitz & Swanson 1986). It is related to the meanings of events to people and symbols that we use to send those meanings (Baker et al. 1992). There are three premises about symbolic interactionism. The first premise is about human beings. They act toward things on the basis of the meaning about things that have for them. The second one is about the meaning of those things. The meaning is obtained from social interaction that everybody has with one's fellow. The last one is about meaning that has changed through interpretation process. These process are used by

the people who encounter things (Blumber1969, p.2). Denzin, a sociologist, explained more about this theory. According to Denzin (1989) there are three assumptions about symbolic interactionism. First, social reality which is understood is social production. The second one is that human beings can be engaged in minded and self-reflexive behavior. Third, human beings can interact with each other. Every person engages and possesses reflexive behavioral interaction with others. This behavior is goal driven. It is driven from social interaction that is symbolic in itself. It contains different forms, both verbal and non-verbal.

### **3.4. Assumptions**

#### **3.4.1. Theoretical Sampling**

We can define theoretical sampling as a method for the development of a theoretical category. The word sampling is so confusing and misleading that many researchers are not able to isolate it from the study of population and characteristics. Therefore, sampling will be done as a procedure before data collection. In contrast, other researchers administer theoretical sampling after the development of categories. Categories in grounded theory develop through the process which we call analytic process, and theoretical sampling will utilize those categories into new research. The important task of grounded theory is to substitute the possessions of categories. It also probes comparative data to provoke the properties that are hidden in a category. Moreover, the sense of grounded theory differentiates it from other types of research. Grounded theory first composes an experimental interpretation and then returns to the field and then assembles much data for checking and clarifying their category.

This theory is said to be addictive. What this means is that we consider all possible hypothetical accounts for explaining findings and then test these hypotheses. It involves both imaginative interpretation and reasoning about an experience. According to this definition, grounded theorists consider all theoretical explanations for collecting data. Then it investigates explanations through more experience for more data collection to follow more theoretical explanations (Chamaz, 2006). Therefore, grounded theory conducts researcher to understand their data in the most useful way.

### **3.4.2. Theoretical Saturation**

Theoretical saturation has been obtained when the main categories that have appeared from the inquiry process are developed with sufficient data to the extent that the incorporation of new data provides no additional insight. Saturation is the phase at which core categories, discriminated through the analysis, are advocated though relevant and difficult data and thus different properties of the categories are created in great detail (Charmez, 2006). According to Charmaz (2006, p. 100) “initial sampling helps to determine where to start data collection”. Charmaz (2006, p. 114) also concurs with this, asserting that theoretical saturation is a subjective exercise and that the Constructivist Grounded Theory method, being an interpretive approach, acknowledges both the importance and limitations of such subjectivity. The variety of the experiences, authority, and expertise of participants, along with the in-depth interviewing approach that has been employed, boosted by the rigor with which constructivist grounded theory analytic procedures were followed, and, finally, the thoroughness of coding and memo writing practices, leads one to conclude that the required depth and rigor have been accomplished in the research.

### **3.5. Data Collection**

The grounded theory method permits simultaneous data collection and analysis (Charmaz, 2006; Guba & Lincoln, 1989). In this kind of methodology, data is collected through using field notes, interviews, historical documents, government records, etc. Although, the data thus collected should be weighed in terms of relevancy, quality and quantity (Charmaz, 2006, p. 16). One of the most widely used data collection techniques in grounded theory is intensive interviewing. This strategy permits the researcher to have an in-depth exploration of a topic, with the interviewer’s active engagement, and interpretation of the interviewee’s responses. As Charmaz (2006, p. 26) describes it, “an [intensive] interview goes beneath the surface of ordinary conversation and examines earlier events, views, and feelings afresh”.

The constructivist grounded theory methodology suggest that the interview process should be open-ended, conversational and constructivist. It also needs fewer participants, but with rich detailed and intensive interviews. Intensive interview

enables the interviewer to ask for more detail, then review significant points and request more explanation (Charmaz, 2006). Open-ended semi-structured interviews were employed in order to collect data. In accordance with the constructivist grounded theory methodology, the first set of interviews were transcribed, reflected upon through memo writing, and then used as a basis for categorizing, discovering, selecting, informing and getting the consent of subsequent sets of interviewees.

### **3.6. Data Analysis**

In order to maintain informant's anonymity and confidentiality, every interviewee was given a pseudonym prior to interview transcription. Firstly, interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and coded line by line utilizing in-vivo codes. Following this, codes were analyzed for main categories from constant comparative analysis which is a strategy in which each piece of data is compared and contrasted with previous information in order to fit all the pieces of datum inductively to inform a larger trend (Strauss and Corbin 1994). When the main categories appeared, a core category was identified as the core phenomenon for improving the theory. The last phase of analysis included comparing new categories for related characteristics. Every category was considered in relation to other categories and to the core category. This led to the generation of subcategories, which showed theoretical propositions about learning that transpired through the process of international practice placement education (Charmaz, 2006; Kelle, 2007).

Data collection and analysis is iterative in grounded theory methodology. The most important part of data analysis is memo writing (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Three different coding phases and also memo writing through the analysis stages are necessary in order to identify concepts and categories. In part with Charmaz (2006, pp.43) "coding is an important step in a grounded theory data analysis". It is a process of labelling a line, sentence or paragraph of interview transcription or any other piece of data (like a segment of audio tape, video record, etc.) with a brief and precise name. Similarly, coding consists of two stages in constructivist grounded theory. Initial coding and focused coding. Open or initial coding is the first stage which consists of close reading and investigating data. Line-by-line coding helps the researcher to interact with the data. In addition, grounded



theorists use *in vivo* codes. It consists of inquiry participants' direct statements. *In vivo* codes assist grounded theorists with understanding participants' meaning and describing their emergent actions. Following this, selective or focused coding is the second phase of coding processes. This kind of coding allows grounded theorists to sort and synthesize large amount of data. They do focus carefully in order to assess which ones best explain or interpret the empirical phenomenon. These codes then become experimental theoretical categories after choosing the best codes that carry the weight of the analysis, what Clarke calls "carrying capacity" and "analytic momentum" (Charmaz, 2006).

Memo writing is defined as an intermediate stage between data collection and writing a draft of a paper or chapter (Charmaz, 2003, 2006; Glaser, 1978, 1998). It is about capturing ideas in process and progress. Following memos on the same category traces its development as the grounded theorist collects more data to illuminate the category and look deeper into its analysis. Memos, can be partial, experimental and exploratory. Furthermore, memo writing can provide a situation for exploring, checking and developing ideas. It also gives a chance to learn about the data instead of only summarizing material. During this memo writing, a researcher's ideas appear as discoveries unfold.

### **3.7. Establishing Trustworthiness**

There are four types of trustworthiness according to Lincoln and Guba (1985): credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. In qualitative research establishing trustworthiness is like validity and reliability in quantitative one. We can define trustworthiness as creating these four items. Credibility refers to confidence in qualitative research. Using the triangulation in qualitative research shows the application of research findings to other contexts, or situations. The degree of neutrality is conformability in most research. In order to make conformability, we need a statement to highlight data analysis steps for providing a logical decision making. Eventually, dependability refers to the repetition of a study by other scholars in order to test the consistency of the findings. It is also the essential part of a study to ensure that the finding is logical and could be repeated.

### **3.8. Design of the Study**

The first step of this inquiry is to understand the philosophical views behind the constructivist grounded theory research design. For this aim, the researcher identified the participants' experience in terms of teaching grammar in communication instruction. The experience of grammar teaching strategies would be obtained through a constructivist approach, which is inductive and focuses on meanings, values, beliefs and feelings ascribed by individuals in a study. A constructivist approach was utilized in order to gather and analyze data which were applied among participants.

At this stage of study, the selection of participants is carried out using a purposeful sampling technique. The most important and initial part of selecting participants was looking for those teachers who had related experience in grammar teaching instruction. Following purposeful sampling, the researcher recognized those cases who had much experience in teaching grammar. Theoretical sampling was also conducted to gain more information from other samples. This continued until the researcher felt that the data were saturated and repeated. Every participant supplied descriptions when they talked about their experiences about the study. These descriptions included values, beliefs and feelings ascribed by individuals in a study Charmaz (2006).

In line with purposeful sampling and theoretical sampling, twelve participants were selected to share their experience of teaching grammar with the researcher. Table 1 shows the characteristic of participants.

<b>Informants</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Teaching Experience</b>	<b>Teaching Level</b>
T.P.1.....	34.....	M.A.....	Male.....	15.....	Advanced....
T.P.2.....	44.....	M.A.....	Male.....	24.....	Advanced....
T.P.3.....	48.....	M.A.....	Male.....	26.....	Advanced....
T.P.4.....	41.....	M.A.....	Male.....	20.....	Advanced....
T.P.5.....	37.....	B.A.....	Male.....	7.....	Advanced....
T.P.6.....	35.....	M.A.....	Male.....	12.....	Advanced....
T.P.7.....	31.....	M.A.....	Female.....	14.....	Advanced....
T.P.8.....	32.....	M.A.....	Male.....	13.....	Advanced....
T.P.9.....	50.....	M.A.....	Male.....	26.....	Advanced....
T.P.10.....	41.....	B.A.....	Female.....	16.....	Advanced....
T.P.11.....	28.....	M.A.....	Female.....	6.....	Advanced....
T.P.12.....	37.....	M.A.....	Male.....	12.....	Advanced....

Table 1. Participants' Demographics

The following steps were taken in order to collect the required data for this study. Semi-structured in-depth interviews, open-ended, memo writing was developed for collecting data. In the interview phase, the participants were asked some questions about the strategies they used for teaching grammar structures. Due to the limited number of teachers in different institutes, each interview was administered in a different spot. For this purpose, each interview was held with several English teachers. Before beginning the interview, the researcher considered a proper place for the interview between herself and the English teachers. Moreover, the researcher transcribed all the participants' responses for further analysis. Memo writing was also done between data collection and data analysis in order that the researcher makes informal and unofficial analytical notes. The memos also consisted of free-flowing

ideas about a code (Charmaz, 2006). Memos contribute to a higher level of theoretical conceptualization (Charmaz 2003, 2006). Finally, the interview continued until all informants had no new perspectives or ideas on the topic.

Thematic analysis was performed for analyzing the data for this kind of study. Then, it was used in order to get patterns, themes, and categories in participant's data. First of all, the verbatim transcript of all participants' or informants' experience was read several times and relevant statements were underlined. Then every line was coded by using in-vivo codes and codes were analyzed to get main categories. Upon the emergence of main categories, a core category was identified as the central phenomenon for the developing theory. After coding all the transcripts, the researcher reviewed her memo writings from each interview and revised codes to reflect additional information. The final stage of analysis included emergent categories for related characteristics. Each category was considered in relation to other categories and to the core category. This led to the generation of themes and subcategories. Eventually, the experiences and expressions of participants were demonstrated.

# **Chapter Four:**

## **Results**

#### **4.1. Overview**

The purpose of the grounded theory addressed in this paper is to explore various strategies which EFL teachers use in teaching grammar in CLT classrooms. The meanings the participants made of their own experiences about teaching grammar in communication instruction have been also investigated. The fundamental scope of this chapter is to indicate a description of applied strategies utilized in teaching grammar with EFL teachers based on grounded data through interview and memo writing.

Thematic analysis was used for data analysis. All of the uncovered strategies were obtained through two categories: focus on form instruction and focus on forms instruction. These are two categories which were derived from this study. Many different strategies which have been put under focus on form instruction category are those strategies used by many EFL teachers owing to their skills and experiences in teaching grammar structures in their years.

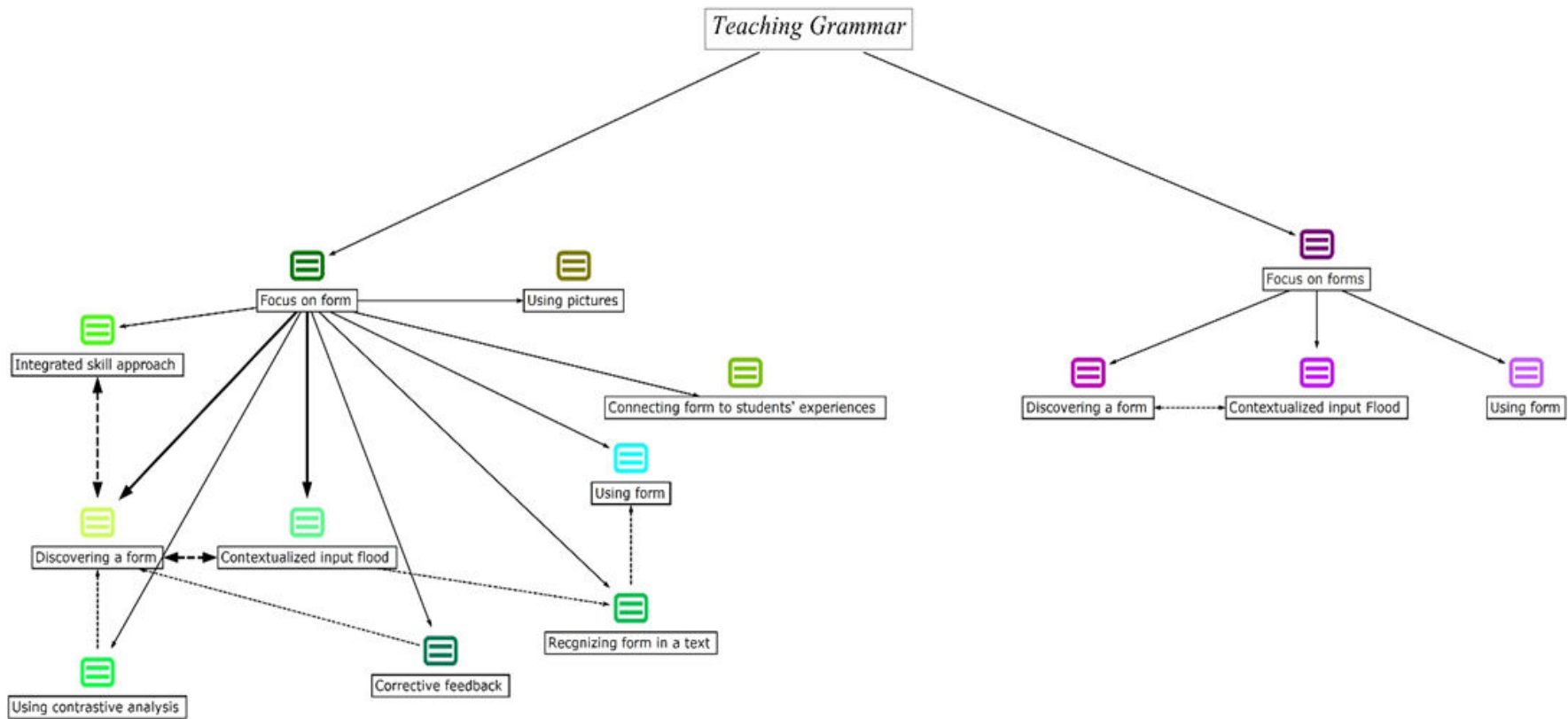


Figure 1 Themes Extracted from Teacher' Interviews

EFL teachers' techniques of addressing grammar in communication instruction were thematically analyzed both on paper and by MAXQDA computer software, used to seek the relationship between the super categories, categorizes and codes with each other. The results are presented through a semantic map.

As seen in figure one, there are two big categories. The first one is focus on form and the other is focus on forms. Subsequently, nine codes were derived from the first super category: discovering a form, connecting a form to students' experiences, using contrastive analysis, contextualized input flood, corrective feedback, recognizing form in a text, integrated skill approach, using form and using pictures. Moreover, discovering a form and using form were derived from the second categories. The relationship between the codes in each categories is shown with an arrow. In addition, the thickness of each arrow in picture shows the degree of relationship between each code.

*Discovering a form* is a code which has the strongest relationship with other categories in focus on form approach. EFL teachers present grammar rules and learners should discover the rules and forms through a flood of examples. In addition, learners are involved in the process of teaching. Put it differently, it is a learner and teacher centered approach. In *contextualized input flood code teaching* teachers often start their teaching process with a story. Then they try to include the grammar rules in the story and then accentuate the rules through intonation or highlighting. As can be seen in figure one, there is a relationship between discovering a form and contextualizing input flood. In both of them EFL teachers present an example at the first stage of teaching grammar, which is also known as presentation.

In *contrastive analysis code* the teacher predicts that most Iranian learners tend to have problems with some rules and forms and try to provide them with an example. The function of the example is to help learners to understand the rules and grammar forms.

In addition, *corrective feedback* was another code subordinating the focus on form approach. EFL teachers correct their learners' errors indirectly through an example and learners understand the correct forms.



In integrated skill approach EFL teachers integrate some skills in order to teach grammar rules inductively. First of all, they consider a skill in which grammar rules were included. Next, they teach grammar rules indirectly and inductively. Learners just listen to that special input not being aware of those special forms. Following this, teacher explains forms and rules via an example. Recognizing a form and using that form are two codes which are related together. In the extending phase of teaching grammar rules EFL learners should use and recognize the forms. Their teachers ask them to use and recognize the form they have learned. In both of them learners should apply what they have learned.

#### **4.2. Focus on Form Instruction**

For the past few decades, English instruction has moved away from traditional approaches toward communicative strategies in CLT classrooms. Most successful participants not only believe in these new strategies but they also try to use them during teaching grammar processes. Ample numbers of them found focus on form more interesting than other traditional approaches like focus on forms because it considers CLT principles of conveying meaning through focusing on form. Moreover, these forms can be taught implicitly or explicitly via some communicative tasks which helps learners to understand the grammar structure more clearly.

Likewise, the main syllabi of most institutes is to do with CLT activities. Then, most EFL teachers prefer to utilize focus on form instruction rather than focus on forms. They assume that teaching grammar rules in the context of meaning with focusing on form is more effective and applied. EFL learners need to communicate in the process of learning with their teachers and other learners. Put it another way, CLT classes should be learner and teacher centered.

The uncovered strategies under the influence of focus on form technique are some subcategories such as discovering a form, connecting form to students' experience, using contrastive analysis, contextualized input flood, corrective feedback, recognizing a form in a text, integrated skill approach, and the use of forms pictures. In addition, some uncovered subcategories such as discovering a form and using a form are also under the influence of focus on forms instruction category.

#### 4.2.1. Discovering a Form

In contrast to traditional teaching methods, modern methods are more effective and efficient. In traditional methods students never developed good proficiency and pragmatic competence, hence unable to function in real life situations; they only memorized and learned about the language and not the language itself. A teacher, one who implemented discovering a form, said: *“For example, when I want to teach conditional, I mix three conditionals, then I ask students what they would do if they inherited a lot of money. Then I explain to students that I have an old grandma who is too old to survive; I’m the only grandchild. If the money goes on to me, I’ll buy a car. I write my own example on the board and allow students to discover the rule.”* (T.P 10) In order to make certain that students can understand the grammar rules, the teacher create a situation such as an example to convey the meaning. *Another situation: “today, I wanna talk about my family. My dad can drive so well and my mom can cook well. Again I write on the board that my dad can’t drive slowly and my mom can’t make pizza. I underline or highlight can and can’t, allowing students to discover these rules.”* (T. P 5) Most teachers believe that grammar teaching should be inductive rather than deductive. They always start grammar teaching with some examples at attending phase. *Another informant: “imagine that I wanna teach adverbs of frequency. I never tell them to use subject first and then the frequency verbs and then the verb. As an example, I’d say “I always get up at 8 in the morning. You are always late”. I don’t give them forms and rules from the beginning. I keep writing examples on the board so the rules are naturally inferred”.* (T.P.12) In line with previous studies, this participant believed that consciousness raising tasks were very effective and improved noticing and proficiency gains. As informant confessed, he tends to rely on inductive approaches being a can characteristic of the teachers affected by CLT principles.

#### 4.2.2. Connecting Form to Students’ Experiences

In order to make certain that students can apply the grammar we teach in speaking or writing, the teacher wants students to talk about that rule with each other in a real context; the teacher names this ‘the extending phase’. She said: *“In this phase I want students to talk about themselves. For example, I teach the present continuous and ask them to relate it to their own lives and make a couple of sentences including*

*this tense. Or I teach since and for of the present perfect and want them to make sentences about how long they've been student.*" (T.P 3) Most of the teachers believe that grammar rules should be personalized and reinforced. For this purpose, they want their learners speak about their real life situation. *"to reinforce what students learn, we should create associations with aspects of their real lives. For instance, "when I want to teach present simple, I tell students to tell me what they really do from morning to night."* (T.P 7) learners need to speak and apply the target features they had learned so connecting form to students' experience. By using this strategy, the teacher can correct learners' errors and prevent fossilization. *"imagine that I have taught 'when clause of time'. I then tell them to make a couple of sentences about the events that happen in their lives using these forms. Then one of them says: Then, she said when I was eight, I had an accident or when I went to kindergarten, my brother born".* (T.P 12) In line with previous studies, these participants believed that consciousness raising tasks can help learners to reinforce grammatical forms.

#### **4.2.3. Using Contrastive Analysis**

Moderate and weak versions of CLT allows teachers to teach grammar. Consequently, such teachers design activities or tasks spontaneously. Endorsing the importance of contrastive analysis one of the participants said: *"... when I want to teach ALTHOUGH, I know tentatively that Iranian students use it with but in one sentence on the grounds that they have it in Persian. So I predict this might happen. I teach the item and then I write on the board a sentence including although. Then I deliberately add but in the following clause and ask students to find out if the sentence is correct or not".* (T.P 1) One of the participants declared about the reason of using this technique. *"The reason why Iranian students use although and but symbiotically is that the although...but structure exists in Persian, and students tend to overgeneralize this structure when they are translating in their minds. Contrastive analysis helps students develop awareness regarding grammar."* (T.P 3)

#### **4.2.4. Contextualized Input Flood**

Many teachers would want to teach grammar through a story including that structure abundantly. They believe that students should acquaint themselves with grammar items in a special context and then come to realize forms and rules. With this

end in view, one of the participants says: “... *I start with a sentence that goes I had an accident yesterday but fled. I don't know what's happened to that person. Students say, sometimes in Persian, that I should help that person and they I write on the board 'I should have helped that person. I then explain the rule and form to them.' (T.P 6)* Many EFL teachers believe that when meaning was conveyed through a context learner can understand the rules. Telling an exciting story attract students' attention to teachers' utterance. *Another time "I tell them a story including that grammar. Students may not be able to realize that grammar up until the end of the story. They just listen. Story finished, I tell them this would have happened if I had done this and that. See, I talk about conditionals this way." (T.P 8)* Telling an exciting story at the attending phase of teaching as a warm-up can attract learners' attention to the topic of the lesson. It is also intelligible for adults who know some structures and rules previously. They listen carefully because they are eager to the other part of story not to the grammar rules. *Another informant: "as an example, when I want to teach 'tobe going to', I draw somebody's picture on the board, then an airplane, then a ticket in the person's hand. I then explain to them that this is Tom and he wants to take a trip. Then I ask them how he's going to take his trip. Then I reply 'by airplane'. Then I'll draw some other sights and a hotel and ask: Who is he going to stay there with? Where is he going to take a trip? And in the end, they will understand this concept". (T.P.2)* In order to make certain that pupils can understand the grammatical rules indirectly, the teacher provide a context or situation. They also provide a situation as an example which including that structure. One of them said: *"when I wanna teach too+ adjective + infinitive, I give my students a situation. For example, I tell them that this chair is heavy and I can't lift it. Or this ceiling is too high and I can't touch it. I give them a situation and then explain the rule or form to them". (T.P.4)* with regard to previous studies repetition was the important factor in order to increase the grammatical forms in audio and visual text.

#### **4.2.5. Corrective Feedback**

When meaning is conveyed in a class, students might be making numerous mistakes which happen incidentally. That the teacher describes a form or structure for a piece of grammar item could be a helpful strategy. One of them stated: *"I write students' mistakes on the board with italic letters or highlight them so they draw my*

students' attention. For instance, I may hear that my pupils are not using the third person singular *-s* correctly with the verb. I then write a number of sentences including this *-s* with a different color. The fact that you write something using a variety of colors helps students to recognize that item". (T.p.1) Teacher can also realize students' mistakes in the process of teaching which can be corrected through feedback, elicitation, recast etc. Although they made lots of mistakes the teacher corrects them. As one of them said: "*in the first stage, I provide students with a dialogue including 'to be going to'. For example, I ask them 'what are you going to do in the future?'. They then start making sentences by means of wrong sentences. I will then correct them*". (T.P.4)

#### **4.2.6. Recognizing Form in a Text**

Teachers, or participants, believe that reinforcing a structure inside a text is a very helpful technique. Students need to practice what they learn so the sentences are enhanced. A teacher having taught skimming or scanning, it is time he knew whether his students can understand grammar or not. Students should pay more attention to the forms which are more important than others. On the other hand, grammar is a tedious lesson; many students do not like it. Highlighting a lesson helps students to enhance their learning. One of them said: "*I want them to highlight the forms they have learned. I wanna make sure which forms they will find because it is not possible to directly observe their grammar bank. I do this through highlighting sentences. For example, I may want them to highlight all the conditionals they have learned*". (T.P.3) Teachers believe that learners need to practice and reinforce what they learn so the sentences are enhanced. In addition, it is very effective strategy in order to learners recognize form in a text. "*in order for the input to be reinforced and enhanced, I should give them a text so they highlight the sentences I have taught them.*" (T.P.10) EFL teachers want to investigate their learners' grammar knowledge so the tasks are provided. For this aim, they check their grammar knowledge by some controlled activities. "*as a task, we can check their grammar by means of some controlled activities. For example, to deal with active and passive voice, I'll give them a text so they highlight those sentences in the text; this way they will develop deep knowledge about these grammar items.*" (T.P.4)

#### **4.2.7. Integrated Skill Approach**

Some teachers believe that a combination of skills makes a more successful lesson, hence the integrated approach. This strategy is so effective especially for teaching grammar. One of the participants expressed his experience as follows: *“I play a conversation with that form in it. In the following pages this conversation will be regarded as a warm-up for the form to teach. For example, when I want to teach the present perfect with never, they listen to a conversation that says ‘I’ve never jumped off a plain or Have you ever jumped off an airplane?’ Afterward, I tell them the rules.”* (T.P 12) In view of the fact that grammar rules become complex in more advanced levels and they tend to look alike, teachers seek help from other skills to ameliorate this situation. One of the participants said with this regard: *“... before I explain a rule, I read aloud a text every part of which is about one person and past continuous. I read the text aloud; they know nothing about this tense. Then I read the text aloud and they listen. Next, I teach them this grammar inductively. We practice then.”* (T.P 7) One of the participants explained about the reason of using integrated skill approach as follows: *“The reason why I use integrated skills approach is that students get to see the structures before a teacher starts teaching that item. This way they can understand that item by means of discovery learning.”* (T.P.4)

#### **4.2.8. Using Form**

Tasks are activities which are so important in teaching and learning. They are very momentous in the process of language teaching. It is essential that students be familiar with task types and ways to implement them. One of the participants said: *“In stage 1 I play a recording and they listen attentively. Then they listen to the task for another time. This time I make a short pause so they repeat what I play. If I teach future tenses, for example, they should listen to the recording and repeat what includes these tenses through the recording. More specifically, they listen to a dialogue about life on the moon between two youngsters. They listen and I make a pause so they repeat things about the future.”* (T.P.4) Having taught grammar appropriately, tasks help us to better apply the input. They need to practice what they have learned. Tasks are considered a very important means to this end. One of the participants’ statement concerning this technique is as follows: *“As for the extension phase, I may ask my students to write a sentence including the grammar I have*

*already presented. For example, I teach present perfect continuous and then I tell them to write a sentence by means of this structure; I have named this guided writing". (T.P.3) pupils need to use the form in the classroom so using the form. "In order for students to use a form, I write a question on the board. Then I have them discuss the grammar I have taught. For instance, I teach conditional sentences and ask them to begin talking about them. If they don't use the forms correctly, I will stop them and ask them to use the right form." (T.P.10)*

#### **4.2.9. Using Pictures**

A number of teachers have mentioned the use of pictures for teaching grammar, in communicative instruction. According to Advanced Theory, we create a link between a student's prior knowledge and the image we have created for them. If this connection is real, it can be very helpful for pupils. One of the participants declared: *"As an example, when I want to teach superlative adjectives and have students compare and contrast things, I show them a picture of an old and a new building. I tell them that one of the buildings is older. Or I show them the pictures of three apples each sized differently. I describe the status of the biggest Apple by means of an image. I create an opportunity so they can recognize what I am teaching; grammar is, indeed, so hard." (T.P.11)* When the input takes a visual form, students will never forget that image. In addition to the form, the meaning is shaped and transferred through pictures. As one of the participants stated: *"whenever I want to teach the past continuous or the past simple, I show my students two pictures. One picture represents 'duration of time' and another picture shows a finished activity: For example, I was eating popcorn when my mother came to my room. Finally, I explain that past continuous happened over a period of time and simple past refers to an activity which was finished. (T.P.9)*

#### **4.3. Focus on Forms Instruction**

Focus on forms instruction is one of the traditional approaches in grammar teaching. EFL teachers teach grammar forms in some separated lessons. Conversely to focus on form, this approach focuses on explicit knowledge for teaching grammar forms out of the context of meaning. In addition, PPP (Presentation-Practice-Production) model of grammar teaching is congruent of this type of approach for

teaching grammar forms. Most teachers utilize controlled meaningful drills and some free production drills in production phase.

#### **4.3.1. Discovering a Form**

In order that students become acquainted with a form inductively, they should be familiar with discovery approaches in the silent way. The role of the teacher should be somebody who encourages students to apply discovery approaches in order to activate their awareness. Concerning the importance of activating awareness, one of the teachers declares: *“as you know, there are two approaches to teaching grammar: inductive and deductive. In deductive method, we use discovery approaches. So the teacher uses awareness approach in the production phase. For example, when you want to deal with the present perfect in a text, we ask students to underline it so they pay attention to that form. This means that we have them underline a number of sentences and use General Approach and guess the form. When they make more guesses, we direct them toward discovering that form or rule, i.e. in the first phase of grammar teaching in communicative approach, we activate students’ awareness.”* (T.P.4) A teacher should use this method because the teaching of a stage is discovering form and structure. Students should use General Approach so they can guess the form inductively. One of the participants said: *“well, the approach I tend to use vary between deduction and induction. I use inductive methods more. I always emphasize the idea that teaching is more practical by means of examples. If you use rules from the beginning, students may have difficulty generalizing it to novel situations. I also move from known to the unknown. For example, when I wanna teach the present perfect, first I make sure students know what the simple past is and what its various aspects are. I also elicit responses from students and use situational language teaching. In order to make my lessons more interesting, I use various markers and pens to make the board look nicer.”* (T.P.11)

#### **4.3.2. Using Form**

Most participants tend to use tasks at production phase when it comes to teaching grammar. When the rule is given, students get some drill practice, a kind of controlled speaking practice. In other words, teachers should create a link between what they have already learned and new knowledge. *“I always ask them a few*



questions, which can be open ended. For example, I want them to tell a story. I sometimes give them a hypothetical situation and ask them what they would have done if they had been in that situation. They write 5 sentences and share with their classmates. I monitor what they do and offer them my feedback.” (T.P.11) In order to pupils utilize target features at practice phase I want them to do some controlled meaningful drills. “At practice phase I use controlled drills or controlled meaningful drills. For example, I teach a part of the present perfect and want them to complete the blank. I also expect their feedback. I write a sentence like ‘since 1992 I have ...’ on the board and then ask them to complete the rest of it.” (T.P.4)

#### **4.3.3. Contextualized Input Flood**

In order for students to better understand grammar parts, teachers try to include that grammar in a story, called context. “In presentation phase I start with a question or I tell them a story which functions as a situation. For example, if the lesson regards conditionals type 2, I say ‘I am on the bus and I am looking out of the window. A very expensive car passes by and I sigh and think what I would do if this car belonged to me.’ I then ask my pupils what they would do if the car was theirs. They make sentences and write them on the board. So, one strategy is offering a context in the form of a question or story, and sometimes I draw time lines on the board. Using graphic data helps students to better retain information. I also ask concept map checking questions to make sure students know what I say.” (T.P.11)



# **Chapter Five:**

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

## **5.1. Overview**

The important purposes of this study are to uncover strategies which most language teachers enact for teaching grammar in communication instruction. To meet these goals, a number of EFL teachers who have been successful in teaching grammar were chosen to elaborate on their applied techniques and also define of ‘how’ of employing such techniques.

This chapter presents a summary of the findings, a discussion of these findings in relation to the previous studies in the field, the pedagogical implications of the study, and the recommendations for further research.

## **5.2. Discussion & Conclusion**

A comparison between these findings and other studies reveals that teachers tend to use a wide range of strategies for teaching grammar with regard to CLT. The majority of participants in this study tend to use strategies relating to focus-on-form perspective although there are still a few allied with focus-on-forms, a more traditional approach. These findings are consistent with other studies which conclude that teachers tend to use a variety of teaching strategies depending on their context, social constraints and school or supervisor’s expectations.

The first and most applied strategy under the influence of focus on form instruction is discovering a form. The findings of this study show that the majority of the participants in this study tried to use them in their grammar lessons; EFL teachers present grammar rules and learners should discover the rules and forms through a flood of examples. In addition, learners are involved in the process of teaching. Put it differently, it is a learner and teacher centered approach. Highlighting the role of discovering a form, Amirian and Sadeghi (2012) conducted a study in order to investigate the influence of grammar consciousness-raising tasks on EFL learners’ performance and concluded that applying such techniques by participants was effective. In addition, Mohamad (2001) found that CRT tasks were more fruitful than traditional instruction when these tasks are applied in high intermediate ESL learners in comparison to low intermediate learners. The findings of the present study are in line with these. The participants of the current investigation also reported the use of CR tasks in their classes with similar conclusions.

The second strategy under the focus on form category, which was favored by some EFL learners, was connecting form to students' experience. The most EFL learners applied these techniques during teaching process. Reportedly, EFL teachers believe that if EFL learners want to learn a language, they should apply it in a real context. Therefore, they transfer a form to a real context of meaning by using this strategy. With this regard, Fotos and Ellis (1991) and Fotos (1994) concluded that consciousness raising tasks are very effective in which they improve noticing and proficiency gains. The findings of this study also endorse this viewpoint. Similarly, the participants in this study apply CR tasks in their classes and believe they are effective.

The other explored technique was contextualized input flood. In contextualized input flood teachers often start their teaching process with a story. Then they try to include the grammar rules in the story and then accentuate the rules through intonation or highlighting. It is an implicit strategy which most EFL learners use it in order to teach grammar rules and forms. To do so, EFL teachers tell a story in which grammar rules are highlighted. Providing a context of meaning helps learners to understand the grammar structures effectively. Teachers try to create a context or situation which will be the basis of focus on form instruction. These teachers believe that if meaning is conveyed through a context, learners will learn the rules more efficiently.

On the other hand, EFL learners can discover the rules and forms inductively through interaction and communication. The findings of this investigation can be related to the study of some other scholars like Trashey and White (1993) and Trahey (1996). They developed some materials like stories, games and exercises with the purpose of exposing students to adverbs. They found that acquisition happens when EFL learners are exposed to the target structure frequently. Similarly, Mahvelati and Mukundan (2012) conducted a study about cognitive style in the collocational knowledge of Iranian EFL learners. The result showed that input flood treatment enhanced the performance of the experimental group at the post-test stage. Some of the teachers who participated in the current study reported the use of input flood in grammar instruction with similar results.

Furthermore, Rikhtegar and Gholami (2015) found that input flooding improves the acquisition of English simple past tense. Tabatabaei and Yakhabi (2009) found that

although students' language production enhances the accurate use of grammar, input flooding plays a decisive role in speech complexity. Hernandez (2008) also indicated that the combination of input flood with explicit instruction was more successful than input flood alone in promoting learners' use of discourse markers. The participants in this study did not mention anything with this regard.

Also, Webb (2007) investigated the advantages of diverse aspects of lexical knowledge and found that repetition had an important influence on students' outcome at both productive and receptive levels. Carter (2014) investigated students' learning of verb-noun and adjective-noun collocations according to two instructional strategies: input flood only and the integration of input flood and input enhancement. He found that the combination of input flood and input enhancement could improve learners' L2 collocational knowledge. Spada and Lightbown (1993) and Trahey and White (1993) found oral input flooding to be more effective among elementary-school students whose L1 was French and who were learning ESL. The findings of the current study are perfectly in accordance with these investigations. Input flood and input enhancement are said to maximize the efficiency of grammar instruction.

Recognizing a form and using that form are two related strategies. In the extending phase of teaching grammar rules EFL learners should use and recognize the forms. Teachers ask them to use and recognize the form they have learned. As Sheen (1992) set out a study to measure direct and indirect consciousness raising tasks. The findings revealed that two groups of students did well in a written post-test of the structure taught. Most EFL teachers choose a reading text for highlighting the grammar rules they teach in their classes. This strategy will help teachers to investigate their learners' perception of linguistic features. Recognizing a form in a text was another strategy for learners' realization of grammar rules. Such expressions confirmed the finding of Moradkhan and Sohrabian (2009) who showed that the experimental group performed better than the control group. As said before, the use of CR tasks were emphasized by the participants of this study with similar results.

In integrated skill approach, EFL teachers integrate some skills in order to teach grammar rules inductively. First of all, they consider a skill in which grammar

rules are included. Next, they teach grammar rules indirectly and inductively through examples. Learners just listen to that special input not being aware of those special forms. Following this, teacher explains forms and rules via an example. Correspondingly, the method of integrated skill approach in teaching linguistic features was also indicated by Doan Dang and Nguyen (2012) who compared the differential effects of CR and the deductive approach under experimental conditions. The results revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control group in the analysis of grammar rules and the oral proficiency. The participants of this study did not report any tangible ideas with this regard.

One other type of grammar teaching category in communicative instruction was focus on forms, a traditional approach in teaching of grammar rules. Accordingly, most teachers utilize controlled meaningful drills and some free production drills in the production phase. They also use explicit knowledge for teaching grammar forms out of context of meaning. There are three strategies under the focus on forms category: discovering a form, contextualized input flood and using a form in PPP stages. Some EFL teachers allow their learners to discover the rules and use the form. In this manner, some participants use the form in practice and production phase of grammar teaching with some controlled drills or controlled meaningful drills. A limited number of teachers in this investigation use focus-on-forms method although it is believed to be a traditional perspective.

In the presentation phase of teaching grammar, one of the EFL teachers teach linguistic features inductively in order that learners discover the rules through the PPP model of grammar teaching. The findings of the current study and Khatib and Nikouee's (2012) showed that using PPP model help learners to automatize their knowledge of present perfect. They also concluded that explicit grammar instruction like communicative, meaning-based tasks by means of PPP model is more fruitful in automatizing proceduralized knowledge of grammatical structures. Most of the participants of the current study reported on the use of inductive teaching in their grammar lessons.

Furthermore, to verifying the previous finding and shed more light on techniques and strategies of teaching grammar in communication instruction, analysis of teachers' perspective gave rise to one technique and strategy that have not been

explored by the previous studies. As an effective strategy, EFL teachers believed that using pictures can be very helpful for pupils. When the input takes a visual form student can never forget that image. This kind of strategy is not in line with previous studies.

Constant analysis of the data revealed that teachers expressed their dire need for modern teaching tools and materials which would enable them to transfer meaning while teaching grammar inductively. They also expressed their satisfaction with the way such things facilitated teaching and understanding. This is not in line with any research done previously and is quite new in terms of research findings.

To sum up, most teachers in this study tend to use state-of-the-art procedures for teaching the forms of language and do not consider grammar as a part to ignore or forget. This is in line with the previously done research. For example, that mentions the role of textbooks, teaching materials, and courses which intend to update teachers' knowledge.

### **5.3. Implications for Practice**

Over the past few decades, the positive and constructive effects of CLT has been revealed. However, practitioners have not been able to effectively and efficiently apply them in classroom settings. Provided the findings of this paper are well recognized by teachers, grammar can be taught more effectively in language classrooms along with communication aspects of language. Grammar and its role in language cannot be underestimated. It is by far one of the most important aspects of language programs today. Even so, the manner it is conveyed and taught in classrooms is heavily influenced by factors that go beyond the scope of this research. However, the integration of communication approaches and CLT principles can assist teachers with better and more productive grammar lessons.

As clearly stated by scholars, grammar is one of the most fundamental subskills which numerous teachers continue to ignore. The findings and revelations of this research and similar projects can shed more light on the nature and essence of grammar and the role it is supposed to play in communication. The outcomes of this



research can be fruitful in pedagogical programs, assessment procedures and textbook development and design.

Teachers, teacher trainers and school policy makers can apply the findings of this research in their classrooms, training programs and workshops. In case teachers understand the communicative potency of grammatical structures and forms, they will teach them communicatively or in accordance with communicative principles so students can internalize and use them communicatively. Trainers should also be capable of train teachers who are open to this new perspective. School managers ought to higher their expectations so they teachers and trainers adapt themselves to new circumstances.

As testing is impacted by the findings of approaches and methods, the outcomes of the present study can entice test developers to design and create testing programs which direct pupils toward more communicative situations. Communicative and functional tests are not so prevalent in out EFL setting, hence, the effect tests should exert on teaching is not very well felt.

Accordingly, text book developers and curriculum designers should adapt their designs. On the condition that the findings of studies like this and similar research are welcomed and recognized, books and other teaching materials should be designed in a way that communicative grammar teaching becomes the core part.

#### **5.4. Suggestions for Further Studies**

Many various studies have debated about the strategies which most EFL learners had used in teaching linguistics features. Some other scholars had done different research for finding effective strategies about grammar teaching. The present study has discussed about the fruitful strategies of grammar teaching among successful EFL teachers in communicative instruction. The various success rate of each technique in order to help EFL teachers in grammar rules teaching should be followed by other scholars. The proper, effective, applicable strategy in the followers' language knowledge would be a good survey to help others to teach in a better manner.

Accordingly, each found technique through this study needs to be tested to find the degree of its effectiveness on EFL teachers' strategies about linguistics features.

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## چکیده

زبان‌آموزانی که زبان انگلیسی را با روش صوتی - زبانی آموزش دیده‌اند دانش عمیقی از گرامر دارند، اما این دانش و تجربه را برای برقراری ارتباط با دیگران به طور فصحیح نمی‌توانند استفاده بکنند. بنابراین یک تغییر به سمت روش آموزش زبان ارتباطی بوجود آمد. این تغییر مشکل سلاست کلام را حل کرد اما یک اثر ناخواسته داشت. اگرچه زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی را به راحتی می‌توانستند صحبت بکنند اما اشتباهات زیادی هم مرتکب می‌شدند. آنها مهارت ارتباطی خوبی داشتند اما از لحاظ مهارت زبان شناختی ضعیف بودند. علت این مشکل نادیده گرفتن گرامر توسط معلم‌ها در روش آموزش زبان ارتباطی بود. هدف این تحقیق، آشکارسازی تکنیک‌هایی می‌باشد که معلم‌های زبان انگلیسی در آموزش زبان ارتباطی برای تدریس گرامر استفاده می‌کنند. این تکنیک‌ها از اظهارات و تجارب دوازده معلم زبان انگلیسی در تدریس گرامر توسط روش آموزش زبان ارتباطی استخراج شده‌اند. دیدگاه معلم‌ها نسبت به تدریس گرامر به صورت تئوری توسط مصاحبه نیمه ساختار یافته الگو برادری شدند. به علاوه، روش دیگری به نام یادداشت برداری جهت جمع‌آوری نتایج مورد نظر و نتایج مربوطه مورد استفاده قرار گرفت. در نهایت اظهارات شرکت‌کنندگان بر اساس روش تجزیه و تحلیل داده‌ها در روش تحقیق سازه‌گرایی، مورد تجزیه و تحلیل واقع شدند. تمام تکنیک‌های آشکار شده تحت دو بعد آموزش به روش جدید و آموزش به روش سنتی بدست آمده‌اند. تکنیک‌های مختلف زیادی که تحت تاثیر بعد آموزش به روش جدید بوده‌اند همان تکنیک‌هایی هستند که بیشتر معلم‌های زبان انگلیسی نسبت به مهارت و تجربه خودشان در تدریس گرامر در سال‌های اخیر استفاده می‌کردند.

**کلید واژه‌ها:** تکنیک‌های معلم‌ها، آموزش گرامر، آموزش ارتباطی





**گروه زبان انگلیسی**

**پایان نامه کارشناسی ارشد آموزش زبان**

**بررسی تکنیک های مورد استفاده توسط معلم های زبان انگلیسی در  
تدریس گرامر در آموزش ارتباطی**

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