

**AN EXPLORATION OF STUDENTS'
BELIEFS ABOUT EFL GRAMMAR, TEACHING
AND LEARNING, AND STRATEGY USE: GRADE 11 IN FOCUS**

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ABSTRACT

There are complaints that students are attending higher institutions with serious EFL grammar deficit and weaker ability to use it accurately. This problem persists even while as well as after their college studies. Attempts to increase the level of their accuracy are partly limited by lack of empirical data regarding variables that underlie their beliefs, strategies and difficulties. The purpose of this study was to investigate learners' beliefs about EFL grammar, learning/teaching, and their strategy use. Data were obtained from 100 grade 11 students with Belief Strategy Questionnaire designed through literature review and unstructured interview. Four principal belief and strategy factors were identified: (a) Beliefs About Grammar; (b) Teaching/learning Beliefs; (c) Personal Strategy Use; and (d) Relationships Between Beliefs and Strategy Preferences. At the same time, it has been found out that: (a) the learners' view of grammar is chiefly the static / 'mechanic' one in contrast to the 'dynamic'/'organic' view; (b) their grammar teaching-learning beliefs are, greatly, of product-oriented, as opposed to process - and skill-oriented ones; (c) their personal strategy use is predominantly limited to learning grammar from product perspective in preference to process and skill perspectives; and ultimately (d) the factor analysis of the data has shown strong impacts of the learners' static/mechanic views of grammar in their teaching and learning strategy preference. These findings provide valuable information that can be used as the bases for developing appropriate programs and strategies that take into account the learners' beliefs, experiences, wants and difficulties.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem

As the English language grammar command of learners has ever been deteriorating, schools, colleges, universities and training institution are increasingly under criticisms from the public and stake-holders. Certainly, effective communication in a foreign language would severely be hampered without an ability to put grammar into use in a variety of situations (Batstone, 1994a; Hall, 1998; Widdowson, 1990). However, currently, there are complaints that a considerable number of students are attending higher institutions to study English or other subjects in English with a very weak knowledge of English grammar and little ability to use the language accurately. As this deficiency in grammar goes on to persist with them in their college stay, it is too difficult to maintain quality of education. What is more, the limited English grammar command of graduates from colleges and universities has continued to be a topic of complaints. Indeed, these seem quite reasonable for ". . . language learning *is* essentially learning how grammar functions in the achievement of meaning" (Widdowson, 1990:97; Emphasis original).

All these problems might well make one point the finger, especially, at the high schools where a lot could be done, on time, to overcome this serious grammar short-coming of the learners.

Although the root causes of learners' difficulties can be attributed to myriads of variables, quite recently applied linguists and researchers are drawing attention to 'beliefs' that learners bring into the learning situations as one of the key factors for either success or failure in learning foreign languages (Abrham & Vann, 1987; Cotteral, 1995; Horwitz, 1987; Wenden, 1986, 1987, 1991; Mori, 1999; Ellis, 1994; Williams & Burdern 1997). Learner belief, thus, can be a good cue as to where learners' difficulties may be.

Prior studies (Oxford, 1990; Oxford and Burry-Stock, 1995; Hosenfeld, 1987; Willing, 1991; Horwitz, 1987; Wenden, 1986) have suggested that learners bring into classroom a variety of their own 'mini - theories' (beliefs) about language, language learning or teaching, and about strategies to achieve learning (Richards and Lockhart, 1994).

However, scholars, still, argue that there has been relatively little research done on the nature of learner beliefs and even by far less on how these beliefs affect language learning (Ellis, 1994). What is more, information on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' beliefs about learning of specific language skills and language areas is relatively scanty. More specifically, very little has been done on grammar in this respect (Mitchell, 1994; Rinvoluceri, 1984; Borg, 1999; Tudor, 1996). As grammar is "particularly liable to be influenced by different views" (Stern, 1992:128), it is particularly useful to "discuss what participants understand by 'grammar' . . . their past experiences . . . and their present expectations . . . [as well as] . . . the role that grammar should play in learners' study program as a

whole" (Tudor, 1996: 209). Indeed, at present, applied linguists assert that grammar teaching should be learner-centered (Rutheford, 1987; Batstone, 1994; James, 1994). That is, their beliefs and attitudes need to be taken into account in the selection of contents and learning experiences.

On the whole, the above reviews suggest that, although vital, there is lack of coherent and empirical data on what learners' beliefs about grammar are, and the effects of these on their approach to teaching and learning/studying grammar.

Indeed, in our current local situations, this lack of insights we experience seem to have emanated from various reasons.

Primarily, although some have attempted to make studies on EFL grammar, quite majority of their studies focus on teaching methodologies from just the teachers' perspectives.

Secondly, the predominance of studies made so far are largely on the four language skills and other language areas more than on grammar. This is, of course, a sharp contrast with the role of grammar in communicative competence, and the key positions it occupies in the research available in the second language learning world wide.

Thirdly, nowadays, there are misconceptions and uncertainties about the role of grammar and learning and teaching it, which exacerbate further the problems.

Therefore, it seems worthwhile to share the position of Horwitz (1987) who advises that the assessment of the linguistic background of learners ensures the most effective language teaching and that a systematic assessment of their beliefs, too, facilitates learning to a greater extent. Thus, it sounds reasonable to suggest that the absence of evidence about learners' beliefs is likely to be a cause or a result of many of their difficulties.

For that reason, what is fundamental, nowadays, in the teaching-learning of EFL grammar, is finding out learners' beliefs in these areas and digging out the effects of their beliefs so as to build appropriate teaching programs and strategies that can improve their deficient knowledge about English grammar and ability to use it.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

Thus, the overall goal of this study is to investigate students' beliefs about learning EFL grammar and the impacts of these upon their approaches to teaching and learning strategies. To accomplish this goal, the following specific objectives are established:

- 1) to assess learner beliefs about grammar, its relation with meaning, communication, and learning languages in general;
- 2) to examine learners' grammar teaching beliefs;
- 3) to investigate learners' personal strategy use for effective learning of EFL grammar; and,
- 4) to examine the relationships among their above belief variables and their strategy use.

1.3 Significance of the Study

It is felt that the accomplishment of the above objectives might offer invaluable information for making informed decision about teaching grammar.

More specifically, the study is believed to be important to practitioners, researchers and policy - makers in the following ways:

- 1) It is believed that it would shade light on learner beliefs (erroneous or desirable) and help to make the necessary repair;
- 2) Hence, it is believed that it might help teachers to predict and meet learners' expectations, interests, and difficulties;
- 3) Thus, it would offer a principled method for treating the teaching learning of EFL grammar, with far-reaching implications for the design of syllabus and organization of classroom techniques and procedures;
- 4) Finally, it would also encourage other practitioners to further investigate learner beliefs, affects and feelings in other language areas and skills as well as;
- 5) To investigate learners beliefs about English learning at all levels.

1.4 Theoretical Perspective

In formulating a theoretical perspective for studying learner beliefs, studies in the second language learning/ acquisition provide a useful prototype. Recent developments in educational psychology reveals that learning of any kind, including language learning, is an interaction of the cognitive, affective and

environmental factors. Fundamentally, this unified theoretical framework approximates the explanation of human behavior in terms of what Bandura (1977:vii) calls, "a continuous (reciprocal) interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental determinants." In this continuous interaction lie students' beliefs. Stipek, a psychologist, argues, "students' **beliefs** are important determinants of behavior, whether or not the beliefs are based on any objective reality" (1988:119 emphasis original). Fox (1993:22), too, adds, "it is the pupils' beliefs in any situation that produce their emotional responses, and it is their emotional response that underpins their behavior."

By the same token, researchers, recently, are increasingly drawing attention to learners' beliefs about the nature of language, language learning and the strategies they employ for effective learning (Mori, 1999; Schommer, 1990; Cotteral, 1995; Oxford, 1990; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Wenden, 1991; Horwitz, 1987).

Accordingly to the model developed by Wenden (1986) and Abraham and Vann (1987), learner beliefs guide their approach to language learning, which directly exerts tremendous influence upon the degree of success in language learning. Currently, researchers believe that successful language learning constitutes awareness of the nature of language, language learning, and of effectiveness of one's own learning strategies (Ellis, 1994; Ehrman, 1997). Thus, learner beliefs about language (learning) is one of the key components in this unified theory

which involves awareness of one's cognitive and affective processes and about one's learning strategies (Williams & Burden, 1997).

Wenden (1991), one of the pioneers in this area, succinctly categorizes learners' 'meta-cognitive knowledge' (belief about language learning) into three types:

- a) 'Person knowledge,' involving knowledge about the laws of human learning; how learning takes place; what one knows about him/her-self as a learner;
- b) 'Strategic knowledge,' involving the stored knowledge about strategies; strategies that work best and how best to approach learning; and
- c) 'Task knowledge,' that includes what learners need to know about the procedure that constitutes the tasks, to accomplish successfully, i.e., the purpose, the nature, etc. of the task.

Also, Wenden interestingly summarizes the nature of learners' beliefs as follows:

- a) They are stable, i.e. they are permanent part of their stored knowledge, and are acquired both formally and informally;
- b) They are storable, i.e. learners can talk about their beliefs as they are available for awareness;
- c) They are fallible, i.e. learner beliefs are not always correct. Some of their beliefs may represent 'folk wisdom' about learning acquired from friends, teachers, etc. or the outcome of their learning experiences. In

other words, their beliefs might make good sense, but not always empirically supportable;

- d) They are interactive, i.e. learner beliefs interact with and influence learning goals, or tasks, strategies, and awareness of learning.

It still seems very important and more comprehensive to add the Schommer (1990) feature of learner beliefs:

- e) Independence, i.e. the effects of learner beliefs on learning exists independently of one's ability to learn. In other words, learners beliefs and their abilities to learn have differential effects on their learning; thus, positive beliefs could compensate for one's limited ability.

With regard to the significance of exploring learner beliefs, applied linguists argue that it is an essential step in understanding learner difficulties, and, consequently, in improving teaching and facilitating learning (Ehram, 1997). Further, it helps a lot for developing learner autonomy and learner training (Wenden, 1986, 1991) as well as for repairing learners' erroneous beliefs (Horwitz, 1987). Moreover, it helps to predict expectational conflict that may contribute to students' frustrations, anxieties, lack of motivation and, in some cases, quitting of foreign language study (Kern, 1995). Finally, it will also enable us to understand the mind so that we guide students to be thoughtful, persistent and independent learners (Schommer, 1990).

In the application of this theory of belief about language learning to this study of grammar, the following underlying logic is designed for conducting the exploration: Learners' (a) beliefs about grammar will consistently be reflected in (b) their teaching-learning beliefs, and directly influence (c) their grammar learning strategy use.

1.5 Definition of Terms

'**Belief**' is defined by Weisberg, et al (1996:14) as "opinions about the objective state of the world." *Cambridge International Dictionary of English* (1995) defines 'belief' as, "the feeling of certainty that something exists or true." Similarly, in this study '**belief**' refers to what a person thinks to be true, no matter whether it is true or untrue or appropriate or faulty.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Views on the Concept of Grammar

2.1.1. EFL Learners' Views of Grammar

Williams (1994) succinctly summarizes EFL learners' perceptions of English grammar. According to her study, the first view of grammar is "a collection of shibbolethic rules, ubiquitous in English society" (Ibid. p.106). This view of grammar is highly prescriptive. Besides, it differentiates the standard form from non-standard form. The non-standard forms are stigmatized. This view of grammar, thus, leads to insecurity and hyper-correction, which has, "in recent years become so frequent" in teaching grammar.

The second view of grammar is what is usually referred to as 'traditional school grammar.' This view of grammar consists of rules for identifying parts of speech, and for parsing (analyzing) sentences. This view, nowadays, has, "received a rather more sympathetic reaction from linguists" (Inbid.) because the ability to analyze and synthesize the target language system is believed to be a necessary and importunate component of learning language.

The third view of grammar is a 'narrow linguistic' one. In this conception, grammar consists of rules characterizing "well-formed sentences" i.e., the acceptability of the word order, morphology and syntactic elements without reference to meaning. Grammar in this narrow sense refers to the structuralist

immediate constituent theory and the formalist transformational generative approach.

The fourth and broadest view of grammar is 'pragmatic' or 'communicative' grammar. This conception of grammar includes not just morphology and syntax, but also phonology, semantics, discourse and pragmatics. Williams describes this view as "grammar as communication in terms of 'what structure x means'" (Ibid. 107). This view is the most contemporary and useful one.

2.1.2 'Static' and 'Dynamic' Views of Grammar

These characterizations of grammar --- as dynamic and/or static --- are largely attributed to Rutherford's (1987) metaphors of language, namely 'organism' and 'machine,' respectively. He has a convincing reason for metaphorising language these ways: ". . . it is [the] perceptions of language that must in turn lead to the assumptions, **about** language upon which we have everything that we do **with** language," including teaching and learning it (emphasis original) (p.57).

Like machine, languages have component parts or 'building blocks' that can be 'taken apart' and 'put together,' namely phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical, semantic, etc. structures. However, viewed as machine, "it is what the language means, not what people mean by the language that counts" (Nayyss'ö'nen, 1995:162). This view also signals language as a 'finished product' or as a 'fixed system'.

In the 'machine-like' view of language lies the static view of grammar. This is a 'grammatical - product' model. It is a view of grammar as an object of study in isolation from meaning, use, 'change' and 'movement.' Grammar perceived as 'static' can also be described as an 'object' to be studied or as 'knowledge' to be memorized, or as Rutherford (Ibid.) says, as a collection of facts in some academic disciplines like history or mathematics.

Put as a whole, this view of grammar entails studying or teaching grammar for its own sake or grammar as an end rather than as a means to proficiency (competence). This view actually misses what grammar really is.

So, the 'dynamic' view of grammar is by far valid and tenable. In the dynamic view, grammar is, "the on-line discourse processing aspect of language rather than the set of constructs with which discourse is 'put together.'" (Rutherford, p.145). The dynamic view of grammar is, thus, in line with the organismic concept of language. Language is rather un-machine-like. It changes and grows over time. Both 'human language' and 'learner' language change over time. Unlike machines, which have linear interconnections, languages (like organisms) have cyclical interconnections. "To the great extent then that we may ascribe to language these characteristics of growth, change, plasticity, fecundity, genetics, regeneration, etc." (Ibid, p.37).

Thus, from language-as-organism view consistently develops a dynamic view of grammar, i.e. grammar as, "a resource providing us with options from which we choose in order to signal our meanings effectively and appropriately" (Batstone,

1994a:66). This belief about grammar can also be described as 'grammatical - process' model because in this model grammar is regarded as a 'device' or 'strategy' for the purpose of achieving discourse, and it is defined in terms of lexis, too. For instance, Widdowson (1990:87) argues that grammar "can be seen as a resource for the adaptation of lexis," Accordingly, grammar plays a 'regulative' function, i.e., the adjustment of syntactically combined lexical sequences in the determination of meaning in context.

The dynamic view of grammar is, thus, more relevant as well as valid than the static view. In the former's conception, unlike the latter which considers grammar as a fixed 'machine', grammar serves as a meaning - potential for dialogue, and for combining different kinds of meaning in one utterance. It is, indeed, used for thinking and acting with at the same time (Halliday, 1994).

The dynamic view----the most contemporary-----thus tightens the interdependence of form and function and forces us to understand grammar in relation to semantics and pragmatics. The static view, however, is very similar to the structural, generative, and traditional grammarians' views. The most well-founded argument in the dynamic conception is that of the developmental feature of grammar. This feature of grammar parallels the ontologies of first and second language and links it to the cognitive processes and learning activities of the learner (Candlin in the preface to Rutherford, 1987).

However, it is still very essential to note that the 'static' or 'mechanic' and the 'dynamic' or 'organic' views of grammar are not necessarily contradictory to each

other. The static view, in particular becomes incomplete and damaging when it is accepted, as usual, as the only one, precluding the other options.

Conclusively, there are three conceptions of grammar which are relevant (Batstone, 1995): First, grammar can be seen as independent of discourse or language use, characterized by semantic study, formulating statements about meaning which appear to attach to self-standing grammatical form, i.e. 'notional/semantic level of meaning.' Second, grammar can be seen as a dependent and inseparable component of discourse or communication, characterized by interdependence between grammar, lexis, and the wider discourse context, i.e. 'implicit or covert meanings.' And, the third conception of grammar is grammar as both dependent on and independent of discourse, so that the relationship between grammar and discourse is reciprocal.

2.2 Approach to Teaching Grammar

2.2.1 Attitude to Teaching - Learning Grammar

Applied linguists, teachers, and even students hold various opinions on the place of grammar in an EFL classroom. Stern (1992) describes positions on the teaching and learning of grammar which fall roughly on a continuum, from 'anti-grammarians' through 'tentative grammarians' to 'positive grammarians' attitudes. The anti-grammarians "believe that the analysis of grammatical features has no bearing on the ultimate competence of a second language acquirer" (Ibid.141). Accordingly, the teaching of grammar is ruled out or overt grammar teaching is rejected. This position is described as 'zero-option' (Ellis, 1994) or 'no -

consciousness-raising' (Rutherford, 1987). Likewise, it is not uncommon to observe teachers or learners who consider grammar teaching as 'dull or 'old - fashioned' methodology and thus would like to have as little as possible of it.

On the other hand, the tentative grammarians let a little grammar in. They are on the verge of "accepting or rejecting the centrality of grammar in the classroom" (Stern, p.141). They are in - between and hence they adopt a cautious position. They acknowledge that some grammatical structures are resistant to overt teaching, but they still admit that one cannot entirely abandon grammar.

The positive grammarians, nevertheless, adopt a confident position on the role of grammar. They unambiguously say 'yes' the teaching of grammar of any kind is significant (Ur, 1996; Celcer Murcia and Hilles, 1988; Rutherford, 1987; Hall, 1989; Doughty and Williams, 1988). Probably, a large number of students, too, like to have more grammar in their classes; however, it is worthy to note that "many of these students demand grammar instruction because it fulfills a cultural expectation of what constitutes a language class" (Celce - Murcia & Hilles, 1988:7). To such students, and even to some teachers, too, to learn a language is just equal to learning its grammar rules. They assume that "more grammar = more proficient (Richards, 1985:148). Likewise, there are some methodologists, too, who take an aggressive, "single - minded point of view suggesting that . . . there is only one 'common - sense approach' to teaching grammar" (Stern :142). As a result the possible options and variation of strategies of teaching grammar are rejected.

In sum, currently, as grammar is making a come back 'from its temporary exile' (Widdowsson (1992:334), the anti-grammarians attitude is no more put up with; nor is the half-hearted, tentative grammarians position tenable. Nonetheless, this restoration of grammar does not mean a maintenance or a come-back of the traditional, single-minded, narrow concept of grammar. Language learning, in addition to other things, involves paying attention to, and mastering the grammatical structures of the language. Thus, positively looked at, grammar teaching and learning is important; it is a means to an end (i.e. proficiency) but not an end by itself. For Widdowsson "language learning is essentially learning how grammar function in the achievement of meaning . . ." (Ibid:97).

2.2.2 Teaching Grammar as Product

Teaching grammar as product is very similar to the machine-view of language, the static conception of grammar and the conventional ways of teaching grammar (Rutherford, 1987). Batstone (1994a :132) defines 'product teaching' of grammar as "focusing learner's attention on pre-specified forms and their meanings." This suggests that teaching grammar as product signifies the structural approach which focuses learners' attention on, "the syntactic and semantic properties of the language itself and looks for ways of manipulating them for the purpose of transmission" (Widdowson, 1990:119).

Very recently, applied linguists put the functional - notional approach, too, under product teaching because in both the structural and functional - notional syllabuses, the linguistic units ---- formal or nation or function ---- are pre-specified

and ordered with the assumption that," once they are taken into the psychic store they are ready to be issued as ready-made tokens of communication" (Widdowson, Ibid).

In product teaching, the learner works on the linguistic units, focusing on the power of abstract rules to generate, with lengthy practice, repetition, memorization of expressions and rules. The ultimate task of teaching is, thus, to impart knowledge about the language. The learners are, hence, largely dependent on the teacher and they are receivers of corrections of grammar errors. Usually, this approach to teaching grammar is described as 'focus on - forms' 'formal instruction' or 'explicit teaching of grammar' and so on.

The main disadvantage of product teaching is that while learners who receive product-teaching will end up with knowing quite a lot about the language, they will not necessarily be able to put the language to communicative effect. However, very recently, applied linguists argue that this approach has advantages, too; it can have a motivating effect, and it can facilitate 'noticing' and 'restructuring' (Batstone, 1994).

In general, although product teaching of grammar plays some roles in the achievement of grammatical competence, it is half-blind and inadequate unless it is buttressed by other approaches. As such, this style of teaching grammar has currently declined although not ruled out. Some believe still that grammar "exists as a significant and autonomous phenomenon which must be studied in its own right" (Ellis, 1995).

2.2.3 Teaching Grammar as Process

Batstone (1994a: 132) defines this approach to teaching grammar as, "regulating tasks for language use to encourage the deployment of grammar through self-expression." This means that if one decides to teach a grammatical structure, he or she has to look for a task (non - linguistic) in which the grammatical structures are "hidden." In other words, teaching grammar from process-perspective is equivalent to task-based language teaching. It is also very similar to the 'content-based' and 'integrated' language teaching approaches as the main feature of teaching language in all these ways is to enable the learner to participate in discourse processes and exchange of meanings.

Teaching grammar from process-perspective is also very similar to Widdowson's (1990) 'mediation perspective' to meaning. In this approach, he expresses that the "learner will be engaged in activities designed to achieve purposeful outcomes by *means* of language. The activities here will be typically *tasks* for problem solving" (p.119 Emphasis original). In similar opinion, Skehan (1995:95) argues, "From a processing perspective we need to consider how language is represented, and how it is accessed and deployed."

In sum, the main aim of process teaching is to find ways in which grammar rules are deployed in communication, negotiation of meaning and sharing of knowledge. Thus, engaging learners in process teaching is assumed as a way to promote fluency through accessing a given type of grammatical structure in

relation to deployment of different lexical units, presuming a gradual improvement in accuracy as well as fluency.

Unlike the product teaching, the methodology in process teaching is not applied directly to the language (grammar), but to the task which are designed to enable learners to sub-consciously "acquire" the language incidentally. Thus, this approach is usually described as "form-defocus" or "message" or "meaning-focused."

The main drawbacks of strictly adhering to this approach to grammar is summarized by Skehan (1994) as follows. It may well lead to the use of comprehension and communication strategies, and encourage a performance - oriented approach to grammar learning. This results in relatively developed fluency and synthesis at the expense of accuracy and restructuring. Although it is suggested that interaction will extend the grammatical system, the reality may be that the engagement in the grammatical processes becomes "unhooked" from communication. Skehan notes, "As a result, the grammatical system is by passed, rather than extended or effectively applied, and short-term communicative gain assumes, greater importance than longer - term grammatical development" (p.190).

So, admitting that this approach to teaching grammar is contemporary and far - reaching, it is by no means sufficient by itself. Thus, it has to be reinforced by explicit teaching of grammar and others.

2.2.4 Teaching Grammar As Skill

Teaching grammar as skill was originated due to the critical gap observed between the teaching of grammar as product (affiliated to structural approach) and as process ('affiliated' to communicative approach). As Batstone (1994a:52) clearly indicates, "product and process teaching are radically different from each other: the former requires a careful control of form for the learner, the latter emphasizes the use of language by the learner."

While product teaching emphasizes largely explicit knowledge, process teaching, however, predominantly stresses direct experience avoiding the explicit knowledge. In other words, in process teaching "conscious awareness and reflection on one's experience is thought to have an inhibiting effect" (Widdowson, 1990:97).

Hence, educators had to find an approach which strikes the balance between product teaching and process teaching. Long (1990), for instance, proposed the idea of 'focus on form' as opposed to 'focus on forms' (N.B. plural). According to him 'focus-on-form' overtly draws students' attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication. Likewise, teaching grammar as skill aims at very similar goal. It is defined as 'carefully guiding learners attention to grammar while retaining a measure of self-expression and meaning focus.'" Thus, skill approach addresses the integration of accuracy and fluency.

The psychological underpinning of skill approach lies in constructs borrowed from cognitive psychology, first designed for skill learning (e.g. driving car) but later on applied to language learning. Cognitive psychologists argue that paying attention is a prerequisite for processing, understanding and retrieving information. Similarly, applied linguists (e.g. Schmidt, 1990) argue, permanent encoding of a stimulus in memory cannot occur without detection, noticing, and rehearsal of noticed information in short term memory. Carr and Curran (1994:207) stress, "there is little compelling evidence that requires any one to believe in a strong form of 'unconscious abstraction' - the full construction of very abstract rule systems completely outside of awareness" and that focused attention is needed for grammar learning. Thus, learning a language, like learning other skills, involves the development of conscious procedures that transform declarative knowledge into procedural knowledge (Andersen, 1980: Johson, 1995).

The implication of skill theory for grammar learning and teaching is tremendous. According to the skill theory, grammar rules "are learnt as separate bits of knowledge, and thus have to be 'accessed' from memory" (Bygate, 1994:248). it also implies that "knowing will be derived from doing" (Widdowson, 1990), and that 'demonstration of the skill enables, the learner to learn" as opposed to the conventional vice versa (Rutherford, 1987:175). Very similar to these, Skehan (1995:99) argues grammar learning has to proceed through cognitive mechanism: "syntactic second language systems will have had to develop by cognitive means" because the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) is now defunct as opposed to the first language acquisition time.

Skill teaching emphasizes, thus, arming learners with the conscious, cognitive skill of understanding the (general) grammatical system of the language so that they workout the underlying rules of the language for themselves. On the whole, skill teaching does not only aim at teaching the grammatical systems of the language but also at teaching learning so that learners develop 'meta-cognition', 'the will and skill to educate oneself' (Collins, 1997:452).

There are varieties of methodologies or techniques that help in teaching grammar as skill. Some are, "focus-on-form" (Dougty & William, 1998; Ellis, 1994; Long, 1990), grammatical consciousness raising (Rutherford, 1987; Sharwood - Smith, 1988), grammaticization (Batstone, 1994), 'interpretation' (Ellis, 1994) and reflection (Swain, 1995) etc.

Advantages of teaching grammar as skill are tremendous. It does not only assist in the learning of the particular foreign language one aims to learn, but also it equips learners for future learning of any languages they might need to learn, i.e., it contributes to the individual's L2 learning know-how (James, 1994:213). Besides, by focusing on underlying skills and competencies, it assists learners to develop control over the creative springs of the foreign language.

Nevertheless, teaching grammar as skill still has some minor problem. It is quite demanding a task for students and it might not fit with learning styles of some students.

2.3 Relationships Among Beliefs About Grammar, Learning and Strategy Use

Product oriented view of grammar learning is basically instrumental and it is learning grammar for its own sake. That is, it is characterized by memorizing grammar rules like studying mathematical formula. The "emphasis is on the objectives and not the procedure of language learning" (Widdowson, 1990:131). Rutherford (1987) describes this view as 'conventional' and 'accumulated entities' theory. In this view a person starts learning a second or foreign language learning from point zero and through steady accumulation of the entities of the target language, the learner agglutinates them in quantities.

Product-view of grammar learning, thus, is consistent with learners' conformity to transmission, dependence on authority (teacher), giving high premium to 'correctness', avoidance of errors, and grammatical well-formedness, and step-by-step learning.

Like so, product - view of grammar learning is away from cogency and accuracy though it has some element of uprightness.

In contrast, process-view of grammar learning is basically underpinned by 'acquisition theory.' This means subconscious learning or "picking-up." This is assumed to be better than learning, conscious study of the grammatical system, because 'acquisition' serves "the ultimately authentic function of spontaneous language use in naturalistic setting" (Rutherford, 1987:22). As such, this view leads to involving in actual language use than explicit study, it is assumed, as

"acquisition of grammar systems arises from general circumstances of use and communicative interaction" (Tomlin, 1990:161).

The process-view of grammar learning is apparently persuasive. However, it has still some drawbacks that should be compensated by other views. First, the acquisition-learning distinction is refuted by recent development in cognitive psychology. Second, the down-grading of form-focused learning by trusting just exposure is, especially, unreasonable in EFL settings. Third, the morpheme acquisition research which this view is based upon does not guarantee validity.

The third view of grammar learning ---- learning grammar as skill ---- is underpinned by skill theory initially designed for learning other skills. According to Johnson (1995) skill perspective involves three stages: verbalization, automatization, and autonomy. During 'verbalization' stage, the teacher describes and demonstrates while the learner consciously perceives and understands. During 'automatization' stage, the teacher suggests exercises while learners practice skill in order to acquire facility, and automatise it; the teacher monitors. And, during 'autonomy' learners continue to use skills on their own - becoming more proficient and creative.

The main implication of this theory to grammar learning is that "grammar is viewed initially as procedure to be applied to the use of lexical items" (Bygate, 1994:241). Likewise, in learning grammar, "what tends to happen is that conventions need to be learnt independently and then associated with relevant lexical items in relevant contexts, in order to be appropriately applied" (Ibid).

Another view of grammar learning implied in skill-learning theory is "learning grammar from initially acquired language", i.e. mother-tongue. Rutherford (1987) argues second or foreign language learners possess two kinds of knowledge, namely 'knowledge that' and 'knowledge how (to).' He defines 'knowledge that' (or 'declarative knowledge') as "unconscious foreknowledge' or innate 'inkling' of what shapes the organization of the target language can assume and the capacity . . . to make good guesses about what he [the learner] doesn't know" (p.7-8). 'Knowledge how' (or 'procedural knowledge') is "the ability temporarily to bend the new language into forms that will . . . serve the initial desire for rudimentary communication," (p.8). Both develop out of the experience of acquiring the mother tongue.

Accordingly, skill theory suggests connecting the familiar with the unfamiliar, assimilating the new into the framework of the old, and 'restructuring' and 'grammaticizing' the foreign language structure while learning (James, 1994). It further implies analyzing and reasoning 'metastategy,' i.e. translation, contrast and transfer (Oxford, 1990) as well as bridging the gap between the target language ignorance and the mother-tongue knowledge. Indeed, skill theory emphasizes higher-level learning strategies: autonomous, self-initiated learning; cognitive planning, tolerating contradictions, establishing hypothesis to be tested, focus on meaning and form, self-discovery and general awareness of the learning process (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Harmer, 1991; Ehrman, 1997; Fox, 1993).

Put together, product strategies which are highly interrelated with product view of grammar are insufficient as they involve mechanical drilling, seeking close guidance from teacher, rote learning and low tolerance of ambiguity. However, process view and process strategies are stronger as they encourage situational grammar learning, social and affective learning, risk-taking, tolerance of ambiguity and top-down processing (implicit learning). The very recent view of learning grammar as skill is related to higher - order learning strategies: finding personal meaning in what is learned, reflection and reinterpretations, self-management, focusing attention, and self-monitoring strategies. Cognitive planning and goal-setting are also included here. Therefore, skill strategies are by far superior as they lead to autonomy and independent learning.

Generally grammar can be viewed from different angles. As such, learners, teachers and applied linguists might maintain various assumptions about grammar teaching and learning. However, almost all applied linguists do not deny the importance of grammatical competence. Even today they argue that grammar has come back from exile. But, what is too dangerous is getting stuck to a single view of grammar. Grammar can be viewed from product-perspective, process-perspective as well as skill-perspective. One does not necessarily contradict the others. Rather they support one another. Especially, the skill-perspective plays the mediating role between the other two. Therefore, to be successful in the ability to enhance their knowledge and use the grammatical systems of English accurately, learners should at least see grammar from all the three angles (as well as from dynamic and static views). With these views

learners consider grammar not only as rules but also as meaning - potential as well as an on-line device to process discourse. Thus, successful learners are those who view grammar from all the angles and employ not only product strategies but also both process and skill strategies. Specially, appropriate strategies are those which help the learner to support himself or herself independently, when external help is withdrawn.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Design

The design of this study is survey because the purpose of the study is to generalize from a sample to a population so that inferences are made about some characteristic, attitude, and behaviour of a target population. Besides, the survey design is a more preferred type of data collection for its economy of design, rapid turnaround in data gathering as well as for its conduciveness to identify attributes of a population from a small sample size (Fowler, 1988). Thus, survey design, here, is favoured for time and logistical constraints, too.

The survey is cross-sectional, i.e. the data are collected at one point in time by administering a questionnaire.

3.2 Population and Sample

The population for this study are English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners (Grade 11) in four secondary (high) schools in Addis Ababa. The sampling design for this study is multistage. That is to say, first, four schools are randomly chosen from among the 26 high schools in the city; then, lists of Grade 11 sections in each of the four schools are obtained so that one (section) from each is selected at random. Finally, lists of students in each section are obtained so as to draw randomly 30 students (from each section) to obtain a working number of 120 sample size. But out of the 120 copies of the questionnaire that were distributed only 108 were returned of which 8 of them had missing pages. So, a working

number of 100 sample size is obtained. Random sampling is preferred as it is essential to enhance the representativeness of the target population as well as of the sample (Kerlinger, 1973). (see Table 1 page 35 for summary of the subjects).

3.3 Instrumentation

To accomplish the objective of this study, a principal survey instrument is used, namely a questionnaire..

The questionnaire (Belief Strategy Questionnaire) is designed by the author through literature review and informal conversational interviews held at different times with some students in higher institutions, secondary school teachers and with students in secondary schools. The conversations held with teachers and students played a fundamental role to designing the questionnaire. The main goal of designing the instrument was (a) to understand the nature of learners beliefs about English as a Foreign Language (EFL) grammar (b) to understand students' beliefs about approaches to teaching EFL grammar, (c) to understand the nature of learners' grammar learning strategy use, and (d) to examine the relationships among the above variables a, b and c.

In order to gather a wide range of information the development of the BSQ proceeded in series of stages. In addition to reviewing different literature, experienced English teachers were asked at different times to suggest their students' learning strategies and their students' perceptions of English grammar. For instance, one teacher reported that his students accused him of not explicitly teaching grammar rules as he usually practiced them group works, dialogues and so on).

Conversations held with several students in higher institutions as well as secondary schools also enriched the questionnaire. College students were asked to list down their learning strategies when they were in high schools. The same was done with students currently participating in secondary school education. Then, a 60 item Likert - scale and 27 categorical scales were first pilot tested. After the pilot test, the categorical scales were better reformed to Likert -scale and the present 5 - point 88 item Likert - scale was redesigned and again pilot tested with 40 students. These pilot testing procedures were important to finally establish the face validity of the instrument and to improve items, format and the scales (see Appendixes).

The questionnaire is divided into three parts. Part I aims at gathering the subjects' views on EFL grammar. That is to say, it addresses the relationships between grammar, meaning, communication as well as the role of grammar in learning languages: Is grammar isolated from or a device for discourse processing? Is it an end by itself or a means to an end? Hence, this part contains 22 items. The items are categorized into three according to the belief factors they address. Items 1-10 are identified with the mechanic /static view of grammar, i.e. grammar as isolated from meaning and language use, as an end by itself. The respondents are asked to decide their agreement or disagreement on 5 point Likert-scale (strongly agree = 5 and strongly disagree = 1). For instance, statements like these are presented: 'When all the rules of English are memorized, English is better learnt', 'Learning English is first and foremost a question of learning its grammatical systems', etc.

Items 11-19 pertain to dynamic or organic views of grammar, i.e. grammar as meaning - potential, as a device for discourse processing, and as a means to an end rather than end by itself. For instance, participants are asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement to such statements: 'I believe I improve my grammar if I use English to communicate with people', 'I study grammar because I need it to use in speaking or writing', etc.

Finally, Items 20 - 22 of the BSQ concern the general past experience of learning English grammar: 'From my experience, learning English grammar is boring / frustrating', 'English is a difficult language,' and so on. These are important to examine their attitude.

Part II of the BSQ holds 33 items. The general aim of this part corresponds the second research question of this study is to assess participants views on three approaches to teaching grammar, namely teaching grammar as product, process and skill. Should grammar rules be 'preached' by the teacher? Should grammar structures be taught explicitly or implicitly? Should methodology focus on teaching learning, or on teaching about the language? These wide issues are addressed in this part in a relatively comprehensible way. As such this part is sub-divided into three categories. The first part (Item 1-11) is identified with the factor "teaching grammar from product perspective." The respondents are asked to give their responses on a 5 - point Likert scale. They decide to what extent the teaching strategy items are helpful (very helpful = 5 point, and waste of time = 1 point). Product teaching items address such traditional grammar class

procedures as 'repetition', 'translation', 'parsing', 'strict error avoidance' etc. The second sub-section (BSQ Items 12-23) aims at gathering the respondents' views on teaching grammar as process. Here, they decide to what extent meaning - focused techniques are important: 'Teacher makes students prepare radio news', 'students have a classroom discussion of some topics such as AIDS ', and so on. The final sub-part, which contains ten items, is related to teaching grammar from skill-perspective. For instance, 'Teacher teaches student, strategies of learning grammar independently', 'Teacher allows students to discover grammatical errors (their own or others) -' and so forth.

The final part of the questionnaire (Part III) coincides with the third research question (objective) of this study. That is to say, it is set for eliciting information about the participants personal strategy use not only to develop their knowledge about EFL grammar but also to enhance their ability to put the device into appropriate use. This part of the BSQ contains 33 items to which the subjects are required to give their responses on 5 - point Likert - scale; the respondents decide whether they employ the strategy items 'most of the time' (5 points), often (4 points), sometimes (3 points), rarely (2 points) or almost never (one point). Overall, this part addresses three grammar learning strategy factors, namely learning grammar from product, process and skill perspectives. Correspondingly, this part of the questionnaire is subdivided into three categories. The first category, BSQ Items 1-13, are related to the first strategy factor, i.e product strategy. For instance, the respondents decided to what extent they, 'study English word formation', 'memorize grammar rules' . . . and so on. The second category

is identified with process strategy, i.e. meaning focused strategy. These are: 'Talking to friends in English,' Talking freely without worrying about errors', 'Listening to BB/C, VOA'. etc.; and, the final sub-part, which contains nine items, aims at assessing to what extent the respondents engage in skill strategies, i.e. meta-cognitive strategy. For instance: 'Noting the sources of my errors (difficulties) and working out plans for improvement', 'Evaluating oneself. . . ,', 'looking for new strategies of studying grammar well,' etc. Succinctly, through the aforementioned procedures, the BSQ was self-designed by the author.

3.4 Variables in the Study

The variable names of this study are: (a) Beliefs About Grammar, (b) Beliefs About Grammar Teaching/Learning, (c) Grammar Learning Strategy Use. The corresponding Research Objectives are: (a) To find out students beliefs about grammar, (b) To examine the nature of their beliefs about grammar teaching-learning, and (c) To explore the learners' learning strategies. The fourth variable or objective is, indeed, to (d) examine interrelationships among beliefs about grammar, teaching and learning, and learning strategy employment. Likewise, the three parts of the BSQ fit each into the respective variables and objectives. But the fourth variable or objective (d) is found out through a statistical technique (Factor Analysis).

3.5 Data Analysis Procedures

Step 1: Information will be reported about the number of returns and non-returns.

Step 2: A descriptive analysis of all the variables and factors in the study will be conducted. That is, 'categorical data' (for each variable and factor) are prepared so that each item, factor or variable can be classified as belonging to its respective category. Therefore 'frequency' or 'observed frequency' (the number of times each category is observed) will be displayed in tables. Also 'relative frequencies' (proportions) as percentages will be displayed (Woods, Fletcher and Huhes, 1986). Additionally, to be able to compare and contrast the specific items or factors, 'mean' and 'percentage' of each will be computed.

Step 3: However, the above statistical procedure are not helpful to show relationships among the variables or factors. Therefore, to identify interrelationships among the variables, a statistical procedure of factor analysis will be applied. 'Factor analysis' is a statistical technique for examining interrelationships among psychological traits (Anastasi, 1976) or factors.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. Information About the Subjects

The following table summarizes source of the participant, sample size and general information about return and non-return regarding the instrument.

Table 1: General Information About the subjects

<u>No.</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Numebr</u>	<u>%</u>
1	Keftenya 12	27	27
2	Nefas Silk	24	24
3	Ayer Tena	24	24
4	Medhanalm	<u>25</u>	<u>25</u>
		Total = 100	Total = 100

Out of the total 26 secondary schools (governmental), four were drawn at random. These are Keftenya 12, Nefas Silk, Ayer Tena, and Medhanalem Secondary Schools. Next, one section from each school was basing on the consent of the classroom teachers and availability of free classes (This is not believed to have any significant impact). Then, from the list of students in each section, 30 students (including equal opportunity for male, and females) were chosen at random, from their roll numbers to fill out the questionnaire. Thus, a total of 120 copies of the questionnaire were administered.

To enable the respondents to think and reflect upon their beliefs and strategies, the questionnaire was administered to be filled at home with sufficient time, i.e. 2-3 days.

At last, out of the 120 copies, 108 of them returned (i.e. non-returns are 12) of which 8 either had missing pages or torn out pages. As the above table shows (Table 1) a working number of 100 sample size was finally retained (56 male and 44 female).

4.2 Responses of the Learners' to the Questionnaire

4.2.1 The Subjects Views on Grammar

The first objective of this study was to uncover the students' views on grammar.

Table 2: Frequencies of responses to Beliefs About Grammar items put into the 5 - point Likert Scale (Note that Relative Frequencies as percentages are the same as the observed Frequencies since N = 100).

NB: For the Items see Appendix, Part I
 Strongly Agree = SA = Scores 5
 Agree = A = Scores 4
 Neither Agree Nor Disagree = NAD = Scores 3
 Disagree = D = Scores 2
 Strongly Disagree = SD = Scores 1

Item	Relative Frequency/ Observed Frequency					Percentage Mean	
	SA	A	NAD	D	SD	X ^I	X ^{II}
1	29	42	10	12	7	75	77.6
2	25	47	20	5	3	77.2	
3	42	45	10	2	1	85	
4	32	48	15	5	09	81.4	
5	24	34	31	100	1	74	
6	31	46	20	3	0	8	
7	27	37	27	6	3	75.8	
8	52	40	8	0	0	88.8	
9	25	32	18	21	4	70.6	
10	17	34	29	7	13	68.4	
11	5	17	5	32	41	42.6	
12	1	0	12	43	34	36.2	

13	9	21	40	28	2	61.4	49,1
14	9	15	3	26	47	42.6	
15	13	21	24	28	14	58.2	
16	4	18	16	37	25	47.2	
17	18	12	32	23	15	59	
18	8	7	12	48	25	45	
19	20	11	9	37	23	53.6	62.4
20	5	7	23	50	15	47.4	
21	30	35	6	9	20	69.2	
22	39	42	4	6	8	79.4	

Table 3: Rank order of Items of the Variable Beliefs About Grammar by Item Mean (X^I) and Mean item Mean (x^{II}) (N = 100).

Rank	Item	X^I (5%)	X^{II} (5%)
1	9	4.44	3.89
2	3	4.25	
3	4	4.07	
4	6	4.05	
5	2	3.86	
6	7	3.79	
7	1	3.75	
8	5	3.70	
9	9	3.53	
10	10	3.35	
11	17	3.19	2.38
12	13	2.95	
13	16	2.39	
14	18	2.25	
15	15	2.19	
16	14	2.13	
17	11	2.13	
18	12	1.81	

Table 2 has intelligibly summarized the observed 'frequency' (the number of times that each Likert scale was opt for under each item) and the 'relative frequency' (i.e. the proportions of subjects falling into different scale) in percentages (Wood, Fletcher and Huges, 1986). Also, Table 3 has revealed from the most high ranked belief item to the least one. The tables also summarize the scores of each category (factors) in the final two columns (see Tables 2 and 3 above).

Accordingly, the most highly ranked items are indicative of the respondents' strong beliefs in static view of grammar. 52 percent of the respondents had endorsed their strong agreement with the view that 'when I make mistakes in English, I would like my teacher to correct them all (item 8) while 40 percent responded that they agree with this. None of the respondents disagree or strongly disagreed. In similar manner, 42 percent and 45 percent have indicated their agreement (strong agreement and agreement, respectively) with the item 'My aim of learning English is to be able to use the right word in the right place and to use the right tense' (item 3). And, the subjects have strongly agreed and agreed that they 'study English grammar to pass' exams (Item 4), 32 percent and 48 percent respectively. In addition the subjects (strongly) agree that 'learning English is first and foremost a question of learning its grammatical systems' (on average 77 percent of them showed their agreement). Besides, 71 percent of the learner either strongly agree or agree in that 'out of school they feel shy of talking to people in English because they are afraid of making mistakes in grammar.

All these suggest that the learners consider grammar as strict adherence to rules, and that the vast majority of them are under the impression that learning grammar equals learning the language (whereas infact there is more to language than grammar). The data further hint that the learners largely need grammar for instrumental purpose, i.e. to pass exams.

The subjects' responses to the remaining items, too, confirm that they strongly maintain the product-view (mechanic view) of EFL grammar. They predominantly endorsed the belief items like 'when all the rules of English are memorized, it is better learnt' - on average 64 percent agreed (Item 7); 71 percent (strongly) agreed that 'students shouldn't say anything in English until they can say it correctly.' Finally, two items 'one who is good in English is the one who can memorize the grammar rules' and "learning of mathematical equations and grammar is similar" - are strongly endorsed by many of the respondents. All these are possibly a manifestation of the static view of grammar and learning.

By contrast, the respondents largely rejected views that 'teachers should not always correct students when they make mistakes' (rejected by 87 percent); 73 percent of them (strongly) disagree with not worrying 'about making mistakes as far as one can learn to communicate' (item 11). Also, 73 percent of the subjects disagree (47 percent strongly) to the idea that 'at beginning if one is able to express some opinions, one does not need to know lots of grammar' (item 14).

All these can be interpreted as a manifestation of the learners' beliefs in 'machin - like' view of grammar, i.e. grammatical well-formedness, grammar as an end

rather than as a means to language proficiency, and speeding up of the time needed for accuracy. However, in reality grammar is 'un-machine-like' (i.e, it is a means to an end rather than end by itself and its development is metamorphic or 'organismic'.

Likewise, the data discloses that these EFL learners decline the notions that 'it is more important to speak English than understand the rules' (Items 15)' and they largely reject the idea that 'grammar learning is like learning to ride a bicycle or play tennis' (items 18). In a similar manner, quite a large number of the learners (62 percent on average) decline the notion that 'people who are very good in their English are those who can speak fluently even if they make few mistakes' (Item 16).

These again prove that the students strongly want to be accurate and 'correct' in grammar. This suggests that if they fail to achieve this, they might consequently get frustrated, demotivated and even despaired.

However, the subjects' response to items 17 and 13 are somewhat encouraging; on average 30 percent agree that they study English grammar because they need to use it in speeches and writings, though 32 percent take neutral position. Also, 30 percent of the respondents agreed that their grammar more improves if they use English to communicate with people, and 40 percent of them took mediocre position (Item 13).

At length, as the last category (factor) of Table 2 (i.e., Items 12, 20, 21, and 22) shows it is possible to conclude that the students' past experience of learning English grammar is largely negative. From their responses to Item 19 - 'knowledge of grammar comes naturally' -- it is realizable that they believe grammar is mastered through hard work because 23 percent of learners strongly rebuffed this while by far more of them, 37 percent, jettisoned it. Likewise, an extremely large number of the participants, i.e. 80 percent, either strongly agree or agree that English is a difficult language (items 22): Note that as interpreted earlier, to learn English is almost to learn the 'grammar' to a vast majority of the learners. By the same token, 65 percent of the students conceive that from their experience, learning English grammar is boring or frustrating. This implies that a considerable number of the subjects feel a lot of anxiety and demotivation about English grammar. Quite interestingly, however, 65 percent of the students rejected the view that "As far as English is not my L1, I don't really need any grammar", and 23 percent took the neutral position (item 20). This is a good indication of the fact that the learners basically feel English (language) grammar is important to them.

To put it in a nutshell, Table 2 and 3 above have succinctly summarized that the subjects' predominant view of grammar is that of static (mechanic) as opposed to dynamic (organic). Their responses to Items 1 - 10 (pertained to the former view) overwhelms the responses to Items 11-18 (pertained to the latter view of grammar); mean percentage mean (X'') of the static view of grammar is 77.6, while that of dynamic view is below average, i.e., only 49.1 percent (Table 2).

Similarly the item mean item (X'') of the static view is 3.89 while that of the dynamic view is lower 2.39 (see Table 3). These erroneous beliefs might have harmful effects because learners' beliefs will: ". . . influence their employment of cognitive strategies and the way in which they consciously develop and build up an awareness of their use" (Williams and Burden, 1997:155).

4.2.2 The Learners' Views on Grammar Teaching-Learning Approaches

The second research question of this study was to explore learners' beliefs about English grammar teaching approaches. Therefore, Part II of the Belief-Strategy Questionnaire is concerned with assessing the subjects' feelings on three approaches to teaching grammar, namely teaching grammar as product, processes and skill.

Table 4: Frequency of responses to Beliefs About grammar Teaching Techniques, put into 5 - point Likert scale, (Do note that 'Relative Frequency' in percentages is similar to the observed frequency since $N = 100$).

N.B: For the items see Appendix , Part II
 Very Helpful = VH = 5 points
 Helpful = H = 4 points
 Average = A = 3 points
 Not Very helpful = NVH = 2 points
 Waste of Time = WT = 1 point

Item	Relative Frequency/ Observed Frequency					Percentage Mean	
	VH	H	A	NVH	WT	X'	X''
1	27	33	21	14	5	72.6	
2	36	34	20	8	2	78.8	
3	42	33	21	4	0	82.6	
4	51	29	5	11	4	82.4	
5	32	37	29	7	2	75	74.12
6	12	15	20	29	24	52.4	

7	25	37	26	5	2	72.6	
8	30	37	26	5	2	77.6	
9	17	21	7	24	31	53.8	
10	37	35	18	18	2	83.4	
11	48	30	18	3	1	84.2	
12	11	6	26	34	23	49.6	
13	13	11	2	32	22	40.2	
14	7	11	7	51	24	45.2	
15	4	7	24	28	37	42.6	
16	15	24	17	31	13	67.4	
17	5	14	22	37	22	50.6	
18	4	27	31	27	11	51.8	49.93
19	9	21	15	50	5	55.8	
20	11	25	25	11	28	56	
21	8	11	23	37	21	49.6	
22	7	2	28	35	28	45.4	
23	17	5	5	32	41	45	
24	7	8	21	27	37	44.2	
25	17	11	23	15	33	52.2	
26	11	27	19	15	26	55.2	
27	17	22	26	27	8	62.6	
28	31	36	22	3	8	75.8	58.64
29	19	3	23	24	31	51	
30	8	18	24	29	22	52.6	
31	25	12	23	18	22	60	
32	17	23	31	21	8	64	
33	19	32	30	7	12	62.8	

Table 5: Rank order of Items of the Variable Beliefs About Grammar Teaching Techniques by Item Mean (X^I and Mean item Mean (x^{II}) importance score (N = 100).

Rank	Item	X^I	X^{II}
1	11	4.21	3.73
2	10	4.17	
3	3	4.13	
4	4	4.12	
5	2	3.94	
6	7	3.92	
7	5	3.88	
8	8	3.75	
9	1	3.63	
10	9	2.68	
11	6	2.62	
1	28	3.37	2.92
2	33	3.39	
3	32	3.20	
4	27	3.13	
5	31	3.00	
6	26	2.76	
7	30	2.63	
8	25	2.61	
9	29	2.55	
10	24	2.21	
1	16	3.37	2.56
2	20	3.29	
3	19	2.86	
4	18	2.80	
5	17	2.53	
6	12	2.48	
7	21	2.48	
8	22	2.28	
9	14	2.26	
10	23	2.25	
11	13	2.01	
12	15	2.13	

As Table 4 and Table 5, reveal these EFL students overwhelmingly advocate the teaching of grammar from product perspective. This is clearly observed from the subjects' responses to the first category of Items 1-11 (see Table 4 above and BSQ Items in Part II). Among the items in this category (factor), items 11, 10, 3 and 4 are immensely endorsed as helpful techniques. That is to say, these EFL students believe that the techniques 'Teacher corrects all the students mistakes when they make errors' and 'Teacher always teaches grammar rules step-by-step' are (very) helpful; 78 percent and 72 percent of the learners, endorse these items respectively. Similarly, 75 percent and 80 percent of the subjects respectively think that 'teacher explanation of grammar points with example sentences' and 'definition or explanation of meta-language (eg. verb, adverb, etcv)' are (very) helpful. Similar to these, the students highly affirm that 'explanation of the forms of structures in Amharic (i.e. L1) (Item 2),' 'filling correct forms of verbs in blank spaces' (Item 7) and 'copying the Amharic translation of new vocabulary from dictionary' (Item 8) are on average helpful' --- 70 percent, 62 percent and 67 percent of the subjects respectively favour these items. Repetition of words (item 5) is believed to be (very) important by 69 percent while 29 percent believe that it is average. This is specially a good indication of the learners' strong desire for 'good' pronunciation. Similarly 'repetition of sentences' (Item 1), 'transformational chorus work' (Item 9) and 'dialogues' (Item 6) are relatively favored by a significant number of the students.

On the whole all the items in this category weigh above the average as 'percentage mean' and 'item mean' of each indicate in the Tables 4 and 5. All

these can be attributed to the manifestation of the product - oriented view (static view) of grammar, as an object to be studied or a rule to be memorized. All the items related to oral drilling (repetition, dialogue, chorus work) are ranked least. This is a clear indication of the learners' beliefs in grammar as a rule to be ingested since they even declined these guided practice activities. In similar manner, the students' insistence on transmission (by teacher) of rules is a good indicative of the learners' perception of grammar as a rule to be injected by the teacher. Besides, the available data imply that these EFL learners feel that avoidance of errors is excessively essential (see responses to items 11 and the previous section). This is too detrimental as it leads EFL learners to dependence on authority, low tolerance of ambiguity and less risk-taking.

Among the three approaches to teaching grammar, "teaching grammar as skill" is ranked second (next to product teaching) by these learners. Perhaps, this is due to the fact that in both approaches *using* the language is subservient to *knowing about* the language.

As such, the questionnaire items 24 - 33 concern skill teaching, i.e. assessing the learners' views on strategies that enable them to analyze and synthesize the grammar systems for themselves, reducing the gaps between L₁ and L₂, and on teaching strategies that arm them with the metacognitive skills of educating oneself.

Interestingly enough, among the items related to skill teaching, the very essential ones are relatively rated as (very) helpful (see Tables 4 and 5 above). 31 percent of the respondents feel that teaching them 'strategies of teaching oneself

(learning) grammar' is very helpful, while more, 36 percent, believe that it is helpful. In addition, 51 percent of the learners feel that it is helpful if teachers help students to 'compare and contrast the rules of Amharic and English' while 30 percent of the students think that this is average. "syntacticisation" or 'grammaticisation' (item 32) is endorsed as helpful almost by 40 percent of the participants, and almost equal number of them i.e. 39 percent advocated 'editing' or 'revising grammar practice activity. Nearly equal number of the respondents', 37 percent, are under the impression that it is helpful if teachers practice them applying newly learnt structures in their writings or speeches instantly (Item 31).

All these are signpost for the learners' want for guided, conscious attention to both form and meaning as well as their desire for strategy training.

'Reflection', 'negotiation of form', 'self-correction' and 'metatalk' (i.e. Items 29, 24, 25) are rated as relatively less important probably not because the learners really felt them as less important, but, perhaps, because these techniques involve negotiation and discussion like process teaching, which the respondents rated much least. However, these techniques are highly indispensable for eventual mastery of a foreign language grammar.

A belief that grammar learning is similar to skill learning is enormously beneficial as it will certainly lead students to taking hold of their own learning, 'automatization and 'noticing' of the grammar structures (Anderson, 1995). Although the students are, presumably, not accustomed to this approach to teaching EFL grammar, they have indicated their aspirations for this on the respective BSQ items.

The final category of the BSQ items (see Tables 4 and 5 as well as the BSQ, Part II, Appendixes) aimed at assessing the learners' views on another related factor - teaching grammar as process. This category (Tables 4 and 5 last category) involves a broad range of issues related to 'acquisition - based' teaching of EFL grammar.

Although this category (factor) of teaching grammar is ranked last, two items --- "Each student uses English in or out of school" (Item 16) and "teacher tolerates students mistakes" (Item 19) --- are relatively rated well; 39 percent feel the former item is (very) helpful (17 percent took neutral position and as few as 13 percent feel it is waste of time), while 30 percent consider the latter as (very) helpful (only 5 percent feel it is waste of time). This is somewhat contradictory to some data which were obtained earlier; note that the subjects were found out to be dominantly ashamed of talking freely for fear of committing errors, and note that they were found to be highly 'intolerant of errors.' This might suggest that learners' erroneous beliefs can easily be 'repaired.'

'Singing English songs' (Item 20), and 'problem solving while using only English' (Item 19) are also encouragingly rated well. 36 percent feel that the former is (very) helpful, though almost 39 percent rejected it; and 31 percent believe that the latter item is (very) helpful while 38 percent turn it down. This shows that learners beliefs, at times, greatly vary from person(s) to person(s).

Unfortunately, majority of these EFL learners downplayed such classroom procedures as 'drama, simulation, role-play' (Item 23), 'teaching through aids' (item 22), 'emphasizing fluency over accuracy' (item 21), classroom discussions (Items 12, 15 and 17)., Put as a whole, process - teaching ranked least favored factor among grammar teaching belief variables with mean percentage mean (\bar{X}^{II}) of 49.9 and mean item mean (\bar{X}^{II}) of 2.56 (Tables 4 and 5 respectively).

The downgrading of this factor (teaching grammar as process) is fundamentally because the learners might consider process teaching as 'non-serious' method of grammar teaching. In other words, this learners considerably give premium to product teaching and /or skill - teaching and consequently they lack awareness of the role of the process approach to grammar. At length, the learners largely rejected process teaching, perhaps, because they predominantly, wrongly hold the belief that explicit grammar teaching or rule - learning equals overall learning of the language.

4.2.3 The Learners' Views on Their Personal Grammar Learning Strategies

The third research question of this exploration was to investigate the way the students go about attaining the goal of EFL grammar learning. Thus, the main motive behind part III of the Belief-Strategy Questionnaire (see Appendix A) was to probe into the learning strategies of the learners with special attention to three approaches, learning grammar from product, process, and skill perspectives.

Accordingly, the following tables summarize intelligibly the data obtained. Table 6 summarizes the score of each item and of each category of items in percentages,

while Table 7 summarizes the score of each item out of 5 point Likert scale and rank order of the items and the category of items.

Table 6: Frequency of the subjects' responses to Personal Strategy Use put into 5 - points Likert scale, (Again note that 'Relative Frequency' in percentages is similar to the Observed Frequency since N = 100)

N.B: For the items see Appendix, Part III
 Most of the Time = MT = 5 points
 Often = O = 4 points
 Sometimes = S = 3 points
 Rarely = R = 2 points
 Almost Never = AN = 1 point

Item	Relative Frequency /Observed Frequency					Percentage Mean	
	MT	O	S	R	AN	X"	X"
1	12	7	19	33	29	48	73.89
2	4	40	5	6	2	84.4	
3	25	36	7	17	15	67.6	
4	35	37	23	3	7	80.6	
5	24	40	25	6	5	74.4	
6	31	41	21	2	5	78.2	
7	21	38	25	5	21	76.6	
8	32	41	17	7	3	74.4	
9	38	45	12	5	0	83.3	
10	34	36	13	13	4	76.6	
11	27	31	33	30	5	63.6	
12	32	41	18	6	3	81	
13	17	31	41	4	7	69.4	
14	5	7	21	29	38	42.4	47.49
15	8	7	11	37	37	42.4	
16	5	12	25	45	13	50.2	
17	1	5	14	44	36	38.2	
18	5	7	21	36	31	43.8	
19	9	12	27	41	21	49.4	
20	11	26	33	22	8	62	

21	6	31	29	17	71	59.3	
22	12	7	29	37	17	53.2	
23	5	17	22	19	29	40.4	
24	3	4	26	30	37	41.2	
25	4	17	26	30	23	49.8	47.28
26	12	13	19	35	18	51.4	
27	9	13	19	35	24	49.6	
28	9	16	25	36	14	51.2	
29	17	16	25	24	17	51	
30	3	11	12	39	35	41.6	
31	9	12	51	26	15	56.2	
32	11	17	14	34	24	45.4	
33	5	9	10	41	35	28,5	

Table 7: Rank order of Personal Strategy Use by Item Mean (X^1) and Mean item Mean (x^{II}) preference scores (N = 100).

Rank	Item	X	X
1	2	4.24	3.68
2	9	4.16	
3	12	4.05	
4	4	4.03	
5	8	3.92	
6	6	3.91	
7	10	3.83	
8	5	3.72	
9	7	3.53	
10	13	3.47	
11	3	3.39	
12	11	3.28	
13	1	2.40	
1	20	3.10	

2	21	2.96	2.37
3	22	2.66	
4	16	2.51	
5	19	2.,47	
6	18	2.19	
7	15	2.12	
8	14	2.12	
9	24	2.06	
10	23	2.02	
11	17	1.01	
1	31	2.81	
2	26	2.57	
3	28	2.56	
4	29	2.55	
5	25	2.49	
6	27	2.48	
7	32	2.27	
8	30	2.08	
9	33	1.47	

As the above tables (Table 6 and 7) demonstrate, in reference to the product strategy (BSQ Items 1-13), these students strongly claim that they engage in 'studying grammar books (items, 2), 'studying patterns that they think would come on test' (item 9), 'bottom - up processing, i.e., paying attention to grammar and lexis while reading and listening (Item 12), and 'seeking for other people to explain grammatical points out of class' (Items 4). As the tables reveal, these strategy items are ranked supremely; 47 percent and 40 percent of the respondents replied that they most of the time and often (respectively) study

grammar books. Nearly equal number of the students reported that they largely read grammar points that would assumed to come on exams (38 percent most of the time and 45 percent often); no one of them reported that he/she does this 'almost never.' On average 73 percent and 72 percent of the participants reported that they usually engage in 'bottom - up processing' and 'seeking explanations from other people.'

This overwhelming engagement in the above strategies is accounted for by their strong beliefs in 'static - grammar' ; note that earlier it had been found out that the subjects strongly endorsed this view of grammar. In other words, these EFL learners chiefly study grammar for its own sake, like body of knowledge in other disciplines - especially for instrumental motivation.

The learners' response to the remaining product - strategy items, too, reinforce the above interpretation. Seventy - three percent affirmed that they either most of the time or often 'write down every new structure' they find (item 8) and nearly the same number (72 percent) usually (= most of the time or often) 'review rules that have so far been learned' (item 6). The vast majority (70 percent) also reported that they either most of the time or often use Amharic as a base for understanding English grammar, i.e. translation (Item 10). On most part, the respondents replied that they either most of the time or often engage in the remaining strategies - 'memorizing rules' (64 percent), 'keeping personal grammar journal' (59 percent), 'recombination, constructing meaningful sentences by combining newly learnt grammar rules' (46 percent), 'getting teacher to correct grammar mistakes' (61

percent), and step-by-step learning, i.e. only studying new grammatical structure after mastering the other' (58 percent). Only 12 percent and 7 percent of the respondents reported to study 'how English words are formed' most of the time and often, respectively. This suggests that morphology of English is the least practiced aspect of grammar. However, very recently applied linguists argue that language (both L1 and L2) are learnt through passing in three stages - lexicalization, syntactization, and re-lexicalization (Skehan, 1994; Halliday, 1994).

On the whole, the available data shows that product-strategy is ranked first by these learners. As Table 6 reveals, on average the relative frequency of this factor (Category) is 73.89 percent. That means the respondents mainly utilize product-oriented strategies. The average of means (Table 7) of items (Item 1-13) also confirms this, 3.68 on 5 point Likert scale. All these illustrate that the learners are by and large dependent on authority, memorization, accumulation and step-by-step learning strategies. This is basically the direct reflection of their beliefs about EFL grammar in their mechanisms of learning.

By contrast, process strategy (form de-focused and meaning - focused) ranked second by the subjects (see Tables 6 & 7). The second category of items (Items 14-24) assessed the extent to which the learners make use of this strategy variable.

Accordingly, the data suggest that these learners employ message - focused strategies inadequately. Among process - oriented items, 'Listening to English music' (item 20), 'watching English TV, video programs' (Item 21), and

'inferencing - using semantic contexts, etc. to guess meaning' (Item 22) scored

above fifty percent on mean percentage (see Table 6 above). Eleven percent and

26 percent claimed that they listen to English music most of the time and often,
respectively, while, 6 percent and 31 percent reported they watch English
Television programs (video) most of the time and often, respectively. This
demonstrates that audio-video materials are the leading means for 'acquiring' the

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The learners' weaknesses in these skill strategies can generally be accounted for lack of awareness, poor educational background, poor experience and, perhaps, lack of learning aptitude.

Generally speaking, the data show that the subjects are preponderantly product-oriented strategy users. This means they mainly invest their time and energy on mechanical 'knowledge' of rules at the expense of use. Widdowson (1990:95) puts this as dangerous:

. . . for language learners to learn only the device without knowing how to put it to use is rather like learning about the delicate mechanisms of a clock without knowing how to tell the time.

The learners' weakness in skill and metacognitive strategies (planning and evaluating) has far-reaching detrimental consequences. Ehrman (1997: 181) argues:

Such students often have difficulty setting their own priorities. They experience everything that comes up in class for them as an expectation they must meet. They feel responsible for every work . . . feel overwhelmed and even despairing of mastering the language.

Effective language learning, however, is not just an accumulation of information, nor is it just the ability to make use of skills, but is also a process of reinterpreting one's view of reality using alternative perspectives.

4.2.4 Relationship among Beliefs About Grammar, Grammar Teaching, and Learning Strategy Use

The fourth objective of this study is to examine interrelationships among learners beliefs about EFL grammar, their beliefs about teaching-learning, and the way they go about learning English Grammar. To do so, a statistical technique - factor analysis ---- was applied as it is used to analyze interrelationships among "two or more variables simultaneously" (Kerlinger, 1973:229).

As to skill strategy, the assessment of the learners opinions by BSQ items 25-33, Part III, elucidates that these students are too weak and below average in using these indispensable strategy variables (see Tables 6 and 7 above). These involve self-monitoring, self-management and self-discovery techniques as well as the know-how to analyzing and synthesizing the under-lying grammar system of the language.

As it is evidenced from the data, however, the learners largely discredited the items. "Looking for new strategies of studying grammar well" (Item 33) is almost never engaged in by 35 percent, rarely practiced by 41 percent and sometimes carried out by just 10 percent of them. Connecting the familiar with the unfamiliar --- 'comparing what I don't know with what I know' --- is also least practiced; only 3 percent and 11 percent of the respondents reported to put it into practice most of the time and often, respectively. Planned inductive learning or 'discovering' grammar points thus far not mastered (item 32) is also unfortunately among the least implemented techniques; just 11 percent and 17 percent most of the time and often apply it, while 24 percent and 34 percent almost never and rarely do this, respectively. In short, the subjects' report reveals that they practice very inadequately the remaining skill strategies, too, namely 'asking oneself what to do to improve own's grammar command' (Item 26), 'evaluating oneself' (item 27), 'noting the source of owns errors (difficulties) and then working out plans to improve' (Item 25), etc.

To factor analyze the data obtained through the questionnaire, primarily each respondent's score of each BSG item was computed (NB: each Item in the BSQ is rated on a 5 - point Likert Scale) Next each respondent's score of each BSQ category (= factor) was calculated. Note that totally there are eight categories or factors: Two grammar belief factors (i.e., static and organic views), three grammar teaching belief factors (i.e. product, process and skill approaches) and three strategy factors (product, process and skill strategies). Finally, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficients were computed for all combinations of the eight factors as presented in Table 8 below. (Each figure in the table is correlation coefficient for its respective two factors).

Table 8: Correlation Among Beliefs About Grammar, Beliefs About Grammar Teaching, and Grammar Learning Strategy Use (N = 100).

		G ₁ OVE	G ₂ MVG	T ₁ POT	T ₂ PCT	T ₃ SKT	S ₁ PDE	S ₂ PCS	S ₃ SKS
G ₁	OVG	1.00							
G ₂	MVG	-0.20	1.00						
T ₁	PDT	-0.20	* 0.90	1.00					
T ₂	PCT	0.02	-0.17	-0.03	1.00				
T ₃	SKT	*0.29	-*0.22	-*0.20	*0.30	1.00			
S ₁	PDS	-0.15	*0.82	*0.77	0.01	-0.08	1.00		
S ₂	PCS	*0.47	-*0.24	0.13	0.07	0.17	*-0.22	1.00	
S ₃	SKS	*0.44	-*0.20	-0.17	0.07	0.08	-0.08	*0.46	1.00

* P < 0.05

NB:

G₁ = OVG = Organic View of Grammar

G₂ = MVG = Mechanic View of Grammar

T₁ = PDT = Product Teaching

T₂ = PCT = Process Teaching

T₃ = SKT = Skill Teaching

S₁ = PDS = Product Strategy

S₂ = PCS = Process Strategy

S₃ = SKS = Skill Strategy

** The test of significance of the correlation indexes yield, as shown in table 8, that the correlation which is as low as 0.20 is significant at 5 percent level.*

As Table 8 illustrates the three variables (i.e. Grammar Beliefs, Teaching Beliefs and Strategies) have largely significantly correlated. The Organic View of Grammar (OVT = G₁) has significantly correlated with Process Strategy (PCS = S₂) and with Skill Strategy (SKs = S₃), 0.47 and 0.44, respectively. This suggests that students who view grammar from organic perspective are likely to engage in process strategy and skill strategy to develop their EFL grammar command. The statistically significant correlation between OVG and Skill Teaching (SKT), 0.29, also shows that learners who maintain organic view of grammar are likely to favor skill teaching; but, the correlation coefficient between OVG and Process Teaching (PCT) is found to be insignificant. This shows how greatly their beliefs vary on these.

In addition, the Mechanic View of Grammar (MVG = G2) has highly correlated with Product Teaching (PDT = T₁), and with Product Strategy (PDS = S1), 0.90 and 0.82, respectively.

This implies that learners who consider grammar as a machine are highly likely to trust or expect product teaching and invest their time and efforts in product strategies. The strong correlation between product strategy (PDS) and product teaching (PDT), 0.77 is reasonable because style of teaching to which the learners are experienced (presumably product teaching) has an impact on their beliefs. Similarly, the significant correlation between process strategy (PCS) and skill-strategy, 0.46, is not surprising, too, as both should highly relate to organic view of grammar.

The statistically significant negative correlation between Organic View and Mechanic View of grammar (-0.20), and Organic View and product Teaching (-0.20) suggest that learners who consider grammar as 'dynamic' are less likely to view it from mechanic perspective as well as prefer product teaching. Similarly, the significant correlation between mechanic view of grammar and skill teaching (-0.22), between mechanic view of grammar and process strategy (-0.24) and MVG and SKS (-0.20) imply that learners who maintain mechanic view of grammar are unlikely to endorse skill teaching as well as engage in process and skill strategies.

Skill Teaching and Product Teaching, and Process Strategy and Product Strategy are negatively correlated at statistically significant level (-0.20 and -0.22 respectively). This can be interpreted as: students who prefer product teaching

are less probable to desire for teaching grammar as skill, and those who employ product - oriented grammar learning strategy are also less likely to use process strategy.

For the most part, the correlation matrix in the above table unveils that these three variables are strongly interrelated. In other words, learners' beliefs about EFL grammar have significant impacts upon their teaching and learning strategies preferences.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Brief Statement of Problem and Procedure

Admitting that learners' beliefs about grammar is one of the key factors contributing to success or failure in learning a foreign or second language, this study was set to investigate learners' beliefs about EFL grammar and their impacts on their preference of teaching approaches and their learning strategies. To achieve this objective, one hundred students from four high schools (grade 11) were used as a sample to fill out Belief Strategy Questionnaire. Accordingly, their responses were applied to different statistical procedures.

5.2 Principal Findings and Conclusions with Their Practical Implications

The data, subjected to various statistical analysis, have shown that the learners' views of EFL grammar is overwhelmingly mechanic or static one. Furthermore, the data has revealed that they predominately endorsed product teaching of EFL grammar. What is more, the data has indicated that these EFL learners, on the whole, engage in product-oriented learning strategies. Finally, the factor analysis of the variables has showed quite significant correlation among their grammar belief variables, teaching variables, and their strategy variables (see Table 8).

These findings have tremendous practical implications. These EFL learners hold erroneous beliefs about grammar (see Table 2 & 3); consequently, they expect and insist on inadequate teaching approach (see Table 4 & 5); they engage in poor and limited learning strategies (see Table 6 & 7). Additionally, they feel a lot

of anxiety, demotivation and low self-efficacy about their learning, as the whole data suggests.

Needless to say that, all these contribute to their deficit or weak command of English grammar, both knowledge about EFL grammar and the ability to put into use.

Therefore, the practical implications of these findings are: Syllabus - designers, textbook writers and classroom teachers should give high emphasis to the inclusion in classroom tasks and activities of learner beliefs about grammar (language), and about learning and teaching grammar in particular and languages in general (i.e. reflective tasks). Doubtlessly, these help learners to reflect upon their beliefs so that they reinterpret and reorganize their old beliefs and try out the new ones. And finally, to enable the learners to adopt alternative and productive strategies, awareness - raising instructions and strategy - training should be included in the EFL education courses. Distinctly, teachers have to interact with students to understand their beliefs and strategies so that they make the necessary 'repairs' to the erroneous beliefs and poor learning strategies that the learners are experiencing..

53 Suggestions for Further Research

Further research is needed to identify which grammar belief or strategy factors are preconceived before classroom learning, which ones are engendered by the kinds of classroom learning situations they are involved in, and which ones result from their learning outcomes.

Learner belief might vary in different sample sizes as well as from person to person. What is more, learner beliefs might vary in various language skills or language areas and from grade level to grade level (i.e. from ages to ages). Thus, empirical investigations under different situations are left to further studies.

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

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