ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF LANGUAGE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
(GRADUATE PROGRAMME)

HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT GRAMMAR TEACHING AND THEIR ACTUAL CLASSROOM PRACTICES: FOUR HIGH SCHOOLS IN AMHARA REGION IN FOCUS

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High School English Language Teachers' Beliefs about Grammar Teaching and Their Actual Classroom Practices: Four High Schools in Amhara Region in Focus

BY

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A Thesis Presented to the

Department of Foreign Languages and Literature

(Graduate Programme)

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching

English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

June 2008

Addis Ababa

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First and foremost, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to my advisor, Dr. Hailom Banteyerga, for his insightful guidance and constructive comments on the work from the very beginning to the end of this thesis.

Next, I am deeply indepted to my father Ato Guade Chekol, my mother W/ro Betiha Assega, my sister Yeshifana Guade, Emebet Eredatie, Yelfie Worku, and my brother Kibreab Guade for their invaluable moral support in the course of the study.

Last, but not least, I would like to express my sincere thanks to my friends Ato Tafere Melaku and Ato Assefa Demiss, who assisted me while I was carrying out the research, and to all directors and teachers who helped me during data collection.

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to investigate high school English language teachers' beliefs about grammar and teaching methods, and their actual classroom practices. It was particularly targeted at revealing whether the teachers' actual classroom practices diverged from or converged with their beliefs. The need for uncovering such issues sprang from the fact that teachers' pedagogical beliefs are believed to influence their instructional judgments and educational outcomes. The required data for the study were gathered through questionnaire, classroom observation and focus group discussion from high school teachers. To analyze and interpret the data, the researcher used both the qualitative and quantitative methods. The results of the questionnaire generally indicated that teachers believe in the positive effects of the inductive grammar teaching approach and communicative language teaching to enhance students' language competences. The actual classroom practices, however, immensely deviated from their expressed beliefs. It was also found out that the teachers had unfavorable beliefs about traditional teacher-centered approach. The actual classroom did not, however, commensurate with the teachers' beliefs. These clashes are against what some scholars in the literature say about the decisive effects of teachers' beliefs to guide their classroom practices. It was then pointed out that these discrepancies between teachers' beliefs and their activities could affect pedagogical outcomes, and it was generally concluded that such disparities could have contributed their shares to the deterioration of high school students' English proficiency. Finally, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education, teacher educators and other concerned bodies should exert a maximum effort to reconcile the teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices to alleviate the negative impacts on the effectiveness of English language teaching.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Statement of the Problem

There is a general agreement in education that teaching is a cognitive activity and that teachers' beliefs greatly influence their instructional practices in the classroom (Farrell, 2005).Some researchers like Borg (2001) and Johnson (1994) also emphasize the decisive effects of teachers' beliefs on their classroom practices. William and Burden in Abiy (2002), for example, say that the teachers' actions are much more influenced by their beliefs than by their knowledge. According to these and other scholars, teachers' beliefs are more important than the methodologies teachers are trained to implement in their classrooms. In addition, citing Jonassen and Grabowski in his study, Yalew (2004:17) adds:

> *Teachers' beliefs are important aspects in the educational process. The belief affects the ways they present their lessons to their students, the types of instructional methodology they employ and students' learning outcomes.*

With regard to the roles of teachers' beliefs, (Farrell, 2005) quotes Shavelson and Stern saying that the teachers' classroom practices are governed by their instructional beliefs and their beliefs serve as 'filters' to choose instructional judgments and classroom decisions.

Recently, some scholars like Hailom (1993) say that Ethiopian high school students' English proficiency has declined because of teachers' wrong conception of effective teaching methods and the procedures they promote in their classes. The researcher also agrees on this issue, and he feels that the different beliefs teachers of English have about grammar teaching in particular and foreign language teaching methods in general

may have some contributions to this problem. Studying English language teachers' beliefs about grammar and grammar teaching approaches is, therefore, pertinent to know how teachers view grammar instruction, how they deal with this item and which line of argument about grammar teaching they advocate because there is currently some debate regarding the nature, extent and type of grammar instruction even among the proponents of CLT. Studying the teachers' beliefs is, therefore, inevitable because the beliefs teachers hold highly influence the implementation of a given teaching approach.

In fact, in the history of language teaching, it is not a new phenomenon to observe two contradictory views or beliefs appearing together about teaching methods or approaches. Applied linguists on their part argue for or against the issue to influence each other. They also attempt to convince language teachers to back up their line of arguments and teach in line with the methods they propose or argue for.

With regard to grammar teaching nowadays, applied linguists and methodologists in the world have various beliefs. Particularly with the appearance of communicative approach, the controversy on the importance of grammar teaching has become widespread. Some scholars like Krashen and Terrel (1983) and Prabhu (1987) argue against grammar teaching. Although it was believed to be very important previously, these scholars and their followers believe that conscious knowledge of rules of grammar is not important for foreign language learning. Krashen (1995: 83) argues, "Conscious knowledge of rules is therefore not responsible for our fluency, it doesn't initiate utterances." Similarly, other methodologists underestimate the value of grammar teaching. Allen and Campbell (1972:42), for example, say, "The important point is that the study of grammar... is neither necessary nor sufficient for learning to use a language."

Nevertheless, the emphasis and desire for grammar teaching have been reviving in the world, i.e. grammar is back nowadays. As a result, Krashen and his proponents face strong oppositions in the area of second language acquisition research. Concerning the coming back of grammar teaching, Williams (1994:2) asks, "Where has grammar been? Where did it go away? Why has it now come back?" And most English language teachers have been giving special attention to grammar. "Language teachers for generations have operated with grammatical concepts and categories which have been considered as a self-evident and simple basis of language" (Stern,1983:131). For these teachers, English language teaching means teaching grammar. In addition, Nuan (1989) believes that grammar is an essential element in using language communicatively. Furthermore, the important role of grammar in conveying massages is emphasized. Woods (1995:31) confirms this as: "Grammar has an important role in helping us to convey our messages."

Although there are some disagreements against the teaching of grammar, most of the students in the world study this item to learn second and foreign languages. Richards as cited in Woods (1995:36) says, "Despite the impact communicative approaches have had on methodology in recent years, the bulk of the world's second and foreign language learners continue to learn from materials in which the principles of organization and presentation is grammatically based." In brief, Harmer (1987) Williams (ibid), Woods (ibid), and other scholars believe that grammar teaching is essential and inevitable although they do not agree that teaching English should be limited only to teaching 'grammar for grammar's sake'.

Nowadays, as explained above, there are various beliefs and controversies in the world about the importance of grammar teaching. Some scholars believe that grammar teaching is very important for

foreign and second language teaching, and still others argue against the teaching of this item. Regarding these controversies, McKay (1987:xi) says, "One of the main controversies surrounding the teaching of grammar is whether or not grammar can be taught." As Ethiopia is one part of the world and shares English language teaching methods, it is hardly possible to say that such controversial views and beliefs are not reflected.

Based on his own teaching experiences and the survey of English textbook evaluation, however, the researcher believes that grammar is undoubtedly taught in Ethiopian high schools currently. Nevertheless, there is no clear evidence or a research finding revealing the facts about whether or not the line of argument against grammar teaching has influenced high school English language teachers' beliefs about grammar teaching. What are high school English language teachers' beliefs about the role of grammar to enhance the students' language competence? It needs investigating.

According to Thompson (1996), there is also a great debate about grammar teaching approaches. The debate is about the preference for the deductive or inductive grammar teaching approach. Lewis (1996) and Harmer (1987), for example, argue in favour of the inductive approach, and they say that inductive practices engender better learning. They believe that the extra challenge to discover the rules for themselves motivates learners, and it is highly important for students to understand English grammar. In connection with this issue, Lewis (1996:165) says, "All learning theory suggests that those things we discover for ourselves are more firmly fixed in our minds than those we are told." His research results on students' preferences, however, reveal that the majority of the students prefer the deductive approach.

On the other hand, Williams (1994) says that many English language teachers maintain a traditional deductive approach. Edwards and Mercer (1987) also argue in favour of this approach, and oppose excessive use of discovery learning- an inductive approach.

The other line of argument lies between the two controversies. Atkins, Hailom and Nuru (1995) and Eisenstein cited in Tudor (1996) argue that both the deductive and inductive presentations are useful to teach grammar. Tudor (1996:212) also says, "Neither option is better than the other in absolute terms." In spite of the fact that there have been a great controversy and several research findings about the role of formal grammar instruction for more than 30 years, Ellis (1996) asserts that there are no firm guidelines for grammar teaching methodology. This also seems true that our high school English language teachers do not have transparent ideas about how and to what extent they should teach grammar.

As stated above, there are two major controversies about grammar teaching. These are:

1. Whether or not grammar teaching is important to enhance the students' language competences.
2. The deductive approach of grammar teaching is more important than the inductive one or vice-versa or both approaches are equally important.

As there are such great controversies and uncertainties about grammar teaching, it is crucial to reveal what beliefs high school English teachers have about these issues because teachers' beliefs have a powerful effect on their classroom practices.

Although it is believed that the teachers' instructional beliefs have an influential power in the teaching learning process, no research has been conducted in our university on teachers' beliefs about the roles of grammar and grammar teaching approaches, and their classroom practices .

The main purpose of this paper is, therefore, to investigate our high school English language teachers' beliefs about the role of grammar teaching to enhance the students' language competences and the types of approaches they employ to teach this item. It also attempts to point out if the teachers' stated instructional beliefs match their actual classroom practices. Finally, it tries to reveal what approach is being employed in English language classrooms in Ethiopian high schools.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

The main concern of this study is to investigate high school English language teachers' beliefs about grammar instruction and their actual classroom practices. In doing so, the study attempts to answer the following research questions.

1. What are high school English language teachers' beliefs about grammar teaching to enhance the students' language competences?
2. Which grammar teaching approach do the teachers believe to be more effective, the deductive or inductive approach? Why?
3. What methods /approaches do these teachers generally employ currently to teach English?
4. Are there any factors influencing the teachers' beliefs and/or their actual classroom practices?
5. What is the implication of employing the deductive or inductive grammar teaching approach?

6. Do the teachers' classroom activities diverge from or converge with their instructional beliefs about grammar teaching? Why?
7. What are the implications of inconsistent/consistent associations between teachers' beliefs and their actual classroom activities?

1.3. Significance of the Study

The findings of this research are expected to be useful for the English language experts working in the Ministry of Education and in regional education bureaus, and for instructors in colleges and universities. It may reveal high school English language teachers' beliefs about the role of grammar teaching and the methods they employ with regard to this item. Moreover, it could point out whether or not their classroom practices are in line with their instructional beliefs. Besides these, it may generally reveal what English language teaching approach is really practiced in the classrooms currently. These all may create awareness on the part of instructors of English so that they may reconsider the methodologies they implement and the types of courses offered to teacher trainees. The Ministry of Education may also benefit from the findings, especially from the concept about the powerful effects of teachers' beliefs in the educational process. Understanding teachers' beliefs is of paramount importance particularly in the process of changing or reforming a curriculum. With this regard, Haynes in Pratt (1980) says that if teachers' beliefs do not match curricular goals, it is likely that resistance will be generated on the part of the teachers. Of course, facing teachers' resistance, and suffering from its consequences is not a strange matter in Ethiopia context at different occasions. At any rate, the findings could pinpoint such crucial issues to be considered by the concerned bodies and pave a way for other researchers to conduct detailed experimental research on the area of teachers' instructional beliefs and grammar teaching approaches.

1.4. Limitations

One of the limitations of this study is that the data collected through focus group discussion are not transcribed, due to time constraint. For the same reason, it was also impossible to include more than 4 sample schools in the study. Thus, the study was based on only 41 English language teachers available in these schools. In fact, some writers such as Cohen and Manion (1994) have mentioned the possibility of using 30 subjects as a minimum sample size in a statistical analysis. However, the researcher felt that such a limited number of subjects and methodological pitfalls might not reveal a complete picture of the study. This could in turn influence the generalizability of the results to some extent.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Teachers' Instruction Beliefs

The concept of 'belief', which has been a common feature of research papers in education for the past decade, has recently come into favour in ELT(Borg,2001). Beliefs are, however, neither easy to define nor to study because they are not directly observable (Johnson, 1994). Nevertheless, Advanced Oxford Learner's Dictionary defines 'belief' as "...a strong feeling that something or somebody exists or true; confidence that something is good or right [or a belief is] an opinion about something; something that you think is true". Eisehart et al in Farrell (2005) also say that belief is an attitude consistently applied to an activity. Moreover, Borg (Ibid) defines 'belief' in general terms and specifies its role. In this study, therefore, 'belief' is used in line with Borg's definition as: "A belief is proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held, is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual, and it is therefore imbued with emotive commitment; further it serves as a guide to thought and behaviour."

In spite of Johnson's ideas, Kagan in Farrell (2005) says that we know that teachers' beliefs consist of tacitly held assumptions and perceptions about teaching and learning. Hampton in Farrell (Ibid) also confirms that teachers' beliefs are indirectly expressed in their activities, and they reflect the nature of instructions the teacher provides to the students. In addition, teachers' beliefs, according to Johnston's (1994) educational research findings, influence perceptions and judgments, and play a great role to translate information on teaching methods into classroom practices. Similarly, Farrell's (2005) study investigated the extent to

which teachers' beliefs influenced their classroom practices, and his findings suggested that what teachers say and do in the classroom are governed by their beliefs.

The attempt to understand teachers' beliefs about the role of grammar and grammar teaching approaches or methods is, therefore, essential to improve the teaching learning process because Bruner cited in Yalew (2004) says that the form of language teaching methods adopted by teachers affect language learning outcomes. Supporting this concept, Yalew (Ibid: 18) also say, "The way by which students are taught either facilitates or slows down their motivation ...their academic performances as well as their future life styles." In connection with this issue, Johnson's (1994) research indicates that understanding teachers' beliefs is very important to improve teaching practices because according to Williams and Burden in Abiy (2002), teachers' beliefs are more important than the methodology which they are told to implement.

Educational research has now shown that much can be learnt about the nature of instruction through the study of teacher's assumptions and beliefs which have a powerful impact on their classroom practices. That is why the study of teachers' 'mental lives' is now acknowledged as a central concern of language teaching, and recent years have seen the development of a significant body of research examining what language teachers think, know and believe, and its relationship to instructional decisions (Farrell, 2005).

On the other hand, Josephine in Farrel (Ibid) says that second and foreign language teachers' beliefs and the influences of such beliefs on their instructional practices in their classrooms have not been investigated. To the researcher's knowledge, this is also true in Addis Ababa University except Abiy's (2000) research on Expressed Beliefs and

Actual Classroom Practices of High School English Teachers Concerning Error Correction and Yalew's (2004) research on Teachers' Beliefs, Knowledge and Practice of Learner- centered Approach in Schools of Ethiopia.

2.2 .Teachers' Beliefs about Grammar Teaching

Because of the controversy about grammar teaching, language teachers have varieties of beliefs about the way and the contents they teach, and about their students. Borg (2003), for example, says that research on grammar teaching indicates that teachers have vast and complex beliefs about pedagogical issues that include beliefs about students and classroom practices Moreover, Tudor (1996) points out that these beliefs are derived from teachers' prior experiences of language learning as students, cultural background and individual personality. In other words, the teachers' experiences as students and their cultural background are regarded as the major sources of their beliefs (Williams and Burden in Abiy, 2002). And teachers' past experiences have more impact than the results of formal research on teachers' practices (Borg, Ibid).

By and large, what teachers do in the classroom is governed by what they believe, and their beliefs often serve to act as a means of filtering instructional judgments and decisions (Shavelson and Stern in Farrell,2005). Teachers' beliefs as guiding principles may not always be true, however. Farrell's (2005) research findings, for example, indicate that teachers have a set of complex beliefs that are not sometimes reflected in their classroom practices for various complicated reasons.

Borg (ibid) mentions students' needs as an example that influence the teachers' classroom practices. This is because more emphasis should be given to the students' preferences than to teachers' in language

classroom (Seedhouse, 1997). According to Seedhouse, what is important is whether the learners themselves validate the activity and find it meaningful, whether they think it has a place in the language classroom, and whether it matches their own language learning aims or not. Moreover, external factors like the type of examination and curriculum boundaries influence teachers' classroom practices (Miroslaw, 2004). These have a great impact on what teachers believe to do and what they do in the classroom.

With regard to grammar teaching, there is a mismatch between what teachers say they believe and what they do in the classroom. As mentioned in Farrell (2005), Richards, Gallo and Renadaya's research findings, for example, point out that those teachers who say they follow communicative approach still firmly believe that grammar is central to language learning and direct grammar teaching is needed. With this regard, Holliday (1994) says that there is a widespread trend that teachers "feel they ought to adopt [CLT] to be up-to-date, but which does not seem to suit the nature of their classrooms". Moreover, Bax (2002) says that teachers and countries that do not implement CLT are regarded as somehow backward. He adds that a world famous ELT author at TEFL conference in 1997 asserted that "many countries are still in the 1950s" in terms of language teaching methodology. Here, the implication is that these countries are backward concerning their language teaching methodologies.

In brief, although many writers agree that the teachers' beliefs highly guide what they teach and how they teach in the classrooms, other factors such as students' needs and the type of examination influence their classroom practices.

2.3.The Essence of Grammar

Several linguists see the essence of grammar from different angles. As a result, there is no single definition of grammar. "Grammar is somewhat an ambiguous term today"(Stern 1983:131). Linton as cited in Stern (1983:131) defines grammar as "...a branch of description of languages which accounts for the way in which words combine to form sentences." This definition belongs to traditional grammar. In this view, grammar is divided into morphology and syntax. Morphology studies the internal structure of the forms of words, and syntax studies sentence structures, and it treats the connection and arrangement of words in sentences (Stern, 1983).

Concerning the definition of grammar, language teachers and grammarians face problems in setting the parameters in linguistics terms because at different times, grammar has included any aspects of language. With this regard, Woods says that "... grammar can be any language analysis, including phonology, morphology, discourse analysis, pragmatics. All these have come under the umbrella of 'grammar' at one time or another" (1995:2).The other way of defining this concept is related to word orders in a sentence. With this regard, grammar is "... the way words are put together to make correct sentences" (Ur, 1996:75). Sometimes it is a problem to tell what exactly grammar means and what it includes and excludes. Some linguists such as Hundson in Woods (1995:3), for example, say, "...there are no natural boundaries around 'grammar', so in principle I shall allow the term to embrace any kind of information about the words."

On the other hand, the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English defines grammar as "... the study and practice of the rules by which words change their forms and are combined into sentences." Based on this definition, as Harmer (1991) explains, grammar is the way how

words change themselves in different contexts and how they combine to make sentences. The grammar of a language is what happens to words when they become negative or plural. And grammar can also refer to how words are ordered differently for various purposes. Here, the order of words in questions and statements can be cited (ibid).

Though there are different ways of understanding about grammar, this research deals with the concept of grammar in line with Woods (1995) explanations. As Wood explains, grammar includes structure words, stem + suffix, grammatical functions like subject, object, etc. informational structures, i.e. meaning differences because of word order and some more. Moreover, the study covers what Freeman (1997) says about grammar. He says that grammar operates at the sentence level and governs the syntax, or word orders, that are permissible in the language. It also works at the subsentence level to govern such things as number and person agreement between subject and verb in a sentence.

2.4. The Concern of Grammar in the History of Language Teaching

In language teaching history, especially in the 20th century, grammar was highly emphasized. Students and teachers considered it the cornerstone of the target language, and knowing grammar was regarded as a remarkable dignity of scholarship (Williams, 1994). As the communicative language teaching approach appeared in the 1970s, however, the value of grammar began to be belittled (Stern, 1983). Here is a brief review about the place of grammar in grammar translation and audiolingual methods.

2.4.1. Grammar Translation Method

This method dominated Europe and foreign language teaching for a century form 1840s to 1940s. The basic procedure of this method is based on the principles of Latin (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Latin was taught through rote learning of grammar rules, translation and practice in writing sample sentences (Hawat, 1984).

The grammar translation method focuses on detailed analysis of grammatical rules, and these rules are used as the basis for translation (Brown, 1994; Cook, 2001). Each grammar point is listed and the rules are explained and illustrated by sample sentences. In this method, accuracy is emphasized, and grammar is taught deductively, i.e. this method emphasizes explanation of grammatical points (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

The main aspects of classroom in the grammar translation method are the use of traditional grammar, and translation of sentences and texts into and out of the target language. Translation is the base of instruction, and classes are taught in students' mother tongue with little use of the target language (Hawat, 1984). Conscious understanding of traditional grammar and awareness of the relation between the first and second languages are seen very important .Traditional grammar is concerned with identifying and defining parts of speech such as noun, verb, adjective, adverbs, preposition. It is also the source of technical terms like subject, statement, sentences, clauses, phrase, etc. (Cook, 2001).

In the mid and late 19th century, opposition to grammar translation method gradually developed in Europe. One of the reasons for the opposition was that "... the students should keep the two languages separate in their minds rather than linking them" (Cook, 2001:4). The

second criticism was that students could construct sentences that are grammatical but would be unacceptable by most of the native speakers (Hawat, 1984). The increased need for oral proficiency in foreign languages was the other opposition against grammar translation method because this method does not emphasize spoken languages. In brief, as it focuses on unusable grammar rules, it does not enhance the students' communicative ability (Richards and Rodgers, Ibid). Thus, after this method was criticized for being ineffective, the audiolingual method was introduced by behavioral psychologists such as Skinner in the 1940s and 1950s (Brown, 1994).

2.4.2. The Audiolingual Method

This method originated in the 1940s and dominated language teaching in the USA till 1967. During this time, grammar played a central role in language teaching (Celce-Murcia, 1991). In fact, Rutherford (1987) points out that even before the appearance of this approach, foreign language teaching had been synonyms with grammar teaching for 2,500 years.

The proponents of this method such as Bloomfield and Fries believe that language teaching occurs through the principles of imitation reinforcement, repetition, and habit formation (Cook, 2001). These beliefs are, according to Cook, the principles of behaviorist psychology. In this approach, as Celce-Murcia (Ibid) and Stern (1983) say, imitation of forms and memorization of certain sentence patterns are used to present a grammar rule, and the rule are practiced with the intention of minimizing learners' errors, which are viewed as bad habits that would be hard to avoid if they once became established. Thus, Harmer (1991:32) says, "Mistakes were criticized and correct utterances were immediately praised."

This method focuses on teaching the spoken language through dialogues and drills (Cook, 2001). Concerning this method, Moulton in Rivers (1964:5) also says, "Language is speech, not writing... A language is a set of habits... Teach the language, not about the language... A language is what native speakers say, not someone thinks they ought to say... Languages are different." According to Cook (Ibid), grammar is seen as a structure in this method, and its base is more in structural grammar than traditional grammar.

Structural grammar focuses on showing how words build up into phrases, and phrases build up into sentences.

In audiolingual method:

> *Structural linguistics developed as a reaction to traditional grammar. Language was viewed as a system of related elements for encoding meaning, the elements being phonemes, morphemes, words, structures, sentence types... phonemic systems led to morphemic systems and this in turn led to higher level systems of phrases, clauses and sentences. Learning a language... entails mastering the elements or building blocks of the language and learning the rules by which these elements are combined from phoneme to morpheme to word to phrase to sentence.*
>
> *(Richards and Rodgers, 2001:55)*

Celce-Mureia in Cook (2001) lists the following characteristics about audiolingual method:

- Structure patterns are taught using repetitive drills
- There is little or no grammatical explanations. Grammar is taught inductively rather than deductively.
- Students are expected to produce error-free utterances.
- Grammatical structures are sequenced, presented and graded according to difficulty or usefulness in a linear system.

The audiolingual method is however criticized for the following points:

- It fails to teach long-term communicative competency

- Language teaching is not acquired through the process of habit formation.
- Its trend to avoid errors in language learning

(Rivers, 1964)

In spite of these and other drawbacks, this method is still used in many parts of the world (Harmer, 1991; Richards and Rodgers,2001).
Similarly, Cook adds the following about this issue:

> *...Though ostensibly it is out of fashion, the influence of audiolingualism is still pervasive. Though new teachers nowadays employ a 'pure' audiolignualism style, many of the ingredients are present in today's classrooms. The use of short dialogues, the emphasis on spoken languages, the value attacked to practice, the emphasis on students' speaking, the division into four skills, the importance of vocabulary control, the step-by-step progression all go back to audiolingulaism. Virtually all pronunciation teaching uses either the audiolingual techniques or repetition and drill or the academic style of conscious explanation. Many teachers feel comfortable with the audiolingual style and use it at one time or another in their teaching.*
>
> *(2002:210)*

2.5. The Decline of Grammar Teaching

As the communicative language teaching movement appeared in the 1970s, linguists looked grammar different from their first view, and they attempted to rethink about grammatical analysis (Stern, 1983). The proponents of the earliest form of CLT like Krashen (1981) degraded the role of traditional grammar in language teaching.

With regard to the inadequacy, or failure of traditional grammar teaching, Doughty in Miroslaw (2004) briefly summarizes as follows: He says that traditional grammar teaching focuses on isolated linguistic forms, has no place for developing fluency, misunderstands the concept of structural complexity, ignores the natural language acquisition process and it has not been a good means of promoting classroom

language acquisition. Moreover, Petrovitz (1997:202) adds, "The main shortcoming of traditional grammar is a lack of context." Stern also confirms that traditional grammar teaching has been far less successful. "That is why empirical research since 1970s has aimed primarily at understanding the conditions and processes of 'natural', untutored first and second language learning" Stern (1992:179).

These were some of the reasons for the decline of traditional grammar teaching and the beginning of communicative language teaching approach (CLT). As CLT movement developed the positive attitude of some scholars toward grammar teaching declined. This movement aimed at the importance of contextual and purposive features of real communication, not accuracy in grammar. The proponents of this movement regarded grammar teaching as unscientific and unimportant in language teaching.

2.6. Grammar during the Earliest Form of CLT

In the 1970s and 1980s, some writers like Krashen and Terrel (1983) realized the shortcomings of the previous language teaching methods and proposed CLT. In CLT, Prabhu (1987), for example, says that the condition of natural language acquisition is replicated in the classroom, and the belief is that language is learnt incidentally from exposure to the target language.

Rutherford (1987) also says that the advocates of the earliest form of CLT believe that learning a grammar rule does not enable students to use the target language spontaneously, and it does not facilitate language acquisition. This variant of CLT, as Hussien (2004) points out, focuses on meaning rather than on form, or grammar rules, because it is believed that focusing on meaning is enhance language acquisition because as Widdowson (1978) indicates the goal of learning second or foreign

language is communication. Thus, according to Krashen (1981), grammar should be excluded since it does not help learners communicate.

Moreover, Krashen and his followers point out that error correction is unnecessary because they feel that errors will gradually selfcorrect as learners are exposed to more complex, rich and meaningful input in the target language (Celce-Murcia, 1991). In addition Krashen (1985) says that no matter how effectively a student learns, the learning will not contribute to his acquired knowledge.

Krashen's views in general create uncertainty in language teaching pedagogy (see 2.8 below). Hopkins and Nettle (1994:157), for example, assert, "The influence of Krashen's idea... has left teachers with a feeling of unease every time grammar is the focus of a lesson, yet teachers have never wished to discard the teaching of grammar" because communication cannot take place in the absence of grammar.

2.7. The Reappearance of Grammar

In Ellis, Basturakmen and Loewn's (2001) terms, the strong form of CLT, which denies the value of grammar teaching, is soon criticized. Nunan (1989:13) puts it as:

> *For some time after the rise of CLT, the status of grammar in the curriculum was rather uncertain. Some linguists maintained that it was not necessary to teach grammar, that the ability to use a second language would develop automatically if the learner were required to focus on meaning in the process of using the language to communicate. In recent years, this view has come under serious challenge, and it now seems to be widely accepted that there is value in classroom tasks which require learners to focus on form. It is also accepted that grammar is an essential resource in using language communicatively.*

In spite of the fact that some people like Krashen consider explicit grammar teaching unimportant, many language teachers continue teaching this item, i.e. grammar teaching has been reviving in the world (Williams, 1994). Some writers such as Harmer (1991), Rutherford

(1987) and Ellis (1996) start to argue for the productive role of grammar, and encourage further reconsideration for the contribution of grammar in language teaching.

However, Higgs and Clifford in Ellis (1996) argue that this variant of CLT may result in students who speak a broken, ungrammatical and 'pidginized' form of the target language. Richards (1985) also points out that there is no actual empirical evidence that proves communicative classrooms, especially those that exclude grammar produce better language learners than traditional classrooms do.

2.8. Controversial Issues about Grammar Teaching

The role and place of formal grammar teaching in foreign or second language pedagogy have been a considerable controversial issue for many years (Seedhouse, 1997; Borg, 2001). "There is currently some debate regarding the nature, extent, and type of grammar instructions or grammar awareness activities appropriate for second or foreign language" (Celce-Murcia, 1991:462). Language teachers, therefore, do not know which way to turn. This ambiguity is created because of some scholars in the field like Krashen (1981) and Probhu (1987), who regard grammar teaching as a waste of time. These influential people have extreme hostile reactions against grammar teaching, yet others such as Stern (1992), Erteel (2000) and Harmer (1987, 1991) praise the value of grammar teaching to develop the students' language competence.

Regarding the debate, Miroslaw (2004) says that the question about the importance of teaching linguistic forms, or grammatical structures, remains one of the most controversial issues in the 2nd language acquisition (SLA) theory and language pedagogy. Ellis (1996) also adds that the last thirty years have been the time of a heated debate. Concerning this controversy, and a number of studies have been conducted to determine the effectiveness of grammar teaching. According to Ellis (1998), in spite of the conflicting nature of the findings, empirical investigations in particular have indicated the advantage and effectiveness of teaching the linguistic forms of a language.

2.9. The Need for Grammar Teaching

With regard to the place and the need for grammar teaching, there is a great debate (Seedhouse, 1997). The debate arises from a number of applied linguists who argue that explicit grammar teaching is unnecessary (Thompson, 1996).

This view is the strong version of CLT, or the earliest form of CLT. It assumes that linguistic knowledge is acquired through communication rather than through direct grammar teaching (Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen, 2001). Is grammarless instruction sufficient to ensure success in acquiring L_2? Regarding this issue, there are numerous opinions. Krashen (1981, 1995), for example, claims that only meaning-focused instruction can enable learners to acquire L_2. Prabhu (1987) also argues that focusing on the grammatical form is unhelpful; instead instruction should be based on meaning using activities or tasks.

In spite of this, Stern (1992: 177) says, "Teachers have been familiar with communicative activities for many years, but the idea of making use of them ... is not widely known, and probably even less widely applied." In addition, Bax (2002) elaborates that although the benefits of an

emphasis on communication are widely accepted in principle by professionals everywhere, traditional grammar teaching methods are still observed in many parts of the world.

Moreover, Schachter in Ellis, Basurkmen and Loewen (2001), among others, suggests that L2 learners, especially adults, do not have acquisitional mechanisms unlike children that acquire their L1. Because of this and other reasons, as Miroslaw (2004) states, grammar was rehabilitated and recognized once again in the 1990s as an important element of language learning.

Woods (1995) also points out that most teachers at present recommend the usefulness of grammar teaching. Obviously, there are numerous reasons for grammar teaching. Swain in Miroslaw (Ibid) says that one line of argument against grammarless instruction, or purely communicative approaches, is that students fail to acquire basic grammatical and sociolinguistic distinctions, and they do not generally achieve high levels of grammatical accuracy.

To alleviate such problems, some researchers like Skehen in Miroslaw (2004) and Ellis (1998) recommend explicit grammar teaching, error correction and designing linguistically communicative tasks as very helpful and necessary. The other reason why grammar should be taught is, as Larsen and Long in Miroslaw (2004) indicate, attention to the form of the target language can help students learn L_2 more rapidly. Pienemann in Freeman (1997) also conducted research on the value of grammar teaching, and demonstrated that it can accelerate language learning and improve learners' accuracy. Thus, according to Ellis (Ibid), structural syllabus should be adopted to complement meaning-based instruction, and to cover the target language grammar, which is missing from notional and task-based syllabuses.

In addition, Celce-Mureia (1991:642-3) recommends grammar instruction as:

> *... no one should dismiss grammar instruction altogether, for there is at present no convincing evidence that to do so would ultimately be beneficial to second or foreign language learners, especially those who need to achieve high level of proficiency and accuracy.*

On the other hand, Ellis (1996) believes that the place of grammar teaching should be viewed from the point of view of educational context in which instruction takes place. In other words, the educational context determines the place of grammar instruction. Purely communicative language teaching, which focuses on meaning, is, for example, more successful in second language contexts in which learners have access to the target language outside the classroom. Freeman (1997) also cites immigrants in the US as examples of second language learners who acquire L2 grammar naturally without instruction.

The earliest form of CLT, however, has a limited significance in foreign language settings where learners have a limited out-of-class exposure to the target language (Freeman, 1997). In such contexts, structural syllabus, explicit grammar teaching and error correction have tremendous values (Miroslaw, Ibid) and Ellis (1996).

2.10. Experiences and Research Findings on CLT and the Value of Grammar

Teachers should be guided and helped by the constantly increasing body of research findings (Miroslaw, 2004). The usefulness of research-generated knowledge, as Ellis (1998) points out, however, often has a limited practical value as researchers and teachers pursue different goals. Researchers, according to Ellis (Ibid), advance technical

knowledge, which is deliberately acquired, and this knowledge is not readily applicable to specific situations. Besides this, research findings are obtained from too few subjects to be universally applied (Ellis, Ibid).

On the other hand, teachers have practical knowledge obtained through experiences and fully expressible only in practice. Thus, the success of research proposals depends, among many things, on the teachers' underlying pedagogical values and beliefs. Instead of imposing research-generated proposals on teachers, therefore, interacting and communicating with teachers, and considering the local educational contexts are of paramount importance (Ellis, 1998; Miroslaw, 2004).

In spite of this discrepancy, a number of studies on the importance of grammar teaching, and the implementation of CLT have been conducted. On the basis of research findings, Ellis (1998) says that grammar instruction has an important role to play in classroom language development. Concerning the implementation of CLT, Doukas (1996) says that although the communicative approach is widely adopted by textbooks and curriculum around the world, research suggests that CLT principles in classroom are rare. Even those teachers who say that they employ CLT approach are observed to teach grammar in line with the principles of structural approach in their classrooms (Ibid).

To point out a better language teaching method, Prabhu as cited in Sysoyev (1999) conducted experimental research, and found out that the group receiving a meaning-based instruction in CLT did well on meaning-based tests, but got low results on a discrete point test. On the other hand, the group receiving a form- based instruction did better on discrete grammar tests rather than on meaning-based tests (Ibid).

In brief, according to Sysoyev (Ibid), the comparison of meaning-based to form-based approaches in L2 teaching indicates that the meaning-based

Belgium at the present time. According to Erzeel (ibid), most teachers in Belgium believe that more focus on grammar teaching plays an important role in their English classes though the tendency over the past decades has been towards a more communicative approach and less focus on grammar. At any rate, Williams (1994) says that the focus and interest in grammar teaching have been reviving in the world nowadays.

2.11. The Effect of Grammar Teaching on Writing

After the decline of traditional grammar teaching in England, an apparent decline in the standards of written English is seen in schools (Williams, 1994). As a result, some educationalists such as Edward and Mercer (1987) have argued in favour of explicit grammar teaching. This is because traditional grammar teaching is believed to be a means of improving the apparent decline of written English (Williams, Ibid).

There is now more interest and beliefs that conscious grammar teaching improves writing (Hudson, 2006). According to Hudson, the state in the UK has been working to change the teaching policy, and to reinforce the teaching of grammar. One of the major reasons to change the policy is the important effect of grammar teaching on children's writing although the earlier published research results have pointed out a negligible or even a harmful effect of grammar teaching on children's writing (Hudson, Ibid). In addition, Laurinen in Hudson (Ibid) conducted research and reported the positive effects of grammar teaching on writing.

2.12. Grammar Teaching and Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)

Since grammar teaching fell out of favour in the USA, a significant lessening in American foreign language skills has been observed. And the need for remedial reading and writing program at colleges and universities across the USA has surprisingly increased. Students who

instruction, or CLT, enables students to express their ideas spontaneously but does not help learners have linguistic accuracy of their speech. On the other hand, form-focused approaches emphasize grammatical structures that make speech accurate. This accuracy is, however, observed in prepared speech only and students are not capable of producing accurate spontaneous speech (Sysoyev, Ibid). Hailom (1982) also conduct similar experimental research to decide whether the structural or communicative approach is better. And his research findings pointed out that CLT is "more functional and effective than structural approach".

As soon as CLT emerged, countries (e.g Malaysia in the 1980s) introduced this approach into their schools. After its introduction in Malysia, however, a large number of students who provide meaningful but ungrammatical sentences have been seen. The students entering universities lack adequate English proficiency to excel in their studies. This is perhaps an indirect effect of CLT (Hussien, 2004). Nowadays, teachers are, therefore, aware that students need to learn grammar rules to achieve both fluency and accuracy, and they often raise questions if a return to grammar teaching is necessary (Celce-Murcia, 1991).

Besides these,Ellis, Basturkmen and Loen (2001) confirm that research studies of immersion education in Genesee and Swain have indicated that students fail to develop high levels of grammatical or sociolinguistic competence in spite of plentiful meaning-focused instruction. This shows the need for some attention to a linguistic form. Higgs and Clifford in Ellis (1996) also point out that learners who are exposed only to meaning-focused instruction do not achieve high levels of proficiency.

Reasons such as these lead many educators and researchers to pay attention to the value of grammar teaching (Thompson, 1996). With this regard, Erzeel (2000) explains the experience of grammar instruction in

have been schooled with the absence of grammar lack verbal skills, and complaints about this problem have come from business agencies and government bodies. Nowadays, however, schools in the USA have been feeling pressure to teach grammar in order to prepare students for multiple-choice questions on grammar and usage in the new Scholastic Apptitude Test (SAT). In spite of this interest in grammar teaching, many teachers who were not trained in grammar are not good at teaching this item (Bralich, 2006).

With regard to SAT, Savignon (1991) says that qualitative evaluation of written and oral expression is time consuming and not straight forward ...US educators, in particular, continue to feel frustration at the domination of curricula by large, standardized multiple-choice tests. Teachers, under pressure to make their students do well on such tests, often devote valuable class time to teaching test-taking skills, drilling students on multiple-choices items about writing, for example, rather than allowing practice writing (Ibid).

These situations are also reflected in our case. Yonas's (2003) research findings, for example, indicate that English exams at grade 8 level are highly grammar based. He says:

> *The English language national examination of grade 8 is still dominated by grammar/structure and reading comprehension questions. There is no listening, speaking or writing exam in the national exams. However, it is a widely accepted view that these macro-skills are basic means in abstracting the communicative competence of the students"*
>
> *(2003:44-45).*

Because of this, as Yonas mentions, teachers of English are forced to deal with more grammar, which is the focuses of the exams, to help their students do well on grammar and reading comprehension exams. He also says that the type of exam has strongly affected the way and the type of items the teachers focus on.

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2.13. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

CLT starts from a theory of language as communication. Richards and Rodgers (2001) indicate that the goal of teaching is to develop communicative competence. Since then, there have been growing interests in communicative language teaching both in second and in foreign language contexts (Savignon, 1991).

In spite of the widespread of CLT in ESL countries, research indicates that the adoption of CLT in EFL countries has generally been difficult. Even though it is difficult, still a number of countries are trying to promote CLT as a language teaching approach (Sato and Kleinsasser in Chou, 2000). Some of the difficulties identified in empirical studies are teachers' beliefs, CLT itself not having clear guidelines, etc (Chou, 2000).

2.13. Characteristics of CLT

Richards and Rodgers (2001) summarize all characteristics of CLT, and state that the characteristics common to all versions of CLT is a theory of language teaching that starts from a communicative model of language and language use. The most common characteristics of CLT according to Chou (2000) are: First, in CLT, meaning is the most important function for communication. Second, contextualization is the basic premise of CLT. According to Lassen- Freeman in Chou (Ibid), the most obvious characteristics of CLT is that almost everything is done with communicative intent. Thus, students use the target language a lot through communicative activities (e.g. games, role playing and problem-solving tasks).

Nunan (1989) also says that the introduction of authentic materials is another characteristic of CLT. In CLT, it is considered desirable to give learners the opportunity to respond to genuine communicative needs in

realistic situations so that they develop strategies for understanding language as actually used by native speakers (Larsen Freeman, in Chou ,2000). Activities in the communicative approach are often carried out by students in small groups. He also states that students are expected to interact with one another, either through group work or in their writings.

Thus, based on the above characteristics, teachers should select learning activities according to how well they engage the students in meaningful and authentic language use rather than in merely mechanical practice of language patterns (Chou,2000).Learner-centered view of second language teaching is also an important criterion (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). According to CLT theory, individual students possess unique interests, styles, needs and objectives that should be reflected in the design of instructional methods (Savignon, 1991).Therefore, teachers should develop materials based on the needs of a particular class. Students are also made to feel secure and unthreatened in a CLT classroom, so teachers that use CLT should avoid adopting an authoritarian, teacher-centered type of teaching (Taylor in Chou, 2000).

2.13.2. Misconceptions about the Inclusion of Grammar in CLT

As Thompson (1996) says, the belief that grammar teaching is excluded from CLT is the most persistent and damaging misconception. Ellis (1996) confirms that CLT was perceived as a departure from grammar instruction in favour of focusing only on meaning. This misconception arises from a number of applied linguists such as Prabhu (1987) and Krashen (1981). That is why Ellis (1998) says that 'communicative' has no clearly understood and received meaning when applied to language teaching- it covers a variety of approaches. Prabhu, for example, argues that grammar teaching is impossible because the knowledge of grammar

that students need is too complex to use the language in communication, i.e. grammar does not help students use the language Krashen also believes that grammar teaching is unnecessary. He says that language should be acquired unconsciously through exposure to the target language.

As Thompson (Ibid) indicates such ideas from various scholars influence and confuse most teachers about what CLT is. Indeed, there is a general agreement that CLT involves particular activity types such as problem-solving, pair work and emphasis on communication. However, this does not mean that grammar is completely ignored in CLT. In connection with this issue, Thompson (1996:10-11) says:

> *...the exclusion of explicit attention to grammar was never a necessary part of CLT. It is certainly understandable that there was a reaction against the heavy emphasis on structure at the expense of natural communication...but there have been theorists and teachers pointing out that grammar is necessary for communication to take place efficiently. It is now fully accepted that an appropriate amount of class time should be devoted to grammar; this has not meant a simple return to traditional treatment of grammar rules...the focus has now moved away from the teacher covering grammar to the learners discovering grammars.*

In CLT, as Thompson (Ibid) mentions, students are first exposed to a new structure in a comprehensible context, so they can realize its function and meaning. After this, the grammatical form used to convey this meaning is discussed, and the discussion of grammar is explicit. In this case, it is the students who do most of the discussion with a support from the teacher (Thompson, 1996).

2.14. Integrative Grammar Teaching

Unlike the advocates of the earliest form of CLT such as Krashen and Prabhu, Long (1991) believes that some focus on grammar instruction is needed, and he says that grammar needs to be combined with meaning-

focused activities. Long (1991:136), however, comments on teaching isolated linguistic forms as:

> *I don't think ...that there is any evidence that an instructional programme built around a series (or even a sequence) of isolated forms is any more supportable now, than it was when Krashen and others attacked it several years ago.*

To help students produce linguistically accurate sentences spontaneously or in a prepared speech, Sysoyev (1999) recommends integrative grammar teaching, i.e. the combination of form-focused with meaning-focused instructions as a possible solution. Spada and Lightbown in Sysoyev (ibid), Ellis (1996),Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen (2001) also agree that form-focused teaching and corrective feedback within the context of communicative interaction contribute a lot to second or foreign language teaching because savingnon in Sysoyev (ibid) confirms communication cannot take place appropriately in the absence of grammar.

Sysoyev (Ibid) also says that although the emphasis given depends on the students' levels and their needs, integration of form and meaning is becoming increasingly important in current research. Musumeci (1997) on his part indicates the idea of combining form and meaning in grammar teaching as a developing trend. In this regard, students should be able to learn explicit grammar rules as well as have a chance to practice them in authentic or simulation tasks (Musumeci, Ibid).

Batstone (1988) shares Musumeci's ideas, and he reasons out the uses of integration. He believes that a meaning oriented approach could give students inadequate exposure to grammatical forms, and a total form-focused instruction could make students too form conscious. It is therefore preferred to pay attention to both meaning and form. Moreover Savignon (1991:269) points out that"...research findings overwhelmingly

support integration of form-focused exercises with meaning-focused experiences." Moreover, Seedhouse (1997) argues that language teaching should combine both form and accuracy with meaning and fluency.

Stern (1992) also agrees on the integration of meaning and form- "At different phases of the learning process, the emphasis may shift from the linguistics to the communicative component or vice-versa, but within the curriculum as a whole both are needed- they complement each other and blend together" (Stern, 1992:180). Focusing on the communicative activities and ignoring the form of a language may produce students who do not appropriately use L_2. Nowadays, there is increasing evidence that learners continue to have difficulties with the basic structures of the language in programs which offer no form-focused instructions (Lightbown and Spada in Sysoyev, 1991). In connection with this issue, these two writers say:

> *...Classroom data from a number of studies offer support for the view that form-focused instruction and corrective feedback provided within the context of communicative program are more effective in promoting second language learning than programs which are limited to an exclusive emphasis on grammar on the one hand or exclusive emphasis on fluency on the other.*
>
> *(1993:103)*

By and large, research has now indicated that a combination of form and meaning may be the best teaching approach (Ellis,Basturkmen and Loewen, 2001; Hussien, 2004). It is also indicated that the integration of form and meaning is gaining importance nowadays, and they should not be taught in isolation (Cece-Murcia, 1991; Sysoyev, 1999).

2.15. Error Correction

With regard to language learning, errors are defined as deviant linguistic forms from the native speakers' accepted norms of the language. Johnson (1994) and Corder (1967), however, have made a distinction between errors and mistakes in that errors are the result of inappropriate

or false knowledge of the language, i.e. errors are wrong linguistic knowledge, which are beyond the learners' awareness of the language system. On the other hand, mistakes are faulty linguistic forms produced as a result of language processing inability. This is to mean that mistakes are not beyond the students' awareness of the language system, but they are simply made because of carelessness, laps of memory, etc (Ibid).

Writers have different views about error correction. Some recommend the use of error correction in L_2 learning whereas others counteract this idea. Edge, for example, believes that making mistakes or errors is "a part of learning... and correction is a part of teaching" (1989:1). Moreover, Drake (1999) asserts that error correction has an important role not only linguistically and pedagogically but also in maintaining the quality of interaction. Similarly, Leech in Drake (Ibid) confirms that L2 teachers should be responsible to correct the learners' language use, or to restructure the learners' developing grammar system. Corder (1967:143) adds that one of the indispensable functions of an L_2 teacher is to tell students 'what is or is not' an acceptable utterance. He generally puts his view as:

> *Errors are signs that actual learning is taking place ... and indicate students' progress and success in language learning...Errors provide feedback, they tell the teacher something about the effectiveness of this teaching materials and his teaching techniques, and show him what parts of the syllabus has been inadequately learned or taught and need further attention. They enable him to decide whether he must devote time to the item he has been working on.*

Moreover, other writers such as Edge (1989) agree on the need for error correction, but they believe that only those errors which hinder communication should be corrected. In other words, they believe that errors, but not mistakes, should be corrected. Abiy's (2000) research findings also point out that Ethiopian high school teachers do not tend to correct all malformations. On the other hand, others like Johnson and

Hammerly in Abiy (2000) argue that all malformation, whether it is a mistake or an error, should be corrected to get rid of fossilization and pidiginization. This is, however, criticized by some writers such as Scrivener in Abiy (2000).These writers argue that correcting all malformations without selecting will prohibit students' participation and motivation because of the fear of making errors or mistakes, i.e. it generally contributes to failure.

In fact the attention given to error correction varies from time to time in line with a given language teaching method. During the audiolongual method, for example, more attention was given to the value of error correction, i.e. a great effort was made to avoid errors. On the other hand, error correction is not recommended in CLT, especially during the erliest form of CLT. Prabhu (1987), who is one of the prominent advocates of this CLT, for example, does not agree on correcting linguistic errors.

In brief, error correction is common in methods focusing on form and accuracy. Seedhouse (1997), for example, asserts that a heavy emphasis on linguistic error correction is associated with an extreme focus on form and accuracy. On the other hand, correction should have either no place, or a very minor place, in fluency work, for it normally distracts from message, or may even be perceived as rude (Brumfit in Seedhouse,1997).

2.16. Grammar Teaching Approaches

Explicit grammar teaching aims at developing knowledge about language rules. Here, learners make an effort to acquire a conscious knowledge of language and to know how language functions to convey meanings (Stern, 1992). To present language explicitly, a teacher can use a

deductive or an inductive approach (Miroslaw, 2004). However, there is no clear cut and a universally accepted understanding about the preferences of the two approaches.

2.16.1. Deductive Approach

The deductive grammar teaching approach involves rule explanations usually at the beginning of a lesson, and then students are guided to apply a given rule in exercises. In other words, the information about language is presented openly and explicitly. The teacher, for example, explains how 'do' and 'does' are used in the simple present tense (Cross, 1992; Harmer, 1987).

2.16.2. Inductive Approach

The inductive grammar teaching approach, or the discovery learning, is an indirect explicitly grammar instruction. Here, students are provided with data or texts which illustrate the use of certain grammatical structures. Then, they are encouraged to analyze and discover the rules to arrive at some generalizations about the given structure. As the students themselves discover the rules, this approach is more student-centered (Harmer, 1987; Cross, 1992; Miroslaw, 2004).

Of the two approaches, the inductive approach is preferred because discovery activities can be much more motivating than those which require the application of rules provided (Harmer, 1987). Concerning this, Harmer (1987:39) asserts, "...encouraging students to discover grammar for themselves is one valuable way of helping them get grips with the language...the use of discovery techniques can be highly motivating and extremely beneficial for students' understanding." Besides this, the rules and patterns students discover by themselves are likely to be more meaningful and memorable, and it fosters deeper understanding and development of learner-autonomy. With this regard,

selection was also based on familiarity, as the researcher worked in Dangila High School for 5 years, and Addis Kiddam is the nearest of all high schools to Dangila in this zone.

Among the total of 19 English language teachers in these two schools, 3 volunteers from Dangila and 2 from Addis Kidam High Schools were observed for 3 periods each. Besides the 5 teachers involved in the observation, 2 others (one from Dangila and the other from Addis Kidam) were included in the focus group discussions, i.e. a total of 5 and 7 teachers participated in classroom observations and focus group discussions respectively.

The selection of these two additional teachers for the group discussions was also on voluntary basis. The two focus groups, one from Dangila with 4 members and the other from Addis Kidam with 3 members, were interviewed face-to-face in groups for about 10 minutes each. So as to gain sufficient and supportive information, and to avoid possible frustration, the researcher pre-informed the group members about the purpose of the group discussions. He also promised them to keep their responses confidential. As they all know the researcher, they felt free when participating in the discussion.

With regard to the total sample teachers' profile, 22 of them were B.A. / B.Ed. holders, 3 diploma and the rest 16 had diploma + summer in English. Their experiences as English language teachers ranged from 1-25, and 34 of them were males and the rest 7 were females.

3.2. Data Collection Instruments

Multiple sources of information are required because no single source of information can be trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective (Patton, 1990). To accomplish the objective of this survey study,

therefore, three different sources of data collection were employed: questionnaire, observation and focus group discussion. These instruments, without which the study would be incomplete, were appropriately used to elicit relevant information to the study under investigation.

3.2.1. Questionnaire

A questionnaire, which is a principal survey instrument, was used in this study. It was designed to reveal teachers' personal beliefs about the teaching of grammar, and the methods to be employed. It contains 7 open-ended and 28 close-ended items. The open-ended items were included to give respondents more opportunity to freely express their views.The investigator, therefore, believes that the questionnaire could elicit relevant and sufficient information about teachers' beliefs.

The close-ended items were put in three tables and the third one is subdivided into two major categories of belief statements. The items were generally related to whether or not teachers believed that:

- grammar instruction enhances students' English proficiency.
- the deductive or inductive approach of grammar teaching is preferred
- traditional language teaching approaches/methods are preferable to develop students' language competence
- communicative language teaching approach guarantees effective language learning.

To reveal facts from different angles, some statements in the close-ended questionnaire overlap in content, but their wording is different. The statements in each category were placed in random order to avoid

choices which might make a favourable impression. With the random order of statements, the aim was to see whether respondents gave consistent answers to the beliefs statements.

In the first part of the questionnaire in Table I, the respondents were required to rate the degree of their agreement or disagreement to each statement on a 5 point Likert Scale from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree) about the need for grammar instruction. Similarly, in the second part in Table 2, the respondents were asked to rate their degree of agreements about the teachers' preference for the deductive and inductive grammar teaching approaches. And in the third table, they were asked about the need for employing the principles of traditional or CLT approach/method.

In fact, a Likert Scale was originally developed to measure the respondents' favorable or unfavorable attitudes towards the object of interest. However, as Bernat (2008) asserts, its scope has been extended to wider cognitive and affective variables including beliefs. That is why it is used in this study.

This questionnaire was designed by the researcher on the basis of the literature reviewed. Pilot testing was, therefore, inevitable for its reliability and validity to carry out the main study. With regard to the pilot test of statements in a Likert Scale, Best and Kahn (2005:318) say that "a trial test should be administered to a number of subjects...to eliminate statements that are ambiguous or that are not the same type as the rest of the scale."

The number of respondents involved in the pilot study was 4, all English language teachers from Duru Betie High School, which is about 19 km from Dangila. After the pilot phase, 3 items have been redesigned as they were a little wordy and ambiguous, and 5 items have been cancelled

because they were found to be mere repetition and irrelevant to the study. After the pilot test, the questionnaire was administered to 41 English language teachers working in the aforementioned high schools, and all the papers were returned.

3.2.2. Classroom Observation

Classroom observation provides a clear picture of what the actual teaching learning process looks like (Selinger and Shohmy, 1989). It is also believed that observation is a very important data gathering tool because "it enables the researchers to document and reflect systematically upon classroom interactions and events as they actually occur rather than as we think they occur"(Burns, 1990:80).

As mentioned in chapter I, one of the main purposes of this study is to confirm whether the teachers' beliefs about grammar teaching are reflected or observed in their actual classroom practices. It was, therefore, mandatory to involve classroom observations as a basic instrument. Therefore, 9 purposefully selected grammar lessons from 3 grade 9 English language teachers, and 6 random lessons consisting of vocabulary, reading comprehension and a type of communicative activities were observed from 2 teachers in the same grade level.

Thus, the researcher himself designed a checklist on the basis of the ideas in the questionnaire, i.e. the items in the observation checklist were very much related to the questionnaire items. They were also pilot tested because "trying out the instrument before the administration of the real study is as important as it is with ready made procedures" (Silinger and Shohamy, 1989:186). This developed confidence on the part of the researcher in the foregoing investigation.

Although the observation was not video recorded or transcribed, the researcher recruited a coobserver because "using multiple observers or teams...can enhance the validity of observations, as researchers can cross-check each other's findings and eliminate inaccurate interpretations" (Alder and Alder, 1994:381).

The specific objective of the observation was to realize the way how grammar was treated in the classroom, the emphasis given to grammar and the approach used by teachers. During the observation, therefore, the coobserver ticked the checklist, and the researcher took notes and at the same time ticked the observation checklist items. After each observation, the two observers discussed what they observed and reached agreement. The information gathered through observation was analyzed with the data collected through the questionnaire and focus group discussion, and used as a means of confirming the impacts of teachers' beliefs about grammar teaching on their real classroom practices.

3.2.3. Focus Group Discussion

The third instrument used in this study was a focus group discussion. The reason why the researcher preferred this tool to interview was that focus group discussion saves time and allows a researcher to gather data from many participants. In line with this, Bernard (1996:175) says, "The major advantage of using focus groups in data collection is that it allows researchers to obtain data from a large number of participants in a short time span." The availability of a number of respondents in one place minimizes expenses and enables the researcher to get a high proportion of valuable responses (Best and Kahn, 2005).

As stated above, the aim of this survey questionnaire was to elicit the teachers' beliefs, and that of classroom observations was to assure whether or not their beliefs were reflected in their actual classroom

practices. And the focus group discussion was used to uncover tangible reasons for the mismatch between teachers' beliefs and their actual classroom practices. Thus, a total of 5 questions were designed and used for this purpose.

3.3. Data Collection Procedure

On the basis of the objectives of this study, the researcher designed three types of instruments (see 3.2). Although the general goal of these instruments was to gather relevant data, they had their own particular shares or specific functions in the research. The survey questionnaire was, for example, intended to gather teachers' instructional beliefs about the issue of grammar teaching and the methods used. On the other hand, the classroom observation was used to confirm if teachers' instructional beliefs influenced their classroom activities. And the focus group discussion was intended to reveal some reasons why teachers' beliefs dictated or did not dictate their classroom practices.

Taking these specific purposes into account, the researcher first observed teachers' classroom practices before administering the questionnaire and conducting the focus group discussions. This was because the investigator expected that distributing questionnaire before observation would make teachers more conscious of their classroom practices, and would result in artificial behavior on the part of the teachers during classroom observation. After the observation, therefore, the questionnaire was distributed, and the researcher compared the results of the observation and those of the questionnaire to identify items indicating the divergence of teachers' classroom practices from their beliefs. On the basis of this result, the researcher reshaped the questions already prepared for the focus group discussions, and then he conducted

the discussions. This, the researcher believes, could reveal facts or reasons why some of the teachers' classroom practices diverged from their beliefs about grammar teaching and the methods employed.

3.4. Methods of Data Analysis

After identifying the research problems and collecting relevant information through the three varieties of instruments, the researcher categorized the data appropriately so as to interpret them. To analyze and interpret the data gained from focus group discussions, open-ended questionnaire and classroom observations, a qualitative method was used. And to interpret the data obtained from the close-ended Likert Scale questionnaire, a quantitative method involving a simple statistical data analysis (percentage and mean) was used because using "simple statistical measures such as percentages and means...reduce the volume of data, making it easier to understand" (Kumar, 1999:223).In the close-ended part of the questionnaire, a 5 point Likert Scales of "strongly agree/strongly disagree" type were used. The items in this part are divided into three tables, and the grand means in Tables 1 and 3 were computed to analyze and interpret similar items together in groups. Moreover, the mean of each item and the percentage of the options were used in the analysis to realize the teachers' beliefs and their implications in each item.

On the basis of Peacock's (1999) suggestions, the 5 point Likert scales have been collapsed into three by combining "strongly agree and agree" as one, and "strongly disagree and disagree" as one scale. This was done for ease of reporting. And the numerical data represented by the percentage and mean scores have been rounded to the nearest whole number for interpretations.

On the other hand, the data gained from the focus group discussions were taped for convenience of listening repeatedly. And a careful attempt was made to sort out the common and major points of the subjects' opinions and comments in both focus group discussions and open-ended questionnaire. After the common core points were identified, most of the subjects' views were paraphrased and some of them were described as they were stated or written. Then, the qualitative data were organized and analyzed together with the quantitative data to arrive at relatively accurate conclusions.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Some Considerations in Methods of Analysis

This chapter is concerned with analyzing and interpreting the data using both qualitative and quantitative methods. During data analysis, a researcher should think over and carefully observe the implications of the data gathered. With regard to qualitative research, Powney and Watts in Yonas (2003), for example, say that data analysis involves discovering and deriving patterns in the data, looking for general orientations in the data, and trying to sort out what the data are about, why and what kinds of things might be said about them. This is to mean that data analysis is not a simple description, but it is a process requiring the researcher to think critically.

Taking all these into consideration, the investigator, therefore, tried to review related literature thoroughly, identified problems and controversial issues, collected supportive information, and in light of these, he made an attempt to realize the relations and implications of patterns in the data during analysis and interpretation.

The core concepts identified as helpful for this study are generally included in three tables. Table 1, for example, encompasses belief statements focusing on the roles of grammar in a foreign language teaching. And Table 2 is concerned with eliciting teachers' beliefs about grammar teaching approaches. On the other hand, Table 3 deals with teachers' beliefs about the preference for language teaching approaches/methods. During analysis, very similar items were selected and treated together in particular subtitles under the main tables.

4.2. Teachers' Reactions to the Role of Grammar

(Items 1-8, Table 1 in appendix A)

Table 1

Item	Strongly agree=5		Agree=4		Undecided =3		Disagree =2		Strongly disagree =1		Total		Mean (X_i)
	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	
1	10	24.4	27	65.9	2	5	2	5	-	-	41	100	4.10
2	8	19.5	25	60.9	3	7.3	5	12.1	-	-	41	100	3.88
3	14	34.1	24	58.5	2	5	1	2.4	-	-	41	100	4.24
4	2	5	30	73.2	-	-	9	21.9	-	-	41	100	3.61
5	9	21.9	25	60.9	4	9.8	3	7.3	-	-	41	100	3.98
6	6	14.6	23	56.1	2	5	10	24.4	-	-	41	100	3.61
7	22	53.7	15	36.6	2	5	2	5	-	-	41	100	4.4
8	7	17	23	56.1	7	17	2	5	2	5	41	100	3.76

Fre=frequency

Grand mean=3.95

The items in above Table were used to elicit teachers' reactions to the role of grammar instructions in high schools because "one of the main controversies surrounding the teaching of grammar is whether or not grammar can be taught" (McKay, 1987: xi). The belief statements included in this table, therefore, dealt with the need for grammar teaching.

4.2.1. Teachers' Belief about the Role of Grammar Instruction

(Items 1,6,7,8- Table 1)

In the above Table, Items 1, 6, 7 and 8 measured the teachers' beliefs about the need for teaching grammar. The percentages of these items, which are 90, 71, 93 and 73 respectively, seem to indicate that teachers believe in the teaching of grammar. The percentage of Item 1(90%), for example, suggests that teachers were inclined to believe in the claim that "Grammar should be taught because it is very important to develop the students' language competences." In fact, insignificant number of teachers (5 percent) disagreed on this view and the rest 5 percent of them remained undecided. The mean score of this item is also 4.1 in a scale of 5, 4,3,2,1 questionnaire, which means the majority of teachers responded "I agree" on this claim. This tends to show that the vast majority of teachers generally believe in teaching grammar with the intention of developing the students' English language competences. The teachers' beliefs were also reflected in their real classroom activities. This was confirmed by the observation in which most teachers were teaching grammar explicitly. The observation results also indicated that English language teachers, directly or indirectly, taught this item even if they did not have a lesson plan specifically designed to teach grammar. The evidence was that 2 of the teachers were observed treating grammar at the expense of teaching other language items such as vocabulary and reading comprehensions.

The majority of teachers (93%) also showed their agreement to Item 7, which reads, "I believe that grammar teaching improves students' writing skills." The percentage of this item (93 percent) also indicates the teachers' strong beliefs about the positive effects of grammar instruction to improve the students' writing skills. Taking the mean of

this item (4.40) into consideration, one could also say that English language teachers endorsed grammar instruction as they believe it enhances the students' writing skills.

Moreover, a number of respondents (73%) favoured Item 8, i.e. many teachers thought that "grammar teaching may help students to develop their communicative competences". On the other hand, a considerable number of teachers, 17 percent and 10 percent, remained undecided and disagreed on this view respectively. In line with this issue, Item 6 required teachers to show their reactions to the relevance of explicit grammar teaching for effective communication. Among the respondents of this item, 71 percent of them were inclined to agree that "students may not effectively use English for communication unless they learn grammar explicitly" (Item 6).

The open-ended part of the questionnaire (Item 1) also indicates that teachers should teach grammar to facilitate the students' communicative competences. One of the respondents, for example, said, "Students should be taught grammar explicitly to be able to carry out communicative activities". In connection with this, Thompson (1996:10) says, "... there have been theorists and teachers pointing out that grammar is necessary for communication to take place efficiently." Similarly, Harmer (1987:5) says, "Students have to know grammar to perform language functions [e.g. greeting]." The other respondents in the same item also said, "Unless a student is taught the differences between the present continuous tense and the past continuous tense, for example, he will not understand the difference between 'what are you doing?' and 'what were you doing?' when he is engaged in free communicative activities." The other respondent also added that to let

students talk about unreal or improbable conditions, they should inevitably be taught about conditional II explicitly before and even after the students are engaged in such free communicative activities.

However, a sizeable number of respondents (24 percent) in Item 6 of the close-ended part of the questionnaire did not endorse the role of explicit grammar teaching. This contradictory view could suggest that the earliest form of CLT advocated by some people such as Prabhu, Krashen and Terrel has negative impacts on a few English language teachers' beliefs about the role of grammar teaching to develop communicative competences. Prabhu in Nunan (1989), for example, believes that communicative tasks without dealing with the linguistic features of the language are the main means of developing competences in a second language. Concerning this, Hopkins and Nettle (1994:157) say, "The influence of Krashen's ideas... has left teachers with a feeling of unease every time grammar is the focus of a lesson, yet teachers have never wished to discard the teaching of grammar" because communication does not seem to take place in the absence of grammar teaching.

By and large, on the basis of the teachers' responses to Items 1, 6, 7 and 8 and the open-ended part of the questionnaire (Item 1), it seems possible to deduce that English language teachers have strong beliefs about the role of grammar instruction to enhance the students' language competences in spite of minor contradictory ideas. The teachers were also observed spending an ample time on teaching grammar. It does not, therefore, seem unreasonable to conclude that teachers' expressed beliefs about the role of grammar teaching are reflected in their actual classroom practices. In this respect, Farell (2005) says that what teachers do in the classroom is governed by their

beliefs. The respondents' reactions to the above items, could lead us to echo Farell's views in that teachers' beliefs have a powerful impact on their classroom practices.

4.2.2. Teachers' Beliefs about Grammar Teaching as a Means of Showing Mastery

(Item 2 -Table 1)

On the other hand, Item 2 assessed the subjects' reactions if explicit grammar teaching shows teachers' mastery or control over their subject matter. The mean score of this item is 3.88, and the percentage showing teachers' agreement is 80. However, 7 and 12 percent of the respondents remained undecided and disagreed on this opinion respectively. In light of the mean score and the percentage, it is likely to argue that one of the reasons, among other factors, why high school English language teachers prefer teaching grammar explicitly is to show students their control over their subject matter. With this regard, Harmer (1991) says that teachers have to be able to show their students that they know their subjects well. In connection with this, Krashen (1995:87) says, "I felt obliged to present an impressive series of lessons that demonstrated my control of the subject...I presented a complete survey of all tenses [and students] thought that I was an outstanding language teacher."

4.2.3. Teachers' Responses to Focusing on Grammar

(Items 3, 4, 5)

In Items 3,4, and 5, teachers were also asked to give their responses if they believe in teaching more grammar than dealing with communicative activities for different reasons other than developing the students' language competences. These items have mean scores of 4.24, 3.61 and 3.98 respectively. The percentages of these items to indicate the teachers'

agreement are 93, 78 and 83 in order. To elaborate each item separately, the vast majority of subjects (93 percent) agreed that English language teachers "prefer grammar teaching because students are more interested in learning this item than carrying out communicative tasks." (Items 3)

One of the reasons influencing the students' preferences is, as reported in Item 5, the inclusion of a large number of grammar-based questions in national examinations. In responding to Item 5, which is about emphasizing grammar because of a large number of grammar questions in Ethiopian General Secondary Education Certificate Examination (EGSECE) and Ethiopian Higher Education Entrance Certificate Examination (EHEECE), 83 percent of the subjects were in favour of this Item (see also Table 3, Items 16 and 17).In fact, insignificant number of teachers, 10 and 7 percent, remained uncertain and disagreed on this claim respectively. It is not, therefore, surprising to hear teachers saying that they focus on more grammar than communicative activities (Item-3) because teachers should "...always strive to keep the topics united in theme and relate to students' interest" (McKay, 1987: XV).

Our experiences as teachers also show us that teachers are obliged to know the students' beliefs and interests, and to teach accordingly because "...learners' beliefs influence their reactions to teaching activities..."(Tudor, 1996:50-51). This might, therefore, be one of the reasons why teachers tend to focus on grammar instruction.

With regard to Item 4, most of the respondents (78 percent) agreed on the claim that "I am more interested in teaching grammar than dealing with communicative activities because grammar is relatively easier to present". A significant number of respondents (22 percent), however, rejected this view. The observation conducted also revealed some facts about this issue. Among the 5 teachers observed, one of them (20

percent) was frequently observed trying to minimize formal explicit grammar instruction in his lessons and to avoid spontaneous grammar teaching. This teacher, unlike others, was not observed bouncing students' wrong answers back to the class, and did not generally encourage further discussions on a particular grammar point. He was frequently heard ordering students to form groups, and discuss most of the lessons among themselves even if the situations seemed inconvenient for group discussions. When asked a specific grammar question in relation to the topic in the textbook, he was observed inadequately explaining the rules involved. This teacher generally seemed that he was less confident and unsure about how to explain grammar rules. The rejection of Item 4 by 22 percent of the target population and the results of classroom observation indicate that not all teachers are interested in teaching grammar. Frequently engaging students in group work regardless of its appropriacy and the students' interest may also suggest that some inefficient teachers use group discussions in the name of student- centered pedagogy as a cover for their weaknesses. From this, it seems possible to conclude that the degree of teachers' grammar knowledge affects the attention given to this item in classrooms.

By and large, computing the grand mean of Table 1 seems desirable to indicate the results. The grand mean of the items in this table is 3.94, which means the teachers' reactions to the category were "I agree". And the results in this part generally indicate that the teachers believe that grammar instruction is decisive in enhancing the learners' language competences. The observation result also confirmed that teachers' beliefs about the role of grammar teaching were also reflected in their actual classroom practices.

As indicated in Items 1, 6, 7, and 8 in the table above, almost all the sample teachers believed in the positive effects of explicit grammar teaching because they felt that it has a direct contribution to the development of the target language proficiency. In brief, the vast majority of teachers showed their agreements to the claim that explicit grammar knowledge could foster language learning and help students use the language in communication and in writing. This finding is generally endorsed by many scholars. Nunan (1989:13), for example, claims, "It is ... accepted that grammar is an essential resource in using language communicatively." Celce-Murcia (1991:3) further argues, "No one should dismiss grammar instruction altogether for there is at present no convincing evidence that to do so would ultimately be beneficial."

Besides the teachers' beliefs about the role of grammar instruction in enhancing the students' language proficiency, the data also indicate other factors making teachers focus on grammar (see Items 2,3,4, and 5 in the same table). These are the students' interests in learning grammar, the inclusion of more grammar questions in national examinations, a means of showing mastery over the subject matter, and the relative easiness of grammar to present.

In conclusion, it seems possible to suggest that high school English language teachers have positive beliefs about grammar teaching, and their beliefs converge with their instructional judgments or with their actual classroom practices. It could also be reasonable to deduce that the teachers have been influenced very little by those theories of second language acquisition that downgrade the role of explicit, form-focused instruction in the learning of a foreign language.

4.3. Teachers' Beliefs about the Deductive and Inductive Grammar Teaching Approaches

(Items 1 and 2)

Table 2

Item	Strongly agree=5		Agree=4		Undecided =3		Disagree =2		Strongly disagree =1		Total		Mean (X_i)
	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	
1	16	39	13	31.7	3	7.3	6	14.6	3	7.3	41	100	3.80
2	10	24.4	20	48.8	-	-	9	21.9	2	5	41	100	3.66

Fre=frequency

The two items in the above table were supposed to reveal the teachers' beliefs about the preferences for the deductive and inductive grammar teaching approaches.

Concerning the deductive approach (Item 1), a total of 71 percent of the respondents showed their agreements to the view that "teachers should directly explain grammar rules with examples", i.e. they should teach grammar deductively. Whereas, 22 percent of them disagreed on this view. The rest 7 percent remained undecided. The double effects of the mean score (3.8) and the percentage (71) of Item 1 indicate that the majority of teachers believe that grammar should be taught deductively .However, a considerable number of teachers (22 percent) did not accept this claim.

With regard to the inductive grammar teaching approach (Item 2), the majority of the subject teachers (73 percent) agreed that "students can internalize grammar rules by focusing on use", i.e. they endorsed the inductive approach. Whereas, the rest 27 percent of the teachers disagreed on the use of this approach to treat grammar. Though most of the target teachers agreed to teach grammar inductively, none of the sample teachers was noticed employing this approach. Instead, the

observation result revealed that the teachers spend much of their time teaching isolated linguistic forms explicitly without context, i.e. the teachers directly presented grammar rules with examples in isolation and explained how grammar rules work in the language. This indicates that they teach grammar deductively. Teaching linguistic forms without context and focusing on a deductive approach to teach grammar are distinctive features of traditional grammar teaching methods. In line with this, Tudor (1996:211) says, "The traditional approach to grammar teaching relies heavily on deduction from a given rule to the instance of usage." On the other hand, grammar is taught inductively in CLT (Thompson, 1996).

In light of the observation result, it could be inferred that the teachers' instructional beliefs about the deductive grammar teaching approach converged with their classroom activities, but their beliefs about the inductive approach diverged from their actual classroom practices.

The teachers were, therefore, interviewed in groups to reason out why of the mismatch. They generally said that they believe in varieties of teaching approaches. Their beliefs seemed to comply with the concept "no single method could guarantee successful results" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001:13). However, the teachers pointed out some impediments hampering them from teaching grammar inductively. As it was reported in the teachers' group discussions, the textbooks (grades 9 and 10) do not have many grammar lessons designed inductively. The other reason given was that the inductive approach is more difficult and time consuming than the deductive approach. Concerning this, Cross (1992:28) says, "The deductive approach is quick and easy for teachers where a difficult grammar point is to be presented and perhaps explained." Moreover, the teachers reported that they had not been acquainted with this approach in practice.

In the open-ended part of the questionnaire (Item 2), the teachers were also asked about their past experiences of learning English, and all of them reported that they were taught this item from their teachers' direct presentation and from grammar books. And it is known that most grammar books present this item deductively. From this, one could deduce that teachers were taught grammar deductively, not inductively.

It therefore seems possible to infer that the teachers' prior language learning experiences could have some impacts on teachers' classroom practices. With this regard, Chou (2000) asserts that teachers' feelings, needs and beliefs, combined with their experiences and theoretical knowledge usually guide their language instructional practices.

The means and percentages of the two items in the above table generally indicate that the teachers agree on both deductive and inductive grammar teaching approaches. In other words, the figures show that teachers generally tend to favour both the deductive and inductive approaches. In fact, what the teachers believe seems effective and complies with the currently accepted principles because "... good grammar teaching probably requires both grammar explanation of forms and meaning by the teacher [i.e. deductive], and task focusing on getting students to work out by themselves how grammar is used for communication [i.e. inductive]" (Atkins, Hailom and Nuru, 1995:84).

To sum up, the target teachers believed that both the deductive and inductive grammar teaching approaches are effective and should be practiced. However, the results of the classroom observation and those of the focus group discussion indicated that teachers placed great emphasis on the deductive approach, and that the teachers were unfamiliar with the inductive approach to grammar instruction. In other words, there was no consistent congruence between teachers' beliefs and their real classroom practices concerning grammar teaching

approaches. This is against the literature which says that teachers' beliefs guide and reflect the nature of instructions. In light of the results obtained about grammar teaching approaches, it also seems possible to conclude that traditional language teaching methods/approaches are prevalent in our high schools.

4.4. Teachers' Beliefs about the Principles of Traditional and Communicative Language Teaching Approaches/ Methods

Table 3

Items	Strongly agree =5		Agree =4		Undecided =3		Disagree =2		Strongly disagree =1		Total		X_i (mean)
	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%	Fr	%	Fre
1	1	2.4	1	2.4	-	-	28	68.3	11	26.8	40	100	1.85
2	5	12.1	20	48.8	2	5	12	29.3	2	5	40	100	3.34
3	1	2.4	11	26.8	-	-	23	56.1	6	14.6	40	100	2.22
4	-	-	3	7.3	1	2.4	25	60.9	12	29.3	40	100	1.88
5	-	-	3	7.3	4	9.8	22	53.7	12	29.3	40	100	1.95
6	3	7.3	5	12.1	-	-	23	56.1	10	24.4	40	100	2.22
7	3	7.3	27	65.9	-	-	6	14.6	5	12.1	40	100	3.41
8	1	2.4	4	9.8	-	-	22	53.7	14	34.1	40	100	1.93
9	16	39	16	39	-	-	9	22	-	-	40	100	3.95
10	14	34.1	24	58.5	3	7.3	-	-	-	-	40	100	4.27
11	21	51.2	18	43.9	2	5	-	-	-	-	40	100	4.46
12	24	58.5	13	31.7	2	5	2	5	-	-	40	100	4.43
13	20	48.8	15	36.6	3	7.3	3	7.3	-	-	40	100	4.27
14	24	58.5	12	29.3	-	-	3	7.3	2	5	40	100	4.30
15	15	36.6	21	51.2	-	-	5	12.1	-	-	40	100	4.12
16	13	31.7	17	41.4	4	9.8	5	12.1	2	5	40	100	3.83
17	18	43.9	21	51.2	2	5	-	-	-	-	40	100	4.40
18	19	46.3	12	29.3	2	5	4	9.8	4	9.8	40	100	3.92

Fre=Frequency

Grand means (X):

From Item 1-8=2.35

From Item 9-18=4.20

$X=\sum X_i/n$

The items in Table 3 were designed to elicit teachers' reactions to the teaching methods/approaches that should be used in the classroom by teachers. The first 8 items in this table encompassed some of the main principles of teaching a foreign or second language in traditional methods. And the second part, from Item 9-18, dealt with the principles of communicative language teaching approach.

In light of the responses given, therefore, the teachers' beliefs about the preference for traditional methods or CLT approaches were indicated. Besides indicating their beliefs on the basis of the results in the questionnaire, an attempt was also made to reveal whether or not the teachers' beliefs about the teaching methods were reflected in their real classroom activities. Hence, the notes made during classroom observation were used in the analysis to cross-check the match or the mismatch between teachers' beliefs and their classroom activities. Moreover, the data gathered from the focus group discussions were treated together with the results of the questionnaire to reason out the mismatch between their beliefs about the principles of language teaching methods and their actual classroom practices.

4.4.1. Teachers' Beliefs about the Relevance of Traditional Language Teaching Methods

In the first category of Table 3 (Item 1-8), the target teachers were required to react to some principles of traditional language teaching methods.

4.4.1.1. Teachers' Reactions to Teaching Grammar Step-by-step and Rule Memorization

(Items 2,7-Table 3)

In Items 2 and 7, teachers showed their agreement with a varying degree. In Item 2, for example, the majority of respondents (61 percent) agreed that "memorization of structure-based dialogues help students to learn English." In fact, a significant number of respondents (34 percent) disagreed on this claim. With regard to Item 7, the majority of teachers (73 percent) agreed that "Teaching structures by sequencing them according to their level of difficulty helps students to learn English". On the other hand, a considerable number of respondents (27 percent) countered this view.

In the same token, the results of classroom observation revealed that teachers seemed to teach structures according to their level of difficulty in a linear system. In the three round observations, one of the teachers was, for example, observed presenting probable conditions, improbable conditions and impossible conditions in sequence. These structures are also presented in this order in grade 9 English textbook, as a brief glance at the book indicated.

This result indicates that the textbook writers could also have the idea of sequencing or grading structures in a linear order on the basis of their level of difficulty. Finocchiaro and Brumfit in Richards and Rodgers (2001) point out that memorization of structure-based dialogues and sequencing of units by principles of linguistic complexity are two of the basic features of audiolingulaism, which is a traditional language teaching method. Moreover, Celce-Murcia in Cooks (2001) confirms that grammatical structures are sequenced, presented and graded according to difficulty and usefulness in a linear system in audiolingualism. The teachers' responses to these two items and the

results of classroom observation could possibly indicate the fact that teachers have some positive beliefs about the effectiveness of some traditional language teaching principles, and such principles of traditional methods generally seem to be prevalent in high school English classrooms.

4.4.1.2. Teachers' Beliefs about Error Correction

(Item 5, Table 3)

The responses to Item 5 indicate that a large number of teachers (83 percent) rejected the view that "All errors must be corrected" and insignificant number of teachers, 7 and 9 percent respectively, agreed and remained undecided with this view. The classroom observation also confirmed the teachers' expressed beliefs.

During classroom observation, when some students were asking and answering questions, most of them were frequently heard making grammatical errors. Three of the teachers, however, did not correct any of the students' oral errors at all, and the other two rarely corrected these errors. On the other hand, all teachers were observed seriously trying to correct every error students made while answering grammar exercises from the textbook.

In the open-ended part of the questionnaire, the teachers' common views in this regard were that frequently made errors should be corrected. The teachers also indicated that correcting all oral errors would result in failure in language learning. In brief, most of the target teachers agreed that not all errors should be corrected.

The results of the classroom observation also indicated that the teachers' beliefs about error correction are reflected in their real classroom activities, i.e. there is a relatively consistent association between teachers' beliefs and their actions (see also Item 18 in 4.4.2.2

below). Moreover, the responses to the degree of error correction depict that teachers generally tend to apply combined principles of both CLT and traditional methods .This is because errors are signs of learning, and they are tolerated in CLT, but they are criticized and must be prevented at all costs in traditional language teaching approaches (Finocchiaro and Brumfit in Riahrds and Rodgers, 2001).

4.4.1.3. Teachers' Beliefs about More Focus on Grammar Than use

(Items 1 and 8, Table 3)

Items 1, 3,4,6 and 8 in Table 3, were used to measure the teachers' beliefs about the relevance of employing some principles of traditional language teaching methods. Items 1 and 8 in particular required teachers to show their reactions to the appropriacy of focusing on more grammar than communicative activities. The vast majority of respondents (95 percent) in Item 1 rejected the claim that "more focus should be given to the grammar than use". A larger number of respondents (88 percent) in Item 8 also rejected a similar principle saying "I believe that there should be more focus on grammar than communicative activities." The rest, 12 percent of the respondents, however, accepted this view.

On the other hand, in the open-ended part of the questionnaire (Item 4), the subjects were asked about the types of skills or knowledge to be taught in order to enhance the students' language proficiency. And almost all the subjects indicated that they believe in the positive effects of engaging students in communicative activities. Their views generally indicated that letting students take part in communicative activities in the form of free dialogue and role play, and combining explicit grammar teaching with the language skills could develop their English language proficiency. Their expressed beliefs seem to comply with what some

influential writers suggest. Stern (1992:180), for example, proposes, "At different phases of learning process, the emphasis may shift from linguistics to communicative components and, or vice versa... but both are needed-they complement each other and blend together." In spite of their positive beliefs about the central roles of communicative activities, only one of the 5 teachers was observed inadequately attempting to involve students in free communication-most of the teachers were inclined to form-focused instruction. This might indicate that teachers' real classroom activities do not match their beliefs about the role of communicative activities in English language teaching for the reasons mentioned below.

A total of 7 teachers in the two groups were also interviewed in the focus group discussions to specify the reasons for the clash between their beliefs about employing communicative activities and their actual classroom practices. These subjects pointed out that teachers of English, irrespective of their instructional beliefs, do not pay due attention to communicative activities because of some prominent problems facing them. The common difficulties frequently reported were scarcity of time, large class size and problems of classroom management, and less motivation on the part of the students.

In fact, the observation confirmed the presence of these problems: there were 74 students in a class on average. In one of the observed classes, which the teacher made an attempt to employ communicative activities, some students were observed giggling and talking something nonsense in their mother tongue, diverting from the topic under discussion. In other words, some students were observed resisting participating in group discussions to carry out the activities. The reasons for the resistance and lack of motivation may be, as indicated in the group discussions, that students like grammar more than teachers give credit

for because the students believe that focus on grammar helps them do well on grammar-based classroom tests and standardized national examinations.

Thus, it could be inferred that the root cause for the students' resistance is the exclusion of communicative competences and language skills from tests. Regarding this issue, Brown (1994:17) says, "Many standardized tests of foreign languages still do not attempt to tap into communicative activities, so students have little motivation to go beyond grammar analogies." From this result, one might deduce that the type of evaluation could have a significant impact on the type of lessons presented in classrooms and the method of teaching the teachers employ.

4.4.1.4. Teachers' Beliefs about the Central Role of Drilling and Native-like Pronunciation

(Items 3, 4, Table 2)

Similar to Items 1 and 8 above, Items 3 and 4 in the same table were used to elicit the teachers' beliefs about traditional grammar teaching principles. The percentages and the mean scores of these items (71%, 2.22 and 90%, 1.82) respectively indicate that the majority of teachers rejected the principles that "drilling should be a central technique in language teaching" (Items 3), and the expectation that "students should have native-speaker-like pronunciation" (Item 4). In the same token, these figures show that most of the target teachers seemed to refrain from endorsing these two principles of traditional language instruction.

4.4.1.5. Teachers' Reactions to Focusing on Accuracy

(Item 6, Table 3)

Moreover, the majority of teachers (81 percent) expressed their disagreements to Item 6, which says, "Correctness in grammar should

be the primary goal of foreign language teaching". The mean score of this item is 2.21. This suggests that most teachers disagreed on the claim about the primary concern of grammatical correctness in a foreign language teaching.

The classroom observation, on the other hand, indicated that the teachers' expressed beliefs in Items 1, 3, 4, and 6, and their classroom application were diametrically contradictory. That is, the teachers were not up to their expressed beliefs. Almost all the teachers were observed teaching grammar in accordance with the principles of traditional language teaching methods, i.e. they tended to focus on accuracy rather than fluency.

The teachers in groups were, therefore, interviewed to explain the disparity, or the mismatch, between their expressed beliefs and classroom practices. The focus group discussions revealed some facts about the clash between what they said they believe and the ways how they materialize their beliefs in classrooms. The common point indicated repeatedly was the students' needs to learn grammar (see also Items 1 and 8 above).

Moreover, the teachers in the open-ended part of the questionnaire (Item 2) reported that they were taught English in traditional approaches. And all of the teachers were inclined to approach grammar instruction traditionally, i.e. in the way they had been taught. The implication seems that teachers' prior language learning experiences may exert a more significant impact on teachers' classroom practice than the results of formal research into language teaching.

On the whole, the grand mean of category 1 in Table 3 is 2.35 on a 5 point Likert Scales, which generally means the majority of the respondents disagreed and a few of them remained uncertain about the

employment of traditional language teaching principles. Some of the principles on which the teachers were asked to agree or disagree were focus on grammar (Item 1), accuracy as a primary goal in a foreign language teaching (Item 6), correcting all errors (Item 5), expecting a native-like pronunciation (Item 4) and using drills as a central technique in language teaching (Item 3).

In brief, a close look at of the grand mean of category I in Table 3 (2.35) generally depicts that the majority of English language teachers do not accept the theoretical principles of traditional language teaching methods. However, the overall combined data of this category suggest that there is obvious incongruence between teachers' real classroom practices and their beliefs. That is, teachers have unfavorable beliefs about traditional language teaching methods, but they implement the principles of these approaches/methods for the reasons mentioned above such as the students' needs. In line with this finding, Bax (2002) says that traditional language teaching methods are still observed in many parts of the world though CLT is widely accepted in principle.

4.4.2. Teachers' Beliefs about the Implementation of CLT

(Items 9-18, Table 3)

The teachers' beliefs about the principles of traditional language teaching methods/approaches and their actual classroom practices are mentioned in sections 4.4.1.1- 4.4.1.5 above. The respondents' beliefs about the implementation of communicative language teaching approaches in Category 2 of Table 3 are also analyzed and interpreted in the following sections (4.4.2.1- 4.4.2.4 below).

4.4.2.1. Teachers' Reactions to the Need for Focusing on Fluency (Items 9 and 10)

As indicated above, Items 9-18 in Table 3 dealt with teachers' beliefs about the principles of CLT. In Items 9 and 10, teachers were, for

should be the main goal of foreign language teaching" (Item 9) and "free dialogue should be used in English language teaching" (Item 10). The vast majority of respondents, 78 and 93 percent respectively, agreed on the above views. The mean scores of these items (3.95 and 4.27 in order) also indicate that teachers generally agreed on the concepts of these items. In fact, a considerable number of respondents (22 percent) in Item 9 disagreed, and 7 percent of the respondents in Item 10 remained uncertain about the concept.

There was, however, a clash between what the majority of teachers believe and their actual classroom practices, as the observation result revealed. It was indicated that the majority of teachers focus on accuracy, not on fluency. The reasons for this could be the influence of form-focused examinations and the students' needs, as indicated in 4.4.1.3 in category 1 above. Moreover, the teachers seemed that they lacked training to implement such principles of CLT.

4.3.2.2. Teaches' Responses to the Advantages of Fluency over Accuracy

(Items 14 and 18, Table 3)

Similarly, the majority of teachers (88 and 76 percent) in Items 14 and 18 respectively agreed on the opinions that "student-student interaction should be used more frequently than student-teacher talk"(Item 14) and "A student is good at English if he/she speaks the language fluently even if he/she makes grammar mistakes" (Item 18).On the other hand, a considerable number of teachers, 12 percent in Item 14, and 20 percent in Item 18 rejected this claim. In sum, the mean scores and the percentages of these items (4.3, 88 and 3.92, 76) respectively indicate that teachers generally accept the ideas mentioned in these items. This suggests that most of high school teachers are communicative-oriented.

4.4.2.3. Teachers' Beliefs about Considering Students' Needs

(Items 12 and 13 -Table 3)

Items 12 and 13 are concerned with the consideration of students' needs when teaching materials are developed, and tasks are designed. The figure of Item 12 in favour of "I believe the learners' needs should be considered when teaching materials and activities are designed" stood out to be 90 percent. Similarly, 85 percent of the respondents in Item 13 favoured the claim saying "English language teachers should consider students' needs and interests". These two figures on similar views could suggest that the vast majority of teachers generally believe that the students' needs should be taken into account when teaching materials are developed and tasks are designed. The implication can also be seen from the perspective of the mean scores: 4.43 for Item 12 and 4.27 for Item 13, which imply that the teachers generally agreed on the opinions mentioned in the two items.

The overall implication of the data seems that most high school English language teachers theoretically advocate the principle of CLT which considers students' needs. According to CLT theory, as individuals possess unique interests, needs, goals and styles of learning, developing materials and selecting learning activities should be based on the needs of a particular class (Savignon, 1991).

Although the majority of teachers agreed on considering students' needs, which is one of the distinctive features of CLT, the classroom practices immensely deviated from what the teachers believe. As the observation result showed, all teachers were highly dependent on the textbook. It is also obvious that our high school English language textbooks are prepared at a national level without specifically considering the particular needs of students in each region, zone or district.

As the classroom practices did not commensurate with the teachers' beliefs, the teachers were invited to discuss the issue in groups and reason out the discrepancies. The focus group discussions pointed out that the school principals oblige them to focus on the textbook and finish it according to the pre-planned annual schedule. That is, they are not encouraged to use their own materials. The other reason for the disparity could be, though not clearly mentioned in the discussion, that considering the students' needs and preparing materials or designing tasks accordingly demands teachers to devote much of their time and energy-it is a burden for teachers. Moreover, as there are a large number of students, teachers cannot satisfy each student's needs. Mentioning Sato and Kleinsasser, Chou (2000) also says that the adoption of CLT in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) countries has been difficult though a number of countries [including Ethiopia] have been trying to promote it as a language teaching approach in the hope that it will improve students' English proficiency. Besides, the teachers do not seem to know the possibility of designing tasks and developing their own materials in line with students' needs. This in turn may indicate that teachers are not aware of some principles of CLT. The overall implication of the mismatch between teachers' beliefs and their classroom activities seems that most teachers accept the principles of CLT, but they fail to implement them.

4.4.2.4. Teachers' Beliefs about the Use of Authentic Materials (Item 15, Table 3)

In the same token, Item 15 in Table 3 required teachers to express their opinions about using authentic materials. The majority of respondents (88 percent) felt that "Teachers should use additional materials such as newspaper articles to teach English" (Item 15); whereas, insignificant number of teachers (12 percent) disagreed on

this claim. The mean score of this item is also 4.12, which means that most of the teachers agreed on this principle. The introduction of authentic materials (e.g. newspaper articles) is one of the basic characteristics of CLT (Nunan, 1989). In spite of a large number of teachers favouring this concept, the observation results pointed out that teaches' beliefs diverged from their classroom practices. This is to mean that no teachers were observed using authentic materials like newspapers and magazines in their classes. Item 7 in the open-ended part of the questionnaire also indicates that teachers never use such materials to teach English. The implication of the responses to this particular item is that high school English language teachers do not use authentic materials in their classrooms.

4.3.2.5. Teachers' Beliefs about the Types of Evaluation

(Items 16 and 17, Table 3)

The sample teachers reacted to the number of grammar questions included in examinations and the types of evaluation in Items 16 and 17. In responding to Item 16, the majority of teachers (73 percent) reported that "grammar questions should not outnumber questions prepared from other language items". On the basis of the mean score of Item 17, which is 4.48, it can be argued that the majority of teachers (strongly) agreed on the view saying "Teachers should evaluate the students' 4 major language skills."

Nonetheless, as the teachers' responses in the open-ended part of the questionnaire (Item 6) point out, classroom tests primarily focus on both grammar and reading comprehensions in actual situations. Vocabulary and mechanics are also included in such tests in the second place as indicated in the same item. Moreover, the number of spelling and listening questions in a classroom test ranked third and fourth respectively.

Contrary to the teachers' beliefs in Item 17 above, almost all of the respondents in the open-ended part of the questionnaire (Item 6) indicated that the writing and speaking skills are not generally included in classroom tests. The teachers were, therefore, interviewed in groups about the disparity between what they believe and what happens in reality about the types of questions and evaluations. The results of the discussion showed that testing the students' writing and speaking skills is unmanageable because of a large class size and the subjectivity of marking. With this regard, Savignon (1991) asserts that qualitative evaluation of written and oral expressions is time consuming and it is not straightforward.

Concerning the number of grammar questions, Yonas's (2003) research findings indicted that the regional examination of grade 8 in our country is dominated by grammar and comprehension questions. This situation is also obviously observed in EGSECE and EHEECE, which are standardized national examinations.

The exclusion of speaking, writing and listening skills in evaluations, and the domination of grammar in standardized national examinations, EGSECE and EHEECE in our case, could imply a difference in the focus and choice of instruction of language items and skills. In spite of the teachers' underlying beliefs about a balanced inclusion of the four major language skills and all language items in examinations, reading comprehension and grammar questions are dominantly prevalent in both classroom tests and national examinations. The teachers could, therefore, be obliged to devote their valuable class time to the teaching of test taking skills to make their students do well on standardized multiple-choice examinations. The results in the open-ended part of the questionnaire (Items 6 and 7) also indicate that there is a balance between the type of language items taught and the type of items included in examinations. This suggests that the number and type of questions in examinations could affect the method of teaching and the kind of language items taught in classrooms.

In brief, the data suggest that the traditional grammar instruction is more prevalent in English language classrooms in the sample high schools. And almost all of the subjects in the open- ended part of the questionnaire (Item 4)reported that teaching all language items such as grammar and vocabulary, and the four basic language skills is essential to enhance the students' language proficiency . These beliefs comply with the literature in the current language teaching approach. The inclusion of these areas of language is one of the basic features of CLT. Holliday (1994:7), for example, says, "... focus on speaking, reading and writing, grammar, pronunciation, etc., and none of which need to be precluded in a communicative approach."

The teachers were, however, observed focusing on explicit grammar instruction in the classroom. The result of the open-ended questionnaire (Item 7) also indicates that teachers emphasize grammar and reading comprehension in the first place, vocabulary in the second, and mechanics and spelling in the third and fourth place respectively. The participants in the focus group discussions also indicated that they give less emphasis to listening, speaking and writing skills.

Therefore, it seems reasonable to suggest that the decision to emphasize grammar and reading comprehension, and to ignore or give less emphasis to communicative activities, other language items, and language skills does not necessarily imply a belief on the part of the teachers. Instead, as mentioned previously, other factors such as the dominant nature of grammar-based examinations, the problems of designing communicative tasks, inability of using authentic materials, the influence of teachers' prior learning experiences and students' resistances to classroom participation could make teachers tend to focus on grammar. Of course, focusing on grammar enhances the students' linguistic competence, which is one of the features of traditional language teaching approaches (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

Giving less emphasis or ignoring some other language skills and communicative activities could in turn weaken the students' communicative competence, which is the major objective of communicative approach. Enhancing the students' "communicative competences is the desired goal" of CLT and developing their linguistic competence is the chief objective of audiolingualism, which is a traditional language teaching method (Finocchiaro and Brumfit in Rihards and Rodgers, 2001:156).

In sum, the grand mean of category 2 in Table 3 (4.20) implies that the subject teachers agreed on the principles of CLT. Therefore, it seems possible to suggest that English language teachers are highly influenced by the principles of CLT at the level of beliefs. Their classroom practices, however, considerably deviated from their beliefs. The observation result generally indicated that the teachers encourage students to memorize grammar rules, teach grammar step-by-step according to the level of difficulty, and employ drills as one of the language teaching techniques. From this, it could be inferred that high school English language teachers tend to employ the traditional language teaching approaches in their classroom activities.

The implication of the incongruence between the teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices may be, among other things, that teachers simply pretend to advocate communicative approach because they feel that "they ought to adopt CLT to be up-to-date [though] it does not seem to suit the nature of their classroom" (Holliday, 1994:13). The combined results of this particular category generally indicate that teachers believe in the positive effects of CLT, but they fail to implement it. This result seems to echo Stern's observation. He, for example, says, "Teachers have been familiar with communicative activities, but the idea of making use of them is not widely known, and probably even less widely applied" (1992:13).

CHAPTER FIVE

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This Chapter deals with summing up the major findings of the study. It further presents possible recommendations forwarded by the researcher on the basis of the results obtained.

5.1. Conclusions

The major objective of this study was to find out what beliefs high school English language teachers have about grammar instruction and the types of foreign language teaching methods. The study also aimed at revealing facts about whether or not the teachers' beliefs converge with their real classroom activities.

The study generally found out heterogeneous results concerning the divergence or convergence between teachers' beliefs and their actual classroom practices.

The results indicated that high school English language teachers have positive beliefs about the development of communicative classroom environments that blend several principles of CLT such as employing free communicative activities, focusing on fluency, using authentic materials, etc. In spite of this, a wide disparity between teachers' beliefs and their actual classroom activities was observed. In other words, the teachers accept the principles of CLT at the level of beliefs, but they fail to apply them in practice for the reasons mentioned in 4.4.2.1 - 4.4.2.5.

It was also indicated that the teachers have favorable beliefs about the inductive grammar teaching approach. Nonetheless, their classroom practices significantly deviated from their beliefs, i.e. the teachers were

observed teaching grammar deductively, not inductively, for the reasons mentioned in 4.3 Employing the deductive approach of grammar instruction is one of the basic features of traditional language teaching approaches. This result could, therefore, suggest that traditional language teaching approaches/ methods are prevalent in our high schools.

Moreover, it was depicted that high school teachers have unfavourable beliefs about the majority principles of traditional methods. It was, however, revealed that the teachers' actual classroom practices are characterized by the domination of traditional language teaching features such as teacher-fronted instruction, step-by-step grammar teaching, complete dependence on textbooks, etc. (see 4.4.1.1 - 4.4.1.5). In other words, their classroom practices significantly diverged from their beliefs about language teaching methods.

On the other hand, the study pointed out some consistent associations between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices. The target teachers, for example, had positive beliefs about the role of grammar instruction and the deductive grammar teaching approach, and their beliefs converged with their real classroom activities.

As mentioned above, most of the findings indicated that the teachers' classroom practices considerably diverged from their beliefs. This is, however, against what some scholars (e.g. Farrell, 2005) in the literature say about the decisive roles of teachers' beliefs to guide their instructional decisions. In fact, the teachers were obliged by some external pressures such as the requirements of standardized national examinations to act against their beliefs. Therefore, it could be deduced that the teachers' practices prevalent in the classroom do not necessarily depict their beliefs.

The disparity between teachers' beliefs and their real classroom activities might have a negative impact on the teaching learning process. Williams and Bob in Abiy (2000), for example, say that the occurrence of such inconsistent associations between teachers' beliefs and their practices indicate ineffective educational results. The inconsistency, or mismatch, mentioned above could, thus, be one of the main reasons for the deterioration of students' English language proficiency all over the country nowadays.

The teachers in the study felt that explicit grammar instruction fosters and facilitates foreign language learning, and it enables students to use the target language communicatively. This could imply that the earliest form of CLT, which argues against grammar teaching, has not influenced the majority of teachers' beliefs about the prominent roles of grammar to develop the students' English language proficiency.

Regardless of the students' interests and the convenience of the situations, one of the 5 observed teachers who seemed poor in grammar was observed frequently ordering his students to discuss grammar lessons in groups. From this, it could be deduced that some teachers are not clearly aware of implementing the principles of CLT or some inefficient teachers use frequent group discussions in the name of student-center pedagogy as a cover for their weaknesses. Moreover, it was indicated that the degree of teachers' grammar knowledge affects their tendency to teach this item (see 4.2.3).

5.2. Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of this study the following recommendations are forwarded:

1. The study showed that most of the teachers' classroom practices are highly diverged from their instructional beliefs. The divergence

between beliefs and practices could result in poor academic outcomes. Therefore, the Ministry of Education, Colleges of Teachers Education and other concerned bodies should be aware of such discrepancies and attempt to reconcile these conflicting beliefs by minimizing external pressures (e.g. types of evaluation) that force teachers to act against their beliefs.

2. The Ministry of Education and any other authorities should be aware of the decisive roles of teaches' instructional beliefs, and they should involve teachers and work with them in cooperation while changing or reforming the existing textbooks, syllabuses, and/or methods of language teaching.
3. The results of focus group discussions on the contents of grades 9 and 10 textbooks depicted that there is insufficient task-based grammar presented inductively. The textbooks should, therefore, be revised to incorporate balanced grammar tasks presented in both deductive and inductive approaches.
4. Adopting the complete principles of CLT seems to be impractical in Ethiopian context although the majority of teachers believe in the effectiveness of this approach. High school English language teachers should, therefore, be trained to combine components of CLT.
5. The study found out that explicit grammar instruction is essential for the development of communicative competence. The teaching of this item should, however, be combined with communicative tasks to enhance students' language proficiency.
6. A means should be devised to include students' communicative competences in tests, at least at classroom level.

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APPENDIX-1

Questionnaire for Teachers

Dear English teachers:

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather relevant information about high school English language teachers' beliefs concerning grammar teaching. As the information you give affects the validity of this study, you are kindly requested to give appropriate responses to each item in the questionnaire.

I would like to assure you that any information you provide in this questionnaire will be kept confidential.

Thank you for spending your precious time.

Before you respond to the items given, please complete the following information by putting a tick mark (√) in the box provided after each option.

School- Addis Kidam High school ☐ Dangila High school ☐ Enjibara High school ☐ Gimjabet High school ☐

Age- 20-25- ☐ 26-30☐ 31-35☐ 36-40 ☐ 41-45 ☐ Over 45☐

Qualification- Diploma ☐ Diploma +Summer ☐ Degree ☐

Teaching experience - 1-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 21-25 ☐ above 25 ☐

TABLE 1

Teacher's beliefs about the Role of grammar

Indicate your answer by putting a tick mark (√) in one of the boxes in each item.

NO	Items	Responses				
		Strongly Agree(5)	Agree (4)	Undecided(3)	Disagree (2)	disagree Strongly (1)
	I. Teachers' Beliefs about the role of grammar teaching					
1	Grammar should be taught because it is very important to develop the students' English language competences.					
2	I believe that explicit grammar teaching shows the teacher's mastery or control over the subject matter					
3	I prefer grammar teaching because students are more interested in learning grammar than carrying out communicative tasks.					
4	I am more interested in teaching grammar than dealing with communicative activities because grammar is relatively easier to present.					
5	A teacher of English emphasizes grammar because most EGSELE and EHEECE questions are grammar- based.					
6	Students may no effectively use English for communication unless they .learn grammar explicitly.					
7	I believe that teaching grammar improves students' writing skills.					
8	I believe that grammar teaching may help students to enhance their communicative activities.					

TABLE 2

Teachers' Beliefs about the Deductive and Inductive Grammar Teaching Approaches

NO	Items	Responses				
		Strongly Agree(5) A	Agree (4)	Undecided(3)	Disagree (2)	disagree Strongly (1)
1	I believe that teachers should directly explain grammar rules with examples.					
2	Students can internalize grammar rules by focusing on use.					

Table 3

Teachers' beliefs about the principles of traditional and communicative language teaching methods/approaches

Put a tick mark (✓) in one of the boxes in each item.

No.	Items	Responses				
		Strongly agree (5)	agree (4)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (2)	strongly disagree (1)
1	More focus should be given to grammar than to use.					
2	Memorization of structure-based dialogues helps students to learn English.					
3	I believe drilling should be a central technique in language teaching.					
4	I expect my students to have native-speaker-like pronunciation.					
5	All errors must be corrected.					
6	I believe correctness in grammar should be thc primary goal of foreign language teaching.					
7	Teaching structures by sequencing them according to the level of difficulty helps students learn English.					
8	I believe that there should be more focus on grammar than communicative activities.					
9	I believe fluency should be the main goal of foreign language teaching.					
10	Free dialogues should be used in English language teaching.					
11	I believe a foreign language is learned through trial and error, and errors are signs of learning.					
12	I believe the learners' needs should be considered when teaching materials and activities are designed.					
13	English language teaching should consider individual students' needs and interests.					
14	I feel that student-student interaction should be used more frequently than student- teacher talk.					

15	Teachers should use additional materials such as newspaper articles to teach English.					
16	I believe that grammar questions should not outnumber questions prepared from other language items in a test.					
17	Teachers should evaluate the students' major language skills.					
18	I believe that a student is good at English if he/she speaks the language fluently even if he/she makes grammatical mistakes.					

Open-ended Questionnaire

1. Do you think that grammar instruction enhances the students' communicative competences? Why or why not?

2. How did you learn grammar when you were a student?

3. Do you think that correcting all grammar errors is effective in a foreign language teaching?

4. What types of knowledge or skills do you think should be taught to enhance the students' language proficiency?

5. What language items or skills do you emphasize in your actual classroom practices? Please rank them from the highest to the lowest according to your focus in a classroom.

   Vocabulary, spelling, mechanics, reading, writing, speaking, listening, pronunciation, grammar, etc.

1st _____	4th _____	7th _____
2nd _____	5th _____	8th _____
3rd _____	6th _____	9th _____

6. Please rank the following language items and skills according to the number of questions in your classroom tests from the highest to the lowest number.

Vocabulary, spelling, mechanics, reading, writing, speaking, listening, pronunciation, grammar, etc.

Note: If you do not include anyone of them in your exam, please exclude them from the list.

1st _____	4th _____	7th _____
2nd _____	5th _____	8th _____
3rd _____	6th _____	9th _____

7. Do you use any authentic materials (e.g. newspaper articles) for a teaching purpose? If so, how often, if not, why no?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix B

Focus Group Discussions

1. Which approach of grammar teaching do you employ, the inductive (guiding students to discover grammars rules by themselves) or the deductive (explaining grammar rules with examples)?

2. Some teachers seem to believe in the positive effects of employing communicative activities, but they do not practice what they say they believe. What do you think are the reasons?

3. Some teachers are heard saying students' needs should be considered when materials are developed and tasks are designed. However, this seems impractical in their classrooms. What do you think are the reasons?

4. Do you believe that all language items and the four language skills should be included in evaluation? If yes, do you implement this claim? Why or why not?

5. Some teachers seem to believe that all language items and the four language skills should be taught. However, this does not seem to be practical. What is your view about the necessity and practicality of this claim?

APPENDIX C

Observation check-list

Date of observation:----------

Name of the school:----------

Code of the teacher:----------

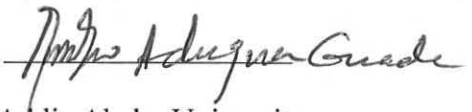
Grade and section:----------

	Items	Observed	Not observed
1	Contextualized grammar instruction.		
2	Explicit traditional grammar instruction (deductive).		
3	Students were encouraged to discover grammar rules by themselves (inductive).		
4	The teacher was good at explaining grammar rules.		
5	Students were engaged in carrying out communicative activities.		
6	The teacher was dependent on the textbook.		
7	Teachers corrected all grammatical errors.		
8	The teacher presented grammar rules step-by-step.		
9	The teacher focused accuracy.		
10	The Teacher used authentic teaching aids.		
11	Students were motivated to participate in group discussions.		
12	Teacher talk dominated the class.		

DECLARATION

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

NAME : Adugna Guade Chekol

SIGNATURE: 

PLACE: Addis Ababa University

Date of Submission: June 2008