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A COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY OF THE NATURE OF
FORM-FOCUSED INSTRUCTION AMONG
SECONDARY ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHERS

by

Sevda Budak

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Under the Supervision of Professor Jenelle Reeves

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A COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY OF THE NATURE OF
FORM-FOCUSED INSTRUCTION AMONG
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Sevda Budak, Ph.D.

University of Nebraska, 2013

Advisor: Jenelle Reeves

The nature of teaching expertise for form-focused instruction (FFI) in secondary schools has received little research attention. FFI research that has been carried out so far has devoted time in exploring the classification of one form of FFI, or the effectiveness of one form of FFI over another. Given that exploring teaching expertise for FFI in a natural classroom setting is necessary in order to bring out the interplay of factors influencing and prioritized by the teacher in choosing how to proceed instructionally. Furthermore, student experiences of teacher FFI have been largely ignored. Giving voice to student perspectives will help draw the relationship between student grammar learning and teacher teaching.

The purpose of this qualitative research was to explore the display of language teaching expertise for form-focused instruction within the English as a second language context. An instrumental case study design was employed focusing on three ESL teachers' grammar teaching.

Analysis of multiple sources of data (semi-structured interviews, non-formal conversations, emails, non-participant observations, video recordings of the lessons, and the stimulated recall technique within the follow-up interviews, collection of documents (teacher plans, student work), photographs of the teaching related documents, and surveys) revealed three core themes for each case with various sub-themes. The core themes were: The influencing criteria on the teacher's decision-making, student as center of teacher thinking, and the dilemmas that the teacher faces. The similarities and the differences across the three cases were discussed within the cross-case analysis. Students' perspectives of each teacher were discussed within each case. The match and mismatch between the student and teacher perspectives were also provided. Based on the findings that emerged, implications for language teaching and language teacher education are highlighted.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Inquiry into teachers' expertise attracted the attention of general education professionals in the late 1980s (Tsui, 2011). Studies that looked into teachers' expertise identify common characteristics that were observed in teachers such as strong knowledge base and high improvisational skills (Berliner, 1994; Shulman, 1987). Following this trend, L2 researchers also focused on language teacher expertise and their findings were congruent with general education. The exploration of language teachers' inner landscapes opened the argument that ESL teachers should possess certain characteristics in order to best foster student learning. These teacher attributes, which are considered as fundamental in language teachers, are broadly discussed in the language teacher field (Andrews, 2001, 2003, 2007; Borg, 2006). According to these proposed effective teacher models, expert teachers display common characteristics of knowledge about their discipline, their students, the curriculum, and the pedagogical knowledge. In language teaching specifically, ESL teachers' knowledge base should constitute not only the knowledge of the language, but also the procedural knowledge of the language in order to better teach the language according to student characteristics.

In addition, the studies that looked into the ESL teachers' approaches to language teaching indicated that there were multiple reasons for their application of particular methods or techniques in language classrooms. These reasons included expected student proficiency level, perceived student proficiency level (student immediate level), district curriculum and rubric checklists. Researchers have confirmed that ESL teachers rely on similar factors in teaching grammar as well (Borg, 2006; Budak, 2009). In form-focused

instruction (FFI) based classrooms - an approach that promotes focusing on grammar in communicative classroom contexts- the proposed expert teacher model is not different from what is described above. A number of researchers also argue that in addition to the procedural and pedagogical knowledge base, teacher awareness of different instructional options would be beneficial in implementing grammar in the best way possible (Ellis, Basturkmen, & Loewen, 2002; Nassaji & Fotos, 2011).

Recent theories of teacher expertise included *adaptive expertise* (Corno & Snow, 1986; Corno, 1995; Hatano & Inagaki, 1986; Hatano & Osura, 2003) as a distinctive quality in teacher development and claimed that it was significant for the teachers to develop this attribute (Corno, 2005; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Fairbanks et al., 2010). Considering the heterogeneous student profile in today's classrooms, it is understandable why education professionals value the existence of adaptive thinking in teachers. The challenge for today's teachers is to accommodate individual students efficiently within diverse classrooms (Randi & Corno, 2005). When this is the case, the virtue of adaptive teaching is indispensable. Teachers who reached this stage of expertise are aware of their students' weaknesses and strengths, and sensitive to their affective and cognitive situations (Corno, 2008). In addition, they can move beyond routinized knowledge and behavior toward innovation by modifying their existent knowledge of techniques and theories according to the present situation at hand, even if it may necessitate giving up "previously held beliefs" (Branford, Derry, Berliner, Hammerness, & Beckett, 2005). This ability requires teachers to deal with novelty (e.g. the unexpected student answer or query) by searching for gaps in their teaching in relation to learning

and using appropriate knowledge in order to take reasoned actions through observation of students and their practice (Schwartz, Bransford & Sears, 2005).

Considering the highest regard for adaptive expertise, apart from the computer-mediated learning studies conducted by cognitive scientists, empirical studies to understand the mindset of adaptive teaching -specifically at the micro level (modification of instruction based on student situation)- are scarce (Corno, 2008; Randi & Corno, 2005).

Yet, the existence of adaptive behavior in teachers' expertise at all grade levels has been acknowledged in literature (Corno, 2008; Duffy, Miller, Kear, Parsons, Davis & Williams, 2008; Randi & Corno, 2005). This feature of teacher expertise was also evident in language teacher expertise studies regarding grammar teaching, although indirectly (Borg, 2006). The majority of these studies described teachers' thoughts and practices in relation to their theories and knowledge of instructional approaches; the understanding of teaching expertise was not at the core of these studies. One can deduce in these extant studies, including my own research that expert teachers teach in ways that are optimally adaptive in the sense that the grammar instruction was attempted for both individual students and groups of students with similar profiles. In addition, specifically FFI research mostly focused on classification of and/or teacher thinking during one form of FFI such as the identification of focus-on-form (FonF) types (Loewen, 2003) or the investigation of reactive and preemptive FonF (Basturkmen, Loewen, & Ellis, 2004). Through an exhaustive search of the research literature, I found no other study explored the instances of teaching expertise that involved all forms of FFI within a natural classroom setting. Moreover, these studies do not provide information about the

relationship between teacher cognition of instructional approaches and student learning (Tarone & Allwright, 2005). As Tsui (2011) also pointed out, “students’ voice has largely remained silent” (p.35). SLA (second language acquisition) research provides ideas and perspectives about instructional options in grammar teaching; yet, teacher thinking, the suggested methodological options and student learning never seem to come together. My goal in this study is to attempt to explore the nature of teachers’ teaching expertise for FFI by examining teachers’ instructional choices and methods, particularly in relation to meeting individual student needs within a group instructional context. In addition, this study aimed to bring students’ perceptions of the effect of these approaches in their learning into light.

Rationale for the Study

In alignment with my interest in studying the mindset of language teachers during the application of FFI approaches and their students’ perceptions of these approaches in their uptake, this instrumental multiple case study contributes to the research in language teaching and teacher education for two main reasons. First, the relationship between ESL teachers’ expertise for FFI and student perception of these instruction types in their understanding has not been explored in the field. Second, even though we know that ESL teachers rely on several factors in their choices of FFI options in grammar teaching, we need more information regarding how multiple factors play out in a real-classroom scenario and in this case the scenario that this study choose to focus on is the individual student versus group of students dilemma teachers face in grammar targeted classrooms. We need to understand which of these elements are at the core of teacher thinking. Identifying practicing teacher expertise related to language form teaching in addressing

individual students can also lead to promising approaches in teacher development for form-focused teaching. It would show that teacher mindset related to form-focused instruction goes beyond technical knowledge and it involves teachers' intellectual ventures. Exploring ESL teacher expertise pertaining to form-focused instruction through teachers' dynamic teaching strategies within a natural classroom environment and unveiling student perspectives of their understanding in relation to teacher instruction will add new knowledge to these neglected areas and provide information to the fields of second language teaching and teacher education.

Worldview

Creswell (2007) stated that the evidence of paradigm or worldview in a qualitative study “inform the practice of research” (p.19). Since paradigms represent the researchers' constructed beliefs, in this study constructivism fits the best as a reflection of my views. My main focus is not to test a pre-conceived theory or hypothesis rather to generate from the first hand experiences of ESL teachers and students. Using a constructivist approach, I am interested in going in depth into teacher thinking and practice and supplementing that with student perspectives on the effectiveness of the instruction they received from the participant teachers. Creswell (2007) conveys that constructivism is integrated with interpretivism and added that it is about “making sense (or interpret) the meanings others have about the world” (p.21). My intention is in line with this statement. In this study, meaning comes into existence through my participants' reflections of their evaluations of their thinking and ideas.

Rationale for Qualitative Methods

Qualitative research is about “study[ing] things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; p.3). An array of reasons for conducting a qualitative study was provided by the researchers. These reasons involve a need for “a complex, detailed understanding of the issue”, “empowering individuals to share their stories, hear their voices”, “to understand the contexts or settings in which participants in a study address problem or issue” (Creswell, 2007; p.40). Thus, qualitative inquiry will allow me to make an in depth study of ESL teachers’ expertise for FFI and to look at these teachers’ choices of FFI options from the perspectives of their students in the natural classroom context. I will be able to capture the meanings of the teachers’ and the students’ experiences in the classroom setting, for contexts and experiences are not separable.

Statement of the Problem

We know that expert language teachers oscillate between instructional approaches by referring to their “practically oriented, personalized and context sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts and beliefs” in teaching grammar (Borg, 2006, p. 272). The factors that shape their cognition should also not be forgotten. Student factor is one of the top reasons in teacher decision-making. Student factors include student language proficiency level, student cognitive or affective needs, educational background, student age or developmental stage (Budak, 2009; Burns & Knox, 2005; Celce-Murcia, 1991). Given that exploring teacher decision-making around individual student versus group of students in terms of FFI is necessary in order to bring out the interplay of factors

influencing and prioritized by the teacher in choosing how to proceed instructionally. In addition, students' perspectives have been largely disregarded. The students' perceptions of teacher approaches and how the instruction has been taken up warrant deeper and further exploration. Moreover, this study will take place at secondary schools. Among many studies available regarding English language teaching (ESL and EFL), public secondary schools have received little attention.

Research Questions

The central question that this study aims to answer is, what is the nature of teaching expertise for form-focused instruction? Based on this central phenomenon, the questions that this study aims to answer are:

1. How do teachers describe and demonstrate such expertise?
2. What is the nature of 'expert' teacher thinking during form-focused instruction?
3. What factors impact teacher thinking / decision making during FFI?
 - (a) How do the ESL teachers circle back to check in if those individual students or group of students picked up what they are trying to teach?
4. What is the nature of the interplay of these factors?
5. How do students experience 'expert' FFI?
 - (a) How do the students perceive the teachers' instruction?
 - (b) Do teacher and student perceptions of student learning coincide? And, if not, what is the nature of the differences in learning perceptions?

Definition of Terms

Form-Focused Instruction (FFI). “FFI is any pedagogical effort which is used to draw the learners’ attention to form either implicitly or explicitly ... within meaning-based approaches to L2 instruction [and] in which a focus on language is provided in either spontaneous or predetermined ways” (Spada, 2011; p. 226).

English Language Learner (ELL). NCLB [No Child Left Behind Act] describes ELL as, “an individual age 3-21, who is enrolled (or about to enroll) in a U.S. elementary or secondary school”. In addition, these individuals are considered to have one of the following characteristics:

- Was not born in the United States or speaks a native language other than English;
- Is a Native American, Alaska Native, or native resident of outlying areas and comes from an environment where language other than English has had a significant impact in the individual’s level of English language proficient, or
- Is migratory, speaks a native language other than English, and comes from an environment where language other than English is dominant.

May be unable, because of difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language, to:

- Score at the proficient level on state assessments of academic achievement;
- Learn successfully in classrooms where language of instruction is English; or
- Participate fully in society

(NCLB Action Briefs, 2013)

Language Proficiency Levels

Table 1.1

Language Proficiency Levels

Language Level	Description
1	Students with Interrupted Formal Education
2	Pre-functional
3	Beginning
4	Intermediate
5	Advanced
	Full English Proficiency

Nebraska Department of Education (2011)

Overview of the Chapters

In order to help the readers, I would like to briefly talk about the structure of this dissertation. Initially, the important terms such as FFI and ELL are given above, including the table that shows the identification of the language proficiency levels. In the ensuing chapter, I will provide the theoretical overview regarding the understanding of teacher expertise in general education and language education field. I will complement the literature review section by devoting the last part for form-focused instruction (FFI) and teaching expertise with regard to FFI. In chapter three, I will talk about the methodology of this current research, which includes the description of the research type, data collection, and data analysis procedures. Research findings are presented in the fourth chapter. Finally, in chapter five I will present the conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further research. References and appendices are given immediately after chapter five.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

General Understanding of Expertise

The interest in inquiry into the unique characteristics of expert knowledge first started within the area of chess in an attempt to identify the differences between master and novice chess players (de Groot, 1965 as cited in Tsui, 2003). In time, the search for the distinctive features of expertise spread into other fields as well such as nursing, dancing, and medicine. The theories of expertise across these diverse disciplines present common characteristics such as the evolution of instinctive knowledge through the process of time and experience. According to these theories, experience in combination with practice plays such an important role that the expert performance becomes automatic, fluid and effortless (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Berliner, 2004). However, Glaser and Chi (1988) put forward that “conscious deliberation” and “reflection” are the essential qualities that make up an expert. These scholars claimed that experts deal with problems by conscious analysis and processing, and they constantly reflect on their performance and seek colleague help to maintain expertise. However, with Breiter & Scardamalia, (1993) expertise is understood as a process during which people work hard to reach high standards they set before them. With the accumulation of experience, the expert practice becomes intuitive and routinized. In the meantime, attentions were pulled towards the distinction between experienced performance and expert performance. It is widely acknowledged that experience has a part in the growth of expert knowledge; yet, experts continuously reinvest their knowledge base and problematize a situation that they are facing, and search for new viewpoints or solutions.

Table 2.1

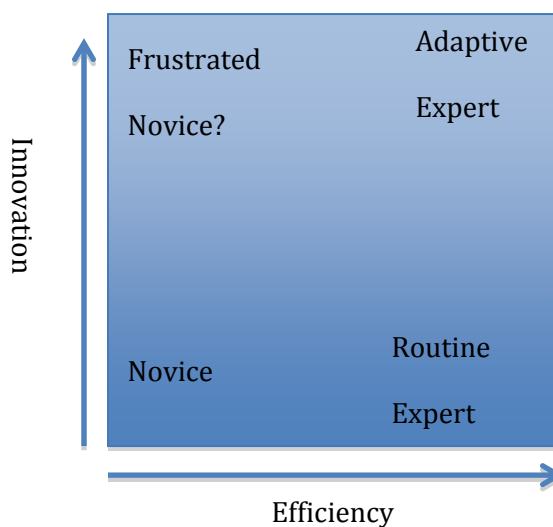
Understanding of Expertise

Expertise as	Gained through	Characteristics	Knowledge	Thought process
Intuition (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986)	Experience, and stages over time	Unconscious knowing and doing	Implicit and tacit	Unreflective
Deliberate, applied thought and action (Glaser & Chi, 1988)	Experience, problem-solving abilities due to extensive PCK and Subject matter knowledge	Self-controlled, self-monitored, and self-reinforced learning (Berliner, 2004)	Explicit, tacit knowledge can be verbalized	Reflective, focus on self-controlled challenges and feedback
Process (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1993)	Experience, more challenging objectives, and constant monitoring of teaching and learning	Look for novel opportunities to grow, and expand	Implicit and explicit	Reflective when anomalies occur, otherwise unreflective

Consequently, the understanding of expertise started as *intuition*, which later considered as *deliberately applied thought and action*, and finally left its place into *expertise as process* (Tsui, 2009). The Table 2.1 above briefly shows the shift in the concept of expertise as understood according to the three different major studies. While the understanding of expertise shifted in time, the developmental stages that Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) provided are considered to be sufficient and valid in understanding the progression of a teacher at all times (Berliner, 2004). However, it is also confirmed that the difference between the last two stages –the proficient and the expert level- may not be as clear-cut. Yet, classifying the ones who are at the expert level as *arational* as Berliner (2004) did might help in differentiation because compared to the proficient teachers, experts “are acting effortlessly, fluidly and in a sense this is arational because it is not easily described as deductive or analytic behavior” (p. 22).

Expertise theorists were also aware that not all experts fit in the last stage because they surpass the described qualities of an expert behavior and performance, and possessing the trait of being adaptive puts them on the top level. For that reason, researchers of expertise called them “adaptive experts” and made a distinction between an experienced non-expert and expert as “routine experts” and “adaptive experts” (Hatano & Inagaki, 1986). When we look at Breiter & Scardamalia’s (1993) study of expertise, one would see that it closely relates with the idea of “adaptive expertise”. Schwartz, Bransford & Sears (2005) adds that there are two dimensions of expertise: efficiency and innovation.

Figure 2.1

The Dimensions of Adaptive Expertise

(Schwartz, Bransford & Sears, 2005)

Routine experts are highly efficient in their work as they have substantive amounts of mental resources and experience related to their specialty. They are quick in retrieving necessary knowledge to solve a problem. However, even if routine experts become good at dealing with routinized problems, they would not be able to move along the lines of innovation unless they become adaptive. Upgrading to the innovation level requires one to replace previous set of knowledge into new understanding, skills, and application according to the situations at hand. Adaptive experts know how to balance efficiency and innovation; they know which skills and knowledge to let go in order to modify them with the new information. This ability is what makes them a lifelong learner (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

Expertise in Teaching

When looking into the field of teaching and teachers, it is not surprising to see the traces of the insights about expert-novice division drawn from various disciplinary studies (Berliner, 2004). Given the identified characteristics of expertise, it is just reasonable to observe similar features in teachers as well. The conceptualization of teacher expertise drew on teacher cognition and teacher practice.

Studies conducted with expert and novice teachers presented common features that they share before, during, and after teaching (see Tsui, 2003 for a review). In the pre-active phase, expert teachers were observed to consider different variables according to their degree of influence and importance. They consciously think about their students' level of proficiency and needs, the appropriate materials and strategies, the class context, the school, and even the parents. Expert teachers are reported to plan for their yearly and daily activities in a non-linear fashion. They use curriculum guidelines, but do not hesitate to make modifications according to their student needs. Expert teachers trust and rely on their judgments and autonomy. However, novice teachers cannot risk a day without a neatly outlined plan that states objectives and aims followed by the decisions about the content, materials, and the activities to use. They are strict in following rules. Compared to the novices, experts' plans may look vague. Their plans may be brief, but their mental plans are rich and detailed. Essentially, they consciously go through their plans and make appropriate alterations, if they think they need to. They are flexible in their plans because they may foresee possible troubles (contextual variables). They are quick in finding solutions for the anticipated problems as a result of their broad repertoire of a variety of situations to draw on.

In the interactive phase, expert teachers present high cognitive skills such as, selectivity and efficiency. During this phase, teacher's decision-making process is contingent with student and contextual factors. As a result of the years of experience, they are aware of all that happens and matters in a classroom environment. This is where their selective ability shows itself. They ignore minor student misbehavior or take care of it before it happens because they prefer using time for task related activities. Expert teachers' improvisational skills are found to be well established. The unstable feature of classroom context is well known in the education field. An expert teacher is also cognizant of this fact and ready to use an alternative routine in case things do not go as expected. In addition, these teachers are also good at on the spot alterations, which are driven from their previously experienced teaching moments.

Depending on the reported and observed characteristics of expert and novice teachers above, expertise is seemed to be associated with a highly conceptualized knowledge base (Bond, Smith, Baker, and Hattie, 2000). It is this knowledge base that impacts teachers' cognition related to teaching and the context of teaching. Teachers' broad and strong knowledge base related to their subject matter, classroom context and students, enables them to plan and teach as efficiently as possible. If teachers' knowledge base is the essential factor in teachers' execution of teaching, then what (should) constitute(s) teacher knowledge base? In the following pages, I will explore this concept.

Teacher Knowledge Base

In the late 1980s, the inquiry about teacher knowledge base started in the field of education. Shulman's (1987) model seems to be the most influential representation of the teacher knowledge base in general education. According to him, teacher knowledge base involves several different categories that are interrelated with each other:

- content knowledge;
- general pedagogical knowledge, with special reference to those broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organization that appear to transcend subject matter;
- curriculum knowledge, with particular grasp of the materials and programs that serve as "tools of the trade" for teachers;
- pedagogical content knowledge, that special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of professional understanding;
- knowledge of learners and their characteristics;
- knowledge of educational contexts, ranging from the workings of the group or classroom, the governance and financing of school districts, to the character of communities and cultures; and
- knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values, and their philosophical and historical grounds.

(Shulman, 1987; p. 8)

Essentially, pedagogical content knowledge encompasses all of the other categories outlined distinctly. As scholars confirmed, the distinction among these features is specifically for analytical purposes; in reality the intricate nature of these characteristics is hard to observe separately (Grossman, Schoenfeld & Lee, 2005; Shulman, 1987; Turner-Bisset, 1999). Within this framework, Shulman (1986, 1987) emphasizes the importance of subject matter knowledge and its pedagogical reasoning in teacher cognition. He defines this concept as pedagogical content knowledge, which involves:

[t]he most taught topics in one's subject area, the most useful forms of representations of those ideas, the most powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, and demonstrations-in a word, ways of representing and formulating the subject that make it comprehensible to others....[It]also includes an understanding of what makes the learning of specific topics easy or difficult: the conceptions and preconceptions that students of different ages and backgrounds bring with them to the learning of those most frequently taught topics and lessons (1986; p.9)

The quote above clearly encapsulates the idealization of teachers who are not only knowledgeable in their subject area, but also have the ability to convert their knowledge into students' level of understanding. As pointed out by other teacher educators (Grossman, Schoenfeld & Lee, 2005), the ideas presented within this term actually go back to Dewey who advocated for a child-centered education and curriculum. In *The Child and the Curriculum*, Dewey (1915) also talks about subject-matter for teaching and the way it should be handled by the teachers. He says what a teacher should care for is,

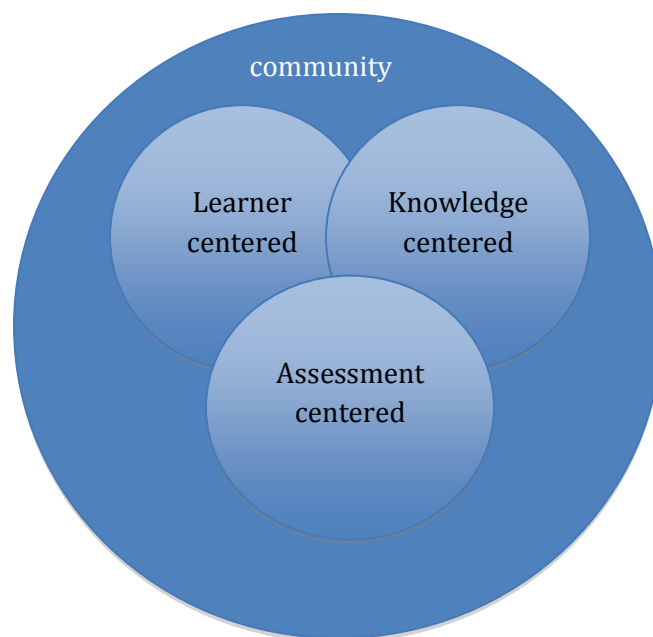
The way in which that subject may become a part of experience; what there is in the child's present that is usable with reference to it; how such elements are to be used; how own knowledge of the subject matter may assist in interpreting the child's needs and doings, and determine the medium in which the child should be placed in order that his growth may be properly directed. He is concerned, not with the subject-matter as such. But with the subject-matter as related factor in a total and growing experience. Thus to see it is to psychologize it (p.117).

Just as Dewey pointed out, subject-matter knowledge is not sufficient alone, it is subject-matter knowledge related to teaching that matters. Grossman's (1989) study with six novice teachers of English in the USA context is a good example of the impact of pedagogical content knowledge in teaching. In her research study, even though all of the six teachers had a solid background in English language, only three of them had gone through the formal teacher education. Grossman observed the differences in teachers in terms of "their conceptions of the purposes for teaching English, their ideas about what to teach in secondary English, and their knowledge of student understanding" (p.26). The comparison of these teachers revealed that the knowledge of subject-matter is not enough to teach it. In addition, there are studies that reveal the inadequacies of teachers with limited subject-matter knowledge. These teachers would prefer sticking to the course book structure and were not able to offer alternative activities or themes (Tsui, 2003). Successful teaching requires pedagogical content knowledge that involves adequate understanding of the disciplinary subject, knowledge of the learners, curriculum, context, and pedagogy.

Apart from Shulman's characterization of teacher knowledge, Bransford, Derry, Berliner, Hammerness & Beckett (2005) bring attention to the knowledge of theories of learning and its impact in teacher thinking and practice. The authors used the "how people learn" framework (HPL, see below) to discuss their points. They claimed "teachers must learn to balance and integrate all four components of the HPL framework if they are to teach effectively" (2005; p.41). Essentially, the expansion of the concepts of the HPL framework, as discussed by the authors, show similar ideas as appeared in Shulman's theories of teacher knowledge as well.

Figure 2.2

How People Learn (HPL) Framework



(Bransford et al., 2005)

As a part of the HPL model, a learner-centered teacher is aware of her/his students' prior knowledge and builds on their existing cognition. These teachers prioritize

building connections between student daily life and school life. Bransford and others (2005) gave an example of a teacher (Steven) who first tried to link the themes of Hamlet to his students' daily life experiences before delving into the content. Steve asked his students to imagine their parents as recently divorced and that their mother was in a relationship with another man who substituted their dad's job. It was thought that this new man had a part in their dad's removal. Steve also asked his students to think of possible reasons for someone to commit a murder. Only after this kind of scaffolding, Steve started Hamlet. As seen, Steve represents a teacher who looks for ways to connect student real life experiences with the target content.

Bransford et al. (2005) added that a learner-centered teacher should also be knowledgeable about metacognition processes to help her/his students comprehend, retrieve, and monitor the newly introduced knowledge. The learner-centered teachers know that success comes with effort, and intelligence can grow by learning and education. For that reason, they need to be aware of the physical and mental activities that can help develop their students' learning abilities. For instance, in one of the research studies on cognition, I read about a small activity that would soothe the brain and rest the eyes that are tired of a long reading. The activity was all about following your thumb along with your eyes as you move your thumb in a circular motion. It may seem like something of insignificance, but it is one of the suggestions that can be used and taught by the teachers. Similarly, authors suggest that learner-centered teachers follow research on cognition and development related to teaching.

The second concept within this framework, a knowledge-centered teacher, addresses teachers who know about what to teach and why to teach. This kind of teacher

is aware of the standards that surround the content, and address the topics that are to be covered by considering student understanding or misunderstanding. This concept seems to be analogous to subject-matter competence as described by Dewey (1915). In addition, “Knowledge-centered” describes a teacher who is not only authority in her/his discipline knowledge, but also has the ability to organize and connect the ideas in her/his subject area to broader contexts.

The third concept, an assessment-centered teacher, involves teachers who know the rationale for summative and formative assessment types, and are cognizant of the importance of formative assessment as an opportunity to provide feedback.

Finally, a community-centered teacher knows that a strong connection between her students’ family members along with the little community that their students live in would help them know their students better, and enable them to build on their students “funds of knowledge” (Bransford et al., 2005; p.55). A couple of examples that are provided for a community-centered teacher include “helping students see how the carpentry skills of their parents [are] related [to] geometry” and, “how activities like riding the subway can provide a context for understanding algebra...” (p.55).

Even though the conceptual frameworks of teacher knowledge, or what a teacher should be able to do, seem to differ according to various scholars; in essence, the ideas that they all present revolve around similar concepts: knowledge of the disciplinary content, knowledge of pedagogy, and knowledge of the learner. Ultimately, it is acknowledged that teachers continue to grow in their application of knowledge throughout their teaching careers. For that reason, the expectation is for teachers to aim to

become “adaptive experts” (Hatano & Inagaki, 1986; Hatano & Oura, 2003) as lifelong learners both in knowledge and skills.

In the following section, in connection with the idea of becoming an expert, I will address the ideas about the construction of language teacher knowledge during the execution of the professional duties, which is also connected to the conceptual shifts of the noun “teacher”.

Language Teacher Knowledge in Teachers’ Teaching

The schemas mentioned above present the general account of the teachers’ knowledge base; however, the fundamental shift in teacher knowing occurred after Freeman & Johnson (1998) reconceptualized the teacher knowledge base that emanates from the teachers’ actual teaching: “We argue that the core of the new knowledge-base must focus on the activity of teaching itself; it should center on the teacher who does it, the contexts in which it is done, and pedagogy by which it is done” (p. 397). These authors called for an understanding of a language teacher knowledge base that depended on exploring who the teachers are and how they do what they do. Putting this in a different way, it was asked to delve into research, analyze the flow of teaching and the teacher reasoning to enhance the understanding of the core of teacher cognition. Many have done this with the expectancy of gaining more access to the teachers’ worlds. Studies about exploring the effects of previous experiences, as a student learner and as a professional learner, of the prospective teachers confirmed that the concept of knowledge and the concept of beliefs are intertwined in teacher thinking and learning (Borg, 1999; Mullock, 2006). For that reason, research about teacher cognition has become the main source in understanding teacher knowledge (Borg, 2006). As Verloop, Van Driel &

Meijer (2001) noted, “in investigating teacher knowledge, the main focus of attention is on the complex totality of cognitions, the way this develops, and the way this interacts with teacher behaviors in the classroom” (p.446).

The idea of teacher knowledge, based on teacher cognition and practice, was considered as a concept shifting moment in language teaching field (Johnston & Goettsch, 2000). Actually, the understanding of teacher knowledge and learning, as constructed during classroom teaching episodes, is connected to the transformation in the vision of teacher and teacher learning through time. Browsing the general teacher education history, we would see that the traditional approach had the vision of a teacher as a *tabula-rasa* that only needed to be filled in with lists of information and knowledge about theory and research; this was the image that regarded teachers as imitators of the expert knowledge. As a result, teacher education consisted of the top-down approach in which problems were presented with the possible solutions to teaching (Crandall, 2000). Freeman (2002) labeled it as *a period of mid 70's* in which teachers were considered to be “doer[s], as implementer[s] of other people’s ideas” (p.5). This period mainly involved teaching principles and strategies to the teacher candidates so that they were equipped with the necessary skills to be able to enhance student learning. However, “[b]ackground, experience, and social context were all overlooked as potential influences on how new teachers formed knowledge in their professional education” (Freeman, 2002, p. 5). What is more, this vision of language teacher left its way to a new understanding of the teacher as a “thinker”, and a “re-constructor”, as statuses that presented teacher as who “knows what to do” (Freeman, 1996a as cited in Freeman, 2002). It was recognized that teachers were not just empty vessels, but individuals who brought their previous learning

experiences into their own teaching practices. It was acknowledged that teachers' previous experiences as learners were so powerful that almost all of the teachers reconstruct the new knowledge onto their pre-existing experiences as practitioners. This phenomenon known as "apprenticeship of observation", introduced by Danial Lortie (1975), was considered to be an important element in teacher thinking because it was undeniably influential in teacher practice. Additionally, this concept was regarded as hard to change unless particular attention was spared into raising teacher awareness (Crandall, 2000). The impact of "apprenticeship of observation" and the teachers' perspectives of teaching (Dencombe's (1982) "hidden pedagogy"), were understood as the constituents of teachers' mental lives.

The last three decades –appointed as the "Decade of Consolidation" by Freeman (2002)- shifted the ways of exploring teacher learning. The focus to the action of teaching in itself took precedence more than anything in teacher education. It was a step for the beginning of an important era where the teachers were positioned in the center of the inquiry. It has been expected that through teacher reasoning about and for language teaching, the path to understanding teacher knowledge base would be clear. Ironically, the idea above has revealed the complexities of teacher "knowing" and brought about the difficulties in determining the phases in teacher learning (Freeman, 2002).

Understanding of Teacher Expertise in Language Teaching

While the generic frameworks mentioned above can also be adopted in L2 (second language) teacher knowledge base, it seems that the existence of content-knowledge only in L2 teacher knowledge base was considered to be satisfactory in most language education programs (Johnston & Goettsch, 2000). The high credit given to the

content-knowledge, as the most important element in the teacher knowledge base is not surprising given that the content-knowledge is definitely the core of language teaching (Andrews, 2003).

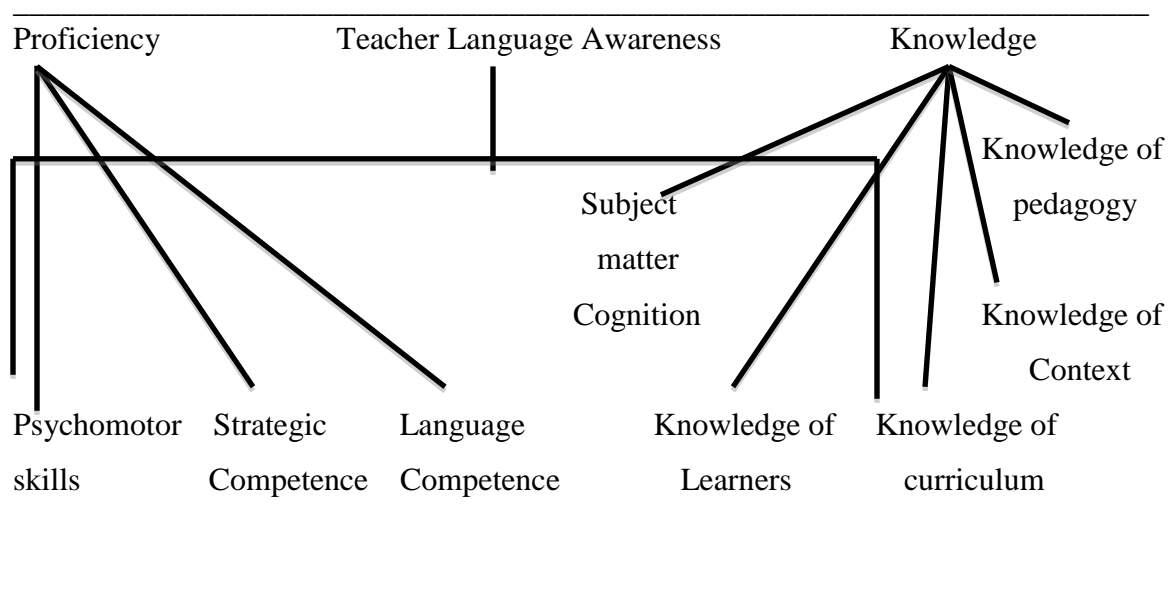
Andrews (2001, 2003) conceptualizes the content knowledge as *Teacher Language Awareness* (TLA), and broadens the reconceptualization in detail. Generally, the content knowledge base includes both the declarative knowledge and the procedural knowledge. While the declarative knowledge includes the knowledge about the rules of a language, the procedural knowledge contains the ability to speak a language. Even if it is acknowledged that the declarative knowledge may not transfer to the procedural knowledge (Johnston & Goettsch, 2000), many scholars prioritize the declarative knowledge and emphasize that the knowledge of the language -applied linguistics, metalinguistics, and second language acquisition- is the core of the profession and is necessary for the language teachers' to be functionally competent in all (Hedgcock, 2002; Yates & Muchinsky, 2003). Troudi (2005) showed the importance of the priority of the declarative knowledge base when he said "to be an English teacher one needs to know the system of the language just as one would need to know [the] mathematic[s] in order to teach it" (p. 118).

The existence of the pedagogical knowledge -awareness of the student levels, the goals, the teaching methods, and the activities- is also considered essential so that the teachers can enhance student understanding and learning with the application of the suitable approaches. However, pedagogical knowledge base seemed to come in second place compared to the content knowledge base. Essentially, within *Teacher Language Awareness* (TLA), Andrews (2003) includes both the content and the pedagogical

knowledge as parts of the set of teacher knowledge base that is expected from a language teacher in order to perform an effective L2 teaching. According to his outline provided below, TLA involves subject-matter knowledge, language proficiency and the ability to see from learners' perspectives such as, their difficulties in learning language.

Figure 2.3

Teacher Language Awareness (TLA), Language Proficiency, and Pedagogical Content Knowledge



(Andrews, 2001; p.79)

It is not hard to see the similarities between Shulman's theoretical framework, HPL (How People Learn) framework, and Andrews' TLA. In fact, different terms were used for similar ideas or similar ideas were described in different ways. Most importantly, in all of these schemas, characteristics of subject knowledge, learner knowledge and pedagogical knowledge are pictured as intertwined and indistinguishable from one another. The amalgamation of all these knowledge bases are seen in experienced teachers; however, a novice or a progressing teacher would be able to use

only some of them. Turner-Bisset (1999) describes this type of teacher as having “good subject knowledge in science, not undeveloped empirical and cognitive knowledge of learners, and limited pedagogical content knowledge, so that she may not be able to share her scientific knowledge with her learners” (p.48).

We may think of a similar example in an L2 context. A novice ESL (English as a second language) teacher may be competent in knowledge about the language, but her/his pedagogical content knowledge may be limited. In that case, that teacher would not be able to adapt her/his lessons according to the student levels or the context. Most probably, that teacher would draw from her/his own previous learning experiences and apply them in her/his own teaching. It is essential for the teachers to see the content from the learners’ viewpoints and estimate their understanding or misunderstanding in order for the learning to happen. Turner-Bisset (1999) argues that inexperienced teachers’ areas of focus would be different, for “they often want to have ‘good ideas’ for lessons to make a good impression on school staff and children, to have lessons which go well, without management or discipline problems” (p. 51).

An opposite case is also possible: a teacher with immense pedagogical knowledge that involves various teaching techniques and knowledge of learners, but limited in knowledge about the language. Andrews (2001) provides examples of a teacher (Rose) who lacks subject matter knowledge related to the passive voice. Within the classroom episode Andrews provided (below) it was clear that Rose had solid background in mechanical knowledge of the passive voice, but had hard times explaining the function of its use:

...one of the students even asked me 'Miss Wong, why do we have to use passive voice in our daily life?' and I find this question difficult to answer, ha, and I 'Oh, I'll tell you next time' ... and then I asked my colleagues 'Why do we use and teach passive voice?' and no one can give me the correct answer. And then I go home and think about it. But even now I really don't know how to handle that student's questions. I finish the worksheets with them and they know how to rewrite the sentences. But I don't know how to explain to them (Andrews, 2001; p. 76).

The snippet of Rose's thoughts show the necessity of the content knowledge and the language competence in teachers. Moreover, L2 teachers should also have "the capacity for implementing, or executing that competence in appropriate, and contextualized communicative language use" (Bachman, 1990: 84; as cited in Andrews, 2001). The good news is teachers can complete their deficiencies in time by experience if they know how to benefit from those experiences (Tsui, 2003).

The complexities of pedagogical content knowledge in an L2 context are also acknowledged by Freeman (2002). According to him:

...teachers' knowledge of subject-matter would probably be defined in linguistic terms, while students' prior knowledge and conceptions of language likely stem from their first language. Further, teacher and student conceptions meet in the second language classroom, through a mixture of first and second languages, thus setting up at least three, potentially conflicting, levels of representation: the teacher's linguistic knowledge, the students' first language background, and the classroom language interactions (p. 6).

Within this statement Freeman alludes to the teachers' decision-making side in using the suitable knowledge bases under the existing circumstances, knowing that there are many variables that are at play in a language classroom. Tsui (2003) discussed similar issues within the case studies of four secondary teachers in Hong Kong. By exploring these four teachers' practice and thinking, Tsui (2003) showed the multifarious side of language classrooms. Based on the general education and language teaching theories and her multiple-case study, she concluded that pedagogical content knowledge "is central to the teaching act [and] integrated and coherent [as a] whole" (p.59). She sees it as "situated and practical because it is closely related to the specific context of the classroom and is embodied in teachers' classroom practices" (p. 59).

In connection with Freeman's and Tsui's inferences, language teaching is seen as situated, particularistic and contextual. For example, the location that the language teaching takes place, and the learners who that language teaching is offered to change the act of teaching dramatically. The language teaching in the "expanding countries" (Kachru, 1985), in which English is being taught as a foreign language, is different than the ones being executed in the "inner circles" (Kachru, 1985), in which the English language is the primary language. In the former context, the students are learning the language as any other subject matter and they are not using the language in combination with other content areas in school. In addition, the language learners may not be exposed to the use of language use other than the school setting. For that reason, while the teachers need to consider their students' limited access to the language, they also need to use strategies that would enable them to accurately cover much in as short a time as possible. Teachers need to be aware of the education system as well. In some countries,

curriculum is bound to college entrance exams, and this situation limits teachers' freedom in using teaching techniques or choice of topics. The students may be used to the explicit, and deductive teaching approaches and may decline or not respond to the use of different teaching options. However, in the "inner circle" countries, the language learners have to learn the language in order to succeed in any other classes. It is critically important for those students to be proficient in the English language so that they can achieve in other content areas, and increase their academic success. In addition, these language learners are culturally, linguistically and socio-economically diverse students. This diversity has also brought the complexities in the pursuit of providing effective language learning environments. The teachers need to be sensitive to these issues even if they feel powerless at times (Clair, 1998). The ESL practitioners need to explore different ways to address this diverse student population by collaborating with other subject-matter, and bilingual teachers. They need to be aware of the impact of the student culture and the first language in the English language learning process. Studies show that matching student needs, proficiency levels and cultural backgrounds within the teaching content and process bring positive outcomes (Nykiel-Herbert, 2008). As acknowledged in the previous sections related to the theoretical frameworks of teacher knowledge, the context in which the language teaching takes place and the learner profiles shape teacher thinking in English language teaching.

Teacher Knowledge in Regard to Form-Focused Instruction

As discussed earlier, language teacher knowledge is strongly related to individual teacher experiences, both as a student-learner and a teacher-learner. However, the circumstances in the classroom have the most influence on the construction of the

language teacher knowledge. Teachers try to integrate their personal theories of teaching and learning with the SLA (second language acquisition) theories of language teaching. Similarly, Tsui (2003) defined teacher knowledge as “manifested in teacher classroom practices...[integrated with] ...pedagogical content knowledge [that involved] the management of learning and the enactment of the curriculum in the classroom” (pp. 65-66). It was mentioned previously that the descriptions of the language teacher knowledge trace back to the characterizations of the teacher knowledge in general education (Shulman, 1986, 1987; Turner-Bissett, 1999). I would say that these assets of teacher knowledge that are regarded as essential should also exist in the teacher knowledge related to form-focused instruction (FFI). However, I see Andrew’s (2003, 2007) TLA (Teacher Language Awareness) as a more embracing model that describes language teacher knowledge. This model includes language proficiency, pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and language awareness (see figure 2.3 above). TLA and PCK in general seem to be identical; yet, the uniqueness of the process of language teaching, separates TLA from PCK related to other subject matters because *language* is itself the teaching material (Freeman, 2002). For that reason, Andrews argued that TLA “emphasize[d] the unique features of the language teacher’s pedagogical content knowledge, ...[and] language awareness [might] be seen as a major sub-component”(2003, p.78). Along with this idea, TLA -which encompasses subject-matter knowledge, language proficiency and knowledge of learners- can be considered as the core of L2 teacher knowledge base in regard to form-focused instruction. I would argue that TLA corresponds the concept of *teacher-learner* (Freeman & Johnson, 1998), which

also includes “not only the what but also the who, the where, and the how of teaching” (Tsui, 2011, p. 23).

If it is argued that the features of a language teacher is similar to that of a teacher knowledge related to FFI, then it would be reasonable to introduce the concept of FFI before exploring more about language teacher thinking related to FFI.

Form-Focused Instruction

Before delving into the various description of form-focused instruction (FFI), I would initially like to clarify that FFI involves “any pedagogical effort which is used to draw the learners’ attention to form either implicitly or explicitly” within meaningful, communicative activities (Spada, 2011; p. 226). Looking into the literature, one would see that the proper teaching of a language’s grammar has always received considerable attention throughout the history of language instruction (Celce-Murcia, 1991; Nassaji & Fotos, 2010; Norris & Ortega, 2000). Numerous grammar-teaching approaches have emerged, each varying in their perspectives on the quantity and the quality of focus on the form of a language (Nassaji & Fotos, 2010). Essentially, the importance given to the teaching of grammar is based on the previous understanding of language teaching. It was believed that the best way to teach and learn a language was achieved through studying grammar- which was connected with the understanding of the teaching of classical languages (Rutherford, 1987). As a result of this conviction grammar stayed at the center of language pedagogy for years. Within these years, various approaches have emerged - the grammar translation, the audio-lingual, the reading approach, the oral and situational method, the silent way, total physical response-which differed in their ways of applying language study; yet, focusing on grammar rules and structures (Nassaji & Fotos, 2010).

By the 1970s, with the emergence of the communicative approach, the importance of the functional aspects of language shaped second language teaching. This approach stressed that the aim of language teaching and learning was to foster the ability to communicate effectively in the target language setting. Language teaching professionals questioned the efficaciousness of the traditional grammar-based approaches and explicit teaching of grammar, claiming that “there [was] much less evidence to show that it (grammar instruction) [led] to the kind of learning that enable[d] learners to perform the targeted form in free oral production (e.g., in a communicative task)” (Ellis, Basturkmen, & Loewen, 2002; p. 421). It was recognized that language was more than grammar structures, and that language teaching should also focus on “communicative competence” (Hymes, 1972) - to not only know the form, but also to be able to use it in appropriate circumstances. For that reason, it was proposed that the language should be taught in a meaning-based context in which form is considered a second priority (Celce-Murcia, 1991). The communicative approach put the primary focus on meaning; however, in recent years, language teaching professionals advocated for some direct attention to form to alert students’ awareness regarding the target structure that was part of the input provided.

As I pointed out at the beginning, FFI involves any method of instruction that is used to pull students’ attention toward language forms within meaning-based lessons. However, the description varies according to the prominent researchers. For example, Long (1991) made a distinction between focus-on-forms (FonFS) and focus-on-form (FonF). The former, which is associated with a traditional grammar-based approach, involves a previously designed structural syllabus (Ellis, 2001; Ellis, Basturkmen &

Loewen, 2001). Teachers who use this approach encourage learners to pay attention to the form of language, either explicitly or implicitly. In both ways, the primary importance is given to the target linguistic rules and patterns in a non-communicative context, which enforces learners to “function as students rather than users of the language” (Ellis, 2001; p. 14) by teaching it as an “object” (Ellis, 2001; p.14). FonFS is also associated with skills-based learning approach as it may include the comparison of the target and the native language of the students, along with the “written and oral exercises that entail using the grammar” (Sheen, 2003; p, 225). On the other hand, focus-on-form (FonF) is used to define the “attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication” (Ellis, 2001; pp. 45-46).

Ellis (2001) defines FFI as “any planned or incidental instructional activity that is intended to induce learners to pay attention to linguistic form...FFI includes both traditional approaches to teaching forms based on structural syllabi and more communicative approaches where attention to form arises out of activities that are primarily meaning focused” (Ellis 2001, p.1-2). Compared to Long’s (1991) interpretation, Ellis conceptualized form-focused instruction under three sub-headings, which embodied the terms planned focus-on-form, incidental focus-on-form and, focus-on-forms (FonFS). The author’s intention was to show that besides inducing spontaneous attention to form, it was also possible to draw learners’ attention to certain language features that were targeted in advance.

Nina Spada’s description of form-focused instruction may seem to correspond with Ellis’s description, “FFI is any pedagogical effort which is used to draw the learners’ attention to form either implicitly or explicitly . . . within meaning-based

approaches to L2 instruction [and] in which a focus on language is provided in either spontaneous or predetermined ways” (Spada, 1997; p.73; 2011, p. 226). Throughout this paper, I chose to refer to Spada’s definition of FFI as I found it an all-embracing concept of FFI. Spada’s conception of FFI differs slightly as she and her colleague renamed focus-on-form as *Integrated FFI* (Lightbown & Spada, 2008). In addition, they used the term *Isolated FFI*, which resonates with focus-on-forms because it involves inducing the learners’ attention to form out of a communicative context. However, Spada & Lightbown (2008) claimed that “Isolated FFI” was different than focus-on-forms as Isolated FFI was used “as a preparation for a communicative activity or after an activity in which students [had] experienced difficulty with a particular language feature” (p.186). Even though *Isolated FFI* may sound like the study of language forms out of meaningful contexts, it essentially indicates the study of forms that are connected or related to a communicative activity. These communicative activities could be part of content-based, immersion or task-based language teaching models, in which the primary concern is learning the structure of the language through meaningful, and engaging activities (Nassaji & Fotos, 2010). Despite the slight differences in definitions, these researchers seem to give the common message that grammar teaching should be carried out in language lessons in order to foster student comprehension and production. Williams (2005) also provided a comprehensive analysis of the different definitions of FFI and discussed its features as applied in extant literature.

To complement the understanding of FFI, I should also add that Ellis (2012) took another perspective in conceptualizing FFI, *an option-based approach*, which is based on the different methodological options that can be used by the teachers according to the

flow of instruction and the status of the students. He proposes “FFI is best conceptualized not in terms of abstract constructs such as focus on form/focus on forms or implicit/explicit instruction but in terms of concrete instructional activities” (p. 263). He presented the options in tables (see Ellis 2012, pp. 264 & 271) by discussing how they could be and were being used in teaching grammar. The figures and the examples help the readers see the different possible options that can be used to attend to language forms. Essentially, regardless of any lesson format it is inevitable to not see the nature of instructional approaches that Ellis (2012) described as intertwined. The complexities of classroom context may allow any type of instruction use, single or mixed, based on the judgment of the teacher (Borg, 2009). Ellis (2012) conveys this message with his options-based approach and acknowledges that there is not only one fixed way of teaching grammar. The challenge was to find and synthesize the best elements in different approaches to teaching grammar for the benefit of the students (Ellis, 2006; Ellis, Loewen & Basturkmen, 2006; Nassaji & Fotos, 2010). Long (1991) confirmed this point, and took it even further by stating that “it is no exaggeration to say that language teaching methods do not exist – at least, not where they would matter, if they did, in the classroom” (p. 39).

Second language learning theorists and researchers propose different strategies; however, they were not intended to be prescriptive (Nassaji & Fotos, 2010). Whatever the linguists reveal and justify as effective and beneficial, teachers are the agents who actually carry out these instructional methods and choose/use the ones that would best address the desired learning outcomes. Actually, I need to be cautious about the noun “agent” here because Nassaji and Fotos (2010) say, “teachers are not agents to learn and

apply methods, but professional decision-makers” (p. 140). Whether they are called agents or decision-makers, teachers have the final authority. They draw on their broad and complex “networks of knowledge” (Borg, 2003; p.81), including personal theories and beliefs (Borg, 2006).

Teacher Decision-Making Related to Form-Focused Instruction

The impact of teacher thinking and practice related to L2 (second language) and grammar teaching, including the choices the teachers prefer, are acknowledged by research (Basturkmen, Loewen, & Ellis, 2004; Borg, 2001, 2003). It has been specifically claimed that teachers’ knowledge of the advantages and the disadvantages of the use of different types of instruction is important in achieving fruitful teaching and learning (Ellis et al., 2001, 2002). In addition, teachers’ length of experience along with their formal education has been identified as factors that shape their knowledge base and practice (Mackey, Polio, McDonough, 2004; Mullock 2006; Tsui 2009, 2011).

As has been elaborated previously, L2 teacher knowledge base involves “knowledge of the language” (teachers’ competence in the language proficiency) and “knowledge about the language” (language related subject matter knowledge such as knowledge of structure) (Andrews, 2001). The necessity of pedagogical knowledge is also considered vital in L2 teachers, so they can effectively tailor the subject matter according to their students’ proficiency levels and other contextual variables. Students’ characteristics have long been recognized as one of the key factors that shape teachers’ orientation to language instruction (Burgess, & Etherington, 2002; Mullock, 2006; Tsui, 2003).

As I concluded earlier, Andrew's (2003) TLA (teacher language awareness) model can also be applied to teacher knowledge in regard to FFI. According to this framework, L2 teachers need to be competent at language proficiency, language awareness and pedagogical content knowledge. Similarly, in the knowledge base of a teacher who is using FFI, these domains are expected to exist and fully operate. The necessity of subject matter knowledge and the ability to transfer this knowledge appropriated according to the learners' level is apparent in the use of FFI. I will not talk about these in detail as I have already discussed these points. However, I would like to talk about contextual factors related to FFI, which impacts the teacher choice of strategies considerably. Contextual factors involve ESL context, learner first language (L1), and "learner variables" (Celce-Murcia, 1991) such as age (adult or young learner) and, proficiency level (beginner or advanced).

English as a Second Language (ESL) Context

In ESL context, students are exposed to the English language not only in the school context but also in their daily life. Based on the expectation that the students would benefit more from the use of the FonF option, teachers may prefer directing students' attention to the target linguistic forms implicitly with plenty of feedback (Spada & Lightbown, 2008). It is assumed that the learners have abundant opportunities to hear and use the language. For that reason implicit attention to the language form and student mistakes would likely to be considered as adequate. However, depending on the frequency of student errors, teachers may prefer addressing the problematic form in a separate lesson. And if the teacher is aware that the error occurs as a result of the first language influence and has the knowledge of the L1, s/he may take advantage of this

unique situation. S/he may analyze and compare the differences in both languages in learner L1 to enhance student intake (Swain, Lapkin, Suzuki & Brooks, 2009).

Language teaching professionals are also aware that communicative contexts alone may not be enough for accuracy in language learning (Nassaji & Fotos, 2010; Williams, 2005). Students may need help noticing certain grammatical structures for the correct use of the language. For that reason, they believed students may benefit from explicit grammar teaching strategies. Through use of different options, as suggested by Ellis (2012), teachers may try to direct their students' attention toward the target structure by means of emphasizing, negotiation e.t.c.; sometimes mini-lessons may also be administered as well.

The use of L1 was also one of the strategies that teachers preferred to use during instruction (Nassaji & Fotos, 2010). L1 use was common in EFL context, there are studies that documented teachers' preference of L1 use in ESL context, and it is mostly preferred for explaining the complex linguistic forms or providing initial information before or during an activity (Ellis, 2012). The strong effects of L1 use to enhance student recognition of general rules and principles of the target form before a communicative activity is acknowledged in the language-teaching field (Nassaji & Fotos, 2010).

As suggested by Spada & Lightbown (2008) and Nassaji & Fotos (2010) teachers may prefer raising their students' awareness about the target grammatical form through communicative structured activities, which involve output opportunities with plenty of feedback. "Integrated FFI", in other words implicit FonF, is also possible in reading, listening and vocabulary activities. Students benefit from explicit or implicit explanation of the target linguistic form before or during the activity; the overall benefit for the

students increase if the students are able to use the language and receive feedback in return.

In addition to ESL context, learner variables such as proficiency level, learner styles, and characteristics have considerable influence in the use of FFI. In the following section, I will be talking about the benefits and hindrances of learner variables.

Learner Variables

Within learner variables, student proficiency level is one of the dominant factors in the teachers' decision-making around use of FFI types. For example, in a survey research I conducted with K-12 ESL teachers (2009), I discovered that teachers were not willing to use FonF type for low proficiency level students based on the belief that their students' low level of understanding would prevent them from noticing or processing the target linguistic form. On the other hand, their statements showed that they would prefer FonF approach with upper proficiency level students, for they thought the student ability level would enable them to attend and process the target form.

The close connection between student level and the effectiveness of FonF is pointed out in language teaching literature as well (Batstone and Ellis, 2009). In addition, research studies supported the parallelism between the level of student understanding and the type of FFI. For example, Loewen (2005) and Nassaji (2010) showed that higher proficiency level students benefit from incidental FonF instruction type; moreover, Nassaji (2010) found pre-emptive FonF as more helpful for beginner and intermediate level students. I found similar results from my classroom observations of secondary ESL teachers. Middle school ESL teachers preferred to align their choice of FFI options strategically according to the student proficiency level. Similar occurrences were also

observed in the events of error correction. Teachers preferred rephrasing the correct form in lower proficiency levels, whereas they preferred explicit linguistic explanation for upper proficiency levels. However, the language domain and the previously studied linguistic items mattered in the teacher choice of approaches. For example, teachers preferred not to make any correction during student talk and would address the incorrect use if only it distorted the meaning or it was previously studied. When they encountered similar incorrect use in the majority of the students, they opted to address the issues in a subsequent lesson. In these mini-lessons, some of the teachers used their students' own writing projects, whereas others preferred activities from subsequent grammar-related books. In either case, teachers' intentions were to address students' gaps in linguistic knowledge that occurred during the communicative lesson, an approach that is also recommended in the second language acquisition literature (Celce-Murcia, 1991; Spada & Lightbown, 2008).

As mentioned previously, student proficiency level is one of the dominant factors in teacher choice of FFI options. However, second language teaching professionals discuss other variants as equally important. Learner characteristics and learning styles and strategies are among those determinant factors as well (Brown, 2007). Learners differ in their cognitive abilities and the strategies that they employ in learning a second language. Brown (2007) covered learning styles and strategies and the influence they exert on language learning extensively. For example, several studies cited in Brown (2007; pp. 122-126) provided evidence that a field-independent and a left-brain oriented learner benefited from explicit FFI. A field independent learner has the "ability to perceive a particular, relevant item or factor in a "field" of distracting items" (Brown,

p.121). On the other hand, a field-dependent learner has “the tendency to be “dependent” on the total field so that the parts embedded within the field are not easily perceived” (p.121). Moreover, some of the defined characteristics of a left-brain oriented learner are *analytic, systematic, objective, planned and structured* whereas a right-brain dominant learner is *intuitive, visual, subjective, and spontaneous* (Torrance, 1980 as cited in Brown, 2007, p.125).

In addition to learning types, personality of learners categorized by Myers (1962 as cited in Brown, 2007) and referred to as the Myers-Briggs test, also impact learners’ language learning strategies. Myer-Briggs character types include extroversion (E) versus introversion (I), sensing (S) versus intuition (N), thinking (T) versus feeling (F) and judging (J) versus perceiving (P). It was argued that teachers needed to have the knowledge of personality types in order to be aware of their students’ individual differences in a classroom. For example, an extroverted (E) type may be comfortable with group work compared to an introverted (I) type (Brown, 2007; p.176). The implication of Myers-Briggs character types in language teaching is important, for they give clues to teachers about the appropriate types of instruction that might work for their students. For example, Lawrence (1984 as cited in Brown, 2007) claimed that Sensitive-Judging (SJ) students “are linear learners with a strong need for structure” (p.52). It may mean that the students that fall into SJ category on the Myer-Briggs scale will likely benefit from explicit FFI. Another example would be introverted (I) type students who may prefer implicit feedback and pre-emptive FonF approach.

Looking into these descriptions, it is hard to disagree with the impact of learner types in language learning and teaching. However, they also pose challenges both for the

teachers and the learners themselves. In this case, teachers need to be able to know the differing learner styles and be as flexible as possible in the use of approaches. They need to know what type of FFI to exert and what type of error correction to use at a given moment. Actually, the task is dual-sided, both teachers and students have their part in language learning. Knowing that language learning is a complex matter, teachers may help their students explore their learning styles and students in return may share what they find beneficial in their understanding based on the teacher's approach. Hopefully, this reciprocal relationship may help learners' ability to turn their input into intake, especially input with the correct form in a meaningful context.

Conclusion

Should grammar teaching be explicit or implicit; integrated within a meaningful context or addressed in isolated segments? All of these questions pertain to the FFI types and are the type of questions that language teachers face when making decisions about their instruction. Even though there is not any consensus among researchers pertaining to the effectiveness of one option over another (Ellis, 2006, 2012), there is a considerable amount of research concluding that language awareness improves language development and use (Ellis, 2002; Nassaji & Fotos, 2010; Norris & Ortega, 2000). This belief is among the main articulated rationales of language teachers as well (Burgess & Etherington, 2002; Chia, 2003; Eisenstein-Ebsworth & Schweers, 1997). In line with research findings and language teacher beliefs, SLA scholars find FFI as one of the most influential approaches in teaching grammar as it targets teaching language form in a meaningful and communicative context.

Even though the general consensus is on the effectiveness of FFI in teaching grammar, teachers need to be aware that there is not one fixed approach that is a panacea. There are a host of different factors that take place in teaching language via FFI such as student proficiency level and learning style. It is known that while some students choose explicit attention to linguistic form, others benefit from implicit type of strategy as well. This also depends on the learner proficiency level. Students who have a low level of understanding may not be able to see the target form in a FonF type of approach unless the teacher points it out explicitly. Of course, understanding a student's readiness for a specific structure is unlikely and impossibly difficult for a teacher (Ellis, 1997; 2006).

In general, teachers who use FFI are aware that learning a language form is best achieved within a meaningful context. They need to know when to use "integrated FFI" (implicit FFI) or "Isolated FFI" according to their circumstances. They may prefer FonF type of approach with higher proficiency level students with the form of input-flooding (activities with the frequent use of target form) or choose mini-lessons specifically focusing on the target form, either as a preparation for a communicative activity or an enhancement to student understanding of a complex or rare form. In either way, teachers need to follow principled pedagogical approach.

A corollary of the above is that teachers who have embraced FFI need to know the "knowledge about the language", the strategies that are put forward by SLA theory and research, the learner characteristics, and the instructional context. All of these characteristics are included in Andrew's "Teacher Language Awareness" model. My intention here is not to categorize teacher knowledge base as segmented. We know that the subsets of teacher knowledge base are only for analytical purposes; otherwise they are

intertwined and work collaboratively. This situation in teacher expertise with regard to FFI is not different. Teachers may vary in their manner of integrating FFI. However, an insightful teacher would be able to make her/his pedagogical choices based on her/his subject-matter knowledge, student types, classroom context, and personal theories and beliefs. Ultimately, this is what is expected from all language teachers.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Description of Case Study Research

This study utilized an instrumental multiple (collective) case study design. Case study is defined as “a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection” (Creswell, 2007, p. 73). A case could be “a thing, a single entity, a unit which there are boundaries...[it] could be a person such as a student, a teacher, a principal; a program; a group such as a class, a school, a community; a specific policy; and so on” (Merriam, 1998, p.27). This particular study can be characterized as multiple (collective) case study as it consisted of three different cases. Stake says collective case study is used to examine a “phenomenon, population or general condition” (2000, p. 437), as it was the target of this study. A case study can be intrinsic or instrumental. The type of case study here is instrumental because the aim is to understand ESL teachers’ display of expertise in teaching grammar other than studying these particular teachers themselves (Stake, 1995).

Case Selection

In order to obtain multiple perspectives in the area of expertise in ESL teachers, I used maximal purposeful sampling strategy. Purposeful selection is defined as a “strategy in which particular settings, persons, or activities are selected deliberately in order to provide information that can’t be gotten as well from other choices” (Maxwell, 2005; p. 88). In other words, the selection of the participants and the sites was important as they informed the research questions of the study.

I intended to include three teachers to represent the expertise teacher population. The criteria for selection of the expert teachers included a minimum of five years of experience, educational degrees, and the recommendation of the teacher education faculty of the local state university, the district ELL coordinator, and the school principals. Initially, I sent out emails, which included the IRB form and a cover letter that explained the details of the study, to the school principals and the district coordinator to gain their permission to conduct the study at the secondary schools. After receiving their approval, I sought the school principals' and the district coordinator's recommendations for possible participants who met the selection criteria. In addition, I met with the ESL team leaders at each secondary school to ask for their recommendation of teachers. I targeted teachers whose names were mentioned more than any other. Then, I met the teachers at their schools to invite them to participate the study. After briefly explaining the purpose of the study, I gave the teachers the consent forms and asked them to sign if they agreed to participate. All three teachers agreed to participate in the study.

The participant teachers consisted of two high school and one middle school in-service ELL teachers. All of the teachers fell into the selection criteria. While the description of the participants will be given in the findings section in detail, the basic characteristics of the three teachers are as follow:

Table 3.1

The Basic Characteristics of the Teachers

Participant Names	Years of Experience	Educational Degrees and Certifications	ELL Levels	Further Additions
Rose	16	*SPED *ELL Endorsement *MA	All levels	*Team Leader *Taught at elementary and middle school grade levels *Teaching writing *Proponent of grammar teaching
Dan	25 (10 yrs in ELL teacher)	*English *ELL Endorsement *Reading Recovery *An Administrative Certificate *MA	Levels 2 & 3	*Taught all grade levels *The last four years at a high school *Teaching reading and writing *Considered grammar knowledge not a priority
Eli	8 (2 yrs in ELL)	*Spanish teaching *MA	Levels 1, 2 & 3	*Taught Spanish for 8 yrs *Teaching reading *Found her Spanish background extremely helpful in teaching ELL *Proponent of grammar teaching as needed

The Students of the Case Teachers

While the exploration of the teacher expertise for FFI consisted the core of this study, I also intended to seek for student perspectives about their teachers' choices of FFI approaches. The student population involved only the students in the participant teachers' classrooms.

In order to gather data from the case teachers' students, all of the students in the selected teachers' classrooms were invited to take part in the research study (see Appendices B & C). The students' families were informed about the study and asked for their permission to let their students to participate the study (see Appendix D). Among these students, the ones who themselves agreed and were given parental permission to participate were included in the study. All of the students in each teacher's classroom were eager to participate. However, there was one female high school student who did not want to fill in the survey questionnaire. The reasoning behind her choice was that she simply did not want to answer the questions. Yet, she did not object to being interviewed. The participant students came from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds, which will be described further in the coming sections.

Data Collection

After permission from the IRB (Institutional Review Board), the district, and the principals were obtained; the ESL teachers were contacted (see Appendix A). Three of the ESL teachers were chosen in consideration of these criteria: teachers with the most years of teaching experience, master's degree and the highest recommendations from the principals and the district coordinator. Then, permission from the students and their families were obtained (see Appendices B, C, & D). The purpose of the study was

explained both to the families and the students. I further explained that the focus of the study was on the teachers; however, students' perspectives were needed to find out whether the teachers' instructional decisions helped them pick up what the teachers were trying to teach. The data sources I used with the teachers included semi-structured interviews, non-formal conversations, emails, non-participant observations, video recordings of the lessons, and the stimulated recall technique within the follow-up interviews, collection of documents (teacher plans, student work), photographs of the teaching related documents. The data sources with the students included a survey, which consisted of closed-ended and open-ended questions, audio-recorded informal conversations, and whole-class interviews.

Interviews. The interviews with the teachers lasted from thirty to forty-five minutes and were conducted in a place that was designated by the teachers, which was their homerooms. The follow-up interviews took thirty to forty-five minutes. These follow-up interviews contained the episodes of stimulated recall. In an attempt to uncover ESL teacher mental process during instruction, teachers were asked to view some segments of the video-recorded lessons (all of the teachers agreed to be videotaped) and asked what they were thinking or considering at the moment of that specific instruction. The follow-up interviews combined with the stimulated recall techniques took place only three or four times after each lesson or the next day in consideration of the teachers' convenience. A protocol for the stimulated recall was presented to the teachers before the start of the procedure (see Appendices E & F). All of the interviews were audio-recorded. During the interviews, I took notes as well. Participants were informed that their identities were protected by using pseudonyms. Each participant was provided with a

consent form and told that they might withdraw from the study at any point (see Appendix A).

Two interview protocols were developed for this study (see Appendixes G & H). The first was the teacher version and the second was the student version. The teacher version asked teachers about their thoughts related to their use of grammar instruction and the student version asked students about their thoughts and feelings about the instruction of the day.

The interviews that were given to the students were in a whole-class format as well. The students were asked questions in general about what they thought of that day's grammar instruction. In addition to the individual interviews, I conducted class interviews to let some students share their thoughts easily and encourage them to add their opinions to their fellow students.

Survey. I used group-administered surveys with the students (see Appendix I). Survey research is used "to describe specific characteristics of a large group of persons, objects, or institutions" (Jaeger, 1998; p. 449). It involves "collecting data from or about some members of the group that is of interest, rather than collecting data from or about all group members" (Jaeger, 1998; p. 450). The major advantage of using a group-administered questionnaire involves the collection of data from a large number of respondents in one sitting, which enabled generalizability. In addition, the respondents had the advantage of asking for clarification about the questions that were unclear to them. The major disadvantage includes the probability that the respondents might feel uncomfortable with the presence of the researcher, therefore might be less truthful in their responses.

The survey questionnaires consisted of both open and close-ended questions.

The survey questions were designed to elicit students' perspectives of their learning regarding the day's grammar instruction (see Appendix I). The open-ended questions targeted students' uptake regarding the day's FFI such as: What helped you the most to understand today's lesson? What did the teacher do to help you understand today's lesson? What more could have helped you to understand (learn) better? What did you find confusing during or after the lesson? There were two close-ended questions: How well do you feel in your ability to use (the target form)? How well did you understand (the target form)?

The students were also asked to put their first names, grades and ELL levels, for I aimed to converse with these students at school either during lunch hours or at the end of the school day to inquire further about their thoughts. These conversations took five minutes and were audio-recorded for analysis purposes. The students were informed that pseudonyms were used to protect their identity and the primary and the secondary investigators were the only persons who had access to their information, and that their thoughts would not be shared with any other person(s) or their teachers.

Non-Participant Observation. The purpose of the observation was to gain in-depth information about teacher grammar instruction and to document the nature of the teachers' expert mindset regarding the use of instructional approaches shaped as a result of the particular classroom dilemma. The observation allowed documenting how the teacher's grammar instruction took place according to the individual student or group of students. The non-participant observations took place for four to five weeks. The time of the observations varied based on teacher preference. While I was given the privilege to

observe Rose's middle school level three classroom everyday, Dan asked me to observe his level three high school classroom for two days a week. Ellie felt more comfortable with a weekly one-day observation.

I targeted intermediate and advanced level classes to better serve the purposes of the study because high proficiency level students are at the developmental stage where they can articulate their thoughts about their learning and instruction better compared to lower proficiency level students. There was not any effort to control or direct the content of the lessons. The teachers were designing and planning the lessons themselves. Briefly before and/or after each lesson, the teachers were asked about their thoughts on the upcoming / just completed lesson. The observations were videotaped with the teachers' permission. The digital camera was placed at such an angle that it would capture only the teacher and the teacher instruction. Even if the focal point of the digital camera was on the teacher, student images had been captured inadvertently. For that reason, student assent and parent consent were sought. Both the students and the parents were informed and assured that the interest of the video recording was the teacher and any information obtained was strictly confidential. In addition, the student who did not grant permission was seated out of the camera range.

Documents. The documents gathered for this data included teacher lesson plans and syllabi (for the description of the course), district rubric checklists, student work, and researcher field notes.

Audio-Visual Materials. Audio-visual materials included audio-recorded interviews, informal conversations, video-recorded lessons, and photographs of teaching and learning related activities or materials. I was aware that some of the teachers might

not be comfortable with videotaping, so I suggested that audio recordings could be used as an alternative. However, they all gave their consent and I proceeded with videotaping.

As mentioned previously, the main focus of this study was on teachers, considering this the video-recorder was placed at such an angle that it would capture the teacher only. However, isolation of the students' visual presence was challenging. For that reason, both the students and their families were notified about this challenge and were reminded that the focus of attention was the teachers, but not the students.

Data Analysis

My approach can be described as non-linear, which involves analysis of the data as collected (Borg, 1998). This procedure allowed initial analysis feed into the following data analysis. Before the analysis of the data, I transcribed all video-recordings, interviews, informal conversations, email correspondences, observations, and field notes. The process of transcribing allowed me to refresh my memory and become acquainted with the data.

I used Maxqda 10 and 11 software to analyze the data. While I was in the middle of analyzing the first case, the company initiated an update version of Maxqda 10. I analyzed the two cases by using the updated version, which was Maxqda 11. Initially, I created Microsoft files for all the data and uploaded them to the Maxqda 10 and 11 software and saved them on my personal computer of which I only have access to. All files were protected by setting a password.

This study followed multiple (collective) case-design where the data was analyzed case by case. I used the template as a base provided by Creswell (2007, 2013) for coding

the cases. I assigned pre-selected codes in the code system in Maxqda 10 and 11 software. During the analysis of the text segments, I looked for “patterned regularities” later to be aggregated under themes within each case. Following the case-by-case analysis, all themes were used to conduct cross-case analysis. Additionally, I searched for “naturalistic generalizations” (Stake, 1995) that emerged from the three cases.

This study also dealt with the students’ perspectives. For this portion of the study, I used a survey questionnaire as a primary data collection method. Individual and whole-class interviews were also conducted. During the data analysis, the frequencies of the responses for the first two close-ended questions for each classroom were calculated and presented in tables. By reading the transcribed data of the interviews, I also looked for significant phrases or sentences that pertain directly to the experiences of the students regarding grammar instruction. The data obtained from the survey questions were discussed in an integrated fashion with the findings of the interviews.

Validation Strategies

Stake (1995) states, “we have ethical obligations to minimize misrepresentation and misunderstanding” (p.109). Thus, qualitative researchers utilize different protocols to assess the accuracy of the findings (Creswell, 2007, 2013). Addressing to the trustworthiness of a study is one of the major concerns of the researchers. In this study, I tried to achieve credibility through data source triangulation protocol, member checking (Stake, 1995; Merriam, 1998), researcher reflexivity (Creswell, 2007, 2013), and thick description (Geertz, 1973). As a triangulation process, I referred to the multiple sources of data to confirm the findings. Classroom observations, interviews, and documents were compared to provide credibility. I conducted member checks by discussing the themes

that emerged from the findings with each teacher. There was not any conflict with my findings and the teacher thinking. They agreed that my findings were realistic and dependable. Each teacher and I also had discussions over the previous interviews to solidify our mutual understanding. I sought for clarity in reporting my findings as an additional validity (Nunan, 1992).

One of the techniques that I used to ensure the reliability of this study was the use of researcher reflexivity. I was aware of the situational dynamic relationship between the researcher (myself), the participants and the research. For that reason, prior to the research, I explained my researcher position to the participant teachers and the students. I provided the suppositions and the process involved in the study. During the whole research process and the writing, I kept re-examining myself as a researcher and the meanings that were constructed as a result of my relationship with my participants by keeping memos.

To further verification, I kept referring continuously to the 20-point checklist prepared by Stake (1995; p. 131) every two to three weeks:

1. Is the report easy to read?
2. Does it fit together, each sentence contributing to the whole?
3. Does the report have a conceptual structure (for example, themes or issues?)
4. Are its issues developed in a serious and scholarly way?
5. Is the case adequately defined?
6. Is there a sense of story to the presentation?
7. Is the reader provided with some vicarious experience?
8. Have quotations been used effectively?

9. Are headings, figures, artifacts, appendixes, and indexes used effectively?
10. Was it edited well, then again with a last minute polish?
11. Has the writer made sound assertions, neither over-nor under-interpreting?
12. Has adequate attention being paid to various contexts?
13. Were sufficient raw data presented?
14. Were the data resources well chosen and in sufficient number?
15. Do observations and interpretations appear to have been triangulated?
16. Are the role and point of view of the researcher nicely apparent?
17. Is the nature of the intended audience apparent?
18. Is empathy shown for all sides?
19. Are personal intentions examined?
20. Does it appear that individuals were put at risk?

Ethical Considerations

As a researcher, I am aware that protecting human subjects from harm in research and respecting to their privacy are fundamental. For that reason, all of the participants were treated in accordance to the ethical guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA) and the University of Nebraska Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Although there are not any identifiable risks for participating in this study, a couple of considerations were kept in mind. First, the risk of identification of the teachers, the students and the schools were targeted to be minimized by using pseudonyms. Second, I was cognizant of the fact that both the teachers and the students might feel uncomfortable during the interview process when talking about their thoughts or experiences. The students might feel that their thoughts might affect their relationship

with the teachers. Some teachers and students might feel uncomfortable with the use of video recording. For that reason, the participant teachers were informed that audio recording could be used, if they preferred. I reassured that any information obtained was strictly confidential. All of the teachers provided their consent to be videotaped. Only one of the high school students did not want to fill in the survey questions. Yet, she did not object to being on the video or being interviewed. As a preventive measure, this non-participant student was placed out of the camera range. In addition, every caution (including keeping all data confidential, locked in the researchers desk and password protected on the researcher's computer) was taken during the research process to ensure that both the teachers and the students felt safe, and comfortable. I restated that the teachers and the students had the freedom to withdraw from the study if they felt the need to. They were informed that no one other than the investigators had access to the knowledge and information they provided, and only pseudonyms would be used during the whole research procedure and subsequent write up and presentation of the research study findings.

Conclusion

To conclude, an instrumental multiple (collective) case study design was used in order to explore ELL teachers' expertise and mindset regarding FFI (an approach with which learner attention is drawn to the linguistic elements of a language in meaning-based lessons) and their perception of student need and learning. For the data regarding student perspective, the dominant research method was the use of surveys. The qualitative data obtained from the interviews and the open-ended survey questions were analyzed together to reach an understanding of the meanings that are common to all

student data. The in-depth analyses of the findings are discussed in the following sections.

Chapter Four

Findings

As described previously, I conducted multiple sources of data collection (interviews, observations, audio-visual materials, documents and surveys) in an attempt to explore the central question: What is the nature of teaching expertise for form-focused instruction? During this period of data collection, it was intriguing to witness teachers' endeavor and enthusiasm to meet their students' language needs.

Initially, I provided Table 4.1 below, which identifies the schools, the teachers, and some characteristics of their classrooms. Then, in the following sections, I introduce the profiles for each teacher and their classrooms. The profiles follow the detailed description of the themes that emerged as a result of the analysis of the data. The overall themes for each teacher are also presented in tables. The discussion of teacher thinking around form-focused instruction is carried out within each case. I included the students' perspectives right after the discussion of each teacher's case. Within the student perspectives, I elaborate on the match and the mismatch between the teacher and the students' perspectives. Finally, the cross-case analysis across each case is presented. Within the cross-case analysis, I included tables that show each teacher's characteristics, the texts and resources used, along with their grammar teaching philosophy. These tables are offered in order to provide clear visualization of the similarities and differences across each teacher and the nature of her / his grammar teaching expertise.

Profiles

Table 4.1

Demographics of Participants

School	Names	Years of Experience	Job Title	Grades	Level 3 St Number
Ivy Middle School	Rose	16	Team Leader/Teacher	6-8	12
Blue Moon High School	Dan	25/10 in ELL	Teacher	9-12	11
Light High School	Ellie	8/2 in ELL	Teacher	9-12	14

Case One: Rose

Site: Ivy Middle School

Ivy Middle School was one of the three middle schools in which ELL services were being offered in the district of the study. The school started the ELL program in the 2012-2013 education year after a three-year cessation. The closing corresponded with the opening of a new middle school that had an ELL program. Students from the Ivy Middle School neighborhood were bused out to the new school for three years. However, it was decided that the students were spending way too much time on a bus and that they needed to have a program in their neighborhood. Hence, the program re-opened again in the year of 2011.

According to the 2012-2013 Annual Statistical Handbook, the student population was 583: 230 students in sixth grade, 188 students in seventh grade and 165 students in eighth grade. Out of 583 students, 52 students were attending the ELL Center. There

were 12 students who were identified as level three students. The three most common primary languages of these students were Arabic, Spanish and Burmese, respectively.

Background of the Teacher

Rose started her teaching career as a SPED (special education) teacher at a rural school. She had her first experience of meeting a diverse population after she moved to the city of the study after three years at her rural school. In the new elementary school during her first year in the district, three of her students were not only SPED, but also language learners. She felt the need to learn new ways to address and approach those students' needs. This continuous desire enabled her to explore new cultures and she found great enjoyment in the process. Her enthusiasm was so apparent when she said, "I absolutely fell in love. I loved working with families. I loved working with the students. I felt like I was learning as much as they were learning. I loved learning about cultures" (December 18, 2012). In the meantime, Rose decided to go back to school to get her ELL endorsement. While she was teaching full time, she got her endorsement in two and a half years and completed her master's degree.

During her 16 years of teaching, Rose has taught both at elementary and middle schools, including all five proficiency levels. At the time of this research, she was also the team leader, which required her to design lessons for levels one, two, and three. In addition, she was required to observe ELL students, especially at level five, in regular education classrooms to see their progress throughout the year. Her leadership responsibilities included meetings with the other ELL teacher and the district ELL technology coach on regular basis and/or as needed. Her meetings with her teammate involved making decisions around and discussions about the writing curriculum. Rose's

meetings with the ELL technology coach revolved around many different topics such as exploration of different ways regarding communication strategies with ELL students or expanding on writing curriculum. As a team leader, Rose also got together with other schools' ELL team leaders. During these meetings, they delved into topics ranging from rubric adjustments to assessment strategies by sharing their concerns and opinions. During the study, it was clear that Rose valued team work and team-work-based-decisions, evidenced in small part by her frequent use of the pronoun *we* such as, “ We think the students are ready to move on level three, when they have all these objectives mastered and they have some of these objectives that they are working on” (December 18, 2012).

Even though Rose was teaching levels one, two and three, for the purpose of this research only her third level classroom teaching, including her level three students were observed and videotaped. Rose's level three classroom was writing- focused.

Grammar Teaching Philosophy

Rose believed that the grammar properties of a language should be attended to purposefully in order to increase student knowledge. By “purposefully”, she meant arranging grammar activities that were directly connected to the target writing objectives. She also preferred arranging grammar-based activities by considering regular education objectives and the types of questions asked in assessment tests:

I look into [district] content objectives to see what do kids to be able to master, what is being asked on the ELDA [English Language Development Assessment], which is the English language development assessment and on the NeSA [Nebraska State Accountability Test] (December 12, 2013).

Rose liked to preplan her grammar related lessons in the form of mini-lessons by looking at regular education objectives and possible question types on the assessment tests, such as phrasal verbs. Knowing that phrasal verbs were one of the grammar features that were being tested on at the NeSA indirectly, for example, Rose planned to teach phrasal verbs. She was aware that ELLs would need to know them because such a knowledge was assumed in the test questions. Describing herself as a “scope and sequence type of person” (December 18, 2012), Rose felt more satisfied when she knew what to focus on, and she felt more confident knowing that she would be covering the kind of knowledge that her students would benefit from the most.

Rose also favored grammar teaching episodes that occurred during class at teachable moments. These moments occurred when her students were going through creating an essay together, or doing a guided writing together, or when they were looking at a student’s piece of work. During these writing workshops, if/when Rose noticed common errors that were being used by several students, she might pull those students aside. Instead of a whole class activity, Rose would do a mini lesson with just those students by briefly explaining the grammatical rules that they were confused about. Rose provided her reason for this individualized small group grammar teaching as follow:

...typically kids that are at level three, most of them are about at the same level and if I have a student or two that I know they have this objective down, I am not really gonna waste their time, cause they understand it. I’ll have them working on their writer’s workshop piece and I pull the other students and we’ll do a mini lesson (December 18, 2012).

Rose acknowledged that the majority of her students comprehended the grammar content when studied in isolation; yet, they might have trouble with using their grammar knowledge in their writing. Being familiar with the research that recommended integrated and contextualized grammar teaching, Rose found herself in a dilemma: “With grammar in ELL ...I teach in isolation, [even if I know that] research [studies confirm that] teaching in isolation is not the best way to do [grammar teaching]” (December 18, 2012). Although the contradiction between what research says and what Rose needed to do disturbed her, Rose justified her approach by saying, “...some of them have the concept, most of the time, if it is in isolation, if we pull it out in isolation” (December 18, 2012).

However, teaching the target concepts in isolation did not guarantee their use by the students in their writings or comments to their peers. In addition, students who showed their conception of the focused grammar items either in their speech or assignments might show regression in the following days. Rose was aware of these facts and the only solution she came up with is “repeating, repeating, repeating”. These repetitions might happen either as a response to student inquiry or error.

So far, I have provided Rose’s philosophy of grammar and the teaching of grammar to give an initial picture of her mental landscape for effective grammar instruction. In the following sections, I describe Rose’s routine classroom environment.

Description of the Classroom

The third level classroom consisted of twelve students- eight boys and four girls. The students’ native language varied: five of them spoke Spanish, six of them spoke Arabic and one spoke Burmese. The classroom also consisted of a variety of grades: Five

of them from eighth grade, three from seventh grade and four from sixth grade. By the time this research started, it was second quarter and it was the third day of one of the female students at the school and she was also new to the level.

On the second day of my observation, all of the students wrote me a brief paper, a page or two, introducing themselves and their families. Rose used this as an opportunity to have her students practice their writing. I must confess that I was touched by this gesture. These letters also helped me get to know these students better. I learned pretty amusing information regarding the students' feelings and thoughts, such as how one was fed up by one of his sister's spoiled behavior, or how one was actually hurt when his friends were making jokes about him being short, but he did not express his actual feelings towards his friends. I could not help but laugh when I read about how one student in particular was proud of seeing hair growth on his body. In addition, I was able to get a sense of the students' English proficiency level through these letters. The students had a decent knowledge of the organizational properties of a writing. They had grammatical errors; yet, they were able to communicate meaningfully. Here is an example from one of the students' letter: "Now I am going to tell you about my hobbies. My hobby's are play soccer at a field where you play with othere people." Within this example, the student started his paragraph with a nice introduction and continued on talking about his hobbies. He had several errors related to grammar, vocabulary, and punctuation, but he was able to explain his points.

All of these students came from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds, they all connected and interacted well. Students joked with each other while working on a particular task, or their relaxed and respectful style during communication demonstrated

that these students seemed to be enjoying each others company being in the same classroom.

For the first two weeks of my observations, the students were seated in a U-shaped position facing the teacher and the white board. However, in the following days, Rose seated the students in groups of four because the grouping of the students would be beneficial in further activities.

The Format of the Writing Lesson

Rose was using *Inside*, a commercial textbook, as a primary source for instruction, which essentially focused on reading skills; yet, the second portion of the book addressed some of the writing genres such as persuasive business letters, and strategies that went along with the genres. Rose was attending to grammar in connection with the demands of the writing genres such as, what tense to use to provide reasons or how to do a formal closing. In addition, attention to grammar occurs during working on the edition of the sample draft provided in the book. Below, I will provide how a typical lesson looks like to familiarize the readers with the routine class atmosphere.

A Typical Lesson

Before the beginning of the lesson, as each student entered they grabbed a laptop from a portable closet placed by the entrance door. They turned on their computers and got ready for the lesson. A typical writing lesson usually started with Rose's introduction to the new writing genre. This introduction involved the organization and the arrangement that was expected in the target genre. Then, Rose would ask her students to think of a position that they could use in their papers. They would brainstorm some possible positions that the students could use as a whole class. Once the students chose

their positions, Rose would ask them to write their lead sentences on their Google docs on their pcs, which could be shared with the teacher and other students of their choice. Rose would be able to show each student a writing sample through the overhead projector in the class. Using a projector that reflected each student's writing, Rose and the students were able to go over each other's sentences as a whole class, while giving suggestions or comments. Below is a small segment, which shows the dialogue between Rose and the students while looking at John's lead sentence:

Sentence: Little kids running around like they were imitating the monkeys trying to see all of the rest of the animals at the same time.

Rose: Here, (pointing to the space between *kids* and *running*) we need

John: A verb

Rose: A verb. What would we put in there?

John: were

Rose: Yep. What could he (John) be describing?

Students: The whole zoo.

Rose: Yes, the whole zoo, the people, the kids, and how they are running around.

While you are writing you need to focus on what you are writing, but that's a great lead.

While the majority of the comments were meaning-focused, Rose would also touch on grammar related mistakes that occurred in the sentences. If she saw too many common grammatical errors, Rose would arrange sentences that focused on those grammar-related errors to work on the next day. In the days that followed, Rose provided writing samples for the target genre and went over the format to refresh her students' memories. In the

meantime, the students would be expected to finish their writing pieces and choose a partner that they would like to share their writing work with in Google docs. Initially, the assigned partners would check on each other's papers and provide their comments or suggestions. Rose would read the papers last and provide final feedback.

In the coming section, I present the themes that arose through data analysis. These themes further in detail and illustrate Rose's philosophy of grammar instruction.

Case One Themes

The Influencing Criteria on Rose's Decision-Making

"Swiss cheese learner[s]" was how Rose described her students. With this analogy, Rose intended to point out the inconsistent nature of her students in their learning: one day they could be excellent in recalling and using the previously studied information, the next day they would not be able to remember a single thing. By referring to her students as *swiss cheese learners*, Rose also tried to indicate the need to improvise her everyday lessons based on the students' status.

Table 4.2
Overall Themes for Rose

Theme Name	Sub-themes
The Influencing Criteria on Rose's Decision-Making	The Need to Address Grammar Gaps The Need to Teach Grammar on a Daily Basis Explicit Teaching Options Prompting The Use of Target Grammar Points
Student as Center of Teacher Thinking	Reasoning With Students Encouraging Peer-to-Peer Interaction Attending to Individual Students
The Dilemmas That Rose Faces	How to Integrate Explicit Grammar Knowledge With the Target Writing How to Assess Student Grammar Knowledge Properly

Essentially, Rose's main concern was to teach how to compose a letter according to the target genre. Throughout this process grammar instruction occurred occasionally in circumstances that necessitated such instruction mostly dependent on the students' errors when they spoke, or in an incorrect sentence formation within their writing passages. However, the occurrence of frequent common errors would shift Rose's routine behavior and tempt her to re-plan her next day's lesson in order to address her perceived student knowledge gap related to grammar. Actually, Rose's perception of her students' lack of grammar knowledge is one of the criteria that prompted her to re-plan her next day's lesson. Below I will expand on this issue within the sub-theme, *The Need to Address Grammar Gaps*.

The Need to Address Grammar Gaps

Rose chose to attend to grammar during editing student lead sentences for their writing projects. Generally, the students were writing their lead sentences on Google docs, which allowed Rose and the students to see each other's papers. By displaying student writings onto the white board through the overhead projector, Rose and the students were able analyze each sentence. Below is one of the lesson segments that shows how Rose attended to grammar during revising student lead sentences that they wrote to describe their zoo experiences (January 11, 2013):

Student 1 wrote, "People pushing each other trying to get a spot for themselves to get food." And Rose responded to this sentence as:

Rose: We want a verb in here, so people *were* pushing each other, ok, trying to get a spot for themselves to get food.

Student 2 wrote, “Kids swarming in the line to get tickets.”

Rose: What do we need in this sentence?

Another St: Verb.

R: What verb could you use?

The same St: Were

Rose realized that out of twelve students, six wrote sentences that were missing appropriate verbs. She thought that she needed to prepare a worksheet that covered auxiliary verbs. This thinking reveals the shift in Rose’s decision regarding re-planning her next day lesson. Instead of focusing on the descriptive writing strategies for the whole lesson, she decided to include grammar practice exercises as well in order to fill in her students’ grammar gaps. She chose to prepare a small worksheet that focused on the grammar structure that the students were struggling with the previous day. However, even after this mini-lesson, Rose detected that many of the students were still missing verbs in their sentences or making other grammatical errors in their writing assignments. This realization was an important moment because it changed Rose’s thinking around when and how to teach grammar, which will be explored below within the sub-theme, *The Need to Teach Grammar on a Daily Basis*.

The Need to Teach Grammar on a Daily Basis

Rose’s decision to practice on language-focused exercises on a daily basis speaks to her critical judgment side as a teacher. As a result of her better understanding of the points that her students needed to improve on, she decided to alter her way of routine teaching. “I realized that it was not enough”, she expressed (January 13, 2013). What she meant was she became conscious of the fact that the correction at the moment an error

occurred during editing, and mini-lessons that focused on certain grammar points were not enough. She felt she needed to do something to ameliorate student awareness regarding the language use. For that reason, she decided to use language review activities as warm-up sessions on a daily basis.

I am grappling with how to do some specific grammar in there because I see in their sentence writing, the majority of them are having difficulty writing complete sentences and they aren't seeing their errors. Even when they are working with the partner, the partner is not seeing the errors, so I wanted something sequential and systematic. The only material that I have at my disposal right now is my *Daily Language Review*. I thought at least if I have a book, I have a trail of what I have covered and what I need to cover again (February 6, 2013).

Rose thought that following the *Daily Language Review* on a daily basis would enable her to focus on grammar related issues sequentially. The *Daily Language Review* consisted of exercises such as, finding mistakes, correcting mistakes (grammar, spelling, punctuation or spelling) in sentences, and/or combining sentences. Since the book heavily focused on a variety of language skills, Rose thought that the use of this book would help her not leave anything out that pertained to necessary grammar knowledge. More importantly, she aimed to use the student outcome that she would get from those exercises to address individual student gaps. She expressed her target as:

It [Daily Language Review] also kind of help me see which specific kids have a skill that is deficit and so then I am kind of watching for that in their writing and to see if they are kind of getting it, to give more individualized practice (February 7, 2013).

I will explore how she fulfilled each student's individual needs by basing her instruction on the outcome of these warm-up sessions in the coming sections. I now would like to discuss Rose's thinking around the use of FFI options during these warm-up sessions.

Explicit Teaching Options. The realization of her students' grammar errors in their language production prompted Rose towards using explicit teaching strategies. She thought that her students would benefit more from direct instruction on the target grammar feature. Based on this belief, Rose chose to refer to the grammatical rule of the target grammar feature that they were working on, and to give as much explicit information as possible in an attempt to raise students' awareness regarding the feature grammar point. In addition, Rose believed that the examination of a sentence by pinpointing the correct and the incorrect use would raise student consciousness. Below is an example that shows how Rose applied her thinking to her teaching practice while they were studying the sentence "does you got any puppys for pets".

Rose: Why do we not use *does* and *you*?

Student 1: because *does* it for like *I, he or she*.

R: Does I, I does? I does the dishes. (The students laughed)

St 2: I do the dishes.

R: So, it isn't *I*.

St 3: Or *you*.

R: Which pronouns use *does*?

St 3: He

R: She does... he does...

St 4: They does...

R: They does? (Some students laughed)...It does.

R: He, she, it. Are those singular or plural?

Sts: Singular.

R: What other pronouns would you use with *do*?

St 5: We

R: We do. We do our homework every night.

St 6: They.

R: They do. Us do?

Sts: No.

R: Does that make sense? So, this should be (referring to the sentence) Do you got?... (stresses *got*)

St 4: Do you have?

R: Do you have? Again *it*, *she*, or *he*. Do they use *got* or *have*?

St 4: Has

R: It has, she has, or she has. You, I, we, they ...got?

St 4: They have.

R: They have. So, that sentence would be, *Do you have any puppies or pets?*

As seen from the segment above, Rose thought that working on a sample sentence as a whole class with direct instruction would reinforce student understanding. In addition, she would be able to address more than one grammar feature such as, the use of *do/does* and *have/has* with appropriate pronouns. As seen above, one of her strategies involved using erroneous form, such as *they does*. She said her purpose was to help her students

realize the correct uses of *do/does* or *have/has* by giving the students the improper uses of *do/does* and *have/has*. With this kind of strategy she was hoping that “[the rules] would click”.

Rose would also seize these moments to test her student knowledge. She would first attempt to elicit the reason for the correct use of the target grammar item from the students. When she was not satisfied with the answers or would want to emphasize the point anyway, she provided detailed explanation about the usage of the grammar item that was being focused on. Many times she would prefer giving extra examples to strengthen student understanding. Rose contended that these structured practices increased student awareness; however, she was much more concerned with helping her students transfer the explicit knowledge into their implicit use. Below, I will touch upon this theme.

Prompting the Use of Target Grammar Points

Rose was also concerned with enabling her students to use the target grammar in their writing projects. As I previously pointed out, Rose’s main concern was to improve her students’ writing abilities by using the correct format appropriate to the writing genre that they were focusing on. However, after discovering grammar related gaps in her students’ sentences, she preferred to address grammar related issues on a daily basis as warm-up practices. Even though these practice sessions were in deductive fashion and not connected to the topic that was under their current study, Rose attempted to prompt her students to use the recently focused grammar feature in their writing projects. For example, the objective of one of the lessons was how to write a persuasive business letter. After the introduction of the format that the students should follow- stating the position,

proving the points, and asking the reader to take action- Rose started teaching adverbs. After providing explanation about why and where the adverbs were being used in a sentence, she asked her students to work on finding the adverbs in a sentence from the practice sheet that she had prepared. At the end of the practice session, Rose asked her students to think about their persuasive business letter and asked them to write at least one sentence related to their position which included an adverb.

As shown in my point above, Rose tried to connect the target grammar feature with the current writing genre in an attempt to make the target grammar point as meaningful as possible, by encouraging her students to use it to build their arguments in their actual letters. Raising student consciousness and enabling the use of structured input in student writing were not the only factors that shaped Rose's decision-making process. Student needs were also among the elements that shifted Rose's thinking. In the ensuing sections, I will expand on these factors within the main theme *Student as Center of Teacher Thinking*.

Student as Center of Teacher Thinking

Studies of teacher expertise revealed the impact of students' needs in the teacher decision-making process. Similarly, in this study, the teachers' sense of what works and what does not work was highly contingent upon teachers' judgment of their students. The teachers in this study depicted the continuous thought of student needs in their thinking and practice. Below I will expand on this issue under three sub-headings, *Reasoning With Students*, *Encouraging Peer-to-Peer Interaction* and *Attending to Individual Students*.

Reasoning With Students

One main characteristic of the grammar teaching expertise that stood out

strongly was how Rose believed in the importance of providing reasons behind the usage of grammar items. She provided these reasons innumerable times during the time span I was observing, and they mostly took place right after addressing the target grammar feature. Within these explanations she tried to provide the students with reasons of why the things that they were studying are important in their school life, and thereafter in a sensible way. While expanding on why it was important for them to use proper English, Rose emphasized that they needed this knowledge to prove that they had a good grasp of the English language, and furthermore, that it was a crucial skill needed in order to attend a “good college.” In fact, attending a “good college” and “looking smart” were her constant reminders to her students as reasons to use the English language properly. For example, one day they were working on finding mistakes and correcting sentences. One of the sentences was “does you got any puppies for pet”. As soon as the students heard this sentence they started to laugh, but Rose told them that she had heard native English speakers speak this way and her explanation followed as below:

Now, if this is the way people speak in the neighborhood, that's all right.

Remember, if you want to speak in a job, you want to speak in college, trying to get a grant to get to college, so that your college is all paid for, if you write this sentence there goes your scholarship, there goes any money anybody wants to award you to further your education, cause they are gonna say, “Oh my, they need to go back to elementary school.” So, remember your audience when you are speaking, when it is appropriate, which is always to speak in correct grammar, remember how that looks, ok? (February 12, 2013)

Looking at the segment above, Rose frequently addressed the importance of the correct

use of language for her students' further education in life. Among her reasons, she often told her students that it was the "school language" that they needed in order to show their qualification. "It was the school language that they [students] would encounter on the tests", she said in an interview (February 14, 2013). For example, one of the students was asked to correct the sentence, "kim told mariam put your homework in the green basket." The student said, "Capitalize K". When Rose asked for the reason, the student's reasoning was that it was a name. Rose replied, "We will say it is a proper noun, means a name, but school language is proper noun, cause we are gonna see that ontest thing we start using that vocabulary instead of saying we are capitalizing it because it is a name, we are gonna say we are capitalizing it because it is a PROPER NOUN (stresses) (January 18, 2013)."

Rose would also associate "the school language" with the formal setting. She told her students that they needed to be able to differentiate between the school language and the street language and they needed to be aware of this distinction both in their oral and written language. The opportunity to address this issue occurred with the use of "gonna" in one of the practice sentences. Rose said, "We are talking the school language, we are not at the neighborhood, not with friends, we might use this word, but it really is not a proper English word (February 7, 2013)" She went on stressing that the students needed to be conscious of the audience that they were addressing to and in this case the audience was formal so the students needed to avoid using "gonna". She added, "...it might be a language of really kind of relaxed conversation, but remember we are doing formal language, our audience is formal language" (February 7, 2013).

The discussion above points to Rose's consideration of the students' perspective

regarding the target grammar features. She was not only interested in the provision of the grammar knowledge, but also providing the reasons behind knowing them. By this manner, she was hoping that her students would be more attentive both in their writing and speaking. Aside from enabling students to see the rationale for studying grammar, there was one point that is also worthy of further exploration: the value of student interaction while teaching and learning grammar. The effort to create opportunities for peer-to-peer work during each grammar activity was evident in Rose's thinking. She was prompting her students to interact with each other during warm-ups or after each writing assignment, which will be elaborated on further below.

Encouraging Peer-to-Peer Interaction

Being cognizant of the power of peer interaction in student learning, Rose encouraged student talk within grammar focused activities. She noticed that students had their own way of explaining the recently learned information to their peers, which was more attuned to their own understanding levels. "They [students] have their own language", she said (December 12, 2013). In one of the interviews, she discussed her views on peer teaching as, "I go off of the ELL checklist, when I am doing lesson plans and see which students are strong in which skills, I pair them together because I know that one student might have strong skill where the other is working on it and so using peer modeling is an additional support I use" (December 18, 2012).

The reflection of Rose's thinking regarding peer-talk occurred after each *Daily Language Review* practice. She would ask students to talk to their table partners about what they had learned recently. For example, they were working on sentence corrections and the sentences were (February 13, 2013):

1. todays weather is gonna be sunny and hot announced the meteorologist.
2. harry potter cried mary are the scariest movie ive ever seen
3. antonio gots a copy of culler student handbook in Spanish

While correcting these sentences, Rose had the opportunity to pinpoint the common and the proper nouns, capitalization, punctuation and the correct use of a verb. She asked her students to share their own understanding with their peers in their groups. Additionally, she would ask each group to share their learning with the whole class. For, she was aware that each group would vary in their noticing and answers. The students' answers included learning proper nouns, replacing words, and using punctuation correctly. Rose thought that having the students share their answers would let them see each other's points and learn from them as well.

Rose's encouragement of student talk took place before starting *Daily Language Review* practice as well. At those times, Rose would refresh her students' memory about the target grammar point first, and ask them to share their learning with their group members before they started working on the exercises. For example, on one of the days the target of the Daily Language Review practice was using adverbs in a sentence. Before analyzing the sentences, Rose reminded the students what adverbs were and why they were used. Then, she asked her students to tell each other what adverbs were. The students shared with their partners that adverbs answered the question of how and helped the verb. After sharing what they learned about the adverbs with their partners, the students started to work on exercises, which were about finding the adverb in a sentence.

Seeing the positive influence of the student talk within grammar related activities, Rose tried to reinforce it during computer editing sessions as well. She said, "I

want them to communicate via this way which is really their world now. They communicate so much through text and Facebook and everything, I want them to be able to communicate to somebody in writing about what they are doing” (January 16, 2013). By editing each other’s papers, students had the opportunity to correct their mistakes, and make suggestions to improve their sentence structures. They did not have to apply what their peers suggested; however, it helped them rationalize what they were doing on their papers. Although, Rose did admit that she had not seen as much grammar related correction in their computer editing and that she was still continuing to encourage her students to be able to see and correct their mistakes in their sentences.

In addition to fostering peer-to-peer help and communication, another characteristic of Rose’s thinking was creating time to work with individual students.

Attending to Individual Students

Rose was inclined to work with individual students, particularly with the ones who were weak in their language skills compared to the rest of the students. Having twelve students allowed Rose to work with an individual student that needed extra help pretty often. For example, by the time I started my observation, it was the third quarter and Rose had two new students. She preferred to work with these two most of the time in order to help them catch up with the rest of the students. There was one student in particular, Alia, who came from another state, and Rose found that her weakness related to writing and language skills was immense. After fully covering the day’s objectives with the whole class, Rose would pull Alia to a corner table and work with her to fortify her understanding about the latest teaching she had done. For example, on the day (January 7, 2013) Rose addressed adverbs and the use of adverbs in sentence structures,

the students who were finished with their business letters were asked to share them with partners, and the ones who had not finished their letters yet were asked to continue on their writing. In the meantime, Rose started to work with Alia about the placement of adverbs, and helped her create the outline for her business letter. Initially, Rose helped Alia identify the differences between an adverb, a verb and a noun by writing on a paper, “An adverb answers the question *how*? And a verb is action like make, walk and play. A noun is a person, place, thing or an idea.” With this one-on-one study, initially, Rose targeted increasing Alia’s understanding of adverbs and helped her form sentences that included adverbs, which she could use in her business letter.

Rose’s attention to individual students during class time involved providing comments, ideas or suggestions while walking around and scanning her students writings, or when students asked her to. Additionally, I witnessed that Rose would invite the students that she thought would need extra assistance into her classroom during lunchtime. Rose would go over the misunderstood points with the students while they were having their lunch at the same time.

Although Rose gave her best efforts to address grammar concepts, either by warm-up activities or during writing projects, she still had some concerns about the grammar teaching sessions, which I will discuss below.

The Dilemmas That Rose Faces

Rose mentioned a couple of dilemmas she faced with regards to the knowledge and teaching of grammar. Her initial concern related to the *Daily Language Review* book, which I will address below.

How to Integrate Explicit Grammar Knowledge With the Target Writing

Rose was using the grammar related activities from the *Daily Language Review* book on a daily basis; yet, she was worried about how to integrate them with the target writing projects. She said that the *Daily Language Review* book was covering multiple concepts very quickly, usually with one or two examples. The more she used this book, the more familiar she became with it, and it was helping her get more ideas on how to use the grammar lessons efficiently in her class. She said that the activities from the book also allowed her to determine what skills were weak or missing in her students' language knowledge.

Even if she found the book beneficial, it became a challenge for her to balance “out of context” practices in the book with her writing objectives. In addition, she was also worried whether her use of segregated grammar teaching was effective. “With grammar in ELL because I teach in isolation, research says teaching in isolation is not the best way to do, how do I integrate it with their writing piece”, she said (February 15, 2013). She was struggling to find additional material to expand the lessons on concepts that she thought her students needed more of. She also mentioned her concern about not wanting to hold other students back while re-teaching to those students who still needed more lessons to completely understand some of the grammar issues.

In addition to the dilemma above, Rose was also concerned with evaluating student progress in grammar knowledge adequately. Below I will touch on this point.

How to Assess Student Grammar Knowledge Properly

Rose struggled with assessments as well. She questioned herself and me about how to formally assess the newly learned grammar points and how to authentically

manage it through student writing pieces. “It is hard to measure where there is progress, it is hard to say that they can specifically do this skill because the only really way to test is in isolation and for me to know that they have this skill is to be able to see it in pieces of their own writing”, she said (December 18, 2012). She added that her mind was constantly busy with the questions, “Are the students transferring knowledge learned into actual writing pieces?” or “Does the use of peer partners in groups on the computer help to transfer skills” (February 15, 2013). Even though she had seen and heard that her students’ re-teaching to peers were effective, she admitted that she had not seen it as much during the computer editing. On the other hand, she told me that most of the time she was able to recognize when her students were not grasping the concept she taught as seen through their homework, or by watching them in class.

She was trying to minimize students’ knowledge gap by covering the lesson once again with the use of additional examples in PowerPoint format, by talking to her students over lunch, by pinpointing what they understood and what they were missing, or by trying to go over the lesson one-on-one. While she was aware of the fact that these strategies worked to some degree, she added that what she really needed was a curriculum that had a scope and sequence to it. She was yearning to construct a curriculum that showed what to cover during each quarter regarding writing genres and the grammar features that went along with the target genres. She was discouraged and frustrated by the lack of a finely designed curriculum. “We do not know where we are going, where we are starting, where we are ending up except by looking at a rubric which is just an assessment piece, and it is not curriculum”, she said (December 18, 2012).

By expressing her concerns, Rose essentially advocated the need for a curriculum

that was developed with the students' skills and interests in mind, even for teachers with many years of experience. Having a solid curriculum, she thought, would help guide teachers in adjusting their approaches according to their understanding of their student's knowledge, skills, and interests.

So far, I expanded on the display of Rose's expertise pertaining to form-focused instruction. In the ensuing section, I will discuss Rose's students' perspectives of the impact of teacher choices of FFI options on their learning. Following the student perceptions, I will provide the match and mismatch between Rose's and her students' perspectives.

Rose's Students' Perceptions

To understand student perceptions, I used surveys and interviews. Before I conducted my surveys with the students (see Appendix I), I wanted to do initial observations until I got familiar with the students and their teacher's style of teaching. After I was content enough with my knowledge about the classroom environment, I aimed at picking two different lessons, which were representative of the teacher's grammar based teachings. I gave each survey right at the of the class period. In addition to surveys, I talked to the students in person at the end of class to understand more about their thinking regarding the latest grammar lesson. However, both the surveys and the individual interviews did not provide as much about student thinking as I anticipated. Most of the responses were short or even not provided at all. I thought a whole class interview might encourage students to talk more. For that reason, I also used the last few minutes of the lessons for group interviews.

Below, I present Rose's students' thoughts with accompanying tables for the two questions which I got more responses to. Following the tables, I include students' answers to other questions on the survey.

To understand student thoughts about their own comprehension and the teacher's teaching style, I administered two surveys on different days. The first one was given on the day (February 6, 2013) when the target of the grammar teaching was on adverbs.

Table 4.3

Grammar-Teaching Episodes and Student Surveys

Focus of Grammar and the Date	Teacher Steps and Style	No of Students who understood very well	No of Students who understood somewhat	No of Students who did not understand so much
Adverbs (February 6, 2013)	*Situational grammar exercise *Direct instruction on the form and the function *Question & Answer Style	6	4	1
Single and plural pronouns; <i>do/does</i> and <i>Has/have</i> (February 12, 2013)	*Explicit instruction on the form *Providing erroneous use of "to be" verb	9	2	-

Rose chose to concentrate on adverbs by using a worksheet that consisted of self-prepared sentences, which targeted the identification of the adverbs. She started the lesson by questioning the students to elicit answers regarding the function and the form of

adverbs in a sentence. For example, the first target sentence was, “We drove far to find the best hamburger”. Below is the segment that shows how the lesson proceeded,

Rose: What’s an adverb?

Student 1: It helps, adds to the verb.

R: It answers the question of what Pablo? Who, what, when, where, why or how?

(Pablo is silent.)

R: Answers to the question of *how*. What does the verb do? Move, right? Number one, which word is an adverb? (Raising her hand, meaning she is looking for hands)

St 2: Drove

R: Can I drive? Drive is past tense of drove. So, drive is not an adverb, it is a ... (acting as if she is behind the wheels)

St 1: verb.

R: Something that I do, does that make sense? Let's see. Is *we* an adverb?

Students: No.

R: What is *we*?

St 1: Pronoun.

R: A pronoun. It takes the place of a noun. Drove. Is it an adverb? No, it is a verb. Pronouns are he, she, it, they.

St 3: Far

R: Why?

St 3 mumbles.

R: Does *far* answer the question of *how*?

Students: Yeah.

R: Turn to your partner and tell what is an adverb!

As seen from the segment above, using a question and answer style by calling on students, Rose provided direct instruction on adverbs such as how they modify a verb and answer the question *how*? The rest of the lesson continued in the similar fashion as shown above. The students and Rose examined each sentence on the worksheet as a whole class by identifying adverbs and how they qualify the verb. Below is another small segment to exemplify the interaction between Rose and the students during a whole class study. The main reason I wanted to include this segment was to show how some students got confused when a sample sentence did not fit in the previously given general grammar rule,

Sentence: I had to quickly clean my room before my parents came home.

Rose: Find the verb, moving verb.

St1: Clean.

R: Is there a word that tells me how I cleaned?

Students: Yeah.

St2: Quickly.

R: Often times adverbs have -ly, not always. So, that's kind of a hint for you also.

In the questionnaire that was given at the end of this lesson (February 6, 2013), the students who selected “understood very well”, stated that teacher’s detailed instruction on adverbs, along with the sentence analysis strengthened their comprehension. However, the students, who chose the options “somewhat” and “not so much”, wrote that they were confused with the example, “We drove far to find the best hamburger.” As shown in

the segment above, as a rule of thumb, Rose told the students that adverbs were usually formed by adding *-ly*. In this example, the use of adverb *far* contradicted the general rule, and confused the students. In a follow-up whole-class interview, when I asked what really helped the students in their understanding considering the whole lesson, most of them found explicit instruction and identification of an adverb in a sentence as augmenting factors in their understanding. One student mentioned that she liked it when Rose circled the words that needed attention. Several students touched upon the influence of Rose's conversational style in their engagement during the study of adverbs.

The second survey was also given right after the end of the lesson (February 12, 2013), in which the first fifteen minutes was spared for *Daily Language Review* (DLR). The target of the DLR was general sentence correction. With the DLR exercises, Rose had the chance of highlighting pronouns, *have/has*, and *do/does not*. While they were correcting sentences, Rose provided direct instruction on singular and plural pronouns and the correct forms of *have/has* or *do/does* in a sentence. Similar to the first survey results, the students who chose the option "understood very well" provided teacher's explicit instruction as a reason for their clear understanding. One of the students wrote that his awareness increased when the teacher also provided the erroneous use of *do/does* in a sentence. What the student referred to in his comment during the instruction occurred as below:

R: Why do we not use *does* and *you*?

St 1: because *does* it for like *I, he or she*.

R: Does I, I does? I does the dishes. (The students laughed)

St 2: I do the dishes.

R: So, it isn't *I*.

The students who circled the choice “somewhat understood” did not provide any reasons for their choice. However, they added that fixing sentences helped their understanding.

In follow-up whole-class interviews after the lesson, I asked the students what they really liked and found helpful in their learning. The most common answers revolved around the warm-up practices. Almost all of the students found the provision of clear, concise explanations regarding the target grammar beneficial. Here are some of the answers they provided:

What is common and proper noun is more clear to me.

Correction and fixing helps me.

I found it helpful when she showed us when to use *do* and *doesn't*.

The teacher showed us the right ways and the wrong ways.

One of the students expressed that he enjoyed working in groups, which was followed by a whole class activity. He preferred group work because he felt more comfortable talking to his friends. He said that when they work with friends they could ask any questions they had much more freely, and they did not feel the pressure of “looking stupid” as they thought they would have felt if they had asked similar questions to their teachers in front of the rest of the class. While one student appreciated the teacher’s frequent repetition, another student valued teacher’s physical positioning in the classroom during instruction. She found herself more engaged when the teacher circulated around the room or stood next to them.

The Match and Mismatch Between Teacher and Student Perceptions

The data analysis exhibited that Rose’s decision-making around use of FFI options

closely matched with the student perceptions of the influence of the teacher teaching options in their learning. As pointed out within Rose's philosophy of grammar teaching earlier, Rose believed in connecting grammar with the immediate target context; yet, she was also aware that some of her students benefited from detailed, explicit instruction followed by structured input activities. Rose's student data show that students also found explicit instruction that involved related activities as helpful in their comprehension. The activities that included sentence correction, teacher frequent repetition of the correct form, circling or underlining the target grammar item, and teacher comparison of the correct and the incorrect form was among student perceptions of teacher teaching options that augmented their learning. Rose's thinking of explicit teaching involved all of these mentioned strategies. She revealed that showing the differences between target forms, and pointing them out either by circling or underlining during instruction increased student noticing. She also thought that the use of erroneous forms and comparing them was effective in drawing student attention to the target grammar point and humored the students. Teacher repetition was also one of the matching perspectives. Repetition is one of the most used teaching strategies as it helps in student recall of the target grammar point and eventually helps the target form extend into the long-term memory. Rose was aware of the power of repetition in learning and her students confirmed it as well.

One of the matching perspectives was related to the decision to use group or pair work in lessons. I elaborated on Rose's thinking around the use of pair and group work in her teachings within Rose's data analysis. She believed in the importance of creating opportunities for student interaction, for she thought that students learn when they work in collaboration. She mentioned that students had their own language and were able to

teach each other even better. Students' thinking of group or pair work was similar to Rose's, in addition students felt more comfortable and relaxed when working with their peers.

Student perceptions brought forward the impact of teacher physical positioning during the lesson. Specifically, one of the students mentioned that her attention increased when the teacher walked around the groups or stood next to them. Rose was also aware of this, and she found it as an effective strategy to keep her students attentive during teaching as well.

One other point I would like to discuss pertains to the student perceptions of the mastery of form. I asked the students what they thought about the teacher rationale for the target grammar features and how important the use of correct form in their language production was. All of the students were in agreement with their teacher's rationale that they needed to speak and write grammatically correct sentences in order to prove their English language accuracy. These students intended to pursue higher education; as a result they contended that display of a good command of English was essential, which was emphasized by their teachers continuously. The students pointed out their appreciation of their teacher and stated their awareness regarding the teacher's effort to meet their needs to improve their English. So far, I presented that Rose's consideration of her use of teaching options corresponds to her students' expectations closely. I will now move on to the discussion of Dan's teaching expertise for form-focused instruction.

Case Two: Dan

Site: Blue Moon High School

Blue Moon High School was one out of the two high schools in the district in which ELL services were being offered during the period of the study. According to the 2012-2013 Annual Statistical Handbook student population was 1,885- 450 students in ninth grade, 441 students in 10th grade, 479 students in 11th grade, and 515 in 12th grade. Out of 1,885 students, 116 students were attending the ELL Program. The number of ELL students differed from level to level, 18 in level one, 19 in level two, 23 in level three, 16 in level four and 40 in level five. The four most commonly spoken languages of these students were Arabic, Vietnamese, Spanish and, Krio respectively.

Background of the teacher

Dan graduated with an undergraduate degree in English in the early 1990s. He started his teaching career in the primary grades of elementary school. In the late 90s, while he was teaching first grade in the district of this study, there was a need for ELL teachers, and he decided to move to the ELL department. In addition to having been trained in Reading Recovery, Dan also had an endorsement in English as a Second Language, an Administrative Certificate to be a K-8 Principal and a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction, specializing in early childhood education. Having taught in every grade level (Kindergarten through 12th), the year of the study was his 25th year of teaching in the district. Dan had been working in the ELL department for ten years and this year was his fourth year in this high school. At the time of this research he was teaching reading classes to level three students.

Grammar Teaching Philosophy: Grammar as “Piecemeal”

Dan believed that grammar was not as important as comprehension in language teaching. “I don’t care so much about their [students’] grammar until it is important for their grammar to be something that somebody is going to evaluate”, he expressed (January 7, 2013). What he had seen was that most high school students who entered the public school education system in ninth grade in the U.S. started their education by missing out of nine years of instruction in English language. For that reason, Dan prioritized helping his students develop their comprehension skills along with their vocabulary. And when it comes to grammar, “We cannot make up eight or nine years of instruction in English that the students are missing” he said (January 7, 2013).

Considering the size of the English knowledge gap in his students, his rationale for covering grammar was to teach it in context as needed rather than in a consistent, pre-planned way. He showed his preference by saying, “We don’t teach grammar specifically as this is what this word is, we do a lot of that piecemeal as we come across situations in sentences that are on the board or something that we are reading or because of what questions that the students might have” (January 7, 2013).

Dan’s grammar teaching was tied to the district’s rubric checklist requirements, and the teacher guidance book of the book that he was using. There was not a set curriculum for ELL teachers to follow, and Dan was using the rubric checklist and the reading book, *Edge*, as a guidance to construct his lesson plans. The book was specifically designed for the proficiency level three. As mentioned before, *Edge* has seven units and each unit is divided into three clusters. Dan planned on studying one cluster per week. He also used the *Grammar and Writing Practice Book* as a

supplementary material for grammar practices that he planned on using in class.

The Description of the Classroom

There were eleven students (six boys and five girls) in the third level reading class that I was observing, and these students varied in their grade levels: one from ninth grade, three from tenth grade, four from eleventh grade and three were seniors. In addition, these students differed in their native language: five Arabic speakers, three Vietnamese speakers, two Spanish speakers and one Krio (Sierra Leone) speaker.

The seating arrangement of the class was traditional, nice straight rows facing the whiteboard and the teacher's table. Everyday, each student took his or her teacher-assigned seat. There was a projector placed in the middle of the room, which was used frequently.

The Format of the Reading Lesson

Dan was using *Edge* as his main textbook, which was specifically written for level three students. The book was the compilation of reading, vocabulary, and writing along with the recommended reading strategies that could be used by the students. The book had seven units and each unit was divided into three clusters. A small portion at the end of certain clusters was devoted to grammar practices. Additionally, he was consulting various grammar-based books in order to complement his grammar teaching objectives. Dan would always have the objectives written down on the board. If he planned on using different texts or sources, he would have the copies ready on each student's table. Below, I will describe what a typical lesson looks like to familiarize readers with Dan's daily classroom atmosphere.

A Typical Lesson

Each student, as they entered the room, would grab their Edge book that was placed on a table by the entrance door. After the bell rang, the lesson would start with Dan's introduction of what they would be doing for the day and for the following days of the week. The new unit would always start with the study of new vocabulary from the target reading text. Dan would use the projector to show the new set of vocabulary that he had created. He would talk about the definitions of each word and give examples to clarify the meanings while the students were taking notes. The initial vocabulary study of the new reading text would take up the whole class period. The following day, Dan would talk about the new vocabulary to refresh his students' memories. Before they started reading the text, Dan would discuss the book with the students specifically targeting the author and the pictures used in the book to give initial ideas about the story that they would be reading.

When it was time to read the story, Dan would call on students to read at least a paragraph. When each paragraph was complete they would stop to talk about what was being said, including the use of the new words. Dan would give more examples related to the content in an attempt to foster his students' understanding. He would often draw pictures or provide his real life experiences to clarify the meaning of the reading text or to define an unknown word. While the main target was to strengthen reading and reading strategies, Dan attended to grammar on particular occasions. He made his decisions based on the immediate reading text. He chose to teach grammar either before or after reading. There were also times when he would stop at a certain sentence during reading and introduce the target grammar point. For, the formation of that specific sentence, he

thought, would present an opportunity to address that specific grammar feature. In the following sections, I attempted to focus on those specific grammar-teaching occurrences by addressing Dan's consideration of grammar teaching based on various factors. In order to do that I also provided Table 4.4, which shows the themes and the subthemes.

Case Two Themes

The Influencing Criteria on Dan's Decision-Making

As previously mentioned, the immediate reading text and the teacher guidance book shaped Dan's decision-making regarding what grammar points to study. There were three main strategies he was inclined to use to address grammar related items. He covered them in a mini- lesson format either before starting a reading text, during reading a text or after they finished it.

Below I will expand on Dan's thinking with regard to connecting the target grammar feature with the target reading text.

Table 4.4

<i>Overall Themes for Dan</i>	
Theme Name	Sub-themes
The Influencing Criteria on Dan's Decision-Making	Connecting the Target Reading With the Target Grammar Feature Complementing the Target Reading Preparing for the Target Reading
Student as Center of Teacher Thinking	Reasoning with Students "It's All About Making Connections"
The Dilemmas That Dan Faces	Deciding on the Best Teaching Vocabulary to Assist Grammar Comprehension

Connecting the Target Reading With the Target Grammar Feature

One of the criteria that shaped Dan's thinking about grammar instruction related to his intention of alerting his students' consciousness regarding the target grammar point during the reading of the text. Dan would prefer implicit teaching options in order to enable his students to figure out the target grammar rule and its function themselves. His aim was to increase his students' noticing skills with regard to the target grammar, and allowing them to infer the rules from the sample sentences. For example, in one of the lessons, after calling on a student to read the first paragraph in the reading, Dan underlined certain words, which were also projected on the board as following: railing, edge, hero, bridge, river, treasure, guide. Then, Dan started asking questions such as, *What kind of a railing is it? What kind of an edge is it?* After several responses from the students like, *metal railing* and *cement edge*, he started asking about what the words, grammatically speaking, *railing*, *edge* and *bridge* were called.

Verb, adjective or adverb? A noun is...a person, a place or a thing. Verb is something doing or being. Adjectives, what do adjectives do? Describe nouns. Adverbs describe verbs. So, a railing is a...a bridge is a ...a river is a ...NOUN. River is a noun, what is *rushing*? It describes the noun. So, it is an adjective (February 5, 2013).

Dan explained that by underlining adjectives in the paragraph, he wanted to pull his students' attention to those specific words to enable them to figure out the usage and the function of those words. He was hoping to alert his students' minds and get them to do some thinking over the use and the functions of adjectives. By asking appropriate questions such as *What kind of a railing is it?*, Dan targeted on eliciting the right answer

and “hopefully had his students deduce the nouns and the adjectives” (February 5, 2013).

As seen above, Dan intended to activate his students’ thinking regarding the use of adjectives while they were reading the text. He was also concerned with ensuring student comprehension by elaborating on each paragraph while identifying the adjectives in the reading.

In addition to encouraging students to notice target grammar points, Dan believed in complementing student understanding of the target grammar point by providing a practice sheet taken from the *Grammar Writing and Practice Book*. The practice sheet and the way Dan used it reflected his belief in the influence of segregated and explicit instruction on the target grammar. For, the practice sheets mostly consisted of fill-in the blank type of questions such as using the appropriate adjective among many provided in a word bank. While choosing the best fitting adjective, Dan would keep on adding more points to stress and clarify the grammar feature that was under study. For example, after agreeing on the correct choice of adjective as a whole class for the sentence, “The boy said he wanted Drew’sjacket”, Dan added, “It (the adjective blue) gives you information, a specific information in your mind. Now, you know that it is a blue jacket” (February 7, 2013). He said that it was the right timing to help the students notice how the use of the adjectives alike helped them visualize what the author was talking about.

In fact, choosing the right time to start teaching grammar during reading was one of Dan’s main concerns in grammar instruction. The right timing would pull his students’ attention and prepare them for the target grammar. For example, Dan’s perception of the right timing to introduce a new grammar item occurred during a story called *Abuela*

invents the Zero. The story, which was about the author's grandma, was written from a personal perspective. As usual, students took turns reading paragraphs. Dan asked one of the students to stop after reading the sentence, "she walks around in my mother's big black coat looking ridiculous". In a follow-up interview (February 19, 2013), Dan told me that it was the right sentence to stop at to introduce the predicate adjectives, as it was newly introduced to students in this sentence. He said he wanted his students to be aware of the different use of adjectives in a sentence. He expanded more on his thinking by saying that that they had studied adjectives as preceding a noun, but he wanted his students to know that it would not always be the case just like in the sentence they stopped at. An adjective could follow the verb form of *to be*, too. Therefore, he planned on halting at that particular sentence to introduce the predicate adjectives. Dan thought that the students saw how a predicate adjective was being used in a real text, and they needed detailed information regarding why and where the predicate adjectives could be used. For that reason, to solidify the concept of predicate adjectives, Dan used a practice sheet that focused on the predicate adjectives in greater detail.

The teaching episodes above vividly depict Dan's way of thinking in addressing the target grammar features in an attempt to connect them with the target reading. It is my understanding that, both from the class observations and the interviews, Dan had a systematic method for determining how and when to delve into the grammar features that he targeted during the reading time. In addition, one of the prominent reasons that Dan leaned towards explicit teaching was his perception of student expectations. "Some of the students expect me to mention the parts of speech; not because I believed that it was necessary for them to know. The knowledge of the meaning of the words is more

important” (February 14, 2013).

Within this theme, I examined Dan’s way of thinking in his approaches to the teaching of grammar during reading a story. There were times when Dan also chose to study certain grammar items after finishing a story. Below, I will cover Dan’s rationale for grammar teaching after a story.

Complementing the Target Reading

In addition to Dan’s inclination to teaching grammar during readings, there were also times during which he allocated class time to work on certain grammar features after they finished reading. His aim was rather to complement the reading text. His reasoning for these after-story grammar episodes was based on two different factors, the first one being the recommendation of the teacher’s guide and, second, his perception of the student need. For example, in one of the units they read a personal narrative titled *Karate*. After talking about this particular reading text, they worked on summarizing the reading by focusing on who, what, when, where and why questions. Then, Dan asked students what it meant to compare things. He drew a Venn diagram on the board saying:

...that's really good at showing what's the same about doing two things, that's what we look at when we wanna compare things...looking at them side by side and seeing similarities. So, we have the word compare when we look at two things and that's what a diagram looks like...so comparative... the comparative of a word is to say the relationship of one thing to something else. For example, *tall* is used in the story (February 28, 2013).

Dan continued on talking about the comparative form of the adjective *tall* and gave some other adjectives as an example. Then, Dan introduced the term superlative, “you are

comparing three things, you are comparing the third to the other two, tall- taller - tallest. Comparative and superlative” (February 28, 2013).

The reason Dan decided to focus on the comparatives was based on the recommendation of the teacher’s guide. However, what was notable was that the book was not using the term “comparative.” Instead it was talking about the use of adjectives to compare people, places or things. Dan decided to cover both the comparatives and the superlatives by providing the linguistic terms. He said:

I did it because they are going to see that in ACT [American College Testing] or one of the questions could be, Is this a superlative form or a comparative form? That’s what I am thinking of when I see something like this, that’s kind of a big picture thing... because all I’m thinking about what they are gonna do when they see a comparative on a test or when they see –er at the end of a word. Are they gonna know that that’s a comparative or superlative? And I don’t know if they are ever gonna have it on a test, but I can see it could be on a test and they have got to know what comparative or superlative mean not just –er or –est (February 28, 2013).

As Dan stated above, his concern about what his students may encounter in a test, shaped his teaching pedagogy as well. While addressing the target grammar feature suggested in the teacher’s guide, he tried to cover it based on his perception of the kind of knowledge that his students might need. And this kind of knowledge involved not only the awareness of a grammar feature, but also the appropriate linguistic term.

Dan’s grammar teaching methodology was also evident before the reading text, which will be explored below.

Preparing for the Target Reading

Dan would also target certain grammar features in preparation for the immediate text. Sometimes, the unit content for a specific grammar skill would also be appropriate to address the deficiencies he detected in his students. Once a decision was made to address a particular grammar point, he preferred addressing the target grammar feature at the beginning of the new reading, and he would tie the grammar point in with the reading.

For example, the reading selection of one of the units was about the teenage brain and how it worked, and Dan thought this selection was a perfect opportunity to address indefinite pronouns due to the nature of the reading. In addition, he said he detected that his students needed explicit instruction to have a clear sense of proper indefinite pronoun use in texts. “I am going to talk about indefinite pronoun because when they are reading or writing about something, they aren't specific about who says this. They can say lots of people believe, or nobody” (March 19, 2013). Dan wanted his students not only to be knowledgeable, but also to be fully conscious of how to say what they want to say, or write by using pronouns appropriately.

Dan believed in activating student prior knowledge to enable the students to make meaningful connections between what they already knew and what was newly presented. For example, before going in depth with indefinite pronouns, Dan preferred to talk about subjects and predicates to refresh the students’ knowledge regarding basic sentence structures. He said, “subject and predicate is basic to writing a sentence. When reading a sentence you expect there to be a subject and a predicate” (March 19, 2013). Based on this judgment, Dan thought that the revision of the essentials of a good sentence, which has a subject and a verb, would prepare his students to see what difference the use of an

indefinite pronoun made to the meaning in a sentence.

As said above, Dan was inclined to combine the recently learned grammar features with the reading text. He said that the reading text would exemplify the recently studied grammar structures, and enhance student understanding. For example, after reading the text, he asked students to find the indefinite pronouns in the sentence:

Until recently, most brain experts thought that the brain stopped growing by the time a person was about 18 months old.

After the students identified *until* and *most* as indefinite pronouns, Dan asked about what was suggested with the use of these indefinite pronouns. After hearing a few responses from the students, he provided a detailed explanation:

Most is more than half. If you have 20 doctors that you check with how many of them have to agree with this statement? Would it be 12? Or upper? Yes. If they say, “The brain research from 1820 says....blah blah, that’s not recent. Would you like to do research from 1820 or 2012? If it is recent, you are gonna trust it, aren’t you? Recently is an important word, but it still is not exact, it is indefinite. When they say most of something you still get an idea, they are making a positive thing, they are making it a thing that you should accept. If it is recently that’s fine, you don’t need to know exactly, but it is good information. It’s happened, we got the research in the last few years and it is not old stuff (March 26, 2013).

As the segment above showed, Dan was trying to make sure that his students understood the indefinite pronouns when they read, and were able to form correct sentences when they wrote.

As I mentioned formerly, one of the criteria that prompted Dan to teach grammar

before the reading was based on the deficiencies he had seen in his students. As he was doing that, he always aimed to connect the target grammar study with the reading. For, he wanted his students to see what they focused on in an authentic context. For example, in students' writings he said he detected that they were not using appropriate conjunctions to connect their sentences. He concluded that it was mostly due to the student misunderstanding of the use of these conjunctions and the meanings that these conjunctions gave to the sentences. For that reason, in the unit, regarding a job application, he thought it would be a good opportunity to highlight the conjunctions and the compound sentences. Before reading the texts in the unit, Dan introduced the students to independent clauses and the most commonly used correlative conjunctions- but, and, or-, which are used to connect the independent clauses. By working on the handout he prepared, he talked about the use of these conjunctions and the meanings. For example, one of the sentences they were working on was " Julia lives in a house. She just got a job in a different state". Between the choices *and* and *but*, Dan told them that *but* would fit in this sentence because those two independent clauses were different and they were not supporting each other. "You use *but* to join different ideas" he said (April 11. 2013). After finishing the practice sentences, they started reading the texts in the unit. While reading, as was his usual manner, Dan referred back to the conjunctions used in the text and the meanings they gave to the sentences. Dan found it essential to encourage his students to make the connection between a learned rule and its use in a text, so that the knowledge would remain firm. Dan provided his rationale for directing his students' attention to the conjunctions during reading as:

When they read it [the text], I think they need to realize that these things with *and*, *or* in the middle, the message from that sentence is that they are both saying the same kind of message and that's why you can connect it with *and*, if you are saying something, the opposite or negative, different from that, then use *but*, and there are sentences in the rest of the material that we are reading something says *but*, so pointing out those examples in reading, connects reading to writing and writing to reading and you are not just learning to write it that way, but you are learning to understand it better that way when you read it and you see these things done, too (April 11, 2013).

Dan's words above indicate his preference for connecting the recently learned grammar skill with the immediate context to exemplify the natural uses of those previously studied grammar items in real contexts. This way it would help the students make genuine connections between what they learned and how they were being used authentically.

Up to this point, I examined Dan's way of thinking around FFI teaching options and materials in order to attend to grammar features during his reading class. While attending to grammar, one of Dan's characteristics was to reason with his students for every grammar feature he planned on teaching. It was essential for him that his students knew and understood his reasons behind what he was teaching. In the following sections, I will further look into this theme within the theme, *Student as Center of Teacher Thinking*.

Student as Center of Teacher Thinking

The students' needs were on the forefront of Dan's decision-making regarding grammar teaching. His efforts to find ways to increase his student understanding

regarding the target grammar feature revealed how it was important for him to connect with his students. In this section, I will present how the impact of student factor reveals in Dan's thinking under two sub-themes, *Reasoning With Students* and "*It's All About Making Connections*".

Reasoning With Students

Dan thought that it was important for students to know his motives behind what he was teaching. He believed that informing students about the rationale of the grammar items that he was teaching would increase their awareness and attention. In almost all of his teaching sessions, Dan would provide explanations for what he was doing along with why it was important for his students to be conscious of what they were learning. He also mentioned the importance of being able to use them correctly in their language production. For example, at the beginning of one of the units he told his students that while they were reading the text, *Jump Away*, they would also be studying the adjectives because the unit was designed around the use and the function of adjectives. Dan stressed that it was necessary for the students to use adjectives in their writing and speech correctly and meaningfully. He said:

We are trying to make you use adjectives. That is an effort you need to consciously think of when you are writing tomorrow and next week. You need to add these many adjectives as you can. I don't want to have ten adjectives for every single noun I have, I can use adjectives wherever. On your paper and on the things that you write and understanding them when you see them in a sentence is what I want (February 19, 2013).

In addition to raising consciousness about the use of adjectives by providing

explanations, Dan also wanted his students to be aware of why it was important for them to know the linguistic terminology used to define different types of adjectives. “You might have it on an English test, or reading test or a multiple choice test, ACT or something, might ask for the superlative of a word. You need to know the word superlative. You need to know what comparative means” (February 28, 2013).

Another concrete example that shows Dan’s provisions of reasons for what he was focusing on was related to his teaching of subjects and predicates. He told his students that he noticed in their previous summary writings, some of them did not correctly put sentences together, and for that reason he wanted to touch on subjects and predicates. He said he wanted to make sure that the students knew how to write sentences in the best way possible. Dan provided his rationale as:

What makes a sentence good? When you read a sentence out of the book what makes that a good sentence or when you write a sentence down in a personal narrative writing sample. I am saying we are looking at subject and predicate of a sentence. Why are those things important? What is the purpose of a sentence? You have to say something that other people can understand. And what we are saying is including a subject and a verb is a good thing to do to communicate, to give information to others. Does that make sense? How can you figure why is a subject and a predicate good to have it in a sentence? I want you to get all the information you can out of the sentences you read and I want you to include all the information you can in the sentences you write (March 21, 2013).

Writing a grammatically correct sentence or understanding the message conveyed in a reading text were the two main reasons that stood out in Dan’s mind. “We want the

students to be able to use the grammar points we teach correctly. We want them to be able to put the right word in the right sentence to mean the right thing. We want them to understand what they are reading as well” (March 26, 2013).

So far, I described the instances that showed the importance that Dan put on providing reasons to his students for what he chose to teach. In the following section, I would like to talk about other factor that shaped Dan’s style regarding grammar teaching.

“It is All About Making Connections”

It was apparent that grammar was a lower priority for Dan in language teaching. Enabling comprehension and production skills in his students were more important. However, he believed that he needed to teach certain grammar items to assist his students’ language learning. During the times he was teaching grammar, there were certain recognizable patterns in his teaching. Dan was an extremely verbal teacher. In general, Dan took up almost the entire class time talking. He was aware of this and saw it as a characteristic distinguishing him from the other ELL teachers at school. “I am very verbal, I do a lot of talking and I think it is a benefit for the students, asking questions and making connections, in ELL everything is about making connection” (December 12, 2013).

Dan considered his verballity during teaching helpful in making connections with his students. To exemplify Dan’s verballity, I will give a few examples. One of the examples relates to the times of the vocabulary study. While introducing the target grammar features or while working on the practice sheets, Dan needed to do a lot of defining of the vocabulary. In order to strengthen students’ understanding of the target grammar item, Dan would draw pictures or trace back to personal experiences to tie back

to the unknown vocabulary words. For example, while practicing the subjects and predicates, one of the sentences said, “Our town has a curfew”. Dan asked if the students knew the meaning of *curfew*. When he got a negative response, he explained it as:

You have to be in your house by 10pm tonight. Your parents say you have to be home by a certain time. It is the last time that you can be out by yourself. Why do they give curfews? Why do the police have curfews? Did you see that somebody stole an atm machine the other day? They took a forklift kind of a thing and took the atm machine away from the bank and put it in the back of a truck (March 21, 2013).

After giving this definition, Dan wanted his students to think about their own experiences and opinions about curfews. “Because this whole unit what we are talking about for the next four weeks are about your opinion and you arguing for that opinion, being persuasive in your speech, that's the debate part, and persuasive writing, trying to persuade somebody to go along with you. As we are writing these think about what your opinion is about a curfew?”, he added (March 21, 2013). After providing this reason, Dan added some more realistic examples that he experienced related to the word *curfew*:

My mom, one time I came home late, 1:30 or 2:00 and my mother was really angry. I have never been given a curfew, so curfew doesn't always have to be a citywide kind of thing, your family can say like when you are tenth grade you make sure you are home by ten. Do you think they get mad because they really are worried about you? My mom was worried about me (March 21, 2013).

Dan was making an effort to link what he was teaching with the other school subject areas as well. He was hoping that his students’ comprehension would be solid if

they could connect their learned language with other subject areas. Dan tried to provide examples related to other school subjects such as civics, science and many more. Below is an example during which Dan related one of the grammar definitions to a science term. While introducing conjunctions and compound sentences, Dan asked the students what *compound* meant. Then, he continued as, “ Many of you had science club. You must have talked about compounds. In science, compound is when you mix two things together. So, a compound sentence is two or more, different parts. And, but, or” (April 11, 2013).

Dan also believed in using well-known stories to build a connection with what he was teaching to engage his students and help them remember easily. One example was his use of Goldilocks to explain the run-on sentences:

Do you know who Goldilocks is? A girl with blond and curly hair. She lives in the forest. She went out for a walk and she came upon this house and three bears lived there. She goes into the house. These three bears had oatmeal on the table. What was wrong with the first one she ate? Too hot, too cold, just right. She sat on the chairs. First one was too small, too big, just right. You go the extremes and then the one is just right. And that’s the point of this. So, what we are looking for here is sentences that are just right. Sentences that are not too long or too short. Sentences that are just right. And the ones that are too long are usually called run-on sentences (April 18, 2013).

The students enjoyed this introduction so much that, some yelled, “Yeah, yeah I know this story” (April 18, 2013) to express their joy. Moreover, several students reminded Dan that he forgot *the bed part*, “The bed is too. The bed is too hard, too soft or just

right”(April 18, 2013). While Dan was attracting his students’ attention with this fun story, he was able to give his message about what run-on sentences were and what the right way of writing a fine sentence consisted of. Ultimately, using personal experiences, other subject areas, or popular stories to explain in detail what Dan was targeting seemed to help his students construct an understanding of the target concepts beyond definitions. As Dan said, “...in ELL, everything is about making connection” (December 12, 2013). As Dan tended to find ways to make the target grammar as meaningful as possible, there were times when he found himself in a dilemma. Below, I will talk about these situations.

The Dilemmas That Dan Faces

In the interviews, Dan pointed out a couple of dilemmas that impacted his decision-making process. One of them directly pertained to the teaching of grammar, whereas the other one related to his students’ knowledge of grammar. Below, I will talk about the place of students’ grammar knowledge in his decision-making.

Deciding on the Best

One of the dilemmas that Dan had been experiencing was related to the decision of moving students up to a higher level, even if they had not shown the level of proficiency in their performance. However, Dan expressed that he and other ELL teachers had to consider individual student needs that are critical and more important than the complete knowledge of grammar.

...the kids really want to move on. We have several people in this class that are still level two on paper, they are 19 or 20, they want to graduate. So, what we have done is, three levels two classes, we have taken them to level three even though they haven't made all the things that they should have to move to level

three... There are a lot of different stories for the kids and I don't know that certain grammar issues are going to keep some of them back if we are moving this student too quickly. Are they never going to pick those things up? I don't know, but because of who they are, the situation they are in, this is what we decide as best for them to move them on (January 7, 2013)

The state law allows students to stay in high school until the age of twenty-one and most of Dan's students were close to reaching the age and time limit to graduate. In an effort to help these students graduate on time, Dan and the other ELL teachers disregarded these students' observed proficiency levels and moved them up to a higher level, even if they did not show the expected proficiency. Dan was questioning himself if they were taking the right action. However, he thought that the situation made it right and certain grammar knowledge was not a big obstacle for Dan to prevent his students from graduating because he thought grammar was not the foremost important issue in ELL. Dan said, "ELL is not a mastery kind of class, it is developmental" (January 7, 2013). He added that those students were acquiring English language at a decent rate and they would continue to acquire it throughout their lives.

Dan's rationale was not surprising, for he pointed out from the beginning that the ability to communicate overrode grammar knowledge in importance. "Grammar is not the only way to say something that is completely understood. Communication, getting the idea, is the first we wanna work on", he emphasized (January 7, 2013). He tied communication skills to the vocabulary knowledge, which also was necessary before he attended to grammar teaching. Actually, this issue was another dilemma that Dan had to face.

Teaching Vocabulary to Assist Grammar Comprehension

The second dilemma was fostering students' vocabulary knowledge in order to make the target grammar comprehensible. Dan said that one of the major goals that the students had to achieve was acquiring adequate vocabulary to increase their understanding. He added that when they were studying a grammar structure or working on grammar related exercises, the number of unknown vocabulary prevented his students from understanding the target grammar structure. "...it makes it twice as hard for them. They are not learning the grammar until they understand the text, until they understand the meaning, until they have the meaning down for every word that's in the sentence that we are using", he expressed (January 7, 2013).

It was the situation that I also witnessed during my classroom observations. While they were working on practice sentences, the unknown words were preventing the students from focusing on the target grammar point. Dan had to stop and give the definition of the word, along with extra sentences that exemplified the usage of the word before they continued further. Dan could not think of any different way to address this situation, other than what he had been doing: providing definitions and extra examples.

Considering the two quandaries that Dan was going through, he tried to find solutions by examining the situations he was in. As a result, he based his actions on his students' needs, whether it was moving them to a higher level or covering the unknown words before a grammar practice. I think Dan's own words will best express his thoughts toward this issue. "That's just the kind of environment I find myself in the classroom... because of who they are, the situation they are in, this is what we decide as best for them to move them on" (January 7, 2013).

Within this section, I have delved into Dan's exhibition of his expertise regarding FFI. In the following section, I will present Dan's students' perceptions of the impact of the teacher's FFI teaching options on their learning.

Dan's Students' Perceptions

The first survey of Dan's students was given at the end of a lesson in which the focus was on adjectives (February 5, 2013). After Dan called on a student to read the first paragraph (given below), he followed an implicit approach to introduce adjectives. He underlined the nouns in the paragraph and started asking questions that encouraged students to see the relation between the adjectives and the nouns such as, "What is a railing? What kind of a railing is it?" Then, Dan read the paragraph again by omitting the adjectives that described the nouns and tried to elicit the function of the omitted adjectives. The paragraph was as follow (Unit 5 Fair Play; p. 358):

Fenny clung to the metal railing behind him. The cement ledge under him was hot on his bare feet. He looked at the river fifteen feet below and nodded. Easy enough, he thought. Not scary like in all those movies where the manly-man hero's waling across a rotting wooden bridge, way above a rushing river, in search of the ever-elusive treasure.

Later, Dan explained more about the function and the form by using a grammar practice sheet, which was taken from a *Grammar Writing Practice Book*. Dan explained once more that adjectives are used to describe people, places, or things and they preceded the nouns.

Table 4.5

<i>Grammar-Teaching Episodes and Student Survey</i>				
Focus of Grammar and the Date	Teaching Steps and Style	No of Students who understood “very well”	No of Students who understood “somewhat”	No of Students who did “not understand so much”
*Adjectives (February 5, 2013)	*Introduction to the reading text *Identification of adjectives in the text *Explanatory instruction on adjectives *Pre-planned grammar exercise	7	3	1
*Subjects and predicates (March 19, 2013)	* Detailed instruction on subjects and predicates *Why they need to know subjects and predicates * Working on exercises and elaborating on each sentence	7	-	2

He read the example, “The tough boy gave Drew a cold smile” from the sheet and talked about how “tough” and “cold” described the nouns “boy” and “smile”. Finally, they worked on the fill-in-the blank exercises, which was about completing a sentence with an adjective from the box and adding an adjective of choice to a sentence.

The majority of the students, who chose the option “understood very well”, provided that the teacher’s explicit instruction and the opportunity to practice on sentences helped them in their understanding. The students, who circled the choice

“understood somewhat”, wrote that forming their own sentences using adjectives would have helped them better in their command of adjectives. In follow-up whole-class interviews, students expressed that they appreciated the teacher’s frequent defining of vocabulary, for they did not have to grapple with the unknown words while focusing on grammar. However, students found the teacher’s constant talking as dull and tedious during grammar teaching episodes. Ramon added, “ He talks and talks and I feel like sleeping.” Following Ramon’s comment, Amy mentioned that they had group activities before and they enjoyed it. After bringing this up with me, she said she should also mention her interest in this to her teacher as well. When I asked the students if they benefited from studying adjectives separately or in combination with the reading text, some of them said that they found separate grammar exercises helpful in raising their awareness. However, combining adjective studies with the immediate reading text was also meaningful to them.

The second survey was given for the lesson in which the target grammar was on subjects and predicates (March 19, 2013). Dan engaged with this particular grammar feature with a grammar practice sheet as a preparation for the next unit. That is, the grammar activities were not directly connected to the target reading text. The coming reading text was about having an opinion and convincing other people by expressing your opinion in an effective way. For that reason, Dan, as he explained before the lesson started, planned on teaching subjects and predicates and move on indefinite pronouns in the next couple of days. He wanted to elaborate on subjects and predicates because he wanted his students to improve their language production by recognizing the importance

of subjects and predicates in order to speak and write a good sentence to express their opinions.

Initially, Dan provided information regarding subjects and predicates by giving sample examples such as, “A subject tells you who or what the sentence is about, a predicate tells something of the subject. The dog ran away. Who is this sentence about? The dog. There is the simple subject and what happened to it? It ran” (March 19, 2013). After explicitly talking about subjects and predicates, Dan asked his students to work on exercises. The practice sheet involved putting the words in the right order like, “the curfew/most of the students/don’t like”, and completing sentences such as “Teens who cause trouble.....”. While they were practicing on sentence formation, they also pinpointed the subjects and the predicates in each sentence. The students who chose the option “understood very well” stated that teacher’s step-by-step explanation and practicing on sentence formation helped aid their understanding. The two students who said they did “not understand very much” did not provide any reasons. Yet, when I asked them individually they stated that they were confused with the term *predicates* and stated that they did not really see why the verbs were being the most important part of predicates. They also added that the complication doubled when the teacher said that a sentence might have two subjects. During a whole class interview after the lesson, I asked students what really helped them understand the target grammar features considering the whole lesson. They said the teacher’s detailed instruction and practicing on exercises assisted their comprehension. Yet, the unknown vocabulary during those grammar studies was a hindrance in their understanding. However, they said their teacher was always

making sure that they knew all of the unknown words to eliminate possible misunderstanding.

The Match and Mismatch Between Teacher and Student Perceptions

The data clearly shows that the teacher thinking around use of FFI options and student perceptions of the influence of these options in their learning mostly match. As Dan previously noted he chose to attend to grammar in combination with the target reading text. In addition, he also preferred sparing time for grammar activities if/ when he saw deficiencies in his student grammar knowledge and they needed it for the target reading text. His grammar teaching sessions, as a preparation for the reading text or during reading text, involved direct and explicit provision of information regarding the target grammar feature. He completed his instruction by working on a structured grammar practice sheet as a whole class activity. During teaching Dan would also define unknown vocabulary in response to a student question or whenever he thought he needed to. The student data shows that the students found these teaching styles of Dan as beneficial in their comprehension. The students also stated that they found the combination of the study of target grammar point with the reading text as helpful. The student data exhibited that the students regarded teacher's step-by-step explanation, which followed practice exercises, as augmenting in their comprehension. However, one student mentioned that the practices that allowed students to form their own sentences with the target grammar feature would have been more constructive.

In sum, explicit instruction, structured input activities, and connecting the study of the target grammar with the reading text at hand were the major matching perceptions between the teacher and the students. Yet, there was one discrepancy between the teacher

and the student perceptions and it was related to the teacher talk. The majority of the class time consisted of Dan's talk. Dan was aware of this manner of his and considered it as a benefit for his students. He said, "...they [the students] understand that communication involves more complete answers or sentences to get the information across. I try to model it by speaking in complete sentences when I say something to them or ask them a question" (January 7, 2013). As seen from his statement, Dan saw his talk during class time as a resource for students. However, the students found the teacher's excessive talk dull and eventually they lost their interest and attention after some point during the lesson. Based on a student comment, students would like to have more opportunities created for them to interact within group works. Teacher talk has been a topic of discussion in literature with varying views. Yet, language teaching researchers were in consensus that the teachers needed to balance out their talk in the lessons and involve student interaction at appropriate times. As seen from the above discussion, the discrepancy between the teacher application of FFI theories and the student perceptions of these uses was not immense. In the following section, I will present the demonstration of Ellie's expertise pertaining to FFI, which was followed by the discussion of her students' perceptions.

Case Three: Ellie

Site: Light High School

Light High School was the other high school in which ELL services were being offered in the district of the study. According to the 2012-2013 Annual Statistical Handbook, the student population was 1,629- 394 students in ninth grade, 366 students in tenth grade, 353 students in eleventh grade, and 546 in twelfth grade. Out of 1,629

students, 200 students were attending to the ELL Program. The number of ELL students according to the levels were, 36 in level one, 57 in level two, 49 in level three, 39 in level four and 37 in level five. In the class that I was observing, there were 14 students, nine boys and five girls. The most common languages these students spoke were Arabic, Karenni, Vietnamese, Spanish, and Kurdish respectively.

Background of the Teacher

Ellie graduated from college in 2004 with a Spanish teaching degree. After teaching Spanish for eight years, she decided to get her MA in ELL. Ellie considered her Spanish language background helpful in connecting with her students and in teaching grammar. Her bilingualism enabled her to address certain grammar features more attuned to her students' first language background. She started teaching ELL since she got her MA degree and this was her second full year of teaching ELL. She taught proficiency levels one and three. This year she was assigned to teach levels one, two and three.

Grammar Teaching Philosophy: “*I would do spattered grammar*”

Ellie described her understanding of language teaching as “less grammar and more holistic” (January 4, 2013). She continued as:

...the thing is that with language, grammar will fix itself in time. The purpose of the language is to be able to communicate ideas, and you can do that and be grammatically incorrect, and that grammar will come with time.

Even though her main concern was not grammar, Ellie thought that grammar should still be taught for students to be accurate in their language production. Yet, “if a student communicates and portrays a meaning and there is some grammatical issues, that is not my huge concern, it is a minor issue” she added (January 4, 2013).

Ellie said she would prefer attending to grammar in the context of what they were studying. However, she thought certain features of grammar should be taught in a more explicit manner. By certain grammar features, she meant complex structures that were hard to grasp without detailed and clear explanation such as “irregular verbs” or “the present perfect tense” (January 4, 2013). In those occasions, she said, “I would do “spattered grammar for a couple of days, explain a lot of time. I take their own work and I type examples without names on it, and we just edit. So, it might be an editing portion or it might be individual words” (January 4, 2013). Within those “spattered grammar” activities, she said she would also attempt to use student work to teach the target grammar feature:

... I noticed that if I did it from something that is prepared, students were not engaged, but when you use their own writing, something that they produced, that’s when they really care...” (January 4, 2013).

As can be interpreted above, grammar knowledge was not Ellie’s first concern; however, she admitted that grammar could not be completely ignored either because the errors that occur in a sentence structure might completely affect the intended meaning. And that’s when the students needed specific and explicit instruction to have a clear understanding on the problematic grammar feature.

Below, I will talk about Ellie’s classroom and what her typical lesson looks like to familiarize the readers with Ellie’s daily class environment.

The Description of the Classroom

The classroom that I was observing consisted of 14 students, five girls and nine boys. The ethnic backgrounds of the students consisted of three Vietnamese, four Karen,

three Mexican, two Kurdish, and two Zomi. Four of the boys had just moved to level three and seven out of nine boys were categorized as academically low. Two of the girls who were from Iraq were lacking formal school experience; however, they were proficient in their verbal ability.

Even if the seats were placed in rows facing the white board and the teacher's desk, the seating arrangement frequently changed depending on Ellie's objectives for the day. Sometimes the students were seated in groups for activities or in a U-shape facing each other and the teacher to have a discussion or conversation.

The Format of the Reading Lesson

Ellie was using *Edge*, which was written for level three students, as a primary source. Actually, this book was the same book that Dan was using. *Edge* consisted of seven units and each unit had three clusters. Ellie planned on teaching one unit per quarter. Each cluster included a list of new vocabulary, literary analysis, characters, reading strategies, and a review. Sometimes, a small grammar portion was added at the end of each cluster. Ellie mentioned that most of the time she would not spend any time on the grammar practices given in the book; for, she found them too basic and easy for her students. I will explain in the ensuing sections what Ellie would prefer to do rather than studying the grammar features given in the book.

A Typical Lesson

Each student would grab his or her book situated on the bookshelf by the entrance door. As soon as the bell rang, Ellie would briefly describe what they would be doing for the day's lesson. After making sure that the students understood the day's objectives, Ellie would start her lesson.

Ellie generally began her new unit by helping students to integrate the new information into their existing knowledge. They would look at the pictures provided in the book and Ellie would try to connect the unit topic with the students' own experiences to help them make sense of the content. They would spend a couple of days studying vocabulary. Students would work on the definitions of the key terms, and make their own sentences using those new words. Ellie would ask the students to prepare a PowerPoint for their sentences by adding pictures that referred to the meaning of the new words. With these Power Point studies, Ellie's intension was to attend to the language form and meaning by analyzing students' sentences.

Finally, they would start reading the story. While reading the story, Ellie would stop at times that she found necessary and elaborate on the topic to further her students' understanding regarding the reading text. During and after reading the story, they would analyze and make inferences regarding the content. During my observations, I witnessed that Ellie's decisions around how and when to teach grammar depended on various occasions. As a result, her grammar teaching episodes occurred at different times: before reading, during reading or as a separate lesson. Below I will expand on Ellie's decision-making regarding grammar, including the factors that influenced her grammar instruction, under three main themes. Before elaborating on the themes, I provided Table 4.6 to assist the reading.

Case Three Themes

The Influencing Criteria on Ellie's Decision-Making

As previously mentioned, Ellie's thinking around when to concentrate on grammar depended on myriad reasons. These reasons could be tied to the reading text,

Ellie's perception of her student needs, or student knowledge. As a matter of fact, these reasons shape Ellie's cognition about when, how, and what to teach as a grammar point. In the coming sections below, I will discuss these occurrences.

Table 4.6

<i>Overall Themes for Ellie</i>	
Theme Names	Sub-Themes
The Influencing Criteria on Ellie's Decision-Making	Linking the Target Grammar With the Target Reading The Aim to Challenge Students Addressing Student Struggle
Student as Center of Teacher Thinking	Initiating Group Work According to Student First Language Creating Individual Studies
The Dilemmas That Ellie Faces	How to Balance Grammar Teaching Not Knowing Students' First Language

Linking the Target Grammar With the Target Reading

Many times Ellie decided on what grammar feature to focus on depending on the objectives of a reading text. Instead of attending to the target grammar feature separately, she would prefer pointing it out while reading a text. She believed in practicing grammar “in the context of what [they] are doing” (January 4, 2013). For example, the objectives of one of the reading texts, *The Bulk*, was making inferences and working on the points of view. Ellie thought that while working on the point of view, she could touch on the subject pronouns as well. After forming two different groups based on student preferences, Ellie asked them to interact with the text by answering the questions in the book. At first, Ellie asked what “point of view” meant. After defining it, she asked the students to find a pronoun that showed the article was written in the third-person point of view. When she could not get any responses, she asked who remembered what second

and first person point of views were. The group interaction went as followed

(February 29, 2013):

Ellie: Ok. What is first person?

Student 1: Character

Student 2: That guy in the story.

Student 3: The guy in the story who tells the story

Ellie: So, what words would he use?

Student 1: I

Student 2: He

Student 3: We

Student 4: My

Ellie: *Me* and may be *us*. All of these are gonna show that these are first person. A pronoun is a word that can take place of a name, pronoun is like who, ok.

What is second person? Your mom is yelling at you. She points her finger and says.....Ku, you!

Ellie: So, *You* or *your* .What would we say for third person? He, she, it, they, their, his hers, Right ?

It is evident the first strategy Ellie preferred using was attempting to elicit the right answer from her students. With the use of question and answer format, Ellie also tended to provide explicit information about the target grammar feature while adding to what students already knew. For example after introducing the pronouns as given in the lesson segment above, one student said that the name “Craig” would also show that the text was written in third person. Ellie expanded on this answer by providing explicit information:

Using a name is third person, too, but it is not a pronoun. Ok. So, I have *Craig*, *he* and *his* so far. Which one of those three is a pronoun? So, what is a noun? A noun is a person, place or thing. So, we are talking about which one of those? A person, right? A pronoun is a word that can take the noun away. So, what word can we use when we take Craig away?

One of Ellie's intentions during grammar teaching concerned with alerting students by weaving the target grammar point with the kind of text questions that they might face. For example, during studying the use of pronouns in the sentence, "'When I walked into the room, I wanted heads to turn", he says.', Ellie directed her students' attention to the quotation marks. She warned them not to immediately decide that it was written in the first person point of view:

This is how the writer incorporates Craig's thoughts. You guys have been practicing for NeSA and graduation, right? They ask you about first person, second person, and third person. So, when you are reading it don't automatically look and go, "Oh, I see *I* and think that's first person" because it is a quotation and the important part is *he says* (February, 29, 2013).

As seen within Ellie's explanation above, she also provided the strategy that her students needed to follow. Ellie did this rather impromptu. In an interview, Ellie mentioned that she and other ELL teachers work to ensure that their students pass the mandatory exams by monitoring and/or working individually if necessary. The teaching segment above showed that Ellie used opportunities to link her focus of topic with possible test questions to alert her students and be ready.

Up to now, I have illustrated how Ellie preferred addressing to grammar related issues in combination with the reading text. We saw that Ellie's thinking around how and when to attend to grammar varied according to the objectives of the reading text and its appropriateness to teach a certain grammar item; in Ellie's own words, "in the context of what [they] are doing" (January 4, 2013). Ellie preferred teaching grammar not only while reading, but also before the start of a reading text as well. As will be seen below, Ellie's decision about teaching grammar before a reading text is tied to a multitude of reasons.

The Aim to Challenge Students

One of the leading factors that determined Ellie's thinking pertaining to grammar teaching was based on her intention to challenge her students. She aimed to achieve this thinking by disregarding the grammar features that were recommended in the book; for, she found them too easy for her students. Instead, she preferred teaching another grammar point that would challenge and stimulate her students. For example, in one of the readings, the recommendation of the book was to teach forming past tense verbs by adding -ed. She thought that her students had already known what the regular past tense verbs were. Therefore, she decided to introduce the adjectives that might look like a regular verb. She knew that identifying adjectives that might also be used as a verb in a sentence would be a challenge for her students:

Many of them would say it is a verb when they see, say *packed*, in a sentence because it ended with an -ed. It can be a verb and it can be an adjective. This is something pretty new at level three and I don't think that they have studied it before. They [students] are very good at putting something in the past tense. Now,

we are going to see if they can use this as a verb and as an adjective (January 15, 2013).

While the idea of challenging students constituted Ellie's forethought in addressing grammar, she aspired to do it in combination with the target reading text. For example, to show the difference between the verb and adjective of the words that end in -ed, Ellie chose four words from the reading text - packed, smushed, defined, frustrated- that were used as adjectives in sentences. Her reasoning behind choosing these words was:

In their reading, those were the actual four that were used as either an adjective or a verb. So, working on these words they would be reinforcing the reading. Plus, *frustrated* was a very obvious word that they knew, it was not new to them. So, I wanted to have a word that they have seen before and typically when they see *frustrated* at a level three ELL level they are using it in the adjective form. They don't know how to use it in the verb form. So, I wanted to pick up a word that was so obvious to them as an adjective and look how it can become a verb because I do not think that they realize that most adjectives can become verbs. Then, I wanted to pick a couple new words like *smushed* was new to them, so that it increases the comprehension of the story when we are reading it. I wanted to mix hard, easy, familiar, unfamiliar (January 22, 2013).

Another example to show Ellie's way of challenging students related to the sounds regarding regular and irregular past tense verbs. Instead of studying the past tense structure as suggested in the book, Ellie wanted to cover a grammar point that is beyond their current level:

...they were being asked if they can only add -ed to put a verb in the past tense. That is something that they already know. So, I was afraid they would say, “Ahh we are doing this again.” So, I tried to step it up and I thought of their pronunciation because that is something that they struggle when they read out loud, so my plan was to take that same idea, how can I tweak a little, to make it a little high interest (January 22, 2013).

For this activity, Ellie had prepared a worksheet that asked students to identify the verbs that ended in *t*, *d*, and *ed* sounds for each page in the story. She read the first page by stressing the verbs more clearly to help her students hear the sounds that each word made. The students were given a few minutes to work on their own. Then, as a whole class, they gave the answers for each sound such as, *stepped* ends in a *t* sound, *returned* ends in a *d* sound and *wanted* ends in an *ed* sound.

The examples above showed Ellie’s mindset regarding her reasons for what to teach and how to teach concerning grammar by linking it to the target reading text. Ellie did not want her students to think of grammar as a separate entity, but rather as a part of the language that they were learning. By helping her students to connect what they were learning as a grammar piece with the reading text, Ellie wanted them to be aware of these grammar features used in a genuine language. She did not worry about whether her students would use them correctly in their language production, as she thought that it would come in time eventually.

As I stated earlier, Ellie expressed her inclination to teach grammar “within the context of what they were doing”. Despite her statement, it was not always the case.

There were times when Ellie chose to teach certain grammar structures that were not

really tied to the immediate reading text. However, her reasoning behind addressing to certain grammar features greatly tied into her understanding of her students' lack of knowledge and what they might need. Below I will exemplify these points within the sub-theme, *Addressing Student Struggle*.

Addressing Student Struggle

The book that Ellie was required to use had seven units and in each unit there were three clusters. Each cluster consisted of different stories and grammar. However, some units either did not require a certain grammar feature to be taught or they were hard to combine with other grammar related activities. In those cases, Ellie would consider it as an opportunity to cover certain grammar structures that she thought her students struggled with the most. For example, one section of the unit was a poetry study. Before starting the poem, Ellie thought that it would be a decent idea to go over the present perfect tense and the present perfect continuous tense; for, she had seen that some of her students were not using these tenses correctly. This grammar feature would also be a good opportunity as a continuation for the regular and the irregular past tense verbs and it would complement student understanding of these verb uses. Being the proponent of the *Input Theory*, she wanted to take it “one step further” by including *since* and *for*:

I looked for something that I see them struggling with. They can do the past tense, present tense, the basic future, but using have been + a verb...For example, today the girl's sentence said, “they have been came.” They do not know what formed with the verb in after *been*. Have been married why is that one in the past tense versus have been playing soccer. It is just something that they struggle with (March 5, 2013).

Another example that would help show Ellie's preference to teach grammar based on her perception of student struggle related to the parts of a sentence. The unit that they were about to start was called "True Self"; however, due to the tests that were going on at the time, they were not able to read the story. In addition, the grammar part in the book recommended the study of subjects and objects. Ellie considered these circumstances she was in, and decided to address not only the subjects and the objects, but also the other elements of a sentence. Here are her own words for her rationale in choosing this grammar feature:

The grammar in the book is subjects and objects. They need to see it at a higher level. Before reading the story I wanted to start with grammar. The grammar thing is usually done at the end, normally I would have used it in the context and the stories as we are talking about, but we are not doing that now. They know he, she, it. How can I make it harder and more valuable? (March 26, 2013)

As the discussion above attests, Ellie's perceived student struggle and her intention of teaching one step beyond student current level shaped her decision-making. She thought planning grammar activities with these conceptions in mind would be stimulating and beneficial for her students.

By examining the criteria that influenced Ellie's decision-making, I have portrayed how and why Ellie attended to grammar before the onset of a reading text. She mostly took her perception of her students' grammar knowledge into account when making her decisions. Moreover, it was also evident that Ellie preferred using various teaching methods in consideration of her student factor. In the following section, I will

discuss how student factor influenced her thinking around use of various teaching methods.

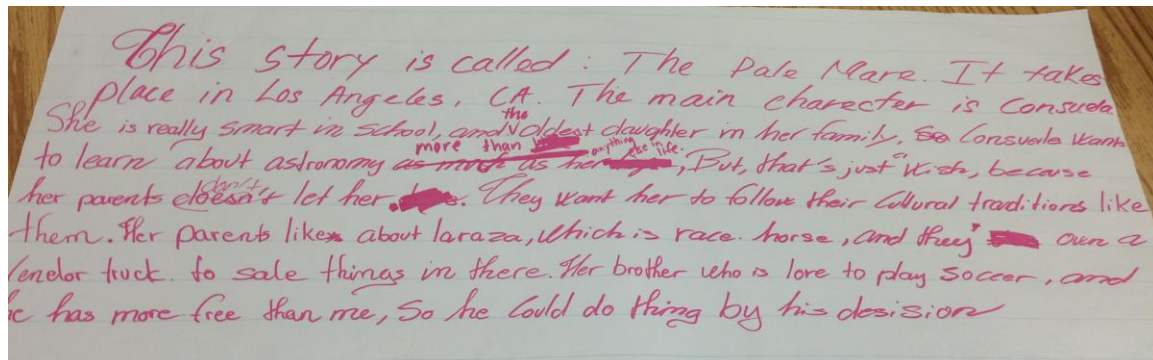
Student as Center of Teacher Thinking

Within this theme I will elaborate on the impact of student needs in Ellie's consideration of different strategies in attempt to make the grammar learning as gainful as possible. In the following section, first, I will talk about the factors that prompted Ellie to use group work. Then, I will discuss the importance that Ellie gave in creating individualized student studies.

Initiating Group Work According to Student First Language

Ellie believed that group work was one of the most effective ways of learning grammar. Actually, she favored the group work because it allowed her to address grammar reactively. Ellie would be able to pull her students' attention to multiple grammar forms, which proved to be problematic for the students. In addition, students were given the opportunity of learning from each other while writing their sentences during a group work study. The structure of the groups changed according to the target of the activity. Groups were arranged either according to the student preference, level of proficiency, or common native language. For example in one of the lessons, Ellie formed her students into four groups according to their shared native language; Spanish, Karenni, Vietnamese, and Zomi. The objective of the lesson was to write a summary of the latest reading text *The Mare*. Ellie structured the groups based on their native language because she thought they would be able to help each other better since they shared the same language. Below is the story summary of the Spanish-speaking students, followed by the

dialogue that went between the teacher and the group members while working on the sentence structures and the meaning:



Ellie: ...her parents like about laraza. Do I say, "You like about soccer?"

Student 1: Love.

E: Ok. Love, but we don't want this "about", what do they feel about laraza?

...ppp, proud. So, her parents... get rid of this "like." Her parents are proud... What do you say with proud? Preposition "of."which is race, horse.

Then, you said, "horse."

St 2: I don't know.

(Eli erased "horse", saying that the author didn't say anything about that and that the students needed to develop that whole idea in somewhere else)

E:they owned a vendor truck to sale things... "sale", what is the verb? I can say, "There is a big sale."

St 1: Sell.

E: Good. Do you say, "I own a phone to taca?" So, they own a vendor truck and they sellget rid of "to". Rather than "things", what do they sell?

St 1: Foods.

E: Do they sell inside it? In English “food” means more than one thing without the “s”. And they sell food from it not in there. ...*Her brother who is love to play soccer.... her brother* comma no “is” ...*her brother who*

St 1: Love to play soccer.

E: Her brother is “he”, what do I do with “love”? Loves. Because “he”. *Her brother, who loves to play soccer*, and... get rid of “and”.*he has more free than me*. Here, you said “he”. Did you already say “he”? So, you don’t want the “he”. Not “free” what is the word?

St 2: Freedom...than me.

E: Are you part of the story? Not “me”, then who.

St 2: Her

E: Who is “her”?

St 2: Consuela.

E: So, he could do thing by his decision. Here, you said “has” and “loves”, and here you say “could”. So, let’s stay in the present tense. So, *he ...*

St 1: Can do thing by his decision

E: You don’t say, “ by his decision”. What do you say?

St 1: him.

E: You could do this. *He can make his own decisions*.

As seen in the interaction between Ellie and the group members, this activity let Ellie address more than one grammar feature implicitly in a context that was meaningful to her students. She was able to pay special attention not only to grammar, but also to meaning as well. She thought this kind of activity was both advantageous and effective in

examining language because her students had the opportunity to see the combination of the meaning and the structure in a real context. The students who had the same language background were able to help each other better in identifying their errors and correcting them.

One other factor that directed Ellie to form groups according to the students' L1 dealt with addressing student grammar gaps efficiently. Being a former Spanish language teacher, Ellie's bilingualism gave her an advantage in further explaining certain grammar features to Spanish speaking students; for, she was familiar with the errors that were specific to Spanish speaking students. For example, the Spanish-speaking students wrote, "He wanted to go to a trip..." in their summary. Ellie told them that she knew they used "to a trip" in Spanish, but they needed to say "on a trip" in English language. In here, Ellie combined her knowledge of the Spanish language with English and showed the differences between the two depending on which language they were using.

Ellie observed that the students who spoke the same L1 showed similar patterns in their learning and misunderstanding due to the impact of their L1. Even if she did not know the students' L1, she would still be able to provide feedback to the students based on the patterns she detected as a result of the influence of their L1. For example, Ellie was cognizant of the need to focus on the tense uses with the Vietnamese-speaking students, for the occurrence of tense related errors were frequent in Vietnamese-speaking students' language production.

In Vietnamese and Karen, there is no tense in verbs. You just go is go. There is no *went*, *are going*, *will go*. It is confusing in level 3, when I try to teach past, present tense and present progressive, but in their language it doesn't exist. They say,

“Yesterday go, tomorrow go.” Or, you just have to know from the conversation what they are talking about. Or they could say “when” and you could answer them. There is no verb tense (April 16, 2013).

The segment below shows how Ellie addressed to those points mentioned above while she was analyzing Vietnamese-speaking students’ summary:

Ellie: ...*she is smart and talented She loved toIs she* in capital? What do we need?

(The student put period before “She.”)

E: You are describing her; it is not something that happened. So, “loves.” Also, *she is...*See, how you are using present tense. You need to stay with present tense. ...*expected to follow cluture*. I need a word here (after follow).

St: Her.

E: (Eli wanted the students to pronounce “culture” because it was misspelled.)

Make it c.u.l.t. ...*her family proud to be Mexican*. This is an adjective (referring to the word “proud”) you need a verb here.

St: Was.

E: You are describing her. So not “was.”

St: Is.

E: You start the setting and then the story. When you start your story this is gonna be your first paragraph and you are gonna go towhat tense? Past tense cause you are gonna talk about what happened now (April 16, 2013).

In addition to the use of group work, creating room for individualized grammar based studies was also among Ellie's efforts. In the following section, I will further examine this point.

Creating Individual Studies

Ellie believed that by working with individual students, she would be able to attend to each students' own weakness and try to cover their needs sufficiently. "Each student is different, they all differ in their needs", she said. Due to the time constraints and the requirement to meet the curriculum needs, it would make it hard for her to spare time for individual studies. However, Ellie tried to create opportunities to work with her students on a one-on-one basis. Her way of creating individual studies regarding grammar mostly occurred and combined with the vocabulary studies. Before reading a new story, they would work on the meanings of the new vocabulary words. Ellie would ask her students to create a PowerPoint, which consisted of their own sentences used with each new word, and a picture that represented their sentences. The students would share their assignments through Google docs for Ellie to provide feedback. In addition, Ellie would call on each student to analyze their sentences in class, while the rest of the students kept working on their sentences. Similar to the group work, Ellie was able to address many different linguistic aspects of language during these individual studies. The segments below shows her attendance to the different grammar structures during these vocabulary studies:

The target word was "Freedom". The student wrote, "I came to the us because I needed freedom."

Ellie: Did you need freedom? You are from Vietnam, so you could talk about...

(Ellie wanted him to use the word “refugees”).

E: Did refugees stop coming?

St: They are still coming.

E: What am I gonna change my verb to? Change “came” to “come”.

Below is another example that shows the interaction between Ellie and a Kurdish-speaking student. The target word was “claim” and the student wrote, “He is claims the food on the ground because is hungry.”

E: (referring to the picture that the student used to represent her word. The picture showed a man digging for gold) In the picture, he is claiming gold. Let’s pretend that this is food for now, but find a new picture.

E: I can say, “he claims”, but I can’t say, “he is claims”. If somebody is doing something now, what do I put in ...?

St: -ing

E: Good. Change that. “He is claiming.” Now, I have to put one more thing. “on the ground because is hungry”. Do I know who is hungry?

St: He

E: Good. “He” put “he.”

The two segments above show how Ellie was able to attend to her students’ errors rather implicitly. She was able to activate and build on student grammar knowledge by attending to the form and meaning. As Ellie stated, the students varied in their level of English knowledge, and their first language affected the way they used the English language. By working with each student, Ellie was able to fill in the gaps in these students’ knowledge by either pointing out the errors they made as a result of their first

language influence, or by comparing the differences in the use of English language and their first language. For example, one of the Spanish-speaking students wrote “foods” thinking that it was correct as it was the case in Spanish language, but Ellie explained that the word “food” denoted plural meaning. With Vietnamese-speaking students, Ellie would try to reinforce the correct use of tenses, for she knew that these students lacked the semantics and the use of tenses as a result of the influence of their first language.

In an attempt to create individualized studies, Ellie was also taking advantage of the technology to promote the learning of grammar. She was using iPods in combination with the vocabulary studies. The study involved the definition of unknown vocabulary of the new reading text and focusing on the other forms of these words such as, “agony and agonize”. After all of the target vocabulary was covered, Ellie would hand out the iPods and the practice sheet that consisted of sample sentences, which was constructed by Ellie using the new vocabulary. The iPods had the app, *Dragon Dictation*, downloaded and ready to use. The students were expected to read the sentences till they got them right as exemplified below:

Sentence: She was in great agony after her son’s death.

St: Sheila engrade Akelah have the right son dearth.

Sentence: If you help a person too much, you are enabling them.

St1: If you help a person too much, you are enably them.

Ellie cherished the use of iPods because the students’ attention to grammar occurred rather implicitly. Let’s hear her own words for her rationale:

The purpose is not to get them to have an accent. For example, when they read many of them say “start”. They only say the base word not *started* or *starting*.

They won't look and focus on the ending. It helps them with grammar and spelling and focus on the ending and words like with prepositions. They just need to say that lot and hear that a lot. There is a ton of grammar, but they don't realize that they are doing grammar too and that's what is nice about it (May 1, 2013).

I am not sure how much this practice has been helping students with regard to the grammar knowledge, but it was certain that it helped improve their speech sounds, by paying attention to changing sounds according to the tense use such as, the "d" sound in "rescued" or the "ing" sound in "avoiding". The students' attention also seemed to be pulled towards the use of prepositions that were followed after a verb or an adjective such as, "depends on" or "responsible for".

As Ellie expressed above, the students did not realize that they were also practicing grammar within these iPod studies. With this thought in mind I presume, Ellie never explicitly touched on the grammar issues before, during or even after the practice sessions. As Ellie pointed out, "saying the sounds out right" (May 2, 2013) was the initial target here. Grammar was being attended to implicitly.

Up to this point, I have portrayed Ellie's thinking regarding FFI, including the factors that shaped her manner of teaching grammar. Below I will talk about the challenges that Ellie had been facing, which eventually influenced her thinking pertaining to grammar teaching.

The Dilemmas That Ellie Faces

Within this theme I will touch on two difficult situations that Ellie found herself in. One of them had to do with balancing her grammar teaching with the student profile, whereas the second one dealt with the knowledge of student L1 to strengthen student

comprehension.

How to Balance Grammar Teaching

The biggest dilemma that Ellie had been experiencing pertained to the difficulty in addressing grammar due to her diverse student population and their equally diverse needs. As has been discussed earlier, her student population consisted of students who came from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds. They also differed in their educational levels. Some of them did not even have formal schooling experience. These factors made it hard for Ellie at times to address all of her students' needs. Here is how Ellie spoke about this concern:

When you have kids who are highly educated and with kids that can't recognize a verb, you wanna meet all students needs, and with ELL, just like general population, there are handicapped classes, gifted classes, special ed classes, with ELL they are thrown in together and if you put that natural gap of advanced and special ed and then you are also thrown in educated, non-educated on top of just natural ability, the gap of students you have in your class is huge (January 4, 2013).

Within Ellie's description of her student profile, one can easily discern her feelings of anxiety and apprehension. She wanted to be able to respond to all of her students despite their level of differences; yet, she was also aware that her efforts depended on student abilities and willingness as well. "...a lot of them don't see, may be, the importance of it [correct grammar use] or don't care to perfect that [their mistakes] or their ability to even see that they are doing it wrong. Some kids just naturally self-correct and hear and others won't and at what point do you keep trying...with grammar?" (January 4, 2013). Ellie

linked some of her students' indifference towards grammar with their non-academic purpose in attending high school. She added that many of her students started their high school education at the age of 19 or 20 and their only aim was to learn and develop their English language for survival skills in the community. Therefore, the importance of learning grammar was minimal for these students, which made Ellie question herself as to how much and what kind of grammar she should insist on with these students. Ellie's other dilemma is related to not knowing some of her students' first language, which is discussed below.

Not Knowing Students' First Language

Ellie considered the knowledge of student first language advantageous in teaching language and bonding with students. She wished she knew all of her students' first language in order to assist them in their grammar learning. As I pointed out previously, Ellie was a former Spanish language teacher and she thought that her knowledge of Spanish helped her with her teaching and connecting with her students. Here is how she expressed the advantage of sharing a common language with her students:

Many of the kids from refugee camps... with their second or third grade education, plus in a country with probably not the best schools, they don't even know what a noun or a verb is. Their goal is to learn the language just to be able to use it and so that can be hard because I cannot speak Karen, Karenese [sic] and Zomi and so you are not able to focus as" (January 4, 2013).

Ellie saw the use of student first language as an advantageous tool to explain certain grammar features. For example, with her Spanish-speaking students she was able to explain some of the grammatical terms and uses in their first language to help them

understand better. She gave the example of one of her Spanish-speaking students who started high school at the age of 19 and he did not know what a verb was. Ellie used her Spanish to teach verbs for she thought “teaching the concept of verb [was] difficult in itself” (January 4, 2013) while the student was trying to learn a new language from scratch.

As seen, the biggest challenges Ellie found herself in revolved around searching for efficient ways to fill in her students’ insufficient basic grammar knowledge due to their lack of formal schooling. In addition, she considered her students’ willingness as an important factor in learning grammar. Despite the challenges, Ellie targeted efficient use of her time with her students considering their level of academic and language variables.

In the sections above, I explored Ellie’s expertise pertaining to form-focused instruction. Below, I will examine the perceptions of Ellie’s students regarding the influence of teacher use of FFI teaching options on their learning.

Ellie’s Students’ Perceptions

The lesson that the first survey was given focused on the differentiation of regular past tense verbs and adjectives that end in -ed. There were two major factors that underlined Ellie’s choice of these grammar features: the gap in student knowledge regarding words that end in -ed and the input hypothesis (Krashen, 1985) or “pushing students one step further” as Ellie put it. Ellie believed that she needed to teach one step higher than her students’ current comprehension level. She pointed out this belief many times. Although she did not name the theory specifically, she expected me to understand what she was referring to by saying, “You know, $i+1$ ”.

Table 4.7

Grammar-Teaching Episodes and Student Surveys

Focus of Grammar and the Date	Teaching steps and teaching style	No of sts who understood “very well”	No of sts who understood “somewhat”	No of sts who did “not understand very much”
*Regular past tense verbs and adjectives *-t, -d, -ed sounds (January 15, 2013)	* Forming sentences with four words picked from the story * Explaining the difference between verbs and adjectives that end in -ed * Identifying adjectives in the story that end in -ed *Studying the sound changes that end in -ed	5	4	1
* have/has been +Ving+ since and for * have/has V3 (March 5, 2013)	*Explaining the difference between past tense and present perfect tense and present perfect continuous tense *Explaining when to use since and for with examples *Giving test *Forming sentences by using certain verbs that Eli asked *Going over the test questions	9	2	1

The *Input Hypothesis* (Krashen, 1985), which is also known as the *Monitor Model*, involves five theories of second language acquisition proposed by Stephen Krashen. In essence, according to this model, students achieve acquisition when they are exposed to

language teaching that is further beyond their current comprehension level. The comprehension of the spoken and the written language is seen as essential in developing the understanding of the linguistic properties of a language. Based on this theory, when the learners are exposed to a substantial amount of language input, the knowledge of grammar would develop unconsciously. This theory seemed to be the root of Ellie's thinking about grammar teaching.

In the first teaching episode (January 15, 2013), Ellie decided to arrange her lesson in an order that helped her students recognize and understand the difference between past tense verbs and adjectives that ended in -ed. Ellie was aware that her students lacked the ability to see the difference between verbs and adjectives that ended in -ed. She said that her students had the wrong idea about each word that ended in -ed and they thought that the words that end in -ed were all identified as regular past tense verbs.

In addition, Ellie believed that she needed to expose her students to a new information that was one step further from their current level. In this case, her students knew how to form regular past tense verbs, yet they were not able to identify if a word that ended in -ed was a verb or an adjective. They also had difficulty in hearing and producing the right sound of the past tense form of a verb. For that reason, she targeted focusing on -t, -ed, and -d sounds. She started her lesson by presenting four words picked from the reading text. These words could be a verb or an adjective depending on the use in a sentence. Then, they formed sentences using these words, both as a verb and as an adjective. Later, Ellie asked them to find words that ended in -ed, and that were also used as adjectives in the reading text. After pinpointing those words, Ellie handed

out sheets that asked students to find verbs that ended in -t, -ed, and -d sounds. One of the sections also asked students to identify past and present forms of irregular verbs.

At the end of this lesson, the students were given the survey. The majority of the students stated that they understood what was presented, even if their understanding degrees varied. The students who chose “understood very well” and “somewhat” responded that teacher detailed explanation on past tense verbs and adjectives aided their understanding. In addition, forming sentences by using the word both in the form of a verb and an adjective, finding the target words in reading text and looking at the meaning of the sentences were also among their comments as being helpful. The students who chose “understood somewhat” were mostly confused with the sound changes of the past tense verbs. They stated that it was difficult for them to hear the sound of the right ending. One of them wrote that it was hard for her to remember all of the irregular past tense verbs. One student specifically wondered about the mainstream students thoughts, and she asked, “ Do you think other students out of ELL are also struggled with past tense verbs and adjectives?” The student who chose the option “not very much” did not provide his reason. Yet, when I asked him in person he expressed that he still could not comprehend when a word was being used as an adjective or as a verb. He added, “I should try hard and study the past tense verbs and adjectives.”

The second survey was given right after the lesson, of which the target grammar feature was *have/has+ V3* and *have/has been +Ving +since/for* (March 5, 2013). Ellie focused on these particular grammar structures because she had seen that the students were struggling with the form and the meaning. She started her lesson by explaining the difference between past tense and the present perfect tense, followed by the present

perfect continuous tense. Then, she explained the use of *since* and *for* with the present perfect continuous tense by forming sentences. While constructing sentences, they looked at both the form and the meaning. She gave students a test to see if they were able to use the correct form. The test questions targeted students' knowledge of the present perfect continuous tense use. After the test, they worked on constructing sentences with the verbs that Ellie gave. Finally, they went over the test questions.

Student responses to the survey questions were similar to the previous one. The teacher's explicit instruction on the form and the meaning, forming their own sentences and practicing sentences were the common answers that the students provided as main reasons for their comprehension. The students who somewhat understood or did not understand at all were mostly confused with the form. They said they were not exactly sure when and for what reason to use the present perfect continuous tense in their writing or speech. The test results were congruous with the student statements. Their mistakes mostly related to the form. For example one of the questions asked them to finish the sentence, She has....." by using the word *walking*. Six of the students wrote, "She has been walked...". However, there were also inconsistencies with what the students did on the test. One of the questions asked them to find the problem in the sentence, "I have been teached for nine years." All of the students, except one, identified the problems and corrected the sentence accordingly. The inconsistencies in the student answers and the student statements alluded to the fact that there were still gaps in student competency regarding the present perfect continuous form. They may know the form, but they may not realize it in every sentence structure. Interviews with the students also brought out their concern with their language production. Several students mentioned that

they were able to use their grammatical knowledge in their writings; however, they were not able to use the correct form in their speech. Ellie was aware of this as well. She tried to accommodate her student needs regarding speaking abilities by arranging speaking activities, either as a group, one-on-one, or with iPod studies. Ellie expressed that the students could correct their ungrammatical structures in writing because they had time to think. Yet, speaking was instantaneous and made it hard to pay attention and use the correct form of language. With speaking based activities students had the chance to practice the prompt use of language. Among different teacher approaches, students mostly found individual and iPod studies helpful and engaging. For example, Ellie arranged one of her lessons to practice *have/has+V3* and *have/has been Ving + since/for* to foster the use in her student language production. She called on students in pairs and asked random questions that were formed in the target grammar structure. She was expecting her students to respond by using the same grammatical form such as to the questions, “How long have you lived in this city?” or “Have you ever eaten fish eggs?” Ellie would remind the students the form if they gave their answers erroneously. Sometimes she would refer to the meaning suggested by the question. For example, she asked, “Have you ever touched an elephant?” to one of the students. And the interaction went as followed:

St: I have never touching since 2000.

E: Are you still touching an elephant?

St: No

E: So, don't use *touching*. Think about it! Have you ever touched an elephant?

St: I have never...(laughs)...I have never been....touching....

E: I have never touched an elephant.

Following this small conversation, Ellie provided the meanings suggested by the use of *have/has been Ving* and *have/has V3*. Consistent with individual interviews and the survey results, the whole class interviews of the students once again showed that one-on-one studies increased their awareness of the target form, and help them notice the errors they made with the help of the teacher.

The Match and the Mismatch Between Teacher and Student Perceptions

On account of the student data, I can conclude that Ellie's perception of student learning substantially matched with the student perceptions. As put forward previously, Ellie's alignment of the target grammar instruction beyond the student current level underlined her thinking. In addition, Ellie also considered the reading text at hand. Based on these judgments, Ellie attended to grammar with the use of explicit teaching options (FonFS). These options included the provision of detailed information about the target grammar point, discussion of the form and the meaning, identifying the target grammar item in the immediate reading text, asking students to form their own sentences with the target grammar feature, and working on the structured grammar exercises. The student data exhibited that the teacher use of these options were regarded as helpful in their understanding.

The individual and whole class interviews showed that the students mostly enjoyed one-on-one studies. They stated that they became more cognizant of their mistakes when they worked with the teacher individually. Ellie was also aware of the power of these single studies; yet, the time constraint restricted her use of separate studies in class. She said that even if these students were in a proficiency level three class, their existing

abilities differed and they all needed different type of attention to further their progress. In addition to individual studies, as explored within Ellie's case study, Ellie tried to attend to each student needs by assigning power-point studies to each student. Every morning, she looked at one power-point study for five minutes through the over - head projector and she attended to the form and meaning of the sentences that the student constructed. With this strategy, she was not only addressing the individual student needs, but was also allowing the rest of the class to learn from their peer's work. The students appreciated these studies and stated that these studies helped them notice the correct use of grammar related issues that the teacher attended to.

One of the distinctive characteristics of Ellie from the other two teachers was the use of student L1. Being a former Spanish language teacher, Ellie was able to explain the use the Spanish language versus the English language with her Spanish-speaking students. The students stated that the teacher's use of Spanish helped them see the differences between the two languages and therefore their attention and comprehension increased. Not all of the students were Spanish speakers in Ellie's class. Ellie believed that the students who had the common language background would be able to help each other. Therefore, she would form groups according to student common language in an attempt to initiate student communication in their first language if they needed to. During my observations, I witnessed student L1 use pretty often and students seemed to benefit from the use of their L1 to explain the misunderstood points.

As a conclusion, depending on the data, I deduce that Ellie's students' perceptions highly converge with her own perceptions. Even the students' attitudes toward the full command of grammar mirrored Ellie's accurate perception of her students' profiles. To

be more explicit, students' attitudes toward the grammar knowledge tied into their desires for their future academic life. For example, Rachel, who aspired to continue her higher education, thought that she needed to be accurate in her language use. However, Tashi did not consider "perfect grammar" important because he already had his own business and he thought he could communicate in English efficiently enough to continue his business. Karma, on the other hand, had responsibilities like, her husband and family, and she was attending school only to further her communicative skills. For that reason, she was content with basic grammar. She felt it was enough to find an appropriate job. So, student willingness to learn grammar, or their attitudes toward the mastery of grammar closely connected to their future aspirations. More importantly, Ellie was aware of the reasons behind student attitudes toward grammar and she was trying to balance out her instruction depending on each student's profile. To be precise, my observations, the student surveys, and the interviews did not exhibit any discrepancy between student perceptions and teacher perceptions regarding the influence of teacher use of FFI. In the following part, I will present the analysis of the similarities and the differences across the themes that emerged in each teacher.

Cross- Case Theme Analysis

In this section, I intend to provide a cross-case synthesis among the three cases. By examining the similarities and the differences across the themes that emerged from the analysis of the three cases, I will address major rival findings. At the end of this section, I will talk about the nature of teaching expertise for FFI as revealed through the analysis of similarities across the three cases.

The three teachers show several similarities and differences in their expertise regarding their understanding and execution of FFI. One of the common similarities among these teachers' expertise in regard to grammar teaching pertains to their decision-making in the events of dilemmas. The challenges that these teachers faced encouraged them to search for different approaches in their thinking, even if it meant giving up their ritual habit of teaching or thinking: an attribute that was associated with adaptive expertise (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). For example, after Rose observed similar grammar errors in her students' writings continuously, she felt the need to alter her routine grammar teaching theory. She thought that attending to grammar only during teaching moments was not enough. Even though she continued on at-the-moment-grammar-teaching, she developed a new habit of teaching grammar in a mini-lesson fashion. Rose moved towards FonFS option (the teaching of grammar in isolation), rather than attending to them (grammar items) at the moment of student writings. During these mini-lessons, she had the opportunity to address various grammar features and talk about the language in a more direct and explicit way.

One other element of adaptive expertise involved the use of appropriate mode of teaching to meet learners' needs. I observed this behavior with Ellie when she preferred to use Spanish to teach certain grammar rules to her Spanish-speaking students who were low in English knowledge. The use of student first language (L1) in language teaching mostly in English as a foreign language context was documented in research (de la Campa & Nassaji, 2009). In fact, researchers pointed out the strong impact of L1 use to enhance student understanding of the rules and encouraged it in the language-teaching field ((Nassaji & Fotos, 2010). In this study, based on Ellie's case, it is shown that L1 use

in English as a second language context could also be effective. Ellie was aware of the influence of L1 in teaching the forms to her students and were taking advantage of it whenever necessary.

Teacher adaptive decision-making dealt with the student's willingness as well. As explored previously, some of Ellie's students started high school at a later age and their reason for attending high school was mostly related to their desire to learn English for survival purposes at no cost. They were not concerned with learning grammar as long as they could communicate. In these cases, based on her knowledge of her students' profiles, Ellie was questioning herself as to how strict she should be with students regarding grammar knowledge. By focusing on their communication skills, she was hoping that "grammar would fix itself in time" (January 4, 2013) with those students.

Dan's decision-making regarding the students' characteristics was different than Ellie's. Dan's dilemmas were mostly related to his low proficiency level students who were close to the age limit to graduate. In an attempt to come out of this dilemma, he preferred to lean towards his students' benefit. For example, he moved some of his students to an upper proficiency level, even though they were not seen as adequately qualified. However, Dan believed the lack of expected grammar knowledge should not be used as an obstruction for these students' graduation. For he believed, ELL was essentially about helping students grow in their language abilities, not to equip them with the full command of the language. Dan thought his students were progressing at their own pace and would continue to do so throughout their lives. He thought he should be a relief and support, not an obstacle.

While attending to grammar, one of the common manners that all these three teachers shared was providing reasons for their students to justify the importance of what they were studying. All of the teachers believed that students would be more motivated if they became more conscious of the reasons behind what they were studying. At every opportunity, all of these teachers provided reasons for what they were/would be studying in attempt to make the purpose of the target lesson more meaningful to their students. For example, Rose tried to make it clear to her students that using the tenses correctly in their writings would be beneficial in their college applications, while Dan convinced his students that using adjectives or conjunctions in their sentences would help them impress the readers in their job applications, and as for Ellie, she pointed out that the knowledge of sentence structure would help her students convey the intended meaning to their audience. When looked at closely, in essence, the teachers in this study depicted their positive attitudes toward descriptive grammar teaching. They were not strict about the prescriptive rules of grammar; however, they tried to give the message in their reasoning that the knowledge of standard grammar was necessary in order to convey effective and meaningful messages. Rose's data, specifically, showed that she preferred presenting her students the variations of English language in different contexts. She was conveying her students that even if there were variations in the English language they should not be considered as incorrect. Yet, she was emphasizing that the use of Standard English in professional contexts would increase her students' status.

Considering the examples above, the reasons that the teachers provided differed according to the target grammar lesson; some were practical, some were intellectual and some were aspirational. Whatever the reason, the thought of providing a clear picture

regarding the target grammar was significant for these teachers to inspire and motivate their students in their language learning studies. This feature of these teachers pointed to their “learner-centered” (Bransford, Derry, Berliner, Hammerness & Beckett, 2005) side because by giving the rationale for what they were teaching, they were attempting to help their students to make the connection between the target grammar and why they needed to know them.

The analysis of the three teachers showed divergence in their stated beliefs against explicit and direct grammar teaching. We know from research that the discrepancies between teachers’ stated beliefs and their actions were based on various contextual factors (Farrel & Particia, 2005; Richards, Gallo & Renandya, 2001). In this study, for example, even though Ellie expressed that she was not concerned with grammar knowledge in her students, she alluded that explicit attention to grammar was still inevitable, since certain structures in English have to be taught explicitly to foster student understanding. Dan did not put into words that grammar needed to be taught for certain occasions; yet, the way he attended to grammar in his lessons suggested otherwise. Moreover, he insinuated the need to teach grammar by saying, “I don't care so much about their [students] grammar until it is important for their grammar to be something that somebody is going to evaluate”(January 7, 2014). Rose, on the other hand, was against teaching grammar in isolation because she said she knew it was not recommended by research. However, she decided to teach in isolation at times anyway because she thought her students would benefit from explicit instruction and understand the concepts clearly. Essentially, all three teachers’ decisions regarding grammar teaching points to the situational nature of teaching. (Berliner, 2004; Tsui, 2003). As reported in the studies of

expertise in teachers, these teachers presented the attribute of “conscious deliberation” (Glaser and Chi, 1988) in their thoughts regarding when and why to teach grammar. It was not a matter of using the best single approach, it was the matter of what approach best fit to certain classroom context (Ellis, Basturkmen, & Loewen, 2006).

Another finding from cross-case analysis is related to the teachers’ support for context-dependent grammar teaching. While these teachers’ reflections on the importance of grammar in language differed, they were all against context-free grammar teaching. Grammar teaching within meaningful context was supported in literature regarding grammar teaching. Language teaching experts claimed that language should not be treated as an “object” (Ellis, 2001), instead efforts should be made to teach it in meaningful and communicative context (Long, 2012; Spada & Lightbown, 2008). In line with the research findings, the teachers in this study also believed that grammar should be treated either within or as a continuation of the context that they were in to make it meaningful. These beliefs were reflected on these teachers’ teaching of grammar as they tried to build context-dependent grammar lessons. For example, Ellie and Dan would target to teach certain grammar features either during or after reading a text in an attempt to make the grammar studies more purposeful. Rose, on the other hand, would attend to grammar while analyzing her students’ lead sentences for their writing projects, during which the primary focus was on the meaning.

Despite their preference to teach grammar in a meaningful context, certain circumstances would lead these teachers to attend to grammar in context free ways. These circumstances mostly revolve around the teacher perception of student needs based on the deficiencies that these teachers detected.

Table 4.8

Rose

Name	Characteristic	Texts and Resources	Stated Philosophy of Grammar-Teaching	Observed Philosophy of Grammar-Teaching
Rose	SPED Team Leader	Inside (Main Book) Natural Geographic Basic English Grammar Book Daily Language Review Rubric Checklist	Supports purposeful attention to grammar Students need to know the form and the function of a grammar feature Against isolated grammar teaching Error correction and peer work are effective in learning grammar Favors integrating grammar with student writing projects Students need to know the linguistic terms, for they are used in the tests Students need to know the reasons for what they are studying There should be a specific curriculum that covers writing and grammar	Constructs mini lessons based on student gaps Explains the forms and functions Isolated grammar teaching on a daily basis Use of error correction and peer work Attempts to integrate target grammar with the target writing projects Teaching linguistic terms Frequent reminders of the need to use grammatically correct sentences Students need to know the difference between formal and informal language and formal language corresponds to the use of grammatically correct sentences Students need to know grammar to show that they are “smart” for their future education

Table 4.9

Dan

Name	Characteristics	Texts and Resources	Stated Philosophy of Grammar-Teaching	Observed Philosophy of Grammar-Teaching
Dan	Very Verbal	Edge (Main Book) Teacher Guidance Grammar and Writing Practice Book Rubric Checklist	Grammar is not a priority Comprehension and vocabulary knowledge are more important Against isolated teaching of grammar, prefers teaching grammar in a context Prefers attending to grammar based on the sentences on the board, reading or student question Believes in the necessity of knowing linguistic terms and their functions in a sentence, for they may be asked in a test Believes in the provision of reasons for what he is teaching	Grammar is needed to write correct sentences and to convey the intended meaning Isolated grammar teaching occurs, yet either to prepare the students for the target reading or to complement the target reading Provision of linguistic terms Provision of rationale for the target grammar feature

Table 4.10

Ellie

Name	Characteristics	Texts and Resources	Stated Philosophy of Grammar-Teaching	Observed Philosophy of Grammar-Teaching
Ellie	Bilingual Considered her Spanish useful in teaching and helping students	Edge (Main Book) Basic English Grammar Book Rubric Checklist	Less grammar, more holistic teaching Communicating ideas is more important, grammar will come in time Prefers grammar teaching in a context Prefers explicit teaching of grammar for complex structures or the features that her students struggle with the most Knowledge of linguistic terms not important Advocate of i+1 theory and challenging her students	Grammar teaching in combination with the target reading Isolated grammar teaching occurs based on perceived student gaps and struggle Provision of linguistic terms is minimum Grammar teaching for complex structures The use of technology to assist grammar understanding Challenging students by teaching grammar features that were beyond student current level Use of group work and one-on-one studies to improve student grammar usage Use of learner L1 in explaining grammar features

Teachers in this study believed that explicit instruction would lead to higher understanding. In fact, this point was reported in the majority of form-focused instruction (FFI) research. Researchers claim that focus-on-forms (explicit instruction) help students learn quickly and increase their proficiency (Norris & Ortega, 2000).

Explicit instruction based on student gaps mostly occurred in Ellie and Rose's lessons. Ellie spared class hours to teach certain grammar features based on her understanding of her student's gaps or struggles. She would prepare worksheets that were loaded with the target grammar feature, which was not tied to a reading text, to strengthen her students' comprehension. Rose used practice sheets that focused on various language properties on a daily basis in order to cover as much grammar related topics as possible.

What is worthy of notice was Ellie's thinking around constructing these input based grammar lessons slightly more advanced than the students' current level. For, she thought teaching grammar that is beyond student proficiency level would be more stimulating to her students. This thinking speaks to her innovative side, an attribute of adaptive expertise (Hatano & Inagaki, 1986; Hatano & Osura, 2003; Schwartz, Bransford & Sears, 2005). Adaptive teachers, education theorists say, move beyond routine behavior and alter their teaching based on the understanding of their students (Corno, 2008; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). For example, the target grammar in the book was basic tense structures. Ellie thought that her students knew these structures. Instead she thought of focusing on the present perfect and the present perfect continuous tenses because she detected that many of her students still made errors in their writings. In addition, she thought that these tenses were a challenge to her students. Therefore,

contrary to her previous context-dependent grammar teaching, she preferred explicit teaching for these complex structures: an approach, which was also recommended by the researchers (Ellis, 2012). Ellie further included “since” and “for” in an attempt to teach a grammar structure that is beyond students’ current level. This example speaks to Ellie’s adaptive side, for she altered her grammar teaching and the content of the target structure based on her perception of her students’ understanding.

One of the conspicuous differences between Ellie and the other two teachers was Ellie’s decision to use iPods as a tool to assist student grammar understanding. With this cognizance, Ellie moved away from her routine thinking of teaching grammar towards innovative thinking of using technology to teach grammar (Branford, Derry, Berliner, Hammerness, & Beckett, 2005). When the iPods were provided to the ELL teachers by the district, Ellie thought that *Dragon Dictation*- an app that was designed to help the users to dictate their emails and text messages- would be an appealing app to use in combination with grammar related activities. For example, she decided to use iPods while working on the past participle verbs. Seeing that most of her students were not making the right sounds when a verb changes into a past participle form, she considered it as an opportunity to let her students practice on the sound changes. Studying with iPods helped students not only recognize but also make the right sound changes as well. Moreover, Ellie thought that the one-on-one interaction between the student and the iPod gave comfort to the shy students, as they did not face correction in front of the whole class. While the element of innovative thinking was evident in Ellie, the other two teachers did not evidence this trait of adaptive expertise.

While attending to grammar, one common strategy that both Dan and Rose followed was emphasizing the linguistic terms that they were teaching. Teacher cognition literature shows the differences regarding teacher thoughts about the knowledge of the linguistic terminology in their students (Borg, 2006). According to research, teachers leaned towards teaching linguistic terms for they thought this is what their students expected (Burgess & Etherington, 2001). In this study, the teachers tended to teach technical language based on the thinking that their students might face with these terms in test questions. This thought was more dominant in Dan and Rose. At appropriate times, they would explain to their students that they needed to know these terms for they might need this knowledge in tests. While this approach was not apparent in Ellie's thinking and teaching, there were times when she would mention the type of questions that the students might get on a test while she was teaching a certain grammar item. For example when she was covering pronouns within the objective of *Points of View*, she mentioned the existence of these types of questions in the test that the students were practicing to get ready for the national tests. Compared to Ellie and Dan, Rose associated the knowledge of grammatical terms with the state of being intellectual. She thought the knowledge and the use of these terms would have a positive effect on her students by greatly benefiting their mental capacity for their future school life.

The thinking around use of teaching strategies among these teachers showed similarities as well, especially between Ellie and Rose. These two teachers valued student participation and thought that creating ways to encourage student participation was key to connections and getting them to learn. Dan's thinking; however, differs from these female teachers, for he believed that more teacher talk was better. As a result, he aimed at

connecting through his talk.

Based on the belief in fostering peer interaction to enable growth in knowledge, Ellie used group work frequently in combination with the grammar teaching episodes. She formed her groups either according to the student preference or common first language depending on the lesson objective. If the objective was to write a summary of a reading text, she preferred forming students into groups based on their native language. She said that students with common first language showed similar patterns in their language learning and it helped Ellie address the group needs more efficiently. In addition, these students would be able to teach and learn from each other more effectively since they shared the same native language.

Rose used group or pair work based on the similar conditions and reasons as Ellie. Rose also believed in the power of peer support during learning. She said she had witnessed how students taught and learned from each other in her teaching many times. She preferred pairing her students with varying strengths to promote the level of understanding and learning, for she thought students were better at using student-friendly language while interacting with each other. Her group work involved asking students to discuss what they learned regarding the recent grammar activity, or asking students to edit each other's writings through Google docs.

In addition to the use of group work, working with individual students was also a common occurrence in Ellie and Rose's thoughts and actions. Rose thought that creating room for individual studies mostly with the students who were new to the level would help them catch up with the rest of the students. Based on this judgment, Rose would pull the student to a corner table after class instruction was over, and once again would go

over the recently learned grammar items with the student while the rest of the students were working on their essays. Sometimes, if she realized that certain students needed extra help, she would ask them to come in during lunch hour. She would try to re-teach the concepts that the students did not understand completely while they were having their lunch together. However, the thought of creating individual studies occurred more frequently in Ellie's lessons. Ellie stated that individual studies were one of the best ways to address each student's grammar gap. She preferred creating these opportunities in connection with vocabulary studies. She would ask her students to form their own sentences using the new words, and then they would examine those sentences. While analyzing the sentences that the students formed, Ellie would be able to address various grammar features, including the meaning.

The teachers in this study showed the intricate characteristics of teacher FFI expertise both in their decision-making process and actions. They aspired to be an aid to their students in their language learning experience by considering myriad factors that pertained to their teaching related environment. They were all aware of the complexities of teaching and learning; yet, they endeavored to make the right decision and take the right action for their students' benefit.

Overall, this cross case analysis unveiled the shared elements of grammar teaching that may be common to many expert teachers of FFI. Teacher decision for FFI revealed that teachers look for a balance between form and meaning in their practice. They intended to achieve this balance by focusing on the timing of the FFI. That is they used either integrated or isolated FFI to attend to form within a meaningful context. In addition, teachers resorted to FonFS (grammar teaching that is not connected to a

context) teaching mode to respond to student deficiencies more efficiently. This analysis also brought forward teacher disposition to let their students see why the study of grammar is important. Teachers' concern for why to study grammar is intellectual as well as motivational. Teachers are willing to alter their current theory of grammar teaching; they may give up comfortable routines or planned instruction in light of recognition of student need that would be better served by a change in instruction. When looked closely, all these elements place teachers' conscious thinking in response to context and student needs at the core of teacher expertise for FFI.

In this chapter, I have discussed my findings based on the manifestations of the three teachers' FFI expertise. In the ensuing chapter, I will summarize my major findings in light of my research questions.

Chapter Five

Discussion

I previously pointed out that the majority of the language teacher studies focused on teacher thinking and their practical knowledge and decisions. With this study, by identifying teacher choices of FFI teaching options, I focused on the display of teacher expertise in teaching form. In addition, I wanted to explore students' voices regarding their perceptions of the influence of teacher FFI teaching options on their learning. The findings were discussed in the previous section in detail. In this chapter, I present the summary of the major findings of this study. I provide my assertions and generalizations in light of my research questions. Implications for future research and limitations followed the discussion of assertions.

The analysis of each case and the cross-case analysis across the cases brought forward the complex nature of teacher thinking in their practice once again. First of all, teacher thinking for FFI is substantially influenced by teacher judgment of what grammar feature to focus on, when to do it and how to it. The data led to two major conclusions and one minor assertion:

- 1) The nature of FFI teaching expertise involves deliberate, thoughtful teacher thinking.
- 2) The execution of FFI reveals teacher disposition to adapt various approaches based on student needs.

The minor assertion is related to the student data. The analysis of the student data shed some light on the possible positive learning outcome as a result of the convergence

between the student and teacher perceptions regarding FFI. However, due to the weaknesses in the student data, it is not reasonable to claim this finding as strong, but rather an interesting coincidence that deserves further exploration.

Below I summarize what these major findings constitute.

1) The nature of FFI teaching expertise involves:

- Teacher choice of FFI options which is contingent upon teachers' language teaching priorities such as reading or writing.
- The impact of teachers' core beliefs which are shaped by teachers' perceptions of students' academic needs
- Teachers' recognition and management of dilemmas regarding the best use of FFI options

2) The execution of FFI contains:

- The provision of rationales for the target grammar
- Teacher regard for student interaction to facilitate the understanding of grammar.
- Teacher adaptation of FFI based on their perception of student academic need such as:
 - Willingness to use technological tools that may yield better grammar learning.
 - Challenging students by targeting grammar features that is beyond students' current level.
 - The timing of FFI.
 - The use of Learner L1.

I will discuss the findings in light of my research questions. Below are the tables that show the discussion of the findings along with the research questions involved.

Table 5.1

Major Findings and the Research Questions

Major Findings	Research Questions
The Nature of FFI Teaching Expertise	1. How do teachers describe and demonstrate their expertise in regard to form-focused instruction? 2. What is the nature of teacher thinking during form-focused instruction?
The Execution of FFI Checking for Student Understanding	3. What factors impact teacher thinking / decision making during FFI? a) How do the ESL teachers circle back to check in if those individual students or groups of students picked up what they are trying to teach? 4. What is the nature of the interplay of these factors?

Table 5.2

Minor Finding and the Research Questions

Minor Finding	Research Questions
Student Perceptions of Teacher FFI Expertise	5. How do students experience 'expert' FFI? a) How do the students perceive the teachers' instruction? b) Do teacher and student perceptions of student learning coincide? And, if not, what is the nature of the differences in learning perceptions?

The Nature of FFI Teaching Expertise

Teachers' decisions regarding what, when and how to focus on form were substantially affected by their beliefs of the place of grammar in language teaching and learning, which has been largely documented in previous research (Borg, 2006). The

teachers in this study did not see grammar as an entity in itself, consisting of decontextualized content that needed to be mastered. Instead, they viewed grammar as part of a whole language study; moreover, the teachers in this study were not even particularly strict about the grammatically correct use of language as long as the intended message was conveyed. Increasing vocabulary knowledge, comprehension skills, and writing strategies took priority over the knowledge of grammar. Essentially, grammar was deeply intertwined with what the teachers were teaching. As a result, priorities regarding grammar in language teaching (when to use FFI) were shaped by the teachers' other language teaching priorities, primarily meaningful reading and writing instruction. This prioritization of language teaching tasks affected these teachers' choices of FFI and motivated their theories of action.

Phipps and Borg (2009) made a distinction between core beliefs and peripheral beliefs, and this distinction proved important in understanding Rose, Dan, and Ellie's thinking about grammar. Some studies, such as Corno (1995), show student affective needs and desires as part of teacher core beliefs, my study, on the other hand, suggests that teacher perception of student academic needs may be a core belief and a distinctive factor in teacher's inclination towards grammar teaching and use of FFI options. In response to student academic needs, teachers in this study, tended to teach grammar either as a preparation for possible test questions or as a means to reinforce students' future academic performance.

This present research data demonstrated that student deficiency and/or struggle in particular grammar structure as seen mostly in their writing was also an important factor in shaping teacher thinking of student academic needs. Thereby, teachers attempted to fix

the grammar holes that they saw in their students' understanding, and this fixing was accomplished mostly by means of mini-lessons. Teacher preference of mini-lessons usually consisted of direct, explicit teaching of target grammar features and related structured activities. Teachers may resort to integrated FFI in an attempt to combine the newly studied grammar structures with the reading text and enable their students to see the target form and its function in the reading text. Isolated FFI was used to help students practice the target grammar structure.

Teacher perception of student needs also made teachers diverge from their stated beliefs of teaching grammar within meaningful context. The teachers in this study differed in their beliefs regarding the importance of grammar in teaching language. However, despite the difference in given importance to grammar knowledge, they all dictated that they were against isolated grammar teaching. Nonetheless, student outcomes directed these teachers' behaviors towards teaching grammar in isolation at times to pull their students' attention to the target grammar concepts.

The Execution of FFI

The teachers in this study considered providing reasons to their students about the target grammar feature as essential in enabling student learning. Teachers' reason for this thought and action was related to increasing student attentiveness, heightening their noticing abilities, and encouraging their desire to learn. Teachers thought that when students were aware of the reasons for what they were studying, they would be able to understand the significance and attempt to focus and understand what was being taught. Raising student consciousness was encouraged by language teaching professionals (Schmidt, 1990). However, the awareness that the researchers supported was about

facilitating student attention to forms in a direct way. In this study, I considered providing reasons for what was being targeted as a grammar feature similar to raising consciousness regarding the target form. The teachers in this study were aiming to pull their students' attention towards the form that was being focused by giving reasons for why the students needed to learn it.

Teachers' preference of activities and choice of FFI teaching options also speak to teacher expertise and teacher understanding of grammar teaching. Teachers, who considered student interaction and individual studies as a powerful way of grammar learning, organized their lessons towards encouraging student participation.

Teachers' judgment and practice regarding what grammar to study and when to study unveiled teachers' adaptive side. The data revealed that teachers' adapt their grammar instruction based on their perception of student needs and student grammar knowledge. We know from general education research that teachers knowledge of their students enable teachers to make better decisions regarding what to teach and how to respond to their students' needs (Berliner, 2004). In this study, teachers altered their instruction by targeting a grammar feature that is beyond students' current level to challenge their students. Or teachers changed their course of action completely to better respond to their students' deficiencies. Teachers' tendency to implement technological tools such as iPods also point to their adaptiveness. The use of technology reflected teacher intention of creating student-centered grammar learning, which points to teacher willingness to adapt new approaches that may enhance student language learning experiences.

These teachers exhibited their thoughtful consideration of when to teach certain grammar items as well. Teachers' timing of FFI varied according to their purposes. Teachers in this study preferred attending grammar before, during or after a reading text to make a meaningful transition between form and meaning.

As a last assertion, I would like to talk about teacher thinking with regard to learners' L1 use during grammar teaching. Teachers' use of students' first languages was seen as beneficial in enhancing student understanding, particularly in an English as a Foreign Language setting. In this study, the use of learner L1 in an ESL context was also depicted as advantageous. Specifically, grouping students according to their common first language was shown as beneficial in enabling students to explain the target grammar feature in their first language if they needed to. Research studies differ in their views about the teacher use of L1. Some of the researchers found it natural mostly in English as a foreign language setting (Cook, 2001), while others recommended not to use it at all (Cummins, 2005). Despite these varying theories, teachers' first hand experience of the impact of student L1 use was found to be helpful in explaining grammar, and bonding with students.

Checking for Student Understanding. One of the questions I was interested in exploring pertained to how teachers check their student understanding of the grammar points they taught. The data showed that the teachers in this study mostly achieved that through reading student writing. In addition, they were not interested in strict grammar correction, but more in student ability to communicate meaningful ideas. The teachers were using the objectives in the rubric checklists to provide feedback to their students. It

was much more a mutual process. The teachers provided their feedback and the students were expected to edit their papers in light of the feedback while learning from them.

Teachers implemented pre-tests and post-tests for the lessons that consisted of explicit grammar teaching to help students see their own progress. These tests also helped the teachers to see the difference in student understanding before and after the instruction. Collecting practice assignments after the class work was also among teacher strategies in order to see how well the students did before and after the whole class study. While teachers used the outcome of the tests and the assignments to reteach certain grammar points depending on the occurrence of common student misunderstanding, they regularly mentioned to students to show their grammar knowledge in their writings.

In sum, the teacher cognitive decision regarding checking student understanding of grammar was influenced by their beliefs of language learning as a whole. While they tended to increase student awareness of the correct grammar use by providing feedback, error correction, and teaching to it, they were not strictly concerned with the correct use of the language form in student language production. Even though teachers expected their students to show their uptake in their language use, they contended that the students would develop complete correct grammar knowledge and use in time.

Student Perceptions of Teacher FFI Expertise

The data I gathered through surveys, and interviews (both individual and whole-class) revealed that the students were mostly content with the teacher use of instructional strategies. In addition, the data shows a high degree of convergence between teacher perceptions and student perceptions. The major commonality across students regarding

beneficial teacher FFI related to direct, explicit instruction, which consisted of the provision of the form and the function. Students also found the combination of the detailed explanation with the immediate reading text helpful in noticing the use of the target form in authentic written language. Structured activities that followed the explicit instruction, forming their own sentences with the use of target form, and pinpointing the target form in the reading text with more teacher input were among the methodological options that the students found as augmenting in their understanding. Students also benefited from activities that focused on correcting erroneous use in a sentence, comparing erroneous use with the correct form, and even circling or underlining the target grammar point to grab student attention. Among various strategies, students found teachers' frequent repetition, and use of group or pair work as helpful. As was discussed elaborately within student perceptions, teacher thinking around the use of direct and explicit instruction, supplementing the instruction with structured input activities, and combining the target grammar with the immediate context that they were in, matched with the student thinking of the impact of the use of these FFI options on their learning.

Teachers' physical positioning during grammar teaching was also seen as engaging for some students. Language teaching professionals have long expanded on teacher physical positioning, giving the message that the teachers needed to be aware of their positioning in the classroom as it speaks not only to teacher intentions, but also signals how committed a teacher is to their students during teaching (Ur, P., 2012).

Students highly valued one-on-one studies that involved a use of technological tools such as the iPod. With teacher help, students were able to notice their errors and make appropriate corrections. Studies that included iPods were mostly fun for the

students. They enjoyed working at their own pace and the errors they made were only visible to themselves, which enabled them to try as much as they wanted to with the use of the iPod. The students also considered studies that involved group or pair work as efficient. They learned from each other as much as they learned from their teachers; moreover, some students felt more comfortable working with their peers. None of the students mentioned the influence of test use, unless I asked specifically. Then, they would acknowledge that the use of pre-test and post-test helped them see their mistakes and alerted them to pay attention to those mistakes in their future language use.

So far, teacher decision-making regarding the use of FFI options and student thinking of the impact of these FFI options did not show any discrepancy. Teacher thinking and student thinking exhibited that teachers were flexible enough to align their FFI teaching options based on their students' expectations, and even learning styles. However, there was one contradiction between teacher and student perceptions, and it was related to the students' consideration of teacher talk. As has been discussed earlier, while teachers regarded their verballity as advantageous for modeling what communication involved, students found it dull, and extreme at times. They wished for opportunities that enabled more interaction among their peers, such as pair or group work. As seen here, contrary to the teachers' beliefs, students might find extreme teacher talk monotonous, and as a result might lose their attention and interest during the lesson. This conflict calls our attention to the point that FFI would likely be more influential when the teacher and student perceptions of effective FFI match to a great deal.

The findings concerning the student perceptions of the influence of teacher FFI in their learning are not strong enough to make significant claims. The student data was

limited, for the students did not provide as much information both in the surveys and during the interviews. However, the data I have do suggest the area that ought to be further researched. For, if teacher and student perceptions were to overlap, this would have strong implications for teachers and teacher educators.

Implications

I started this journey to explore teacher expertise with respect to form-focused instruction and teacher demonstration of this expertise in their language classrooms. I also wanted to complement my questions by involving student voices of the teachers whom I was taking this travel with. Throughout this journey, I recalled how mentally and physically demanding teaching was; yet, incredibly full of rewarding and satisfying feelings, as when a student hugged her teacher, saying, “I will miss you Mrs. Rose”.

As I said, this study enabled me to explore and identify ESL teacher expertise for FFI. I found out that the characteristics of teacher expertise that were hypothesized in previous literature were also evident in these teachers’ form based thinking as well. First of all, these teachers cared about their students immensely. Their decision-making revolved around how they can better serve their students in teaching language, so that students can enjoy their school life and further their education. This macro thinking was the fundamental element in teacher maneuvers. Data analysis exhibited that the teachers felt the need that they should provide explicit teaching of grammar (focus-on-forms) to increase student accuracy in their language use in order to prove their competency in their future school or professional lives.

The data demonstrated that teachers had concerns regarding making efficient decisions about which grammar feature to focus on and combining it meaningfully to

their target lesson. Based on this finding, I propose that book publishers should take teacher's voices into consideration in designing student books that the teachers could use as a resource. In addition, teacher education professionals can offer courses that involve approaches, strategies and methods of teaching grammar in combination with actual teaching episodes that show how expert teachers implement the extant methods and strategies in their lessons. Further field opportunities should be provided to teachers-to-be in which they can experience and collaborate with teachers in real school settings.

Professional meetings can also be beneficial in broadening the teacher knowledge of effective grammar teaching. I am aware that ESL team leaders and the district coach tended to organize meetings to discuss various topics. Within these meetings, teachers could share their concerns regarding the combination of grammar and the target lesson. They could appoint people in constructing a lesson curriculum that also include grammar teaching or they could hire a publisher that could arrange an editor to write a book by taking the teachers' needs into consideration.

Based on the teacher interviews regarding teacher beliefs in grammar teaching, teachers might have specious assumption that isolated grammar teaching was disadvantageous. However, present research proposes that grammar teaching in isolation (focus-on-forms) can also be influential in enhancing student grammar learning (Sheen, 2003, 2005; Ellis, 2012). I contend that teachers might not have an accurate picture of the use of various FFI options. Therefore, I propose that teacher educators could provide FFI research with opposing views to their prospective ESL teachers and show them that any grammar teaching option could be implemented if the teachers see the need to. It should

be emphasized that the teachers need to depend on their sound judgment based on the current circumstances they are in.

One other point that I would like to discuss deals with teacher talk during teaching. Teacher talk was seen as a valuable resource for language learners (Krashen, 1981). However, student perceptions brought forward how much teacher talk enable student engagement. Walsh (2002) investigated the benefits and hindrances of teacher talk in EFL classrooms. O'Neill (1994) discussed teacher talk and provided the conditions that it could be facilitating. Warren-Price (2003) inquired into his own teaching and his use of talk and concluded that he needed to drop the amount of his talk in attempt to increase student participation and enable student communication. Discussions vary when it comes to the teacher talk; in fact, many would argue that it was a matter of teacher balance. In this study, there was a conflict between teacher decision of the dominance of the teacher talk and the students' thinking of the amount of teacher talk. Students clearly stated that they lost their engagement when the teacher talk was dominant. As far as I know not much research was carried out to explore teacher talk in ESL classrooms. I would encourage further research that looked into the teacher talk and the student perceptions of teacher talk within FFI based lessons to provide more insight to this point.

As a last point, I would like to talk about the unintentional impact of a researcher and the research topic they are exploring to their participant teachers. We researchers are concerned with our presence in a classroom for varying reasons. We do not want to disrupt the usual class atmosphere; we do not want the students and the teachers to feel uncomfortable and anxious. We want to be as invisible as possible. In time, we become

not as intimidating to the students and the teachers. In fact, we may not realize that our research intentions could be an inspiration for the teachers. I came to this understanding after a research participant confided in me, thanked me actually to enable her to change her visions towards grammar teaching. Even if I did nothing, my research topic urged this teacher to search more about grammar teaching and encouraged her to explore different ways that she can use in her lessons. Here is what the teacher told me at the end of my last observation (February 15, 2013):

I am glad I chose to participate in your study. I was able to look at my current teaching of grammar and how to work on adjusting it to meet the needs of the students in my class. It is a work in progress on my part but I am able to look at it from a different perspective now.

Limitations

By doing this research I intend to explore the display of teacher expertise with regard to FFI. The study of these teachers' expertise using a case study design enabled me to explore their particularistic application of FFI expertise. I should be cautious not to generalize the findings to the whole population of ESL teachers. The boundaries of this research project limited to three teachers and three different schools in a city located in the Midwest U.S. Further research could implement a similar case study design that target teachers in different states. In addition, I also aimed to explore student perceptions of teacher teaching options. Even though all of the students participated in this study, the number of participant students was limited to the participant teacher classrooms that I was observing. I recommend a further research that targets large student population to better understand student perceptions of the impact of FFI options on their learning.

Conclusion

To recap, the nature of teaching expertise for FFI as revealed in this study is shaped by teacher cognitive decisions regarding what, when and how to focus on language form. Teacher perception of student academic needs is not only at the core of teacher thinking, but also influences teacher FFI teaching options such as the use of integrated and isolated FFI to combine the form and its function in a meaningful context, or the use of focus-on-forms to enhance student explicit understanding of the target grammar.

Teachers act against their beliefs of grammar teaching, or have difficulties in making decisions, when expected grammar knowledge is not observed in a student. Yet, student needs and benefits always determined teachers' instructional behavior. While teachers valued one-on-one instruction, student interaction and the use of a technological tool to facilitate student understanding of grammar, teachers considered providing students with a rationale for the target grammar essential to increase student awareness.

Teachers adapt FFI with the aim of focusing on a grammar feature that is one step beyond students' current level to challenge students. Based on their bilingual experience, teachers considered L1 use as beneficial in student grammar understanding. Finally, teacher use of FFI and students' perceptions of the impact of teacher use of FFI on their learning may show conflicts. Student and teacher perceptions of FFI may converge for efficient grammar teaching and learning. This finding is weak yet promising, and further research to explore this phenomenon is warranted.

Based on the findings on the nature of FFI, the expert FFI involves the deliberate and thoughtful implementation of any type of FFI (isolated, integrated, or focus-on-

formS) based on teacher judgment of student needs, timing within the immediate context, and teacher language teaching priorities. In addition, the consideration of student perspectives of grammar learning complements the FFI teaching expertise.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Teacher Consent Form

English as a Second Language Teacher (ESLT) Adaptive Mindset Regarding Form-Focused Instruction (FFI) and Student Learning

Purpose:

This study will aim to explore the nature of native ESL teacher expertise pertaining to teaching grammar in secondary school settings, particularly in meeting individual student needs in a group instructional context, and the perceptions of ESL students' of the instructional options used in teaching grammar. You are invited to participate in this study because you are teaching ESL in secondary schools and your contribution is invaluable.

Procedures:

Your participation will involve interviews and follow-up interviews, which should take 30 to 45 minutes, at schools at your choice of time. Within the follow-up interviews, you will be asked to view or listen to some parts of the four or five video recorded (or audio recorded) grammar-teaching sessions to provide your thinking for your choice of teaching options. You will be given a protocol before each interview. These interviews will happen four or five times and should last 30 to 45 minutes. These follow-up interviews will be conducted either at the end of the each lesson or the next day in your available time. Our communication will also involve informal conversations and emails. The interviews and the informal conversations will be audiotaped with your permission. Three to four week visit permission to observe and videotape your intermediate and advanced level classroom teaching related to grammar will be requested. If you prefer audiotaping will be used. I may take notes during observation of your grammar teaching. You will also be requested the copies of your instruction materials such as plans, or documents related to the grammar points you focus, and student work. The last five minutes of the four or five grammar focused lessons will be requested to be spared for the investigator to handout blank papers to your students for them to put their opinions about their learning and understanding of the day's grammar lesson.

Risks and/or Discomforts:

There are no known risks involved in participating in this research.

Confidentiality:

Pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity. Any information obtained during this study, which could identify you, will be kept strictly confidential. The data will be kept in the primary investigator's password protected laptop and stored in a locked cabinet in the investigator's office and will only be seen by the investigators during the study and for five years after the study is complete. The information obtained in this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but the data will be reported as aggregated data.

Opportunity to Ask Questions:

You may ask any questions concerning this research and have these questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study. Or you may contact the investigator(s) at the phone numbers below. Please contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board at (402) 472-6965 to voice concerns about the research or if you have any questions about your rights as a research participant.

Freedom to Withdraw:

Participation in this study is voluntary. You can refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers, the principals, the district office, the school in which has provided permission for the research to be conducted, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, or in any other way receive a penalty or loss of benefits to which you or they are otherwise entitled.

Consent, Right to Receive a Copy:

You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. Your signature certifies that you have decided to participate having read and understood the information presented. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

Signature of Participant:

 Signature of Research Participant

 Date
Name and Phone number of investigators

Sevda Budak, Ph.D.c., Principal Investigator
 Jenelle Reeves, Ph.D., Secondary Investigator

402 323-0839
 402 472-2610

Appendix B. Child Assent Form

Dear Student,

We would like to invite you to take part in this study. We are asking you because you are an English Language Learner.

In this study we will try to learn about your thoughts and ideas about the grammar lesson of the day. To do this study, we will give you a blank paper in the last five minutes of each four or five grammar lessons and ask you to write about what you think you have learned and whether the lesson has helped you understand the lesson and what you think would help you learn better. We will also try to talk to you in person to better understand your thoughts either during lunch hours or at the end of the school day for five or ten minutes. We will have these talks four or five times. We will also make an audio recording of your speech.

We will not share your speech and thoughts with your teachers or any other persons. The reason for doing this study is to learn more about your thoughts about the grammar lessons and how they help you learn.

Your parents will also be asked to give their permission for you to take part in this study. Please talk this over with your parents before you decide whether or not to participate.

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. If you decide to participate in this study, you can stop at any time.

If you have any questions at any time, please ask one of the researchers.

IF YOU SIGN THIS FORM IT MEANS THAT YOU HAVE DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE AND HAVE READ EVERYTHING THAT IS ON THIS FORM. YOU AND YOUR PARENTS WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS FORM TO KEEP.

Signature of Subject

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

RESEARCHERS

Sevda Budak, Ph.D.c.

Phone: 402 323-0839

Jenelle Reeves, Ph.D.

Phone: 402 472-2610

Appendix C. Youth Assent Form

Dear Student,

We are inviting you to participate in this study because you are an English Language Learner.

First, we will give you a blank paper in the last five minutes of each four or five grammar lessons and ask you to write about what you think you have learned and whether the lesson has helped you understand the grammar point(s) and what you think would help you learn better. We will also try to talk to you in person to better understand your thoughts either during lunch hours or at the end of the school day for five or ten minutes. We will have these talks four or five times. We will also audio record of your responses.

Being in the study will not have direct benefit to you, but it may help us learn more about your thoughts and ideas about the grammar lessons and how they help you learn. In addition, you may have the opportunity to evaluate your own learning while talking about your thoughts.

You may feel uncomfortable sharing your thoughts, but your responses will be strictly confidential. We will also use fictitious names to protect your identity. We may publish a summary of everybody's responses or present such a summary at a scientific meeting, but your identity and responses would be totally confidential.

We will also ask your parents for their permission for you to do this study. Please talk this over with your parents before you decide whether or not to participate.

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. If you decide to participate in this study, you can stop at any time.

If you have any questions at any time, please ask one of the researchers.

IF YOU SIGN THIS FORM IT MEANS THAT YOU HAVE DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE AND HAVE READ EVERYTHING THAT IS ON THIS FORM. YOU AND YOUR PARENTS WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS FORM TO KEEP.

Signature of Subject

Date

Signature of Researcher

Date

RESEARCHERS

Sevda Budak, Ph.D.c.

Phone: 402 323-0839

Jenelle Reeves, Ph.D.

Phone: 402 472-2610

Appendix D. Parental Informed Consent Form

Purpose:

This project will aim to explore English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher expertise regarding grammar teaching methods and student perspectives of these methods in their understanding. Your child/legal ward is invited to participate in this study because they are secondary school English language learners.

Procedures:

They will be asked to write about their thoughts about the grammar lesson of the day on papers provided by the investigator in the last five minutes of the four or five lessons. The investigator would also want to converse with your child/legal ward at school for five or ten minutes either during lunch hours or at the end of the school day to clarify their ideas. These conversations will happen four or five times and will be audio-recorded. The investigator may also ask your student work from the teacher to compare the learning achieved on that particular grammar point and the student perspective.

Benefits:

This study may help us understand the nature of ESL teacher expertise regarding teaching language form in a classroom context and explore the teacher and the student perspectives of student learning. There are no direct benefits to your child/legal ward as a research participant; however, this study may also provide them an opportunity to reflect on their own learning while talking about their thoughts.

Risks and/or Discomforts:

There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

Confidentiality:

Pseudonyms will be used to protect your student's identity. Any information obtained during this study, which could identify them, will be kept strictly confidential. The data will be kept in the primary investigator's password protected laptop and stored in a locked cabinet in the investigator's office and will only be seen by the investigators during the study and for five years after the study is complete. The information obtained in this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but the data will be reported as aggregated data.

Opportunity to Ask Questions:

You and your child/legal ward may ask any questions concerning this research and have these questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study. Or you may contact the investigator(s) at the phone numbers below. Please contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board at (402) 472-6965 to voice concerns about the research or if you have any questions about your child's/legal ward's rights as research participant.

Freedom to Withdraw:

Participation in this study is voluntary. You and your child/legal ward can refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without harming your and their relationship with the researchers, their teachers, the school in which has provided permission for the research to be conducted, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, or in any other way receive a penalty or loss of benefits to which you or they are otherwise entitled. Also, their grades will not be affected by their participation or withdrawal from the research.

Consent, Right to Receive a Copy:

You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to allow your child/legal ward participate in this research study. Your child/legal ward will also agree to be included within the study by providing assent if they are above the age of seven years old. Your signature certifies that you have decided to allow them to participate having read and understood the information presented. You will be given a copy of this parental/legal guardian consent form to keep.

Name of Child to be included:

(Name of child: Please print)

Name & Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian:

(Name of Parent/Legal Guardian: Please print)

Signature of Parent /Legal Guardian

Date

Name and Phone number of investigators

Sevda Budak, Ph.D.c., Principal Investigator	402 323-0839
Jenelle Reeves, Ph.D., Secondary Investigator	402 472-2610

Appendix E. Stimulated Recall Protocol for Video-Recorded Lessons

We are going to watch a partial segment of the video recording of the grammar lesson you have given. The purpose of this interview is to help you remember what you were thinking during this particular teaching moment. Try to remember what was on your mind at that moment and tell me to stop when you are ready to report your thinking.

Please, tell me everything on your mind and remember that I am not interested in what you think right now, but what you were thinking at that teaching moment you see in the video.

You can watch the segment as much as you want if you think that is necessary for you to recall your thinking of the moment. Whenever you are ready, I will listen and audiotape your verbal report. I will also take notes. Perhaps, I will ask some questions to clarify my understanding.

This videotape and the following audiotape of the interview are strictly confidential.

Pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity and other than the investigators, no one will have access to this information. If you have any questions at any moment, please ask.

Thanks for your invaluable participation once again.

Shall we begin?

Appendix F. Stimulated Recall Protocol for Audio-Recorded Lessons

We are going to listen to a partial segment of the audio recording of the grammar lesson you have given. The purpose of this interview is to help you remember what you were thinking during this particular teaching moment. Try to remember what was on your mind at that moment and tell me to stop when you are ready to report your thinking. Please, tell me everything on your mind and remember that I am not interested in what you think right now, but what you were thinking at that teaching moment you hear in the recording.

You can listen to the segment as much as you want if you think that is necessary for you to recall your thinking of the moment. Whenever you are ready, I will listen and audiotape your verbal report. I will also take notes. Perhaps, I will ask some questions to clarify my understanding.

This audiotape and the following audiotape of the interview are strictly confidential.

Pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity and other than the investigators, no one will have access to this information. If you have any questions at any moment, please ask.

Thanks for your invaluable participation once again.

Shall we begin?

Appendix G. Interview Protocol for Teachers

- Can you tell me your history in becoming an ESL teacher? How long have you been teaching? What levels? And what are you teaching now?
- How do you choose your approaches in teaching grammar? What do you consider? What do you take as a basis in your choice of instruction? What factors shape your grammar teaching instruction?
- What are the dilemmas you face in teaching grammar? What are the challenges you encounter?
- How do you come to know your students? How do you understand their grammar knowledge/level? What is important for you to know about your students to address their needs?
- How do you address your individual student needs? What do you consider in addressing individual student needs, level of proficiency, emotions? Which comes first?
- How do you address your group of students' needs? What do you consider when attending these collective students?
- How do you balance your instruction towards your students?
- How do you understand whether your students have understood the lesson you presented? What do you do to check in their understanding? What do you do if the target outcome is not achieved?

Appendix H. Interview Protocol for Students

- What do you think you learned today?
- What do you think about today's instruction? Did it help you understand today's lesson? If not, what do you think could be different? What would have helped you understand better?

Appendix I. Student Survey

1. How confident do you feel in your ability to use "....."?	a) not confident at all b) very unsure c) somewhat unsure d) pretty sure e) relatively sure f) very sure
2. How well did you understand?	a) very well b) somewhat c) not very much d) not at all
3. In the lesson, what helped you the most to understand?	
4. In the lesson, what did the teacher do to help you understand.....?	
5. What more could have helped you to understand (learn) better?	
6. What did you find confusing during or after teaching?	
7. What questions do you still have if any about?	