



UIT

THE ARCTIC
UNIVERSITY
OF NORWAY

The Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education

Investigating the Beliefs on English Grammar Instruction among Norwegian Students and Teachers in High School

The beliefs of Norwegian L2 learners of English on grammar instruction, and the correlation between grammar knowledge and learner beliefs

Camilla Baumann Johansen

ENG-3982, Master's thesis in English Language and Education, May 2019



Abstract

The objectives of the present study were to gain insight into the beliefs of high-level English second language (ESL) students and teachers from a Norwegian high school on grammar instruction as well as to investigate if grammar knowledge had an influence on these beliefs. To do this, a questionnaire was designed to measure the participants' preferred grammar instructional method out of the four construct pairs: meaning- versus form-focused instruction, focus on form (FonF) versus focus on forms (FonFs), implicit versus explicit instruction, and inductive versus deductive instruction. Additionally, I tested the participants' grammar knowledge and proficiency in English by having them complete a proficiency test and a grammaticality judgement test. After analysing the data from the proficiency and grammaticality judgement test, the students were divided into two groups: The high scoring group (those who scored above the mean score in both tests) and The low scoring group (those who scored under the mean score in both tests). Overall, the participants in the high scoring group showed a preference for meaning-focused and inductive instructional approaches (as did the teachers) and the participants in the low scoring group reported to prefer focus on form and deductive instructional approaches. What this suggests is that there is in fact a correlation between grammar knowledge and one's instructional method preference.

1 Introduction	9
2 Theoretical Background	11
2.1 The Interface Debate	11
2.2 Meaning-focused Instruction vs. Form-focused Instruction.....	12
2.3 Focus on form vs focus on forms	13
2.4 Explicit vs. Implicit instruction	15
2.5 The Inductive and The Deductive Approach.....	15
2.6 Student and Teacher Beliefs on Grammar Instruction	16
2.7 Learner Beliefs on Grammar Instruction	18
2.8 Constructions	19
2.8.1 Subject-verb agreement.....	20
2.8.2 Verb movement.....	22
3 Research questions and hypotheses.....	23
4 Methodology	25
4.1 The participants	27
4.2 The Pilot Study	28
4.3 The proficiency test	29
4.4 The grammaticality judgement test	30
4.5 Questionnaire.....	32
4.5.1 Multi-item scale	32
4.5.2 Open/closed questions in student questionnaire	34
4.5.3 Open/closed questions in teacher questionnaire	35
4.6 Procedure	35
5. Results	37
5.1. Proficiency test	37
5.2 The grammaticality judgement test	38
5.3 High scoring and low scoring group.....	39

5.4 Multi-item psychometric scale	40
5.5 Open questions	42
5.5.1 What have you learned through grammar instruction from earlier?.....	42
5.5.2 Advanced grammatical rules.....	42
5.5.3 The factors shaping the student’s beliefs	43
5.6 Teacher questionnaire.....	43
5.6.1 Multi-item psychometric scale.....	43
5.6.2 Is Grammar Instruction unnecessary?.....	44
5.6.3 Reasoning behind the teachers’ beliefs	44
6 Discussion	45
6.1 Proficiency test and grammaticality judgement test.....	45
6.2 Student beliefs on grammar instruction.....	46
6.3 Teacher beliefs on grammar instruction	48
6.4 The beliefs on grammar instruction change according to the difficulty of the grammatical construction	50
6.5 Study limitations.....	51
7 Conclusion.....	52
Bibliography.....	53
Appendix 1 - The Standardized Oxford proficiency test	55
Appendix 2 - The sentences of the grammaticality judgement test	58
Design & Stimuli.....	58
Appendix 3 - The grammaticality judgement test scoring sheet	60
Appendix 4 - Student questionnaire	61
Appendix 5: Teacher questionnaire.....	66

Foreword

I would like to express my appreciation for the guidance and the significant number of advices that my supervisor, Yulia Rodina, has given me in the process of this study. I would also like to thank Björn Lundquist for helping me with the analysis of the data I collected for this study. Furthermore, I would like to thank the teacher participants for taking part of the experiment, and for the support and feedback they have given me, and special thanks to my practice teacher for the support and for letting me carry out the experiment during my 5-year practice period. Additionally, I would like to thank the student participants for willingly participating in my study, and for their surprising enthusiasm to do so. Finally, a thanks to my cousin and two of her friends for participating in the pilot study, and to my family and partner for support and motivation during this process.

1 Introduction

The present study investigates the beliefs of Norwegian high school students and their teachers on English grammar teaching in foreign language classrooms. The role of English grammar teaching in the classroom has been heavily debated in the last four-five decades, and several propositions and theories have been proposed regarding this. It is a point of interest not only for education systems around the world, but for the field of second language acquisition (SLA) as well. Perhaps the most debated aspect of the role of English grammar teaching is the value of and the relationship between explicitly learned knowledge and subconsciously acquired knowledge and the implications of each, which is known as the interface debate (Krashen, 1981: 1). The interface debate is a name for the conflict between researchers that hold three distinct positions on the concept of the two different learning systems. These positions are called the strong interface position, the weak interface position and the non-interface position. The interface debate and the positions within it are presented and described in section 2.1. More relevant for this study, are the grammar instructional approaches that are based on the different positions in the interface debate: meaning-focused instruction, form-focused instruction, focus on form, focus on forms, explicit instruction, implicit instruction, deductive instruction and inductive instruction. These eight constructs inhabit traits from the different positions in the interface debate and rely on different cognitive systems to execute their effect. Research has been done on determining the efficacy of each of these constructs (see for example, Poole, 2005). Some found that for example focus on forms was more effective than focus on form when trying to make students remember glossaries (Laufer, 2006), and some have argued for the superior efficacy of Focus on Form (Lee, 2000) (Byrnes, 2000). With varying results like these, it is clear to see that the question of the efficacy of each of these constructs is still inconclusive, which might suggest, as some researchers believe, that the efficacy of these constructs is subjective (Thornbury, 2008). If the efficacy of these constructs is indeed subjective, then I suggest that research should be aimed at determining the grammar instructional method preference of English language learners, rather than on the general efficacy of each of the constructs. A study that did something similar to what I suggest, was carried out by Graus and Coppen (2016). The authors tested the English teacher student's preference with grammar methods at universities in the Netherlands. They found that both undergraduate and postgraduate students preferred "more traditional form-focused approaches for teaching higher-level language learners" (Graus and Coppen, 2016). The study does not, however, account for the preferences of the language learners the student teachers are studying

to teach, which I argue is vital for the bigger picture. Do high-level students hold the same grammar instructional method preference as teachers? Is there any instructional method that both high-level students and teachers find particularly efficient when learning English grammar? Are there any individual variables that determine individual preferences? These are the questions that I will attempt to answer in the present study.

The topic of grammar instruction method preferences is important because it can provide valuable insights for the interface debate, as it can tell us which learning method the learners themselves prefer. Additionally, research in this field might unveil problems with the education system and/or help teachers optimize English language courses by practicing the students' preferred methods. With this study I hope to inform and encourage other researchers to undergo a more extensive study on this subject.

To measure the high school students and teacher participants' instructional method preference, I developed a questionnaire consisting of a multi-item psychometric scale section and an open question section designed to identify their preferred method of grammar instruction. Additionally, the participants completed a language proficiency test and a grammaticality judgement test (GJT). The latter was used to investigate students' knowledge of several English grammar rules. The results of the proficiency test and the GJT were then compared to the answers in the questionnaire to see if proficiency level determines students' beliefs on grammar instructional methods.

When reviewing the results of the tests and the questionnaire, an intriguing finding was made. The students who scored above the mean score in the proficiency and grammaticality judgement test seemed to lean in favour of meaning-focused and inductive approaches to grammar instruction, whereas those who scored below the mean score leaned more towards focus on form and deductive instructional approaches. Furthermore, I discovered that the teachers' preferred method – meaning-focused instruction – only corresponded to the high scoring group's preference. The implications of these findings are that grammar knowledge influences the beliefs of high-level students and teachers, and that the teachers preferred method does not align with the needs and wishes of all the students. These implications and the potential reasons behind them are elaborated on in the discussion, in section 8.

2 Theoretical Background

In this section I will position my work with related and/or similar research on the topic of grammar instructional methods, define the different methods and present the different critiques of these methods. First, I will present the interface debate and define the three different positions within it, then I will discuss meaning-focused instruction vs. form-focused instruction, followed by an introduction to focus on form vs. focus on forms. Then I will discuss the implicit vs. explicit approaches to FonFs, and lastly, I will present inductive and deductive instructional approaches.

2.1 The Interface Debate

Ever since Stephen Krashen wrote his influential book *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning* (1981), the relationship between the concepts of explicit and implicit knowledge has been the object of heavy debate within the second language acquisition (SLA) field. His book is about the “Monitor Theory” a theory that “hypothesizes that adults have two independent systems for developing ability in second languages, subconscious language acquisition and conscious language learning, and that these systems are interrelated in a definite way: subconscious acquisition appears to be far more important” (Krashen, 1981: 1). The publication has led a plethora of researchers to debate whether, or to what extent, explicitly learned knowledge can be internalized and become part of the automatized knowledge system. This debate is called “The Interface Debate” and from this debate, three differing schools of thought emerged: The strong interface position, the weak interface position, and the non-interface position.

The strong interface position argues that explicitly learned knowledge can indeed become part of the automatized learning system. This position is most often associated with the SLA researcher Robert DeKeyser.

The weak interface position also argues that there is a connection between implicit and explicit knowledge systems, and that the two are interconnected. However, the followers of this position differ from the strong interface position in their belief that explicit knowledge leads to L2 acquisition only when implicit learning is insufficient. There are several variations of the weak interface position, but they all generally concur with the previously mentioned belief.

The non-interface position does not acknowledge the interconnection between explicit

and implicit knowledge systems and argues that these are two entirely separated systems. This is the stance that Krashen takes in his work, as he argues that “adults have two independent systems for developing ability in second languages” (1981:1). Furthermore, the researchers within the non-interface position group believe that explicit knowledge can, at best, only monitor language performance, and not become acquired knowledge – which the subconscious, implicit learning system, is responsible for.

2.2 Meaning-focused Instruction vs. Form-focused Instruction

The Interface Debate did not only result in a continuous debate among researchers and the emergence of differing schools of thought. A more direct consequence can be seen in today’s school system with the pedagogical distinction between instructions mainly focused on meaning and instructions mainly focused on form. Meaning-focused instruction is an instructional method based around the concept of communicating meaning, where communication of meaning is the primary intention for language teaching (Williams 2005). The meaning focused instructional method is an approach to language acquisition that involves exposure to input of the target language and the use of the target language through meaningful activities and communication that is relevant to the context. This will contribute to an unconscious learning of the L2 (Graus and Coppin 2016). The idea is that since language is a tool for communicating meaning, why should not the teaching of a language be based around communication and meaning as well? The meaning-focused instructional approach is widely used in contemporary English Language classrooms and can be seen in techniques such as Krashen’s and Terrell’s Natural Approach, some content-based English second language (ESL) instruction and immersion programmes (Ellis, 1994: 571).

The contrasting approach, form-focused instruction (FFI), is an umbrella term that characterizes “any planned or incidental instructional activity that is intended to induce language learners to pay attention to linguistic form” (R. Ellis, 2001: 1). Within this approach, grammar instruction and linguistic features, such as pragmatic, morphological, phonological, syntactic, and lexical conditions of the language, are the main focus of the acquisition of the L2 (Graus and Coppin 2016). Learners are presented to grammatical conditions and structures of the language, so they can learn the inner workings and the structure of the language which will in turn increase their proficiency in the target language. FFI, however, is according to Graus and Coppin (2016), “not limited to traditional approaches of grammar teaching as it also

includes attention to form in more communicatively oriented or meaning-oriented language classrooms.” Because of this, form-focused instruction is divided into two distinct sub-categories.

2.3 Focus on form vs focus on forms

The works of Long (1991) and Long and Robinson (1998) defined two distinct sub-categories of form-focused instruction: focus on forms (FonFs) and focus on form (FonF). The two categories can be distinguished by their varying extent of inclusion of meaning-focused instruction. Focus on forms refers to a strictly form-focused instructional method, where the teachers attempt to teach the students a second language by focusing on the formal aspects of the language, such as the grammatical structure and the different linguistic forms. Focus on form, on the other hand, incorporates the ideology of meaning-focused instruction by primarily focusing on the communication of meaning and occasionally addressing the formal aspects of the language if the students struggle with or ask about a rule. In the two following passages I will discuss both FonFs and FonF in more detail.

As mentioned, FonFs is a method that stands in contrast to meaning-focused instruction, where the primary focus is on the formal aspects of the language, such as grammatical structures and linguistic forms as opposed to the communication of meaning. Through this method, the learners are isolated from meaningful activities and are supposed to practice grammatical, and linguistic forms and rules. An example of this in a classroom situation could be when a teacher starts a lesson by writing subject-verb agreement rules on the blackboard and asks the students to write these rules down in their notebook. After the teacher has explicitly explained these rules to the learners, the learners are asked to practice and internalize these rules individually.

FonFs in recent years has got a bad reputation, since it is associated with traditional classroom practices and is therefore seen as outdated. Many researchers, such as I. S. P. Nation (2001), have suggested that a balanced language course should consist of four strands: comprehensible meaning-focused input, form-focused instruction, meaning-focused output, and fluency development (Laufer, 2006). Laufer (2006) conducted a study where she tested the efficiency of both FonF and FonFs. She found that FonFs was more effective than FonF (as the students instructed with the FonFs method remembered more glossaries than those instructed with FonF) and went so far as to say that FonFs was “indispensable to vocabulary instruction” (Laufer, 2006). The problem with calling FonFs “indispensable to vocabulary instruction” is

that it is automatically contradicted and denied by the many L2 learners who have learned the majority of their vocabulary and grammatical rules by participating in immersive activities such as gaming and spending prolonged periods of time with native speakers of the L2. On the other hand, most of these individuals probably extensively participated in these immersive activities during the critical period. The critical period is a stage in development that happens in all children approximately between ages 4-13. During this period language develops readily and subconsciously. The students in Laufer's study was high-level learners from a high school, which means that they were no longer in the critical period, and as such they no longer had the added comfort of absorbing grammar knowledge subconsciously like a swamp.

Long (1991) and Long and Robinson (1998) argue that both meaning-focused instruction and focus on forms are valuable teaching methods, and that the occasional focus on the discreet forms of the second language could be beneficial for the student's L2 acquisition. However, they believe that the subconscious learning process encouraged by meaning-focused instruction is more crucial. As such, focus on form emerged as a bridge between the opposing beliefs of meaning-focused instruction and FonFs. A FonF approach emphasizes the importance of meaning centred communication and encourages it, while simultaneously drawing attention to formal aspects of the L2 when necessary. An example of this in a classroom setting could be when the teacher made the students engage in a meaningful activity such as a class discussion in the L2 and then occasionally corrected student errors and gave them examples of target-like forms. Here, the class would get to practice the communicative skills in the L2 in an immersive environment, while concurrently learning about the formal aspects of the L2. In studies, FonF has proved to be an efficient teaching method of a second language (See Byrnes, 2000 and Lee, 2000 for further summaries of focus on form-related research). However, critics of FonF, such as Alex Poole (2005: 50), argue that: "[...]not a single empirical study can be found that took place in a setting in which classes were overcrowded, up to-date materials were generally not available, and teachers received less than adequate training in language skills and pedagogy." In other words, Poole implies that FonF might not be as efficient as studies seem to indicate when applied to real life classrooms that might be overcrowded and not well-funded, and that might struggle with classroom discipline problems. These are solid arguments, as a FonF approach requires teachers that are well-educated and that are capable of listening to and correcting all the students that need correcting – which can prove to be difficult in a class with many students. Additionally, this approach also requires students that are willing to engage in

these meaningful activities, that are motivated to learn, and that are willing to participate in class.

2.4 Explicit vs. Implicit instruction

A Focus on form approach can be executed through implicit or explicit instruction. Implicit instruction involves limited formal language teaching, where the learners are exposed to communicative activities such as reading books, watching movies, etc, instead of the teacher purposely addressing the formal aspects of language. The idea is that by doing this, the learners automatically gain knowledge of grammatical structures and forms, without explicitly studying these aspects. An example of implicit instruction can be if the teacher lets the students talk to each other about their dream vacation. Then the teacher can go around and listen to the learners' interaction with each other and correct them if he/she hears any grammatical errors, in order to make the learners aware of the grammatical rule they made an error in.

Explicit instruction, on the other hand, involves planned activities that are meant to highlight formal aspects of the target language. In this method, the teacher purposely makes the learners aware of grammatical and linguistic forms, so that they can learn them and further internalize these rules by using them communicatively. The approach is characterized by the fact that the learning of the grammatical forms is planned as opposed to the implicit method where the addressing of the formal aspects of the L2 only occur when a learner is struggling with a particular aspect or rule. The instruction can consist of grammatical activities such as "fill in the blanks", verbal or written repetition of rules, attempting to explain the rule to a classmate, and the writing of example sentences containing the rule. As such, this method is essentially a bridge between FonF and FonFs.

2.5 The Inductive and The Deductive Approach

The explicit version of FonF can either be deductive or inductive. With an inductive approach, the learners are induced to discover and notice grammatical rules themselves, which often is encouraged by the teacher giving the students texts or example sentences where the particular rule in question is dominant. With a deductive approach, the learners are given grammatical rules in advance, so they can be used and practiced through exercises. Scott Thornbury gave a great example of these two approaches in his book *How To Teach Grammar* (1991):

An example of deductive learning might be that, on arriving in a country you have never been to before, you are told that as a rule people rub noses when greeting one another, and so you do exactly that. An example of inductive learning would be, on arriving in this same country, you observe several instances of people rubbing noses on meeting so you conclude that this is the custom, and proceed to do likewise. (Thornbury, 1991: 29)

In the same book, Thornbury states that studies on the efficacy of these two approaches has been inconclusive (1991: 38), and that it is most likely due to the great number of variables involved (the students preferred approach, the teacher's explanatory skills, etc). Additionally, he states that: “[a] key factor seems to be the kind of item being taught. Some grammatical items seem to lend themselves to a deductive treatment, and others to an inductive one.” (38) Thornbury suggests that a deductive approach is beneficial when teaching adult learners, as they tend to tackle problems analytically and reflective, but are not as great with intuitive subconscious learning. Children and teenagers on the other hand, are more receptive and attentive to structures happening around them as they are trying to make sense of the world, this is why an inductive approach is beneficial when teaching younger learners. Additionally, a deductive approach can easily and quickly bore even the most attentive and engaged students, which might make it a unfortunate choice of method for the younger learners. Finally, Thornbury believes that an inductive approach provides more profound knowledge of language, since it involves cognitive learning and demands greater attention from the students than what a deductive approach does. This coincides with Krashen's monitor theory (1981), as Thornbury's belief communicates with the larger issue of conscious language learning vs. subconscious language acquisition and supports Krashen's hypothesis that subconscious acquisition is more important than conscious learning. This is not the stance that I take in this study, as the results of the tests I conducted seem to indicate a more mutually important relationship between conscious learning and subconscious acquisition, than the one Krashen and Thornbury describes.

2.6 Student and Teacher Beliefs on Grammar Instruction

The researchers Johan Graus and Peter-Arno Coppen published a study named *Student Teacher Beliefs on Grammar Instruction* in 2016, where they tested 832 undergraduate and postgraduate

student teachers of English on their beliefs on grammar instruction at nine universities across the Netherlands. In the study, Graus and Coppen used the same eight constructs as those I have introduced above (Meaning-focused, form-focused, FonF, FonFs, explicit, implicit, inductive and deductive) and developed a questionnaire designed to acquire insights about student teacher beliefs on their preferred grammar instructional method. In the study, they found that the answers of higher-year undergraduates and postgraduates revealed a trend towards a preference for more meaning-focused and implicit instruction, but ultimately:

[...] when learner level is taken into consideration students show a distinct preference for form-focused instruction and FonFs for teaching the higher-level pupils. Additionally, we found that grammatical difficulty also affects beliefs: explicit and deductive approaches are clearly preferred for teaching complex grammatical structures. (Graus and Coppen, 2016: 24)

Graus and Coppens study is highly relevant for my study, as the study is similar both in terms of its purpose and its methodology. Their purpose was to:

[...] explore the beliefs that were held in different stages of students' educational and professional lives and what the origins of these beliefs were. In addition, we examined the influence of two variables – grammatical difficulty and learner level – that have been investigated intensively by SLA researchers [...] but that have been all but neglected in teacher cognition research. (Graus and Coppen, 2016: 3)

The methodology they used is, as mentioned, a questionnaire. This questionnaire is similar to mine, in that it measures the beliefs of the participants in eight constructs. On the other hand, the methodology in the present thesis differs since I also test the participants' general grammar knowledge as well with the proficiency test (see section 4.3) and the grammaticality judgement test (see section 4.4). The biggest difference between their study and mine, is the participants. Graus and Coppen studied teacher students' beliefs on grammar instruction, whereas I studied high-level student beliefs on grammar instruction and their grammar knowledge.

Additionally, in their study, Graus and Coppen divided their participants in two groups – undergraduates and postgraduates. This was done to test if teacher students do indeed get influenced by the knowledge they obtain about grammar instruction during their teacher education. They tested this since research findings, such as indicated in Ur’s study from 2011(qtd. In Graus and Coppen), suggest that, “many students (and practising teachers) [...] seem reluctant to deviate from the traditional model of presenting rules and practising these in a limited context [...]” (Graus and Coppen, 2016: Introduction). They found that there was indeed a difference between the beliefs of undergraduates and postgraduates, which indicates that students’ beliefs do get influenced by their teacher education. They cannot, however, answer whether or not these beliefs are reflected in the participants’ practice, as they only tested student teachers and not established teachers. I also divided my participants in two groups, but my groups are distinguished by their grammar knowledge and not by the stage of education they are in. I grouped the participants based on their grammar knowledge to see if the participants’ proficiency and knowledge in grammar affected their beliefs, and my findings seem to demonstrate just that (see section 5). To conclude, our studies are both similar and divergent, but the relevance of Coppen and Graus’ study to mine, lies most prominently in its value as a point of reference. Comparing the findings of their study to mine will reveal if the beliefs on grammar instruction of student teachers align with those of the students. This will be valuable information for further research, for if this is not the case in this and other studies, there is potentially room for great improvement in this area in English language learning classrooms, seeing as how the learners’ preferences and wishes are possibly not met by their future teachers.

2.7 Learner Beliefs on Grammar Instruction

The present study is not the first to investigate learners’ beliefs on grammar instruction. A study by Shawn Loewen and his colleagues (2009), for example, had 754 students at a university in America complete a questionnaire designed to account for student beliefs on grammar instruction and error correction. The results were varying, but a trend was revealed in the beliefs of English second language learners (ESL), for they doubted the need of grammar instruction and error correction more than what foreign language learners did (Loewen, 2009: 101). Loewen states that: “One possible explanation for these differences might relate to the amount of grammar instruction in learners’ current or past L2 classes” (101).

Another study by Nina Spada and her research team from 2009, examined the learners' preference for when grammar instruction should be taught. The methodology she used in this study was primarily the questionnaire. They collected data from two groups: group one consisted of 12 expert judges who provided judgments of the content validity of the questionnaire and group two consisted of 314 ESL students who provided responses to the final version of the questionnaire. What she found in the study, was that overall the results indicated that the learners preferred grammar instructional approaches that integrated grammar instruction in communicative practice. They also found that the ESL learners reported that they preferred separating grammar instruction from communicative practice a lot more than what the EFL learners did (Spada, 2009).

Renate Schulz conducted an extensive study in 2001, where she tested 122 Colombian FL instructors and 607 Colombian students in predominantly EFL courses on their beliefs on grammar instruction and corrective feedback. She compared these results with the results of a previous study by Schulz from 1996, where she tested 824 FL students and 92 FL instructors at the university of Arizona (Schulz, 2001: 246). Schulz found that the students' and the teachers' views on grammar instruction differ, as well as their beliefs on corrective feedback. She found that almost all students expressed a desire to have their errors corrected, while the teachers' seemed reluctant to do so (Schulz, 2001: 255). She also found that most, "[o]verall, the data show that the Colombian students, as well as their teachers, were more favourably inclined toward traditional language teaching, which indicates stronger beliefs regarding the efficacy of explicit grammar instruction and error correction." (Schulz, 2001: 254), but that the teachers felt, more than the students, that real life communicative practices also play an important role.

While there is a substantial amount of research on the subject of learner beliefs on grammar instruction, my study is the only one, to my knowledge, that investigates if learner beliefs are influenced by the learner's grammar knowledge. This is important information as it can help future researchers on the subject to identify at the very least one of the many variables that shapes one's beliefs on grammar instruction and it can help teachers customize their instruction based on their students' grammar knowledge.

2.8 Constructions

In this section I will briefly define and provide examples of two of the grammatical constructions that I tested the participants in and that I will discuss in this study; starting with subject-verb agreement, followed by verb movement.

2.8.1 Subject-verb agreement

The English language contains several morphological and syntactic rules, and one of them is the subject-verb agreement. The Norwegian language does not have this necessity of agreement between subject and verb, which is why many Norwegians struggle to learn this properly when learning the English language. Because of this, I have chosen to include the subject-verb agreement construction in the grammaticality judgement test. This will reinforce our understanding of each participant's actual grammar knowledge. Subject-verb agreement is the grammatical rule that entails that the subject and the verb must always agree. With this I mean that the subjects and the verbs must agree with one another in both person and number. Therefore, if the subject is singular, the verb must also be singular, and if the subject is plural then the verb must also be plural. In English, sentences that involve present tense third person singulars, have to be followed by a verb with the suffix *-s* (example 1 c), or the suffix *-es* if the verb ends with a vowel letter, and no ending for modal auxiliary verbs. When the subject in the sentence is not third person singular, the verb remains in its original form (without the suffix *-s*) (see examples 1 a, b, d, e).

(1)

- a. I walk to school (first person singular)
- b. You walk to school (second person singular)
- c. He/she walks to school (third person singular)
- d. You walk to school (second person plural)
- e. They walk to school (third person plural)

The verb *be*, and its present tense forms *am*, *are*, *is*, and its past forms *was* and *were*, and modals do not follow the subject-verb agreement. The form of *be* and the modal auxiliaries remain the same form in third person singular sentences (see examples 2 and 3).

To be form

(2)

- a. I am hungry (first person singular)

- b. You are hungry (second person singular)
- c. She is hungry (third person plural)
- d. You are hungry (second person plural)
- e. They are hungry (third person plural)

Modal auxiliaries

(3)

- a. I should change the battery (first person singular)
- b. You should change the battery (second person singular)
- c. He should change the battery (third person singular)
- d. You should change the battery (second person plural)
- e. They should change the battery (third person plural)

The Norwegian language does not have the requirement of agreement between the subject and the verb. In Norwegian, a suffix *-r* is added to the verb in present tense sentences independent of number or person. This is exemplified in (4).

(4)

- a. Jeg spiller fotball (First person singular)

I play fotball

- b. Kari spiller fotball (Third person singular)

Kari plays fotball

- c. Dere spiller fotball (Second person plural)

You play football

2.8.2 Verb movement

In the English language, the word order is Subject Verb Object (SVO), and one of the constructions in the grammaticality judgement test is the SVO construction. The S-V word order is not affected by where the words are in a sentence. The subject and the verb occur in the same order, and this is unaffected by whether something else precedes the subject. Interrogative sentences normally have a V-S word order. The sentences used in the test are declarative sentences, which is why this section will focus solely on these. The example (5) below shows examples of two declarative sentences.

(5)

- a. I bought a white house (S-V-dO)
- b. Yesterday you saw Maria outdoors (A-S-V-dO-A)

In the Norwegian language, the word order also follows the SVO order as mentioned above, and the fundamental rule is that the verb is placed in the second position in a sentence. However, the Norwegian and English language differ in some way in the SVO word order through a procedure named inversion. In the English language, the verb phrase often occurs after the subject in non-subject-initial declarative clauses. In Norwegian, the rule is that the verb must be in the second position, therefore the finite verb switch place to the second position in the sentence. Therefore, translating sentences from English to Norwegian, where the finite verb is not originally in the second position, can be confusing for Norwegians. Examples:

Non-subject-initial declarative main clauses, lexically

(6)

- a. Last night my father went for a walk (A-S-V-dO)
- b. I går kveld dro faren min på en spasertur (A-V-S-dO)
- c. *Last night went my father for a walk (*A-S-V-dO)

Subject-initial declarative main clauses, lexically

(7)

- a. The lady always goes by the gas station (S-A-V-dO)

b. Damen går alltid forbi bensinstasjonen (S-A-V-dO)

c.* The lady goes always by the gas station (S-V-A-dO)

In the grammaticality judgement test used in this study, the participants are tested in non-subject initial clauses and verb movement across an adverb in subject-initial clauses.

3 Research questions and hypotheses

In the following sections I will present and discuss my research questions and my predictions. In section I introduce my research questions and briefly discuss the intention and reasoning behind each one. Further, I discuss my predictions that are developed from theory in section 2. The three research questions raised in this study are:

RQ1: What beliefs do high-level students hold on meaning-focused and form-focused instruction?

RQ2: How does students' actual knowledge of English grammar and overall language proficiency affect/shape their beliefs?

RQ3: What beliefs do the teachers of high-level students hold on meaning-focused and form-focused instruction and are there differences in teacher vs. student beliefs?

These questions are designed to address a research problem in the SLA field, specifically the problems of the efficiency of the different grammar instructional methods and the different beliefs on these methods. RQ1 investigates high-level English learners' beliefs on grammar instruction and is asked in order to figure out what type of grammar instruction high school students prefer (Meaning-focused, form-focused, FonF, FonFS, Explicit, implicit, deductive and/or inductive). The research question is similar to that of Graus and Coppen in their study from 2016. Their research question 1 was: "Which beliefs on form-focused instruction do undergraduate and postgraduate EFL student teachers hold in successive year groups?" (Graus and Coppen, 2016: 573). In their study, they found that overall the student teachers preferred form-focused, explicit, inductive instruction and FonFs, but when learner level was taken into consideration the students showed a distinct preference for more traditional form-focused approaches and FonFs (Graus and Coppen, 2016: 594). Given these findings, I predict that my participants overall will report to prefer form-focused, explicit, inductive and FonFs approaches as well. RQ2 explores the extent of how grammar knowledge and overall language proficiency shapes the participants beliefs. Contrary to the findings of Graus and Coppen's 2016 study, I suspect that the students with extensive grammar knowledge and language proficiency will show to prefer more meaning-focused and implicit instructional approaches. This is because I believe that higher level students quickly grow tired of traditional form-focused instructional approaches, as they already have a substantial amount of knowledge about the subject, and

therefore wishes the instruction to focus on other aspects and challenges while practicing in the target language, such as the different cultures of the world, literature, etc. RQ3 investigates the beliefs on grammar instruction that the teachers of high-level students hold, and if there are differences in the beliefs of the teachers and the students that they teach. I predict that the teachers will, as seen in Graus and Coppen's study (2016), prefer form-focused instruction and FonFs, since they are teaching high-level students. However, after looking at Renate Schulz's large-scale study from 2001 that confirms that there is often a mismatch between students' and teachers' views on grammar instruction, I cannot rule out the possibility that this will be the case in my study as well. Thornbury (1999) also argues that grammar instructional method preference is subjective, this leads me to believe that there will be differences among the students' beliefs as well; which is why I divided them in 2 groups - to see if grammar knowledge could be one of these subjective variables that determines their beliefs.

4 Methodology

The methodology for this experiment is based on a quantitative methodology. The methodology consists of a threefold test that is made up of a proficiency test, which is discussed further in section 4.3, a grammaticality judgement test (4,4), and a questionnaire (4,5). Parts of the methodology are inspired by Jensen (2016) and Jensen (2017), which also include a similar proficiency test and a grammaticality judgement test, but with a different investigative focus. Before starting with the main experiment, a pilot study was completed. More about the pilot study is discussed in section 4.2.

Before each test, the participants (who are characterized in section 4.1) were asked to write down a code on each paper in the tests. The code consists of the first letter of their mother's first name, the first letter of their mother's last name, and the three last numbers of their phone number. The reason for this advanced code, is to keep the participants anonymous while simultaneously making sure that it is possible to separate the participants from one another and compare how they did on each of the tests, and to make sure that the students remember the codes. The first test the participants had to participate in was the proficiency test. The proficiency test is in the form of a paper handout and is based on "fill in the blank" sentences, that aim to display the participants overall grammatical proficiency. This type of test is included in my experiment to get an overview of the proficiency level of each student and to further compare them to the data from the main part of the experiment - the questionnaire. The second test is the grammaticality judgement test. A test that is presented in PowerPoint from a projector, and the participants had to answer whether the sentences were grammatical or ungrammatical on a table handout. This test is also included to see if the students struggle with different constructions, and in order to further analyse if these results can affect their beliefs on grammar instruction. The grammaticality judgement test is discussed in more details in section 4.4. The main part of the experiment is the questionnaire, one questionnaire was designed for students and one for teachers. The questionnaires are inspired by Graus and Coppin (2016) who developed a similar questionnaire to investigate the attitudes of student teachers towards meaning-focused instruction vs form-focused instruction, focus on form vs focus on forms, explicit vs implicit instruction, and inductive vs deductive instruction.

The questionnaire is in the form of a paper handout as well. Both questionnaires include a multi-item psychometric scale, and some open and closed questions. All the statements in the first section will gather data on the participants' preference on meaning-focused instruction versus form-focused instruction, focus on form versus focus on forms, explicit versus implicit

instruction, and deductive versus inductive instruction. The next section will gather data about other aspects around beliefs on English grammatical instruction. The questionnaire is discussed in section 4.5. The three tests were conducted in two lessons, on two different days and in two different classes. Each lesson lasted for 90 minutes. Even though the participants are almost adults with their attention span in check, I still used two lessons on two different days for the experiment to prevent the participants from getting exhausted or impatient during the experiment. Therefore, I used the first lesson for the proficiency test and the grammaticality judgement, and the week after I used the start of a lesson to the questionnaire. Also, I intentionally separated the judgement test and the questionnaire, since the judgement test could potentially temporarily influence how the students felt about grammar teaching in general. If, for example, a student found the judgement test boring, it could have made him more inclined to base his answers on his temporary feelings.

4.1 The participants

The participants in this study are students in the first year of high school (high-level students), and English teachers from a vocational school in Tromsø in Northern Norway. The students are between 16 and 17 years old enrolled in a health and adolescence school program. The students started their schooling in 1st grade (when they were 6 years old), as most Norwegian students do, and have now learned English in school for 11 years. They are first graders from two different classes in the health and adolescence program. Altogether, there are thirty-nine students in total in both classes, fourteen from one of the classes and sixteen from the other. Nine students only attended school at one of the experiment days, which means that they were only able to participate in either the proficiency test, the grammaticality judgement test or the questionnaire. These participants are not included in the experiment. Therefore, there are thirty student participants in total in this experiment. There were also five minority students among the participants, one with Thai as a first language, two with Kurdish as a first language, and two with Spanish as a first language. These participants moved to Norway in an age of 4-6 years and have started in the Norwegian school the same age as Norwegian students, and therefore they also have had the same length of English exposure. Therefore, I will not take their language background into account in this study. All the students agreed to take the tests, and they were all able to give consent themselves, as they are over the age of 15. (NSD 2019). The reason for choosing an older age group instead of younger students from secondary school or primary school, is because in the research of beliefs on grammar instruction, it will be more effective to

study older students since they have acquired greater capabilities in the English language, and are more inclined to have beliefs on their preferred grammar instruction method.

In this experiment, there is also a questionnaire made for English teachers. This questionnaire is similar to the student questionnaire, but with some adjustments. The participants of the questionnaire were four English teachers in the “health and adolescence” program from the same school as the students. The reason for including teachers in this experiment is to research their beliefs on grammar instruction, why they do hold these beliefs, and to compare these beliefs to the student beliefs and research the correlation between them.

Figure 1: Overview of the number of participants, their age, age of acquisition and length of English language exposure

	Number	Age	Age of acquisition	Length of exposure
Students	30	15-16	6	11 years
Teachers	4	35-50		

4.2 The Pilot Study

Before the experiment, a pilot study was carried out. In the pilot study there were three participants at the age of 15 years old that participated in the proficiency test, grammaticality judgement, and the student questionnaire. They all have Norwegian as their L1, and have learned English in school since 1st grade, and have this as an L2. The three participants were my cousin and two of her friends. For the teacher questionnaire I used my practice teacher as a participant. He is an adjunct professor who specialises in social studies, English and history. The main reasons for the pilot study, were to investigate following questions:

1. Are there any questions that are hard to understand, that need to be more specific or reworded?
2. Were there any questions or tasks that could easily be misunderstood?
3. Were the tasks too difficult for their age group?

4. Do the tasks have any errors that I am not aware of, such as grammatical errors, design errors or other defects?

One concern I had about the proficiency test and the grammaticality judgement test, was that it potentially did not match the level of proficiency that the participants of my study had. This concern stemmed from Jensen's (2016) and Jensen's (2017) study, where they stated that the proficiency test and the grammaticality judgement test was a good fit for the age group of the participants in their study, which were 8th graders and 4th graders at the age of 9-10 years old, and 12-13 years old. The age groups of the participants in my study were 16-17 years old, and the participants in the pilot study were 16 years old.

When the pilot study was completed, I discussed the test with the participants. Their immediate comments were that they had really noticed that the proficiency and the grammaticality judgement test became more and more difficult throughout. Their first impression was that the test was not too difficult, but not too easy either, as they found it more difficult after a while. They had no problems understanding what to do in each task, or to understand the context of the sentences, but some of the correct grammatical "fill in" tasks were more difficult. Overall, they found the tests appropriate for their age group, which is why I concluded that the tests were suitable for the experiment.

For the questionnaire, a few changes were made after the pilot study. Some of the questions in the questionnaire were a little hard to answer according to the 16-17 years old participants. Therefore, two questions that originally were open questions were changed into closed questions with several choice alternatives.

4.3 The proficiency test

This study includes a background information sheet, a proficiency test, grammaticality judgement test, and a questionnaire. The first part of the study is the background information sheet and the proficiency test. The background information sheet is handed out with the proficiency test. On this paper, they are asked to fill out with their age, native tongue, other second languages, and how many years they have had English instruction in school. This information is relevant, because it can be compared with the test results and identify patterns.

The proficiency test I used in my study is an adaptation of the standardized Oxford proficiency test. The test has been previously used by others who investigate and research the Second language acquisition study, like Jensen (2017) and Jensen (2016). The proficiency test is not the main part of my study, but it is included to map out the participants' general proficiency in English. Additionally, this information is crucial because it allows me to compare the participants' general proficiency in English with their beliefs on grammar instruction, which in turn might reveal trends and/or tendencies. The test consists of "fill in the blanks" tasks, with multiple choice alternatives. In the first part the participants need to fill in the right word in different sentences (example 1), and in the last part the participants also need to fill in the blanks, but here all the test sentences compose a single story (example 2 and 3).

Example 1. (5) In some places **it rains / there rains / it raining** almost every day

Example 2. (21) **The history of aeroplane / the aeroplane / an aeroplane** is

Example 3. (22) **quite a / a quite / quite** short one. For many centuries, men

Before handing out the test, I provided them with some information about the test. There were no oral questions among the students about the test before, during or after the test.

4.4 The grammaticality judgement test

The grammaticality judgement test consists of fifteen sentences that are presented in a grammatical form and in an ungrammatical form. Therefore, there are altogether thirty sentences for the participants to judge. Each of the thirty sentences are presented alone on a PowerPoint presentation on a projector, for ten seconds per sentence. In these ten seconds the participants must decide whether the sentence presented on the projector is grammatical or ungrammatical and fill their answer on a scoring sheet (see appendix 3). The participants are tested in three constructions in this test, and these constructions are subject-initial and non-subject-initial declarative clauses with lexical verbs, and subject-initial declaratives with 3rd person singular subjects. Each construction is revealed through five grammatical sentences, and five ungrammatical sentences that are similar to the grammatical ones. Therefore, the participants must judge ten sentences for each construction type. There are also five fillers

included, which is included to help boost the interest of the grammatical weak participants, and for distracting the participants' recognition of patterns in what they're being tested in. The grammatical and ungrammatical form of a sentence does not appear in pairs or immediately after one another, they are separated and appear in random orders to prevent the participant from recognizing the structure of the sentences and from comparing the two varieties of the sentences.

(7) *3rd person singular subject*

Martin plays with the white cat every day

*Martin play with the white cat every day

8) *Non-subject initial clauses, verb movement*

Yesterday the boy cried because he fell

*Yesterday cried the boy because he fell

(9) *Subject-initial clauses, verb movement*

Sara only likes to go swimming alone

*Sara likes only to go swimming alone

(10) *Ungrammatical filler*

*Dog the barked at little cat the all day long

The linguist Ewa Dabrowska (2010) reports some important factors regarding the grammatical judgement of sentences in her study *Naïve v. expert intuitions: An empirical study of acceptability judgments*, by explaining the crucialness of neutralizing the target sentences through “balancing stimuli for length, lexical content, processing difficulty, plausibility, etc., whenever possible”, or either to “control for them (by setting up control conditions which will allow them to assess the extent to which the confounding factors affect speakers' judgments”. (Dabrowska, 2010: 5) With this in mind, the choice of words in each sentence in the test is

based on words from a word frequency list of English, to avoid the participants being unfamiliar with some words in the sentences. This can cause a misunderstanding of the sentence that is not based on grammatical factors, which gives invalid data. Therefore, it is also important that the sentences have approximately the same vocabulary and length, and that all the sentences in the test are made up of 10-12 syllables.

4.5 Questionnaire

In the following passages I will present and discuss the main experiment. The main experiment consists of two questionnaires, one for teachers and one for the students. The questionnaires include a Multi-Item scale and open/closed questions.

4.5.1 Multi-item scale

The main part of the experiment is the questionnaire. The questionnaire is written in Norwegian, to avoid any confusion or misinterpretations. The questionnaire is developed to collect data about student and teacher beliefs on English grammar instruction in a Norwegian school. The questionnaire for the teachers and the students differs from one another, but the first part is similar. The first part of the questionnaire is a multi-item psychometric scale consisting of eight statements that the participant can rank into either “strongly agree”, “agree”, “neither agree nor disagree”, “disagree”, and “strongly disagree”. This part of the questionnaire is developed to investigate the students’ and the teachers’ attitude towards meaning-focused instruction vs form-focused instruction, focus on form vs focus on forms, explicit vs implicit instruction, and inductive vs deductive instruction. All the instruction forms are paired with a form that stands in contrast to the other. For example, in implicit instruction the learner learns grammatical forms implicitly, which stands in contrast to explicit learning, where grammatical forms are learned intentionally and pre-planned. Further, the first part includes eight statements that will measure the participants preferred method in these four instruction pairs, one statement for each instruction type.

Figure 2: Scales and sample items of the Multi-item scale.

Scale	Pole	Items	Sample items
Meaning-focused vs Form-focused instruction	Meaning-focused	MFI1	Det er ikke viktig å fokusere på grammatikk i engelskundervisningen, fokuset bør være på å lære å kommunisere. Læreren bør inkludere grammatikk i engelsk undervisningen
	Form-focused	MFI2	
Focus on form vs focus on forms	Focus on forms	FFSI3	Jeg mener det er viktig å øve ofte på grammatikk for å kunne lære språket godt Lærere bør <u>kun</u> fokusere på grammatikk i undervisningen, hvis eleven/elevene opplever noen vanskeligheter med dette i undervisningen
	Focus on form	FFI4	
Explicit vs implicit instruction	Explicit	EII5	Det er viktig å lære alle grammatiske regler, selv de elevene ikke gjør feil ved, for å lære seg engelsk godt nok. Elever lærer automatisk grammatikk ved å studere eksempelsetninger
	Implicit	EII6	
Inductive vs deductive instruction	Inductive	DII7	Å oppdage grammatiske regler gjennom eksempeltekster/setninger er bedre måte å lære grammatikk enn at læreren presenterer regler Det er bedre at en lærer forklarer grammatiske regler i fellesskap, enn å la elevene oppdage de selv gjennom å arbeide med eksempler
	Deductive	DII8	

4.5.2 Open/closed questions in student questionnaire

As mentioned, the questionnaire developed for the teachers and the students are not similar in part two. In this section I will present the questions in part two of the students' questionnaire. In this student quantitative questionnaire, two open questions are included. The reason for this is to gain a better understanding of the beliefs on grammar instruction and the reasoning behind these beliefs for each participant. With open questions the participants will be able to describe, in their own words, any individual reasoning behind their beliefs on grammar instruction. The first open question (1.2.1) "What is your opinion about English grammar instruction in school, and why?" is constructed to understand each individual general viewpoint on grammatical instruction in English at school, and why they think they have this viewpoint. The next open question (1.2.3) "What have you learned in prior English classes about grammar? Do you remember any specific grammatical rules you have learned in English class?", these questions are developed to explore what the participants have learned earlier in English grammar instruction, and whether or not they remember something specific they have learned. To be sure that the student participants understand what I am asking for, a table of grammatical rules is given in the questionnaire, also it can be difficult for the participants to remember names of grammatical rules without being given any examples.

Figure 3: Table of examples of grammatical rules from student questionnaire

Eksempler på grammatiske regler
Den ubestemte artikkel (a/an)
Samsvar mellom subjekt og verbal
Ordstilling
Ing-form
Eiendomspronomen

The three open questions that are in the questionnaire are object response questions, the first of them (1.2.2), is about the participants' experience with earlier English grammar teaching methods, and how they have been taught English grammar in the past. Following this question, a table of different teaching approaches are listed, that the participants can cross off, for example: "black board instruction", "correct feedback" etc. The next open question (1.2.4) asks if they have struggled with some specific grammatical rules, where they can cross off either "yes" or "no", and then there is a following table where they can cross off their preferred method

of being taught advanced grammatical rules. This question is included to see if their preferred grammatical method differs when they are handling advanced grammatical rules that they have struggled with. The last questions (1.2.5) is formed to get information about what kind of factors that have shaped the participants' view on English grammatical instruction, like "traveling" and "secondary school teachers".

4.5.3 Open/closed questions in teacher questionnaire

Part one of the teacher questionnaire is, as mentioned, the same as part one in the student questionnaire. In part two of the teacher questionnaire, some of the questions are similar to the student questionnaire, and some are different. Question 1.2.1, 1.2.5 from the student questionnaire section two remain in section two for the teachers', though 1.2.5 consist of more teacher adapted alternatives. Further, questions 1.2.2 and 1.2.3 in the student's questionnaire is formed into one question in the teacher questionnaire (1.2.4) (See appendix 4 and 5 for the questionnaire questions).

The remaining questions are open questions. The first question asks for the participant's opinion on what he/she thinks is the most efficient method of English grammar instruction, and if the person uses this method themselves. In this question the participant can answer very broadly, which gives me the option of analysing the answer to see how it relates to the poles of the methods the experiment is based on. This will also show the correlation between the teachers' view on grammar instruction versus the students' attitude towards grammar instruction. Moving on, the next questions asks whether the teacher participants believe that the students get enough grammatical instruction in English. The question is asked to get more information about whether or not the teachers lean more towards meaning-focused instruction or form-focused instruction. Finally, the last questions are included to find out if the teacher participants believe that there are any specific grammatical constructions that should be given more attention to in the classroom, for example S/V-agreement.

4.6 Procedure

The experiment took place in a high school in Tromsø, in two different classes. As mentioned, each class were first year classes in the program "Health and Adolescence". The first part of the experiment, the proficiency test and the grammaticality judgement, was completed the same

day in both classes. To begin with, I told them that these tests are experiments for my master assignment, and that the tests would not have any effect on their English grade in school. Then, the background information paper was handed out (see more information in 4.3?), and then moved on to explain how they were going to create the anonymous code, (see more in introduction to methodology), which I asked them to write on each paper they were given during the lesson. I obtained oral information from them about how many years they have had English instruction in school, if they all had attended a Norwegian school since 1st grade, to avoid confusion and incorrect fragmental data from this question. Before handing out the test, I provided them with some information about the test, like what they needed to fill in, and that the first part consisted of individual sentences, and that in the end they needed to fill in the blanks in order to complete the story that was in the last part of the test. There were no questions before, during or after the test. After fifteen minutes all the participants were finished. I asked after they handed in the papers if they thought that the test was difficult or easy, and two students in one of the classes said that it was easy to start with but got increasingly difficult. No one had any specific comments in the other class. Next, I gave them a paper with a column that contained the numbers of the sentences that matched the numbers on the sentences in the PowerPoint, where there had two columns to judge the sentences either ungrammatical or grammatical. The grammaticality judgement test was presented on a projector screen. Before starting, I explained what they were supposed to do. I did not help anyone during the experiment, and all the participants seemed to know what to do. After finishing the test, I collected the papers and let the English teacher of the class continue the lesson. This part also took fifteen minutes to complete. The main part of the experiment, the questionnaire, took place three days after in the same classes. As mentioned, the questionnaire is also in the form of a paper handout. Before handing out the questionnaire I told them where to answer with whole sentences and where to only check off. I also reminded them of the anonymous code, how to produce it and that they needed to write it down at the questionnaire. All the students were finished with the questionnaire after 20 minutes.

5. Results

The data results were calculated on paper, since all the three parts of the experiment were in paper form. After calculating all data for all three parts for each participant, the scores were collected in excel. All the personal codes are presented in excel, with the scores for proficiency test, grammaticality judgement, and questionnaire. In this chapter I will present the results of the proficiency test, grammaticality judgement and the questionnaire. The main focus will be the results of both proficiency test and grammaticality judgement test in correlation to the results of the first part of questionnaire that measures the instruction attitudes. Afterwards, I will present results of the open questions in the questionnaire for both the students and the teachers. The two classes are not divided into two different class groups. This is because both classes have the same English teacher, and they are also at the same age in the same school program, therefore I did not think it was necessary to divide them into two class groups.

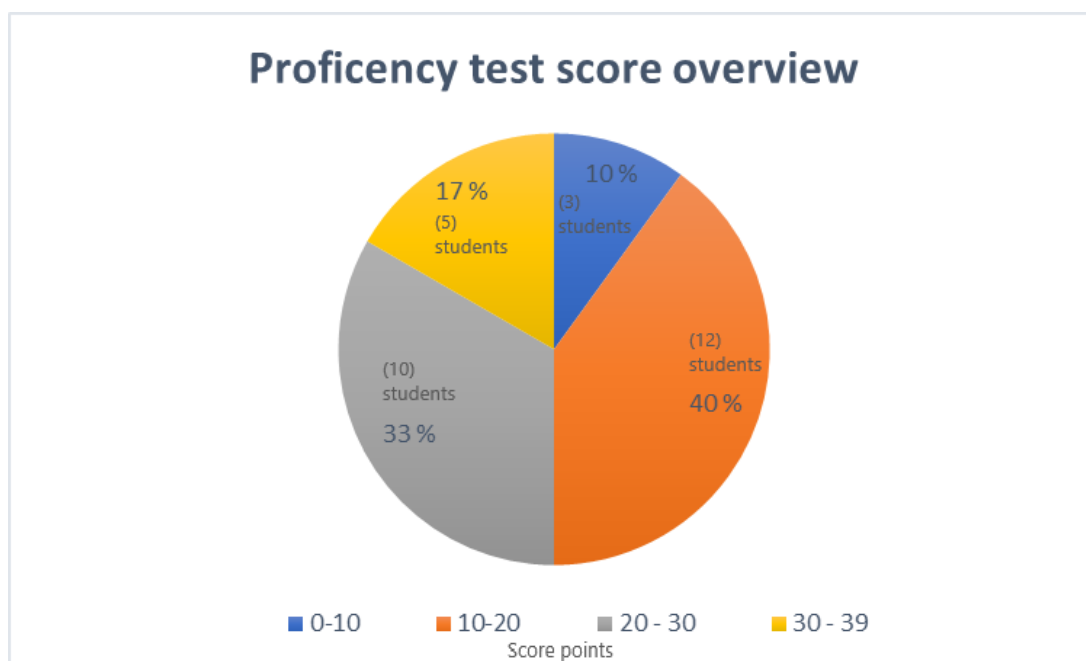
5.1. Proficiency test

In this section I will present the results of the proficiency test and grammaticality judgement test for the student participants.

The participants are separated into two different proficiency groups, one group with a low score in total in both proficiency test and the grammaticality judgement test, and one group with a high score in total in both tests. Further, with this separation, it is easier to discover a pattern towards the preferable grammar instruction that the questionnaire deals with.

The proficiency results showed a various spectre of score, though a pattern of the score results showed that the students either scored low, or high, and not so much in between. The highest possible score for this test was 39 points, no one managed to get full score, but many were close. (Additionally, in the open question sections this disinterest was in some cases made clear, as some of the answers were very short and insignificant.)

Figure 4: Score of the proficiency test among 30 High-school students.



Note: Overview of the score distribution (0-39) in the proficiency test among 30 students.

5.2 The grammaticality judgement test

In this test, there were also various results among the students. Still, the pattern from the proficiency test is also clear in this test, and there were few participants in between. There was no specific construction that stood out as unchallenging or challenging for the students.

Figure 5: Overview of the accuracy score of the tested constructions in the grammaticality judgement test.

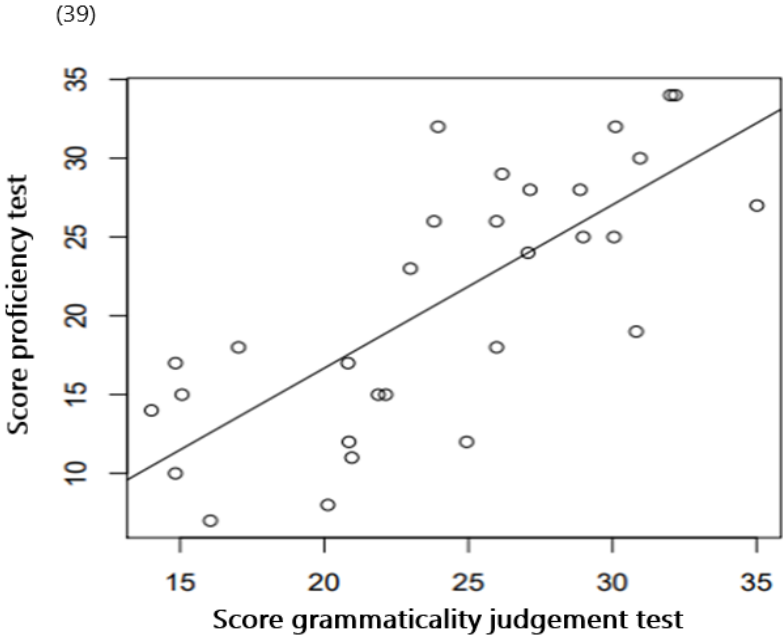
Constructions	Total score
Agr Local SG	66.3% (198,9/300)
Adv SV	70% (210/300)
S Adv V	57% (171/300)

The accuracy score of the tested constructions are illustrated in Figure 5. Figure 5 shows that there is a small difference in the accuracy score of the tested constructions. Though, the figure does show that there is a small leap in the results of Adv SV and S Adv V, but these results

were tested and concluded as not significant.

The results of the proficiency test and grammaticality judgement test showed a clear correlation between those who did well in the proficiency test and those who also did well in grammaticality judgement test, and a correlation between those who did not do well in the proficiency test, did neither do well at grammaticality judgement test.

Figure 6: This graph shows the correlation between the proficiency test and grammaticality judgement test



5.3 High scoring and low scoring group

The results of the proficiency test and grammaticality judgement test reveal a significant positive correlation between the grammaticality judgement test and the proficiency test. Because of this, I have decided to add up the results from the two tests to a general proficiency score (0-74), because the total score in the proficiency test is 39 and the total score of the grammatically judgement test is 35 (39+35=74). In the next section, I will explore if there is a correlation between the student’s proficiency in English (the total score of both tests) and their attitudes on form-focused and meaning-focused instructional methods.

I have divided the 30 participants into two groups, one with a score below 48 points,

and one group with a score higher than 48 points out of 74 points in total. The reason for selecting the score 48 is because that is the median number of the total score in proficiency test and grammatically judgement test. In the following passages, I will refer to the participants who scored above 48 points as the HSG (high scoring group), and the participants who scored below 48 points as the LSG (low scoring group).

The reason for dividing the participants into two proficiency groups, is to see if proficiency correlates with attitudes. First, I will present the average score of the multi-item psychometric scale for the HSG and the LSG, and then run correlation tests on the relation between raw proficiency scores and the attitude score.

5.4 Multi-item psychometric scale

In the following table, I have assigned a certain score to each attitude towards a specific preferred method of grammar instruction. For example, if a participant answers “strongly agree” on question 1. on the form (a question that asks if the participant prefers meaning-focused instruction over form-focused instruction), that would constitute 5 points on meaning-focused instruction. If he answered “strongly disagree” that would constitute 1 point, and if he answered “disagree” that would constitute 2 points, etc (see appendix 5). The numbers in table 4 are the average mean score of the answers in every instructional method from student questionnaire (1,1).

Figure 7: Attitude mean score per group

	HSG mean score	LSG mean score
Meaning-focused instruction	3,466667	2,666667
Form-focused instruction	3.200000	3,733333
Focus on form	3,000000	3,133333
Focus on forms	3.333333	4.000000
Implicit instruction	2,733333	2,300000
Explicit instruction	2,933333	3,600000
Inductive instruction	3,533333	2,933333
Deductive instruction	2,866667	3,666667

Figure 7 shows that there is a clear difference in the mean score of the attitude questions for the LSG and the HSG. The proficiency and attitudes score from table 4 show a general tendency that the HSG prefer meaning-focused and inductive learning, we can see this on the scores because these scores are above 3, which means that most of the HSG answered neither disagree or agree (3point) or agree (4points) or strongly agree (5points). With this logic in mind, we can also see in table 4 that the LSG preferred form-focused over meaning-focused instruction, focus on forms, explicit approaches and Deductive learning, since they scored above 3 on the questions related to these constructs. To further test the scores from figure 7, a series of correlation tests (linear models) were run on each item from the multi-item psychometric scale to see if these tendencies are significant. If the p- value is below 0.005, it is considered significant.

Figure 8: R2-value and P-value of the attitude mean score per group

	R2 - value	P – value
Meaning-focused instruction	0.2023	0.00735
Form-focused instruction	0.08573	0.06399
Focus on form	-0.02604	0.6114
Focus on forms	0.1398	0.02382
Implicit instruction	0.1665	0.01451
Explicit instruction	0.05726	0.1077
Inductive instruction	0.04479	0.1357
Deductive instruction	0.2372	0.003717

Figure 8 shows that there is a positive correlation between HSG and meaning-focused instruction. This indicates that the participants with a score above 48 in total in grammaticality test and proficiency test prefer meaning-focused instruction. The table also show a positive correlation between HSG and implicit instruction. The results presented in the table also show that there is a negative correlation between low-proficiency score participants and focus on form. This means that the participants with a score below 48 in total in grammaticality test and proficiency test prefer focus on form instruction. There is also a negative correlation between LSG and deductive instructions, which indicates that the participants also prefer deductive instruction.

5.5 Open questions

In this section I will present relevant tendencies from the results in the open questions from the student questionnaire, and some tendencies in comparison with the LSG and the HSG.

5.5.1 What have you learned through grammar instruction from earlier?

In this question, the results show a pattern that very few students remembered any specific grammar rules in both the HSG and the LSG. The question further asked whether the participants remembered any specific rules. In addition to this, they were also given a table of examples of grammatical rules in the questionnaire, that were orally pointed out before handing out the test. Still, 27 participants said that they did not remember any specific rules, and that they cannot remember what they have learned earlier in English grammar instruction. There were three who said that they remembered learning the use of a/an, and pronouns. Two of these were from the HSG and did remember learning the rules of a/an and pronouns, and one of them was from the LSG and remembered learning the rules of a/an.

5.5.2 Advanced grammatical rules

The question number four is a closed question, which asks whether they struggle with any specific grammar rules, and if so, how they would prefer to practice this rule. The option given is “Being taught it by the teacher on the blackboard”, “Teacher explain the rule carefully”, “Trying to talk English, without the specific grammar rule in mind, and then the acquisition will come automatically”, “Be explained the rule, and then write example sentences with the rule”, “Try to read, write, and talk without the rule in mind, then the rule will be learned eventually” or to “carefully study the specific rule”. The results of this question revealed that twelve out of fifteen in the LSG preferred that the teacher explained the rule or being explained the rule followed by writing example sentences that contained the rule. The remaining three participants preferred to practice the rule implicitly through communication. Furthermore, eleven of the fifteen participants that are categorized as participants in the HSG also preferred to carefully study the specific rule, or to have the teacher explaining the rule. The four participants left, chose to learn the grammatical rule through implicit communication. In other

words, the majority of the LSG answered that they preferred the instructional methods focus on forms and explicit instruction, and so does the majority of the HSG.

5.5.3 The factors shaping the student's beliefs

This question is included to understand the reasoning behind the students believes on grammar instruction. The question is “Which factors have contributed in forming your view on grammar instruction? Choose three of the most important factors, or more.” In this question there are “check off” alternatives, where the participants can choose several answers. The results were that 25 participants from both the LSG and the HSG answered that teachers from secondary school have formed their view on grammar instruction. 3 of the remaining 5 participants were from the HSG and two from the LSG. These 5 participants all selected options as traveling, parents, and friends.

5.6 Teacher questionnaire

The teacher questionnaire consists of the same agree/disagree survey questions as the ones on part one of the student questionnaire, and part two is made up of open questions. In this section I will present some important results from the teacher questionnaire. Since this questionnaire is only tested on four teacher participants, I will not perform statistical analysis of the data, instead I will interpret the results and analyse them and present the important factors in the results that are common for all the participants.

5.6.1 Multi-item psychometric scale

As mentioned, section one in the student questionnaire and the teacher questionnaire is identical. This is the agree/disagree survey questions, that measures the participants attitudes towards either meaning-focused instruction vs form focused instruction, focus on form vs focus on forms, implicit vs explicit, and inductive vs deductive instruction. The results for all four of the teacher participants were that their preferred meaning-focused instruction instead of form focused instruction. Further, in the choice between focus on form vs focus on forms they preferred focus on form, and in a focus on forms- type of instruction, they seemed to prefer

implicit and inductive instruction. Only one of the four participants preferred deductive instruction instead of inductive instruction.

5.6.2 Is Grammar Instruction unnecessary?

The first question in section two was “What is your opinion of English grammar instruction in high school?”. The results of this questions were similar among the participants. All four of the participants answered that they thought grammar instruction in high school was highly unnecessary. Two of the four participants also said that the focus should lay on communication. Question three asked whether the participants thought that students did not get enough English grammar instruction in high school, or if they thought that there is too much focus on grammar in school. All the participants answered that they did not use time on grammar instruction in their own classes. One of the participants added the information that he/she thinks that teachers in general should remove or decrease some of the focus given to English grammar instruction in English classes in high school.

5.6.3 Reasoning behind the teachers’ beliefs

In the teacher questionnaire, question (6) asked about the participants earlier experiences with grammar instruction, and how they learned grammar in English lessons as grammaticality judgement and students. Here, all the participants answered that in high school, secondary school and the university they believed that there was too much focus on grammatical features and linguistics. Three of the participants mentioned that their time at the university especially formed their view, because the focus on grammar was strong. One of the participants also expressed frustration towards some of the grammar subjects from university, and deemed them “highly irrelevant”, unless one wanted to become a linguist. The last question was a closed question, where the participants were asked to name the factors that formed their view on English grammar instruction most (cf. question 5 in the student questionnaire). All four teachers selected the options “University” and “Secondary school”, three of them also selected the option: “practice teachers”.

6 Discussion

In this chapter I will discuss the results of the experiment from the previous chapters and compare them to the research questions from 3.1. For this reason, I will repeat my research questions and predictions before I start discussing how they relate to the results of this study.

As mentioned earlier, the research questions and predictions are inspired by previous research on the subject of learner and instructor beliefs on grammar instruction, and are, and are:

RQ1: What beliefs do high-level students hold on meaning-focused and form-focused instruction?

RQ2: How does students' actual knowledge of English grammar and overall language proficiency affect/shape their beliefs?

RQ3: What beliefs do the teachers of high-level students hold on meaning-focused and form-focused instruction and are there differences in teacher vs. student beliefs?

Now that I have re-presented my research questions, I will in the following section discuss how these relate to the results of my study.

6.1 Proficiency test and grammaticality judgement test

The results of the proficiency test showed that 15 participants scored below the mean score of 21,03 points in this test, and that 15 participants scored above the mean score. There is a positive correlation between the proficiency test and the grammaticality judgement test. As explained in section 5.2, this means that the participants who scored below the mean score in the proficiency test also scored below the mean score in the grammaticality judgement test, and those who scored above the mean score in the proficiency test, also scored above the mean score in the grammaticality judgement test. The results of the grammaticality judgement test showed no significant positive or negative result among the three tested constructions. However, the results presented in 5.2 show that the participants did comprehend the verb movement constructions best, but also the least. The verb movement constructions with the highest mean score among the 30 participants were Non-subject-initial declarative main clauses, lexically, and the verb movement construction that resulted in the lowest mean score was Subject-initial declarative main clauses, lexically.

6.2 Student beliefs on grammar instruction

Before analysing the student questionnaire, the participants' proficiency level in grammar and their proficiency in three constructions was measured. As presented in section 5.1 and 5.2, The results of these tests show a positive correlation between the scores in both tests. The student participants who scored above the mean score in the proficiency test also scored higher than the mean score in the grammaticality judgement test, and conversely, the participants who scored below the mean score in the proficiency test also scored below the mean score in the grammaticality judgement test. This tells us that the students who scored above the mean score are generally proficient in English and not only proficient in one formal aspect of the language, and vice versa for the low scoring group. The multi-item psychometric scale in the first part of the questionnaire, measured whether the participants preferred meaning-focused instruction or form-focused instruction, focus on form or focus on forms, explicit or implicit instruction, and inductive or deductive instruction. The results were varying, but the instruction types: meaning-focused instruction, implicit instruction, focus on form, and deductive instruction were the alternatives that were most frequently chosen by the participants. This completely contradicts my prediction, based on the findings of Graus and Coppen's study (2016), that the students would overall prefer form-focused, explicit, inductive and FonFs grammar instructional approaches. However, when taking the participants' English proficiency level from the proficiency test and grammaticality judgement test into consideration, the results showed a trend among the HSG students to prefer meaning-focused instruction and implicit instruction, and for the LSG students to prefer focus on form and deductive instruction. This confirms my prediction that the students with good grammar knowledge and English proficiency would prefer meaning-focused instruction, as the HSG students preferred meaning-focused instruction. What is interesting though, is that the LSG students reported to prefer FonF and deductive instructional methods. Both FonF and deductive approaches are methods that are designed to make the students internalize grammatical rules subconsciously and are similar to meaning-focused instruction in that regard. A potential reason behind the varying preference results for the LSG and the HSG, can for instance be that the participants who scored below the mean score in the proficiency and grammaticality judgment test prefer FonF instead of meaning-focused instruction because they acknowledge that they need to learn the grammatical constructions of English to improve, and they believe consciously learning about these constructions are the way to go. This potential reasoning challenges Krashen's belief (1981)

that consciously learned language cannot become acquired knowledge, as the students seemingly relies on it to do exactly that. Previous research on learner beliefs on grammar instruction also challenges Krashen's non-interface position. Loewen's study (2009) displayed that some (but not all) students value grammar instruction, and Nina Spada's study (2009) found that students generally preferred integrating attention to grammar within communicative practice (FonF), which means that most students seem to some extent value explicit conscious learning of grammatical rules. Back to the potential reasons of why the HSG students reported to prefer meaning-focused instruction; one reason could be that the participants who scored above the mean score in the proficiency and grammaticality judgement test are more independent and proficient in the English language, and as such might yearn for more challenging tasks in the subject. This might lead the students to embrace meaning-focused instruction, as the instruction would then encourage them to use the language and to identify language patterns and constructions for themselves. Furthermore, The HSG might prefer meaning-focused and implicit learning because they already have a good ear for language, and therefore they subconsciously understand English grammar without even knowing the details of the specific rules. With this in mind, English lessons that primarily consists of grammar teaching, can become too simple for them because they already do implicitly understand the grammatical rules of the English language. Therefore, the HSG could want English lessons to consist of more than the target language, since they might want to be challenged by other aspects such as culture, history, literature, etc.

According to the study of Graus and Coppen (2016), postgraduate and undergraduate teacher students preferred form-focused instruction and favoured the FonF approach. If we compare these two groups with my groups, we can see from my study that both the LSG students and the HSG students' preferred grammar instructional method does not concur with the undergraduates' and postgraduates' preferences in Graus and Coppen's study (who reported to prefer form-focused, explicit, inductive and FonFs grammar instructional approaches). This indicates that there is a deviation in preferred English Grammar instructional methods between postgraduate/undergraduate teachers and high school students. Furthermore, this deviation in results from Graus and Coppen's study and my study, subtly and partly answers RQ3: "What beliefs do the teachers of high-level students hold on meaning-focused and form-focused instruction and are there differences in teacher vs. student beliefs? and the answer to the second part of the question is apparently yes, since the beliefs of soon-to-be teachers differ from the high-level students'. While high-level students and student teachers are not comparable groups in most contexts (since high-level students are less informed on specific subjects that student

teachers that has studied the field for a while), one goal of my study was to examine if high-level students did in fact have a preferred grammar instructional method that they believed to be more effective than other methods, and if so if their preferred method concurred with their teachers'. For this reason, Graus and Coppen's study became a valuable point of reference. Graus and Coppen's study examines the beliefs of to-be teachers, and by comparing the beliefs of these student teachers with those of the students, I could study if these to-be teachers held the same beliefs as the students they are studying to teach. The results of my study present valuable information for the fields of SLA and language pedagogy which may propose ways for optimization of language classes if the to-be teachers' beliefs on grammar instruction did not match the students' beliefs. If the student teachers' beliefs proved to be in accordance with the students' beliefs, this would imply a positive change for future language classes. What we could see from my results was that the student teachers' preferred method in Coppen and Graus' study did not match the preference of the LSG students and the HSG students in my study. However, since I only tested 30 students and four teachers from a single high school in northern Norway, it is impossible to say if this result is representative for the rest of the world, and even for the rest of Norway. This is why further research and testing is needed to determine whether or not teachers and high school students have different beliefs on which instruction method is the most effective when teaching and learning a second language, and preferably an extensive study that tests several high school students and teachers from different countries.

6.3 Teacher beliefs on grammar instruction

As mentioned, the teacher and the student questionnaire consist of the same multi-item psychometric scale, but the open questions in the teacher questionnaire differs from the open questions in the student questionnaire. The multi-item psychometric scale in the questionnaire aims to measure and determine the participants' preferred instructional method among meaning-focused instruction vs form- focused instruction, focus on form vs focus on forms, explicit vs implicit instruction, and inductive vs deductive instruction. This section showed a clear and unison result among the teacher participants. The teacher participants preferred meaning-focused instruction and focus on form when choosing between focus on forms or focus on form. Additionally, they also preferred implicit and inductive instruction, however, one of the four participants preferred deductive instruction. These results differ from the results of the student teachers in Graus and Coppen's study (2016). In the study of Graus and Coppen, teacher

students preferred, as mentioned, FonFs, explicit and inductive instruction. “However, when learner level [was] taken into consideration students show[ed] a distinct preference for form-focused instruction and FonFs for teaching the higher-level pupils” (Graus and Coppen 2016). While the teachers in my study favoured a more meaning-focused approach and implicit and inductive instruction, the teacher students in Graus and Coppen’s study preferred an instructional form that is the opposite of meaning-focused instruction, namely FonFs. There can be a plethora of reasons for this intriguing finding, for instance, the teachers in my study were between the ages of 30-45 and were also established teachers and not postgraduate and undergraduate teacher students, in other words, they have gained more experience in English language instruction. Through this experience, they might have acknowledged that meaning-focused, implicit and inductive instruction works best for them and their students. To understand why the teachers, believe that meaning-focused, implicit, and inductive instruction are the most effective instruction methods for their students, we might benefit from examining the students. The students in this study are high school students at a vocational school, in the health and adolescence program. In a vocational programme, some of the focus in every subject should always be on knowledge relevant to the specific profession the programme is intended to prepare them for (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2017), therefore it is complicated and perhaps not always best to put the primary focus on the English language itself. Therefore, teachers in these vocational schools might favour meaning-focused, implicit and inductive instructional methods since these methods allow and even encourage the teachers to integrate relevant knowledge for the specific programme into English language lessons, while simultaneously implicitly learning the students the formal aspects of the target language. Established teachers and student teachers are more comparable than high school students and to-be teachers, since the established teachers are what the student teachers are going to become. In this regard, Graus and Coppen’s (2016) study was once again relevant for my study. By comparing these groups, I could see if to-be teachers had other beliefs than the already established teachers that taught them in upper secondary school.

The problem with the teachers’ choice of instructional method is that it only harmonizes with the HSG’s preferred instruction method, and not the LSG. The LSG, as mentioned above, favoured an explicit focus on form approach and deductive instructional methods. This makes sense when we think about the influence that grammar knowledge has on the beliefs of the participants, because the teachers, similarly to the HSG students, have a great deal of knowledge about grammar and are proficient in the English language, so it makes sense for their beliefs to align with those of the HSG students. The problem is, if the teachers were to only use their

preferred method, the gap between the HSG and the LSG might continue to increase, as the needs of the LSG will not be met and this might discourage them and stagger their SLA. This, however, is not a rare problem in the educational system. Students have, as this study has portrayed, subjective preferences when it comes to which method they feel they learn the most from, and this is not exclusive to language classes. With this in mind, Thornbury (1991) seems to be correct to assume that the efficacy of the instructional methods is subjective and that there are a great number of individual variables that determines a person's preferred method. Perhaps the key to accommodating all the students' needs in a second language education class, is as I.S.P Nation suggested – a balanced language course consisting of four strands: “comprehensible meaning-focused input, form-focused instruction, meaning-focused output, and fluency development” (Laufer, 2006). Another way to work around this problem could be if the teachers occasionally asked the students which method they preferred and adjusted their future instruction methods accordingly. On the other hand, this would entail teaching the students about the different methods and assuming they know which method lets them learn most effectively.

6.4 The beliefs on grammar instruction change according to the difficulty of the grammatical construction

In question 4 in the questionnaire, the participants were asked how they preferred to learn a grammatical rule in English they struggle with. The results showed that twelve participants with a score below the mean score in the proficiency test and in the grammaticality judgement test preferred focus on form and explicit instruction when they encountered a grammatical rule in English they struggled with, and so did eleven of the participants with a score above the mean score in the proficiency test and grammaticality judgement test. These results do not support Krashen's theory regarding the necessity of implicit learning, because the students reveal that they believe explicit learning is a more effective learning method for them when they are struggling with a grammatical construction. This shows that the students believe, and perhaps has experienced, that consciously learned knowledge can be internalized and become part of the automatized knowledge system. Additionally, the results seem to support “The weak interface position”, as the students' responses to question 4 in the questionnaire indicate that they prefer explicit learning when implicit learning is unsuccessful. However, these answers should be taken with a grain of salt, as the students aren't necessarily aware of the mind's ability

to subconsciously acquire knowledge, and as a result all the implicit and meaning-focused approaches might seem counterintuitive and time-wasting on paper.

6.5 Study limitations

There are limitations to this study. One of the primary limitations in my study (and other studies investigating learner and instructor beliefs on grammar instruction) is the nature of the data collection instrument. While the questionnaire is useful and allows the researcher to collect interesting information, there is only so much it can tell us. The multi-item psychometric scale asks the participants about specific things instead of allowing them to address issues that are subjectively important to them. This might lead those that are uninterested to rush through it without giving it much thought, which might corrupt the results. Additionally, in the open question sections this lack of interest was in some cases clear, as some of the answers were very short and insignificant. In other words, some put in more effort than others when filling in the questionnaire. Furthermore, questions in a questionnaire might get misinterpreted which in turn provides false data. Another limitation to this study is the fact that the experiments were tested on students and teachers from a vocational school. This might influence the results, as their primary focus is not necessarily to learn and teach a new language, rather to learn and teach a specific profession. Regardless of these limitations, my study provides insight into the high-level learners' belief on grammar instruction and their preferred instructional methods. Additionally, I found that there likely is a correlation between the learners' and the instructors' grammar knowledge and proficiency in the English language and their beliefs on grammar instruction.

7 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate the beliefs of Norwegian high-level students and teachers on grammar instruction methods in English foreign language classrooms, and to see if grammar knowledge had an influence on their beliefs. Previous research in this field, such as Graus and Coppen's study from 2016, has tested the beliefs of ESL student teachers on their preferred grammar teaching method. This inspired me to investigate if the students – that the student teachers are one day to teach – had beliefs of their own. By having the students participate in a proficiency test, a grammaticality judgement test and a questionnaire, I was able to gather data about the students' proficiency in the English language, their knowledge of the grammatical constructions that are reported to be problematic for L1 Norwegian L2 English learners, and their preferred grammar instructional method. The proficiency and grammaticality judgement test allowed me to establish two separate groups – the high scoring group (those who scored above the mean scores) and the low scoring group (those who scored lower than the mean scores). These two groups allowed me to see if the participants' proficiency in English could affect their grammar instructional method preference, which it did (see section 5,4). By comparing the results of the proficiency test, the grammaticality judgement test and the questionnaire, I discovered that the high scoring group preferred meaning-focused and implicit instruction, whereas the low scoring group preferred focus on form and deductive instructional approaches. The teachers, similarly to the HSG students, preferred meaning-focused instruction, implicit and inductive instructional approaches. This suggests that 1) grammar knowledge influence the participants' beliefs on grammar instruction (since the teachers and the HSG students have good knowledge about grammar and are proficient in the English language), and that 2) not all the students' needs and wishes are met by their instructor's preferred instructional approach. However, further, more extensive research on the subject is needed to validate these findings as universal.

Bibliography

- Byrnes, H. (1999). Meaning and form in classroom-based SLA research: Reflections from a college foreign language perspective. 125-179. In J. F. Lee & A. Valdman (Eds.), *Meaning and Form: Multiple Perspectives*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Dąbrowska, Ewa (2010): "Naive v. expert intuitions: An empirical study of acceptability judgments" *The Linguistic Review*, 27.1, pp. 1-23. Retrieved 29. March. 2019, from doi:10.1515/tlir.2010.001
- Ellis, R. (2001). Introduction: Investigating form-focused instruction. *Language Learning*, 51, 1–46.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition (Oxford applied linguistics)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Graus, Johan, and Peter-Arno Coppen (2016): "Student Teacher Beliefs on Grammar Instruction." *Language Teaching Research*, vol. 20, no. 5, Sept. 2016, pp. 571–599, doi:10.1177/1362168815603237.
- Jensen, Isabel Nadine (2016): *The Bottleneck Hypothesis in L2 acquisition*. MA Thesis. Tromsø: UiT The Arctic University of Norway
- Jensen, Mirjam Gustava (2017): *Investigating the Bottleneck Hypothesis in Second Language Acquisition*. Tromsø: UiT The Arctic University of Norway
- Krashen, S. (1981). *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Laufer, Batia (2006): "Comparing Focus on Form and Focus on Forms in Second-Language Vocabulary Learning." *Canadian Modern Language Review*, vol. 63, no. 1, 149–166.
- Lee, J. (2000). Five types of input and the various relationships between form and meaning. In J.F. Lee & A. Valdman (Eds.), *Form and meaning: Multiple perspectives*, 25-42. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- Loewen, Shawn, Li, Shaofeng, Fei, Fei, Thompson, Amy, Nakatsukasa, Kimi, Ahn, Seongmee, & Chen, Xiaoqing. (2009). Second Language Learners' Beliefs about Grammar Instruction and Error Correction. *Modern Language Journal*, 93(1), 91-104.
- Long, M. (1991). Focus on form: A design feature in language teaching methodology. In: K. De Bot, R. Ginsberg, & C. Kramsch (Eds.), *Foreign language research in cross-cultural perspective* (pp. 39–52). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

- Long, M., & Robinson, P. (1998). Focus on form: Theory, research and practice. In: C. Doughty, & J. Williams (Eds.), Focus on form in classroom language acquisition. 15–41. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- NSD: Norwegian Centre for Research Data. [ONLINE] <https://nsd.no/personvernombud/hjelp/index.html#hideid6> [Accessed 07 February 2019]
- Poole, Alex (2005): “FOCUS ON FORM INSTRUCTION: FOUNDATIONS, APPLICATIONS, AND CRITICISMS.”. [ONLINE] <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/FOCUS-ON-FORM-INSTRUCTION%3A-FOUNDATIONS%2C-AND-Poole/44b161985bab9ff07e3c84877f1984c6fe46065b#paper-header> [Accessed 14 April 2019]
- Schulz, R. (2001). Cultural Differences in Student and Teacher Perceptions Concerning the Role of Grammar Instruction and Corrective Feedback: USA-Colombia. *Modern Language Journal*, 85(2), 244-258.
- Spada, N. (2009). Developing a questionnaire to measure learners’ preferences for isolated and integrated form-focused instruction. *System: An International Journal of Educational Technology and Applied Linguistics*, 37(1), 70.
- Thornbury, Scott (1999): *How to Teach Grammar*. Longman, 29-68.
- Utdanningsdirektoratet. “Yrkesretting og Relevans i Fellesfagene.” Udir.no. [ONLINE] <https://www.udir.no/utdanningslopet/videregaende-opplaring/yrkesretting-av-fellesfagene/> [Accessed 05 March 2019]
- Williams, J (2005): *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning*. Mahwah, N.J.: L Erlbaum Associates, Web. 671-691.

Appendix 1 - The Standardized Oxford proficiency test

PROFICIENCY TEST

Participant code:

Instructions: Please complete the sentences by selecting the best answer from the available answers below. You can select by underlining or making a X next to your choice.

1) Water _____ at a temperature of 100° C.

is to boil is boiling boils

2) In some countries _____ very hot all the time.

there is is it is

3) In cold countries people wear thick clothes _____ warm.

for keeping to keep for to keep

4) In England people are always talking about _____.

a weather the weather weather

5) In some places _____ almost every day.

it rains there rains it raining

6) In deserts there isn't _____ grass.

the some any

7) Places near the Equator have _____ weather even in the cold season.

a warm the warm warm

8) In England _____ time of year is usually from December to February.

coldest the coldest colder

9) _____ people don't know what it's like in other countries.

The most Most of Most

10) Very _____ people can travel abroad.

less little few

11) Mohammed Ali _____ his first world title fight in 1960.

has won won is winning

12) After he _____ an Olympic gold medal, he became a professional boxer.

had won have won was winning

13) His religious beliefs _____ change his name when he became a champion.

have made him made him to made him

14) If he _____ lost his first fight with Sonny Liston, no one would have been surprised.

has would have had

15) He has traveled a lot _____ as a boxer and as a world-famous personality.

both and or

16) He is very well known _____ the world.

all in all over in all

17) Many people _____ he was the greatest boxer of all time.

is believing are believing believe

18) To be the best _____ the world is not easy.

from in of

19) Like any top sportsman, Ali _____ train very hard.

had to must should

Read the following passage about the history of aviation and choose the best answer for each blank. Note that it is a continuous story.

20) The history of _____ is

airplane the airplane an airplane

21) _____ short one. For many centuries men

quite a a quite quite

22) _____ to fly, but with

are trying try had tried

23) _____ success. In the 19th century a few people

little few a little

24) succeeded _____ in balloons. But it wasn't until

to fly in flying into flying

25) the beginning of _____ century that anybody

last next that

26) _____ able to fly in a machine

were is was

27) _____ was heavier than air, in other words, in

who which what

28) _____ we now call a 'plane'. The first people to achieve

who which what

29) 'powered flight' were the Wright brothers. _____ was the machine

His Their Theirs

30) which was the forerunner of the Jumbo jets and supersonic airliners that are
_____ common

such such a some

31) sight today. They _____ hardly have imagined that in 1969,

could should couldn't

32) _____ more than half a century later,

not much not many no much

33) a man _____ landed on the moon.

will be had been would have

34) Already _____ is taking the first steps towards the stars.

a man man the man

35) Although space satellites have existed _____ less

since during for

36) than forty years, we are now dependent _____ them for all

from of on

37) kinds of _____. Not only

informations information an information

38) _____ being used for scientific research in

are they they are there are

39) space, but also to see what kind of weather _____.

is coming comes coming

Appendix 2 - The sentences of the grammaticality judgement test

Design & Stimuli

	Agr_Local_S G	Past_tense	Adv_SV	S_Adv_V	Fillers
Grammatical	5	5	5	5	0
Ungrammatical	5	5	5	5	5

- The numbers in column 3 and 5 are the placement for the sentences in the actual test

Condition	Grammatical		Ungrammatical	
Agr_local_SG: Main clauses with local agreement, singular subjects	Lisa likes to read books about horses	1	*Lisa like to read books about horses	28
	The boy takes the bus to school every day	29	*The boy take the bus to school every day	6
	The dog runs around the house every morning	14	*The dog run around the house every morning	35
	Martin plays with the white cat every day	38	*Martin play with the white cat every day	20
	The teacher talks about mathematics and numbers	22	*The teacher talk about mathematics and numbers	43
Adv_SV: Non-subject- initial declarative main clauses, lexicity	Last night the girl opened a present from her dad	3	*Last night opened the girl a present from her dad	18
	Yesterday the teacher looked angry all day long	26	*Yesterday looked the teacher angry all day long	9
	Yesterday the boy cried because he fell	45	*Yesterday cried the boy because he fell	33
	Yesterday the boy cried because he fell	21	*Yesterday cried the boy because he fell	41
	Last month the children baked	39		13

	some bread at school Today Maria ate lunch at two o'clock		*Last month baked the children some bread at school *Today ate Maria lunch at two o'clock	
--	--	--	--	--

S_Adv_V: Subject-initial declarative main clauses, lexicality	The girl always played soccer with her brother	30	*The girl played always soccer with her brother	4
		15		36
	The boy sometimes jumped up and down in his bed	8	*The boy jumped sometimes up and down in his bed	25
	The children often walk to school together	31	*The children walk often to school together	16
		24		42
	The mouse usually eats cheese for dinner		*The mouse eats usually cheese for dinner	
	Sara only likes to go swimming alone		*Sara likes only to go swimming alone	
Filers, ungrammatical			*Girl cake the baked a for her mother and sister	5
				7
			*Alexander when laughed funny clown the fell	11
			*The dogs to like run around park in the	17
			*Girl little the danced with sister and father her	32
		*Dog the barked at little cat the all day long		

Appendix 3 - The grammaticality judgement test scoring sheet
SCORING SHEET

Student code:

	RIKTIG	FEIL			
Ex.1		✓			
Ex.2	✓				
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					
21					
22					
23					
24					
25					
26					
27					
28					
29					
30					
31					
32					
33					
34					
35					

Appendix 4 - Student questionnaire

Spørreskjema

1.1 Kryss av

Jeg mener

	Svært uenig	Uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig
1. At det ikke er viktig å fokusere på grammatikk i engelskundervisningen, fokuset bør være på å lære å kommunisere					
	Svært uenig	Uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig
2. Læreren bør inkludere grammatikk i engelskundervisningen					
	Svært uenig	Uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig
3. Jeg mener det er viktig å øve på grammatikk for å kunne lære språket godt					
	Svært uenig	Uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig

4. Læreren bør sette av litt tid i hver engelsktime til å undervise i grammatikk					
5. Læreren bør sette av litt tid i hver engelsktime til å undervise i grammatikk.					
	Svært uenig	Uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig
6. Lærere bør <u>kun</u> lære/forklare en grammatisk regel, hvis eleven/elevene sliter med akkurat denne regelen.					
	Svært uenig	Uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig
7. Det er viktig å lære alle grammatiske regler, selv de elevene ikke gjør feil ved, for å lære seg engelsk godt nok.					
	Svært uenig	Uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig
8. Den beste måten for elever å lære grammatikk på, er ved å studere eksempelsetninger. (Og å ikke bli forklart noen					

grammatiske regler på forhånd)					
	Svært uenig	Uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig
9. Det er bedre at en lærer forklarer grammatiske regler i fellesskap, enn å la elevene oppdage grammatiske regler selv gjennom å arbeide med eksempler.					

1.2 Besvar spørsmålene med hele setninger.

1. Hva mener du om grammatikkundervisning i engelsk, og hvorfor mener du dette?

2. Hvordan har dine tidligere lærere lært deg engelsk grammatikk? Kryss av

Tavleundervisning	
Oppgaveløsning/oppgavehefte	
Lydopptak/film	
Kun når lærer har rettet på meg når jeg har skrevet/sagt noe feil	
Har ikke hatt grammatikk i engelskundervisningen	

3. Hva har du lært i tidligere engelsk grammatikkundervisning? Husker du noen grammatiske regler du har lært tidligere? (Se eksempel tabellen på siste side)
4. Er det noe innen engelsk grammatikk du synes er spesielt vanskelig å lære? (Skriv gjerne ned hva)

Ja [] Nei []

Hvis ja, hvordan måte tror du at du kan lære deg dette best mulig på? Kryss av.

<input type="checkbox"/> Pugge på regel
<input type="checkbox"/> Lærer går gjennom regel på tavlen
<input type="checkbox"/> Øve kun på å snakke engelsk, uten fokus på grammatikk
<input type="checkbox"/> Skrive eksempel setninger med bruk av regelen
<input type="checkbox"/> At lærer forklarer regel nøye, helt til jeg forstår den
<input type="checkbox"/> Lærer skriver/sier mange eksempelsetninger med bruk av korrekt regel

Kryss av 1.3

Hvilke faktorer har formet ditt syn på grammatikkundervisning? Velg tre av de viktigste faktorene (færre enn tre er også tillatt)

- Mine egne lærere fra grunnskolen
- Mine egne lærere fra ungdomsskolen
- Mine egne lærere fra videregående skole
- Medelever
- Reising
- Venner
- Familie
- Jobb
- Kollegaer på jobb

[]Praksis

[]Erfaring etter å ha fullført grunnkurs

andre: _____

Eksempler på grammatiske regler
Den ubestemte artikkel (a/an)
Samsvar mellom subjekt og verbal
Ordstilling
Ing-form
Eiendomspronomen

Appendix 5: Teacher questionnaire

Spørreskjema

1.1 Kryss av

Jeg mener

	Svært uenig	Uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig
1. Det er ikke viktig å fokusere på grammatikk i engelskundervisningen, fokuset bør være på å lære å kommunisere					
	Svært uenig	Uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig
2. Læreren bør inkludere grammatikk i engelskundervisningen					
	Svært uenig	Uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig
3. Jeg mener det er viktig å øve på grammatikk for å kunne lære språket godt					
	Svært uenig	Uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig
4. Læreren bør sette av litt tid i hver engelsktid til å undervise i grammatikk.					
	Svært uenig	Uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig
5. Lærere bør <u>kun</u> lære/forklare en grammatisk regel, hvis eleven/elevene sliter					

med akkurat denne regelen.					
----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--

	Svært uenig	Uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig
6. Det er viktig å lære alle grammatiske regler, selv de elevene ikke gjør feil ved, for å lære seg engelsk språket godt nok.					
	Svært uenig	Uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig
7. Den beste måten for elever å lære grammatikk på, er ved å studere eksempel setninger. (Og ikke bli forklart noen grammatiske regler på forhånd)					

	Svært uenig	Uenig	Verken enig eller uenig	Enig	Svært enig
8. Det er bedre at en lærer forklarer grammatiske regler i fellesskap, enn å la elevene oppdage grammatiske regler selv gjennom å arbeide med eksempler.					

1.2 Besvar spørsmålene med hele setninger

1. Hva mener du om grammatikkundervisning i engelsk på videregående skole?
2. Hva mener du er den beste metoden for å lære elever engelsk grammatikk? Bruker du denne metoden selv?
3. Får elevene nok engelsk grammatikkundervisning, eller får de for lite av dette?
4. Er det enkelte grammatiske regler det bør legges mer vekt på å lære elevene? (Eks. subject verb agreement, word order, etc.)
5. Hva er dine tidligere erfaringer med engelsk grammatikkundervisning? Hvordan lærte du deg engelsk grammatikk på skolen som elev/student?

Kryss av 1.3

Hvilke faktorer har bidratt mest til din tro på grammatikkinstruksjon? Velg tre av de viktigste faktorene (færre er også greit)

- Mine egne lærere fra grunnskolen
- Mine egne lærere fra ungdomsskolen
- Mine egne lærere fra videregående skole
- Lærere fra universitet/høyskole.
- Pensum fra universitet/høyskole

- Medstudenter
- Praksis
- Praksislærere
- Elevens forventninger til engelsk undervisning
- Akademiske artikler
- Konferanser/kurs
- Erfaring etter å ha fullført grunnkurs
- Jobberfaring
- Kollegaer (engelsklærere)

Annet : _____