



DIFFICULTIES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING GRAMMAR IN AN EFL CONTEXT¹

Abdu Mohammed Al-Mekhlafi

PhD., College of Education, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman
rayan3@gmail.com

Ramani Perur Nagaratnam

PhD., Ministry of Manpower, Oman

The role of grammar instruction in an ESL/EFL context has been for decades a major issue for students and teachers alike. Researchers have debated whether grammar should be taught in the classroom and students, for their part, have generally looked upon grammar instruction as a necessary evil at best, and an avoidable burden at worst. The paper reports a study undertaken to investigate the difficulties teachers face in teaching grammar to EFL students as well as those faced by students in learning it, in the teachers' perception. The study aimed to find out whether there are significant differences in teachers' perceptions of difficulties in relation to their gender, qualification, teaching experience, and the level they teach in school, thus providing insights into their own and their students' difficulties. Mean scores and t-test were used to interpret the data. The main findings are reported with implications.

Key Words: English language teaching, instruction, EFL grammar instruction, teaching, difficulties in grammar instruction

INTRODUCTION

The English teacher is often portrayed as an "unattractive grammar monger whose only pleasure in life is to point out the faults of others" (Baron, 1982, p. 226). For the most part, within the classroom, any mention of grammar causes the student moments of discomfort and sometimes even terror. Many teachers have tried to make grammar teaching a non-threatening, imaginative and useful activity within the English curriculum.

¹ A summary of this paper was presented at the 54th World Assembly of the International Council on Education for Teaching (ICET) on 'Maintaining Strategic Agility: Managing change and assuring quality in education for teaching', 14-17 December 2009, Muscat, Oman.

Previous studies on students' and teachers' attitudes and perceptions of grammar instruction in the context of language teaching and learning suggest a disparity between students and teachers. While students favour formal and explicit grammar instruction and error correction, teachers favour communicative activities with less conscious focus on grammar (e.g., Brindley 1984; Kumaravadivelu 1991; Leki 1995; Schultz 1996, 2001; Spratt 1999).

Rationale for the present study

The foregoing review of literature shows that practicing teachers are faced with a range of options for grammar instruction in their classrooms. There are, however, many types of difficulties faced by students and teachers with regard to grammar instruction in an ESL/EFL context. Identifying such difficulties and being consciously aware of them would help teachers find ways of overcoming them and provide effective grammar instruction.

There has, however, been little investigation of the difficulties faced by EFL teachers and Aran learners in the Gulf region with regard to grammar instruction. The teachers employ theoretically recommended methods without necessarily taking into account their own and their learners' potential difficulties. They may not be conscious of difficulties which are serious and may thus hinder students' learning of English grammar, and do not choose the method of instruction that would pose fewer difficulties and problems to their learners.

It is in this context that the present study was undertaken to capture valuable insights into how EFL school teachers in Oman perceive students' as well as their own difficulties with grammar instruction. The study reported here aims to address this need by presenting the difficulties of a cross section of school EFL teachers in Oman as well as their perceptions of their students' difficulties in this regard. It also aims to add to the knowledge base in this area.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Attitudes towards grammar instruction

In teaching grammar, three areas have to be considered: grammar as rules, grammar as form, and grammar as resource. For many L2 learners, learning grammar often means learning the rules of grammar and having an intellectual knowledge of grammar. Teachers often believe that this will provide the generative basis on which learners can build their knowledge and will be able to use the language eventually. For them, prescribed rules give a kind of security.

A better approach is perhaps to see grammar as one of many resources that we have in language which helps us to communicate. We should see how grammar relates to what we want to say or write, and how we expect others to interpret what our language use and its focus.

According to Widdowson (1990: 86), " . . . grammar is not a constraining imposition but a liberating force: it frees us from a dependency on context and a purely lexical categorization of reality." Given that many learners – and teachers – tend to view grammar as a set of restrictions on what is allowed and disallowed in language use – 'a linguistic straitjacket' in Larsen-Freeman's words (2002: 103) – the conception of grammar as something that liberates rather than represses is one that is worth investigating.

According to Morelli (2003), students perceived themselves as having a better attitude towards grammar instruction in context, while performing slightly better after having experienced the traditional grammar instruction. Elkilic and Akca (2008) reported generally positive attitudes of students studying English grammar at a private primary EFL classroom towards studying grammar. In particular, however, a little over 50% of their subjects claimed to enjoy grammar very much and only about 10% reported finding some difficulty in learning and remembering grammar.

Student expectations

Student expectations of traditional, explicit grammar teaching have been confirmed by many teachers (cf. Borg, 1999a, b). Burgess and Etherington (2002:440-441) also conclude that teachers believe that explicit teaching of grammar is favoured by their students because of expectations and feelings of insecurity.

Since the 1970s, attention has shifted from ways of teaching grammar to ways of getting learners to communicate, but grammar has been seen to be a powerful undermining and demotivating force among L2 learners. In terms of motivation and learner success with languages, grammar has been seen to be a problem and to stand in the way of helping learners to communicate fluently. The hard fact that most teachers face is that learners often find it difficult to make flexible use of the rules of grammar taught in the classroom. They may know the rules perfectly, but are incapable of applying them in their own use of the language.

Teachers' recognition of this process (i.e., of transferring declarative knowledge about grammar into procedural knowledge) as a problem for many of their students has been reported by Burgess and Etherington (2002:442). Haudeck

has reported that many learners have difficulty in internalising grammar rules, although these have been taught intensively (1996, cited in European Commission, 2006).

The use of grammatical terminology

Metalinguistic discussion (i.e., the use of grammatical terminology to talk about language) is seen by Stern (1992:327) as one of the characteristics of explicit grammar teaching. According to Burgess and Etherington (2002: 444), teachers believe that their students see grammatical terminology as useful and that its use does not present a particular difficulty for students.

Descriptive grammars acknowledge the fact that language is dynamic and its use is constantly changing, although not in major ways. The problem for ESL/EFL learners, however, is that there is a time-lag between the awareness of such changes and their acceptance as the proper use of the language.

As Morelli (2003:33-34) has observed, “Grammar can be taught traditionally or contextually, but student perception should be considered by teachers in the decision-making process. Students need to feel confident that educators have met their needs . . . and educators should be willing to consider the attitudes and perceptions of students when making decisions about how to teach grammar.”

METHOD

Purpose

The study reported here aims to investigate the difficulties of a cross section of school EFL teachers in Oman as well as their perceptions of their students' difficulties with regard to grammar instruction.

Research questions

The study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What are EFL teachers' perceptions of the difficulties of students and teachers with regard to grammar instruction in an EFL context?
2. Are there any differences in teachers' perceptions between the difficulties faced by teachers and those faced by students?
3. Do these perceptions of difficulties vary according to the teachers':
 - Gender,
 - Level taught,
 - Qualifications, and
 - Experience?

4. Are there any significant differences in teachers' perceptions due to the type of difficulty?

Limitation of the study

The present study is limited to:

- EFL teachers teaching English in Omani Basic Education schools, and
- The use of questionnaire as the research instrument.

Nevertheless, the responses are valuable in themselves, indicating the general difficulties that students and teachers face with regard to grammar instruction in an EFL context.

Research design

The study was mainly quantitative in design, using a questionnaire and the subjects responded to each statement on a five-point Likert-type attitude scale (from 5 for 'strongly agree' to 1 for 'strongly disagree'). The respondents also provided background information on gender, qualification, teaching experience and the level they teach, for creating their profile in terms of variables. The data was analyzed (t-test and ANOVA) using the SPSS.

The research instrument

The questionnaire used in the present study, which comprises 20 statements, was the one employed by Burgess and Etherington in their study (2002: 451-452) (See ANNEXURE – I for the questionnaire used in the present study).

Subjects

Only one broad geographical context was chosen for the study, namely Oman, in order to be context-specific and be able to make a close connection between teachers, their assumptions and their practical experience. It is believed that the subjects fairly represented the context of EFL teaching at different levels in Omani schools. Besides, the sample size was 90, more than the minimum number required for making useful statistical analyses according to Cohen and Manion (1994:77). The profile of the subjects in terms of the four variables is given below in Table 1:

Table 1. Profile of Respondents to the Study Instrument

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Categories within the variable</i>	<i>No. of respondents in each category</i>	<i>Total (N)</i>
Gender	Male	39	90
	Female	51	
Level they teach	Grades 1-4	17	90
	Grades 5-10	31	
	Grades 11-12	42	
Qualification	Master's Degree	8	90
	Bachelor's Degree	76	
	Diploma	6	
Experience	≤ 5 years	27	90
	$> 5 \leq 10$ years	41	
	> 10 years	22	

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

With regard to the first research question whether there are difficulties faced by students and teachers with grammar instruction, Table 2 (ANNEXURE – II) shows an overall mean of 3.51 on a five-point scale, the means for individual statements ranging from 2.97 to 4.10, thus indicating teachers' general agreement with most of the statements in the survey questionnaire (See Fig. 1 below). This suggests that, in the perceptions of teachers, there are difficulties faced by teachers as well as students with regard to grammar instruction in an EFL context.

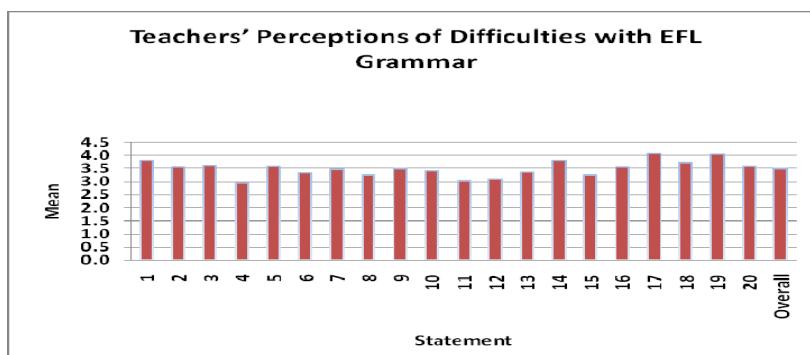


Fig. 1. Teachers' Perceptions of Difficulties with EFL Grammar

With regard to the second research question about the differences between students and teachers in the difficulties faced, Table 3 shows that there is a statistically significant difference at the level of

$p < 0.001$ in the perceptions of teachers and students, with students experiencing difficulties to a greater extent than teachers, which is understandable. The overall mean for students' difficulties as perceived by the teachers was 3.58, while the overall mean for teachers' difficulties was 3.23 (Table 3 below).

Table 3. Teachers' Perceptions of Teachers' and Students' Difficulties with EFL Grammar (N = 90)

Statement	Mean	SD	t	Sig.(2-tailed)
Teachers' Difficulties	3.2331	.58484	5.225	.000
Students' Difficulties as perceived by the Teachers	3.5779	.42214		

The third research question is about the differences in perception of difficulties in terms of the four teacher variables: gender, level taught, qualification, and teaching experience.

With regard to gender, a comparison of the overall mean response for male (3.508) and female teachers (3.510) (See Fig. 2 below) shows that they are quite nearly the same and that there is no statistically significant difference at the level of 0.05 in their perceptions about the difficulties (Sig.: .978) (Table 4 in ANNEXURE – II)). This suggests that *gender* does not play a significant role in the teachers' perceptions when it comes to articulating their own difficulties as well as those of their students with English grammar instruction.

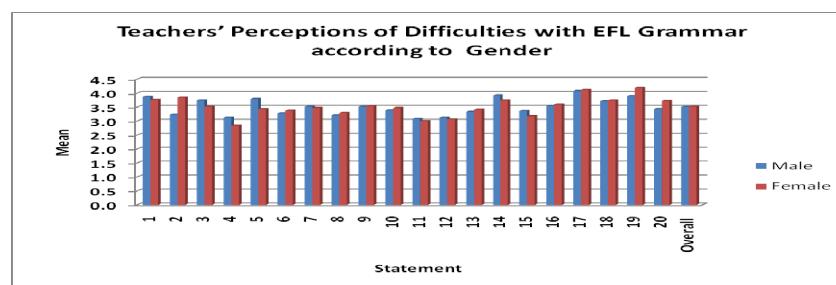


Fig. 2. Teachers' Perceptions of Difficulties with EFL Grammar according to Gender

With regard to the level taught, Table 5 (ANNEXURE – II) shows that teachers teaching at different *levels* have similar perceptions about their own and their

students' difficulties with English grammar instruction, with a slightly higher mean for teachers of Grades 1-4 (3.58) than the means for teachers of the other two levels, which are nearly the same (3.49 and 3.5) (See Fig. 3 below). Table 5 also shows that there is no statistically significant difference at the level of 0.05 in terms of this variable (Sig.: .686).

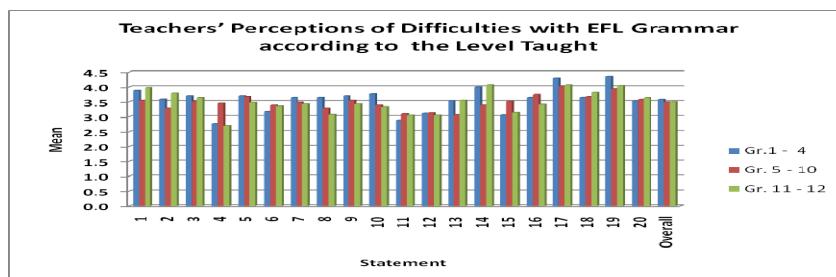


Fig. 3. Teachers' Perceptions of Difficulties with EFL Grammar according to Level Taught

With regard to teachers' qualifications, Table 6 (ANNEXURE – II) shows a slightly higher overall mean for teachers with a diploma qualification (3.78) than the overall means for teachers with higher qualifications, viz. bachelor's (3.46) or master's degree (3.49) (See Fig. 4 below). The results also show that there is no statistically significant difference at the level of 0.05 in terms of this variable (Sig.: .211 – Table 6).

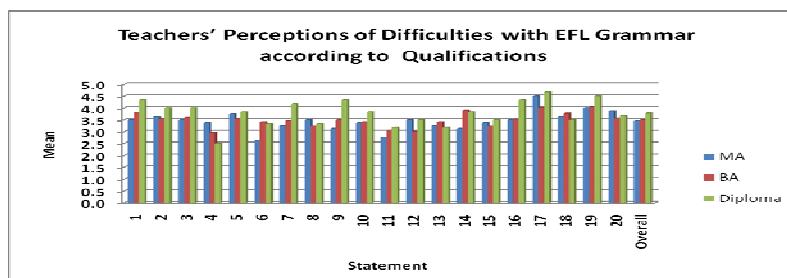


Fig. 4. Teachers' Perceptions of Difficulties with EFL Grammar according to Qualifications

With regard to teachers' experience, it does not seem to be a significant variable with regard to their perceptions of their own and their students' difficulties with English grammar instruction, as Table 7 (ANNEXURE – II) shows (See Fig. 5 below). The results also show that there is no statistically significant difference at the level of 0.05 in terms of this variable (Sig.: .869 – Table 7).

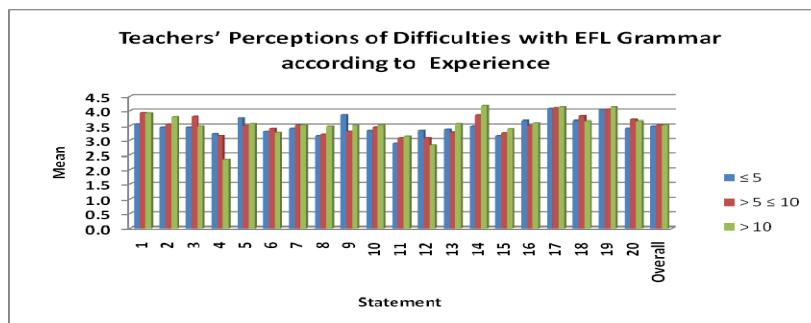


Fig. 5. Teachers' Perceptions of Difficulties with EFL Grammar according to Experience

The foregoing discussion is based on the overall mean score obtained for the difficulties in general and for each of the four teacher variables considered in the present study. With regard to the fourth research question, a detailed analysis of the results provides interesting and valuable insights into teachers' perceptions of different types of difficulties for students and teachers themselves and their concerns about classroom application of grammar teaching principles. The results are discussed with respect to difficulties categorized in terms of the themes listed in Table 8 below:

Table 8. Statements in the Questionnaire Categorised according to Themes

Theme	Statement(s)
Explicit grammar teaching	3, 4, 5, 13
The transfer of declarative knowledge into procedural knowledge	1, 17, 18
The use of grammatical terminology	14, 19
Error correction	15, 16
Problem-solving activities	2, 20
The use of authentic texts for grammar instruction	6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12
The use of spoken and written communicative activities	17, 18

Explicit grammar teaching

The dichotomies of unconscious/conscious learning and inductive/deductive teaching methods are both sometimes equated with the dichotomy between implicit and explicit instruction. Attitudes to inductive and deductive methods were investigated through statements concerning explicit presentation of grammar by teachers, students finding form-function matches for themselves, and the constraints in using either of the two methods.

Statement 3 (*My students expect teachers to present grammar explicitly*) and Statement 13 (*A lack of explicit grammar teaching leaves my students feeling insecure*) produced a mean score of 3.61 and 3.38 respectively (Table 2 - ANNEXURE – II), supporting the view that students, in teachers' perception, prefer explicit grammar teaching. This is not surprising, as students are known to expect traditional, explicit grammar instruction (e.g., Borg, 1999a, b). The responses in the present study indicate that this expectation of students still remains, especially at the school level.

Responses to Statement 5 (*My students prefer to find matches between meaning and structure for themselves*), however, produced a mean score of 3.59 (Table 2 - ANNEXURE – II), which is very close to the mean score for students' expectation about explicit teaching of grammar. This perception of students' preference for an inductive method of learning grammar on the part of the same responding teachers is surprising. With regard to the same statement, the difference in mean between males and females seems to be higher than for the other statements (Table 4 - ANNEXURE – II). A follow-up interview with teachers might have provided more specific information and thrown light on their understanding of explicit and implicit methods of teaching grammar.

With regard to Statement 4 (*My students prefer to learn grammar from one-sentence examples*), which links to explicit grammar teaching, responding teachers produced the lowest mean score (2.97) of all statements in the questionnaire (Table 2 - ANNEXURE – II). In terms of experience, however, there seems to be some significant difference at the level of 0.05 in favour of teachers with more than 10 years of experience (Table 7 - ANNEXURE – II).

Declarative vs procedural knowledge

Statement 1 (*My students find it difficult to transfer their grammatical knowledge into communicative language use*), designed to identify teachers' beliefs about the possible transfer of declarative knowledge (i.e., knowledge about grammar) into procedural knowledge (i.e., ability to use that knowledge in actual communication), produced a mean score of 3.81 (Table 2 - ANNEXURE – II). This indicates that responding teachers recognise this process of transfer of one kind of knowledge into another as a problem for a large number of their students.

This gap between students' grammatical knowledge and communicative ability is not surprising to teachers, who often find that most of their students can recall grammatical rules accurately and perform very well on discrete-point grammar

exercises, but fail to achieve such grammatical accuracy in actual communication.

This fact is corroborated by the responses to Statements 17 and 18 (*My students find it difficult to improve the accuracy of their grammatical knowledge within a totally communicative writing/speaking activity*), which produced a mean score of 4.10 and 3.73 respectively (Table 2 - ANNEXURE – II).

In terms of teacher qualifications, teachers with a diploma agree strongly (mean of 4.33) that their students find it difficult to transfer their grammatical knowledge into communicative language use. The mean for this statement for teachers with higher qualifications is lower (Table 6 - ANNEXURE – II).

The use of grammatical terminology

The use of grammatical terminology in the EFL classroom is seen as a necessary part of the explicit method of teaching grammar. When students and teachers talk about grammar (i.e., in meta-linguistic discussion), which is one of the characteristics of explicit language teaching (Stern 1992: 327), they need to use grammatical terms.

Two statements (14 & 19) sought to explore teachers' perceptions of how their students feel about the use of grammatical terminology. Statement 14 (*My students find grammatical terminology useful*) and Statement 19 (*My students find it difficult to use grammatical terminology*) produced a mean score of 3.82 and 4.07 respectively (Table 2 - ANNEXURE – II). This indicates that, in the responding teachers' perception, their students see grammatical terminology as useful, but find difficulty in using the terms to be of a greater magnitude. Interestingly, the usefulness of grammatical terminology seems to be linked to the students' preference for explicit grammar instruction.

The difference in mean between teachers of Grades 1-4 and 11-12 on the one hand (mean of ≥ 4) and those of Grades 5-10 (mean of 3.4), however, seems to be higher with regard to their perceptions of the usefulness of grammatical terminology to their students. That is, teachers of the lowest and highest levels think that their students find grammatical terminology more useful than those of the middle grades. There is a significant difference at the level of 0.05 in terms of the level taught with regard to the usefulness of grammatical terminology (statement 14) (Table 5 - ANNEXURE – II).

In terms of teacher qualifications, teachers with a diploma agree very strongly (mean of 4.50) that their students find it difficult to use grammatical terminology and the majority of teachers surveyed, who have a bachelor's

degree, also seem to show a high level of agreement with regard to the same statement (mean of 4.04). The mean for this statement for teachers with higher qualifications is lower (Table 6 - ANNEXURE – II).

Error Correction

Teachers generally tend to believe that errors of form committed by EFL learners should be corrected even when communicative goals are intended. This need for correction of form even within a communicative context, either spoken or written, may arise from a concern for grammatical accuracy in students' communicative output or for avoiding fossilization of errors in their interlanguage. Statements 15 and 16 aim to capture teachers' perceptions in this regard.

Statement 15 (*Teachers find it difficult to correct student errors of grammar within a written communicative context*) and Statement 16 (*Teachers find it difficult to correct student errors of grammar within a spoken communicative context*) produced a mean score of 3.26 and 3.57 respectively (Table 2 - ANNEXURE – II). It may be inferred from the results that the responding teachers experience more difficulty in correcting their learners' spoken communication than written.

Problem-solving techniques

Problem-solving techniques in relation to grammar teaching are inductive techniques that require learners to find form-function matches by themselves. (e.g., Hall and Shepheard, 1991). Responses of teachers surveyed in the present study produced a mean score of 3.58 for Statement 2 (*My students are motivated by problem-solving techniques for learning grammar*), showing a link to responses to Statement 5 about students' preference for finding matches between meaning and structure for themselves. Surprisingly, however, the same responding teachers produced a mean score of 3.60 for Statement 20 (*My students are frustrated by problem-solving techniques for learning grammar*) (Table 2 - ANNEXURE – II).

A possible interpretation could be that teachers, while recognising the motivational potential of problem-solving techniques, also observe their students' frustrating experience with such techniques, possibly because they are too 'challenging' for the learners to cope with. Another interpretation could be that teachers' responses to Statement 2 are based on their theoretical assumption about what these techniques could do to the learners, while those to Statement 20 could be based on teachers' assessment of the ground reality.

With regard to the statement about students being motivated by problem-solving techniques for learning grammar (Statement 2), there is also a significant difference at the level of 0.05 between males and females in their perceptions (Table 4 - ANNEXURE – II).

The use of authentic texts for grammar instruction

Authentic texts are texts that are not produced artificially for the purpose of language teaching, but are used for genuine purposes in the real world, like newspaper articles and recipes. By implication, these texts are contextualised and communicatively complete in themselves. They focus is on conveying real meaning rather than on form. Decontextualised examples of language, on the other hand, are one-sentence examples usually found in EFL textbooks and grammar practice books. They illustrate grammatical forms and structures in context-free sentences and are generally associated with the explicit method of teaching grammar.

The use of texts illustrating authentic communication for presenting grammar is generally seen as posing problems to teachers and students alike. Students' problems with their use arise from difficulties of variety of structures (Statement 7), culture (Statement 8), vocabulary (Statement 9), and implicit form-function matches (Statement 10), besides an overall difficulty in handling grammar presented within authentic texts (Statement 6). Teachers' difficulties with authentic texts include those arising from the amount of time needed for using them (Statement 11) and producing suitable tasks from such texts (Statement 12).

According to the responding teachers' perceptions, students experience greater difficulties from vocabulary (Mean=3.52), variety of structures (Mean=3.49) and finding form-function matches (Mean=3.43) than from handling from presented within authentic texts (Mean=3.33) and culture (Mean=3.26). Statements 11 and 12 relating to teachers' difficulties in using authentic texts produced a mean score of 3.03 and 3.09 respectively (Table 2 - ANNEXURE – II), which indicates a lower perception of teachers of their own difficulties than those of students.

The use of spoken and written communicative activities

Statements 17 and 18 refer to the possible difficulties students might have in improving the accuracy of their grammatical language within totally communicative activities. Responding teachers produced a mean score of 4.10 and 3.73 for the two statements respectively. In fact, the highest mean score of

all scores for the survey questionnaire (4.10) was obtained for Statement 17 (*My students find it difficult to improve the accuracy of their grammatical knowledge within a totally communicative writing activity*) (Table 2 - ANNEXURE – II).

The results indicate that, in teachers' perceptions, totally communicative activities, whether written or spoken, pose great difficulties to students for learning grammar and improving grammatical accuracy, writing activities proving more challenging than spoken ones. It might be inferred that the teachers surveyed might have a serious concern about the lack of sufficient focus on form in purely communicative activities or tasks for developing students' grammatical knowledge. Practising language as communication in real-life tasks might not give sufficient opportunities for students to improve their grammatical knowledge.

In terms of teacher qualifications, teachers with a diploma agree very strongly (mean of 4.67) that their students find it difficult to improve the accuracy of their grammatical language within a totally communicative writing activity and the majority of teachers surveyed, who have a bachelor's degree, also seem to show a high level of agreement with regard to the same statement (mean of 4.01). The mean for this statement for teachers with higher qualifications is lower (Table 6 - ANNEXURE – II).

CONCLUSION

Generally speaking, in teachers' perceptions, both teachers and students invariably face serious difficulties with regard to EFL grammar instruction, students facing them to a greater extent than teachers. It is obvious that EFL teachers consider these difficulties quite serious, which suggests that serious attention needs to be paid to them.

There may be generally recommended ways of teaching EFL grammar (for example, the implicit method), but it would not be proper to adopt them universally without looking at the possible difficulties that might go with those methods suggested. While a less favoured method might pose fewer problems and hence be more effective, a more favoured method might be less effective owing to greater difficulties or problems in implementing it. The difficulties may also be influenced by the context in which a particular method is used.

It is, therefore, necessary to make a detailed study of such difficulties faced by teachers and students in specific contexts, take appropriate steps to overcome them, and adapt the method to suit the actual teaching and learning

environment. This is not to suggest ‘diluting’ a sound approach or method, but only to plan mediating or supplementary tasks to help learners tide over the difficulties.

IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the present study point to the following implications:

1. EFL Curriculum and material developers should show an understanding of learners' and teachers' difficulties, and provide sufficient guidance and help in the curriculum document and the teachers' book showing how the potential difficulties could be addressed in planning their classroom activities. Teachers may be given examples of mediating tasks, which would mitigate the difficulties.
2. As Morelli (2003: 33-34) has pointed out, students need to be taught grammar through various methodologies and approaches to cater to their individual styles of learning, and educators should consider students' attitudes and perceptions when making decisions about how to teach grammar.
3. EFL teachers would do well to understand and address their learners' concerns in planning their lessons and classroom activities, and use supplementary materials, if necessary, to help learners cope with the difficulties.
4. Both in-service and pre-service training programmes should be planned in such a way that student-teachers and practising teachers articulate the potential and actual difficulties and discuss ways of overcoming or at least coping with them.

The database relating to teaching English as a foreign language, including the difficulties of learners and teachers with regard to grammar instruction, should be enriched by more detailed research and analysis, which would enable generalizations across the gulf countries.

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ANNEXURE - I

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT – QUESTIONNAIRE
STUDENT AND TEACHER DIFFICULTIES WITH GRAMMAR

These are questions about how students and teachers deal with grammar in the classroom. Please indicate how far you agree or disagree with these statements. If you **agree strongly**, mark a **5** on the scale; if you **strongly disagree**, mark a **1** on the scale.

No.	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	My students find it difficult to transfer their grammatical knowledge into communicative language use.					
2	My students are motivated by problem-solving techniques for learning grammar.					
3	My students expect teachers to present grammar points explicitly.					
4	My students prefer to learn grammar from one-sentence examples.					
5	My students prefer to find matches between meaning and structure for themselves.					
6	My students find it difficult to handle grammar presented within authentic texts.					
7	My students find authentic texts difficult because of the wide variety of structures which appear.					
8	My students find authentic texts difficult because they are too culture bound.					
9	My students find authentic texts difficult because of the vocabulary used.					
10	My students cannot find form-function matches in authentic texts without explicit direction from teachers.					
11	Teachers find the use of authentic material too time-consuming.					
12	Teachers find it difficult to produce tasks of a suitable level from authentic texts.					
13	A lack of explicit grammar teaching leaves my students feeling insecure.					
14	My students find grammatical terminology useful.					
15	Teachers find it difficult to correct student errors of grammar within a written communicative context.					
16	Teachers find it difficult to correct student errors of grammar within a spoken communicative context.					
17	My students find it difficult to improve the accuracy of their grammatical language within a totally communicative writing activity.					
18	My students find it difficult to improve the accuracy of their grammatical language within a totally communicative speaking activity.					
19	My students find it difficult to use grammatical terminology.					
20	My students are frustrated by problem-solving techniques for learning grammar.					

ANNEXURE - II

Table 2. Teachers' Perceptions of Difficulties with EFL Grammar (N = 90)

Statement	Mean	SD
1. My students find it difficult to transfer their grammatical knowledge into communicative language use.	3.8111	.93490
2. My students are motivated by problem-solving techniques for learning grammar.	3.5778	.97125
3. My students expect teachers to present grammar points explicitly.	3.6111	1.04607
4. My students prefer to learn grammar from one-sentence examples.	2.9667	1.49494
5. My students prefer to find matches between meaning and structure for themselves.	3.5889	.94684
6. My students find it difficult to handle grammar presented within authentic texts.	3.3333	1.03858
7. My students find authentic texts difficult because of the wide variety of structures which appear.	3.4889	1.01941
8. My students find authentic texts difficult because they are too culture bound.	3.2556	1.03382
9. My students find authentic texts difficult because of the vocabulary used.	3.5222	1.07293
10. My students cannot find form-function matches in authentic texts without explicit direction from teachers.	3.4333	1.02825
11. Teachers find the use of authentic material too time-consuming.	3.0333	1.05415
12. Teachers find it difficult to produce tasks of a suitable level from authentic texts.	3.0889	1.16739
13. A lack of explicit grammar teaching leaves my students feeling insecure.	3.3778	.97816
14. My students find grammatical terminology useful.	3.8222	1.25937
15. Teachers find it difficult to correct student errors of grammar within a written communicative context.	3.2556	1.25027
16. Teachers find it difficult to correct student errors of grammar within a spoken communicative context.	3.5730	.83785
17. My students find it difficult to improve the accuracy of their grammatical language within a totally communicative writing activity.	4.1000	.90006
18. My students find it difficult to improve the accuracy of their grammatical language within a totally communicative speaking activity.	3.7333	.99210
19. My students find it difficult to use grammatical terminology.	4.0667	.87152
20. My students are frustrated by problem-solving techniques for learning grammar.	3.6000	1.08927
Overall	3.5090	7.71887

Table 4. Teachers' Perceptions of Difficulties with EFL Grammar according to their Gender (Males: N=39; Females: N=51)

Statement	Gender	Mean	SD	F	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
1	Male	3.8718	.86388	1.357	.536	.593
	Female	3.7647	.99173			
2	Male	3.2308	1.06281	4.942	3.105	.003
	Female	3.8431	.80926			
3	Male	3.7436	.96567	1.447	1.051	.296
	Female	3.5098	1.10223			
4	Male	3.1282	1.47219	.032	.895	.373
	Female	2.8431	1.51489			
5	Male	3.7949	.95089	.068	1.828	.071
	Female	3.4314	.92206			
6	Male	3.2821	1.02466	.095	.408	.684
	Female	3.3725	1.05756			
7	Male	3.5128	.79046	9.319	.194	.847
	Female	3.4706	1.17223			
8	Male	3.2051	1.10452	.295	.403	.688
	Female	3.2941	.98578			
9	Male	3.5128	.99662	1.240	.072	.943
	Female	3.5294	1.13759			
10	Male	3.3846	1.09100	.600	.391	.697
	Female	3.4706	.98697			
11	Male	3.0769	1.10940	.062	.341	.734
	Female	3.0000	1.01980			
12	Male	3.1282	1.19603	.107	.278	.782
	Female	3.0588	1.15606			

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
13	Male	3.3333	.98230	.018	.375	.708
	Female	3.4118	.98339			
14	Male	3.9231	1.28523	.105	.662	.510
	Female	3.7451	1.24649			
15	Male	3.3590	1.34726	1.363	.684	.496
	Female	3.1765	1.17823			
16	Male	3.5385	.82226	.174	.342	.733
	Female	3.6000	.85714			
17	Male	4.0769	.98367	.023	.212	.833
	Female	4.1176	.84017			
18	Male	3.7179	.88700	1.454	.128	.898
	Female	3.7451	1.07412			
19	Male	3.8974	.94018	.201	1.626	.108
	Female	4.1961	.80049			
20	Male	3.4359	1.16517	2.494	1.254	.213
	Female	3.7255	1.02134			
Overall	Male	3.5077	6.67887	1.604	.028	.978
	Female	3.5100	8.50930			

Table 5. Teachers' Perceptions of Difficulties with EFL Grammar according to the Level taught

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
1	1-4	17	3.8824	1.05370	1.970	.146
	5-10	31	3.5484	1.09053		
	11-12	42	3.9762	.71527		
	Total	90	3.8111	.93490		
2	1-4	17	3.5882	1.00367	2.394	.097
	5-10	31	3.2903	.97275		
	11-12	42	3.7857	.92488		
	Total	90	3.5778	.97125		
3	1-4	17	3.7059	1.04670	.213	.809
	5-10	31	3.5161	.99569		
	11-12	42	3.6429	1.10036		
	Total	90	3.6111	1.04607		
4	1-4	17	2.7647	1.52190	2.593	.081
	5-10	31	3.4516	1.43385		
	11-12	42	2.6905	1.47314		
	Total	90	2.9667	1.49494		
5	1-4	17	3.7059	.77174	.557	.575
	5-10	31	3.6774	.79108		
	11-12	42	3.4762	1.10956		
	Total	90	3.5889	.94684		
6	1-4	17	3.1765	1.01460	.242	.785
	5-10	31	3.3871	1.02233		
	11-12	42	3.3571	1.07797		
	Total	90	3.3333	1.03858		
7	1-4	17	3.6471	1.16946	.274	.761
	5-10	31	3.4839	1.06053		
	11-12	42	3.4286	.94075		
	Total	90	3.4889	1.01941		
8	1-4	17	3.6471	.99632	1.943	.149
	5-10	31	3.2903	.93785		
	11-12	42	3.0714	1.09082		
	Total	90	3.2556	1.03382		
9	1-4	17	3.7059	1.26317	.413	.663
	5-10	31	3.5484	1.09053		
	11-12	42	3.4286	.99125		
	Total	90	3.5222	1.07293		
10	1-4	17	3.7647	1.20049	1.116	.332

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
11	5-10	31	3.3871	.91933	.230	.795
	11-12	42	3.3333	1.02806		
	Total	90	3.4333	1.02825		
	1-4	17	2.8824	1.05370		
12	5-10	31	3.0968	1.10619	.049	.953
	11-12	42	3.0476	1.03482		
	Total	90	3.0333	1.05415		
	1-4	17	3.1176	1.21873		
13	5-10	31	3.1290	1.14723	2.509	.087
	11-12	42	3.0476	1.18841		
	Total	90	3.0889	1.16739		
	1-4	17	3.5294	1.17886		
14	5-10	31	3.0645	.99785	2.968	.057
	11-12	42	3.5476	.83235		
	Total	90	3.3778	.97816		
	1-4	17	4.0000	1.22474		
15	5-10	31	3.3871	1.22956	1.056	.352
	11-12	42	4.0714	1.23748		
	Total	90	3.8222	1.25937		
	1-4	17	3.0588	1.39062		
16	5-10	31	3.5161	1.17958	1.443	.242
	11-12	41	3.1429	1.24100		
	Total	89	3.2556	1.25027		
	1-4	17	3.6471	.93148		
17	5-10	31	3.7419	.68155	.499	.609
	11-12	42	3.4146	.89375		
	Total	90	3.5730	.83785		
	1-4	17	4.2941	.77174		
18	5-10	31	4.0323	.87498	.233	.792
	11-12	42	4.0714	.97262		
	Total	90	4.1000	.90006		
	1-4	17	3.6471	1.27187		
19	5-10	31	3.6774	.90874	1.287	.281
	11-12	42	3.8095	.94322		
	Total	90	3.7333	.99210		
	1-4	17	4.3529	.70189		
20	5-10	31	3.9355	.81386	.072	.931
	11-12	42	4.0476	.96151		
	Total	90	4.0667	.87152		
	1-4	17	3.5294	1.12459		
Overall	5-10	31	3.5806	1.14816	.378	.686
	11-12	42	3.6429	1.05510		
	Total	90	3.6000	1.08927		
	1-4	17	3.5824	7.94466		
	5-10	31	3.4871	8.51652		
	11-12	42	3.4951	7.09156		
	Total	90	3.5090	7.71887		

Table 6. Teachers' Perceptions of Difficulties with EFL Grammar according to their Qualifications

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Qualification</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
1	MA	8	3.5000	1.30931	1.394	.253
	BA	76	3.8026	.89472		
	Diploma	6	4.3333	.81650		
	Total	90	3.8111	.93490		
2	MA	8	3.6250	.91613	.630	.535
	BA	76	3.5395	.99921		
	Diploma	6	4.0000	.63246		
	Total	90	3.5778	.97125		

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Qualification</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
3	MA	8	3.5000	1.06904		
	BA	76	3.5921	1.03509		
	Diploma	6	4.0000	1.26491	.467	.629
	Total	90	3.6111	1.04607		
4	MA	8	3.3750	1.40789		
	BA	76	2.9605	1.50058		
	Diploma	6	2.5000	1.64317	.586	.559
	Total	90	2.9667	1.49494		
5	MA	8	3.7500	1.38873		
	BA	76	3.5526	.91498		
	Diploma	6	3.8333	.75277	.366	.694
	Total	90	3.5889	.94684		
6	MA	8	2.6250	1.30247		
	BA	76	3.4079	.96854		
	Diploma	6	3.3333	1.36626	2.108	.128
	Total	90	3.3333	1.03858		
7	MA	8	3.2500	1.16496		
	BA	76	3.4605	1.01247		
	Diploma	6	4.1667	.75277	.1.596	.209
	Total	90	3.4889	1.01941		
8	MA	8	3.5000	1.06904		
	BA	76	3.2237	1.02760		
	Diploma	6	3.3333	1.21106	.272	.762
	Total	90	3.2556	1.03382		
9	MA	8	3.1250	1.24642		
	BA	76	3.5000	1.05198		
	Diploma	6	4.3333	.81650	2.348	.102
	Total	90	3.5222	1.07293		
10	MA	8	3.3750	1.18773		
	BA	76	3.4079	1.03509		
	Diploma	6	3.8333	.75277	.484	.618
	Total	90	3.4333	1.02825		
11	MA	8	2.7500	1.58114		
	BA	76	3.0526	1.00525		
	Diploma	6	3.1667	.98319	.345	.710
	Total	90	3.0333	1.05415		
12	MA	8	3.5000	1.30931		
	BA	76	3.0132	1.13717		
	Diploma	6	3.5000	1.37840	1.029	.362
	Total	90	3.0889	1.16739		
13	MA	8	3.2500	1.58114		
	BA	76	3.4079	.86684		
	Diploma	6	3.1667	1.47196	.240	.787
	Total	90	3.3778	.97816		
14	MA	8	3.1250	1.80772		
	BA	76	3.8947	1.16137		
	Diploma	6	3.8333	1.60208	1.363	.261
	Total	90	3.8222	1.25937		
15	MA	8	3.3750	1.68502		
	BA	76	3.2237	1.18433		
	Diploma	6	3.5000	1.64317	.173	.842
	Total	90	3.2556	1.25027		
16	MA	8	3.5000	1.19523		
	BA	75	3.5200	.77738		
	Diploma	6	4.3333	.81650	2.757	.069
	Total	89	3.5730	.83785		
17	MA	8	4.5000	.75593	2.407	.096
	BA	76	4.0132	.91642		
	Diploma	6	4.6667	.51640		

	<i>Statement</i>	<i>Qualification</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
18	Total	90	4.1000	.90006			
	MA	8	3.6250	1.40789			
	BA	76	3.7632	.92186			
	Diploma	6	3.5000	1.37840	.244	.784	
19	Total	90	3.7333	.99210			
	MA	8	4.0000	.75593			
	BA	76	4.0395	.90097			
	Diploma	6	4.5000	.54772	.798	.453	
20	Total	90	4.0667	.87152			
	MA	8	3.8750	1.35620			
	BA	76	3.5658	1.08733			
	Diploma	6	3.6667	.81650	.299	.742	
Overall	Total	90	3.6000	1.08927			
	MA	8	3.4563	10.98619			
	BA	76	3.4933	7.29186			
	Diploma	6	3.7750	7.44983	1.582	.211	
	Total	90	3.5090	7.71887			

Table 7. Teachers' Perceptions of Difficulties with EFL Grammar according to their Experience

	<i>Statement</i>	<i>Exp. (yrs)</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
1	≤ 5	27	3.5556	1.12090			
	$> 5 \leq 10$	41	3.9250	.91672			
	> 10	22	3.9130	.66831			
	Total	90	3.8111	.93490	1.457	.239	
2	≤ 5	27	3.4444	.84732			
	$> 5 \leq 10$	41	3.5500	.95943			
	> 10	22	3.7826	1.12640			
	Total	90	3.5778	.97125	.778	.462	
3	≤ 5	27	3.4444	.97402			
	$> 5 \leq 10$	41	3.8000	1.01779			
	> 10	22	3.4783	1.16266			
	Total	90	3.6111	1.04607	1.185	.311	
4	≤ 5	27	3.2222	1.52753			
	$> 5 \leq 10$	41	3.1500	1.45972			
	> 10	22	2.3478	1.40158			
	Total	90	2.9667	1.49494	2.772	.068	
5	≤ 5	27	3.7407	.81300			
	$> 5 \leq 10$	41	3.5000	1.13228			
	> 10	22	3.5652	.72777			
	Total	90	3.5889	.94684	.525	.593	
6	≤ 5	27	3.2963	1.17063			
	$> 5 \leq 10$	41	3.4000	.98189			
	> 10	22	3.2609	1.00983			
	Total	90	3.3333	1.03858	.153	.859	
7	≤ 5	27	3.4074	1.24836			
	$> 5 \leq 10$	41	3.5250	.93336			
	> 10	22	3.5217	.89796			
	Total	90	3.4889	1.01941	.121	.886	
8	≤ 5	27	3.1481	.81824			
	$> 5 \leq 10$	41	3.2000	1.11401			
	> 10	22	3.4783	1.12288			
	Total	90	3.2556	1.03382	.733	.484	
9	≤ 5	27	3.8519	1.06351			
	$> 5 \leq 10$	41	3.3000	1.11401			
	> 10	22	3.5217	.94722			
	Total	90	3.5222	1.07293	2.189	.118	
10	≤ 5	27	3.3333	1.03775			
	$> 5 \leq 10$	41	3.4500	1.06096	.214	.808	

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Exp. (yrs)</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
11	> 10	22	3.5217	.99405	.377	.687
	Total	90	3.4333	1.02825		
	≤ 5	27	2.8889	1.25064		
	> 5 ≤ 10	41	3.0750	.99711		
12	> 10	22	3.1304	.91970	1.182	.311
	Total	90	3.0333	1.05415		
	≤ 5	27	3.3333	1.14354		
	> 5 ≤ 10	41	3.0750	1.11832		
13	> 10	22	2.8261	1.26678	.639	.530
	Total	90	3.0889	1.16739		
	≤ 5	27	3.3704	.92604		
	> 5 ≤ 10	41	3.2750	1.01242		
14	> 10	22	3.5652	.99206	1.935	.151
	Total	90	3.3778	.97816		
	≤ 5	27	3.4815	1.36918		
	> 5 ≤ 10	41	3.8500	1.23101		
15	> 10	22	4.1739	1.11405	.232	.794
	Total	90	3.8222	1.25937		
	≤ 5	27	3.1481	1.43322		
	> 5 ≤ 10	41	3.2500	1.14914		
16	> 10	22	3.3913	1.23359	.321	.727
	Total	90	3.2556	1.25027		
	≤ 5	27	3.6667	.87706		
	> 5 ≤ 10	41	3.5000	.87706		
17	> 10	22	3.5909	.73414	.024	.976
	Total	89	3.5730	.83785		
	≤ 5	27	4.0741	1.03500		
	> 5 ≤ 10	41	4.1000	.74421		
18	> 10	22	4.1304	1.01374	.304	.739
	Total	90	4.1000	.90006		
	≤ 5	27	3.6667	1.03775		
	> 5 ≤ 10	41	3.8250	.84391		
19	> 10	22	3.6522	1.19121	.083	.921
	Total	90	3.7333	.99210		
	≤ 5	27	4.0370	.70610		
	> 5 ≤ 10	41	4.0500	.90441		
20	> 10	22	4.1304	1.01374	.612	.545
	Total	90	4.0667	.87152		
	≤ 5	27	3.4074	1.18514		
	> 5 ≤ 10	41	3.7000	1.06699		
Overall	> 10	22	3.6522	1.02730	.140	.869
	Total	90	3.6000	1.08927		
	≤ 5	27	3.4759	9.44364		
	> 5 ≤ 10	41	3.5250	7.20399		
	> 10	22	3.5201	6.48558		
	Total	90	3.5090	7.71887		