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Integrating Grammar in Adult TESOL Classrooms in El Salvador

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Integrating Grammar in Adult TESOL Classrooms in El Salvador

by

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Abstract

In 2008, Borg and Burns explored the beliefs of ELT professionals regarding the integration of Grammar in the adult classrooms. Their study comprised the opinions of instructors from different parts of the world, but excluded the Latin American region. This research sought to fill that gap by providing an insight into the region through a sample of 64 EFL professionals in El Salvador. By means of a questionnaire that yielded quantitative and qualitative data, the beliefs of the participants were analyzed. The results of this study showed that the beliefs of the teachers in El Salvador are remarkably similar to those of the original study. Through this research, it was found that teachers greatly favor the integration of grammar with other skills by including it in context. At the same time, teachers' accounts showed that practical knowledge and experience greatly determine their practices, even over their theoretical knowledge. It is expected that these findings motivate further study in a population that has been highly under-researched so that ELT professionals can inform their practices.

Keywords: teacher's beliefs, grammar, integration, EFL.

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Table of Contents

Chapter   Page

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter I: Introduction

Grammar teaching and learning have been controversial topics both in the field of second language acquisition and in the field of pedagogy. For years, it has been debated, with no real consensus, what the best approach to teaching grammar is, despite the large amount of research done on this matter. In fact, ever since the inception of the Grammar Translation Method there has been a fascination for finding the way to incorporate grammar in the English classroom that no method has been able to address successfully. What is more, in the past few years there has been an emergence of a line of research on teachers' beliefs rather than in the methods they use, given that there seems to be a rupture between what methods dictate and what teachers decide in the classroom.

Therefore, researching teachers' beliefs and practices has become of extreme importance to the field of pedagogy. There have been several studies done in this area of teacher cognition and how this affects classroom practices. One of these studies was conducted by Borg and Burns (2008) on 176 teachers of adults from around the globe to better understand their beliefs in the area of grammar instruction. Unfortunately, though their study aimed at collecting information from every continent, they were unable to collect enough data from Latin American instructors. Thus, it is important to replicate this study and bridge that gap left by their study.

In order to do this, this study gathers and analyzes data from participants who teach in institutions that serve adults in El Salvador. The learning of English has become an important asset for people who want to improve their job opportunities, and for those who plan to move to an English-speaking country such as the US. Being that these two goals involve, perhaps above all else, communication, one would assume that every institution would be somewhat homogeneous in what they think is the key to teaching linguistic skills. Indeed, simply by

perusing, one can notice that most of these institutions claim to help learners to communicate, some even claiming to do it at high-speed; this does not tell us, however, to what extent grammar is involved in the teaching process. What is more, it is not uncommon to come across individuals, and even institutions who are against the teaching of grammar in the ESL classroom.

This reality is the main motivation to expand on Borg and Burn's (2008) study. Since instructors' beliefs may outweigh their theoretical knowledge, it is of extreme importance that these beliefs are explored. This research will open a window into a population that is wildly neglected and will open a window into teachers' minds and their reported practices when it comes to grammar. What is more, the results yielded from this study may help to make conclusions about the Latin American region, which was not included in the original study.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Grammar and SLA Theory

Grammar is "a system of rules governing the conventional arrangement and relationship of words in a sentence" (Brown, 1994), and as one of the language subskills, it needs to be considered within the framework of teaching. However, deciding how to teach grammar, or whether or not to teach it, is one of the most debated issues in the fields of pedagogy and second language acquisition (Ellis, 2006). After all, as Larsen-Freeman (2014) points out, the term grammar alone can be interpreted differently depending on how it is seen; it can represent the set of rules and structures but it can also be seen as a tool to make meaning.

The teaching of grammar has undergone changes throughout the years. In fact, there is record that even by 500 B.C., there had been discussions of the most logical way of learning languages, especially with advocates of inductive learning (Kelly, 1969). Hinkel and Fotos (2002), in an overview of the history of grammar teaching, explain that the Grammar Translation Method was the first attempt to homogenize teaching through a common method. For years, translation was used to teach languages such as Latin and Greek. However, when the need emerged for people to learn other languages, such as English, researchers had to create other methods that would allow people not only to understand but to be able to produce language. From this, the Audio-lingual, Direct Method, the functional approaches and others arose. However, even when these methods focused on providing input aside from structures, they kept space for explicit grammar instruction (pp. 1-12).

This explicit way of teaching grammar was challenged, probably most famously, by Krashen's Input Hypothesis, which became a vast area of study and controversy in second language acquisition. This hypothesis proposed a more naturalistic approach to language given

that, according to Krashen and Terrell (1983), learners have an intuition about grammar that allows them to arrive to the correct structures without needing to be explicitly taught. Therefore, those instructors who would follow this approach would stay away from teaching grammar, and focus solely on providing meaningful input to students with the idea that the structure would eventually be learned. This hypothesis led ESL/EFL teachers to be reluctant to teach grammar explicitly in their classrooms and favor a "communicative" approach with more implicit learning in their practice.

Another theory that might support that reluctance is that there seem to be developmental sequences in learning languages. These sequences are most notably agreed upon in terms of negation, questions, possession, and past time markers (Tarone & Swierzbin, 2009). One of the first people to propose these sequences was Corder (1967) who coined the term built-in syllabus to refer to a "learner-generated sequence" meaning what a learner is able to acquire at a certain stage and that it might not be the same as an "instructor-generated sequence" (p. 166). This means that it does not matter what you teach students to do, they will learn things at their own rhythm and in the same order. This would also imply that, as Krashen meant, an instructor's job is merely to provide natural input.

One more contribution from the field of SLA related to grammar is the distinction between focus on form and focus on formS. Long and Robinson (1998) define the latter as the presentation of lexical items or forms presented one at a time, stemming from the idea that languages are to be analyzed linguistically to create lists that can be sequenced and presented to the learners (pp. 15-16). They introduce the idea of focus on form as a different alternative to what they consider inefficient teaching. Long and Robinson (1998) present this concept as an "occasional shift of attention to linguistic code features – by the teacher and/or one or more

students – triggered by perceived problems with comprehension or production" (p. 23) inside a communicative task. They continue to explain that in focus on form, learners' main focus is communication and the accomplishment of tasks, while the instructor draws attention to specific issues to make them salient to the learners. Long (2001) defends the idea of focus on form by saying that focus on formS (i.e. isolating grammar forms) hinders learning and that, on the contrary, focus on form accelerates learning and promotes ultimate attainment (p.186).

These ideas have certainly revolutionized and contributed to the way that we see grammar teaching and learning. Interestingly, there seems to be a gap between second language acquisition theories and what teachers actually do in practice. Ellis (2001) points out that there is a difference between technical – coming from research – and practical – coming from instructional practice – knowledge and that "teachers, faced with the need to make countless decisions to accomplish a lesson, must also necessarily rely on the practical knowledge they have acquired through teaching or, perhaps their experiences of having been taught." (p. 47). Thus, SLA research is helpful and contributes to the technical knowledge of instructors, but in the end, it might be the practical knowledge the one that determines what happens in ESL/EFL classrooms.

It is not surprising, then, that there are still certain doubts regarding how grammar should be addressed in the language classroom. After all, multiple theories and methods have been brought up by SLA researchers. What is more, it has been suggested that theories only contribute to expand what might be the most important factor of teaching – i.e. teachers' individuals beliefs. After all, as mentioned above, instructors need to have practical knowledge that research in SLA might not be able to provide because that is not its specific intent (Ellis, 2001, p. 45). SLA contributions cannot be overlooked, but in the end, it is each instructors' job to make classroom

decisions. Long (2001) explains that instructors do not seem to adhere to one specific method but that they take certain parts of methods, which can lead one to believe that methods either don't matter or don't exist (p. 180). Hence, studying teachers' beliefs and practices becomes crucial.

Teacher's Beliefs

The construct that leads this research is that of teacher's beliefs, which will be defined in this paper as the "psychologically held understandings, premises or propositions about the world that are felt to be true" (Richardson, 1996 p. 103). Admittedly, this construct is quite complex and agreement upon a definition is intricate; however, its importance is monumental to the field of education (Pajares, 1992). Because of this idea that teachers' classrooms decisions are more crucial than what any method may dictate, researching what teachers believe has become important, not only in language teaching but in education in general.

This is proven by the vast amount of literature in the field of teachers' beliefs in the last few years. For instance, there has been research done on in-service and preservice teachers (Tunkler, Ercan, Beskirli & Sahin, 2016; Debreli, 2016), in different subject areas such as mathematics, science, physical education (Purnomo, Suryadi & Wardis, 2016; Rachele, Cuddihy, Washington, McPhail, 2016; Baron, 2015), and even in constructs such as discipline and self-efficacy (Polat, Kaya, Akdag, 2013; Aslan, Tas, Ogul, 2016). These studies are a reflection of how important the field of teacher's beliefs and cognition has become.

In fact, Pajares (1992) goes further and claims that "[f]ew would argue that the beliefs teachers hold influence their perceptions and judgments, which, in turn, affect their behavior in the classroom, or that understanding the belief structures of teachers and teacher candidates is essential to improving their professional preparation and teaching" (p. 307). Hence, it is really not surprising that this area of research is making an impact in language teaching.

Beliefs about Grammar Teaching and Learning

As stated above, there are different perspectives when it comes to role of grammar teaching in the ESL/EFL classroom, and they may depend on different variables such as emerging theories, or teachers' decisions. In fact, as Burguess and Etherington (2002) explain, the choices made by teachers in their own individual contexts play an important role in what happens in their classrooms (p.436). However, before diving into what teachers believe about grammar, it is important to define what grammar teaching is.

First, grammar teaching will be defined in this paper in Ellis' (2006) words: "Grammar teaching involves any instructional technique that draws learners' attention to some specific grammatical form in such a way that it helps them either to understand it metalinguistically and/or process it in comprehension and/or production so that they can internalize it." (p. 84). In other words, when speaking about grammar teaching it might not be just an explicit lesson, but any activity that may raise students' attention toward a form.

The beliefs and cognitions of teachers in teaching grammar play a massive role in their practices as it has been demonstrated in the literature. For instance, Borg (1999), regarding the use of grammatical terminology in the classroom, explored the beliefs of four different teachers through observation and interviews. These four teachers expressed their arguments for and against the use of terminology in the classroom and were observed to find what motivated the presence or lack of terminology in their explanations. He found that experiences in life shape people's beliefs; therefore, the decisions that teachers make. What is more, their decisions to use terminology or not were largely based on what was needed in the moment. So, for example, if they had explained something using terminology and students had not understood, they would explain again avoiding its use.

Another example in the literature is a study conducted by Sanchez and Borg (2014) who researched two Argentinian teachers who were observed and interviewed to find out the reasoning behind their classroom decisions. They made similar claims regarding teachers' decisions since they found that both teachers largely based their choices not only in pedagogical reasoning but in other factors such as "[their] perceptions of their knowledge of grammar, their beliefs about the value of grammar in L2 learning, and their interpretations of their context (particularly of their learners)" (p. 52). The researchers point out that undoubtedly their own experiences would have shaped each of their instructional decisions as well.

It is important to say that grammar teaching may be seen as a wide spectrum. On one side of the spectrum, there are teachers who, when it comes to teaching adults, believe that grammar should be taught explicitly and on the other side those who believe that it should be taught implicitly. Norris and Ortega (2000) define explicit grammar instruction as that which contains explanations or exercises that encourage students' attention to forms; whereas, implicit instruction is the opposite in that there is no mention of grammatical structures or special attention placed to them (p. 437). From this definition, it is clear that these two are the extreme views, and it is quite possible that teachers do not adhere entirely to one or the other. That being said, there have been studies that explore both ends of the spectrum.

On the side of explicit teaching, there could be several reasons why teachers might choose to go about explaining grammar this way. For instance, a study carried out with four teachers in Iran found that teachers who did not feel confident on their knowledge of grammar tended to avoid explicit explanations; whereas, teachers who felt confident had no problem giving explanations of syntactic structures, drilling and using grammatical terminology. Interestingly, one of the teachers interviewed in this study said that she felt that this was more

appropriate to do with adults than with teenagers. From this, the researchers concluded that a teacher's own knowledge of grammar could determine how they taught (Nazari & Allahyar, 2012).

In a different study conducted by Andrews (2010) with 170 teachers in Hong Kong, China, opposite results were found. Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire and take a battery of tests to measure their grammar proficiency and knowledge. Andrews reported that teachers who scored high on grammar tests favored an inductive approach to teaching grammar, while those who scored low would favor explicit grammar teaching. He also linked this to teacher confidence, claiming that a high level of subject matter knowledge would push teachers to a learner-centered approach, and a low level of grammar knowledge would push teachers to hold on to a teacher-centered, textbook-centered approach (p. 360-361). These two studies clearly show two opposite poles of one issue, and there could be different reasons for this, ranging from cultural perspectives to different researchers' interpretations.

This same study by Andrews (2010) contributes to the discussion of explicit grammar instruction by providing an insight into his participants' justifications for explicit teaching. He mentions in his conclusion that some of the common reasons why teachers claim to use explanations in the classroom include that explicit teaching supports implicit learning and that by teaching a specific form, students get a sense that they have learned something tangible in their class (p. 24). However, one must ask how valid these claims are, given that the less qualified participants were the ones who favored explicit grammar teaching. It is important to note that these two studies were done from the teachers' perspective, so Andrews does not explore learning, they merely express what teachers do, or believe they do, in their classrooms.

From the learners' perspective, a longitudinal study conducted with German learners provides some insight in the difference between explicit and implicit instruction. In this study, Klapper and Rees (2003) analyzed the data of 57 students of German who were placed in two distinct groups of instruction (explicit versus implicit) for four years. On the first two years of the study, the students who were being taught explicitly performed better on their tests, and used language more accurately than those who were being taught in a more communicative way – though the latter were more fluent. By the end of the study, both groups were relatively balanced due to spending some time immersed in the target language in the middle of the program, but those who were taught explicitly had an advantage on grammar usage. Besides this, it was shown that students underperformed when tested on topics that had not been explained in class. Based on these results, Klapper and Rees supported the use of explicit instruction under the claim that their results show that explicit grammar teaching accelerates the acquisition process.

Another reason to support explicit explanations has to do with feedback. Ellis, Lowen and Erlam (2006) conducted research in this area to find which of the two, implicit or explicit feedback was more effective. To do this, they set three different groups that would receive different feedback (implicit, explicit, and control) on one same topic – the regular past tense. The implicit feedback was given in the form of recasts, while the explicit feedback was given in the form of metalinguistic information. Students were tested using oral, grammar, and metalinguistic tests. Their results showed that explicit, metalinguistic feedback was more effective than implicit feedback and that "when learners receive explicit feedback on their attempts to communicate, acquisition takes place" (p. 366). These results were also supported by another study conducted by Varnosfadrani and Basturkmen (2009), adding that explicit instruction might be more effective because they catch students' attention.

On the other side of the spectrum of grammar teaching, we find those teachers who believe that, when teaching adults, grammar should be addressed implicitly. For instance, one of the most popular beliefs among instructors and even among people who are not part of the field, is that children have an ability to learn languages implicitly that adults lack. However, a study conducted by Litchman (2016), where both children and adults were tested on their ability to learn an artificial language found that adults were able to learn implicitly, even outperforming the children in the study. Litchman also established that the only "difference between adults and children was on metalinguistic awareness: some adults in the implicit training condition guessed the mini-language's rules, but no children in the implicit group guessed the rules" (p. 727). In other words, adults were equally capable of leaning the artificial language implicitly. Nevertheless, the researcher remained on the side of caution because this was a short learning period, and results might be different when testing long-term learning.

On a similar line of thought with implicit learning, there are many teachers who believe that grammar should not be taught in isolation, but mixed with the four skills – listening, speaking, reading and writing. For example, Celce-Murcia (1991) in explaining her views on grammar, expressed that features of language should be practiced in context and that instructors should aid their students in analyzing discourse while focusing on grammar (p. 476). Nunan (2001) also voiced the need for grammar to be taught in context by saying that learners need to understand the different forms and choices they have to express an idea, and when and how these are used. (p. 192). These words are echoed by many other ELT professionals who do not view grammar as a separate subskill but as an intrinsic part of the language and of communication.

One study that seems to agree with these words was conducted by Burguess and Etherington (2002). They sought to find teachers' beliefs regarding several aspects of grammar

teaching by means of a questionnaire with both quantitative and qualitative data. One of the most interesting results was that they found that most of their participants did not agree with decontextualizing grammar but they preferred to teach it within authentic discourse. Furthermore, their participants seemed to lean towards explicit teaching within communicative or task-based activities. This study also demonstrates that teachers are not really bound by methods but by what they think is best for their context.

Numerous ideas have surged claiming that grammar should be taught within the four skills. One of these studies explores the use of consciousness-raising tasks to combine grammar and communication. Fotos (1994) put to the test three different communicative tasks with 160 university students who were separated in groups that would either receive the tasks and grammar instruction or would only receive the tasks. The analysis of her data yielded similar results, which lead her to conclude that it is possible to gain grammatical proficiency without the need of explicit grammar teaching, but through making students analyze the differences between structures. Moreover, she claims that a wide variety of grammar structures could be used in an integrated matter with positive results.

All of these studies reflect a wide variety of beliefs that have been researched, and all of them add value to the field. Moreover, the fact that there are so many methods, and approaches that instructors are aware of, only builds on to the idea that all of these cognitions and all of the experiences shape an instructors' own beliefs and practices.

Study on Teachers' Beliefs about the Integration of Grammar

Borg and Burns (2008) sought to find out the system of beliefs and reported practices that ESL and EFL professionals have regarding the integration of grammar in their adult classrooms. They started with the premise that teacher cognition mattered more in the classroom than the

methods or approaches proposed over time. In other words, they wanted to find out what shaped teachers' decisions for instruction in their classroom. They were able to collect data from New Zealand, Australia, Asia, Europe and South America. However, the sample from South America was insufficient to be used in their study.

From this survey, they were able to make conclusions regarding their participants' beliefs and classroom practices. Their questionnaire, which will be used in this study as well, was divided in three parts to collect background data, beliefs about grammar learning and teaching and practices integrating grammar into other skills. They concluded that the two most prevalent beliefs when teaching grammar are, on the one hand, that teachers favor explicit grammar teaching and on the other, that they favor integration of grammar with other skills.

The present study is an attempt to replicate, expand and compare the findings of Borg and Burns to the Latin American context based on a representative sample of teachers in El Salvador. As said before, the original study was unable to make conclusions that would apply to the Latin American region. In order to be able to make these conclusions comparable to those of the original study, the research questions, the instrument to gather information and the analysis procedure have only been slightly modified to reflect the realities of the population which is under study.

The Adult Language Classroom in El Salvador

Due to the impact of globalization and the increasing need of learning English, many Salvadorans decide to start learning this foreign language. Some Salvadorans receive English as a class when they are children, but this is mostly the case in private and/or bilingual schools. In the case of public schools, students receive EFL classes for only five years (seventh – eleventh grade) and unfortunately, as Martinez (2015) found in an investigation conducted in public

schools in El Salvador, the way classes are designed do not lead to effective learning. For this reason, many Salvadorans seek to study English when they reach adulthood (which is legally reached at age 18). The most common way to do this is attending language academies, which abound all over the country, but it is also possible to do so in technical colleges and universities.

Borg and Burns (2008) included in their sample, the data from eight secondary/high school teachers; however, this would not be applicable to the Salvadoran context because adults are not part of these programs. In fact, the General Law of Education of El Salvador on its Seventh Chapter, establishes a separate section for adult education for the cases of adults who, for one reason or another, were unable to complete their education stating that these especial cases will be handled separately from the secondary/high schools (Asamblea Legislativa de la República de El Salvador, 1990). In the same legislation, they address the existence of Non-formal education, which would include language academies, and clearly state that they (non-formal institutions) "*podran estar a cargo de entidades estatales o privadas… [y N]o estaran sujeta a controles estatales*." [can be governmental or private… and they will not be bound to governmental controls] (p. 12).

Having clarified that language academies, which handle most of the English learning population, are under no regulations of curriculum or any other type of educational regulations, it can be presumed that each academy can teach in any way they seem adequate. Interestingly, the trend is that most language academies pride themselves in teaching through a communicative approach, since communication is most people's goal. However, as Borg (1998) points out, personal beliefs and understandings shape the instructional decisions that teachers make (p. 22) and so, institutional perspectives might not be the predominant factor on how English, and more specifically grammar, is taught in El Salvador.

Research Questions

1. What beliefs about grammar teaching generally are reported by TESOL practitioners working with adult learners (18 years and over)?

2. Are the beliefs and practices about grammar teaching reported by teachers related to (a) their experience; (b) their qualifications; (c) the type of institution they work for?

3. To what extent do teachers say that they integrate grammar teaching into their work?

4. What conceptions of integration emerge from teachers' accounts of the relationship between the teaching of grammar and of language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) in their work?

5. To what extent do teachers believe that their reported approach to the integration of grammar is effective in promoting language learning?

6. What evidence do they cite in justifying their views about such effectiveness?

7. To what extent do teachers' explanations of their beliefs and practices vis-a`-vis integration refer to SLA theory?

Chapter III: Methodology

Participants

The sample of participants in this study is similar to the number of participants in the original research. Borg and Burns (2008) divided their participants geographically into 3 groups with between 55 and 61 participants per region; therefore, the number of participants in this research was aimed at equating or surpassing that number. After collecting the data, 64 participants' information was gathered for analysis.

All the participants are teachers of English as a Foreign Language in the context of El Salvador. All of these participants were recruited through language academies, technical colleges and universities that teach adults specifically, in the capital city of San Salvador and its surrounding area. In order to access the participants, emails were sent to coordinators to request authorization to enter the institutions and recruit participants. A total of five institutions were visited during a period of two months. The researcher approached each institution and personally delivered the surveys to the teachers who agreed to participate in the study. Furthermore, some participants were reached personally by the researcher since obtaining access to the institutions where they work was not possible. In this case, since they were reached personally outside the institutions, there was no need to obtain authorization.

Since the institutions that were visited are academies and universities, most, if not all, instructors have experience working with adults, which is the only requirement that participants needed to fulfill in order to be part of the study. What is more, participants were asked to primarily remember their experience with adult learners, since many of them do not work exclusively with adults. Every person who agreed to participate in the study was permitted to do so; thus, all the information collected is presented and analyzed in this study.

Data Collection Instruments

A cross-sectional questionnaire (see Appendix A) was used to survey teachers' beliefs and reported practices. Questionnaires are a common and effective way of collecting data regarding opinions and attitudes from a large number of participants (Mackey & Gass, 2016, p. 102). This questionnaire was modified from Borg and Burns' (2008) original instrument. One of the modifications done to their original version was that in Borg and Burns' questionnaire, the first question, which asks about teacher's years of experience, was done in the form of intervals. In the instrument used for this research, teachers were given blank spaces for them to fill out their exact years and months of experience. Furthermore, a question was added to discover the decade in which teachers received their qualifications.

Another change made to the original questionnaire was to the questions that require the participants' qualifications and institutions where they work. One of the qualifications asked for in the original study was "Diploma", which does not apply to the Salvadoran context and was eliminated. Similarly, in the options of institutions, the names were changed to better reflect the reality of the participants. What is more, three different questions were added to the first section of the questionnaire to inquire the participants' experience learning Spanish and English grammar and studying abroad.

Finally, the most relevant change done to Borg and Burns' questionnaire is the scale. The second section requires that participants agree or disagree to statements using a Likert scale. This scale has been modified from the original five-point scale to a four-point scale (forced choice) to improve the reliability of the results given that the mid-point has been proven to be interpreted differently by participants (Nadler, Weston & Voyles, 2015). By removing the mid-point then,

participants are required to deeply reflect and make a choice that approximates their beliefs the most.

Because of the nature of the research where beliefs and reported practices are analyzed, the instrument is divided in three distinct sections.

1. Background data. In this section, participants are asked to fill out their age and two blank spaces with their years and months of experience for the first question. From questions 2-5 they were required to tick squares according to their personal information regarding qualifications, and type of institutions where they work. The last two questions from this section required respondents to provide information about their experience learning Spanish and English grammar.

2. Beliefs about grammar teaching and learning. Using a four-point Likert scale, participants were asked how strongly they agree or disagree with 15 statements about how grammar is learned and how they believe it should be taught. For instance, the first statement says: "Teachers should present grammar to learners before expecting them to use it." Participants were asked to mark one of the four squares that showed their personal perspective.

3. Practices integrating grammar. This section asks participants about the role of grammar in their own classrooms. They were asked to answer two sets of questions and to justify their answers with their own words by providing explanations of how they integrate grammar in their classes, and evidence of the effectiveness of their grammar teaching approach. It was from this section that the most relevant information was yielded, since it is teachers' own words that reflect their beliefs.

Procedures

        Data collection procedures were executed in a period of approximately three months. To do this, the researcher traveled to El Salvador in order to collect the data personally from the participants. Prior to this, the researcher reached out to language academy coordinators, college and university deans from San Salvador and its surrounding area to request their permission to use their institutions' facilities and be able to reach as many participants as possible. At the same time, other participants were contacted individually since they had personal contact with the researcher.

        Most of the respondents were approached in person in their workplace, others were approached in places convened by the participants and the researcher. The volunteers were explained the goals and procedures of the study and asked to read the consent form thoroughly. The consent form included information such as the anonymity of the survey and the assurance that they could choose to withdraw their answers from the study at any point. At the same time, they were informed of the publication of the findings, and how they could access the results if they wished to do so.

        As the participants filled out the questionnaire, the researcher stayed in the proximities to answer any doubts they had. The questionnaire was provided to them in paper and it took each respondent an average of ten minutes to complete. Upon the completion of the questionnaire, participants were reminded of their ability to reach the published results and of the researcher's contact information in case of any questions that could arise.

Analysis

        Once all the data had been collected, the researcher transcribed all the information from the participants' questionnaires into an Excel spreadsheet. Since the questionnaire that was used

in order to collect data from participants contained different types of data, the analysis was run differently for each type.

In order to answer the first research question, descriptive statistics sufficed. Thus, the first analysis that was performed on section one and two was frequencies to yield demographic information from the participants, as well as to find the percentages of participants who agree or disagree with each statement. This was the main analysis that Borg and Burns (2008) did in their study; thus, the same procedure was followed for this paper.

In order to answer research question 2, the Likert scale responses of the most substantial categories for each variable (i.e. their experience, qualifications, and institutions they work for) were averaged to see if there was a noticeable difference by category. Based on the apparent similarity of the results, it was determined that no other statistical analysis was needed to answer the question. Therefore, only descriptive statistics were used in the analysis of the data collected.

Section three yielded qualitative information. Descriptive statistics helped to answer questions 3 and 5. Whereas questions 4 and 6 were analyzed by doing a content analysis based on Lincoln and Guba (1985) of the participants' explanations to the two open ended questions which were presented to them. By means of the software Atlas.Ti, the information was coded using the labels used by Borg and Burns (2008) where possible. For question 1b, 58 quotes were identified and later categorized into groups based on the different participants' responses; whereas, for question 2b, 63 quotes were coded.

Content Analysis was also used to identify the answer to research question 7. By reading the participants' accounts for both open-ended questions, and searching for technical words that are commonly used when describing approaches to grammar in the classroom, the answer to question 7 became apparent.

It is worth mentioning that two items from the questionnaire were removed from the analysis. These two questions were part of section one of the questionnaire and inquired about participants' experience with learning Spanish and English grammar. These two questions intended to draw a relation between learning experiences and teaching practices. Regrettably, these two questions did not yield the expected responses, and no valuable information was collected from them. Thus, this information was excluded from the data analysis.

Chapter IV: Results

A total of 64 teachers of English in El Salvador (Age: $M = 38.53$, $SD = 10.36$; Experience: $M = 13.53$, $SD = 8.80$) filled out the questionnaire. In terms of their qualifications (Table 1), it is shown that most of the participants are highly qualified, with the highest percentage having a Bachelor's Degree in ELT. It is important to note that for this question, two out of the 64 participants did not offer a response. It is unclear why this was the case, but it is quite possible that these two participants have no training in ELT; thus, they did not have a box to check. Moreover, one of the participants who marked "other" as an option specified that they did not possess any certification in ELT.

Table 1

Highest ELT qualification

Qualification	N	%
Bachelor's	36	58.1
Certificate	10	16.1
Master's	10	16.1
Postgraduate certificate	4	6.5
Other	2	3.2
Total	62	100%

In spite of this, it can be observed that the sample taken comes from qualified instructors. This is not surprising for this population since the TESL Major has become increasingly popular in the last few years. This is also consistent with the answers obtained to the question of the year when they obtained their degrees or qualifications. 73.3 per cent of the respondents, who possess a certification in ELT, received their highest qualification during the 2000s and 2010s, which would suggest that their knowledge in the subject is not outdated. What is more, when asked about their experiences with education abroad, 28.1 per cent claimed to have studied outside of

the country. It is unclear, however, what part of their education was done abroad. Overall, all of this information would suggest that the participants in this study are highly qualified individuals.

In terms of their work experience, 71.9 per cent of the participants work in the private sector. This is also consistent with the reality of El Salvador since there are very few public spaces where adults can receive English classes; hence, the demand of teachers in this sector is very small. Within those two categories, participants were asked to select the type of institution where they work. The results of this question are represented in Table 2 below. Collecting equal data from each type of institution was not possible since the study was voluntary, and the access to certain institutions and participants was not equal in each institution.

Table 2

Respondents by type of institution

Institution	N	%
Language Academy	40	62.5
University	19	29.7
Other	3	4.7
Technical college	2	3.1
Total	64	100

Research Question 1: Beliefs about Grammar Learning and Teaching

Section two of the questionnaire consisted of 15 different statements that referred to different common beliefs that surround the teaching of grammar in the adult classroom. The participants were asked to show their agreement or disagreement with each statement in a four-point scale. The results have been ranked from the most to the least agreed on in Table 3. It is important to note that there was no middle point of uncertainty; thus, participants were restricted to choose one. In analyzing the responses, there were five statements that did not receive a

response from every participant (statements 5, 6, 7, 10 and 12), which could mean that the

participants were neither in agreement nor in disagreement with the statements.

Table 3

Percentage of beliefs about grammar learning and teaching – from most to least agreed on

Beliefs	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. Exercises that get learners to practice grammar structures help learners develop fluency in using grammar.	3.1	9.4	62.5	25.0
2. In learning grammar, repeated practice allows learners to use structures fluently.	1.5	14.1	57.8	26.6
3. Learners who are aware of grammar rules can use the language more effectively than those who are not.	9.4	15.6	42.2	32.8
4. Indirect grammar teaching is more appropriate with younger than with older learners.	6.3	18.7	57.8	17.2
5. In a communicative approach to language grammar is not taught directly.	1.6	26.6	57.8	12.5
6. It is necessary to study the grammar of a second or foreign language in order to speak it fluently.	7.8	23.4	51.6	17.2
7. Grammar learning is more effective when learners work out the rules for themselves.	3.1	28.1	54.7	12.5
8. Correcting learners' spoken grammatical errors in English is one of the teacher's key roles.	3.1	31.3	45.3	20.3
9. During lessons, a focus on grammar should come after communicative tasks, not before.	4.7	29.7	43.8	20.3
10. Teaching the rules of English grammar directly is more appropriate for older learners	7.8	31.3	45.3	15.6

11.	Teachers should present grammar to learners before expecting them to use it.	12.5	28.2	48.4	10.9
12.	It is important for learners to know grammatical terminology.	6.3	39.1	39.1	14.1
13.	Formal grammar teaching does not help learners become more fluent.	7.8	46.9	34.4	10.9
14.	In teaching grammar, a teacher's main role is to explain the rules.	15.6	57.8	21.9	4.7
15.	Grammar should be taught separately, not integrated with other skills such as reading and writing.	39.1	43.8	9.4	6.3

As seen in the table above, the statements that received the highest percentage of agreement were the ones presented as statements 3 and 8 in the questionnaire. These two statements received over 80 per cent of agreement between those who strongly agreed and those who only agreed. These two statements show a belief that teachers have engrained in them: the need of offering constant practice on structures studied so that students can master them and are able to use them effectively. On the other hand, the statement that received the highest rate of disagreement, as shown in the last item in table 3, was questionnaire statement number 6 (82.9 per cent), which addressed the effectiveness of separating grammar from the other macro and micro skills.

Research Question 2: Relationship between Beliefs, Experience, Qualification, and Institution

The descriptive statistics of the three most substantial categories for each variable and their corresponding responses in the Likert scale showed that there were no indicative differences between categories in experience (1-5.5 years $M = 2.74$, 5.6 years $M = 2.71$),

qualification (bachelor's $M = 2.66$, certificate $M = 2.76$, Master's $M = 2.59$), or institution (language academy $M = 2.71$, university $M = 2.63$). Thus, it cannot be established that any of these variables are related to teacher's beliefs.

Research Question 3: Integration of Grammar

In section three, participants were asked to describe how they integrate grammar in their classrooms and how effective their personal method of integration is. Borg and Burns (2008) purposefully excluded the use of a specific definition for integration because "[their] goal was to elicit teachers' conceptualizations of what integration is and providing [their] own definition would have been detrimental to this goal." (p. 467).

Question 1a asked teachers to which degree they integrated grammar into their lessons. In this question, again, the participants were not provided with a definition of what complete, substantial or some integration meant. Thus, it can be assumed that even though participants might have similar understanding of the constructs, the extent to which they integrate grammar might have some differences. Figure 8 shows that the clear majority of participants claim to integrate grammar substantially in their lessons; whereas none of them expressed that they never integrate grammar in their classroom. This is not a surprising response, given that in their explanations, which will be further analyzed below, a great number of teachers expressed the inevitability of grammar in every aspect of language.
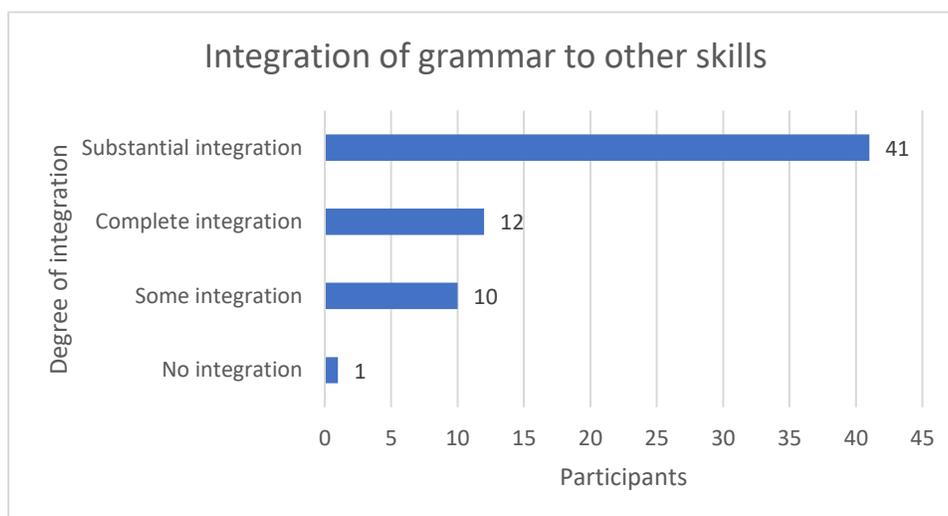
Figure 1: Integration of grammar to other skills

Question 1c asked the participants about the degree of control they have over the materials that they use in their classes. This question is particularly interesting given that textbooks could have an influence over the degree of integration of grammar in their classrooms. As shown in table three, 92 per cent of the instructors claim to have some or more control over the materials that they use in their classrooms, which leads to believe that it is their decision to integrate grammar; although it would be impossible to claim that their textbooks or any other imposed materials have no influence on their practices at all.

Table 4

Degree of control over materials

Degree	N	%
Complete control	29	46.0
Some control	29	46.0
Little control	3	4.8
No control	2	3.2
Totals	63	100

Research Question 4: Relationship between grammar and skills

Two out of the 64 participants who completed this questionnaire did not provide an answer for question 1b, which was the first of two open-ended questions presented to the participants. The responses of the participants yielded 2319 words, which averages 37 words per participant who offered a response to the question. In running a word list analysis of frequency, it was interesting to find that out of the four macro skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) the one that was mentioned the most was reading with 4.65 per cent out of the total percentage of words, followed by speaking and writing with 4.25 per cent each, and listening with 3.85 per cent. After coding, 58 units of meaning were identified and coded into seven categories.

These seven categories were analyzed in a similar matter to Borg and Burns' study, and the same concepts of integration were used to code the responses to 1b. In their study, there were seven codes taken out of the responses to question 1b. The first of these forms of integration is "grammar in context", which is basically introducing grammar in contexts that are meaningful. The second and third are "deriving grammar from texts" and "presenting grammar through texts", the former being that from a chosen text, the instructor selects a grammatical point to explain, and the latter that based on grammatical structure, the instructor looks for or adapts a text to go with it. The fourth form of integration is "task-driven grammar work", which means that the instructor has some activities centered in grammar so that students complete a communicative task. "Grammar in preparation for skills work" and "grammar after skills work" refer to grammar focus to prepare for or as a continuation to other skills. The last form of integration is "reactive focus on grammar" which is correction of grammar while students work on other skills. Figure 3 shows the results for the comments in each category.
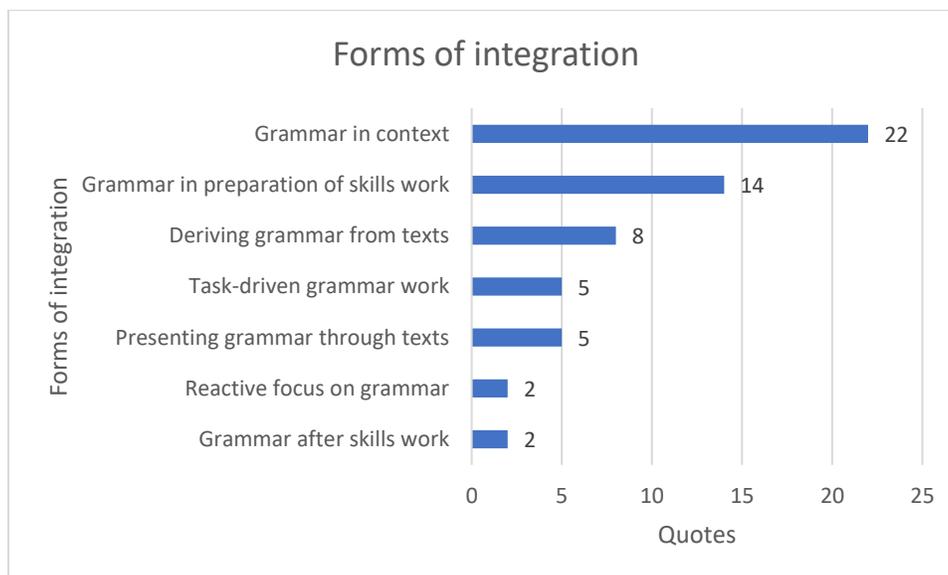
Figure 2: Forms of integration

For this research, it was necessary to add one category in addition to these seven forms of integration. That category comprised 15 comments that did not fit in with those seven forms of integration, either because the participants did not really elaborate on the integration, and simply stated it was important to do so without further detail, or because they demonstrated a negative attitude towards the use of grammar in the classroom. In the case of the latter, it is unclear what they mean by "grammar", with some mention among the comments of "explanations". Therefore, it could be assumed that these comments are in regards to explicit grammar teaching, but the explanations do not lead to that conclusion with certainty.

Grammar in context. Most participants responded to question 1b making reference to the fact that grammar is inevitably embedded into all four skills of language. While most of them touched on this superficially, others went into explaining how they approach this intricate relation mentioning how grammar is present everywhere in language, or even providing a road map of what their classes are like. For example:

Nowadays, there are some textbooks that help you a lot on [integrating grammar] because they include reading or listening exercises where the grammar structure is being used, so students can get it from context and later you can allow them to figure out the grammar rules by themselves if necessary. It's really useful to guide students to develop other skills when learning a new grammar structure, they definitely get less frustrated because now the main objective is communication not only to write down a sentence correctly. (Participant 7)

In this quote, participant seven enclosed some of the issues that other participants dealt with, not only the importance of context. For instance, it is nearly a fact that in the Salvadoran English classroom there are textbooks that guide or support the conduction of the lessons. Many of these textbooks are designed in such a way that all the skills are interconnected in as many aspects as possible. That way, teachers, by merely following the textbook, would be integrating the skills to some extent. Another issue expressed here is the need for communication rather than memorization of structures, which other participants also mentioned.

Grammar in preparation for skills work. The statements placed in this form of integration are those which state or imply that grammar is a tool for communication and it is in no way the central issue to be dealt with in a language class. It is worth noting that this category was the second largest, which would indicate that several of the participants believe that grammar is necessary prior to developing any other skill. For example,

Since students are expected to produce language, I first explain the grammar rules behind the language they are supposed to produce. That way, when they write they make less mistakes, and feel better about their learning, they also feel more confident with the language and are more willing to participate in class discussion. (Participant 37)

From this quote, it is clear that instructors in this category feel that grammar is needed for students to communicate and they teach it as a way to give them the necessary tools for them to be successful.

Deriving grammar from texts. In this specific form of integration, the participants expressed that they would focus on a topic, or on a text (written or spoken) and from there, the grammar would stem. In other words, the most important issue for them is the topic at hand. One of the participants (56) even mentioned that their syllabus was content-based. For example:

> I teach students about one topic, not a grammar part. We usually discuss ideas about the topic by working in pairs or small groups. (Participant 63)

> From their responses, it is not clear whether the topics are from a textbook or if they

personally look for relevant topics for their classes. What is clear from their words is that grammar does not determine what they cover in their classes, but, in a way, takes a back seat to the most important issue for them, which is the content and the developing of macro skills.

Task-driven grammar work. Grammar is seen as a tool to complete a communicative task in this particular form of integration. In a way, it could be said that like deriving grammar from texts, in this category, grammar is not as important as the macro skills whose focus is on communication. The participants who fell into this category, mentioned presentations, discussions, and other group-work activities that students needed to accomplish and that inevitably, grammar was expected to arise from this. For example:

> In the institution I work, teachers impart the instruction for learning English under the
> Communicative Approach. The activities carried out in the classes, projects and others
> require the students to communicate their ideas and study the contents in the program.
> Teachers focus in what the students convey paying little attention to grammar structures,

which are taught integrated in the process. This process demands students going for

meaning not for form; even though, during the classes it is considered to call the students'

attention when making mistakes, slips and errors. (Participant 50)

Without a doubt, in this statement, which seems to be shared by the other four people in

this category, grammar does not share the same importance as the other skills that might be seen

as more "communicative".

Presenting grammar through texts. The main difference between this category and

deriving grammar from texts is that, in this case, grammar is crucial in the selection of materials

and the development of the class. The instructors placed in this category emphasized the need to

incorporate grammar in their classrooms and from that need, they look for the materials that will

help them to address a grammatical point that their students need to learn. For example:

I usually have my students analyze texts, conversations or situations in order to introduce

a new structure. I provide guiding questions, so they learn new grammar structures. By

using them in context, students should learn new grammar structures and practice other

skills simultaneously, so they don't get afraid of making mistakes. (Participant 8)

As seen in this particular quotation, the focus is grammar in context. It is interesting to

note that, just as in the first quotation presented, the instructors express concern with grammar

inhibiting students' learning; however, both participant seven and eight seem to believe that their

way of presenting grammar helps students to feel confident on what they are doing.

Reactive focus on grammar. This form of integration is in regards to teacher's

corrective role in the classroom. As seen in Figure 2, this code was not particularly large, but it

was central to the comments of two of the participants. For example:

When [students] are reading and they don't pronounce auxiliaries I remind them the

rules, also in writing and when they are speaking I pay full attention to what they are

saying so that I can correct/explain later. (Participant 32)

It is noteworthy that participant 32 was the only one who made reference to a specific

grammatical structure, and who was among the very few who mention explicit grammar

teaching.

Grammar after skills work. This last form of integration is one of the least favored

based on the coding results with only two people in it. However, it is important to note that they

could represent a larger group of people who share these views. In this category, one of the

instructors seemed adamant on belittling the importance of grammar:

You teach language first (skills) and then grammar. You don't need grammar to speak a

language; you need grammar to speak about the language. (Participant 19)

the other participant's words, on the other hand, were not as strong about it and were almost

depersonalizing the response:

It's good to teach grammar and also practice/teach language skills, even though some

methods say that we can practice reading, listening and doing these activities to get

vocabulary and later, when grammar is taught, it is easier. (Participant 33)

Though these quotes exemplify the same form of integration, they also reflect a view of

grammar as a secondary skill compared to others.

Miscellaneous ideas regarding grammar. This category was created in addition to the

seven categories created by Borg and Burns (2008). The majority of participants who fell in this

category were just restating the need of integrating grammar but did not provide information on

how or why this is the case. On the other hand, there were others who provided information but

who would not fit in with the rest of the categories or even with others in the miscellaneous category. For example:

I try to find a balance between inductive and deductive grammar teaching. I think grammar should be part of our teaching. (Participant 10)

I don't give big explanations with grammar. (Participant 26)

I consider grammar is present in each of the language skills; however, overexplaining it leads to a boring learning perspective from the student. It's important to teach the substantial information to keep a balance. (Participant 44)

These ideas, though incongruent with the established categories, are still valid and important to mention in this particular analysis. The three of them are representative of the larger sample in that they do see relevance to grammar, but a sense of apathy towards what can be understood as "explicit grammar teaching" join these comments.

In general, the respondents to question 1b seemed to, unknowingly, place themselves into the categories established by Borg and Burns in their original research. These seven categories summarize different views of integrating grammar. However, this is not to say that these are the only ways of grouping views or that teachers' beliefs are limited to one or two categories. What is most interesting is that undoubtedly, the vast majority of responses, with the exception of three, exalted the need for the integration of grammar in the adult classroom.

Research Question 5: Effectiveness of their Approach to Integration

The last of the closed questions, question 2a, asked participants to rate their degree of integration as effective or not effective. Out of the 63 participants who responded to the question, 56 of them claimed that the integration of grammar into their teaching was effective. This is quite logical, given that the majority of teachers claim to integrate grammar, and one can only

assume that they do so, because they have seen its effectiveness. Interestingly, when looking at the results for question 1a which referred to how much they integrated grammar, none of the participants reported to not have integration in their classrooms; however, when analyzing this question, three of the participants marked that they separated grammar and it was effective.

Table 5

Effectiveness of degree of integration

Effectives of degree of integration	N	%
Integrate and effective	56	88.9
Integrate but not effective	4	6.3
Separate and effective	3	4.8
Separate but not effective	0	0
Totals	63	100

Research Question 6: Sources of Evidence

Out of the 64 respondents who agreed to participate in the study, 58 of them completed question 2b. In this question, the instructors needed to describe how their approach to integrating grammar is or not effective by providing evidence of their findings. In total, this question generated 1840 words, with an average of 32 words per respondent. Upon analysis, 63 units of meaning were identified and placed in categories. In order to analyze this question, eight of the nine categories created by Borg and Burns (2008) were used. The code labeled "teacher's learning experience" yielded no results from the participants' responses and was not used. Some participants responded by providing more than one source of evidence and so were coded in different categories.

The first source of evidence is the "communicative ability", meaning that teachers perceive the effectiveness of their approach by their students' ability to use grammar successfully in communication. The second one is "progress", which is described as the

advancement of students' linguistic abilities. "Student affect" and "student feedback" are the next categories, which refers to students' emotions toward language, and their voiced opinions to the instructor. The fifth piece of evidence is "performance on assessment", which is related to scores. The last three that were used in this analysis are teachers' experience, failure of isolating grammar, and teachers' intuition. All of these relate to teacher's previous experience and engrained beliefs. The results to this analysis are presented in Figure 4.
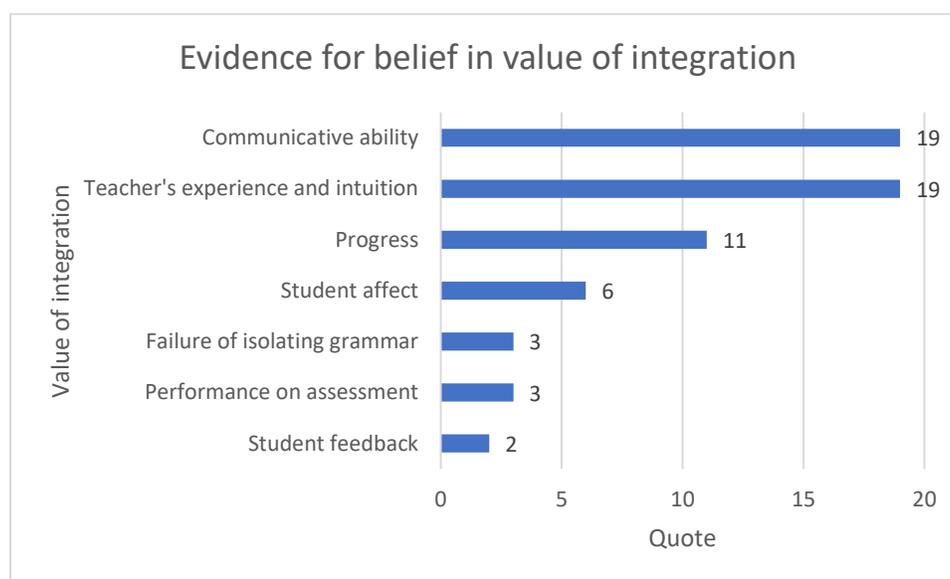

Figure 3: Evidence for belief in value of integration

Teacher's experience and intuition. The first major category of sources of evidence was teacher's experience and intuition. This category was unified as one from the original two categories of Borg and Burns (2008). This was due to the fact that the way that teachers phrased their responses made it particularly difficult to make a distinction between experience and intuition, which could be argued comes from experience itself.

In this category were placed those respondents who expressed that their own past practice indicated the effectiveness of grammar integration. Most of the statements labeled under teacher's experience were somewhat impersonal, not providing many specifics.

I teach English in an academy where students come to learn communicative English, they don't need any grammar explanation, grammar is taught inductively and at least students need explanations, they are given but briefly. Integrating grammar teaching/teaching the other skills helps students to develop fluency, vocabulary; even though I recognize if some grammar were explained, they could have had better grammar when producing the language. (Participant 49)

Furthermore, some of the comments in this category were vague enough to leave room to determine if their beliefs came from experience or intuition. For instance,

Adults sometimes don't need a lot of grammar explanation so I try to integrate grammar in all the skills. (Participant 32).

These quotes, specific or vague, all show that instructors are led by their own experienced-formed beliefs. Somehow they "know" that the integration of grammar works for their students' benefit.

Communicative ability. The category of communicative ability was equally favored by the respondents. In general, the responses categorized under this label mentioned productive skills as ways of observing the success of integration of grammar. For example,

When you integrate grammar with other exercises you make sure students are learning to use the new skills. You can prove this by making written exercises, or by making communicative activities. While they are done in separate phrases, you can see the understanding in each individual. (Participant 47)

Moreover, participants expressed that part of their evidence to know that their practice is being effective is that students are successful at informal communicative activities. For instance,

I know it is effective to integrate grammar with all the skills for example when they

speak, if I understand the message they want to convey (when they use grammar

correctly), it means that their English has improved. (Participant 20)

This particular category showed that instructors' assessments of their students' abilities

has weight over their classrooms decisions regarding their integration of grammar in the

classroom, and perhaps over other aspects as well.

Progress. The third label with the most comments under was that of "progress". The

participants in this category expressed that when they integrate grammar into their lesson,

students show improvement in their linguistic skills.

When I provide them with meaningful input through context and opportunities to put

grammar into use, they improve that accuracy as well as their fluency in the language.

(Participant 7)

Interestingly, many of the participants in this category mentioned not only the integration of

grammar, but also the explicit explanation of structures and rules.

Student affect. This category comprises the comments that mention that a source of

evidence for the effectiveness of an integrated approach comes from students' attitudes and

motivation in the classroom. Interestingly, most of the comments in this area mention

"confidence" as a key telltale sing. For instance,

I notice that if I don't teach at least a little grammar the students are not so confident

when they communicate. They hesitate more and it's difficult for them to understand

what the other person is talking about. When grammar is taught, students improve a lot;

and it's more noticeable when they go and get jobs. Students who have more knowledge

of grammar get jobs faster than those who don't know correct grammar. (Participant 12)

It is interesting to point out that this evidence of effectiveness is not verbally expressed by the students, but it is perceived by the instructors in their students' attitude in the classroom.

Failure of isolating grammar. This category comprises three comments made by teachers who, based on their experience, noticed that isolating grammar did not have the desired effects and opted to integrate grammar instead. One of the participants' expressed the following:

I've tried teaching grammar in isolation before, but it didn't really help my students make significant progress in a short period. For that reason, I chose to add grammar to the teaching of other skills and students present/produce more effective results. (Participant 48)

Though only three comments were placed in this category, it is quite possible that other instructors – those in the experience/intuition category, for instance – have gone through the same trial and error process.

Performance on assessment. This category was equally weighted as the previous one, with only three comments. These comments explicitly stated that it was through assessment that they evidenced the effectiveness of integration. This, because the communicative ability category could be interpreted as assessment as well. Thus, in this category, only those that mentioned "assessment" or "evaluation" were included. For example:

I get to know it as I observe my students' progress is shown through different kinds of assessments and even as they practice any given role-play. (Participant 42)

Similar to other categories, it is unclear whether this is the only way that instructors measure the effectiveness of their approach; however, the fact that when reading the question, this is the first idea that appeared in their minds, says something about the evidence they gather.

Student feedback. In this category, only two comments were included. It is quite noteworthy that this is the least popular source of evidence for the success of an integrated given that in the end, it is students who know better what is being effective or them and what is not. Interestingly, one of the comments makes it seem like the feedback is initiated by students and the other is initiated by the instructor asking students' opinions. With these two comments, though, students do provide feedback. For example,

> When I meet my students out of the classroom they tell me themselves how much they've
> learned from me. (Participant 1)

There could be several explanations why this category was so underpopulated; however, discovering this is outside the scope of this study and would not be more than conjectures.

Research Question 7: Integration in relation to SLA Theory

From the participants' accounts of their forms of integration and their sources of evidence, it became clear that Second Language Acquisition Theories do not have a crucial role in their beliefs or practices. Though this may be a bold claim to make, it would not be entirely implausible.

In the case of the participants of this study, the mention of technical vocabulary commonly used when speaking of grammar such as meaning-focused versus form-focused, or focus on form versus focus on formS, implicit versus explicit instruction or inductive versus explicit instruction was virtually absent. Most of the participants limited themselves to express what has worked for them in terms of experience rather than what SLA theories establish. This finding is rather disheartening but not uncommon.

Chapter V: Discussion

With the analysis of the data, the research questions that were established by Borg and Burns (2008) and adapted to conduct this research are discussed in this chapter in the context of the literature brought about by the subject at hand. Through this study, the beliefs of teachers in El Salvador were measured for analysis. These beliefs were summarized into 15 statements that represented common beliefs surrounding the teaching of grammar in the ESL/EFL classroom. It is important to note that these are reported beliefs, and that it would be nearly impossible to report if there is a tangible connection or disconnection between these beliefs and the practices of the participants.

From the results, it is seen that the two most agreed on statements are related to exercises and practice. Statements three and eight presented the teachers with the idea that through the practice of grammatical structures, students become more fluent at it. Both statements had a staggering percentage of agreement among participants. This finding is congruent with the literature that proves that there is an intrinsic connection between fluency and grammar. Arevart and Nation (1991), for instance, found that the development in language fluency improves students' overall understanding and managing of grammar. Furthermore, the other two statements that are related to this relationship also received favorable results in that most participants seem to agree that there is a strong relationship between grammar and fluency.

Another interesting result that came out of the analysis is that the most disagreed on statement was in reference to separating the skills. These results are especially relevant to this study because it shows that there seems to be a consensus among EFL instructors that grammar should not be separated from the macro-skills. This is not surprising for teachers in El Salvador, given that, instruction tends to be leaned towards communication, and as Spada et al. (2014)

found in their results, teaching grammar integrated with other skills improved students' speaking

performance in a shorter period of time than when placing greater focus on isolated forms (p.

464-465). What is most striking about these results is that when compared to Borg and Burns

(2008) study, the two most and least agreed on statements match what teachers in El Salvador

believe in.

It is not entirely surprising that a relationship was not found between the reported beliefs

and teachers' experience, qualifications, or institutions they work for. First of all, this may be

because, as explained before, many institutions have a similar vision, which may homogenize the

teacher population. Another reason, which was presented by Borg and Burn's (2008) in their

study, which found no significant correlations either, was that "seeking to account for the beliefs

teachers hold in terms of discrete demographic variables is unlikely to be productive", especially

taking into account how intricate the system of beliefs is (p. 477).

The integration of grammar in the classroom was better explored by the third section of

the questionnaire, where participants had the opportunity to express their beliefs in their own

words. Based on teachers' responses, it is clear that most of the teachers who participated in the

survey feel that they substantially integrate grammar into their work. It is important to note that

since participants were not given definitions of the constructs that integrated this section, there

may be variability in what these constructs are in teachers' mind. In spite of this, the majority of

participants reported that they considerably integrate grammar in their practices. What is more,

they manifested to have some or complete control over the material they use in their classrooms.

This shows that their integration of grammar is a by personal choice.

With their words, participants expressed that the most common way to integrate grammar

in their classroom is by presenting grammar in context. Giving that teachers do aim to include

some grammar in the classroom, it is not surprising that most quotes fell into this category. Besides this, out of the categories that were presented by Borg and Burns (2008) the "grammar in context" seems as the more general one. The least two substantial categories were regarding focusing on grammar after skills work, and using grammar to correct students' performance. This last result is congruent with the fact that in the Likert scale, 73.4 per cent of participants disagreed with the idea that the teacher's main role is to correct students' mistakes.

Regarding teachers' reports of the effectiveness of their practices, the overwhelming majority note that their practice of integrating grammar into other skills is effective, and cite their expertise and their students' communicative skills as their evidence for it. However, it was interesting to read teachers' accounts because, in most instances, the participants provided very general comments that only hinted at the evidence. Describing the reasons why they limited themselves in their answers would be a mere conjecture, since they could range from lack of time or interest in the questionnaire to lack of self-reflection in their practice. The latter would be the most pessimistic scenario; however, it would not be completely implausible.

Another marked feature of the participants' explanations of both integration and its effectiveness is that the vast majority of accounts come from practical experience. Certainly, there is value to this driving force, since, in various instances, it is experience that determines decisions made in the classroom. However, this lack of theoretical evidence in these participants, who are mostly highly qualified, is interesting because there are very few instances in which technical language is used in their accounts. This is consistent with the findings of Borg and Burns (2008) who discovered that their participants also based their narrations of their practice on experience and not in Second Language Acquisition theories.

In general, the most meaningful finding of this study is that there is conclusive agreement that grammar needs to be integrated with other skills in order for it to be more effective. This was expressed both by the results of the Likert scale and their accounts of their practice. This belief concurs with literature that establishes that a balanced combination of focus on form and focus on formS helps students to improve both their accuracy and their fluency (Klapper & Rees, 2003).

However, it is important to recall, at this point, that this project reflects teachers' reported beliefs and practices. Thus, it is possible that there be a rupture between what teachers say and what they actually do. This issue has been explored in the literature and it has been found that there are certain tensions between what teachers report and what they practice in their classrooms (Phipps & Borg, 2009; Nazari, A. & Allahyar (2012). Thus, the results reached through this paper need to be considered inside that scope.

Suggestions for Further Research

Because of the nature of this paper where beliefs are explored, the most natural progression for future research would be an analysis of teachers' practices. This would shed light to the relationship between beliefs and practices and ideally bridge the gap that research has found to exist. At the same time, studying teachers' practices would contribute to inform their practices and find steps that can be taken to improve the teaching in El Salvador.

Moreover, this paper was meant as way to fill a gap in a research. This gap left by Borg and Burn's (2008) study was of a geographical nature since they were unable to collect data from the Latin American region. With this sample from El Salvador, this division becomes somewhat smaller, especially because the results from this study are remarkably similar to those of the original study conceived by Borg and Burns. However, El Salvador is only one small part of

Latin America and more research would be beneficial to ensure that the results would apply to the region given its cultural and political diversity.

Finally, the teacher population of El Salvador is greatly under-researched. In order for instructors to inform and improve their practices, it is necessary that local research be done. There is a lack of resources that affects the interest in research of ELT professionals in the country; as a consequence, instructors have little to no information that can help them to reflect on their personal experiences and relate to the experiences of others under similar situations and environments. Thus, the most important suggestion for further research is, in fact, a claim for ELT professionals in El Salvador to ask questions and search for answers.

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Appendix A

Instrument: Survey

Integrating Grammar Instruction in Adult EFL & ESL Classes

Section 1: About yourself

Age: _____

Years of experience as an English language teacher: _____ year(s) and _____ month(s)

Highest relevant qualification to ELT (Tick ONE)

Certificate ☐	Postgraduate Certificate ☐	Bachelor's ☐	Master's ☐	Doctorate ☐	Other (Specify)

Year of attainment

1960s ☐	1970s ☐	1980s ☐	1990s ☐	2000s ☐	2010s ☐

Education abroad

Yes ☐	No ☐

Type of institution you teach English in most often (Tick ONE)

Private ☐	Public ☐	Other (Specify)

How would you describe the institution you teach English in most often? (Tick ONE)

Language Academies ☐	Technical college ☐	University ☐	Other (Specify)

How would you describe your learning of Spanish grammar?

How would you describe your learning of English grammar?

Section 2: Views about grammar learning & teaching

For each statement below mark the ONE number which best reflects your view.

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Teachers should present grammar to learners before expecting them to use it.	1	2	3	4
2	Learners who are aware of grammar rules can use the language more effectively than those who are not.	1	2	3	4
3	Exercises that get learners to practise grammar structures help learners develop fluency in using grammar.	1	2	3	4
4	Teaching the rules of English grammar directly is more appropriate for older learners.	1	2	3	4
5	During lessons, a focus on grammar should come after communicative tasks, not before.	1	2	3	4
6	Grammar should be taught separately, not integrated with other skills such as reading and writing.	1	2	3	4
7	In a communicative approach to language teaching, grammar is not taught directly.	1	2	3	4
8	In learning grammar, repeated practice allows learners to use structures fluently.	1	2	3	4
9	In teaching grammar, a teacher's main role is to explain the rules.	1	2	3	4
10	It is important for learners to know grammatical terminology.	1	2	3	4
11	Correcting learners' spoken grammatical errors in English is one of the teacher's key roles.	1	2	3	4
12	Grammar learning is more effective when learners work out the rules for themselves.	1	2	3	4
13	Indirect grammar teaching is more appropriate with younger than with older learners.	1	2	3	4
14	Formal grammar teaching does not help learners become more	1	2	3	4

	fluent.				
15	It is necessary to study the grammar of a second or foreign language in order to speak it fluently.	1	2	3	4

Section 3: Grammar Teaching in Your Classroom

The questions in this section ask about the role of grammar teaching in your own work.

1a   In your teaching, to what extent is grammar teaching integrated with the teaching of other skills? (Tick ONE)

No integration ☐	Some integration ☐	Substantial integration ☐	Complete integration ☐

1b   Please explain your answer to 1a by describing the relationship between grammar teaching and the teaching of language skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening) in your lessons.

1c   How much control do you have over the choice of teaching materials that you use in your work with adult learners? (Tick ONE)

No control ☐	Little control ☐	Some control ☐	Complete control ☐

2a   Mark with an **X** the ONE statement from the four below which best describes your position:

I separate grammar teaching from teaching the other skills and I believe this helps my students learn language effectively.	

I separate grammar teaching from teaching the other skills but I do not believe this helps my students learn language effectively.	
I integrate grammar teaching and teaching the other skills and I believe this helps my students learn language effectively.	
I integrate grammar teaching and teaching the other skills but I do not believe this helps my students learn language effectively.	

2b   With reference to your answer in 2a, how do you know that your approach to separating or integrating grammar is or is not effective in helping your adult learners improve their English?

This completes the questionnaire. Thank you for taking the time to respond.

Appendix B

IRB Approval

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Institutional Review Board (IRB)

720 4th Avenue South AS 210, St. Cloud, MN 56301-4498

Name: Marie L. Osorio Naves

Address

USA

Email: miosorionaves@stcloudstate.edu

IRB PROTOCOL DETERMINATION: Exempt Review

Project Title: Integrating grammar in adult TESOL classrooms in El Salvador

Advisor Dr. Choonkyong Kim

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed your protocol to conduct research involving human subjects. Your project has been: **APPROVED**

Please note the following important information concerning IRB projects:

- The principal investigator assumes the responsibilities for the protection of participants in this project. Any adverse events must be reported to the IRB as soon as possible (ex. research related injuries, harmful outcomes, significant withdrawal of subject population, etc.).

- For expedited or full board review, the principal investigator must submit a Continuing Review/Final Report form in advance of the expiration date indicated on this letter to report conclusion of the research or request an extension.

-Exempt review only requires the submission of a Continuing Review/Final Report form in advance of the expiration date indicated in this letter if an extension of time is needed.

- Approved consent forms display the official IRB stamp which documents approval and expiration dates. If a renewal is requested and approved, new consent forms will be officially stamped and reflect the new approval and expiration dates.

- The principal investigator must seek approval for any changes to the study (ex. research design, consent process, survey/interview instruments, funding source, etc.). The IRB reserves the right to review the research at any time.

If we can be of further assistance, feel free to contact the IRB at 320-308-3290 or email ri@stcloudstate.edu and please reference the SCSU IRB number when corresponding.

IRB Institutional Official:

Dr. Latha Ramakrishnan
Interim Associate Provost for Research
Dean of Graduate Studies

OFFICE USE ONLY

SCSU IRB# 1714 - 2147	Type: Exempt Review	Today's Date: 4/21/2017
1st Year Approval Date: 4/21/2017	2nd Year Approval Date:	3rd Year Approval Date:
1st Year Expiration Date:	2nd Year Expiration Date:	3rd Year Expiration Date: