GRAMMAR TEACHING METHODS IN EFL LESSONS:

Factors to consider when making instructional decisions

Master's thesis

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract

Kielioppi on vakiinnuttanut asemansa kielen opettamisessa ja oppimisessa ja se on tärkeässä osassa vieraiden kielten opetussuunnitelmaa. Sanotaan, että erilaisia opetusmenetelmiä on yhtä monta kuin on opettajiakin, joten metodien kirjo on todella laaja. Opettajat ovat itse vastuussa siitä, miten kielioppia opettavat, joten he tekevät sen parhaaksi katsomallaan tavalla. Kielten opetusmenetelmiä on tutkittu paljon, mutta vähemmän tutkimuksia on tehty siitä, millä perusteella opettajat opetusmenetelmänsä valitsevat. Tämä tutkielma toteutettiin kuvailevana tapaustutkimuksena, johon osallistui kolme suomalaista englannin kielen opettajaa kolmelta eri koulutasolta. Aineisto kerättiin observoimalla jokaisen opettajan yhtä oppituntia, joka videokuvattiin. Koska tutkielman aiheena on kieliopin opettaminen, huomio keskittyi ainoastaan opettajaan, ei oppilaisiin. Luokkahuoneobservoinnin jälkeen opettajia haastateltiin ja haastattelut äänitettiin. Oppitunnit ja haastattelut litteroitiin sekä analysoitiin laadullisen sisällönanalyysin keinoin.

Tämä tutkielma pyrkii vastaamaan kolmeen tutkimuskysymykseen: 1) Mitä kieliopin opetusmenetelmiä opettajat käyttävät? 2) Mitä he ottavat huomioon opetusmenetelmän valinnassa? 3) Mitä eroja ja yhtäläisyyksiä kieliopin opetusmenetelmissä on eri koulutasojen välillä? Tulokset osoittivat, että opettajat käyttivät oppitunneillaan grammar-translation (GTM), audiolingual (ALM), total physical response (TPR) sekä silent way metodeja. Opetusmenetelmiä valitessaan he ottavat huomioon oppilaidensa taidot, iän, mielialan, luonteenpiirteet sekä mahdolliset tasoerot. Näiden lisäksi valintaan vaikuttaa oppitunnin ajankohta sekä opetettava aihe ja siihen käytettävissä oleva aika. Alakoulussa käytettävät opetusmenetelmät ovat opettajakeskeisempiä kuin ylemmillä tasoilla ja ainoastaan siellä käytetään TPR metodia. Lukiossa pääpaino on yksityiskohtien opettamisessa, jossa opetus on oppilaslähtöisempää kuin muilla asteilla. Jokaisella koulutasolla on käytössä GTM ja kielioppisäännöt opetetaan eksplisiittisesti suomen kielellä. Tutkimus paljasti, että opettajien ajatukset ja teot eivät täysin kohdanneet ja siten osoitti jatkuvan reflektoinnin olevan tärkeä osa opettajan työtä tavoitteiden saavuttamiseksi. Kommunikatiivisia menetelmiä ei käytetty kieliopin opetuksessa eli kielioppi nähdään yhä oikeaoppisten rakenteiden hallintana ja sitä opetetaan eksplisiittisten sääntöjen kautta siitä huolimatta, että tavoite on rohkaista oppilaita käyttämään kieltä. Tämä tutkimus auttaa opettajia kielioppi opetusmenetelmien valinnassa eri koulutasoilla sekä kannustaa oman toiminnan kriittiseen tarkasteluun. Tutkielmaa voisi jatkaa pitkittäistutkimuksella, jonka avulla saataisiin yhä parempi kokonaiskuva opettajien henkilökohtaisista opetusfilosofioista sekä heidän suosimistaan opetusmenetelmistä.

Asiasanat – Keywords grammar teaching methods, EFL teaching, teachers' personal theories
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1   INTRODUCTION

"Without grammar, language does not exist", say Nassaji and Fotos (2011:1). However, this has not always been the case. One of the most heated topics in the field of language teaching has been the role of grammar so the ways of teaching it have varied significantly. During the time of the more traditional methods, the focus was clearly on form and accuracy, and learning a language basically meant learning its grammar. After some time, people questioned the importance of grammar when the aim of language teaching changed more towards enhancing learners' communicational skills: "it was even suggested that teaching grammar was not only unhelpful but might actually be detrimental" (Nassaji and Fotos 2004:126). Nowadays the general idea is that grammar really has its place in language learning and teaching, and research has demonstrated that focusing only on meaning is inadequate, hence one would not reach the highest level of competence without some focus on form (see for instance Harley and Swain 1984 and Lapkin, Hart and Swain 1991). Keck and Kim (2014:30) point out that for many years now, researchers' focus has been on "how to draw students' attention to grammar while still developing other areas of communicative competence", but they have still not come to a conclusion about the ideal balance between these two. Nassaji and Fotos (2011:1) state that "The controversy has always been whether grammar should be taught explicitly through a formal presentation of grammatical rules or implicitly through natural exposure to meaningful language use".

The purpose of this study is to describe the grammar teaching methods Finnish EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers use in their lessons and to discover the reasons behind their choices, in other words, what affects their instructional decision-making process. In addition, the aim is to understand the *teachers' personal theories*, which include their beliefs, attitudes, knowledge and conceptions of grammar and language learning and teaching in general. This research paper is a continuation of my BA Thesis (Takala 2013), to which I have now added a comparative aspect of different school levels and increased the number of participants. First of all, the aim is not to promote one method over another since there is still no agreement on that issue, and second, the number of participants in this study is still quite small so I do not seek to make any generalizations about how grammar is usually taught. The reason for not having more than three participants is that the goal of this study is to get a deep understanding of all of their thoughts and actions, and since this is a MA Thesis with

restricted amount of time and resources, this goal would not have been achieved if the number of participants would have been bigger. The three participants were Finnish EFL teachers with experience from all three different school levels examined in this paper: elementary school, secondary school and high school. Gathering data from different school levels enabled me to add a comparative aspect into this research paper and to look for possible similarities and differences between the teachers and between the three school levels. Thus, the research questions of this paper are: 1) What kinds of grammar teaching methods do the teachers use? 2) What does the chosen methods depend on? 3) What are the differences and similarities between school levels? Since the aim of this paper was to examine the grammar teaching methods and their underlying reasons, the chosen data gathering methods were a semi-structured interview and non-participant classroom observation. The observation enabled me to see the methods in action, whereas the interview helped in getting a deeper understanding of the teachers' personal theories. In short, this thesis is a descriptive case study with ethnographic research features, and the method of analysis is content analysis.

I chose this topic because not a lot of research has been done on teachers' personal theories, which are said to enlighten what grammar teaching actually involves (Borg 1998), and since grammar has established its place in language lessons, this needs further research. In teacher training, for instance, there is not much said about how to choose the method of teaching or what factors should be taken into consideration before going "on stage", and I think that this it is a serious gap in our training programme because instructional choices have to be made. According to Larsen-Freeman (2000: ix), a study of methods is extremely important in teacher education because "Methods serve as a foil for reflection that can aid teachers in bringing to conscious awareness the thinking that underlies their actions" and "A knowledge of methods helps expand a teacher's repertoire of techniques". Furthermore, using a repertoire of teaching methods benefits all learners (Dykes 2007:10). In addition, I believe that reflecting on one's thoughts and actions would improve our future teachers' self-confidence and make the leap to working life less intimidating. Teachers who are already working would also benefit from becoming more aware of their teaching habits because by understanding their own personal theories better themselves, they can also explain and justify them to their students.

This study will begin by defining grammar in chapter 2 since it is one of the key terms in this paper, followed by a review of the development of different language teaching methods. Then I will discuss teachers' instructional decision-making process and what should be taken into account when making those decisions. Teachers' personal theories will also be discussed in that chapter. Chapter 3 introduces the research questions and the participants, as well as the methods applied to gather and analyse the data. I will present the findings in chapter 4, starting with the overall structure of the observed lessons, moving on to the factors the participants take into account when making instructional decisions and the similarities and differences between the three school levels examined from two different point of views. The final chapter discusses the results and offers suggestions for further research. In addition, the strengths and weaknesses of this paper are discussed.

2   TEACHING GRAMMAR

I will start this section by giving different definitions of grammar and explain how grammar is seen in this paper. Then I will give a brief history of the changes in grammar teaching, in other words, describe the development of the ways language has been taught. After that I will discuss the options in grammar teaching and what factors teachers should consider when making these instructional decisions. At the end of this section, I will focus on teachers' personal theories.

2.1   What is grammar?

What does it actually mean to teach grammar? There is no one and only way to define grammar because it might mean very different things to different people. There are different kinds of grammars out there but in this paper the focus is on how one would define it and its function and importance in language learning and teaching. However, I want to highlight the importance of *pedagogical grammar* here because it focuses on the ways of grammar teaching, and that is exactly what this study focuses on as well. Keck and Kim (2014:1) define pedagogical grammar as: "a research domain that is concerned with how grammar can most effectively be taught and learned in the second language (L2) classroom". They highlight the importance of the three big areas: L2 grammar acquisition (learning), L2 grammar instruction (teaching), as well as grammar description, proposing that all these aspects should be taken into account when examining pedagogical grammar. Thornbury (2004:13, emphasis added) describes grammar as "*a description of the rules* for forming sentences, including an account of the meanings that these forms convey". This type on definition that sees rules and grammar synonymous is perhaps the most common one**.** Here is a different kind of description: "I have also tended to favor *a dynamic view* of grammar (…). Grammar is much more about our humanness than some static list of rules and exceptions suggests. Grammar allows us to choose how we present ourselves to the world, (…) all the while establishing our individual identities" (Larsen-Freeman 2003:142, emphasis added).

According to Levine (2014), grammar is connected to learner identity just like it is connected to any other aspects of language. This supports Larsen-Freeman's vision of

individual identities and the humanness of grammar, which I agree with. I do not see grammar as a set of rules but as an important tool for successful communication, so the way grammar is seen in this paper somewhat differs from Thornbury's (2004:13) description. If we look into Larsen-Freeman's conceptions of grammar in a more detailed manner, it becomes clear that she does not consider grammar as an area of knowledge but actually as a skill or a dynamic process whereby the students learns how to use grammar meaningfully and communicatively. Grammar is a verb rather than a noun; it is not a thing, it is something people do. She calls it *grammaring* (Larsen-Freeman 2003). The dynamic nature means that grammar and language change constantly and it is common knowledge that the way we see grammar nowadays is very different from the view of many decades ago. In addition to form and meaning, she argues that teachers should educate their students about the appropriate use of grammatical forms and why certain forms are more appropriate than others in different situations. That way they can ensure that their students also know how to use language appropriately and not just accurately. Hence, *form*, *meaning* and *use* are the three dimensions of language and all of them are component parts of grammaring (Larsen-Freeman 2003:34-35). However, taking account of all these dimensions in language teaching can be challenging and especially the part of use can cause uncertainty. Larsen-Freeman (2003:48) points out that non-native teachers, for instance, might not have much experience on this dimension and they might not have been taught about the pragmatics of grammar.

The way grammar is seen in this paper is in accordance with Larsen-Freeman's vision; people need grammar in real-life situations to express meanings, therefore the goal of teaching grammar should be successful communication. In order to meet that goal, it is important to let the students practice grammar in meaningful communicative contexts so drilling grammatical structures is not enough. This way they can transfer the skills learned in the classroom to everyday situations in the real world outside the classroom setting. However, the importance of accuracy is also acknowledged but not highlighted. Language is a shared system that enables people to communicate with each other; to ask directions, to tell jokes, to tell how they feel etc. I think it is important to let one's students know as well why they are learning a language to motivate them to do so. Grammar is not just rules or mechanics, but something more vivid and exciting. Using the language appropriately and meaningfully means learning to grammar, not only learning about grammar explicitly.

The humanness of grammar has not always been a consideration; in the eighteenth-century, the more traditional view of grammar was based on rules and it was actually heavily influenced by Latin. This rule-oriented approach is called *the prescriptive approach,* and it is still used in schools today because it can be helpful to language learners (Yule 2010:85). Prescriptive grammar concerns the ways language *should* be used properly, and it is based on the kind of language use that is believed characteristic of the majority of speakers. In the twentieth century, it became more frequent to focus on how ordinary native speakers actually use the language (Yule 2010: 86-87) and this is called *the descriptive approach.* The biggest difference between these two ways of looking at how languages work is that descriptive grammar focuses on language as it is used by real speakers, whereas prescriptive grammar focuses on how it should be used. However, Ur (2011:508) point out that in practice these two might not be that different from each other: "Even where teachers explicitly take descriptive grammar as their model, these standards in fact become prescriptive within the context of classroom practice, so that in most cases acceptable usages are treated as correct, and unacceptable ones as wrong and needing to be corrected".

As a conclusion, neither have the view of grammar nor the grammar teaching methods always been the same. These changes in grammar teaching will be discussed in the following section but before that, it is important to look at how the repetitive term 'rule' can be defined because both the descriptive approach and the prescriptive approach are equally concerned with rules. However, the definition of the term is not unambiguous. Thornbury (2004:11) mentions that rules can be defined either as principles that state how things should be done or as the ways how things are usually done. Knowing the difference between these two approaches, it is clear which type of rule applies to which approach. He continues that people often associate grammar teaching with the prescriptive rules, but in foreign language teaching the favoured approach is often the descriptive one. This seems logical because if the learner actually wants to use the language somewhere, it is helpful to know how the speakers of that language really use it. The topic of this research being grammar teaching methods in EFL lessons, the focus is on pedagogical grammar; what the teachers do and why. Therefore, I will add a third type of rule: a pedagogic one. Thornbury (2004:11) defines pedagogic rules as "rules that make sense to learners while at the same time providing them with the means and confidence to generate language with a reasonable chance of success". He advises

teachers to concentrate on their students' needs as opposed to those of the grammarians. The methods that the participants of this study used in their lessons to teach grammar rules to their students will be examined later on.

2.2 A historical overview of teaching grammar

Grammar has always held a central role in EFL classrooms but the ways of teaching it have varied significantly. Hall (2011:79) suggests that the changing teaching methods reflect the spirit of the times and contemporary ideas, such as social values and interests in linguistics, hence they are context-dependent. Not only has the grammar teaching gone through the changes but language teaching in general; ways of teaching refers to everything that teachers do in order to get their students to learn. To be precise, these methods have changed according to what the current view of language and its role has been like, as well as whether the goal of teaching has been, for instance, being grammatically correct or being able to communicate fluently. In addition to the above-mentioned factors, the role of the learner in the language learning process has also had an effect on the changes. Nassaji and Fotos (2011) refer to these changes as pendulum swings due to the various developments in the field of grammar teaching. These changes can be divided into three slots; the first one having the major focus on grammar, the second one focusing more on communication and meaning, and the latest combining the two.

For centuries, grammar was taught in a very traditional way and the main focus was on written form of language and grammar was seen as a set of rules. By knowing these rules, one would also know the language. This way of teaching was called *the grammar-translation method* (GTM) and it is still very popular among teachers worldwide. As one may infer from the name grammar-*translation* method, translation was regarded as one of the best techniques of learning a language. It has also been called *the classical method* because it was first used in Latin and Greek lessons, both of them regarded as classical languages (Larsen-Freeman 2000:11). According to Keck and Kim (2014:7), instruction in these types of classes is usually explicit which means that teachers give verbal explanations of grammatical rules and teaching is highly form-focused. Ur (2011:510) defines explicit knowledge as: "the ability to verbalize a rule or description of usage, often using grammatical metalanguage". Furthermore, Hall

(2011:81) explains that GTM requires language learners to concentrate on grammar items in isolation. This method has been criticized for the lack of developing learners' communicative abilities and focusing too much on the written form of language. In addition, the method was based on an assumption that a language can be learned just by following the teaching method (Pavičić Takač 2008:1). The use of one's imagination was also very limited. "(…) its emphasis on learning *about* the L2 often leaves students quite ignorant of how the language might be used in everyday conversation" (Yule 2010:189, emphasis added). Since the grammar-translation method did not prepare students to communicate, a change in the ways of teaching was expected.

The next method that became popular was called *the direct method*. The biggest difference between these two methods is the use of learners' L1 because in the direct method, no translation is allowed at all. "In fact, the Direct Method receives its name from the fact that meaning is to be conveyed *directly* in the target language through the use of demonstration and visual aids, with no recourse to the students' native language" (Larsen-Freeman 2000:23). The belief was that foreign languages can be learned the same way as native languages are acquired, so neither the teacher nor the students were allowed to use the students' L1 in the classroom, not even to ask questions or give clarifications. The teacher answered their questions by drawing or giving more examples to help them understand, the focus being on oral production and inductive learning.

In the twentieth century, the focus started to shift even more from writing to speaking because the need for being able to speak foreign languages grew during the World War II. An oral-based approach that became popular at that time was called *the audiolingual method* (ALM). This method was influenced by a belief that in order to use a language fluently, one must spend hours and hours repeating oral drills. (Yule 2010:190) Another way of putting it is that learning a language is a matter of habit formation, and especially the behaviourists shared this belief. The goal was automaticity; hence patterns were memorized and imitated so many times that students knew them by heart. Mimicking the teacher and repeating the tape recordings was vital for acquiring proper pronunciation and creating structural patterns (Johnson 2013:166-167; Larsen-Freeman and Long 1991:55) but it can be rather demotivating for language learners. "According to the audiolingual method the learner is conceived of as a passive recipient of the programme whose intervention would seriously interfere with the desirable automatic

reaction" (Pavičić Takač 2008:1). Teaching happened implicitly through natural exposure which means that students were exposed to grammatical forms without being told about the rules, deducing them themselves based on the examples given to them and focusing primarily on the meaning. Ur (2011:510) defines implicit knowledge of grammar as: "…demonstrated through students' actual production of speech or writing in communication and does not imply the ability to explain underlying rules". However, Hall (2011:89) points out that drilling individual grammar items might only lead to successful results among young learners, failing to enhance older learners' language skills. In the early 1960s, the habit formation was challenged by Noam Chomsky, an American philosopher and linguist. He believed that learning a language demands the use of one's own thinking in order to comprehend the underlying grammatical rules, and this new idea of learner's importance in the learning process was actually the reason for the shift in the ways of teaching. In other words, the teacher-centred nature of the audiolingual approach was an issue, so the mainstream teaching techniques once again started to change. Students were encouraged to rely on themselves and teaching became more student-centred: "The teacher speaks but only when necessary. Otherwise, the teacher gets out of the way so that it is the students who receive the practice in using the language" (Larsen-Freeman 2000:61). This approach is called *the silent way*, and it is one of the humanistic approaches in language teaching that emerged as a response to the scientific characteristics of the previous methods. Humanistic language teaching regards teachers as "enablers or facilitators who assist learners in their self-discovery rather than instructors who 'transmit' knowledge to learners" (Hall 2011: 90). Hence, most of the time they stayed silent during the lessons. Another humanistic teaching method is *total physical response*, TPR, which links learning with movement. The central idea of this method is that languages can be learned through commands and physical actions and the emphasis is mainly on building comprehension skills, therefore it works well especially with younger students (Johnson 2013: 180). All these methods mentioned this far are actually not that different from each other. Although they do have differing opinions about the best ways that language can be learned, they are all grammar-based approaches where the focus is on learning the structure of the target language (Nassaji and Fotos 2011:2).

People started to question if it is enough to acquire solely linguistic competence because it seemed that students had great difficulties in using the language anywhere else than in their classroom. Even if the goal was successful communication in the target language,

the ways of meeting the goal were not that fruitful. This led to the rise of communication-based approaches. (Larsen-Freeman 2000:121) Hence, the pendulum started to shift even more from focus on form towards focus on meaning. The next approach was called *communicative language teaching* (CLT), which emerged approximately in the 1970's, at a time when language learners were viewed as individuals with their own communicational needs. Thus, the goal of communicative language teaching was to get the learners to use the language appropriately in real-life situations outside the classroom. In class, they practised performing certain functions, for example, service encounters, politely declining invitations and asking the way. These functions or tasks were all done with a communicative intention in mind and because of that, students used the target language a lot during the lesson and usually worked in small groups. The task material in CLT lessons is authentic whenever possible, and Larsen-Freeman (2000:129-130) justifies this by stating that students should be given a chance to develop strategies for understanding the target language as one uses it in reality. CLT can actually be divided into *strong* and *weak* forms: the strong approach proposes that languages can be learned only by using them, rejecting grammar instruction completely, whereas the weak approach acknowledges the need for learning the language before moving on to communicational tasks (Hall 2011:94). Alternatively, they can be called the deep-end CLT (strong) and the shallow-end CLT (weak), the latter one being more of the mainstream method. (Thornbury 2004:22, Allwright and Hanks 2009:49) Textbooks and curricula were now modified to suit learners' needs all over the world; emphasis was on different kinds of communicational tasks and authentic examples. The role of grammar was questioned and one of the persons who were strongly against grammar instruction was Stephen Krashen, also recognized as "the originator of the communicative approach to second language teaching" (Pavičić Takač 2008:1). Keck and Kim (2014:18-19) point out that Krashen's focus on interactive and engaging way of teaching fit really well with the communicative method that was in favour at that time. This purely communicative approach, relying on natural authentic communication, did not include grammar in any way. Two more methods that focus highly on meaning and communication are *constructivism* and *dialogic language teaching*. Dialogism, or dialogic language teaching, emphasizes verbal interaction and learner engagement in the learning process, and favours the type of communication which promotes higher cognitive functions in learners (Sedova, Salamounova and Svaricek 2014). The key principle of constructivism in language learning and teaching is also learner-centeredness: "learners

construct their own knowledge by actively participating in the learning process. Constructivist instructional developers value collaboration, learner autonomy, generativity, reflectivity and active engagement" (Ping Wang 2011: 274). Furthermore, constructivists believe that language learners themselves should construct the meaning, and not only mindlessly repeat and learn what someone else has said to be meaningful and correct (Moore and Hansen 2012:8). According to Nassaji and Fotos (2011:10), focusing only on meaning is problematic because the learners fail to achieve desired levels of grammatical competence. Hence, common concern over learners' grammatical competence grew and it helped to spark a new era in the field.

The pendulum started to shift again but this time not from one extreme to another (focus on form or focus on meaning); it was no longer as black and white as whether to teach or not to teach grammar. The new era of L2 grammar teaching researches believe in communicative language teaching but also recognize the fact that grammar instruction is important for accuracy. Hence, it focuses on combining these two extremes. The reasons that led into this combination are, first of all, that it has been discovered that learning a language without some level of consciousness is problematic, and second, there is clear evidence that focusing exclusively on meaning does not lead to the best possible results (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: vii). One example is an approach called *focus on form* (FonF) which is an instructional option that draws learners' attention to linguistic forms but does that in a meaningful, communicative context. Nowadays there is also hard evidence for the positive influence of teaching that focuses on linguistic forms (Larsen-Freeman and Long 1991), as well as clear evidence for the need of form-focused instruction in communicative context: "Classroom data from a number of studies offer support for the view that form-focused instruction and corrective feedback provided within the context of a communicative program are more effective in promoting second language learning than programs which are limited to an exclusive emphasis on accuracy on the one hand or an exclusive emphasis on fluency on the other" (Lightbrown and Spada 1993: 105).

I referred to these changes in teaching methodology as pendulum swings and I think that it very well describes the way we see grammar today. To sum it all up, there has been a swing away from the grammar-based approaches towards the more communicative ways of teaching and on to the current view of combining the two. Grammar lessons today are no longer only about knowing about the language but about

knowing how to use it in real-life situations. In addition, nowadays the nature of language is considered to be dynamic so it is expected to keep on changing. According to Pavičić Takač (2008:1), today's language instruction is a combination of the various conceptions and ideas of different approaches.

2.3 Options in grammar teaching

Both the role of the language teacher and grammar teaching have been investigated in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) research quite a lot (as is comes to grammar, SLA concentrates on how and when second language learners acquire specific grammar systems). One possible way of defining grammar teaching is that: "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" (Ellis 2006: 84). The instructional techniques refer to the methodology used by the teacher. When teaching grammar, or teaching languages in general, teachers are faced with endless amount of decisions that they make either consciously or unconsciously. These choices have to be made, and for some teachers it is easy while for others it takes more time. Ur (2011:520) points out that there is no one and only successful teaching method that works for every teacher because a successful method is a combination of several instructional techniques. This section examines some of the possible options in grammar teaching.

To start off, teachers need to think about why they are teaching a language in the first place because their conceptions and ideas about the language, and more specifically its grammar, inevitably affects the way they teach it. What do they want their students to achieve, what is their ultimate goal? Larsen-Freeman (2003: ix-x) points out that "There is great value (…) for teachers to be able to articulate and examine their personal views of language and grammar – views that (…) are doubtless influenced by their experiences both as learners and as teachers and by the views of their instructors, researchers, and colleagues", offering an interesting point of view that teachers' ideas of language teaching might reflect the ideas of their own teachers while they were still language learners themselves. Keck and Kim (2014:1) share her idea of teachers' views about grammar having an impact on the ways they teach it but they suggest that there is

more to it: "Approaches to L2 grammar pedagogy are informed not only by one's view of grammar, but also by beliefs about why grammar is (or is not) important, how it can be learned, and in what ways it can (or should) be taught". Thus, if teachers' ways of teaching grammar reflect what they think of it (or what their teachers have thought of it), focusing on their thoughts and ideas might well shed light on the methodology that they prefer to use in their lessons. The questions of how teachers define grammar, how important they think that grammar is in language learning and teaching, and what their goal of teaching grammar and/or language is, all help in understanding their personal theories and possibly their instructional decisions.

Johnson (2013:162-163) provides more useful ways of identifying the language teaching method at stake. In this research paper, they are called "the tools". The first tool is to identify whether the teacher uses scales (repetition) or simulations of real-life situations during the lesson. According to Johnson (2013: 255-256), scales are regarded as stepping stones towards the actual language use, for example, having a conversation with a friend. The importance of the mind (e.g. use of imagination) is actually the biggest difference between these two ways of teaching. There are differing opinions about the role of the mind in language lessons and, for example in the audiolingual method which I already discussed above, the engagement of the mind plays no part whatsoever. "Repeat after me" types of exercises have no freedom of making choices; students are expected to repeat in verbatim everything that they hear. The engagement of the mind is greater in tasks such as speaking about one's family or inventing a story. The freedom of making choices does not exist in scales because the product is controlled and there is no room for the use of imagination. Usually scales concentrate on a small area of language, for example, articles in isolation. Therefore, identifying whether there were simulations of real-life situations or scales in the lessons is important when determining what kind of a role the mind has in the lesson.

Students can be introduced to a grammar topic through two different routes; deductively or inductively. To distinguish the chosen route is a helpful tool in identifying the grammar teaching method. Here the very beginning of a grammar lesson is crucial when determining which approach the teacher uses because introduction reveals the answer to this question. Teachers might get their students involved with the new grammar topic by using leading questions and then introducing the topic of the day themselves. This is called the deductive approach; starting with the introduction, possibly including explicit

rules of the topic, followed by examples and practice (Johnson 2013:160). The deductive pattern is very common in language lessons and especially the traditional grammar-translation method follows this pattern. It is also closely related to explicit teaching and the Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) model, which again is very commonly used in grammar-based approaches. The way Nassaji and Fotos (2011:4) describe the PPP model is the following: The presentation stage is where the unfamiliar grammar item is introduced, thus made familiar to the learners. The next stage of this model is the practice stage where learners do different kinds of exercises in which the role of learners' own minds is kept in minimum, drawing their attention to specific structures. Finally, in the production stage, learners are given more freedom to use their imagination and produce speech where they use the newly learned structures. Although the PPP-model is a very popular lesson structure, teaching grammar does not have to consist of these three stages. Ellis (2006:84) suggests that teachers can, for instance, have lessons that only consist of practicing or exclusively focus on presentation. He continues that these first two stages can also be left out completely, letting the students discover the rules themselves. This discovery process contains loads of examples without revealing the topic because the students are expected to find it out themselves. Therefore, providing them with multiple examples should help them find a repetitive pattern. This is called the inductive approach and it is related to implicit teaching, both of them used, for example, in the audiolingual method (Nassaji and Fotos 2011: 3). It might take time for some students to connect the dots but Thornbury (2004:49-55) points out that the discovery process is a more engaging one, hence it might lead to better learning results and remembrance of the rules. I do not think it is teachers' task to entertain their students but I do agree with Thornbury's point about engaging the students in order to help them reach higher levels of proficiency by giving them a chance of using their own minds. The juxtaposition between inductive and deductive approach has always been a heated topic in the field of grammar teaching and researchers of today still have not reached a consensus on this issue. These approaches are clearly linked to explicit and implicit teaching, which have also been widely studied. There is significant evidence in favour of explicit teaching but some research also says that implicit teaching might lead to successful results. Ur (2011:511) concludes that: "in second-language teaching and learning in formal contexts it is very likely that an explicit component within a basically communicative or task-based methodology will make a substantial contribution to the achievement of grammatical accuracy". The conclusion is that there is evidence supporting the use of explicit teaching.

Another controversial issue in the field of language learning and teaching is the use of L1 in L2 or foreign language learning. There are researchers who argue that L1 should not have any role to play in learning other languages and teaching should be done using only the target language with a focus on immersion, while the opposing side strongly believes that learners' L1 should not be banned from the language classroom. Hall (2011:72) says that possible reasons for not using learners' L1 in classrooms are that learners have to use the target language more, which again creates more opportunities to practice it, and that teachers might not even share a common L1 with the students. In Finnish EFL textbooks, however, the grammar sections are usually written in learners' L1, which again might lead to choosing Finnish as the language of instruction. It can be helpful to pay attention to the language of instruction when trying to figure out the method of instruction at stake; does the teacher explain a grammatical item in the learners' L1 or in the target language? This is one of the tools used in this paper to distinguish the participants' teaching methods. In addition, I am interested especially in the reasons behind that choice of using L1 or L2. Unfortunately, only a few studies have examined the use of L1 from this aspect so there is clearly a need for further research of teachers' personal thoughts about the use of students' first language. One of the studies that examined the use of students' L1 in foreign language classroom teaching with an aim of understanding teachers' purposes and reasons for using the L1 was conducted by De La Campa and Nassaji (2009). The study was carried out in Canada and the data were gathered by interviewing the two teacher participants and observing their lessons. The observed lessons were for English natives who had studied German as a foreign language for under two years. The study concluded that the teachers did use the students' L1, especially when providing instructions or explaining grammatical items and meanings. Both teachers' decision of using L1 during their lessons was actually context-driven, as well as based on their personal theories. They mentioned in the interview that since their students are learning German in Canada, a country where one cannot hear the target language being used basically anywhere else besides in the classroom, they are not exposed to the language enough in order to be taught exclusively in German, their proficiency levels are not high enough. Hence, they believed that using the students' L1 can facilitate learning the target language. These findings suggest that using students' L1 can be used as a pedagogical tool in teaching foreign languages. Johnson (2013:163) also points out that grammatical items are often explained in learners' L1 because it might not be practicable to do this using the target

language, especially with young learners whose understanding of the language is still quite limited.

Another helpful tool that helps in identifying a method is the emphasis of different skills; speaking, listening, reading and writing. Determining which of these four skills are of primary importance might reveal the underlying teaching method. There are two different kinds of categorizations of these skills. The first categorization is productive skills (writing and speaking) and receptive skills (reading and listening), and the second, perhaps the more common categorization, is written skills (writing and reading) and spoken skills (speaking and listening). In addition to these four skills, Larsen-Freeman (2003:13) suggests that grammaring is the fifth skill: "When we view grammar as a skill, we are much more inclined to create learning situations that overcome the inert knowledge problem. We will not ask our students to merely memorize rules and then wonder why they do not apply them in communication". She reminds that it takes practice to develop the skills, for example, learning to grammar. As the saying goes, "practice makes perfect". But the question is what kind of practice? What kinds of teaching strategies teachers themselves regard as successful are clearly linked to their personal thoughts about grammar teaching and as was already mentioned in the beginning of this section, teachers' beliefs and ideas have an effect on the ways they teach. Hence, the way teachers' view grammar can also be considered as one of the tools that help in deciding which grammar teaching methods they use. All the tools mentioned in this section will be used in analysing the grammar teaching methods that the participants of this study used. The participant are introduced in section 3.1 and the overall structure of their lessons in section 4.1.

2.4   Factors that affect instructional decision making

One of the key questions in this paper deals with the different components that teachers need to take into account before deciding on their instructional methods, the possibilities of which were discussed in the previous section. In other words, I am interested in the reasons behind choosing certain methods, that is, what the teachers participating in this research take into account when making these decisions. Thornbury (2004:25-27) lists a few factors that teachers should consider when determining the type of instruction and activities in their lessons. What he emphasizes the most is the

importance of the target audience, the learners, and what should be taken into account is their age and level of skills, as well as their interests, needs, and expectations of the teaching. For example, are the learners' skills good enough to work independently on specific tasks or do they need the teacher's help and if so, in what proportions. He also mentions the group size and the available materials. These seem reasonable because, for instance, a big group in a small classroom might be logistically problematic in tasks that require movement. Lastly, he mentions that teachers' decision-making process can be constrained by extraneous factors, such as school curriculums or national exams. To sum these up, clearly the target audience, i.e. the students, is the biggest piece of the puzzle and it seems perfectly logical because the aim of teaching is to enhance learning. Tailoring the teaching to suite the learners' needs is of the essence here and Thornbury (2004) is not the only one with this vision of the importance of the target audience. For example, Pavičić Takač (2008:19) has also investigated the factors that affect teachers' professional decision-making process, suggesting that: "Which teaching strategy a teacher will employ depends on the time available, the content (i.e. the component of knowledge learners are to acquire), as well as on its value for the learner (i.e. which learning strategy he or she can learn or apply)". She also points out that language teachers should identify and take into account their learners' individual differences if they want to conduct effective teaching, for example, their learning strategies, motivation and cognitive styles, the latter one referring to the mental processes of knowledge development and integration (Pavičić Takač 2008:28). There actually seems to be a somewhat mutual understanding between researchers about the importance of learners' individuality in language learning process. For example, Nassaji and Fotos (2011:140) also feel that when teachers are making instructional decisions, they should take into account the context of instruction and their students' individual needs, as well as strive for learner autonomy. Learner autonomy means that learners themselves are responsible for their own learning and some methods that strive for this goal, which were discussed more thoroughly in the previous section, are, for example, constructivism and communicative language teaching. And finally, according to Moore and Hansen (2012: 1), in order to create effective learning, teachers need to "consider learning theories plus student needs, differences, and abilities as they carefully plan lessons, create positive classroom environments, use diverse instructional strategies".

There are tons of instructional options for teachers to choose from but what all teachers should consider is to vary their teaching strategies because every single learner is an

individual. And as became clear in the previous paragraph, there is considerable agreement on the importance of learners' individuality in the language learning process. Thus, teachers should see their students as individuals who all have their own ways of learning and plan their teaching methodology accordingly. Some of the students might be auditory learners for whom the audiolingual method is a great way of learning, while others learn best by actually using their own hands and moving around in the classroom, being kinaesthetic learners. In addition, Dykes (2007:10) points out that: "By delivering instruction in a variety of creative ways, using all the channels to the brain, we are ensuring not only that all students can benefit, but also that they will enjoy their lessons". Amongst others, she has studied the importance of the learners in the language learning process: "Awareness of the need for more active involvement in learning has come about with the greater understanding of how the brain works, and the accompanying recognition that people vary considerably in their learning modes" (2007:9). Dykes continues that especially young children could benefit from exercises that are more active, for example, kinetic tasks. As one of the aims of this paper was to examine whether there are differences between the grammar teaching methods used in different school levels, her suggestion of kinetic methods being more suitable for young learners is of great value. As a matter of fact, learners' age and the ways it affects their language learning process has been studied quite a lot over the past two decades. However, the research has mainly focused on the importance of the time when a person starts to study a language for the first time and the level he/she reaches before certain age. Saville-Troike (2012:87) mentions that it is commonly believed that children are more successful language learners than adults but the evidence for the truthfulness of that belief is arguable. He says that one possible reason for the inconsistency in the research findings might be the differing definitions of "success", for example, whether the goal is native-like pronunciation or being a fluent speaker. Also Lambelet and Berthele (2015:15) mention that "children are usually regarded as more adept at learning languages". Chomsky, for example, relates L2 learning to first language acquisition and says that languages can be learned if leaners are exposed to enough amount of input. However, instead of focusing on the age of onset in foreign language learning, this study focuses on the teaching methods that the teachers with different aged learners use in elementary school, secondary school and high school. In addition, all these students have started to study English approximately at the same time.

So, Dykes (2007) claims that young learners benefit from kinetic methods. And as was pointed out earlier, also Hall (2011:89) made a suggestion about the teaching methods that work for young learners, referring to use of scales and drilling. Older students, on the other hand, are said to benefit from explicit instruction (Larsen-Freeman 2003:154). In addition, older students are more experienced language learners, therefore they have better cognitive skills. More experienced learners can, for example, make comparisons between languages. Cameron (2001:110) agrees with Larsen-Freeman's (2003) statement that older students are increasingly able to learn from formal instruction, but advises teachers to keep in mind that too explicit grammar teaching might destroy students' motivation and confuse them. Teachers need to get their students engaged in learning: "engaged students are the ones who are most likely to continue with their language study, thereby achieving higher levels of proficiency" (Larsen-Freeman: 2003: 153). Also Lambelet and Berthele (2015:27) acknowledge that implicit teaching is not enough after a certain age and the need for explicit instruction is clear. This means that learning becomes a conscious act, not just something that happens naturally to which mentalists believe in. However, there is a lack of research in this field of age-related changes in the efficiency of implicit language learning so even though explicit teaching is said to be successful, that does not directly imply that implicit teaching is not. Clearly, there is a need for more research in that area.

As already mentioned above, the age factor is rather controversial. There are researchers who agree that some age-related differences do exist in the field of language learning and teaching but disagree with the explanations behind these differences. Larsen-Freeman and Long (1999:163-164) suggest some explanations for the possible age-related differences. For example, children love to play games and do simpler 'here and now' types of exercises while adults enjoy more complex problem-solving tasks. Adults have the ability to think abstractly whereas children learn better with clearer samples, referring to their cognitive skills again. According to Yule (2010: 189), there are affective factors that can create barriers to language learning among different age groups. For instance, teenagers are usually quite self-conscious, and if there is a slight chance of embarrassment, it is possible that they refuse to take part in this sort of exercise. Other affective factors that might have a negative influence on the willingness to learn are, for example, an exhausting schedule or stodgy textbooks. What is interesting is the comparison between youngsters and children: "Children seem to be less constrained by affective factors. Descriptions of L2 acquisition in childhood are full

of instances where young children quickly overcome their inhibitions as they try to use new words and phrases" (Yule 2010:189). I agree with these statements. The higher the school level, the higher the number of different subjects and substance, and teenagers might easily feel overwhelmed with such an exhausting schedule in school. In addition, the textbooks used in higher school levels have usually much more content in them, including explicit rules etc. Cameron (2001) also agrees that grammar instruction that is too explicit might affect negatively on the learners' motivation. The question is, therefore, do these affective factors have something to do with the chosen method of teaching? Do teachers on higher levels avoid using exercises that might embarrass the students? The factors that affect the participants' decision-making process are discussed in section 4.2, in other words, what they themselves take into account when making instructional decisions.

2.5   Teachers' personal theories

The role of grammar in language teaching has been a heated topic among scholars worldwide but what EFL teachers' instructional decisions are based on is a relatively unexplored theme of research. Instructional decisions refer to, for example, which skills teachers emphasize in their lessons, how they give instructions and what type of materials they prefer to use. As a matter of fact, "the lack of attention to the cognitive bases of teachers' work in grammar teaching represents a gap in the research agenda for L2 teaching" (Borg 1998: 10). Borg (1998) presents an interpretive study that explored teachers' personal pedagogical belief systems and grammar teaching; which methods teachers have decided to use in their lessons and what the factors behind these decisions are. He believes that the pedagogical systems are extremely important in making the decisions about how to teach grammar, and these systems include, for example, teachers' conceptions, attitudes and knowledge. When teachers' personal theories are discussed in the current research paper, they involve Borg's (1998) concept of personal pedagogical system. The study was conducted in an English language institute in Malta, which is a Mediterranean centre for TEFL (teaching English as a foreign language), and the participant was a teacher who speaks English as his native language. Since the aim of the study was to understand the teacher's actions, the chosen data gathering methods were classroom observation and a semi-structured interview. The students in the observed lesson were intermediate-level EFL learners. The study revealed that the

teacher used student errors as the basis of his grammar teaching and one of his reasons for doing so was that it convinces the students for the need of focusing on form and encourages them to do so. In other words, by actually showing them what type of errors they had made, they themselves might realize that they need more practice. However, the teacher said that they do not focus solely on the topics which are problematic to one group specifically but also the ones that he himself has noticed being difficult for students of that age and level of skill. He clearly emphasized learner-centred teaching methods, stating that the discovery process is a more memorable one and motivates the students better than the deductive approach does. The teacher also mentioned that he likes to learn by finding out the grammatical rules himself and that is also the approach he uses with his students; the inductive approach. As a matter of fact, teachers' beliefs about grammar can have an impact on how they teach it to their students. These beliefs, Larsen Freeman (2003:x) suggests, have started to form even before they were teachers; already when they were actually language learners themselves. This means that teachers' beliefs about grammar might reflect their own teachers' personal views of the subject. The teacher also encouraged the students to refer to their L1 during the lessons because, once again through experience, he thought it can speed up the learning process. In addition, he was not afraid of using grammatical terminology because he gave explicit instructions in points where he thought it would not confuse the students. Hence, his instructional decisions were highly influenced by his own beliefs of what works well and what does not, his conceptions of the students' affective and cognitive state, as well as the insight of learning styles: "(…) different learners may learn more effectively in different ways (…) so that now I'm more aware of the need to take into account the different learning styles a group of students are likely to have" (Borg 1998: 21). In addition to all the above mentioned factors that influence the teacher's instructional decisions, also classroom management was one of them. As a conclusion, the teacher based his instructional decisions mainly on his own beliefs and experiences of what works and what does not and how pleasant the students find the activities, not on any external forces like school policies or requirements. Continuing to study teachers' personal theories is important in providing realistic accounts of what grammar teaching really involves.

In addition, Keck and Kim (2014:1) point out that "approaches to L2 grammar pedagogy are informed (…) also by beliefs about why grammar is (or is not) important, how it can be learned, an in what ways it can (or should) be taught". As mentioned

earlier, teachers' view of grammar teaching is one of the tools that help in identifying the teaching methods. Questions about what grammar is, is it important etc., are all part of teachers' personal theories. The word theory, however, might be somewhat misleading because usually theory is considered as something one can learn from a book. The relationship between theory and practise is complex since on paper everything might be perfectly clear, when again in practise everything is not quite as black and white; Ellis (1998:40) divides these two into *practical knowledge* and *technical knowledge*. Technical knowledge is explicit; it is learned deliberately and systematically. Practical knowledge, on the other hand, is implicit and is acquired through actual experience. He points out that teachers mostly rely on their practical knowledge in the classroom but they do also use their technical knowledge when, for example, planning their lessons and tasks. Hence, building up one's practical knowledge demands actual teaching experience so obviously the more experienced teachers have wider practical knowledge and perhaps stronger personal theories, whereas novice teachers might run into problems more easily due to the small amount of practical knowledge of the field. This does not mean that experienced teachers have successful lessons every time but when something does not go according to plans, for example, experience on how to handle these types of situations does help. In addition, teachers cannot decide in advance what works and what does not, nor can they say a method is successful before testing it in practice in their own classrooms. Nassaji and Fotos (2011) call teachers professional decision-makers, who make their pedagogical decisions themselves. The decisions are done by "drawing on complex practically-oriented, personalized, and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts and beliefs" (Borg 2003:81).

Phipps and Borg (2009) present a longitudinal study on the relationship between teachers' grammar teaching beliefs and practices which focuses on whether these two are in accordance or not. The group of participants was formed from three experienced EFL teachers who were observed and interviewed for approximately one and a half years. Thus, their research focused on a rather small number of participants. What the study found out was that the teachers' beliefs and practises were in alliance quite well. What the teachers had in common was that they all favoured the more traditional ways of teaching grammar and used the deductive route (presentation before practise). In addition, none of them were afraid of using grammatical terminology. However, there was also some mismatch between the teachers' beliefs and practises, and these were

about meaningful grammar and inductive teaching, as well as oral group work. For instance, one of the participants said that she was not happy with the way she teaches grammar to older students. They expect her to teach grammar explicitly and she understands that this type of instruction might be beneficial for them, but still feels that it is contradictory to what she believes in. Another participant mentioned that he does not like to use rule-based grammar instruction, but nevertheless does that in his lessons. These examples demonstrate that not everything that teachers believe in is always aligned with their actual classroom practices, but some of it definitely is.

Inspired by Borg's (1998), De La Campa's and Nassaji's (2009), as well as Phipps' and Borg's (2009) studies, I chose to use the same data gathering methods in the current research paper as they did in theirs. The number of participants were also kept small, which enabled me to focus on each teacher thoroughly. In addition, in the interview I chose not to ask the participants explicit questions about the teaching methods they use, for instance, asking them to name the methods they prefer, because they might not be familiar with the terminology or even be aware of using those techniques. For example, Hall (2011:60) points out that "drilling and practising of dialogues in the classroom defined the audiolingual era, yet drills are still used by many teachers today, whether they explicitly associate such techniques with Audiolingualism or not". That is why I chose to observe their lessons myself. He continues that "whether they draw upon 'academic' theories or not, the approach teachers pursue in their classes will be informed by their personal hypotheses and beliefs, whether these theories are explicit or remain unconscious". To find out the methodology they use, I observed their lessons and made my own conclusions based on what I *saw* in action because I thought it might be more truthful than just relying on what the teachers *say* they do. And as pointed out in the study made by Phipps and Borg (2009), what teachers think and what they actually do might not always be in perfect alliance. I also wanted to get deeper into their thoughts so I interviewed them after the observed lessons, with an intention of understanding their personal hypothesis. Data and methods will be discussed in a more detailed manner next.

3   DATA & METHODS

I will start this section by introducing the research questions and the participants of the study. Then I will introduce the methods used in gathering and analysing the data, as well as provide reasons for my choices.

3.1   Research questions and participants

The research questions of the study are as follows:
1) What kinds of grammar teaching methods do the teachers use?
2) What does the chosen method depend on?
3) What are the differences and similarities between school levels?

As already discussed, there are many different grammar teaching methods out there but researchers today have still not reached a consensus on what the most successful one is (Nassaji and Fotos 2011), and most likely a method that suits for all teachers and learners does not even exist because every learner is an individual with his/her own differences and needs and teaching should be tailored accordingly (Pavičić Takač 2008). In addition, instructional methods need to be tested out in practise before deciding whether they work or not (Nassaji and Fotos 2011). Hence, every teacher has their own ways of teaching, and that is why the first research question of this paper is "What kinds of grammar teaching methods do the teachers use?" In order to get an answer to this question, I used the help of *the tools* (Johnson 2013), as discussed in section 2.3. There are many decisions to be made concerning the ways of teaching grammar and teachers are the ultimate decision-makers. I am interested in the reasons behind their choices; what makes them choose certain methods over another? Furthermore, as Borg (1998:10) has pointed out, "the lack of attention to the cognitive bases of teachers' work in grammar teaching represents a gap in the research agenda for L2 teaching". This concerns the factors that affect teachers' instructional decision-making process and what they take into account when making the decisions. It is suggested by Thornbury (2004) and Moore and Hansen (2012), amongst others, that teachers should consider especially their students in the decision-making process. However, what teachers actually base their instructional decisions on is relatively unexplored so more research needs to be

done on teachers' personal theories because those theories provide an insight to what grammar teaching actually involves. Since teachers' approaches to L2 grammar pedagogy are informed by their personal theories (Larsen-Freeman 2003, Keck and Kim 2014), those need to be examined as well. Since this topic is in need for further research, the second research question of this paper is: "What does the chosen method depend on?" Another topic that needs further research and is quite controversial is the age factor, how does learners' age affect the method of teaching (Lambelet and Berthele 2015, Cameron 2001). Therefore, this paper's third and final research question is: "What are the differences and similarities between school levels?" Answering all these questions sheds light on what teachers take into account when deciding how to teach and what type of teaching suits for students of different age. This information is of special value particularly for novice teachers but also for more experienced teachers because it inspires to consciously reflect one's thoughts that underlines the actions. Furthermore, they become more aware of their personal theories by reflection, which again leads to more confident teaching.

In order to answer the above-mentioned research questions, the chosen data gathering methods used in this study were classroom observation and interview. One lesson was observed per participant, immediately after which they were interviewed. All of the participants of the present study were Finnish EFL teachers with years of experience. The term *foreign language* is used here because they teach English in an environment where the language of communication is Finnish. There were three participants in total, but for ethical reasons, I did not use their real names in this paper. They were chosen from different school levels; elementary school, middle school and high school, but they have all gained teaching experience in all of these levels. The reason behind choosing them from different schools levels was that one of the aims of this paper was to discover possible differences in grammar teaching methods between these three levels. The elementary school teacher will be introduced as "Aino", who has 10 years of teaching experience. The observed lesson was for 12-year-old students and the reason for choosing that specific age group is that they were already quite familiar with learning English grammar. "Leila" is the middle school teacher and she has the most amount of experience, 17 years in total. I wanted to observe a class in middle school that has been in that level for some time, hence I went to see a lesson for 16-year-olds. The third participant of this study will be introduced as "Annika", the high school teacher, with approximately 10 years of experience in the field. The observed lesson was for 18-year-

old students. I did not want to collect the data from third-year students, the ones who are in their final year of high school studies, because I assume that their grammar lessons focus mainly on preparing for the matriculation examination. Neither did I want to observe first-year students' English lesson, because that age group would have been too close to the age of the middle school students. In addition to identifying the grammar teaching methods that these teachers use in their English lessons, the aim was to investigate their reasons for teaching the way they do. In other words, find out what the chosen methods depend on and what components they take into account when making decisions about how to teach. Thus, the focus is clearly on the teachers, not on the students. Furthermore, this paper does not seek to make any generalizations but to get a deeper understanding of the participants' personal theories and to carefully describe them. Hence, this is a qualitative case study.

As previously discussed in section 2.3, revealing the teaching methods can be done with the help of the tools. For example, looking at the order of teaching a grammar topic; is it deductive or inductive, meaning that does the teacher start the lesson by introducing the topic and the rules, later on moving to examples, or vice versa? Another example of a tool that helps in discovering the underlying methods is to determine whether the teacher uses the target language, in this case English, or the students' L1, Finnish, as the language of instruction. With the help of the tools, determining what grammar teaching methods the participants of this study used during their lessons will be done in section 4.

3.2   Data gathering methods

The purpose of this study was to examine the grammar teaching methods used by the three participants and to discover the reasons behind their choices. Hence, a qualitative research approach was considered more suitable than a quantitative one because the goal was not to make generalisations about grammar teaching but to get a deeper understanding of these teachers' personal theories. Qualitative research's central goal is to *understand* a specific phenomenon (Kalaja, Alanen and Dufva, 2011:19), and that is exactly what the main objective of this research is; to describe and understand the three participants' thoughts and feelings. According to Hirsjärvi, Remes and Sajavaara (2009:161), the basis of qualitative research is to describe real-life events as

comprehensively as possible, with an aim of discovering something. These are also the exact goals of this study; to describe the ways of teaching grammar that the participants use in reality and to discover the reasons for teaching it the way they do. In order to get the answers to these questions, I needed to see their teaching in action, as well as hear their own thoughts. Thus, the chosen data gathering methods were *classroom observation* and *interview*.

With the help of an interview - as Hirsjärvi et al (2009:212) points out - one can figure out what the participants think and believe in, but it does not tell what they do in real world. In order to find out whether these people actually *do* what they *say* that they do, one of the data gathering methods had to be observation. They also mention that it is commonly known by sociologists that results from an interview and results from an actual observation are often contradictory, especially when the theme for research is values. Seeing the teachers' methods in action meant going to the field and observing their lessons, and this was done in January 2016 in middle sized schools in Central Finland. It was a *non-participant observation,* meaning that the observation of the ongoing events of the lesson took place without the researcher taking part in them (Larsen-Freeman and Long 1991:16). These lessons would have taken place even without my presence in the classroom which means that the data were gathered in a naturally occurring setting. The authenticity of the data is highly important in this type of research where the interest lies in these teachers' personal theories and behaviour. However, observation as a data gathering method has been criticized for the fact that the researcher's presence in the classroom might have an effect on the behaviour of the participants (Hirsjärvi et al. 2009:213). This downside was taken into consideration and the participants were specifically asked to plan their lessons the way they normally plan them and teach the way they usually do. Being a non-participant observer, I was able to make field notes during the lessons, as well as fill in the grid I had prepared in support of the observation (see Appendix 2). The main focus was on making detailed field notes, therefore the grid was made very simple and clear. It only includes some examples that help identifying the underlying teaching methods, and what was not in the grid was written down in the field notes. Hence, the reason for making a grid was to simplify the process of identifying the grammar teaching methods. All the lessons were videotaped and there was also an additional tape recorder on each teacher's desk, making sure that the sound was captured perfectly. In total, three lessons were observed and recorded, one from each school level.

Before conducting the actual interviews, the recording devices and the questions were tested by conducting a pilot interview. The interviewee was a teacher who belongs to the target group but did not take part in the actual study. Some of the questions were rephrased after the pilot interview to make them clearer. Once that had been done, I interviewed the teachers at their schools immediately after each lesson. The language of the interviews was Finnish and their duration varied from 35 minutes to 45 minutes. The reason for conducting the interviews in Finnish was that it is all the participants' L1, as well as mine. Hence, I thought that since we share the same L1 with these teachers, it felt most comfortable and natural to use Finnish. All the interviews were recorded and later transcribed. Nunan (1992: 116-117) calls these types of interviews *retrospective interviews* because they take place as soon as possible after the mental events. An interview enables the voices of the participants' to be heard; they themselves can explain their own actions, for example, why they structured their lesson the way they did etc. Furthermore, interviews can facilitate the process of interpreting the data because by being present in the data collection process, researchers can examine participants' reactions and other nonverbal ways of conveying meaning. Since the focus of this study is on the teachers' actions and thoughts, their students were not interviewed. The interview used in this study was a *semi-structured* one, meaning that there was a specific theme and some key questions but also room for spontaneous talk and some time for extra topics that may arise during the course of the conversation (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2008: 47-48). The great thing about interviews is their flexibility, especially in semi-structured interviews; participants have a chance of repeating, asking clarifying question or emphasising the most important points. In the final part of the interviews applied for this research, the floor was given to the interviewees to express whatever was on their minds, for example, something that they thought was left unsaid or something that they wanted to clarify in order for me to get the overall picture of their teaching habits. Since the aim was to get as much information as possible, the final question "Is there still something you would like to say before we finish", was extremely important. According to Ruusuvuori and Tiittula (2005), interviews resemble everyday conversations: making questions and comprehensions, as well as showing interest in what the other has to say. In order to get the answers to the questions, it is very important for the interviewer to create this conversation-like atmosphere and convince the interviewee of the confidentiality of the interview, for example, by emphasizing the participants' anonymity. Since the focus of this paper is on the

teachers' personal beliefs and perceptions, they are the only ones with the information needed for this study. Clearly that is why one of the chosen data gathering methods was an interview. The interview questions can be seen in Appendix 1.

I believe that the combination of classroom observation and interview allowed me to get a deeper and more realistic image of these teachers' beliefs and practices. Observing the lessons provided insight into the ways they teach grammar and the interviews explored their personal theories underpinning their classroom practices, as well as enabled the participants' voices to be heard. Since teachers' instructional methods are informed by their beliefs about grammar and their conceptions of successful grammar teaching methods (Keck and Kim 2014:1), I included these questions in the interview: how they define grammar and how important do they think it is, as well as what are the characteristics of a successful teaching method. These answers might very well reflect the ways they teach grammar to their students and that way pass on their personal thoughts. The data gathering methods used in this research are often used in qualitative studies and more specifically, in *case studies*. According to Hirsjärvi, Remes and Sajavaara (2009:134), a case study usually involves very detailed information about a small group of "cases" that are somehow linked to each other. In this study, the link between the cases, i.e. the three participants, is that they are all Finnish EFL teachers whose grammar teaching methods are being investigated. Hirsjärvi, Remes and Sajavaara (2009:135) also point out that there are usually more than one data gathering method used in case studies, and the typical methods are, for example, interviews and observations. In addition, an *ethnographic approach* was used in this study in collecting the data, because observing a lesson and making field notes are parts of ethnographic research features. Pitkänen-Huhta (2011:88) defines ethnography as national science that focuses on human beings and describes their actions with an aim of understanding them. Thus, this is a qualitative and descriptive case study that has ethnographic research features.

3.3   Methods of analysis

The form of analysis used in this paper is *content analysis*. According to Weber (1990:3), content analysis is used for making inferences about the "sender of the message" or "the message itself". In other words, the aim is to describe the meaning of

what is said and done. Content analysis is one of the ways used in analysing data gathered via interviews, for example, and as one of the data gathering methods of the current paper was a semi-structured interview, this method of analysis was considered most suitable. Since one of the research questions concerns the reasons behind the teachers' instructional decisions, another aim of the analysis is to find explanations. Furthermore, this study is made from a comparative point of view, so the analysis also focuses on possible differences and similarities between the teachers and the school levels.

Overall, the data consists of three videotaped lessons, the grids and the field-notes done during the observed lessons, as well as the three recorded and transcribed interviews. Interpretations were done throughout the research process, starting already in the data gathering phase, which is characteristic to studies with ethnographic research features (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2008:152). The process of analysis started from transcribing the data gathered from the lessons and the interviews. The transcripts were done in a more detailed way in points that answered the research questions. Before starting to analyse the data, all the transcripts were read through carefully and according to Hirsjärvi and Hurme (2008:143), this is a very important step because reading leads to better understanding of the data, thus speeding up the process of analysis. Some memos were written while reading the transcripts in order to highlight the parts that dealt with the teachers' personal theories and grammar teaching, after which the transcribed material was categorised into smaller pieces according to the research questions. The categorization reduced the amount of the data, facilitating the process of analysis. Analysing and interpreting the data meant identifying the grammar teaching methods that the teachers used in their lessons and what they said that they take into account when making the instructional decisions. The methods were identified with the help of the tools. After that, the teachers' actions and answers were compared with each other, with an aim to discover differences and similarities between them. Finally, conclusions were drawn. This form of analysis felt most suitable for the purpose of this paper, with the help of which the research questions were also most likely to be answered.

4 "WHAT WAS I THINKING TEACHING GRAMMAR ON FRIDAY"

The lines are always blurred between different teaching methods because many of them share some similar views. In addition, teachers often use more than one method during a lesson or even a couple of methods simultaneously, therefore it is not a clear cut of which method is at stake at a certain moment. However, these techniques do have specific characteristics and the tools help in identifying which methods teachers use. Section 4.1 includes the overall structure of the observed lessons and lots of quotes from the teachers to capture what they really said and did during the lessons and the interviews because those parts best describe their thoughts realistically. Hence, this section reveals whether the teachers used deductive or inductive approach, what the role of the L1 was like, were the lessons teacher or student-centred etc., all leading us towards the conclusion of the teaching methods they used in their EFL lesson. Section 4.2, on the other hand, examines the factors that the three teachers take into account when making decisions on how they teach, and these conclusions were drawn based on what they said in the interviews. Finally, section 4.3 includes a comparison between the grammar teaching methods used in different school levels.

4.1 Structure of the lessons and the grammar teaching methods

The topic of the lessons, as well as the number of students and their age are presented in Table 1. As can be seen in the table below, there was a notable difference between the numbers of students in each class. Aino had the smallest group size and the youngest students while the number of students in Annika's lesson was three times as much as hers. In addition, the students in Annika's lesson were the oldest ones of these groups. Taking into consideration also Leila's group size (almost double the size of Aino's group) and the age of her students, a pattern can be distinguished between these three groups: the older the students, the bigger the group size. This finding is not be generalized to group sizes in Finnish schools in general, only to these three groups in question.

Table 1. Key components of the observed lessons

	Years of experience	Students' age	Number of students	Grammar topic
Aino's lesson	10	12	8	irregular past tense
Leila's lesson	17	16	15	the passive voice
Annika's lesson	10	18	24	irregular plural nouns

4.1.1 Aino's lesson

Aino´s 45 minutes-long lesson with the 12-year-olds started with standing up and doing some morning stretches at 10:15 on a Wednesday morning: "Alright, stand up, please. Let's stretch. Good morning. How are you today? (…) Ok, put your hands up, let's stretch, morning stretch". There were in total 8 students there because the group was divided into two (dividing a group into two parts was an option only for Aino, not for the other two teachers participating in this study). The stretching seemed to be their normal morning class routine since the students knew right away what to do. After the greetings and stretches, Aino asked the students in English to take out the homework and read their answers to their partner. During the lesson, she used English in familiar phrases such as giving short instructions etc., but every now and then she also translated these types of phrases in Finnish, both of the students' and the teacher's L1. When she spoke for a longer period of time or gave more complex explanations, she did that solely in Finnish. In the interview, I asked her whether she uses English or Finnish when teaching grammar, she answered sharply: "Always Finnish". Aino said that the reason was that some of her students are not capable of following the teaching in English; the weaker ones simply do not understand what she is saying. She added that by teaching in Finnish, she ensures that the reason of not learning something is at least not because of the language of the teaching. Being an experienced teacher, she has had the time to compare the learning results of teaching grammar in English or in Finnish, and then settling on Finnish as the language of instruction. Her reasons of doing so are commonly acknowledged: "A deductive method involves giving rules, and in practice

this will often have to be done in the learners' L1. It is often not practicable to explain grammatical rules to a learner (particularly at the early learning stages) in the target language" (Johnson 2013: 163). We can say that Aino's students, being the age of 12, are still at an early stage of learning. While the students were comparing their answers in pairs, she went around in the classroom checking that everyone had done their homework. Before showing the correct answers, she told the students the topic of the day:

Example 1. (Lesson)
Aino: 8b:ssä ((the homework exercise)) oli tärkeetä se, että sä muokkasit sen imperfektiin eli kun siinä päiväkirjassa oli nykyhetken muoto nii sun piti laittaa menneen hetken muoto. Ja tänään me kerrataan se mennyt hetki. Miten kerrotaan menneestä ajasta. *'In exercise 8b it was important that you changed it into the past tense, so in the diary there was the present tense and you had to put it into the past tense. And today we are going to revise that past tense. How can one speak about something in past tense.'*

As can be seen from the example above, she introduced the topic by telling the students what it is. This revealed the answer to the question of whether the teacher uses a deductive or an inductive approach, the former meaning that teachers themselves give out the topic, so Aino used the deductive approach. In addition, as Johnson (2013:163) points out, deductive teaching is usually done in learners' L1 and that was the language of instruction in Aino's lesson as well, backing up the conclusion. It also came out in the interview that the deductive method is the one which Aino uses more often than the inductive one:

Example 2. (Interview)
Aino: Mulla on muutama asia mitkä mä lähen oppilasjohtosesti. Yleensä mä lähen opejohtosesti, koska niillä on vielä se taito niin heikossa ja sit yläkoulussa tai lukiossa nii siellä ne pystyy päättelemään paremmin. Mut alakoululaisten kanssa nii se yleensä aina lähen siitä et niinku mä kerron sen et miten se toimii. Että tän sä osaat, tää uus asia toimii näin. Ja sit heti harjotellaan jollain pelillä tai jollain muulla. Mutta säännöllinen verbi, säännöllinen imperfekti opetin just aikasemmassa kappaleessa, nii siinä mä lähinki sillä tavalla et mä olin poiminu sieltä lauseita kappaleesta, jossa oli se herra Ed. Ja sit mä sanoin että katoppas kaikista lauseista näitä tekemisen sanoja, mitäs jännää sinne on ilmestyny. Ja sitte ne lähti niinku poimimaan et siellä on kaikissa tommonen –ed. Sit mä sanoin et miten sä suomensit ton yhen lauseen?. Ja sit ne käänsi semmosen. Noniin, onks se nyt tästä hetkestä vai menneestä, tavallaan johdatellen. Elikkä se tavallaan et luotiin se sääntö siitä esimerkistä. Et sitä käytän öö lyhyiden adjektiivien vertailussa, herra Est, koska silloin se on helppo löytää, ja säännöllisessä imperfektissä. Ne on oikeastaan ne asiat missä mä käytän johtamista. Muuten yleensä aina opejohtosesti. Alakoulussa. *'I teach some grammar items in a student-centred way but normally I use a teacher-centred approach in introducing an item because their skills aren't that good quite yet, compared to middle and high school students whose power of deduction is better. But with elementary school students I almost always start with the explanation of the topic. You already know how this works and the new topic works like this. And then we immediately practice with a game or something like*

that. But regular verbs, I just taught them the regular past tense in the previous chapter, I introduced the topic by highlighting some sentences that included Mister Ed. Then I asked them to look at the verbs and what they all had in common. Then they pointed out the –ed. Then I asked them to translate one sentence in Finnish and they did. Well, is it in present or in past tense, leading them a little. So we kinda created the rule from the example. I use this method when comparing short adjectives, because Mr. Est is easy to find, and also when teaching the regular past tense. These two topics are basically the ones that I teach in a student-centred way. With the exception of these two topics, I almost always use the teacher-centred approach.'

After the students had compared their answers in pairs, Aino showed them the correct answers from the e-book (the electronic textbook) on the smartboard (a smartboard works like a regular whiteboard but it is an interactive whiteboard with touch detention features similar to PC input devices). She pointed out the most important points by highlighting them and reading them out loud, for example, the past tense of "I eat pizza, I ATE pizza". Altogether, checking the homework took approximately 5 minutes and they did that by using several methods; the students read out loud what they had written, saw the correct answers on the smartboard (the important points were also highlighted with a bright colour) and heard the teacher repeating the sentences. Thus, Aino applied both visual and auditory methods in checking the homework. Before moving on, she asked the students if they had understood everything, giving them a chance to get a clarification to whatever was still unclear. Next they did a short "repeat after me" type of exercise, reading out loud verbs from the textbook both in present and in past tense, for example: "stand, stood", mimicking the teacher. There were in total 16 verbs which also included pictures of the actions, therefore they were also visually pleasing to look at and perhaps helpful for those learners who learn best by seeing visuals of the topic being taught. This kind of repetitive exercise is clearly characteristic to the exercises used in the audiolingual teaching method where the use of one's own mind is very limited and oral drilling is the heart of the manner. Repeating the verbs was done in isolation and there was no room for improvisation. Hence, making use of the very first tool that was mentioned in section 2.3, one can say that Aino used scales in this section of grammar teaching, not simulations of real-life situations. This type of language use is not something that learners would apply in real-life, for instance, when having a conversation with a friend or writing them a letter. However, scales can be regarded as stepping stones towards using a language in real-life situations (Johnson 2013: 255-256), and since Aino's students were still very young, she most likely thought that they are not yet capable of practising simulations of real and meaningful language use.

Then the more theoretical part of the grammar teaching started. Aino had made a presentation slide with a title "The irregular past tense – *the irregular forms of the verbs in past tense must be memorized*", but before going into that, she first revived what they had already learned in the previous lessons. She also provided reasons for the students why they should learn to use the irregular past tense:

Example 3. (Lesson)
Aino: Ennen joululomaa, ope vaihtaa suomeen, jotta kaikki varmasti pysyy mukana, kirjotettiin vihkoon epäsäännöllisestä imperfektistä. Ja siitähän mä sanoin, että se säännöllinen oli se missä oli se herra Ed. Historioitsija herra Ed, joka tunki nimensä joka paikkaan. Herra Edin verbit on säännöllisiä. Ja sit on niitä epäsäännöllisiä, jotka on pakko opetella ulkoa. MIKSI? Koska ne on ne yleisemmät verbit mitä englannissa käytetään; syödä, juoda, nukkua (…) Sä käytät niitä koko ajan. Ja jos et sä niitä osaa, sit se kuulostaa hassulta englantilaisen korviin. Sen takia ne pitää opetella ulkoa koska sitten ku sä osaat ne epäsäännölliset ulkoa, sä tiedät, että kaikki muut on säännöllisiä eli sit sä tiedät mihin tulee ed ja mihin ei". *'Before Christmas break, the teacher now switches to Finnish so that everyone will definitely understand, we made notes about the irregular past tense to our notebooks. And I said that the regular tense is the one where we have Mister Ed, Ed the historian who puts his name everywhere. Mister Ed's verbs are regular. And then we have the irregular ones that one has to learn by heart. WHY? Because those are the most commonly used verbs in the English language; eat, drink, sleep (...) those ones you use all the time. And it would sound funny to the English if you don't know them. That is why you have to memorize them because once you have done that, you will know that all the rest are regular ones so then you'll know where to put or no to put – ed.*

Apparently Aino had taught them a mnemonic (Mister Ed) through which she started to go through the topic of the day. In the interview, she said that she makes her own mnemonics and slide shows because the textbooks' grammar sections are usually written in standard language with difficult terminology, making the learning more difficult. So she does not use the ready-made grammar 'boxes', like she calls them, but makes her own because she feels they could be more simplified and that way make them easier to take in. The teacher in Borg's (1998:24) study shared these thoughts and further explained the need for making the rules more "user-friendly": "I think there is often a significant difference between the immediate aim of a part of a live lesson and the written explanation of a grammar rule in a grammar reference book. The teacher, (…) who is well aware of what her / his students can deal with orally / aurally at a moment in time, often needs to select and modify grammatical information in a way that in a way that a reference book doesn't need to". The slide she had made had two sections; the present and the past. In the first part, there were examples of the present tense, for instance, *"I eat", "I don't speak", "Do you swim", and "Does he sing"*, and the second part had the same sentences in the past tense. The teacher went through these

examples with the help of the students; she asked the students to change the tense of the examples one by one. Once a student had told the correct answer, she revealed it on the smartboard. Therefore, communication took place only between the teacher and the student. They elaborated some points more than others, for example, the negative sentences "I don't speak" and "I didn't speak". Aino asked the students to look at this example on the smartboard, especially the main verb. She asked them to compare the two and then a student replied that they look similar. Aino then emphasized the fact that one has to remember that the main verb doesn't change, which they can clearly see that from this example as well. After they had gone through all the examples, the students again mimicked the teacher and read the sentences out loud. This part of the lesson took about 6 minutes and Aino used only Finnish as the language of the instruction. It was clearly teacher-led but Aino also activated the students during the presentation by asking them some questions. However, the focus was mainly on the teacher and the students were to listen to what she had to say. As previously discussed, the type of instruction in lessons where the teacher uses grammar-translation methods is usually explicit, meaning that teachers give formal presentations on grammatical rules and focus on form. Aino's 6-minute presentation does fall into this category of teaching methods. So far, the identified teaching techniques in Aino's lesson are the audiolingual method and the grammar-translation method.

Aino then asked the students to take out the textbooks and study the 12 verbs (which they had already read out loud after checking the homework) for a few minutes, reading them out loud in English in pairs. She told them that they are going to play a game where they ought to remember these verbs both in present and in past tense, so again she explained the reasons for doing the task. Here the emphasis was placed on spoken skills: speaking and listening. After a couple of minutes, they started playing a game called "slap" (läpsy in Finnish), the instructions of which she explained in Finnish. On the first round, the idea of the game was to remember the past tense of a verb and to say it out loud in the first person singular form as quickly as possible, for example, the verb "sleep" was changed into "I slept". When they said the word, they slapped the floor at the same time. So the one whose hand was on the bottom, got to keep the word to him or herself. The students did not play the game round their desks but sitting down on the floor, working in groups of four; the boys had their own group and the girls had theirs. They got to move away from their own desks and play more freely, which seemed to relax the mood of the lesson. On the second round, they changed the verb into a

negative one, for example, the verb "sing" was changed into "I didn't sing". Aino observed their playing and performance but did not interfere in the game; the students played it amongst themselves. This game was clearly student-centred and kinaesthetic, the latter one referring to a learning style where the students carry out physical activities, in this case slapping the floor. Hence, this activity had some characteristics of the total physical response method. This type of activity also corresponds to Dykes' (2007) view of the importance of learners' active involvement in the learning process. Overall, this game took one-third of the lesson so the time spent in explaining and playing the game was around 15 minutes. More time was clearly spent on the game rather than on the lecture and Aino herself told that she never lectures for more than 15 minutes, preferably only for 5 to 10 minutes, keeping it as simple as possible. She said that she usually prepares her students a handout which have some blanks in them and that they fill in those blanks while she has a teacher-centred lecture about the topic. The first part of the handout is normally a dictation exercise where students only fill in the most important parts by writing down a word or two with the teacher's help and then there are some exercises after that where they can practise the use of those rules. Then immediately after the theoretical part, the students get to practice the topic verbally. Aino really emphasized the importance of oral practicing in memorizing a grammar topic, and she said that practicing should be done with a partner or in groups, not alone. Here is how she justified this:

Example 4. (Interview)
Aino: Aina muiden kanssa. No se hyöty siitä että ne pystyy sanoon et "ei, ei se noin mee" ku ne korjaa toisiaan niin luonnollisesti ja esim tuolla kun ne pelas ((game in the observed lesson)) et "ei ku se on se draw ei se oo mikään drew, drew on se mennyt muoto". Et ne niinku neuvoo toisiaan koko ajan. Niin se kieli on elävä asia joka tapahtuu toiminnassa jonku toisen kanssa, yleensä puhuttu kieli. Nii miks mä harjottelisin sitä itekseen luokassa ku tääl on ne kaverit? Aina. Kaverin kanssa tai ryhmässä. *'Always with others. Because of the benefit of being able to say "no, that's not how it's done" 'cause they correct each other's utterances so naturally and e.g. when they played the game there like "No, it's draw, not drew, that's the past tense". So they like continuously correct each other. And language is such a living thing that takes place in action with someone else, usually the spoken language. So why on earth would I practice it by myself in a classroom filled with peers? Always. With a friend or in a group.'*

The students returned to their seats and Aino asked them to take out their notebooks because they were going to do a translation exercise. She wrote 6 sentences on the smartboard in Finnish and asked the students to translate them into Finnish into their notebooks. She told them to now work alone to test whether they had learned to use the positive and the negative forms correctly. While the students were writing, Aino went

around in the classroom checking how they were doing and if they had learned how to use the past tense. This way she was also free to help those who needed some assistance. Obviously, the emphasis of this task was on written skills with a focus on form, once again following the GTM. After everyone had completed the task, they checked the answers; the students provided the answers and Aino wrote them on the smartboard so that everyone could see them, after which she read the sentences out loud in English. In addition, she always complemented the students on getting it right. Before the lesson ended, Aino asked her students to put their thumbs up or down, depending on whether they thought that the past tense was easy or difficult. All of the students raised their thumbs up so clearly they now thought that they know how to use the past tense. Aino gave them one exercise of this topic for homework and ended the lesson saying: "Thank you for today, good job".

What I concluded from Aino's lesson was that she definitely used the audiolingual method as one of her teaching techniques because they did quite a few oral drilling exercises during the lesson by repeating separate words and sentences, and repetition is one of ALM's principles (Larsen-Freeman 2000:43). Another more traditional method that she used was the grammar-translation method. She often asked the students to provide translations, focusing heavily on accuracy. In the end of the lesson, they even did a writing exercise with the same intention of emphasising the form. They also discussed the rules explicitly and did that in their L1. GTM is known for emphasising translation and the use of explicit statements of grammar rules (Thornbury 2004:21). However, she did have one kinaesthetic exercise in the lesson and that was the game called 'slap'. The main idea was oral drilling with a focus on form, so without a doubt it also goes into the category of both audiolingualism and GTM but it also included some characteristics of the TPR method (total physical response) because they learned through movement. One of TPR's key principles is that students learn languages by moving their bodies (Larsen-Freeman 2000:111). The morning stretch routine they did in the beginning of the lesson was more clearly a TPR exercise (for instance, the teacher asked the students to roll their shoulders so they did) but that had nothing to do with grammar. Furthermore, she followed the PPP-model, beginning her lesson with a small presentation of the grammar item, followed by the practice-stage where students got to drill the new form. The production-stage was actually not included in this lesson because at that stage, students are expected to have fully learned the grammar item and then produce language on their own using this item correctly. As a final task, Aino

asked her students to translate some sentences into their notebooks in order to see whether they had learned the topic or not, but this exercise does not fulfil the requirements of the final stage of the PPP-model because learners are not given the opportunity to produce language using their own imagination, there was no room for using one's own mind. Hall (2011:65) reminds that the habit-formation approach has been criticised for failing "to allow for the role of the human mind in learning, of consciousness, thought, and unconscious mental processes". In short, Aino used a mixture of GTM, ALM and TPR, as well as followed the presentation-practice pattern, i.e. the rule-driven path.

4.1.2 Leila's lesson

Leila's lesson was for 16-year-old students and there were 15 of them there. The lesson took place on a Friday morning, starting at 9:10 and ending 45 minutes later. It took some time for the lesson to begin because some of the students had their mobile phones out and did not put them away immediately. Leila decided not to start the lesson before everyone had done that. After a couple of minutes, they began the lesson:

> Example 5.　(Lesson)
> Leila:　　Ok, last time and the day before that we revised the TENSES a little bit eli aikamuotoja, right? And today I promised you that we'd go through the passive ones again. Remember? We did that ages ago in the fall briefly (…) so I think it would be a good idea to revise it so you won't be all confused about what it is. '…*so the tenses…*'

The topic of the day was the passive voice and she told that to the students immediately in the beginning of the lesson. This means that she used the deductive approach instead of letting the students figure out the topic, which is one of the characteristics of the GTM. The inductive approach is said to be more engaging for students (Thornbury 2004:49-55) but still teachers often prefer to use the deductive one. Leila started with English but quickly switched to Finnish, telling the students: "But now since this is grammar, I think I'll do most of it in Finnish". Therefore, the method she uses in grammar teaching clearly allows the use of L1 in the classroom. Here is how she answered when I asked her in the interview whether she teaches grammar in English or in Finnish:

> Example 6.　(Interview)

Leila: No yleensä yritän lähtee siitä, että ois niinku joku esimerkkilauseita (…),vaikka luetaan teksti, usein vaikka ihan kirjan kappale tai sit joku laulu tai joku tekstin pätkä muualta. Tai sitte vaikka ihan niinku suullistavia harjotuksia, siis keskusteluharjotuksia missä on sitä kielioppia niinku ujutettuna. Niin, että.. niinku että oppilaat… ne vaan niinku tekis niitä rakenteita automaattisesti. Ja sit ku ruvetaan KÄYMÄÄN sitä kielioppiasiaa nii sillai sit voi mennä siihen et "hei, sä osasit jo muodostaa tän lauseen". Et kyl mä lähtisin niinku sieltä päästä liikenteeseen. Nyt mä unohdin mitä sä kysyit. *Usually I try to start with example sentences (...), for instance, reading a text like a chapter from the textbook or a song or a piece of text from somewhere else. Or do speaking exercises where the grammar topic is already hidden in there. So like…the students would just start using the structures automatically. And then when we start to actually GO THROUGH the grammar topic, you can say like "hey, you already knew how to form this sentence". So I would start by doing it that way. Now I forgot what you asked.*

Anni: Se oli et suomeksi vai enkuksi. *I asked whether you teach in Finnish or in English.*

Leila: Nii suomeks vai enkuks. Sitte ku päästään näistä esimerkkilauseista nii kyllä mä yleensä suomeksi käyn ne asiat. *Oh yeah, Finnish or English. Once we have gone through the example sentences, I usually go through the topic in Finnish.*

Anni: No mikä siihen on se syy? *And what is the reason for that?*

Leila: Noooo mä lähen ehkä oppilaitten ilmeistä ja siitä että kun… Varsinki lukiossa niin heillä on jo monesti sellanen käsitys et nyt ku lähetään käymään kielioppia ni asia on VAIKEE. Nii sit tavallaan varmistetaan se, että sun oppiminen ei kaadu siihen et vaikeilla termeillä käydään sitä viel vieraalla kielellä. Mut että sitte taas. Nyt ku mä muistelen taaksepäin sitä pienten opetusta ja monesti seiskojen kanssa ku tulee just vaikka niinkun.. No olkoon nyt vaikka aikamuotoja. Niin sitte mä en käytäkään niin paljo sitä suomen kieltä. Että kun mun ajatus on se et ne oppis sen mahdollisimman paljon sieltä esimerkkien kautta nii sitte mä taas jotenki ajattelen, et jos mä nyt tässä vaihdan niinku suomeksi kesken kaiken, niin tuun korostaneeksi sitä et TÄÄ on nyt KIELIOPPIA ja tää on VAIKEETA tää asia. Että se on jännä juttu, et ehkä pienemmillä enemmänki enkkua ja sit taas noilla abiturienteilla sit taas hiotaan niitä suomeksi niitä juttuja. *Well, I look at the students' facial expressions and…Especially in high school they have this conception of grammar being difficult. So that way I can make sure that your learning does not depend on understanding difficult terms or the foreign language. But then again…When I look back on teaching the little ones or the 14-year-olds, it's like… Well let's say I'm teaching tenses. Then I actually don't use Finnish that much. My idea is that they would learn as much as possible through the examples so I kinda think that if I would now suddenly switch into Finnish, I'd emphasize the fact the THIS is now GRAMMAR and this topic is DIFFICULT. It's funny, maybe English is used more often with smaller students and Finnish with 19-year-olds when practicing the details.*

Next she opened up a grammar section from an e-book on the smartboard (these ready-made slides were actually from another series of books than the one they used with this group). Before going into the slideshow, she briefly explained to the students what the passive voice is and she did that with the help of a student.

Example 7. (Lesson)

Leila: Eli passiivi. Viimeks ku me käytiin niitä aikamuotojuttuja nii kaikki lause-esimerkit oli aktiivilauseita. Ja nyt pitäis miettiä, et mikä se semmonen passiivi oikein on. Osaaks joku saman tien sanoa ku te ootte äidinkielessäkin näitä käynyt ja joskus sillon käytiin enkussa, että milloin käytettiin passiivia, mikä se oikein on? *So the passive voice. Last time when we looked at the tenses, all the examples were active sentences. And now we should figure out what the passive voice means. Can someone tell me the answer right away, since you have studied*

> it in your Finnish lessons and some time ago in English lessons as well, so when does one use the passive voice and what is it?'
>
> Oppilas: Siinä ei oo tekijää. ' *It doesn't have a subject.'*
>
> Leila: Joo, just näin. Ei oo tekijää lauseessa ollenkaan tai sitte sitä ei haluta korostaa, ei välttämättä haluta kertoo. Elikkä Suomessakin sanotaan vaikka että jäätelöä syödään paljon joka kesä (…). Okei elikkä se on siis VERBIN MUOTO. Verbin muoto, jossa ei sitä tekijää välttämättä kerrota. No hei, verbit kun ne on lauseessa, niitä sanottiin predikaateiksi. '*Yes, exactly. There is no subject in the sentence or one does not want to highlight it or reveal it. It is said in Finnish that a lot of ice-cream is consumed every summer. Ok so it is a VERB FORM. A verb form that doesn't reveal the subject. And hey, when verbs are in sentences, they are called predicates.'*

Leila came up with some example sentences where she used the passive form and simultaneously explained a few grammatical terms, that way leading them more into the topic. Here the students were to simply listen to the teacher since there were no visual aids on the smartboard to look at. Then they looked at some more examples given on the smartboard. Leila asked one student at a time to read an example sentence out loud in English and then another student to come and use the smartboard to pick out the predicates. For example, a student read out loud "many things are also broken here" and another one clicked on the "are broken" part while the rest of them stood by and observed the action. In addition, Leila asked them to translate the sentences orally in Finnish and pick out the objects of the actions. She used grammatical terms (in Finnish) such as subject, object, predicate, passive, active, the present tense, etc. Along the way she gave them more information about the topic, for example, the fact that a predicate might consist of more than just one word or that usually the most important point is located at the very beginning of a sentence. So far, the lesson was highly form-focused and teacher-led but Leila also activated the students during the slideshow. Five minutes after this "session" had started, some students started to wander off the topic fingering their mobile phones or talking with each other. Leila then asked them if they had already gotten bored since they were not paying attention to the teaching anymore, and by doing so she got their attention back again. She had to repeat this quite a few times and even some of the students asked their peers to quiet down. Perhaps this has something to do with Cameron's (2001) comment on the demotivating effect of too explicit instruction. This teaching session lasted for 10 more minutes and it included, for example, gap-fill exercises where the students clicked the correct word and dragged it into the gap on the smartboard. Thus, Leila also applied kinaesthetic learning technique in addition to the audio-visual methods since the students came up to the board and moved different pieces with their hands. Every time when there was a new type of exercise, the teacher had a mini-lecture about its specifics and after that the students

completed the exercise, therefore it clearly followed the presentation-practice model. This part of the lesson lasted for 18 minutes in total. The very last slide dealt with word order which led to an interesting dialogue between the teacher and a student concerning this issue:

Example 8.   (Lesson)

Leila: Moni suomalainen sanois, että "where this part is put" (…) koska meillä Suomessa sanotaan, että mihin tämä osa laitetaan, mutta enkussa on kysymyksessä KÄÄNTEINEN SANAJÄRJESTYS. '*Many Finns would say "…" because in Finland one says where this part is put, but the word order is inverted in English.*'

Student: Mut kyllähän sua silti ymmärretään jos sä sanot sillai. '*But you would still be understood even if you said it like that.*'

Leila: Kyllä ne ymmärtää, mut se kuulostaa just sellaselta rallienkulta tai sellaselta niinku suomeks joku sanois että "missa olla tama osa" ((said this with an Italian accent waving her hands)) (…) eli kannattaa harjotella se oikee sanajärjestys. '*Yes, they would understand you but it would sound similar to rally English ((a term used in Finland referring to poor language skills)) or like someone would say in Finnish "where be this part" (…) so you should learn the proper word order.*'

Next the students were asked to do pair work. Leila took out a couple of speaking exercises which were divided according to their level of difficulty. There were altogether five options to choose from, the levels of which were identifiable by colour. According to Dykes (2007:10), providing students with some choices is a good strategy to use every now and then because some students might struggle with focusing on only one task for lengthy period of time. In three of these handouts, the students were to translate the Finnish sentences into English and then their partner checked the correct answer. In the other two exercises, one had to vary the tenses or change an active sentence into a passive one. One example of the latter one would be "Sophie put together this slideshow", "This slideshow was put together by Sophie". Leila let the students choose the speaking exercises themselves, according to what they thought their level of skills were. While they were practicing, Leila was able to go around and see how they were doing and help those in need. The time spent in the discussion task was more or less the same as the time spent in the teaching session, a little less than 20 minutes. There was no emphasis placed on writing since the students did not write down anything during the entire lesson. Neither did they do reading comprehension exercises. Hence, one can conclude that the emphasized skills during this lesson were the spoken skills: listening and speaking. The teacher was the one who did mainly all the speaking in the first part of the lesson but once they moved on to the speaking exercises, the students "had the stage". Leila finished the lesson with a short summary of the passive voice and asked the students to start studying for the upcoming verb test.

Based on the observations I made during Leila's lesson, the method she used the most was the traditional grammar-translation method. What led me into this conclusion was that she used the deductive approach and explicit instruction, the language of instruction was Finnish, she asked her students to translate sentences into and out of their L1 multiple times (during the lecture and the pair work), the first part of the lesson was completely teacher-led and teacher-centred, and the lesson's focus was form, which are all characteristic to the GTM (Keck and Kim 2014:7, Larsen-Freeman 2000:15-18). Even though Leila did not ask the students to actually write down anything in a traditional way, the focus was on the written form of language. The students picked out accurate sentences on the smartboard and made translations from written texts. During the second part, the roles changed and the learners were more actively involved in the learning process. However, the focus was still on grammatical accuracy because the students were not asked to produce anything using their own imagination but to specifically focus on form. Neither were there any simulations of real-life situations so clearly the more communicative methods had no part to play in this lesson. During the entire lesson, they did little other than listening or speaking, therefore the emphasized skills were evidently the spoken skills, and the primacy of speech indicates that Leila's teaching techniques also had some characteristics of the audiolingual method. In this method, the belief is that it is unnecessary for the teacher to go through grammatical rules explicitly (Larsen-Freeman 2000:45) but on the contrary, Leila explained the rules explicitly in the observed lesson. Hence, she had some characteristics of the audiolingual method in her teaching but did not follow the method completely.

4.1.3 Annika's lesson

Annika's lesson for the 18-year-olds was on a Tuesday noon. During this lesson, 90 minutes in total, the students answered a questionnaire which took approximately an hour, so there was half an hour left for the grammar section. Obviously, only the latter part of the lesson was relevant for this research. Here is how Annika initiated the grammar section:

Example 9. (Lesson)
Annika: Okei eli tänään tota lopputunnin aiheena siirrytään vähä kielioppiin. Öö substantiiveja aiheena ja varmasti monen mielestä tuntuu et joo joo, on, on nähty, on kuultu. Aijaa se on a man, MEN. Eli puhutaan epäsäännöllisistä monikoista ja

öö laskettavista ja ei-laskettavista substantiiveista. *'Okay so the rest of today's lesson will be spent on grammar. Uh the topic is nouns and I'm sure everyone's like yeah, yeah, been there, done that. Oh, it's a man, men. So we will talk about irregular plural nouns and uh countable and uncountable nouns.'*

As can be seen, she introduced the topic in Finnish herself and gave one example of an irregular plural noun in English. Thus, she used the deductive approach just like the other two participants did and said herself that the deductive approach is more logical because it makes the students focus on the desired subject immediately. It also came up in the interview that she beliefs it is better to teach grammar in Finnish, basing her belief on practical experience and what she thinks works well in her own lessons. Furthermore, Annika has tried teaching grammar in English and asked her students for feedback, in which she discovered that 99% of the answers were negative. The students preferred Finnish as the language of instruction for different reasons. Firstly, they said that they do not understand the grammatical terms in English. Secondly, they mentioned that they see no point in learning these grammatical terms in English. Thirdly, the topic itself is already quite difficult so why would they want to complicate it any further. However, Annika made an interesting point about teaching grammar in the target language. She started to wonder if it would have made any difference if these students' teachers had *always* taught grammar in English because then the students would already be familiar with all the grammar talk, including terminology etc. My opinion is that it would have made a difference. If teachers already in lower school levels would have familiarized their students with grammatical terms in English, as well as used English as the language of instruction at least partly, the students would not resist being taught in the target language because they would already expect that. And as was mentioned in section 2.4, students' expectations should be taken into consideration when making instructional decisions (Thornbury 2004:25-27). Therefore, as Annika's students expect the teaching to happen in Finnish, that is the reason why she taught in Finnish.

After introducing the topic, Annika asked her students to take out their iPads or mobile phones because they were going to play a game called *Kahoot*. Kahoot is a learning platform in the Internet made from a series of multiple choice questions. The questions were in view on the smartboard and the students were to pick the answer they thought to be correct from their own devices. The faster they chose the answer, the more points they got (and it had to be a correct one in order to get any points). There were altogether 10 questions and after they had answered all of them, the winner of the game was shown on the scoreboard. There were questions about countable nouns, for example, is

"cheese", "egg", "water" or "bread" a countable noun, or whether "apple", "bottle", "juice" or "book" is an uncountable noun. All of the questions were in English and there seemed to be some confusion about what the terms *countable* and *uncountable* mean. After two questions, the teacher clarified the meaning of these two words in Finnish because she noticed their confusion. Here we have a great example of what Annika already mentioned when we talked about whether to teach grammar in English or in Finnish. Since she uses Finnish as her language of grammar instruction, this resulted in confusion amongst the students when the grammatical terms were written in English in the game. They did not immediately figure out their meaning since they did not know what they meant. After Annika paused the game and explained these terms in Finnish, some students said: "Now I get it". Later on in the game, there were also some gap-filling exercises, for instance, "How ___ is this book". The options were "many", "very", "little", and "much". The time spent in this game was around 5 minutes. Using a game as a grammar teaching method is a creative way to get students excited about learning, and according to Dykes (2007:10), creative teaching makes the learning experience also more enjoyable. I believe this to be true because games are usually regarded as something fun and if this fun factor is added to an EFL lesson, it makes learning feel nicer as well. This, again, has a positive effect on learners' willingness to learn when they are provided with motivating exercises. In addition, it is worth mentioning that Annika had actually made this game herself so it was not part of the textbook material. She said that it takes time to do the extra material or to look for ready-made ones online since one has to go through them in detail to see if they are any good, and perhaps still do some modifications. Yet she added that it is important that also teachers enjoy their own lessons, implying that they might become more motivated when they are pleased with the materials they use. Annika gave a personal example: she uses a lot a music in her lessons because she herself enjoys listening to music, possibly inspiring her students by being inspired herself. Turning to textbook materials, here is what she said:

Example 10.   (Interview)
Annika: Mut jos kirjan, kirjasarjan opematskut tarjoo siellä jotakin hyviä nii TOTTAKAI
              käytän, koska on mun ihan tyhmä käyttää omaa aikaani jos mä jotain
              samantyyppistä sit löytäsin sieltä matskuista et jos siellä vaan on hyviä nii käytän
              kyllä. (…) jos kirjan matskut motivoi nii miks ei! Nehän on hirveen hyviä
              materiaaleja, hyviä tehtäviä. Ja tässä Open Roadissa ((textbook series)) on paljon
              kielioppia suullistettu. Nii sehän on aikasempiin kirjasarjoihin mitä mäki oon
              niinku käyttäny, English United oli se mikä oli täällä aikasemmin, nii nii ihan
              huima harppaus! Et ei tarvii keksiä joka kohtaan paritehtävää et mitä kirjasarja
              tarjoo heti valmiiks et "okei harjotellaanpas samaa kielioppia suullisesti". Ihan

loistava. *'But if there are good exercises in the textbook, OF COURSE I use them. Because it would be stupid for me to spend my own time looking for extra materials that are similar to the ones in the textbook. If there is something good in the textbook, I do use it. (...) if the textbook material inspires you, why not! There are very good materials, good exercises. And there are a lot of spoken grammar exercises in the Open Road textbook. Compared to the ones I've used, for example English United that was used here before, it is a lot better! One doesn't have to come up with pair work exercises for every section since the textbook already includes them so "alright, let's practice the same grammar item orally". Fantastic.'*

They continued dealing with nouns, but this time focusing on the vocabulary. Annika had looked up and printed a board game from the Internet, the theme of which was countable and uncountable categories and examples. Before handing them out to the students, she explained the idea of the game in Finnish and put some of the more unfamiliar words on the smartboard in Finnish. The students played this game in pairs, moving around the board by giving examples of the categories such as winter clothing, liquid in the kitchen, weather or furniture. They were to start each example with "There is/are some", for instance, "There is some wine" for "liquids". The idea was to say as many words as possible in 20 seconds, so it was a competitive game that focused on form. The students played this game for 10 minutes while Annika went around in the classroom. Before moving on to the next exercise, she went over some of the categories in a more detailed manner, for example, "transport". She showed the students a list of words in English that belonged to this category and then they translated them from English to Finnish together. If there were no volunteers to translate, Annika told them the word in Finnish:

Example 11.   (Lesson)
Annika: Minkälainen auto on convertible? *'What kind of a car is a convertible?'*
Student: Avoauto. *'A convertible.'*
Annika: Joo, avoauto. Öö rubber dinghy, onko ikinä kukaan kuullu rubber dinghy? *'Yep, a convertible. Um, has anyone ever heard of a rubber dinghy?'*
Students: …
Annika: Se rubber sana on siinä. Öö kumivene. Ihan kumivene on rubber dinghy. *'The word rubber is part of it. Um, rubber dinghy. It's just a rubber dinghy.'*

Next they looked at a slide show from the e-book. Annika told the students in Finnish that they would continue working with grammar but in this exercise the vocabulary was simpler. The idea was that the students answered the questions in the slide show in pairs and then then they looked at the correct answers together. They were to change the plural forms into singular ones and deduce the rules. One of the questions was: "What are the singular forms of the words "guesses", "echoes", and "lilies", and "Why the

plurals are formed by adding –es and not –s". To clarify, the questions were written in Finnish. Here is how they then checked the correct answers.

Example 12. (Lesson)
Annika: Keksittekö siellä mikä oli syy näihin es-loppuihin näissä sanoissa? (…) Jos se tulee teille nyt jo luonnostaan ku te kirjotatte sanoja nii sitte teiän ei sitä sääntöö tarvii tietää, mutta on olemassa sääntöjä näihinkin juttuihin niinku moniin muihinki. Ja sit on olemassa niitä poikkeuksien poikkeuksia. '*Did you come up with reasons for adding –es to these words? (...) And if you already know how to do it without actually thinking about it, then you don't have to know the rule, but there are rules for these things just like there are for many others. And then there are exceptions of exceptions.*'
Student: Päättyy s:n vokaaliloppunen. '*A word that ends with a vowel ends with an s.*'
Annika: Joo ((now showed the correct answers)). Guess päättyy s:n, ei voi olla kolmatta s:ää siellä guesses. O-päätteiset sanat, konsonantti plus y niin sama homma. '*Yeah. Guess ends in an s, there cannot be a third s there in guesses. The same goes for words that end with an o or with a consonant plus y.*'

In the interview, Annika said that grammar is very important when teaching high school students but in the above example she tells her students that they do not have to know the rules if they already know how to use them correctly. In his study, Borg (1998) also came across this type of dismissal of the rule when the teacher told his students that they do not have to know the actual words. He concluded that: "the teacher was not implying that he felt terminology had no role to play in the L2 learning process; rather, he was making real-time decisions in response to potential complications he thought the use of terminology (…) would have caused" (Borg 1998: 20). This might have also been Annika's reason for not emphasizing the rules, to avoid confusing her students. The questions in the slide show were mainly about the irregular plural nouns, for example, "deer", "teeth" and "crossroads". This task was clearly teacher-led but the interaction did not only take place between the teacher and the students but between the students themselves (compared to Aino's and Leila's lectures/presentations where the students answered to the teachers questions without talking to each other first). Annika mentioned in the interview that she does not like to give lectures where she is the only one speaking and the students are solely listeners, she thinks such type of grammar teaching is not fruitful in any school level. She also said in the interview that she often teaches in a teacher-led way because her students have given her negative feedback whenever she has not taught them the topic explicitly herself, for example, if she had asked the students to teach one grammar topic to one another, their response has been that they did not learn the topic because the teacher did not teach it (referring to her 18-year-old students). This means that her students expect her to teach them explicitly in order to learn something. Clearly Annika takes her students' expectations into

consideration when deciding how to teach because their expectations were also the reason for using Finnish as the language of instruction. The time spent in this exercise was approximately 8 minutes so they had couple more minutes to practice before the lesson ended. Annika asked the students to take out their books and do a gap-filling exercise about nouns. In this task, they wrote down the answers to the empty slots so now the emphasized skill was writing, even though they were allowed to do it with a partner if they wanted to. Annika mentioned in the interview that the skill that is emphasized the most in her lessons is speaking but they also do some written tasks in the classroom. Nevertheless, this does not mean that the students are obliged to do silent and independent work because she always encourages them to work together, just like she did in the observed lesson. However, they did not have the time to complete this task in class so Annika asked them to finish it up at home and gave them two more exercises of the same topic for homework.

To sum up the observations made in Annika's lesson is that she focused on form and used Finnish throughout, but emphasized interaction between students themselves and used a mixture of deductive and inductive approach. In addition, she made good use of the technological devices available and included games in the lesson. She had a formal presentation about grammatical rules but it was somewhat different than the ones of the other two teachers. The focus was clearly on form but students were the ones who searched for a repetitive pattern in the examples that explained the rules, not the teacher. According to Thornbury (2004:49-55), the discovery process is an engaging way of introducing the grammar topic and based on what I saw in action, all the students' worked together actively to figure out the underlying rules. Therefore, the chosen approach was somewhat inductive because Annika did not elaborate on the rules before the students had discussed them with each other first. However, it does not quite fall into the category of inductive teaching because the teacher revealed the rules herself so the students did not discover them right from the beginning. Thus, her teaching techniques had some characteristics of inductive, as well as deductive learning. She did not follow the PPP-model because they started from the practice-stage, moving on to the presentation-stage. Thus she chose the inductive route; teaching rules through examples (Nassaji and Fotos 2011:3). However, Annika left out the production-stage completely, just like Aino and Leila did. In addition to the traditional GTM, Annika's lesson had some characteristics of the humanistic approach, especially the silent way. Its principles are, for example, building on the knowledge that students already possess,

there is no mimicking of the teacher, and the teacher stays silent for most of the time because students are encouraged to rely on each other (Larsen-Freeman 2000:62-63). Most importantly, it is a learner-centred method and I believe that all the above-mentioned principles including the learner-centeredness were present in Annika's lesson. As I already mentioned, teachers can take bits and pieces from various grammar teaching methods so they might not follow one or two methods very strictly, they have tailored their teaching to suit their students' needs and their own as well so their teaching can be a combination of many different techniques. All the observations indicate that she used a mixture of traditional methods (GTM) and humanistic methods (the silent way).

4.1.4 Summary of the observed lessons

All the participants had years of experience in the field of teaching and furthermore, in all three different school levels. Thus, they taught with confidence and believed in what they were doing because they had already had time to test out different teaching methods and decide which ones work well for them and their students. What the three teachers did similarly during their lessons was that they all introduced the grammar topic themselves instead of letting the students figure it out. Hence, they used the deductive approach, in other words, they told their students the topic of the day immediately at the beginning of the lesson. Even though Annika used the reverse PPP-model (without the production stage), her approach was still somewhat deductive because she revealed the topic herself and gave an example of what it is before letting the students practise. In addition, they all exploited technical devices during their lessons, such as the smartboard and the document camera. However, only Leila's students got to use the smartboard themselves by moving pieces around on the smartboard with their hands. What else they did similarly was that they all included a more theoretical lecture or a slideshow in their lessons. However, these theoretical parts of their lessons somewhat differed from each other. First of all, Annika's students were asked to figure out the rules themselves, working in pairs or in small groups. Hence, she used the student-centred approach, staying silent herself while the students were actively engaged in their own discussions. She only showed them the correct answers after they had had some time to discuss each example, making sure that nothing was left unanswered. Aino and Leila, on the other hand, used the teacher-centred approach when

they had their teaching sessions or lectures concerning the grammatical rules. Both of them asked the students to answer their questions without talking to each other first, so the focus was somewhat on the teachers because communication only took place between the teacher and the students. Leila and Aino maybe wanted the students to think on their own before talking to their peers. Even though the three teachers went through their presentations a bit differently, they all focused on form.

The language of their presentations was Finnish, the teachers' and the students' L1, and it was also the language that was mainly used throughout all the lessons. Aino and Leila greeted their students in English and both of them also gave short instructions in the target language, but the teacher who used the least amount of English during her lesson was Annika, the one with the oldest students. She used English only when reading example sentences or words out loud from the materials but other than that, exclusively Finnish. For example, when Annika asked the students to take out their textbooks, told them what they would do next or gave them homework, she used Finnish. This was surprising and quite the contrary of what I expected to happen in high school lessons. However, the reason might be that her students were in a more advanced level, compared to the other two groups, hence working on items in a more detailed way and practising rules and their exceptions. The lesson focused highly on form, therefore it might have been more difficult to learn *about* the language using only English. She also mentioned in the interview that her students have asked her to teach grammar in Finnish because otherwise they might not be able to understand what she says. However, I think that the greetings and basic instructions could have been in the target language because, firstly, that type of language use presumably would have been rather easy to understand for students of that age and secondly, they would have been more exposed to input. Since they live in a country where English is not one of the official languages, the amount of input outside school environment is smaller compared to countries where one can hear the target language spoken in the streets. For those reasons, I myself would use the target language as much as possible, of course taking into account its level of difficulty so that it would not complicate the learning process.

Aino, Leila and Annika all used the textbook materials in their lessons. Either they used the actual book or had taken parts from there, such as the grammar slides etc. Aino was the only one who had done the grammar slide herself and as was mentioned earlier, she said in the interview that she always does the presentations and the handouts herself

because she is simply not happy with the ready-made ones. She had also done the game herself, as well as the example sentences the students translated into English in the latter part of the lesson. The parts where they used the actual book were basically checking the homework and practising the verbs. Also Annika had prepared some material for her lesson herself, such as the *Kahoot* game. The board game they played in the lesson was also taken outside the textbook material. Leila did not use any material outside the textbook during her lesson but before the students left the classroom, she did give them a handout to take with them at home which she had done herself. Although, the ready-made grammar slides were not taken from these students' textbook but actually from another series of textbooks that she uses with some of her other groups.

Both Aino and Annika used games in their lessons. Aino had the game called 'slap' with the help of which the students drilled the verbs in past tense, and Annika had the board game which dealt with different categories and the *Kahoot* game about irregular plural forms. However, only Aino's students got to move away from their seats and play more freely in the classroom, and I think that it relaxed the atmosphere there. The students were laughing and enjoying themselves while playing the game, possibly not realizing that they were actually drilling grammatical forms. Still, taking into account that Aino only had 8 students whereas the number of Annika's students was 24, it might have been logistically challenging to move around in the classroom with that many people in it. Even though Annika's students stayed in place, they also seemed to take pleasure in playing the games based on the smiles on their faces. Even though Leila did not use games as one of her teaching methods, she also had her students to do pair work, excluding herself from the action and letting the students learn from each other. The emphasized skill in this task was clearly speaking but also listening to what the other one has to say since their task was to correct one another whenever an error occurred.

In all of the teachers' lessons, the students worked either in pairs or in small groups but still, all of their focus was on form and the importance of the mind was minimal. As a reminder, exercises that focus on form aim for grammatical accuracy and for enhancing the ability to use the language correctly. Annika's lesson was almost entirely filled with pair work and Leila used it at the end of her lesson. Similarly, also Aino asked the students to work in pairs for a few times. The teacher with the most versatile teaching techniques and fast-tempo style was Aino: she used drilling exercises where the students were to repeat words after her or read them out loud in pairs, focusing on

spoken language use. She had a grammar slide that focused on form where students were to change the present tense into a past tense, where the oral communication took place between the teacher and the student. She had made a kinaesthetic game about the verbs, focusing once again on form. Finally, she also had the students working alone, writing translations into their notebooks. All this took place during one lesson but still the focus was only on one grammar topic so they practiced its use intensively and in various different ways. According to Dykes (2007:10), providing students with various activities might engage those who have trouble focusing on one task for lengthy periods. In addition, some need to engage in physical activity in order to maintain interest. Aino's game actually was a kinetic one since the students got pick up cards and slap the floor whenever they knew how to change the tense. Including these types of exercises into one's lessons are believed to make them more memorable.

For clarification, here is a short summary of the grammar teaching methods that the teachers used in their lessons: Aino used the GTM (grammar-translation method), the TPR (total physical response), and the ALM (audiolingual method). She was actually the only one who used "repeat after me" types of exercises during her lesson. Leila, on the other hand, mainly used the GTM because translation exercises played a big part in her lesson. Annika's lesson had some characteristics of the GTM as well but she also used more humanistic approaches, emphasising student-student interaction instead of being the centre of attention herself, for example, the silent way. Therefore, a method each teacher used in their lesson was the traditional GTM that is known for emphasising the importance of translation and grammatical accuracy. Nassaji and Fotos (2011:14) point out that: "if the goal of second language learning is to develop communicative competence and to enable learners to use language accurately and fluently for real communicative purposes, a focus on grammar must be incorporated into L2 communicative instruction". GTM surely focuses on accurate use of grammar but somewhat falls short of enhancing learners' communicative competence. However, Ellis (2002:176) remarks that the materials that teachers themselves have found efficient are not any worse than what studies have found to be efficient because "countless learners have successfully learned from traditional grammar teaching materials". Hence, it would be wrong to criticize the methodology these teachers used in the observed lessons because those teaching techniques and exercises they used might very well lead to successful learning results. Ellis (2002:160) also points out that there are two types of exercises in language textbooks that are predominant: controlled production tasks and

explicit descriptions. Since all the participants of this study more or less used the textbooks in their lesson, it can be that it was not their conscious choice to emphasize these exercise types but did that because those types were available in their textbooks.

4.2   What affects teachers' decision making?

Teachers' ideas about language learning and teaching, their conceptions of grammar, what they think the most successful teaching methods are etc. are all parts of their personal theories, which again affect the ways they teach (Keck and Kim 2014:1). By now we know that teachers have started to form their personal theories already when they were still learners themselves and, for example, their own teachers' ideas might have had an impact on how they nowadays teach. In the interview, Aino referred to the methodology used by her own teacher, saying that her teacher asked them to write down all the grammar rules into their notebooks. What Aino learned from that experience was that she did not want to teach grammar the same way that her own teacher did, and that is why she nowadays does the templates ready for her students so then they only have to write down a word or two on the handout. She said that writing down everything the teacher said was exhausting and dull because the notes were long and complex. Hence, she decided not to make her own students to do that. On the contrary, she always tries to simplify everything and according to Aino herself, simplicity is the most important factor when she takes into account when making decision on how to teach. As Larsen-Freeman (2000:ix) points out: "by becoming clear on where they stand, teachers can choose to teach differently from the way they were taught". Hence, Aino's own experiences as a learner guides her in making the instructional decisions.

Since teachers' conceptions of grammar have an effect on their instructional decisions, the three participants' definition of grammar is of essence here. First of all, all of the teachers' attitudes towards grammar were positive. Annika feels that teaching grammar is fun, and Leila thinks that too. Leila also said that it is quite easy because the amount of information you can teach your students is limited compared to, for instance, vocabulary. Interestingly, they all also said that grammar is very important but there seemed to be some difference there. Aino and Leila both said that grammar is a 'building material' which helps learners to create meaningful sentences but that they do not consider it as important as, for example, learning new words or phrases. For

instance, Leila said that learners are able to carry out actions only by knowing the correct words and not the accurate forms. If they want to buy some milk, for instance, they need to know the word "milk" but not necessarily the correct and polite way of asking for it: "Can I have some milk, please". As for Annika, she said that the older the students, the more important the role of grammar, and since she teaches high school students, grammar has a central role in her lessons. Here is how they all answered the question of the importance of grammar in language learning and teaching:

Example 13. (Interviews)

Aino: Sanasto on tärkeempi. Koska mä oon melko varma, että jos mä opettaisin niin, et mä käyttäisin sanastoo ja erilaisia tekstityyppejä ja kuunneltais juttuja nii ne lapset rupeis oppimaan ne rakenteet ilman et mä ne spesifisti niille avaan. Ainaki osa hiffaisi sen ja osais ruveta käyttään niitä omassa puheessaan. Mut on se kuitenki semmonen et semmoselle oppilaalle, jolle korva ei sano yhtään mitään nii on hyvä tavallaan niinku avata mihin tää liittyy, miks tää on tärkeetä, mitä hyötyä tästä sulle on. *Vocabulary is more important. Because I'm quite sure that if I would teach by using only vocabulary, different types of texts and listening exercises, the kids would start learning the correct form without being explicitly taught. At least some of them would learn like that and start using it correctly in their speech. But for students who don't have ear for languages, it's good to tell them what this means and why this is important for them.*

Leila: Mun mielestä se on tärkee, TOSI tärkee osa kieltä. Niin, että sä oikeesti saat tehtyä lauseita, jotka tarkottavat jotain eikä sulla oo vaan sanoja putkessa peräkkäin niin että sä et ikuisesti kuulosta sellaselta rallienkun puhujalta, joka pätkii sanoja peräkkäin (…) Kuitenki se kielioppi sitte suhteessa niinku siihen muuhun esimerkiks sanastoon tai sitte..jos vaikkapa johki kohteliaisiin fraaseihin nii sit sillä ei oo niin suuri merkitys kuitenkaan. *I think it's important, VERY important part of a language. Being able to produce sentences that actually mean something and you don't just have one word after the other, so that you won't always sound like one of those rally English speakers who just lists words words (...) However, if I compare grammar to others, for example, to vocabulary or polite phrases, I don't think it is quite as important as the others.*

Annika: Alakoulun puolella ihan eri, lähetään liikkeelle niinku fraasitasolta ennenmmin, opetellaan ja toistellaan vaan et osataan sanoo ennenku edes tiedetään mitä osataan sanoo. Että tota sitte isompien kans pystyy niinku puhumaan asioista asioina. Ottamaan ikään kuin vähän erilleen siitä kontekstista sen kieliopin ja sitte vähä pyöritellä niitä ku termit on hallussa ja muuta että… että kuinka suuri merkitys sillä on niin nii ikäänku se tietys mielessä kasvaa sieltä alakoulusta lukioon. Niinku tuntien painopisteessä, voisin kuvitella. Ehkä kursseissa on tietysti sit eroo et paljonko sinne on tumpattu kielioppia. Onks se se abikurssi missä reenataan niinku just niitä pikkujuttuja vai ollaanks vasta siellä alussa. *In elementary school it's totally different, there students start from a phrase level where they learn by repeating, so they just know how to say things already before they even understand what they are saying. As for older students, one can speak freely with them about differenct topics. Kind of taking grammar out of the context and then talking about it when students are familiar with the terminology and all that… So its importance kinda increases from the elementary school level towards high school level. In the focus of the lessons, I would say. And of course there might be some difference between courses. Whether it is a course for students who are preparing for final exams where all those little details are practised or for students taking their first language courses.*

What Aino mentioned about grammar learning somewhat reflects the ideas of the mentalist learning theory, the one favoured by Chomsky. This vision of comprehending grammatical rules demands the use of one's own mind so the teacher must stay silent and give room for the learners' thoughts. As discussed earlier in section 2.2, Chomsky was clearly against habit formation which again is exactly what the audiolingual method is all about. One of the methods Aino used in the observed lesson was the audiolingual method so there seems to be a mismatch between what is said and what is done. Leila actually made a comment about the mentalist learning theory and told that she has come to a conclusion that following that theory is basically impossible:

> Example 14. (Interview)
> Leila: Ois ollu kiva vaan niinku tarjota niille hirveen paljo niinku tekstejä tai kuuntelua tai puheharjotuksia niin, että ne ois oppinu ne rakenteet niinku sillai sitä kautta. Että sillai automaattisesti. Mut sit tajus, että AIKA VAAN EI RIITÄ SIIHEN. Meidän pitäis matkustaa porukalla jonnekki Lontooseen niinku opetteleen sitä kieltä. *'It would have been nice to teach them through texts, listening exercises and speaking exercises so that they would have learned the correct forms automatically that way. However, then I realised that there is simply NOT ENOUGH TIME TO DO THAT. We should travel to somewhere like London to learn the language.'*

However, Aino did continue that some of her students need the teacher's help and that is why she uses teacher-led techniques, so perhaps she would like to use more of these learner-centred methods but she feels that some of her students would not be able to take that much responsibility of their own learning which again might lead to poor results. Hence, another factor she takes into account when making the instructional decisions is her students' individual differences. Leila also mentioned the learner differences, and more specifically their level of skills, when she was asked about the factors she takes into account when deciding how to teach. For example, she usually prefers not to include written exercises in her lessons because the differences between the students' skills can be problematic: one has written down two words while the other has written down twenty. She considers it a waste of time because written exercises can be done at home where students can do them in their own pace. Then they just check the answers together on the next lesson. Leila pointed out that this type of arrangement saves time and is more efficient. Hence, differences between learners' skills and the time available are two of the factors that affect her instructional decisions.

When Leila spoke about the importance of grammar, on the other hand, she emphasized the importance of accuracy; words should not be just listed one by one, otherwise the

speaker might sound ignorant. She also mentioned that grammar is needed in making sentences meaningful. Annika, on the other hand, focused on the differences between school levels, concluding that grammar has a central role among older students. Therefore, these teachers' conceptions of grammar somewhat differed from each other. Leila and Aino agreed that it is not the centre of attention in their lessons and, for example, they regarded learning and teaching vocabulary more important than grammar. Annika's belief was different, she clearly stated that it has a central role in her lessons in high school and that the main focus is on grammar. She also pointed out that the amount of attention that is given to grammar varies between school levels. The differences and similarities in grammar teaching between elementary, secondary, and high school will be discussed in the next section.

One of the questions in the interview concerned the ultimate goal of teaching languages and more specifically teaching English grammar, so basically what the teachers wish their students to learn from their lessons and what they think learning a language means. Dykes (2007:18) feels that the end result of language learning should be increased knowledge and skill which the learners are later on capable of applying into their own language production outside the classroom. When the participants of this study were fronted with a question about their teaching goals, all of them shared Dykes' idea of the importance of being able to apply the learned skills to real-life situations. Aino, the teacher who had the youngest students, was the one who clearly stated that her most important goal is to get her students encouraged to actually *use* the language without worrying about making grammatical errors. Leila also remarked that she strives for getting her students to learn how to communicate in English and being able to use the language, but she continued that the biggest goal in her lessons is to create an atmosphere which engages the learners well enough to make them want to continue studying English in the future. Annika also mentioned the importance of creating positive attitudes towards English language and culture, as well as the aspect of being able to use it in real life, but admitted that there is not always time to focus on those matters, especially with older students who are preparing for the matriculation examination (a test every Finnish high school student takes before graduating). Therefore, time is one of the factors that affect also Annika's instructional decision-making process. One of the goals that all the teachers then shared was to get their students to actually use the language outside the classroom setting but as already concluded in section 4.1.4, they all focused on form. Did they do tasks where students

were able to use their own minds and produce utterances by using their imagination? Unfortunately none of them did.

As mentioned earlier in this paper, teachers' instructional decisions are said to reflect their own conceptions of language and grammar. However, this statement fell short of the expectations in the light of the teaching goals. A reason for using classroom observation as one of the data gathering methods was to see if what the teachers say in the interviews corresponds with what they do during their lessons, and here I feel that there was a mismatch between what they said and what they did. Understandably the goals of teaching might not always be visible in action but if something truly is *the* ultimate goal, one would expect to see actions taking place in order to meet that goal. What was the teachers' reason for not using language production tasks in their lessons? Well, Aino's students were still quite young so they might not yet have the needed skills to produce speech without the support of tasks where they have a restricted number of options to choose from, always focusing on one specific item at a time. Therefore, their lack of skill was most likely the reason for not doing any production exercises because they were simply not capable of doing those. However, the ALM's ultimate goal of learning is to learn to use language communicatively (Larsen-Freeman 2000:43) through the use of scales, and since Aino clearly used that as one of her teaching techniques and said her goal to be exactly the same, her own principles of teaching and the ones in the ALM correspond to each other rather well. Looking at the issue from the point of view of the skills, Leila's and Annika's students already should have increased their level of knowledge and skills to a point where they are capable of taking part in discussions where they ought to present their own ideas in the target language, but they were not provided with an opportunity to do so. However, the goal in question is indeed an ambitious one, thus it might not be noticeable in every single lesson and as Annika pointed out, there is not always time to do tasks that strive for enhancing the students' communicative skills. As, for example, Nassaji and Fotos (2011) have stated, one key element of successful teaching is to always vary the teaching methods, so maybe the teachers chose not to include simulations of real-life events this time but to focus more on scales. However, grammar teaching that is solely based on explicit instruction and drilling - as Borg (2006) points out - is unlikely to result in fluent communication skills. In addition, Annika mentioned that one of her biggest goals in teaching high school students is to prepare her students for the Finnish matriculation examination that often includes grammatical details. She also pointed out that these details might not have a

part to play in her lessons if that type of exam would not exist. Based on the observations made during her lesson, she used techniques that focus on form, possibly leading to achieve the goal of learning these grammatical details. Therefore, an external factor restricted her from following the instructional methods that she prefers. In other words, the Finnish matriculation exam seemed to mediate the extent to which she acted according to her personal beliefs in making the instructional decisions. She also mentioned time-constraints; sometimes the teaching goals are just forgotten because with older students, she has to cover certain amount of topics in a restricted amount of time. Larsen-Freeman (2003:146) also mentions this aspect: "It is frequently the case that a particular grammatical syllabus (…) has been adopted, and it is the teacher's responsibility to "cover" certain grammatical structures". These contextual factors, high-stakes examinations and time constraints, are also mentioned by Phipps and Borg (2009) in their discussion of factors that restrict teachers' instructional decision-making process. In addition to those two, they mentioned the prescribed curriculum as one more restrictive factor, and I believe that Annika is also referring to this when talking about the amount of topics that have to be taught.

Furthermore, all the teachers said that the day of the week and the time of the day affect their grammar teaching decisions. For instance, before Leila started her lesson I was observing, she actually told me that she did not know what she was thinking when making the decision of teaching grammar on Friday but would stick to the plan because she had prepared the material for the lesson already and because I was there to observe it. This means that normally she does not teach grammar on Fridays so clearly the day of the week is one of the factors she takes into account when making instructional decisions. In addition, she said that during morning classes, students can focus better on grammar, especially if one chooses to teach systematically in a teacher-centred way. Lessons that take place on afternoons, on the other hand, should include more speaking exercises and tasks where students can "goof around" more freely. Aino also prefers to teach grammar in morning lessons and furthermore, if she has the possibility of dividing a group into two, she chooses to teach grammar on those lessons because that way she has more time to give to each individual and to see if someone is struggling and needs more help. Hence, the number of students was one of the factors that affect her decisions about grammar teaching. Annika too mentioned that if a lesson is on a Friday afternoon from three to four, especially with secondary school students, she prefers them to do written exercises alone and silently. I would say that this is connected to

classroom management so deciding the suitable teaching method is one of the ways the teacher uses to control the class, and this depends on what mood the students are at the given moment. If they are restless, one way to get them to cool down is to make them work individually. Furthermore, what affects students' mood – according to Leila – is whether they are hungry or tired, and their lessons should be planned accordingly. For example, every time when Leila starts a new English course, she focuses on what the students are like during each English lesson. If their school day has already been full of lessons where they use a lot of creativity or do physical activities, the students might prefer to do writing exercises that are done in silence because of their low energy levels. Here is how Leila answered when I asked her if the grammar teaching methods she uses work well with all her groups in secondary school:

Example 15. (Interview)
Leila: No EI kyllä toimi. Kyllä siin täytyy ottaa mun mielestä ihan ne oppilaat. Että…voinks mä nyt puhua vaikka toissavuotisista kahesta ysiryhmästä, jotka mulla oli rinnakkaiset? Nii toisessa oli tämmösiä mites nyt sanois…negatiivisesti ulospäinsuuntautuneita kavereita ja sitte toisessa oli niinku semmonen kiltimpi, aktiivinen, niinku myönteisesti aktiivinen porukka. Nii kyllä se vaikuttaa IHAN SUORAA siihen, että mitä sä teet niitten kanssa. Että toisen ryhmän kanssa pitää koko ajan keksiä jotain jippoa ja varmaan näitten ryhmien kanssa mulle on kehittyny kielioppiin se, et mä keksin niitä sellasia hulluja, omasta mielestäni hassuja sääntöjä. Että just mä näytän esimerkiks keskisormee ku pitää muistaa, että tähän tulee verbin 3.muoto (…) ja niinku sellasta tavallaan heittäytyy itte tyhmäks, että ne saa nauraa sulle. Nii se huomio mikä niillä menis vaikka nuuskasta puhumiseen tai jotain tai niinku viikonlopun ryyppyreissujen suunnitteluun nii sitte se kohdistuuki siihen vähä niinku SUN pelleilyys. Ja sit samalla vahingos tulee joku uusi kielioppisääntö ja sitte ruvetaan äkkiä tekeen jotain puheharjotuksia missä ne pääsee tekemään. Ja sitte taas toinen…no lainausmerkeissä kiltti porukka nii sitte ne tekee siellä luokassa niinku tällee niitä juttuja, että ei tarvii niin mutkalle vääntyä ku yleisö on niinku vastaanottavaisempaa. *'NO they don't. One has to take account of the students. Like…can I talk about the two different groups of 16-year-old students that I taught last year? Well, one group had these so called negative extroverts and the other consisted of more kind, active and positive students. This DEFINITELY affects your instructional decisions. With this first group, you have to come up with all kinds of circus tricks, and what I actually learned from this was that I now tend to teach grammar by using mnemonics that are, at least in my opinion, a bit crazy and funny. For example, I show them my middle finger when they need to use the 3rd person form (...) and kinda like play stupid so that they can laugh at you. This way you get them to focus on YOU and not on talking about snuff or planning what to drink during the weekend with each other. Then they accidentally hear about a new grammar rule, after which they are given speaking exercises so that they can take active part in the learning process. With the so called nicer group, on the other hand, you can do stuff in the classroom without the circus tricks because they are more receptive to what I say.'*

Here Leila told about her own experiences of working with two groups where the students were all the same age but still extremely different from each other. Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers' instructional methods can vary greatly also between parallel grades. This seems rather logical because different groups consist of different

people and as, for example, Nassaji and Fotos (2011), as well as Moore and Hansen (2012) emphasized, every learner should be seen as an individual with his/her own characteristics, needs, level of skills etc. What works with one group might not work with another one. This is why teachers should always test different grammar teaching methods in practice because even if some studies prove certain methods to be successful, it does not automatically mean that they lead to successful results among every group.

Annika also talked about planning her lessons according to what the students are like, just like Leila did. Here is what she said about choosing the grammar teaching methods for different groups:

Example 16. (Interview)
Annika: Kyllä sitä ryhmää miettii kokonaisuutena sillai jos se on siis tullu jo tutuks. Lukion ryhmähän ku se aina vahtuu…nytki tää oli moneshko kerta…kolmas kerta ku mä näin nää ylipäätään nämä tyypit! Niinku se et miten nopeesti hahmottuu se et minkälaisesta ryhmästä on kysymys nii se nyt tietysti vähä vaihtelee. Mut jos se jotenki hahmottuu nopeesti että ryhmä on hirveen semmonen fyysinen, liikkuvat paljon, ovat paljon niinku liikkeessä jo ihan siinä istuessaan tuolilla nii sitte kyllä se niinku käy mielessä. Et miten JUST TÄÄ RYHMÄ…voisinks mä keksiä tähän jonku missä niinku mennään tuolla käytävässä tai liikutaan luokassa. Toisaalta miettien just se ajankohta, että jos on se myöhänen ajankohta ja mä laitan ne vielä juoksemaan ympäri luokkaa nii et villiintyykö se homma sit entisestään? (…) Lukiossa se tulee tietyllä viiveellä jos ne oppilaat ei oo tuttuja. Tai sitte se menee niinku yritys-erehdys – tyyppisesti niinku näitten kans tein viime tunnilla. Puolet porukasta oli aika jäässä ja mä kuulinki ku yks tyttö sano että: "mä en kyllä tykkää yhtään tämmösistä sosiaalisista jutuista". Niinku tavallaan se et hoksasin niinku et okei, tässä on nyt aika iso osa semmosia jotka nauttii ehkä enemmän siitä et ollaan paikallaan ja tehään tehtäviä kun et mun pitää ihan outojen tyyppien kans tehä jotain asioita. Mutta tosiaan se ottaa aikansa ennenku hahmottuu. *'You do think about the group as a whole, assuming that you already know it. It always changes in high school…and this was like…the third time that I've even seen these guys! How quickly you can create a bigger picture of what the group is like obviously changes every time but if you quickly realize that a group is very physical and the students are moving around a lot even when sitting behind their desks, it does cross your mind that how can THIS VERY GROUP…can I come up with something where they can move around in the corridor or in the classroom. However, one has to take into account the time of the day. If I ask them to run around in the classroom, despite of the fact that it is already afternoon, will they become even more restless? It takes time in high school to figure out what the group is like if you don't already know the students. One can also use a hit-and-miss –technique, and I actually did that during our previous lesson. Half of the students did not like it at all and I even hear a girl saying that: "I really don't like these types of interactive exercises one bit". Basically I realised then that okay, the majority of these students probably prefer doing written exercises round their desks rather than doing some stuff with total strangers. As I already said, it takes time to figure it out.'*

This piece from an interview with Annika reveals that she plans the grammar exercises according to what she thinks that a specific group of students would enjoy doing.

Hence, she takes into account her students thoughts and feelings, and tries to create an atmosphere that is comfortable for the majority of her students. As one of the goals of Annika's teaching was to create a positive atmosphere, at least what she says here proves that she is actively working towards meeting that goal.

In short, the factors that the participants of this study take into account when making the decisions on how to teach grammar are, first of all, their students: their age and level of skills, what they are like, and on what mood they are, for example, are they restless, hungry, tired and so forth. In addition, one group might have learners whose skills are very different, so to suit the teaching to meet all of their needs also has to be taken into account. Especially Leila talked about this issue and her way of dealing it was to avoid doing written exercises during the lessons. Group size was also one of the effective factors, as well as the time of the day and the day of the week. The external factors that affect teachers' grammar teaching methods were the Finnish matriculation exam in high school, as well as the time constraints, for instance, certain amount of grammatical information needs to be covered in a restricted amount of time. This refers to external factors such as the school curriculum, which again has to be followed in all of the participants' schools.

4.3   Differences and similarities between school levels

This section examines the differences between grammar teaching methods used in elementary, secondary, and high school levels. The participants of this study were asked to elaborate on the differences and/or similarities that they think exist between these three school levels. All of them have taught in all the three levels, so they spoke from their personal experiences. Furthermore, they were asked whether they would use the same grammar teaching methods also in different school levels that they used in the observed lesson, and if not, what kinds of changes they would make to their lesson plans. All of the above-mentioned factors will be discussed in section 4.3.1, which is written from the participants' point of view. Section 4.3.2, on the other hand, examines the differences and similarities between grammar teaching methods used in different school levels from the researcher's point of view, based on what I saw during the observed lessons.

4.3.1 The participants' point of view

The elementary school teacher and the secondary school teacher, Aino and Leila, both
said that they would not make any significant changes to the ways they currently teach
grammar. Nevertheless, both of them gave an example of what they might do
differently. Aino said that she would possibly only make the example sentences longer
and more challenging for upper level students but without losing the simplicity of them.
I expected this kind of an answer because upper level students have more advanced
language skills and therefore the use of language should be in accordance with their
level. Other than that, Aino feels that the methods she uses with her current groups in
elementary school would work in secondary and high school levels as well. She also
mentioned that she would not change the language of instruction into English even if
she was teaching in other school levels. It came up in the interview that the secondary
school teacher, Leila, would use more English with younger students than with, for
example, high school students with whom she would go through grammatical details in
Finnish. She continued that older students tend to associate grammar with difficult and
complex rules so they expect the teaching to happen in their first language.
Interestingly, this is exactly what Annika's students expect her to do as well. Leila also
talked about other languages in addition to Finnish and English. She thinks that it would
be a good idea to compare the target language with other languages that are familiar to
students of higher level:

> Example 17.   (Interview)
> Leila: Mitä isommaks tulee nii (…) vaikka jos tietää, että oppilas lukee montaa eri
>   kieltä, just vaikka ruotsia, nii mun mielestä on ihan hyväkin jo ruveta tekeen
>   vähä sellasia niinku analyyttisiä vertailuja, että noniin meillä on enkussa
>   sanajärjestys näin ja ruotsissa kääntyykin sitte jos se tulee se ajanmääre sinne
>   alkuun. Et vähän ruveta tekemään tämmösiä niinku tietosia viertailuja siellä jo
>   enemmän. *'When the students become older (…) for example, if you know that
>   they study many different languages, such as Swedish, I think that it's a good
>   idea to start comparing the languages analytically. Like okay, the word order in
>   English goes like this and in Swedish it changes if you put the time expression in
>   the beginning. So kinda adding more of these conscious comparisons.'*

What Leila would do differently is that she would not address grammar as explicitly in
elementary school as she does in secondary school. In addition, she would reduce the
amount of information of the grammatical slideshow she had in her lesson. She would
try and slip the grammatical forms in phrases and sentences so that the students would
perhaps unconsciously learn to use them, and also focus on smaller pieces at a time.
Leila said in the interview that when she was a language learner herself, it was easy for

her to pick up the repetitive pattern in example sentences and learn how to use the form correctly without knowing the explicit rules. However, she said that it is also important to tell elementary school students about grammatical rules because there are always those students who need to learn the rule in order to learn to use the grammar item accurately and this idea is shared by Aino as well. They both seem to be attracted by the idea of being able to teach grammar implicitly through examples without explicit instruction. However, they both recognize the need for explicit instruction as well, referring to students who simply cannot deduct the rules themselves and need the teacher's assistance. Leila herself said that there is simply not enough time to teach grammar through examples when talking about her own experiences as a secondary school teacher. I believe that if time would not be the issue, both Leila and Aino would use the mentalist learning theory more often in their English lessons. If Leila were to teach the same grammar topic, the passive voice, to high school students, she said that she would have to focus more on form, including all the exceptions, because of the matriculation examination. In short, Leila would basically use the same grammar teaching methods in every school level, only varying the amount of grammatical information and its importance in her lessons.

The high school teacher, Annika, was the only one who clearly stated that she would teach differently in lower school levels. She pointed out the same factor as Leila did; she would avoid using explicit instruction in elementary school and she would not use grammatical terminology. In addition, she said that she would not show them a power point show concerning the grammatical rules. Not using grammatical terminology in elementary school came somewhat as a surprise because Annika herself said that students would be more receptive to English grammatical terminology if their teachers would have accustomed them to its use already in the early stages of grammar learning. Perhaps that was only a thought that came into her mind during our conversation, not something she herself has thought about doing. Hence, not Annika nor Leila would use explicit grammar instruction in elementary school. Furthermore, Annika felt that teaching languages in lower school levels should involve more drilling and repetitive tasks so that the students would learn the basic grammar structures by heart, and according to Hall (2011:89), drilling leads to successful learning results among young learners. Annika also pointed out that grammar gets a lot more complicated after secondary school and at that stage, they learn all the exceptions that were left out in purpose in elementary and secondary school. She said that the leap to high school

grammar is huge and that sometimes students feel really overwhelmed, especially if they have had difficulties with it in secondary school. She also feels that students can easily pass English courses in secondary school "basically without doing anything", and that is why some of them are in trouble in high school. Another thing Annika said about the exceptions in high school grammar was that they need to be taught because students' knowledge of those details has been repeatedly tested in the matriculation exams and doing well in those exams is very important for those who plan to continue studying in the future. She also made an interesting point about what Aino regards as the cornerstone of her teaching:

Example 18.   (Interview)
Annika: Paljo teoreettisempia on ne kielioppiosiot niissä lukion kirjoissa ((compared to elementary and secondary school textbooks)). Paljon asiaa, tiiviisti, poikkeuksia, ööö ja se semmonen alakoulu-yläkoulu selkeys kyllä karisee siinä kohtaa. Varmaan niissä pyritään niinku selkeyteen mut sitä asiaa on vaan niin paljo et se on aika niinku overwhelming ku kattoo sitä semmosta aukeamaa. *The grammar sections in the textbooks used in high schools are a lot more theoretical. Everything is packed with information and exceptions, and at that point the simplicity that we have in lower school levels disappears. I'm sure that they also aim for that simplicity but it is just so overwhelming to look at those pages that are filled with grammar.*

She feels that it is impossible to keep the grammar sections as simple as possible because there is an overwhelming amount of information in the textbooks used in high schools, a lot more that what there is in elementary school level books. I believe that the amount of information is connected to the amount of focus because it clearly takes more time to cover everything. The level of intensity in grammar teaching was possibly the biggest difference between the three school levels; whether the focus was on learning the basics of a grammatical item or learning an item thoroughly including all the details. Aino used quite a lot of drills in isolation with her young students, focusing on getting them to learn the structure of the past tense by heart. Leila went into her topic in a more detailed way but it was Annika whose focus was almost entirely on the little details of irregular plural nouns. Thus, younger students focused on "the big ideas", scratching only the surface, and the older ones focused on details, applying their minds to exceptions and irregularities which they need to know in the upcoming exams. Aino herself said that elementary school students do not need to learn everything and every exception there is. She justified this by pointing out that English is learned in a spiral way, referring to the fact that what is learned in elementary school, will be reinforced later in secondary school and even more in high school. Another teacher who talked about this was Annika. She said that young learners do not yet need to know about all

the grammatical items they are learning, for example, their exceptions, because they will come back to those topics later on and build more knowledge on those basics that they have already learned. Annika also mentioned in the interview that the importance of grammar increases the older the students get, suggesting that grammar is not the centre of attention in elementary school level and that it is also less complex compared to more advanced levels. However, even though grammar is the centre of attention in high school, it does not mean that learning it would be any less fun there because games and competitions can be used as one of the teaching methods in high schools as well. All the participants actually said in the interviews that they would use games in any school level.

Finally, both Annika and Aino talked about how they would use the learner-centred approach in different school levels. They feel that higher levels students can take more responsibility of their own learning, hence they would make the teaching more student-centred with older students and not be the centre of attention themselves. Looking back at the grammar teaching methods that both of these teachers actually used in the observed lesson, I would say that their actions are in alliance with this idea of theirs. Aino taught in a teacher-centred way and had the authority of the lesson most of the time. Larsen-Freeman (2000:17) says that this type of teacher's role is very traditional where "students do as she says so they can learn what she knows". Annika, on the other hand, used more of the learner-centred approach, letting them do the work together while she observed them: "teacher's silence frees the teacher to closely observe the students' behaviour" (Larsen-Freeman 2000:63).

4.3.2 The researcher's point of view

What was similar between all the school levels, first of all, was that grammar was taught in the first place. One of the grammar teaching methods that was present in all school levels was the GTM, and as can be expected from the use of GTM, explicit teaching techniques and use of grammatical terminology were present in every school level. In addition, the favoured approach was the deductive one and the language of instruction was Finnish. Textbooks were also used in every level and they were followed in a linear order. In addition, the grammar sections in these textbooks were also written in Finnish. All the teachers were unanimous why grammar should be taught using the learners' L1.

One of the four skills that were emphasised in all school levels was speaking. They did speaking exercises during the lessons and that usually took place after the "teaching sessions". Furthermore, these exercises were done in pairs in every level.

The elementary school teacher, Aino, does not like the ready-made grammar sections in textbooks because she thinks that they are too difficult to understand, even for herself sometimes. She also pointed out that when she was teaching high school level students, she made the handouts for them as well. As was mentioned in section 4.2, the first thing Aino takes into account when deciding how to teach grammar is how to simplify it. Annika, on the other hand, thinks that the grammar sections in elementary and secondary school level textbooks are really simple already. Since she teaches grammar for high school students whose textbooks are filled with long and complex grammar sections, the textbooks used in lower levels can understandably seem simplistic for her. However, both Annika and Leila used the ready-made grammar sections in their textbooks, whether they were satisfied with them or not. Hence, the elementary school teacher was the only one who made the presentation of grammatical rules herself. Another difference in the grammar teaching methods used in the elementary school was that the TPR method was used solely in that level. In the elementary school, students were also allowed to move away from their desks and do an exercise sitting down on the floor. Furthermore, elementary school was the only level were students were tested whether they had actually learned the day's topic or not by doing a written translation exercise.

Grammar teaching methods that were used in secondary school level differed from the other two levels by, first of all, providing students with choices. Students were able to choose the exercises that they though would best fit their level of skills, and as already mentioned, giving students the freedom of choice every now and then is important (Dykes 2007:10). Unlike in the other two school levels, students did not write down anything during the lesson nor did they even take out their textbooks. However, the teacher used textbook materials during the lesson and this took place when she had the lecture. This lecture was different from the ones used by the other two teachers' because Leila let her students come and use the smartboard themselves during the lecture. Neither Aino nor Annika let their students to come in front of the classroom to use the board. The length of the lecture was, however, the longest in secondary school level. Finally, games were used as a teaching technique in all the school levels except in the

secondary school. However, Leila said in the interview that she normally does use them as one of her grammar teaching methods but did not do that this time.

The order of the traditional PPP-approach was reversed in high school level. The teaching started from practising and ended in presentation, unlike in the lower school levels. They started with games and moved on to the power point –show about the grammar rules. Hence, there were some characteristics of the inductive approach and I believe that the students' advanced language skills enabled the teacher to use that approach. High school students can take more responsibility of their own learning process and be more actively involved in it without the teacher's continuous guidance compared to, for example, elementary school students who do not yet possess good enough language skills that are needed in learning grammar solely through the inductive route. Even though there was a presentation about the grammatical rules also in high school level, it was not as teacher-centred as in the other two school levels. Students were the ones who deduced the rules and discussed them amongst themselves. The role of the teacher was to observe the students almost during the entire lesson. Annika provided her students with exercises "forcing their awareness" to the wanted grammar topic (Larsen-Freeman 2000:64). Hence, one of the grammar teaching methods used in high school level was the silent way. Interestingly, English was used the least in this school level.

5   DISCUSSION

The present study examined grammar teaching methods in EFL lessons. The aim was to describe the instructional techniques used by three English teachers, as well as provide reasons for their actions. In addition, the goal of the study was not to make any generalizations due to the small amount of participants, but to get a deeper understanding of the participants' personal theories. The reason for focusing on their theories was that it is acknowledged that teachers' personal theories have an impact on the ways they teach (Larsen-Freeman 2000:ix-x, Keck and Kim 2014:1), and that teachers' theories provide realistic accounts of what grammar teaching actually involves. I believe that all the goals were reached and I got a profound idea on how these teachers work. Hence, the combination of classroom observation and interview as data gathering methods was a successful one.

This thesis had three research questions in total and all of them were answered. The first research question concerned the methodology; what kinds of grammar teaching methods do the teachers use in their classrooms. The results showed that they used a mixture of the grammar-translation method, the audiolingual method, total physical response, and the silent way.

The second question was about the factors that the teachers take into account when making instructional decisions. All of them mentioned the importance of their learners and that teaching should be tailored to meet their needs. According to Thornbury (2004:25-27), that is one of the major factors all teachers should consider when deciding how they teach grammar. More specifically, the participants talked about their students' level of skills, age, characteristics, and mood. The grammar teaching methods that the teachers have planned to use during a lesson might very well change based on whether the students are, for instance, tired or restless. According to the teachers, some methods work better in morning lessons and some in the afternoon. Hence, they take into account the time of the day, as well as the day of the week. Especially on Fridays students are usually more restless than any other days, so classroom management issues also affected their choice of methodology. In addition, the type of the grammar item is taken into account when deciding the instructional methods, as well as the group size. Furthermore, there are some external factors that affect the teachers' instructional

decision-making process; time constraints, the Finnish matriculation exam and the school curriculum.

The final research question concerned the similarities and the differences in the grammar teaching methods between the three school levels. These were examined from two different aspects; from the point of view of the participants (the interviews) and the point of view of the researcher (the observed lessons). The results revealed that the focus was on form instead of meaning in every school level, and the grammar-translation method was present in all the three schools. In other words, the students practised accurate use of grammar. Furthermore, the deductive route was chosen in every level and the language of instruction was Finnish. One more similarity was that they did oral pair work in every level, emphasising the spoken skills. Both the elementary school teacher and the secondary school teacher also used the audiolingual method. In addition, the elementary school teacher had also some characteristics of the total physical response, whereas the high school teacher used the silent way. In summary, they all used the grammar-based approaches, focusing on teaching the structure of the target language. The elementary school teacher had the most amount of repetition and habit-formation exercises, the secondary school teacher emphasized the spoken skills the most, and the high school teacher gave the most amount of responsibility to the students in their learning process. The findings suggest that the teacher with the youngest students tends to use the audiolingual method more often than teachers with higher-level students. This method is known for emphasising the importance of repetition and drilling in language learning since the aim is habit-formation. As was already mentioned in section 2.2, this sort of language learning works better with younger students so that might very well be the reason for this difference between school levels. The teacher with the oldest students, on the other hand, uses more learner-centred approaches than the lower-level teachers.

There was one clear mismatch between what the teachers said and what they did, and this had to do with their goals of teaching. The participants said that their aim is to get their students to actually use the language outside the classroom in different communicational situations, and that is exactly what the main aim of the communicative language teaching (CLT) is. However, the methods used in communicative language teaching versus the methods used in the participants' lessons differ from each other significantly. In CLT, the focus is clearly on meaning and learners get to practice real-

life situations in the classroom, for example, do authentic problem solving tasks or make future plans using their own imagination (Thornbury 2004:22). The above-mentioned factors were not visible in the observed lessons. The three participants' focus was on form and there were no simulations of the real world, hence, CLT was not used in any school level. This raises an interesting question of whether these teachers would have used CLT if they had taught, for example, vocabulary instead of grammar. Grammar is clearly still seen as rules with right or wrong answers, not something from the between. The conversation that took place between Leila and her student (see example 8.) illustrates the situation really well; the student strongly feels that she would make herself understood in real-life situations without using grammatically correct sentences, to which Leila replied that it would not sound good and advised everyone to learn the correct word order to avoid grammatical errors. Why do they have to avoid making an error if the goal is to be able to convey meaning? Leila said herself that she strives for encouraging the students to use the language outside the classroom but she evidently feels that grammar should be used correctly in these real-world situations. I wonder if the traditional view of grammar is so dominant that it prevents the teachers from bringing communicative elements to their grammar lessons, even though they want their students to learn to communicate successfully. As this juxtaposition clearly demonstrates, it would be beneficial for teachers to continue evaluating their instructional decisions also during working-life and possibly reassess the situation. They should really think about their goals and come up with practical solutions of meeting those goals. The goals might change in the course of time so the means of achieving the goals should change accordingly. To cite Cook (2008:248), "The end dictates the means: a goal expressed in terms of communication means basing classroom teaching on communication and so leads to techniques that make the students communicate with each other".

Even though all the research questions were answered, there are also limitations in this study. It is possible that the observed lessons do not tell the entire truth of the participants' usual ways of teaching since only one lesson was observed per teacher. Although they were asked to plan their lessons the way they normally do and not to make any alterations to their lesson plans only because they were to be observed, one cannot be entirely sure whether the teachers acted by this request or not. Since the goal was to get as realistic of an idea of their teaching methods as possible, it would have made the findings more reliable if the number of the observed lessons would have been

higher. Hence, what could have been done differently is to have increased the number of lessons per each participant. I would not increase the number of participants, however, because if there would have been more teachers taking part in this study, it would have taken too much attention away from the teachers as individuals and possibly complicate the process of understanding their personal theories.

Borg (2003) emphasizes that successful teachers constantly reflect on their actions and that way enhance their instructional knowledge. This research paper helps current and future teachers to understand the importance of reflecting one's own work. Teachers should set goals and figure out the way to reach those goals in order to enhance their teaching strategies. This study also reminds teachers that it is not enough to merely copy the grammar teaching methods that have been said to be successful because they need to be personally tested and modified to meet the students' individual needs: "Theory and research can only provide proposals that can be tested and examined in language classrooms, not final solutions" (Nassaji and Fotos 2011:138). I believe it is also quite comforting that teachers do not have to read manuals to become better in what they do, they just have to consciously examine their own actions and be aware of the instructional choices that are available. This study is useful for both teacher trainees and for teachers who are already in working life because as Borg (2003) emphasises, the reflecting work should be constant in order to gain more knowledge and practical skills. And as for future teachers, they should become aware of their personal theories and actively work on them. Every teacher should reflect on their goals and the ways of meeting those goals. And as the findings of this study confirmed, what teachers think they do and what they actually do might not always go perfectly hand in hand, as in this case the instructional methods that the participants used in the observed lesson did not fully correspond with what they said they were trying to achieve. This study is valuable and encourages all teachers, as well as the participants of this study, to examine their actions more critically and possibly do some changes. Continuing research on teachers' personal theories does not only enrich our understanding of grammar teaching, but language teaching in general.

Although grammar teaching methods have been studied quite extensively, more research should be done about the factors affecting teachers' instructional choices. Hence, I would continue this study by observing more lessons, making it a longitudinal study instead of increasing the number of participants, just like the study by Phipps and

Borg (2009). Since "the end dictates the means" (Cook 2008: 248), the aim determines the methods. If the aim is to get a profound image of teachers' personal theories, then a longitudinal study is the recommended method. Then again, if the goal is to make generalizations and to get a bigger picture about the grammar teaching methods the majority of Finnish EFL teachers actually use, the number of participants is the key. Ur (2011:520) reminds that the aim of these types of studies should not be on trying to find the best teaching technique there is because the best technique is most likely a combination of several methods. Hence, a longitudinal study with a relatively small number of participants would be a good way to continue the investigations about the methodology of grammar teaching.

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APPENDIX 1: THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Kauanko olet ollut englannin opettaja ja millä luokka-asteilla?
2. Mihin opetuksessasi tähtäät eli millaiset tavoitteet sinulla on? (Yleisesti kielenopetuksessa sekä kieliopin opetuksessa)
   - Mitä kielioppi mielestäsi on?
   - Millaiseksi kieliopin opettamisen yleensä koet?
   - Kuinka suuri merkitys mielestäsi kieliopilla on kielen oppimisessa ja opettamisessa?
3. Opetatko kieliopin yleensä suomeksi vai englanniksi? Miksi?
4. Onko sinulla tietty tapa opettaa kielioppia?
   - Onko tunneillasi toistuva kaava vai vaihteletko opetustapoja?
   - Mikä opetusmenetelmiesi valintaan vaikuttaa?
   - Harjoittelevatko oppilaasi yleensä yksin vai muiden kanssa?
   - Painotatko kielioppia harjoiteltaessa jotakin osa-aluetta
   (kirjoittaminen, lukeminen, kuunteleminen, puhuminen)?
   - Kun opetat uuden kielioppiasian, pidätkö yleensä alkuun pienen opetustuokion, jonka jälkeen oppilaat harjoittelevat vaiko annat oppilaiden tehdä harjoituksia kertomatta mistä niissä on kyse?
5. Millaista materiaalia käytät kieliopin harjoittelussa?
   - Oppikirjan tehtäviä vai jotakin muuta, mitä?
   - Jos teet itse materiaalia tunnille, millaista se yleensä on?
6. Millaisia eroja on mielestäsi kieliopin opetusmenetelmissä eri kouluasteiden (ala/ylä/lukio) välillä vai onko niitä?
   - Miten eri kouluasteilla käytettävät oppikirjat ja etenkin niiden kielioppiosiot mielestäsi eroavat toisistaan?
   - Käyttäisitkö siis omaa tapaasi opettaa kielioppia myös muilla asteilla? Jos et, mitä muokkauksia siihen tekisit?
7. Oletko huomannut jonkin menetelmän toimivan paremmin / huonommin kuin muut?
   - Mistä huomaat, että menetelmä toimii? Eli millaisia piirteitä toimivassa opetusmenetelmässä mielestäsi on?
8. Haluaisitko sanoa vielä jotakin?

APPENDIX 2: GRID USED IN OBSERVATION

Oppituntien observointi   Pvm: _____

Opettaja: _____   Luokka: _____

ALOITUS	TEHTÄVÄTYYPIT	KIELIOPIN OPETUS
☐ opettaja kertoo ☐ oppilas löytää	☐ aukko ☐ käännös ☐ muunnos ☐ toiminnallinen	☐ suomeksi ☐ englanniksi
HARJOITTELU ☐ suullinen ☐ kirjallinen	HARJOITTELU ☐ yksin ☐ parin kanssa ☐ ryhmässä	HARJOITTELU ☐ drillaaminen ☐ aito keskustelu
FOKUS ☐ kommunikointi ☐ rakenne	HARJOITTELU ☐ paikoillaan ☐ liikkuen ☐ käsillä tekeminen	HARJOITUKSET ☐ kirjasta ☐ muualta
OPPITUNTI ☐ opejohtoinen ☐ oppilaslähtöinen	OPETTAJAN ROOLI ☐ tiedonantaja ☐ organisoija	