The effects of Integrated *versus* Isolated form-focused instruction on the written performance of English-as-an-Additional-Language secondary-school students

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Declaration

I hereby certify that this dissertation constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions or writings of another.

I declare that the dissertation describes original work that has not previously been presented for the award of any other degree of any institution.

Irena E Gwiazda

Abstract

Over the past forty years, second-language teaching methodologies have evolved from heavily grammar-based syllabuses to fully communicative models that largely neglect the role of instruction in form. Nowadays, many methodologies attempt to merge these two extremes into more inclusive approaches that combine instruction in form and communicative foci. This study concentrates on two recently defined approaches of form-focused instruction (FFI): integrated and isolated. Educational research has only recently started to pay attention to this dichotomy. By addressing this issue, the current study aims to establish which of these two approaches more successfully promotes the learning of English past tenses by secondary school English-as-an-Additional-Language (EAL) students.

This quasi-experimental study adopts the explanatory sequential mixed-method design. The participants in the study were ninety-one mainstream secondary school EAL students, divided into three groups: a control group, which participated only in mainstream content-based lessons with no focus on form, and two experimental groups, which participated in ten FFI lessons in addition to the mainstream content-based lessons. Members of one of the experimental groups received integrated FFI, in which instruction in form was delivered during communicatively oriented lessons, and the students in the other experimental group received isolated FFI, in which instruction in form was delivered outside of the communicatively oriented lessons. Data collection methods included two questionnaires, interviews, field notes, observations and three periodic tests consisting of form formation, form recognition and metalinguistic tasks.

The research findings demonstrate that the experimental groups outperformed the control group, and the intervention gains were maintained over time. Importantly, the results indicate a considerable disparity in the level of effectiveness of each FFI, suggesting that isolated FFI provides overall better performance outcomes than integrated FFI in the EAL context. This advantage is particularly significant in the case of the form formation tasks.

The findings point to the intervention's resulting in greater awareness of the language among the participants and their increased ability to notice the targeted forms — the skills facilitated by both FFI approaches. The research outcomes offer some implications for EAL methodology, clearly indicating that application of the two instruction types, particularly isolated FFI, affords good educational value.

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List of abbreviations

CBI	Content-based Instruction
CF	corrective feedback
CLIL	Content and Language Integrated Learning
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CO	Control group
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DES	Department for Education and Skills
DfE	Department for Education
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DSG	Dedicated Schools Grant
EAL	English as an Additional Language[1]
EAL TA	English as an Additional Language teaching assistant
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EGL	English as a Global Language
EI	explicit information
EIL	English as an International Language
ELF	English as a Lingua Franca
ELL	English Language Learner
ELT	English Language Teaching
EMAG	Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant
EMAS	Ethnic Minority Achievement Services

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[1]In this work the terms EAL and ESL are used interchangeably as they occur in the source texts. Where no source is referred to, the term EAL, as used in English mainstream school context, is applied.

ESL	English as a Second Language[1]
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
FE	Further Education
FF	form formation (tasks, skills)
FFI	Form-focused Instruction
FoF	Focus on Form
FR	form recognition (tasks, skills)
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HLTA	higher level teaching assistant
IE	input enhancement
IGCSE	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
IL	Interlanguage
INT	Integrated (Form-Focused Instruction (students/group))
IP	Input Processing
ISO	Isolated (Form-Focused Instruction (students/group))
KS3	Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8, 9 of a secondary school in England)
KS4	Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11 of a secondary school in England)
L1	first language (mother tongue)
L2	second language
LA	local authority
LEA	Local Education Authority
LEP	Limited English Proficiency
MMR	mixed method research
MTA	mid-term admission
NALDIC	National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum
NASEA	Northern Association of Support Services for Equality and Achievement

OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
PE	Physical Education (a school subject)
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
PI	Processing Instruction
PLASC	Pupil Level Annual School Census
PPP	presentation practice production
PPT	Power Point presentation
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
QUAL	qualitative (methods, research)[2]
QUAN	quantitative (methods, research)
SEN	special educational needs
SI	structured input
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
T1	pre-test
T2	immediate post-test
T3	delayed post-test
TA	teaching assistant
TAP	Transfer Appropriate Processing (theory)
TBI	task-based instruction
TBLT	task-based language teaching
UREC	University Research Ethics Committee

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[2]*QUAL and qual are viewed by some researchers (e.g. Teddlie &Tashakkori, 2003) as conceptually distinctive, with the former being sometimes regarded as "a 'fuller' concept of qualitative work" (Smith, 2006:459). Nevertheless, for the purpose of this paper such distinction is not adhered to.*

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Chapter 1.

Introduction: explicit language instruction in the EAL context. The overview of the thesis

1.1. The key concepts and the scope of the research

Among the many controversies in Second Language Acquisition[3] (SLA) theories, the place of grammar in language teaching still remains a topic of heated discussion (Ellis, 2001b). It seems that there are many factors that influence the place and role of grammar teaching in language education. On the one hand, there are the different stances underpinned by linguistic research, resulting in often contrary theories of how languages are mastered (e.g. input theory *versus* output theory; see section 5.2); on the other hand, there are the more situational contexts, including the political realm, which drive language policies (see Chapter 3). On top of that, or perhaps as a result of these two powerful factors, there is what is often referred to as *fashion* in language teaching (Bourne, 2007; Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Long, 2000, Slavin, 2010). Driven by these factors, the place of grammar instruction in language teaching has shifted from its initially prominent role, as in grammar translation or audiolingual method, to total neglect, embodied for instance in the strong form of the Communicative Language Teaching approach (CLT) (see Howatt, 1984, for the discussion on strong and weak CLT). As a result, it seems that grammar might be viewed as an almost pejorative term (Watson, 2012; see also Crystal quoted in Brown, 2014). It is then quite understandable why, nowadays, attention given to grammar teaching in various pedagogical approaches is widely referred to as form-focused instruction (FFI) rather than simple grammar teaching, making the exact focus of such instruction even more vague (Williams, 2005). The *form* in FFI is commonly associated with grammatical structure, as is

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[3] Although throughout this work the terms 'language acquisition' and 'language learning' are *not* used interchangeably, the field of Second Language *Acquisition* involves investigation into "human capacity to learn languages other than the first, during late childhood, adolescence or adulthood, and once the first language or languages have been acquired" (Ortega, 2013:1-2). As such, although it is labelled as acquisition, it refers to learning as well.

the case in the present study, but can also refer to other linguistic features (Williams, 1995), e.g. lexical, as, for instance, in File and Adams' study (2010), discussed in section 4.5.3.

Another issue, much more crucial perhaps, is the ways in which FFI should be applied in language teaching, including the timing (Spada, 2011), and the most beneficial methods of providing learners with such instruction. Although, there is still no unanimity among researchers as to whether instruction in form is at all desirable or necessary (see e.g. Krashen, 1982, 1992; Truscott, 1996, 1999), there is a wealth of evidence demonstrating that instruction in form plays an integral part in advancement of learners' proficiency (see e.g. Doughty & Williams, 1998a; Ellis, 2002; Lyster, 2004; Lyster & Saito, 2010; Samuda, 2001; Spada & Tomita, 2010; Williams, 2005), particularly in the case of explicit instruction (Norris & Ortega, 2000), and especially in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Content-Based Instruction (CBI) classes (Spada, 2011). Research has also shown the effectiveness of explicit corrective feedback in such meaning–oriented contexts (Lyster & Saito, 2010). It can be argued that CLT, when deprived of explicit language attention, is inadequate due to absence of grammar instruction elements (Fotos,1998), since particular linguistic features seem to be difficult to learn or acquire without being specifically pointed out (Williams, 1995).Although many studies weight various aspects of FFI differently, leading to less than unanimous results (see Lightbown & Spada, 2013 for a discussion), it seems that FFI brings a crucial element to language teaching, significantly contributing to the development of learners' interlanguage.

Nevertheless, some issues connected with the efficiency of focus on form methodologies have yet to be adequately resolved, or even sufficiently explored, such as which type of explicit form-focused instruction (FFI) is most effective for a second-language learner. An example of such an underexplored area is the quite recent distinction between Isolated and Integrated FFI (Spada & Lightbown, 2008), which serves as a theoretical framework for the present study. According to this distinction, Integrated FFI draws students' attention to a linguistic form while they are immersed in content-based or communicative instruction,

whereas Isolated FFI is presented in tasks separated from communicative use of language which nevertheless constitute a part of the curriculum that involves content-based or communicative instruction (Spada & Lightbown, 2008). Both FFI types have their advantages and disadvantages (see section 4.5.2). However, few studies so far have investigated the two FFI types' effectiveness, and there is an even greater scarcity of studies comparing the Integrated FFI with the Isolated FFI in meaning-oriented classrooms (File & Adams, 2010; Spada & Lightbown, 2008; Spada, *et al.*, 2014). The present research is designed to contribute to filling this gap in research, aiming in particular to discover which of these two types – Integrated FFI or Isolated FFI – works better for mainstreamed English-as-an-Additional-Language (EAL) students in the English secondary school setting.

The setting, although a mere background of the investigation conducted here, is not insignificant. A clear distinction is made between EAL/ESL (English as an Additional/Second Language) and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) settings, since each of them facilitates learning differently, and poses different challenges brought, for instance, by students sharing or not sharing L1, absence or presence of a natural language context, or different language focus in these settings, including intensity of focus on form (Mitchell & Hooper,1992). Naturally, the setting of the present study affects the results of the present research, yet it does not limit the applicability of its findings. We have entered an era of *superdiversity* (Vertovec, 2007), as the world around us is being shaped by globalization, transnationalism, and transmigration (Yiakoumetti, 2015b). The growing need to educate significant and increasing numbers of emerging bilinguals who struggle with acquisition of the host language is common to many countries, and thus, the results of the present research in this particular setting have potential to influence and inform practice elsewhere, where similar challenges in providing adequate instruction in English language to mainstreamed learners occur, e.g. in Australia, New Zealand, Canada or the United States (Edwards, 2010; Leung, 2010). In British schools, these challenges are further compounded by the lack of common policy (Creese, 2010; Costley, 2014; Yiakoumetti,

2015a) needed to govern the school provision for the increasing numbers of EAL learners on the one hand, and the scarcity of specialist EAL training available to large numbers of mainstream teachers on the other (Costley, 2014). This, in turn, translates into blurred, or often non-existent, focus on the language in mainstream classrooms (Gravelle, 2003), and the way the language is perceived by both teachers and students. As discussed in Chapter 3, EAL learners' deficiency in English language is seen as a problem to be overcome (Anderson & Macleroy, 2015; Leung & Franson, 2001) in order to access curriculum, and not as a chance and motivation to master the language and to develop it to the levels allowing students to pursue their further education. This also applies to the precarious position of FFI in teaching practices in many British mainstream schools. However, there are some symptoms of grammar teaching gradually gaining importance as it has been recently reintroduced in primary schools, many years after it was abandoned, having created what David Crystal calls "the lost generation" (Brown, 2014:1). Still, although seemingly beneficial for language learners, the curricular change fails to adequately recognize the needs of EAL pupils (see a discussion in Chapter 10).

This chapter serves as a preface to the present dissertation, as well as a guide to its ten chapters. It aims to define the scope of the research presented here, briefly introduce its aims and rationale for its undertaking, and outline the methods used to fulfil these aims. In its final section, it signposts the main parts of the thesis to enable quick navigation between the chapters, highlighting the links between the dissertation's components.

1.2. The motivation for the study and its aims

This study endeavours to contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the role and efficacy of FFI in meaning-oriented classrooms. More importantly, it offers a comparison of Isolated and Integrated FFI's effectiveness, filling an existing gap in the research field, since there is a scarcity of adequate data as to which of these approaches contributes better to students' second language development (Lightbown & Spada, 2008; Spada, *et al.*, 2014).

So far, only three studies directly comparing these two approaches have been published in peer-reviewed journals, and these have brought somewhat conflicting or non-indicative results. The publications include studies by File and Adams (2010), Elgün-Gündüz, *et al.* (2012), and Spada, *et al.* (2014) (see table.9.1 for an overview of these studies). The original contribution to the research knowledge which the present study affords is not limited to research into these two FFI types. Placing this study in the EAL setting provides another important dimension, responding to the call for more empirical and rigorous studies in this field:

> […] although there is plenty of policy analysis, there is little research that addresses pedagogic practices in EAL teaching. Most classroom based research is small scale, based on teacher perceptions, and/or anecdotal (Andrews, 2009:9).

Thus, in terms of strictly EAL classroom research, there is a shortage of comparative studies consisting of both qualitative and quantitative data (Andrews, 2009), to which the present research aims to respond. Furthermore, the setting of the empirical research – EAL in a secondary school – constitutes a rather underexplored area. As pointed out by Andrews, in terms of EAL, "there is a gap in studies that focus on the 11-18 age group" (Andrews, 2009:9). In addition, an academy, where the fieldwork is based, although a dynamically flourishing educational institution, is still a very new type of establishment and, as such, is a subject of little linguistic research.

The more personal motivation for this study comes from the author's professional experience as both an EFL and EAL teacher. The gained awareness of the students' needs and experiences in the process of learning, and understanding of the educational aims and challenges of migrant students served as a trigger to begin this long, but very rewarding research journey.

1.3. The hypothesis and research questions

The hypothesis, a driving force of the present study, concerns the two FFI types and predicts that one of them – either Isolated or Integrated – is more beneficial to the learning of the targeted forms. Four research questions are set to assist with testing the hypothesis, and each of them is subdivided into supporting questions as follows:

Question 1: What is the effect of explicit form-focused instruction on English-as-an-Additional-Language (EAL) secondary school students' written performance?

Sub-questions: 1. How does the performance of the experimental groups compare with the performance of the control group? **2.** How do students respond to explicit grammar instruction? **3**. What are students' attitudes towards explicit grammar instruction?

Question 2: How does the effectiveness of Isolated versus Integrated form-focused instruction compare in the English secondary school setting?

Sub-questions: 1. What are the differences between the two experimental groups in terms of the level of mastery of the targeted forms? **2.** What factors influence the discrepancy?

Question 3: What is the role of metalinguistic input and teacher's explicit feedback in each FFI approach?

Sub-questions: 1. To what extent does metalinguistic awareness influence the students' success and how does it compare across the groups? **2.** How do students receiving each FFI perceive teachers' explicit feedback?

Question 4: How can teaching of the language use, language structure, and subject content be combined to serve the purpose of improving grammatical competence in EAL students' writing in the context of a mainstream secondary school?

Sub-questions: 1. What is the educational value afforded by application of the two FFI types in the mainstream school? **2.** What would be the most effective way to combine explicit language teaching with content teaching?

1.4. Methods

In order to answer the questions listed above, the present research adopted explanatory sequential mixed methods design, where the quantitative phase is followed by the qualitative phase. Such a sequence allows for fuller understanding and interpretation of the quantitative results (Creswell, 2014). The research was quasi-experimental, and involved application of two programmes of intervention – one based on Isolated FFI and the other based on Integrated FFI – for a period of ten weeks. The participants taking part in the main study were 91 mainstreamed pre/intermediate EAL students of various mother tongues, aged between 12 and 16, enrolled in British secondary school. The study benefited from a number of various data collection tools, allowing for triangulation while interpreting the data. The instruments included a pre-test, a post-test and a delayed post-test; pre- and post-intervention questionnaires; interviews; video recordings, and fieldwork notes. The data collection tools had been tested during the pilot phase prior to the main experiment. The study included the presence of the control group, which facilitated the answering of the first research question, but also afforded a more indicative interpretation of the overall research results. The *form* selected for the experiment comprises grammatical constructions used to express past events, as the linguistic features most adequate to the developmental stage of the participants. The communicative backdrop for the use of these forms was provided by short films.

1.5. The organization of the thesis

The organization of this work slightly departs from the orthodox order of literature review followed by the setting scheme traditionally applied in theses. Here, the order of chapters has been dictated by the way the main arguments unfold in the thesis and the nature of the

findings. Although the setting of this particular study – EAL in an English secondary school – is a mere background for the research, the fact that learners are immersed in the targeted language together with native speakers of that language plays a major part in determining the role of FFI, its applicability, and the impact it has on learners, as revealed by this study. The setting then, in its wider characteristics, becomes an important factor influencing the success of the investigated types of FFI – Integrated and Isolated – yet it does not limit the relevance of the research findings. In today's world, where globalization and transmigration are a norm, the factor of immersion in a targeted or official language is pertinent to many educational settings around the globe. Hence, it is vital to identify and define it, what is undertaken in the description of a sample immersion setting – the British mainstreamed educational field – which in this work precedes the more theoretical discussion on FFI specifically. It also serves as an introduction to a discussion on the capability of some established methodologies in affecting learners' interlanguage development, in Chapter 3. As such, the natural and logical, albeit slightly nonstandard, thesis structure emerges.

The organization of the thesis is also constrained by the research design adopted in this study – explanatory sequential mixed methods design – which dictates the order in which the research results are reported, analysed and interpreted. Here, the two databases – quantitative and qualitative – are not merged (Creswell, 2014). Instead, "in the interpretation section, after the researcher presents the general quantitative and then qualitative results, a discussion should follow that specifies how the qualitative results help to expand or explain the quantitative results" (Creswell, 2014:225). Therefore, in this work a separate chapter is devoted to the quantitative analysis, which is followed by the qualitative analysis chapter, and concluded by a further chapter where the results are interpreted and discussed. The paragraphs below briefly characterize all ten chapters.

Chapter 1, the introduction to the thesis, encapsulates the key concepts in the dissertation, its composition and aims, and serves as a guide to the rest of the work. The chapter opens with a presentation of the scope of the research and its core notions. It then briefly outlines

the aims, motivation and rationale of the study, leading to formulation of the hypothesis and the research questions. Methods and research tools are introduced, and each chapter is briefly outlined.

The backdrop used for the exploration of the effectiveness of the Isolated and Integrated FFI approaches – EAL in a mainstream secondary school – is presented in Chapter 2. Here, the place of EAL provision in the British educational system is described in some detail. The chapter begins with an explanation of various terms used to refer to teaching and learning of the English language nationally and internationally, and moves on to the identification of an English language learner, briefly presenting the characteristics of EAL students' cohort, and acknowledging the challenges such learners might face in mainstream education. This is followed by a presentation of various layers of EAL provision in English schools.

Chapter 3, although still devoted to the setting of the study, draws on the facts presented in the previous chapter to offer a critical discussion on the issues with which EAL learners and their schools are confronted. It argues that the attention given to language teaching in mainstream schools is often inadequate to EAL learners' linguistic needs, and schools often fail to provide EAL students with a sufficiently rich, properly adjusted educational diet. In this context, it seems that inclusion of some form of linguistic instruction might provide EAL learners with an essential element to supplement their mainstream input.

In an attempt to explore and understand these needs, as identified in the previous chapter, the thesis proceeds to a review of the most relevant literature, and so Chapter 4 is devoted to discussing the role of language instruction in language learning, and explores form-focused instruction in its various dimensions. It also attempts to establish the position of Isolated and Integrated FFI in the complex taxonomy of instruction in form. Prior to that, selected theories on language learning, and approaches to instruction in form, are investigated, putting FFI in a wider theoretical and methodological context.

Chapter 5 continues with the exploration of the relevant literature, moving its focus to investigation of the various methods used in FFI, such as processing instruction, consciousness raising, or corrective feedback. There is also a discussion on the theoretical background of these methods and, in particular, the input hypothesis, the output hypothesis and the interaction hypothesis, which aids understanding of the mechanisms underlying the suitability and efficacy of these methods for language teaching in general, and FFI in particular. This investigation is especially significant since many of these methods are employed in the experimental treatment, which constitutes the core of the present study, and is introduced and discussed in the next five chapters.

Chapter 6, a rather large, but crucial part of the thesis, offers a response to the issues raised in the previous four chapters, in that it explores the research questions emerging from these issues, and presents the experimental intervention treatment aimed at addressing them. Here, the hypothesis is formulated and discussed, and the research methodology is established. The chapter explores both philosophical and methodological paradigms, and offers a detailed explanation of the fieldwork study, drawing on the feedback from the pilot study. The chapter also presents some validity and reliability considerations and devotes some attention to a discussion on ethical issues.

The mixed method design adopted in the present study employs both quantitative as well as qualitative methods. The pre-arranged sequence of investigation prioritizes the quantitative analysis, which is the first analysis performed on the data obtained from the study. The detailed results of these analyses, carried out with the use of SPSS software, are presented in Chapter 7. There are also some pre-intervention analyses incorporated in the first part of the chapter to exclude some potentially confounding variables.

Chapter 8 draws on the quantitative analysis findings presented in the previous chapter, and begins with establishing the ground for further investigation. This is achieved through the setting of some qualitative questions, which were triggered by the findings made in the

quantitative phase of the analysis. In the next step, the findings from various data collection instruments are analysed in the process of triangulation, resulting in the emergence of certain leitmotivs – patterns and themes characteristic of the data being analysed – which contribute to interpretation of the entire data gathered. The chapter concludes with the review of the questions formulated in response to the quantitative data, and offers some tentative answers to all of them.

While Chapter 8 offers an initial review of the findings, it is Chapter 9 that provides a more detailed discussion on the study's outcomes, drawing on both quantitative and qualitative sources, and confronting the results with other findings as reported in the literature. The discussion revolves around the main research questions, determining the structure of the chapter. The final section includes consideration of the findings in relation to the main hypothesis.

Chapter 10, the final chapter of the thesis, is devoted to positioning the research in a wider perspective, demonstrating its originality, and pinpointing the theoretical, methodological and policy implications of its findings. Both strengths and limitations of the study are analysed, and some recommendations are made for further research on the basis of the findings and the discussion, showing how the present study could pave the way for future research.

1.6. Conclusion

The growing number of learners of English internationally, including migrant children moving to Anglophone countries, makes the issue of language education increasingly urgent. The place of grammar in the language instruction available to these learners has been hotly debated for many years now, and the present study contributes to the discussion on a very recent framework of grammar instruction. By doing so, it responds to a shortage of studies on the topic of Isolated and Integrated FFI. In addition, by setting the study in a secondary school, it addresses the issue of scarcity of studies on that educational level.

Chapter 2.

Setting the scene - the EAL provision in secondary schools in England

2.1. Introduction

British schools have always had to cope with relatively large numbers of pupils for whom English is not their first language. Whereas the education workforce has grown accustomed to, and welcomed, short-term visitors learning English as a foreign language in language schools, the educational challenge brought in by foreign migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and children of those seeking a long-term home in the British Isles has provoked discussions and various initiatives aimed at developing English language teaching provision within the state mainstream schooling environment, in order to address the new and growing demand. As recent statistics indicate, the number of EAL children arriving at British schools has markedly increased (see section 2.3), with the expansion of the European Union, the influx of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrant workers. With the strict guidelines established by the Department for Education and Skills highlighting the importance of tailored support – "All children and young people should be able to achieve their potential, whatever their ethnic or cultural background and whichever school they attend" (DfES, 2003:4) – it is understandable that teaching English language ought to be high on schools' agenda.

This chapter introduces the concept of EAL teaching, and provides an outline of its provision and setting. It starts with a discussion of various terminology used to identify English language learners in section 2.2. It then moves on to describe characteristics of EAL learners in section 2.3, identifying some challenges they typically face when placed at English schools. The schools, and the support offered to EAL children, are described in more depth in section 2.4, with reference to the school workforce, their roles and training, as well as support models and external agencies.

2.2. The terminology

As one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, English has been the subject of incessant attempts to define its role in the contemporary world, or at least to describe its characteristics and purpose. For example, a distinction has been made between the English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), English as an International Language (EIL), and English as a Global Language (EGL), (Crystal, 2003).

Equally, the English language learning spectrum is relatively wide and, depending on the purpose, students' location, and age, specific types of learners are described using different terms. Hence, in Britain, learners of English are most commonly referred to as English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, English as a Second Language (ESL) learners, learners of English for Academic Purpose (EAP), or learners of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

The acronym EAP refers to international students who seek to improve their skills in English language in the academic context, in order to pursue studies at university or college in the UK. EFL applies to usually short-term visitors, who enrol on English language courses in the UK, as well as to learning English in non-Anglophone countries, often as a school curriculum subject. Students whose mother tongue is other than English, but who live in the UK, are referred to as EAL (English as an Additional Language), and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) learners. The term EAL applies to early years, primary and secondary school contexts, as well as the sixth form (Ofsted, 2002:2), whereas ESOL is used mostly in colleges (Ofsted, 2003:1), and for adult learners. In the compulsory education context in the UK, the term EAL replaced ESL – English as a Second Language – as it was argued that many British school pupils are not bilingual, but multilingual (DfES, 2006), thus English is often their third or even further language. ESL is still used in some contexts in the UK, and it is sometimes considered an adult equivalent of school-based EAL (teachernet.gov.uk). ESL is also used in some other English speaking countries. It functions

widely in the educational system in Australia (DfES, 2006). In the United States, however, the government and schools use the term ELL (English Language Learner) as an equivalent of British EAL and ESOL. The term ELL was coined in order to label students positively, instead of focusing on their language deficiencies, as the previously applied term did (LEP - Limited English Proficiency) (Carder, 2009).

It is worth mentioning here the political implications and hidden agendas behind some of the terminology used to label groups of students mentioned above. Language pedagogy and policy have always been politicised (Carder, 2009; Costley, 2014), and terminology applied may be perceived as stigmatising those so labelled. The US term, 'Limited English Proficiency', would be an obvious example of such a negative impact, but seemingly the more positive UK term, 'English as an Additional Language', is also viewed by some as pejorative or singling out. For instance, Chalmers (2014) observed that some parents he had invited to his study did not wish for their children to be labelled EAL because they associated this label with marginalisation. Indeed, as opposed to e.g. the term 'emerging bilingual learner', used in some literature, EAL seems not to be as inclusive, and may be perceived as focusing on deficiencies rather than strengths.

This chapter (as well as the whole thesis) concentrates on English language provision for such emerging bilinguals understood as migrant workers' children, second generation immigrants' children, and asylum seeker and refugee minors in England. As an official term, English as an Additional Language (EAL) terminology prevails, with some references to emerging bilingual learners understood synonymously, and as used in source texts. When, later in this thesis, a comparison is made between various studies, ESL is considered equivalent to EAL, provided it refers to teaching of English to students living in Anglophone countries, as opposed to EFL, meaning English taught as a foreign language outside of Anglophone countries.

2.3. EAL learners – an overview

The presence of EAL learners in British schools has become a common phenomenon, and with "unprecedented population movement" (Anderson & Macleroy, 2015:368) evident in recent years, the numbers are on the increase. According to statistics, the number of EAL pupils in the UK schools had risen by 25% between 2004 and 2008, and accounted for 824,380 students learning English as an additional language in 2008 (Andrews, 2009). In 2005, EAL learners in primary school comprised 11.6% of the whole school population, with a lower percentage (9%) in secondary schools. It was then estimated that, by 2011, the latter number would increase by a further 2.6% (DfES, 2006:3). The reality, however, exceeded these expectations and, in 2011, in England alone 16.8% of the primary school population were EAL learners (547,030 pupils), and 12.3% of the secondary school cohort were EAL (399,550) (DfE, 2011). Two years later in 2013, 18% of primary school children spoke English as an additional language (NALDIC, 2014a), and 13.6% of secondary school students (Anderson & Macleroy, 2015). The numbers are still on the increase, changing more rapidly than previously expected, with over a million EAL students being taught in English schools alone at present (NALDIC, 2014b).

The numbers do not spread equally across the country, as they, quite understandably, reflect migration patterns. The statistics themselves may be quite misleading if the figures are not examined on a more local level. The greatest density of EAL pupils is recorded in inner London, where in 2010 around 54.1 per cent of students had a mother tongue other than English (education.gov.uk). Also, nationwide figures indicate much more voluminous immigration into England, as compared to the rest of the UK. In 2005, net migration in the UK amounted to 130,000, of which 116,000 refers to net inflow in England alone. It is estimated that this discrepancy between England and the rest of the UK in respect of migrant destination is going to widen, as the statistics suggest this trend has been continuous since 2003 (DfES 2006).

EAL children arrive from a wide range of countries, and this is reflected in the variety of their mother tongues. It is estimated that in London, there are as many as over 300 different languages spoken at home (Anderson & Macleroy, 2015; Coyle, 2009). Looking at a single school level, the number of languages spoken can amount to over 40 (Manyena & Brady, 2007). Analysing languages by new arrivals' country of origin, it can be noticed that in 2007 the largest national group migrating into the UK were people from India (553,300), with Poles being the second largest group (423,300). Polish-born migrants have continued to be the most prominent group to come to the UK for some time now, although only 7% of them come here with dependants (Rutter, 2007). These statistics suggest that, despite being the second largest influx group into the UK, they should not be necessarily defined as the second largest EAL cohort in schools. The third, fourth and fifth places in immigration data for non-native English speakers are taken by Pakistani, German and Bangladeshi speakers respectively.

2.3.1. Possible difficulties with learning English

EAL students arrive in British schools with a variety of educational backgrounds and levels of English language proficiency. Some may have a very poor level of literacy in their first language, or can be illiterate in any language; some may not understand the Roman alphabet, or might never have had any formal education in their home country (DfES, 2005). Others may be very well educated, and benefit from several years of EFL tuition before entering the UK. The various levels of prior education and linguistic proficiency is an important factor affecting learners' English language acquisition, and overall progress at school. The most disadvantaged students seem to be asylum seekers (DfES, April 2005), especially if they happen to be unaccompanied minors who came to the UK on their own. The overall number of asylum seeker and refugee pupils in UK schools in 2003 was 98,929, of whom 65,734 were located in Greater London (Arnot & Pinson, 2005). However, these numbers are on the increase, influenced by the unstable humanitarian and political situation in some countries, particularly in the Middle East, such as Syria, Afghanistan or Iraq. Only

last year, between June 2014 and June 2015, 2,168 unaccompanied asylum seeking children made asylum application, almost twice as many as in the previous year (Home Office, 2015[1]). Even with adequate levels of education received prior to their arrival in the UK, the pressures connected with their status and uncertainty about their future are likely to affect achievement of such students (Manyena & Brady, 2007).

On the whole, EAL children arriving at British schools are most often exposed to one or all of the three main sources of distress. The most common problem constitutes the language, as many of these young migrants communicate with their families only in their L1 (Manyena & Brady, 2007), and have limited exposure to English before joining school. In addition, parents' lack of English proficiency hinders their children's progress, because they often consider themselves unable to help their children with the schoolwork, and feel they cannot actively participate in their local school life, due to the language barrier (Manyena & Brady, 2007). Another issue, as briefly mentioned previously, is scant, interrupted, or non-existing prior education that some new arrivals may have experienced (Manyena & Brady, 2007), which means that such students' inability to understand the language of instruction cannot be possibly offset by background knowledge of curriculum content. Finally, there is the so-called 'culture shock', which applies to the school situation to the same extent as to any other aspects of life. The educational system and teaching methods may be significantly different to those the students were familiar with, and the adaptation difficulties that newly arriving EAL pupils have to face tend to be greater in the case of secondary school children, compared to those entering earlier stages of education (Manyena & Brady, 2007). These challenges prove particularly significant in the case of EAL learners joining English schools mid key stage, who, on the whole, tend to significantly underachieve compared to non-EAL students, as data collected in KS2 demonstrates (Strand, 2015). Although, according to statistics, the achievement gap narrows down towards the end of KS4, recency of arrival and educational background are among the key factors influencing EAL students' attainment (Strand, 2015).

A separate issue, which often proves to be challenging to students and teachers alike, is assessment – both formative as well as summative. The topic of an EAL student's assessment is briefly discussed in section 2.4.2.5.

2.4. EAL provision in secondary schools in England

The outline of the EAL school provisions presented in this chapter concentrates mainly on secondary education, since this setting has been identified as more challenging for EAL students (Manyena & Brady, 2007; Gravelle, 2003), with the level of support judged to be poorer, compared to earlier stages of education (Manyena & Brady, 2007). In this context it is rather remarkable that secondary education seems to be somewhat neglected in EAL research in the last decade, as the studies on EAL school support have been mainly focussed on early years and primary education settings (Andrews, 2009).

In this work more attention is given to EAL school provision in England, as opposed to the rest of the UK, since it is here where the vast majority of immigration is concentrated – over 95% of the total UK net migration, as estimated in 2006 (DfES, 2006:2).

2.4.1. Types of secondary schools in England

There is a broad choice of secondary school types in England, in both state as well as independent sectors. The list below provides a simplified taxonomy with a brief description of some of these educational establishments, all as specified on government websites (direct.gov.uk).

- State secondary schools

The majority of students in England attend state schools, and all children between 5 and 16 years of age have the right to a free place there. Pupils start secondary school at the age of 11, following a transition from Year 6 of a primary school (Key Stage 2) to Year 7 of a secondary school (Key Stage 3). They remain in the secondary school until the age of 16 (Key Stage 4), or even longer, in the so-called 'sixth forms' (Key Stage 5). Most of these

schools admit both boys and girls, though there are some single-sex ones as well. The state schools are funded by local authorities, follow the National Curriculum, and are inspected by Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) – a government educational audit body (direct.gov.uk).

Within secondary state schools there are mainstream and special educational establishments. The former group includes community schools, foundation schools, trust schools, voluntary-aided, and voluntary-controlled schools, and, more recently, academies. The division between these is usually connected with various land and building management, and ownership policies, as well as level of independence in running these schools (direct.gov.uk). Specialist schools, apart from following the National Curriculum, focus on a particular subject area, e.g. sport, or art (direct.gov.uk).

In addition to the dual division between mainstream and specialist schools, there are so-called 'state schools with particular characteristics', which include city technology colleges, community and foundation special schools, faith schools, grammar schools, maintained boarding schools, free schools, University Technical Colleges, and academies. All of them provide free education, with the government funding the running costs. The substantial difference between such schools and the mainstream schools lies in admission criteria and funding arrangements. In addition, free schools have considerable freedom in designing their own curricula, as they are not bound by the National Curriculum. Also academies are more independent to shape their own curricula. They are all-ability independently managed schools, which are set up by sponsors such as voluntary, business or faith groups, in partnership with local authority and the Department for Education (direct.gov.uk).

- Independent schools

These are fee-charging schools, which follow their own curriculum and admission policy. They are still inspected by Ofsted or an equivalent government-approved inspectorate, in

order to ensure that standards are properly maintained. In England, there are 2,300 independent schools, of which more than half have charitable status (direct.gov.uk).

2.4.2. EAL teaching and support provision in secondary schools in England

There are a few crucial issues that need to be considered while describing EAL provision in secondary schools. First of all, the mechanisms and procedures of identifying EAL students and, more precisely, their specific needs, cannot be underestimated. Secondly, the support that is offered to match those needs has to be considered. Finally, it needs to be highlighted that both of these aspects of EAL provision naturally depend on the schools' workforce, both specialist as well as mainstream-based.

2.4.2.1. Identifying EAL students

The key tool for EAL learners' identification is careful monitoring of the first language spoken by newly admitted students (DfES, 2006). Some secondary schools liaise with primary schools to obtain information on students who identified the school as their choice for their Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 transition. Schools may even organise to meet their prospective students and perform an initial language assessment of those who are on the primary school's EAL register. This is sometimes done during the so called 'transfer days', when primary students visit secondary schools they are planning to join after Year 6 (McGuffog, 2008).

Despite these procedures being applied by some schools, in 2006 statistical data showed that the system of identifying EAL students and their needs in the first year of secondary school was limited, in relation to primary school setting. The reason for such a situation might lie in different approaches to EAL needs identification criteria adopted at both stages of education (DfES, 2006). In pursuit of more accurate data, and subsequently better language support, the government imposed on schools a requirement to monitor the first

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language and ethnicity of all pupils from January 2007, by means of collecting data under the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) (DfES, 2006).

A crucial point in providing good EAL support is the early and accurate identification of pupils that require such help. This should be done as soon as EAL students are admitted to school (DfES, 2006). Pinpointing the language difficulties, and matching the support to their needs, would be the next steps to be taken.

2.4.2.2. Identifying EAL students' needs

The discrepancy between numbers of EAL pupils at primary and secondary education stages, apart from the first language monitoring inaccuracies, may result from curriculum focus being different at these two phases of education, which may lead to diagnostic failures. Primary school teachers place much emphasis on pupils' literacy, and are extra vigilant of any literacy problems, as these are more common in primary schools, where children start learning to read and write, whereas, as noticed by Gravelle (2003), secondary school teachers tend to view assessment of English to be separate from assessment of curriculum areas. Many of them do not feel competent to provide extensive analysis of students' English language needs, often limiting themselves to pointing out single grammatical or spelling mistakes (Gravelle, 2003), and being more preoccupied with the content of a student's response, and not so much with its linguistic form. What students really need at this stage of their education is careful, and more importantly, systematic analysis of errors they make, as argued by Gravelle (2003), in order to facilitate self-assessment and understanding of success criteria.

This raises the issue of the assessment of EAL students' needs. Once EAL learners are identified, the appropriate level of EAL support needs to be provided, in order to match it adequately to students' requirements. This is usually done by means of an initial EAL assessment. The four skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening – are the subject of such assessment, and the test is generally conducted by an EAL specialist (Monaghan,

2008). The outcomes of such a measurement provide more or less detailed information regarding students' English proficiency in terms of these four skills. It is worth noting that prior to the abandonment of National Curriculum levels in 2014, such EAL assessments were often related to the English subject mainstream levels. Assessment of some other subject skills, such as drawing, singing or mathematics, for which linguistic competence is not so crucial, may also be conducted alongside the language assessment (Monaghan, 2008).

Schools are advised to use the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority assessment framework (QCA, 2000) for the purpose of English language assessment. However, some schools and local authorities devise their own sets of 'stages', usually grading the English language competence between 1 and 5, with 1 indicating beginner, and 5 native-like proficiency (Monaghan, 2008). Some schools apply initial first language assessments to aid placement. This is more frequent in multilingual schools, taking place on a pupil's first day, usually as a part of a school's admission procedures. The first language assessment is also used for diagnostic purposes, and may be administered if a bilingual child, already on roll, makes slower progress than expected (www.naldic.org.uk). Ideally, students' initial EAL assessment should consist of assessing students' abilities in their strongest language, alongside English language assessment (Monaghan, 2008). Such testing provides a better impression of an overall picture of students' ability and, although it seems impossible to conduct without the help of a bilingual assistant, it is argued that even for someone who does not share a student's first language it could be possible to estimate EAL students' ability to read and write, on the basis of his or her fluency in L1 (Monaghan, 2008).

Drawing on the initial assessment results, and levels of previous education and literacy, schools can establish the support guidelines for each EAL pupil, including strategies recommended to help in accessing the language and the school curriculum (Monaghan, 2008). One of the outcomes of such assessments may be a decision to place a student in an earlier year than their age would suggest. This happens when a child arrives with little or

no previous schooling. Such a decision needs to be made with care as the child can become frustrated if they fail to be sufficiently cognitively challenged (EMAS, 2004).

2.4.2.3. The role of school-based professionals in supporting an EAL learner

Relocating to a different country and adapting to a new educational system is rarely a straightforward experience. Apart from some emotional and culture shock issues, EAL students in mainstream schools are also faced with other challenges, typically associated with demands of academic work. Here, the initial level of English plays a major role in achieving success, as low proficiency may impede accessing instructions or expressing themselves fluently and accurately. Another issue is learning the curriculum content; more of a cognitive rather than linguistic challenge. An ideal situation would be to have a single school-based professional being able to meet both of these EAL student needs. In reality, however, the secondary school teaching and supporting workforce specialises usually in either curriculum subject competency or EAL. The main objective is to be able to juggle the human resources to the pupils' best benefit.

The role and characteristics of specialist staff

In secondary schools, EAL support is carried out by English speaking teaching assistants (TAs), bilingual TAs, EAL TAs (both bilingual and English speaking only), Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs), EAL teachers (both bilingual and English speaking only), EAL Coordinators, and sometimes external services, such as EMAS (The Ethnic Minority Achievement Services). Sometimes they are also supported by SEN (Special Educational Needs) teachers (Wallace and Mallows, 2009).

Analysing outcomes of some case studies it is evident that schools very often lack specialist support in the EAL area. Wallace and Mallows (2009) report that, even in schools with a large bilingual-learner population, very often EAL teachers are not to be found at all. In many schools EAL support work is solely performed by TAs. It was apparent that those in charge of EAL in schools often lack appropriate qualifications and knowledge. Some of

them, in spite of being responsible for EAL provision at school, had no experience in this area. NALDIC figures from 2009 show that between 2005 and 2009, numbers of EAL specialist teachers nationally increased by just 8%, as compared to a 25% increase in EAL pupil numbers during the same period (NALDIC, 2009). Since 2008, the change in government funding has further contributed to shortages of EAL specialist staff (Anderson & Macleroy, 2015). The findings from Wallace and Mallows' case study show that EAL is often included within SEN, or inclusion provision, which normally deal with students experiencing learning difficulties caused by impaired cognitive abilities, or behaviour abnormalities. Such practices fail to promote the status of EAL within the school, show lack of understanding of EAL, and interfere with the smooth functioning of the EAL provision (Wallace and Mallows, 2009).

However, if EAL specialists are present at schools, the national strategies developed by the government give some guidelines to secure certain levels of EAL support. These are not divided into separate sets of rules for primary and secondary provisions, but are presented as uniform for all schools where EAL specialists work alongside mainstream teachers. The main proposal is that the two types of professionals should cooperate via collaborative planning and team teaching (DfE, 2010b). Where necessary, they need to establish an appropriate action plan, e.g. to pre-teach vocabulary, target help, provide in-class support, or follow-up consolidation. Another practice being encouraged involves informative observation, where either teacher acts as an observer e.g. in order to test a particular teaching technique. An EAL specialist may also work with target groups during the main part of the lesson, or even work on a one-to-one basis before or during a lesson. The government educational body also sees the role of an EAL specialist as a resource provider and a development facilitator, who ensures that specific resources are available to support the language and curriculum needs of EAL learners. Finally, such specialists should be involved in monitoring bilingual students' progress (DfE, 2010b).

Mainstream teachers' role in supporting EAL students

Where mainstream curriculum teachers are accompanied by EAL specialists, their role is mainly to collaborate with the EAL specialist as described above. Teachers who cannot benefit from team teaching, or other forms of EAL specialist support, have to undertake a dual role in the class. They act as both curriculum deliverers and language facilitators. Schools unable to rely on EAL specialists' assistance can resort to strategies outlined by the Department for Education as "guidance for teachers in settings with little or no access to expert support" (DfES 2005b:5). Most of these strategies refer mainly to beginner level students, since schools deprived of specialist expertise find it particularly difficult to support bilingual pupils at the early stages of language learning.

The policies recommended by the DfES (2005b) include: use of demonstrations and visuals; focusing on communication rather than correction in the first stages of learning the language, and involving students in routine tasks. Also, it is essential to integrate the student into an activity by means of differentiation, drawing attention to key words, and referring to the student's L1 language and culture. Students need a sense of success and completion, therefore the following list of tasks could serve as an example of tailoring the tasks to suit their needs:

> […] copying words or sentences under pictures; matching pictures to names, words or sentences; filling in missing words; sequencing; text marking; labelling; matching sentence halves; filling in tables and grids; giving yes/no, true/false responses (DfES, 2005b:5).

The guidance also promotes the use of bilingual or picture dictionaries, and encourages use of L1 for content learning, and even for a discussion. Teachers are advised to provide plenty of opportunities for language development, through providing relevant input, purposeful and carefully planned pair and group work, and building on the language learnt in previous lessons. Using writing frames is encouraged, and so is modelling of a response. Teachers need to offer constructive feedback and let students reflect on their learning. The

strategies range from parental involvement to handwriting practice for students new to the Roman alphabet (DfES, 2005b).

EAL qualifications and training

The most widely recognised British ELT (English Language Teaching) professional qualifications include certificates and diplomas of Trinity College London ESOL and University of Cambridge ESOL. Holders of these can teach EFL and ESOL. Some teachers may do an MA in Applied Linguistics or ELT. Although all these qualifications may be sufficient to teach English in private language schools and higher education, in England, teachers wishing to work in state schools have to possess Qualifying Teacher Status (QTS). The most common way of obtaining the status is completion of the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE).

It needs to be pointed out, however, that EAL, not being a curriculum subject, may be perceived as having low status when it comes to national training strategies, as it is not represented as a subject specialism in teacher training (Anderson & Macleroy, 2015). The attention devoted to teaching EAL in PGCE training courses is erratic, and is likely to be even more so with the introduction of School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) to replace university-led PGCE courses (Costley, 2014). For this reason, it is not surprising that teachers find it frustrating working with EAL students as, having little or no EAL-specific training, they lack confidence and ability to address the students' needs (Anderson & Macleroy, 2015). Thus, such teachers need to resort to a trial-and-error approach, and often feel negative about their practices (Haworth, 2009). Moreover, the existing literature often fails to offer practical advice on how to support an EAL learner in a busy mainstream class (Haworth, 2009).

The government promoted EAL-oriented Continuous Professional Development (CPD) through provision of accredited courses for EAL teachers and TAs, initiated in 2005. By 2008 such training was considered "a national priority" (Anderson & Macleroy, 2015:367),

yet "attitudes have since changed and direct funding has been removed" (*ibid.*)
Nevertheless, some accredited and not accredited EAL courses are available for both
mainstream staff and specialist EAL staff, and include raising awareness of certain aspects
of second language acquisition (e.g. the silent period), making teachers understand the
benefits of L1 and cultural differences, helping teachers boost a child's self-esteem, as well
as allowing them to maintain high expectations. Training offered promotes assessing EAL
pupils' work in relation to National Curriculum standards, selecting appropriate teaching
techniques that are culturally appropriate, and explores ways of cooperating with other
professionals and parents (teachernet.gov.uk). For teachers, there are a few courses
available, such as MEd, Diploma and Post Graduate Certificate offered at Birmingham
University in association with NASSEA (Northern Association of Support Services for
Equality and Achievement), MA Bilingual Learners at University of London; MA Language
Ethnicity in Education at Kings College in London, MA or Post Graduate Diploma in EAL
and Education at Leeds University, MA, PG Dip/Cert Multilingualism at University of East
London. However, some teachers may be unwilling to attend relevant CPD courses if the
EAL population in their school is relatively small (Haworth, 2009).

2.4.2.4. EAL support models

There are three main ways in which the school-based staff can support EAL learners.
These are:

- team teaching and TAs' in-class support,

- induction courses and withdrawal lessons,

- after-school or break time enrichment activities, sometimes referred to as *extended schools*.

In addition to these, some schools may also offer discrete English courses for their sixth
form students (Ofsted, 2002). Each of these three strands of EAL support is described in
the sections below.

Team teaching and TAs' in-class support

The current government policy promotes collaboration between EAL specialists and mainstream teachers, also by means of co-teaching (DfE, 2010b). This was briefly discussed in section 2.4.2.3. This section concentrates on some issues arising during the process of collaboration.

Whereas the role of an EAL TA, or indeed any TA in the mainstream classroom, is well defined, and almost self-explanatory, establishing the remit of teachers involved in team teaching may present some problems. This specific partnership between a mainstream and an EAL teacher can be quite challenging at times. Teachers involved in a "working relationship" that promotes communication and decision-making concerning classroom issues represent a significant change for the structure of teaching (Cohen 1981:165). Such a situation is appreciably different to a traditional classroom model with one teacher and an assisting TA. In the team teaching model promoted by the Department of Education, a single lesson can be taught by two teachers, and this may be quite frustrating for the staff involved, as proven by experience among teachers in Australia who adopted such a model (Arkoudis, 1994). Equally, the division of teachers' roles may cause some confusion among EAL students, since they may perceive an EAL specialist as inferior to a curriculum teacher (Creese, 2005), who is usually the one to control the pace and stages of a lesson.

Induction courses and withdrawal lessons

EAL withdrawal provision, as opposed to mainstream inclusion, was popular in schools until the mid-1980s (Cable, *et al.* 2003:6). At that time, there was a general belief that students needed to acquire an adequate level of English before they could join the mainstream education. Within that setting, the methodology used in EAL teaching (referred to as ESL at that time) resembled that of EFL or school curriculum Modern Foreign Languages, and was largely separated from the curriculum (Cable, *et al.*, 2003:6). In the 1980s, isolating ESL students was regarded as a manifestation of social segregation, and also, as the main

cause of students' lack of progress in the language learning process, due to their being isolated from their native peers (DfES, 2006). For these reasons, and following the recommendation of the Commission for Racial Equality, the emphasis was shifted from withdrawal to mainstreaming (Cable, et al 2003:6). Even many years later, in 2001, Ofsted has voiced its position on withdrawal practices:

> All work should be firmly placed within the context of the National Curriculum or relevant coursework rather than consisting of decontextualised language activities. Time limits for withdrawal work should always be set and outcomes reviewed regularly (Ofsted, 2001:11).

Although Ofsted inspectors judged EAL provision to be less successful than support provided in class (Cable, *et al.*,2003), due to decentralisation of school management (Cable, *et al.*, 2003:6), or maybe because the above-quoted recommendation did leave some space for short term withdrawals, schools soon started to reintroduce so called "induction" periods (Cable, *et al.*, 2003:7). These are purposefully designed and timetabled withdrawal support programmes for newly arrived students with poor or no command of English. In order to attend these courses, students are withdrawn from mainstream subjects for a designated period of time (Cable, *et al.*, 2003:7). In some schools, such an intensive English teaching phase lasts between four to six weeks, and the students' attainment is carefully monitored (Manyena & Brady, 2007). Many schools, however, regard induction periods as compromising students' progress, since pupils miss out on mainstream education (Manyena & Brady, 2007).

After-school and break time enrichment activities - 'extended schools'

All state schools, including secondary schools, are encouraged to offer a well-developed extended provision – a range of extra-curricular activities for students and their families, usually provided after school, and aimed at raising achievement, motivation and participation (DfE, 2010a). An example of such inclusive projects run within this programme

could be 'family learning', which promotes whole family engagement in school activities, or 'adult learning', providing education for parents. In 2006, according to a national survey involving 1155 secondary schools in England, those with more than 50 per cent of pupils with EAL on roll were more likely to offer family learning than schools with fewer pupils with EAL (nfer.ac.uk). The data may suggest that EAL students and their families keep close links with the schools. This may result from greater awareness of their language needs and, thus, more need to secure both formal and informal language exposure.

Irrespective of 'extended schools' provision, LAs and schools are making efforts to involve parents, including refugee parents, in the education of their children. This happens via community link workers employed in some schools. There are also special workshops and cultural events for parents organised to improve their language, literacy, and IT skills. During such activities, parents are encouraged to communicate and mix with other parents and teachers. However, asylum seeker and refugee families tend to be reluctant to mix with host communities (Manyena & Brady, 2007).

Besides community and family involving events, all schools provide some after school clubs for their students on roll. These can be additional sports or music classes, but also literacy support sessions, e.g. homework clubs (Manyena & Brady, 2007).

2.4.2.5. The EAL students' progress monitoring

Whereas it may be relatively straightforward to assess students' English language proficiency e.g. using QCA Stages (QCA, 2000), and some school EAL provisions do so regularly (Manyena & Brady, 2007), it is much more difficult when it comes to overall curriculum progress, especially during the initial stages of language learning. It is hard to distinguish between language problems and subject knowledge while measuring EAL students' attainment. As the majority of tests and exams are administered in English, there is a risk that EAL pupils' progress may be underestimated, resulting in them being placed in low ability sets (Anderson & Macleroy, 2015), ignoring their cognitive abilities and the need

for suitably balanced challenges within the mainstream context. Such practices are commented on below:

> Using language to screen children was said to be 'bad' practice; children with poor language skills were put in lower sets despite their ability and sometimes 'schools judge by names of children – they assume that children with foreign names would not know or speak English (Manyena & Brady, 2007:23).

Using, and allowing students to use, bilingual dictionaries, also in an exam situation, is one of the suggested ideas to overcome assessment dilemmas (Manyena & Brady, 2007). In some LAs, especially those with a significant population of EAL learners, there is a pool of centralised resources that students may use, including textbooks, bilingual dictionaries, language mentors and interpretation service. Many schools have an active policy of recruiting bilingual support to reflect the many different languages spoken in schools (Manyena & Brady, 2007).

Still, when it comes to bilingual student's progress monitoring, all secondary Key Stage 4 students are assessed according to uniform criteria in GCSE exams, and "[their] achievement is measured based on their English performance alone" (Yiakoumetti, 2015b:11), regardless of their level of language proficiency. Despite great efforts on the part of EAL and mainstream staff, and students' hard work, EAL children tend to underperform in comparison with the rest of the schools' population (Bhattacharyya et al, 2003). Exam outcomes are used to measure schools' efficiency, and are constantly monitored by Ofsted and local communities. It is not surprising then that EAL learners are often perceived as "a burden rather than an asset to schools" (Anderson & Macleroy, 2015:352). British educational policy is very much established on "monolingual assumptions" (Anderson & Macleroy, 2015:368), which is particularly striking in a country so diverse, and multilingual. Interestingly, although English native speaking students indeed generally outperform EAL students when it comes to the traditional 'five A*-C including English and Maths' measure in GCSE exams, the latter group copes much better than their non-EAL peers in English

Baccalaureate (EBacc) (Tadeo, 2014), a new performance measure introduced by the government in 2010.

2.4.3. External agencies support for EAL students in secondary schools in England

With all these challenges described above, English schools are not left alone in their mission to support an EAL learner, minority student, often refugee or asylum seeker. There are volunteers, both individuals and organisations, as well as government-based bodies and charities, who offer help.

An example could be the Children's Society Harbour Project - a charity set up in 2001. It looks after asylum seeking and refugee children, and young people with emotional, psychological, and mental health problems. It is a school-based service located in East Oxford, close to a few schools with high numbers of refugee students on roll (homeoffice.gov.uk[2]). It is crucial for schools to develop good links with multiple support agencies in order to be able to cater for all students' needs including EAL and vulnerable pupils. One such organisation that supports teachers in this way is the National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum (NALDIC), which provides information on many aspects of EAL support, and offers EAL training and networking opportunities.

Until 2012 schools were provided first with so-called 'Section 11 funds', and then with an Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG), to secure specialist support for their EAL students. When EMAG was still in force, schools most commonly liaised with EMAS, the Ethnic Minority Achievement Services, a UK government-funded body introduced to support EAL, ESL and community language speakers. EMAS teachers and specialists supported students in mainstream settings to help them achieve their full potential. However, these funds are no longer ring fenced, as they have been recently replaced with Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), which can be assigned at schools' discretion to any aspect of teaching and learning they deem appropriate. As a result, many schools have seen their EAL provision reduced (Strand, 2015).

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter has provided a description of the current state of EAL provision in England, a snapshot of current practice in the mainstream environment, evidencing some considerable efforts undertaken by various educational professionals, teachers, and TAs, in an attempt to improve the learning experience of EAL students in the UK. Nevertheless, it is apparent that the measures currently advocated and implemented fail to successfully respond to the challenges of growing numbers of EAL learners and, more importantly, the very nature of their distinct linguistic needs as compared to native speakers. This is particularly evident in the case of secondary education, where the ultimate end-product, i.e. GCSE, the uniform success criterion, sees many EAL students underperforming. This has been exacerbated, in recent years, by "a notable shift in Britain towards performance models of education with emphasis on product" (Anderson & Macleroy, 2015:352). Unfortunately, this shift has not always been accompanied by any substantial governmental EAL-targeted guidance or support, as the bulk of central government documents on EAL good practice and provision date from before the introduction of the far-reaching educational reforms, such as the introduction of EBacc in 2010, removal of National Curriculum levels in 2014, or placing more emphasis on linear rather than modular exams and coursework. The tensions originating from shrinking EAL funds and growing demands on school performance combined with increased number of EAL pupils nationally could pose a threat to EAL learners' educational success.

The next chapter examines in more detail the possible causes of the shortfalls of the current practice, and investigates EAL learners' needs in this respect.

Chapter 3.

Some concerns around the EAL policy and practice in the mainstream education in England, and the call for improvement

3.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to critically investigate the current practice and approaches to EAL teaching and learning; also, from a theoretical point of view, to establish whether what has been offered in terms of EAL support is contributing well to EAL students' language development. The chapter provides some arguments to support a premise that the main EAL guidelines do not serve their purpose well enough, and schools applying policies based on these guidelines struggle to support EAL learners adequately. Some evidence supporting this view is provided, and conclusions drawn. The issues raised here by no means comprise an exhaustive list of matters connected with the topic, as the complexity of SLA theories, elusiveness of 'official' policies, as well as a wide variety of classroom practices would require a much more extensive report.

This chapter is organised around four interrelated sections. The first section describes those EAL policies which prevailed in the past and those which are advocated nowadays, explains theoretical principles shaping these policies, and points out some problematic aspects of the current system. The second section is devoted to analysis of some theoretical frameworks, and investigates whether they support the current approaches to EAL learning and teaching. The role of an EAL specialist in the mainstream setting is briefly discussed in the next section, with their demanding role being highlighted, and their effectiveness inspected. Section 4 mentions a possible alternative to the current EAL mainstreaming policy, and highlights a vital issue of the learning outcomes that needs to be considered.

3.2. The EAL policy and principles

In England there is no official EAL policy as such (Creese, 2010; Costley, 2014), and the decision concerning language programmes for linguistic minorities is left to be made by local education authorities (LEAs), and schools (Kibler, 2005). The Department of Education, and other organisations, provide LEAs and schools with general guidance on how to organise support for EAL learners (Kibler, 2005), but there is a lack of clear pedagogy for EAL teaching (Creese, 2010), which contributes to a diminishing EAL teachers' role in relation to mainstream teachers, and results in an urgent need to work out a systematic approach to integrating language teaching into the mainstream (Leung & Franson, 2001). As such, "national policy is open to a variety of interpretations" (Costley & Leung, 2009:151). Nevertheless, despite the resultant chaos of approaches for some, or vacuum of viable approaches for others, it is still possible to distinguish between two underlying principles shaping EAL practice in England over the last fifty years.

From the 1960s up to the early 1980s, the policy and practice within the EAL setting were based on the assumption that an EAL student has different educational needs than a native English-speaking pupil (Costley & Leung, 2009). This is when, in response to these needs, students were withdrawn from normal schooling to acquire *enough* language to be able to access the school's curriculum. From the 1980s this approach changed dramatically and, as a consequence, all students started to be viewed as "language learners with similar needs within an undifferentiated mainstream" (Costley & Leung, 2009:152). In this approach, which continues to be promoted, no allowance is made for students' ethnic, socioeconomic or linguistic background, and none of these factors are considered to influence educational success (Costley & Leung, 2009).

> The policy of mainstreaming means that all students are regarded as
> having similar learning needs that can be accommodated through the
> National Curriculum (Costley & Leung, 2009:168).

This framework, however, seems to be inconsistent, as despite its 'no difference' theory, it allows for, and even encourages, the existence of EAL specialists in schools (Costley & Leung, 2009).

The rationale beyond switching from the withdrawal system into mainstreaming, apart from the fact that it originates from the belief that all learners should have equal access to the curriculum (SCAA, 1996), and was aimed at avoiding discrimination, resulted also from an assumption that the mainstream environment would provide EAL students with real life stimuli, motivating them to use and learn the target language in order to interact with their peers, and express their needs and, as such, would create the very best opportunities to learn the language (Leung & Franson, 2001). The assumption that the mainstream setting is a universal remedy for language needs is most explicitly encompassed in the following quote:

> where bilingual pupils need extra help, this should be given in the classroom as part of normal lessons (DES, 1989:10.10).

However, since the 1980s, when mainstreaming started to be advocated by the educational authorities, many schools have still used withdrawal classes to teach EAL students (Costley & Leung, 2009), which may be an indication of schools' and teachers' approach towards this policy and its efficiency in providing adequate EAL support. After all, it is teachers who execute the policies, and their practice is driven by their students' educational needs, rather than strict uniform policies forced upon them by educators. As García points out:

> Sometimes this [bilingual education] pedagogy supports and follows the language policy, but most of the time, teachers create, contest, change and transform policies, as they enact their pedagogy (García, 2009:313).

Although, in talking about 'this pedagogy' the author relates to bilingual education pedagogy, the point she makes could be easily generalised over any teaching pedagogy applied by teachers. In the absence of a fully developed EAL pedagogy in the mainstream curriculum (Leung, 2005; Yakoumetti, 2015a), it seems that teachers are forced to resort to

trial and error in developing their professional practice. Furthermore, the lack of "policy that supports an integrated language and content curriculum for learners of English as an additional language" (Creese, 2010:99) makes it even more difficult for educators to respond adequately to the challenges posed by linguistically diverse mainstream classrooms.

In the absence of an EAL-targeted pedagogy, Yiakoumetti (2015a) proposes that introducing and developing translanguage pedagogies might contribute to solving the problem. However, she acknowledges Canagarajah's (2011b) argument that such pedagogies might not necessarily be suitable for developing EAL learners' academic discourse, which they will eventually need to be able to engage with and contribute to. Perhaps for this reason, "translanguaging in literacy is more challenging than in speaking" (Canagarajah, 2011a:402). Indeed, its applicability to the mainstream secondary school context, where EAL students' educational achievements are typically measured by their ability to produce good quality academic writing, may be somewhat problematic. Nevertheless, as Yiakoumetti (2015a; 2015b), points out, certain benefits of translanguage pedagogies may be perceived as worthy of future exploration. Accepting Vertovec's (2007) claim about entering the age of superdiversity, there never seemed to be a better time to do it. Anderson and Macleroy (2015) note:

> Within a broader research field too there is momentum behind more
> interdisciplinary approaches to second language acquisition, TESOL
> and bilingual education, reflecting a 'multilingual turn' (May 2014).
> Here, in place of an emphasis on language separation and native
> speaker norms, the shift is towards taking connections between
> languages and plurilingual literacies as a starting point. (*ibid*.:369).

Sadly, it seems that this *multilingual turn* has not yet arrived in a British mainstream classroom, nor does it seem to be on the horizon, taking into account the dominance of monolingual English ideology still strongly influencing educational policies, as Yiakoumetti (2015a) and Anderson and Macleroy (2015) remark.

Commenting on the introduction of the mainstreaming policy, Leung and Franson (2001) rightly point out that such a strong recommendation affecting so many students should be supported with extensive and reliable research; research that could assert supremacy of this policy over other approaches, including withdrawal, in terms of its usefulness for English language teaching and learning. Yet such research had not been undertaken prior to implementation of the mainstreaming policy (Leung & Franson, 2001), and our current knowledge of language learning does not justify it either (Costley, 2014). Therefore, it is likely that factors other than EAL students' best interest contributed to such policy changes. Costley (2014) points out to the "political nature of provision for EAL learners" (*ibid*:289; Carder, 2009), which clearly suggests that language learning theories and language research were not at the centre of the decisions around EAL support. However tempting it might be to enter into discussion of the political aspect of the policy decisions and its implications for social justice, such deliberations would extend beyond the scope of this work. Instead, the next section investigates the mainstreaming issue from the point of view of its usefulness to language learning, and inspects how it relates to theories of language learning.

3.3. The ugly side of mainstreaming – why it does not cater for all learning needs of EAL students.

As Leung and Franson (2001) noticed, there was no research carried out to justify the introduction of the mainstreaming strategy. What is even worse, mainstreaming "means a rejection of much of what we know from research in second language acquisition about language learning processes" (Costley, 2014:285). Indeed, the governmental guidelines considering mainstream as the right place for learning the language fail to find adequate justification in SLA theories. One such theory limits the mainstreamed students' learning chances, setting a condition stipulating that language learning will only take place if there is a "learning through interaction" element in a lesson (Levine, 1990:3):

> Unless that vital element of the 'mainstreaming' equation is also there, the strategy of mainstreaming must fall short of what it is intended to achieve: pupils' achievement in schools (Levine, 1990:3).

To investigate this theory and, more importantly, to check whether the mainstream setting allows for language acquisition by meeting the interaction element condition, some research in this area is analysed below.

A classroom study carried out by Pica (1991) shows that more advanced L2 students whose language level matched that of the other classmates benefited linguistically both from peer and teacher input, even if the subjects did not participate in the interaction themselves but simply witnessed it. However, in the case of less linguistically proficient students, an opportunity to interact and ask for clarification proved to be a condition of comprehension (Pica, 1994). The simple conclusion which can be drawn from Pica's study is that language exposure does not always result in language acquisition. If this is accepted as a true statement, then one cannot expect that placing an EAL learner in the mainstream classroom to access "normal lessons", as advocated by DES (DES, 1989:10.10), will provide sufficient underpinning for language acquisition to be achieved unless substantial adjustments are made. However, even then, as argued in Chapter 4, lessons may fail to provide fully utilised language learning opportunities. The above arguments have shown that mainstream language policy in its fundamental principles does not support SLA as understood in 'learning through interaction' theory.

Another theory that should be investigated is rather controversial Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985) (see section 4.2), according to which second language acquisition takes place merely through comprehensible input, and no interaction is necessary. This assumption, although it stands in direct opposition to the previously discussed theory, seems to be confirmed by Pica's (1991) research results described above, at least in the case of more advanced learners with levels of English matching these of their peers. If Krashen's assumption expressed in Input Hypothesis is accepted, claiming that no

interaction and no error correction, but sole comprehensible input is necessary for SLA to happen, it may appear not to be possible to create these learning conditions in a mainstream subject classroom. As Leung and Franson argue: "the focus on the delivery of the curriculum content may preclude the focus on language development" (Leung & Franson, 2001:171) and, as such, making curriculum input comprehensible for EAL learners is not a priority in the mainstream setting.

Another SLA theory that seems to be in direct opposition to the mainstreaming strategy is Faerch and Kasper's hypotheses formation theory, suggesting that language learning happens with students forming and testing language hypotheses (Faerch & Kasper, 1983). Under the language hypotheses formation theory there lies an assumption that learners test these hypotheses by seeing whether their utterances 'work'. In a classroom situation, teachers' feedback resulting from classroom interaction could make such testing possible. Unfortunately, this theory also does not seem to be compatible with underlying principles for mainstreaming policy, as in the mainstream classroom, where in many subject lessons the emphasis is put on the content and not so much on the language (Leung & Franson, 2001), such language hypotheses testing as described above is not encouraged by teachers. Instead, in agreement with their main concern, they value students' successful communication of the curriculum content both in writing as well as in oral production, over accuracy in terms of the language. Thus, teachers seem to be more likely to provide feedback on the content of students' output than on their linguistic accuracy. Students' contribution to the lessons is seen as a success in *getting through* the language to the subject content. Accuracy in terms of the language tends not to be the focus of a mainstream teacher's interest, or to be very high on their agenda (Harklau, 1994; Destino, 1996). As a result, error correction lacks consistency, as "teachers do not notice or choose not to react to some errors" (Lyster, *et al.*, 1999:458).

The scarcity of language error correction, whether resulting from the intensive focus on subject content, or mainstream teachers' lack of SLA knowledge (Haworth, 2009), can pose

serious threats to the process of learning the language of instruction. If a student produces a grammatically erroneous utterance, which despite its imperfections is still comprehensible, and there is no feedback indicating the existence of errors in this utterance, then such an erroneous structure is likely to become a language rule incorporated into the student's linguistic repertoire and language knowledge. As Pica points out, learners' mistaken hypotheses about L2 structural features are serious:

> such mistaken hypotheses lead to productions which, although grammatically imprecise, are communicatively functional, they can result in internalized rules within the learner's interlanguage grammar (Pica, 1994:68).

Moreover, even if linguistic feedback is provided to students it risks being unnoticed if it is implicit (Ellis, 2001b). According to some researchers (e.g. Schmidt & Frota, 1986), implicit error correction, such as asking for clarification, and negotiation of meaning, has less impact on students' language production than is gained by drawing learners' attention to the fact that they are being corrected (Schmidt & Frota, 1986). What seems to be important, then, in error correction, is that "correction must bring students' attention to their own errors, and secondly, it must do so in meaningful, communicative contexts. This combined focus on the structural and communicative properties of the L2 is somewhat reminiscent of the balance between explicit grammar instruction and classroom communication" (Pica, 1994:70).

Following on from what has already been mentioned on error correction practices in the mainstream, and hypotheses testing theory, it is rather obvious that EAL students do not have much opportunity to benefit from grammar error correction that could lead to language learning in the mainstream classroom. Even if mainstream teachers were more committed to providing linguistic feedback, as revealed in Pica's study (Pica, 1991), learners not actively participating in the interaction between the teacher and the class due to low levels of English proficiency would miss out on the opportunity to test their language hypotheses.

3.4. The myth of a 'superman' EAL specialist.

Despite the issues described in the previous section, it could be claimed that the mainstream setting should still be able to cater well for EAL students' needs, since, as pointed out in Chapter 2, some subject teachers are supported by EAL specialists, and between them they are in a position to deliver both language and curriculum content. Bourne (1989) presents four roles that an EAL specialist can undertake while supporting learners. Two of these may be undertaken in the mainstream as well as in withdrawal sessions. These are: the remedial role, in which individual attention to a student is offered, and the specialist role, which highlights EAL staff expertise in SLA theories. The other two roles are said to be exclusively mainstream-based. These are: the catalyst role, in which an EAL specialist offers their expertise to the rest of their colleagues, and is seen as an "agent for change", and the good teacher role, expressing itself in team teaching (Bourne, 1989:107). The roles, purposeful and well described, seem to be well tailored to any classroom situation. This section discusses how this works in practice.

It is argued that, on the one hand, due to the lack of explicit methodology for EAL teaching, and the fact that EAL does not have the status of a curriculum subject (Leung, 2001), EAL support staff are undermined, in comparison with mainstream subject teachers (Leung and Franson, 2001; Creese, 2010). On the other hand, subject teachers expect the EAL staff to somehow almost supernaturally fix *the problem of language* inefficiencies that prevent students from accessing subject lessons' content:

> The fact that some pupils might not be able to understand the content
> because of their current level of English language development is […]
> a problem to be fixed (Leung & Franson 2001:170).

However, miracles do not happen, and for an EAL specialist "working in the mainstream classroom, the attempt to maintain a clear language teaching focus may be problematic" (Leung & Franson, 2001:170), and this is for several reasons. Firstly, mainstream teachers view their role as content deliverers only, and the language specialists' role as the one

designed to deal with EAL learners' *language problems*, seeing learning the language as a separate process from learning the curriculum (Leung & Franson, 2001; Gravelle, 2003). This is despite of the fact that "[inclusion] policy argues that all teachers are responsible for all students. Students learning EAL, therefore, are the responsibility of classroom teachers of subject curriculum" (Creese, 2010:100). The second issue is connected with the nature of the mainstream setting, in which, by nature, the most prominent concern is the curriculum rather than language content (Leung & Franson, 2001). Creese continues: "subject knowledge continues to [be] dominant with little room for a language agenda in the mainstream classroom" (Creese, 2010:105). Another issue is the lack of clear guidance on how a subject teacher and an EAL specialist should cooperate, or co-teach in the mainstream classroom (Ellis, 1985). While it is advised that "co-operative teaching is not the sticking together of two pedagogies, but the development of something new" (Riley & Bleach, 1985:88), there is no explanation of what that 'something new' should look like. As Riley and Bleach (1985) pointed out, a clear representation of what good practice looks like would be desirable.

As a result, the frustration and tension between curriculum subject teachers and EAL specialists is apparent (Creese, 2005), and may indicate that the current mainstreaming governmental guidance does not work for an EAL setting. Dissatisfaction with the current state of the art in the EAL support system is clearly visible both from the perspective of subject specialists and EAL specialists. Costley and Leung (2009) cite the example of Miss B, an EMAG (Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant) teacher, whose post was funded by a special government grant offered to schools enrolling high numbers of ethnic minority students. In her workplace, a primary school in London, two-thirds of the school population were assessed as having EAL needs. Miss B, who had been supporting EAL learners in the mainstream for a year, applied to the school's head for permission to alter the support model in agreement with what she felt would work better for her students.

> Miss B put forward a case for working with EMAG students in individual groups separate from their mainstream classes – a withdrawal programme of sorts – arguing that her work would be more effective in targeting students' particular needs in small, individual groups rather than in mainstream classrooms where she felt somewhat restricted in terms of what she was able to do (Costley & Leung, 2009:158).

Leung and Franson (2001) report an example illustrating the situation in the other camp:

> Very often the ESL support teacher is expected to deal with the language difficulties. Ros, an ESL support teacher, made this point: You can be presented with a chapter from a science book, for example, and told this is what we're doing in the next four weeks, can you take them [ESL pupils] away and go through it with them? (Leung & Franson, 2001:170-171).

In both of these singular but by no means isolated examples, education professionals, EAL and subject teacher alike, saw withdrawal as a better suited provision for their EAL learners. Although they represent different perspectives, their attitude implies frustration with the current mainstreaming model. In both of these cases, it is apparent that the EAL support teacher is often expected to take on the whole burden of the language delivery. In this case two questions arise:

- Is it plausible to expect an EAL specialist to teach English *successfully* to EAL students within the mainstream lesson framework?
- How can the government-advocated language learning through curriculum take place in the case of a curriculum subject teacher being largely unprepared to participate in the language teaching process, even to the extent of making their input comprehensible to EAL students?

Finally, there are students whose linguistic needs may go even further, much beyond the mainstream setting, such as students with no prior education in their mother tongue who, although orally proficient, may never achieve "grade level performance" (Kibler 2005:16).

Even if they do manage to attain average achievement levels, it may take them up to 10 years to do so (Dooley, 2009). Such students, with no, or severely interrupted schooling, e.g. refugees (Dooley, 2009), quite naturally will need a different approach. Yet, as evidenced in the examples above, the mainstream setting hardly caters for the needs of EAL students with good L1 educational background, so it is doubtful that it would be able to support more disadvantaged EAL learners in the naturalistic mainstream immersion setting.

Over the past twenty-five years or so, after mainstreaming became the preferred and advocated EAL approach in British schools, the lack of mainstream EAL curriculum, pedagogy or methodology (Creese 2010; Yiakoumetti, 2015a; Costley, 2014) is still one of the reasons why this setting cannot successfully fulfil its aims. Another reason for its limited success is the lack of theoretical background and research which could strongly advocate its purposefulness for SLA. Nevertheless, however tempting it could be to blame the government for lack of clear EAL guidelines, subject teachers for lack of engagement in language delivery, or EAL specialists for lacking 'the magic wand', the reason why mainstreaming seems not to be an ideal answer to EAL learners' problems may go far deeper, residing in complex linguistic theories, or, on the contrary, lie just on the surface. Creese observes that "it is extremely difficult in the English context to introduce a language learning agenda into the subject classroom" (Creese, 2010:105). Surely, it is even more so when there are no strategic solutions or officially supported policies. It seems that the mode of thinking about EAL learners, the way they are conceptualised, often perceived as a source of 'a problem', as characterised by Leung and Franson earlier, makes it impossible to construct a truly inclusive language policy and, as a consequence, a language pedagogy to suit EAL learners' needs in the mainstream. It seems that the inclusive characteristics of language policies are merely declarative, while educational reality remains faithful to monolingual standards (Yiakoumetti, 2015a). It appears that such reluctance to embrace and realise the benefits of multilingualism is the reason why EAL students and EAL specialists are often left to themselves, struggling to secure educational success.

3.5. The alternative approach – reintroducing benefits of explicit language instruction.

Both researchers and practitioners advocating mainstreaming refer to language accessibility, or rather ability to overcome *language barrier*, in order to access the curriculum content. However, two facts are worth noting here: the language should not be perceived as a barrier, or even mere medium of instruction, but instead should be perceived as an important element of a child's education. If it is agreed that English is so important in itself, either apart from or just because of being a key to the curriculum, it seems obvious that it needs to be taught more explicitly. All the concerns with this approach as not generating enough context for language use, or purpose for language acquisition in enough capacity as to motivate students to learn the language in addition to learning the curriculum, are unfounded, as learners immersed in an English-speaking school and community will have enough stimuli to find the English instruction desirable.

Secondly, it is worth pointing out that accessing education, succeeding in comprehension, and gaining knowledge through English – an aim that seems to be a top priority for educators and researchers looking for better methods to help a student access the curriculum content – contributes to the final product, but does not constitute it. In terms of a secondary school, for an EAL student, or indeed for any secondary school student including native speakers of English, this final product takes the form of GCSE exam grades, as they will often shape a young person's future. In achieving this goal, it is obvious that the most important issue is the production of the language; dissemination of the knowledge and skills gained in secondary education. Here, accessing, understanding, and gaining the knowledge will not be sufficient for an EAL learner, as they are likely to struggle with output, also in terms of the language structure. It seems overly optimistic to follow Mohan and van Naerssen's assumption that "as we acquire new areas of knowledge, we acquire new areas of language and meaning." (Mohan & van Naerssen, 1997:2). In contrast, Leung and Franson argue that:

there is [...] little reason to assume that comprehension of content ideas at a broad level would automatically lead to ability to use English to carry out academic tasks effectively. In other words, receptive ability is related to but not the same as productive ability. (Leung & Franson, 2001:171).

Swain (1995) notes that in pursuit of accessing the input, students may use contextual clues and resort to paralinguistic signals, but:

when trying to use language to express meaning, the pupil has to attend to all aspects of the language system in order to communicate effectively; and the development of this ability requires at least some teacher input, meaningful use and practice and helpful feedback (Leung & Franson, 2001:171).

Leung and Franson point out that in a classroom preoccupied with curriculum content, developing such language skills enabling the carrying out of an academic task in its productive aspect may not be "naturally" possible (Leung & Franson, 2001), contrary to what government appears to assume and advocate (DES, 1989).

Apart from theoretical principles concerning teaching language through mainstream curriculum, mentioned earlier in this chapter, there is also the issue of students' ability to produce good quality, academic output, as, even if the mainstream setting could satisfy the governmental requirements of equal access to the National Curriculum, lack of focus on high quality language production does not provide an EAL learner with equal opportunities to achieve. In the mainstream environment, reception and accessibility seems to be prioritised over production ability. The overpowering drive for curriculum accessibility and comprehension leaves language issues behind in terms of creating learning aims. It is said that mainstreaming provides a learner with real life stimuli for language acquisition (Leung & Franson, 2001), but students who can access lessons content may not necessarily perceive mastering language as another goal that needs to be achieved, as there is no focus on it in the mainstream context (Leung & Franson, 2001). If the language of instruction is perceived as a barrier to access that instruction, and this is the approach

visible in the education practices described in this chapter, then once it is accessed, very often a full success is assumed, both by a subject teacher as well as a student. Instead, the language should be understood as a medium of both input and output, but more significantly as an aim in itself alongside curriculum content. The solution to this problem could be twofold. Firstly, educators and policy makers need to stop pretending that differences between EAL and native English speaking students are non-existent in terms of learning needs and learning processes. Secondly, alongside mainstream immersion, which could provide content access and real life stimuli as advocated earlier, there is a need for more explicit language instruction. The remaining chapters are devoted to searching for the most suitable approach to EAL teaching in mainstream schools.

3.6. Conclusion

The arguments raised in this chapter suggest that EAL learners in English mainstream schools are in a 'no win situation'. On the one hand, EAL methodologies seem to be applied in schools on more experimental grounds (Riley & Bleach, 1985). On the other hand, at least formally, schools try to follow methodologies included in governmental policies, even those of an implicit nature. However, as demonstrated in this chapter, these practices and guidelines do not always follow SLA research. It is enough to state that the underlying principles of the EAL framework are self-contradictory. The 'no difference' and 'equal access' approaches stay in a direct opposition to the government-acknowledged and supported need for EAL specialists' support, such as e.g. EMAG teachers (Costley & Leung, 2009).

Moreover, the issue of perceiving language as 'a problem' did not cease with enforcing the policy of mainstream immersion. Due to the fact that for curriculum teachers the main concern is the lesson content, there is a high risk that for EAL students it has also become the goal in itself, marginalizing the need for mastering the language. Perhaps, in the absence of support for creating and implementing well-balanced programmes of directed

language instruction, the lack of focus on language skills and language structures, so apparent in school practice nowadays, discourages EAL learners from gaining language competence to a good academic level. Thus, the need for an explicit language instruction seems apparent. The next two chapters investigate which approaches to explicit language instruction could prove most useful for supporting EAL learners.

Chapter 4.

Literature review: The place of language instruction in second language teaching

The literature review section is divided into two extensive and substantial chapters – Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. Chapter 4 has two aims. Firstly, through presentation of selected approaches to language teaching and learning, it seeks justification for language instruction as such, and FFI in particular. Secondly, it introduces the taxonomy of instruction in form, exploring its many dimensions, including the two approaches that constitute the focus of this research – Isolated and Integrated FFI. Once the benefits of instruction in form have been established and its characteristics examined, the next chapter, Chapter 5, investigates the teaching methods that could be employed to implement instruction in form. It also explores selected linguistic theories underpinning these methods.

4.1. Introduction

The place of language instruction and, more specifically, grammar instruction has been a highly contentious issue: "nothing in the field of language pedagogy has been as controversial as the role of grammar teaching (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011:1). Therefore, it is not surprising that a homogeneous, widely accepted theory of language learning has not emerged yet (Ellis, 2005d), and maybe never will. Long (1991) goes even further, claiming that "it is no exaggeration to say that language teaching methods do not exist – at least, not where they would matter, if they did, in the classroom" (*ibid*.:39). Perhaps due to these controversies, language teaching practice has over the years been exposed to what is considered 'fashionable' in second language teaching at a particular point in time (Bourne, 2007; Long 2000; Slavin, 2010).

This chapter investigates second and foreign language instruction, with grammar instruction as the main focus. As already stated, it is a rather controversial topic, and "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" (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011:1). Thus, the review of the literature on grammar instruction, undertaken in this chapter, includes also a short section on the natural exposure approach which disavows any instruction in form. The discussion then begins with a brief analysis of the naturalistic second language acquisition (section 4.2), and moves on to systematized concepts of language instruction, moving from broader concepts, such as explicit versus implicit language instruction (section 4.3), through focus on forms versus focus on form syllabuses (section 4.4), towards exclusively communicative settings of form-focus instruction (FFI), its interdivisions and use (section 4.5). The discussion is followed by a conclusion, which recaps and emphasises the most salient points of this chapter to link the work to the EAL context in British mainstream schools.

Many references to SLA theory and research quoted in the literature review chapters of this work date back to the 1990s and earlier. This is when the research into second language learning became a flourishing and hotly debated issue, which is reflected in the vast, unprecedented influx of published research papers during that time (see Gass, 2009). The 1990s saw increased interest in research into form-focused instruction and its impact on learning grammar (Ellis, 2012). Many of the findings and hypotheses which emerged in the last decades of the previous century had a profound role in shaping our present understanding of language learning processes and practice, acting as a starting point for further explorations. Thus, these prominent sources are frequently referred to in the discussion below.

4.2. Zero language instruction approach

Among numerous strategies and methods for mastering a second language, derived from SLA and second language learning theories, the one that does not involve any formal instruction seems a very tempting if not a miraculous one. The theoretical background for

this zero instruction language acquisition approach, or, what Ellis calls "natural methods" approach (Ellis, 2001b:17), constitutes the hypothesis advocated by Krashen (1981), that language acquisition takes place through mere exposure to comprehensible input. In this view SLA and L1 acquisition processes are perceived as comparable. What is more, supporters of such a natural method believe that L2 cannot be learnt by instruction for it is too broad a phenomenon to be taught (Krashen, 1992), and according to some researchers (Krashen, 1982; Reber, 1989) only simple language rules may be learnt, while more complex ones need to be acquired implicitly through the language exposure. Krashen (1981) advocates second language acquisition associated with effortless attainment of L2, as opposed to second language learning gained through language instruction. The competences resulting from these two distinct processes are then deemed to be stored separately (Schwartz, 1993; Sharwood Smith, 2004; Krashen,1981), and accessed separately for output, as the non-interface position assumes, rejecting a possibility of explicit into implicit knowledge transformation (Krashen, 1981). According to Krashen, teaching grammar does not result in grammar acquisition. The language competence originating from acquisition is deemed to be superior to learnt competence, as the latter requires the use of 'the Monitor' to be applied in language production, a device that filters output assuring its accuracy, which compromises fluency and spontaneous language use in a communicative situation (Krashen, 1981). This naturalistic approach favours a natural interaction as the only way to develop underlying grammar, with instruction viewed as destructive to language acquisition (Krashen, 1982; Truscott, 1996, 1999).

Such a theory, although still held by some researchers, has received quite substantial criticism in the past decades (see e.g. Brumfit, 1984; Long & Robinson, 1998; Swain, 1985, 1993). Ellis highlights "research findings that suggest that "natural" language learning does not lead to high levels of grammatical and sociolinguistic competence" (Ellis, 2001b:17), and argues that evidence originating from SLA theories as well as linguistic pedagogy provides "a compelling argument in favor of teaching grammar" (Ellis, 2001b:17), as a

number of empirical and extensive meta-linguistic studies have evidenced (Doughty & Williams, 1998a; Ellis, 2002; Lyster, 2004; Lyster & Saito, 2010; Norris & Ortega, 2000; Samuda, 2001; Spada, 2011; Spada & Tomita, 2010; Williams, 2005). If, then, grammar instruction is so desirable, the most efficient types of grammar instruction need to be identified. In the following sections of this chapter some approaches to language instruction, and particularly grammar instruction, are discussed.

4.3. Implicit versus explicit instruction

While discussing instruction it is necessary to distinguish between implicit and explicit instruction types – the dichotomy defined by DeKeyser (1994) as follows:

> Implicit means that no rules are formulated; explicit means the rules
> are formulated (either by the teacher or the student, either before or
> after examples/practice) (DeKeyser, 1994:188).

Both of these types of instruction may be potentially challenging. If feedback is regarded as a way of providing language focus then, as Ellis (2001b) points out, if it is of an explicit nature it may interfere with the communicative purpose of a certain task. If it is implicit, however, it risks not fulfilling its function, as it might go unnoticed by a learner. These challenges are potentially present for other than feedback instruction types. Nevertheless, as Williams (1995) points out, referring to Ellis' proposition (1993), it is "the development of explicit rule-based knowledge" that is vital for a language learner in helping them to analyse input and aid output (Williams, 1995:12).

Although, indeed, explicit rule-based knowledge helps students with comprehension as well as production, it is debatable whether it is as important as implicit knowledge in building learners' proficiency in L2. Many SLA researchers holding different views on SLA principles, including Krashen's theory followers, would certainly strongly agree on the superiority of implicit knowledge in this respect. "In the view of most researchers, competence in an L2 is primarily a matter of implicit knowledge" (Ellis, 2005d:214). However, Norris and Ortega, having analyzed 49 studies on L2 instruction, concluded that implicit instruction is not as

effective as explicit instruction in the process of language learning (Norris & Ortega, 2000). Is it then possible that, combining Ellis' observation (1993) referred to before with the above research outcomes, explicit instruction could lead to implicit knowledge, contrary to the assumptions of the non-interface model? Reversed movement does not raise any controversies, as it is easily accepted that implicit knowledge can become explicit as learners 'unpack' and analyse formulaic expressions, whether acquired in the course of language exposure or through an implicit instruction – "implicit knowledge is procedural, is held unconsciously and can only be verbalized if it is made explicit" (Ellis 2005d:214). As for the instruction, however, it is more debatable whether explicit knowledge not originating from implicit cognition can be used with the same fluency, accuracy and overall success as implicit knowledge seems to be. An answer to this question could help to determine whether an explicit instruction can lead to implicit knowledge. According to the weak interface model, this is possible (Ellis, 2005d). It is also argued that provided with plenty of communicative practice, learners' explicit knowledge does become implicit (DeKeyser, 1998). VanPatten's research findings on input processing (VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993), discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, may be perceived as an argument against such a strong case for the role of language practice in SLA. Bearing this in mind, Ellis' weak interface position (Ellis, 1993) might be more accurate here, claiming that "explicit knowledge primes a number of key acquisitional processes, in particular 'noticing' and 'noticing the gap' (Schmidt, 1994)" (Ellis, 2005d:215), which seems to be advocating drawing students' attention to linguistic features rather than focusing on language practice itself.

4.4. Focus on form versus focus on formS

It can be generalised that approaches to language teaching can be divided into three types:

1. those primarily based on explicit and structural grammar instruction – a traditional way of language teaching, still widely used in some educational contexts, especially

in English as a foreign language (EFL) classes (Shi, 2012), but in other settings as well, e.g. EAP (Demirtaş & Sert, 2010).

2. those based on purely communicative syllabuses, with no language instruction provided

3. those that combine language instruction with communicative focus (a mixture of the two above)

The third approach incorporates what has been defined by Long as "focus on form" – directing "students' attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication" (Long, 1991:45-6). This approach works by "briefly shifting learners' attention to linguistic code features as problems occur in the context of an otherwise meaning-focused lesson in a sequence determined by their own internal syllabuses, current processing capacity, and learnability constraints" (Long, 2000:179). On the other hand, the *focus on formS* approach is applied in lessons "consisting principally of work on the linguistic items that students are expected to master one at a time […] with little if any communicative use of the second language" (Long, 2000:181). It refers to a teaching methodology "equated with the traditional teaching of discrete points of grammar in separate lessons" (Sheen, 2002:303).

Discussing approaches to the instruction type typical for Long's *focus on formS*, researchers have been using terms such as *formal instruction*, *grammar instruction, code-focused instruction* or even broad *form-focused instruction* to refer to approaches traditionally contrasted with instruction that is meaning-focused (Doughty & Williams, 1998b:4). It must be noted, however, that the distinction between *focus on formS* and *focus on form* is much finer than that. Both of these types of instruction draw attention to form, and do not constitute opposite ends of the schematic form-meaning continuum (Doughty & Williams, 1998b). That is, within instruction concentrated on form there are various approaches, out of which some can be perceived as moving closer than others towards the solely communicative and meaning-focused instruction, yet are far from it.

Figure 4.1 illustrates how these three syllabuses are conceptualised in the present work, how they relate to each other, and how other approaches could position themselves in relation to them. The focus on formS, or traditional approaches, are placed on the opposite side of the spectrum to the mainstreaming approach, where EAL pupils are immersed in mainstream lessons with primary focus on meaning, content, and communication. A more language-oriented approach, but still standing in direct opposition to focus on formS, would be the pure form of communicative language teaching (strong CLT). Long refers to such contexts as "focus on meaning" (Long, 1991:44).

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┌──────────────┐                                    ┌──────────────┐                    ┌─────┐
│ focus on formS │----------------------------------│ focus on form │------------------│ CLT │--CLIL −mainstreaming
└──────────────┘                                    └──────────────┘                    └─────┘              (immersion)
(grammar based
syllabuses)
```
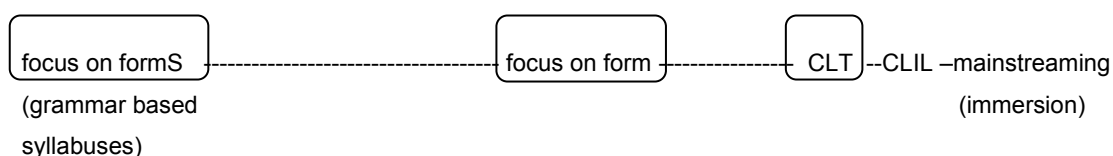
Figure 4.1: Three main approaches to language teaching on a continuum.

Focus on form syllabus originates from dissatisfaction with the first two types of approaches (Fotos, 1998). It would be then worth considering where such disappointment with the first two syllabuses might originate. Both focus on formS, as well as strong CLT, being mutually exclusive, are very far from ideal. CLT can be considered incomplete or insufficient due to lack of grammar instruction (Fotos, 1998). It is argued that in CLT, particularly less salient linguistic forms, or those similar but not identical to a learner's L1, fail to be noticed by a student, and consequently are unable to be learnt or acquired without being pointed out (Williams, 1995). Moreover, in CLT and many immersion settings, feedback can no longer be perceived as a learning tool, for "it is unclear if a teacher response of 'Good' or 'OK', addresses form, meaning or both, or is simply positive affective feedback" (Williams, 1995:13), and in CLT classrooms it is more typical for feedback not to be form-based, but rather meaning-based. It is for the above reasons that, as Williams observed, in Canadian immersion programmes which followed CLT syllabuses, students continued to make

frequent grammatical errors, even in the basic structures, despite being exposed to extensive comprehensible input and real life communicative opportunities (Williams, 1995).

Focus on formS, at the other extreme, fails language learners by depriving them of opportunity to use learnt structures in purposeful communication. As Fotos reports of Long's observations, "it is not surprising that teaching grammatical forms in isolation usually fails to develop the ability of learners to use forms communicatively unless they are psycholinguistically ready to acquire them anyway (Pienemann, 1984)" (Fotos, 1998:302). Long's focus on form also incorporates elements of grammar instruction; however, it seems to be more *ad hoc* resulting from communicative purposefulness, and is never decontextualised. It seems that combining linguistic instruction with communication and meaning provides a well-balanced alternative for language teaching approaches listed as points 1 and 2 above. Despite obvious deficiencies in these two approaches, there are still those who follow the first type of teaching approach (see Fotos, 1998; Shi, 2012, and Demirtaş & Sert, 2010 for discussion or/and examples), and, just the opposite, "those who advocate minimal to no interruption in communication, limiting attention to grammar by means of corrective feedback (Doughty & Varela, 1998)" (Sheen, 2002:303). For supporters of either of these methodologies - those attached to grammar syllabuses and those worshipping a purely communicative approach - moving towards the focus on form syllabus proposed by Long may raise certain objections. It may be viewed as another way to concentrate on grammar instruction, an idea that seems to be the exact opposite of what the current language teaching methodologies promote. Fotos notes that:

> [...] many educators might think that focus on form is exactly what
> EFL learners do not need, since their major problem is not the lack of
> instruction on grammatical features, but the lack of opportunities for
> communicative language use. (Fotos, 1998:301).

It seems that such reservations may be only voiced by those who are not familiar with the focus on form syllabus principles or focus on form type of instruction, which may be partially

due to some problems with availability of guidance on what focus on form comprises, and how it is applied in lessons (Williams, 1995) – an issue discussed further in this section. On the other hand, even if the focus on form approach is adequately interpreted as the one which promotes the communicative factor in a grammar instruction, in some of the more traditional teaching contexts, moving from focus on formS towards focus on form may raise fears that what is associated with more communicative approaches – seemingly unstructured noise of students chatting combined with decentralised teacher's position – may be perceived as inappropriate in an educational setting: "one drawback of many activities designed to promote communicative language use is that they are perceived to be frivolous" (Fotos, 1998:304). Such a view is not only expressed in EFL contexts, but may be transferred from such contexts to EAL classrooms with students who, having experienced more traditional, focus on formS, types of instruction in their home countries, could perceive focus on form syllabuses encountered in English speaking countries as inadequately structured for classrooms, and thus not desirable, worthwhile or motivating enough.

Equally, in the CLT environment, moving towards focus on form may be approached with caution, as any type of instruction in the communicative language teaching approach is treated with suspicion and fear that it could bring language teaching back to the dark ages of the grammar translation or audiolingual method, or, in the best case scenario, could result in breaking up the authenticity of communicative focus. When students are told during form-focused instruction (FFI) what the focus of a task is, "it can be argued that the task ceases to be communicative and becomes a situational grammar exercise" (Ellis, 2001b:25).

These reservations, as well as differences in opinion among researchers and educators on what is most beneficial for a language learner may originate from the fact that there are two completely different worlds of language teaching and learning, namely EAL/ESL[4] (English as an Additional/Second Language), where a learner is surrounded with English language,

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[4] EAL and ESL are used interchangeably here, and throughout this work.

and EFL (English as a Foreign Language), where a learner's contact with English is often limited to a language classroom. These are very distinct learning environments, which should determine teaching methodologies, yet there seems to be only one research pool, where SLA research findings and analyses seem to land, and out of which linguists and researchers pull out their evidence and arguments to build theories to recommend and promote so-called 'good practice'. Such a uniform approach is apparent even in the most prominent publications, one example being the title of Ellis' chapter: "The Place of Grammar Instruction in the Second/Foreign Language Curriculum" (Ellis, 2001b), where ESL and EFL contexts are uttered in the same breath. Nevertheless, there are certain distinctions noted by some researchers when it comes to the focus on form syllabus. Fotos sees different challenges that focus on form could bring for EAL and EFL settings. Referring to exposing learners to target grammatical forms, she maintains that "such repeated encounters are necessary to reinforce the focus-on-form treatment" (Fotos, 1998:303). She points to the fact that in an EFL context such a condition is difficult to meet, and suggests that an intervention in the form of task-based activities may be necessary in such an instance (Fotos, 1998). Nevertheless, focus on form may bring benefits to both teaching settings, only in different dimensions:

> Whereas, in the ESL situation, a focus-on-form approach is used to position grammar instruction within an existing communicative framework, in the EFL context it provides a strong rationale for introducing communicative language activities into the grammar classroom (Fotos, 1998:304).

Here, another problem was experienced by those educators both from EAL and EFL settings who might want to adopt Long's focus on form approach, namely lack of guidance on how to apply it in practice, with the only signpost directing them in their endeavours being instruction materials developed by researchers as a part of their study on Long's phenomena (Williams, 1995). Examples of such suggestions comprise materials drawing attention to rare linguistic forms, using authentic texts, or employing communicative tasks

where the subject of communication is a grammar issue itself (Williams, 1995). Also, Long (1991) himself recommended task-based language instruction altogether with "indirect, context-based presentation of grammar forms, rather than overt, teacher-led instruction" (Fotos, 1998:302). It may be an exaggeration to so claim, but it is quite characteristic of researchers not to concentrate too much on the pragmatic application of their discoveries. Instead, they usually sail away to discover new lands.

> Clarke (1994) […] notes that those who pursue research are rarely found in language classrooms and that the knowledge and experience of classroom teachers are rarely incorporated into theory construction (Williams, 1995:12).

Soon after the focus on formS versus focus on form dichotomy emerged, not only was guidance on how to apply the latter in practice rather scarce, but also not much was known about the nature of the focus on form concept. Fotos, for instance, argued that focus on form means "to provide some type of implicit focus on grammar during communicative language teaching" (Fotos, 1998: 301). Not only the phrase 'some type' seems disturbingly vague here, but also striking is the fact that focus on form instruction is limited to a focus of implicit nature. In the same paper, however, Fotos reports some instances of research, including her own (Fotos, 1994) in form-focused instruction (FFI) which were explicit in nature and proved to be beneficial for learners (Cadierno, 1995; Skehan, 1996a). Similarly, Ellis understands Long's focus on form as "reactive feedback while learners' primary attention is on message" (Ellis, 2001b:25), thus rejecting the possibility that it could constitute a carefully pre-planned part of a lesson. What is interesting here is that spontaneous FFI, referred to by Ellis as incidental FFI (Ellis, 2001a), is perceived by some other researchers as very difficult to apply in practice (Barbieri & Eckhardt, 2007).

As demonstrated in the above examples, focus on form instruction has flourished in numerous interpretations since the term was coined by Long in 1991, including being viewed as planned/proactive and unplanned/reactive, as well as implicit and explicit FFI

(Barbieri & Eckhardt, 2007). The originator of the concept saw focus on form as involving a more implicit language instruction (see Long, 1991 earlier in this section), but soon his creation started living its own life, and proved a prolific research material, not only being a subject of numerous studies (see Norris & Ortega, 2000 for a review of some studies), but also being interpreted in a variety of different ways (see a discussion further in this section). It is not surprising, however, that despite intensive attention devoted to the concept of focus on form, many years later, as Spada (2011) admits, some primary questions on second language instruction generally, and FFI more specifically, remain unanswered. Yet, there is some interesting evidence confirming the legitimacy of some features of FFI, particularly when FFI is of explicit nature (see Norris & Ortega, 2000; Spada, 2011). This conclusion confirms what was mentioned in the earlier discussion on CLT's feedback, as well as on students' inability to notice certain linguistic aspects by themselves (Williams, 1995), which is often the case in communicative and content-based contexts. Research has also shown that corrective feedback is more effective when it is explicit, especially in CLT and content-based language classes (Lyster & Saito, 2010).

Although the effects of SLA instruction proved durable (Norris & Ortega, 2000), it is still not certain whether it is an explicit or implicit type of knowledge that is benefiting from L2 instruction, i.e. if students could use language learnt in this way for spontaneous communication, or only if specifically focusing on accuracy (Spada, 2011). Nevertheless, "there is increasing evidence that instruction, including explicit FFI, can positively contribute to unanalyzed spontaneous production, its benefits not being restricted to controlled/analyzed L2 knowledge" (Spada, 2011: 233).

The concept of focus on form was not entirely new (Fotos 1998), as similar concepts had been proposed before Long's dichotomy, such as Johnson's unificationist position, entailing teaching of language use and structure together within a communicative framework (Johnson, 1982). As Williams speculates, "chances are teachers are already using such activities in their classrooms, but haven't put a name to them and perhaps do not realize

their importance to research" (Williams, 1995:16). It seems that a well-known notion has now been classified and named.

Perhaps it is for this reason, or maybe the fact that the term so closely resembles the focus on formS term in its visual representation, that Long's focus on form has been used with varying accuracy or unanimity. As Sheen points out, there is considerable terminological confusion around the concepts of focus on form and focus on formS, with these terms being used to refer to any grammar instruction (Sheen, 2002). Also, Fotos uses one of the terms in an ambiguous way: "Arguing against 'focus-on-form' syllabuses, where grammar points comprised the entire lesson content, Long suggested […]" (Fotos, 1998: 301-302). There has been some inconsistency and ambiguity among researchers in terminological usage while referring to different approaches to instruction in form (Williams, 2005). A multitude of terms have been used to describe a variety of practices in this area, and different studies applied a "somewhat different definition of form-focused instruction" (Williams, 1995:13). This poses a difficulty in unequivocally defining these approaches and relating them to one another in order to compose a transparent taxonomy, but also, it interferes with drawing unequivocal conclusions from research to confirm efficiency of focus on form instructions.

The biggest issue in using the variety of terms is that many of them are commonly and colloquially used, and have not been as finely defined, as in Long's abovementioned terms. For that reason, it is indeed difficult to position them on a continuum, or even assign some distinctive characteristics to them. An example could be the widely used *form-focused instruction* term, which "is variously used to denote the teaching of linguistic formS in isolation, as well as to describe teaching that integrates attention to forms, meaning, and use" (Doughty & Williams, 1998b:4). Maybe it was for that reason that Ellis decided to adopt the *form-focused instruction* term to embrace many aspects of instruction in form, such as ""analytic teaching" (Stern, 1990), "focus-on-form", and 'focus-on-forms' (Long, 1991), corrective feedback/error correction, and "negotiation of form" (Lyster & Ranta, 1997)" (Ellis, 2001a:2).

In addition, the fundamental principles behind the focus on form syllabus are not always understood in the same way. Whereas Long assigns the theory of similarities between L1 and L2 acquisition to be the principle of focus on meaning (Long, 1991), which corresponds to CLT, content base instruction (CBI) and immersion in this work, Sheen argues that "'focus on form' derives from an assumed degree of similarity between first and second language acquisition positing that the two processes are both based on an exposure to comprehensible input arising from natural interaction" (Sheen, 2002:303). Yet, any uncertainty based on a variety of interpretations of the focus on form phenomenon could be insignificant if we accept that Long's focus on form is a part of a broad concept, incorporating a spectrum of form-focused instruction (FFI), positioning itself closer towards those syllabuses which have an element of instruction firmly embedded in a purposeful communicative context, as presented in Figure 4.1 earlier in this section.

4.5. Isolated and Integrated form-focused instruction

More recently, Spada and Lightbown (2008) made the distinction between Isolated and Integrated FFI, the two approaches which are core to the current study. The present section offers a detailed description of each approach, positions them in the complex taxonomy of instruction in form, and explores their applicability and limitations in various classroom contexts.

4.5.1. The place of Isolated and Integrated form-focused instruction in the taxonomy of the instruction in form

The more recently developed division into Isolated and Integrated FFI (Spada & Lightbown, 2008) approximately corresponds to the previously mentioned earlier developments of Johnson's (1982) separationist and unificationist positions on language instruction, but differs from Long's focus on formS and focus on form dichotomy, as it excludes non-communicative syllabuses represented in focus on formS approaches. Although delivered in separate lessons, Isolated FFI is taught in order to prepare students for a communicative

task or in order to address language problems that have already arisen in such a task. Therefore, although the phraseology used by Spada and Lightbown (2008) could imply this, focus on formS cannot be equated with Isolated FFI. "Isolated FFI is provided in activities that are separate from the communicative use of language, but it occurs as part of a program that also includes CLT and/or CBI" (Spada & Lightbown, 2008:186) – the context that does not occur in the focus on formS syllabus. However, Integrated FFI can be equated with Long's focus on form. Indeed, from Long's definition quoted in 4.4 above, it can be concluded that *focus on form* bears a very close resemblance to Spada and Lightbown's integrated FFI. The feature which distinguishes these two, however, is the character or timing of instruction in form – in *focus on form* it is reactive, whereas in Integrated FFI it is both reactive as well as proactive (Spada & Lightbown, 2008). Also, Integrated FFI, as a more communicative method, might be mistaken for Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), as indicated by Spada and Lightbown (2008) commenting on a study by Sheen (2005). Nevertheless, these are not identical; the main difference between CLT and Integrated FFI is the requisite presence of instruction in form in the latter, although indeed such grammatical instruction is designed around communicative targets. On the other hand, the concept that corresponds closest to Integrated FFI is planned and incidental focus on form as described by Ellis (2001a) and Doughty and Williams (1998c) (Spada & Lightbown, 2008).

A taxonomy that complements the ones presented above, and which incorporates three similar types of instruction to those being discussed here, *i.e.* focus on formS, Isolated FFI and Integrated FFI, is Ellis' 'code-focused teaching', 'integrated option', and 'parallel option' (Ellis, 2001b:24-25), where only the last two approaches attempt to combine language teaching with focus on communication or/and content. Code-focused teaching is "traditional language teaching" (Ellis, 2001b: 24), and as such comprises an approximate equivalent of Long's focus on formS. As can be concluded from the discussion in section 4.4, such methods, through lack of a communicative element, are considered too limited, and thus do

not feature in the present discussion. The remaining two instruction modes are compared and contrasted instead.

Ellis' *integrated option* is analogous to Integrated FFI, not only due to a similarity in phraseology. As Spada and Lightbown (2008) point out, Integrated FFI, just like focus on form instruction, draws students' attention to "language form during communicative or content-based instruction" (*ibid*.:186). Such instruction can be either incidental or planned and anticipated, explicit or implicit, and involve implicit as well as explicit learning (Spada & Lightbown, 2008). Although Ellis seems to be more systematic in his specification of the *integrated option*, there are no major discrepancies between his concept and Integrated FFI. He describes two ways in which the integrated option can be incorporated into a lesson. One is through communicative tasks, and as such is proactive; the other is a reactive approach and constitutes teachers' feedback on students' performance in a communicative task. Here, however, the feedback is not focused on content (Ellis, 2001b), as is the case with Integrated FFI (Spada & Lightbown, 2008).

The third approach to language instruction identified by Ellis, *parallel option*, roughly corresponds to Spada and Lightbown's Isolated FFI, but is slightly more restricted and radical. Whereas Isolated FFI accepts drawing on students' language problems, as noticed by teachers in communicative tasks, in order to inform their instruction (Spada & Lightbown, 2008), the *parallel option* entirely isolates instruction from communicative tasks (Ellis, 2001b). Moreover, Ellis proposes that the instruction in the *parallel option* model is applied not only without linking it with communicative tasks, but it is also scheduled to take place outside a CLT class, a condition not formulated in the case of Isolated FFI. As such, the parallel option seems to be closer to more traditional grammar teaching models (Ellis, 2001b). In such an approach, the risk that learners might struggle to notice the relevance of such instruction to their communicative needs is rather high, and may be discouraging. Isolated FFI approach, on the other hand, is not of such a detached nature as to compromise motivation. On the contrary, since it allows for linking its communicative and

instructional dimensions by a teacher able to personalise instruction to include the structures their learners struggled with during a communicative task, motivation is expected to be high (Spada & Lightbown, 2008). As Spada and Lightbown point out:

> Isolated FFI is the provision of instruction in lessons whose primary purpose is to teach students about a particular language feature because the teacher believes that students are unlikely to acquire the feature during communicative activities without an opportunity to learn about the feature in a situation where its form and meaning can be made clear (Spada & Lightbown, 2008:187).

Apart from these distinctions, the underlying principle behind the two instruction types, Isolated and Integrated, is the existence of a dual syllabus applied here, where separate attention is devoted to "intentional learning and explicit instruction" (Spada & Lightbown, 2008:187) and communicative language aspects. When referring to the Isolated and Integrated FFI, Spada and her team highlight the issue of timing of FFI in communicative syllabus-based lessons as the main difference between the two approaches (Spada, *et al.*, 2014).

4.5.2. The applicability and limitations of Isolated and Integrated FFI

As the focus on code or focus on formS approach to L2 instruction has been ruled out as not desirable, the decision that is left to be made is which of the two remaining approaches should be chosen for specific teaching situations: Integrated FFI or Isolated FFI. Both FFI approach types have their advantages and disadvantages in certain applications, which are explored in sections below.

4.5.2.1. The use of Isolated form-focused instruction.

One of the situations in which Isolated FFI proves to be beneficial is when the targeted forms rarely occur in the communicative or content-based context (Spada & Lightbown, 2008). As Integrated FFI is embedded in the communicative purpose, the number of times

a learner is exposed to an infrequently occurring language rule might be insufficient for acquisition of this rule, even if accompanied by a typically brief Integrated FFI instruction.

Also, the salience of the targeted form determines which of the FFI types could give good results. Analysing Norris and Ortega's (2000) research on explicit input enhancement, which is applied to increase the salience of a particular targeted language form, Spada and Lightbown conclude that "isolated FFI might be useful for creating the necessary salience to help learners notice language forms that occur frequently but are semantically redundant or phonologically reduced or imperceptible in the oral input" (Spada & Lightbown 2008:195). However, forms go unnoticed by some learners even when in a written form. Here enhancement, such as application of a colour or enlarged font, brings desirable effects in instructed SLA, as proven in a study carried out by Sharwood Smith (1993).

Integrated FFI is criticised for potentially exposing students to linguistic structures occurring in communicative tasks which they are not yet ready to digest (Spada & Lightbown, 2008), thus highlighting the benefits of Isolated FFI. Supporting the latter mode is also the theory that learners, especially beginners, find it difficult to concentrate simultaneously on form and meaning (VanPatten, 1990).

Another situation in which Isolated FFI could be preferable is when this type of instruction closely corresponds to what is expected of students in terms of language production (Spada & Lightbown, 2008). Nevertheless, as some research shows (e.g. VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993a), successful L2 production does not need to result from tightly corresponding instruction. It must be stressed, however, that VanPatten and Cadierno's controversial findings instigated a heated discussion among researchers (see 5.4.1).

Isolated FFI seems to be preferred by older learners (Spada & Lightbown, 2008), but also children may benefit from it, as in Integrated FFI they often mistakenly assign instruction to meaning instead of the form (Lyster & Ranta, 1997).

It is assumed that Isolated FFI is especially useful to reduce the negative transfer in case of strong L1 influence, especially in monolingual classes where students enhance transfer errors among themselves (Lightbown, 1991; Lyster, 1987). In such cases, Isolated FFI seems to be a more radical and relentless method than Integrated FFI, in terms of drawing students' attention to a particular linguistic form and pinpointing the gaps in their knowledge. This is for two reasons: firstly, instruction in Integrated FFI could be so deeply embedded in the communicative purpose of a lesson, that it may be too brief or too ambiguous to make learners notice the difference between the targeted form and their output; secondly, as students in a homogenous language class are sources of input for each other, and may reinforce language errors, more direct, uncompromised attention to form is needed to break incorrect language rules that might have emerged as a result of being exposed to repeated transfer errors occurring in peer input and output. In the current research, the case study was conducted in a multilingual classroom, therefore some of the advantages of Isolated FFI mentioned here were not able to accrue in the experiment.

4.5.2.2. The use of Integrated form-focused instruction

Describing the two intervention types, Spada and Lightbown (2008) attempt to assign each of them to a specific teaching purpose, and thus they argue that, being firmly embedded in the communicative purpose of the lesson, Integrated instruction has the potential of reinforcing automaticity necessary to communicate in spontaneous situations. Integrated FFI is advocated to be a provision of practice of a form that a learner has already noticed and started to use. It provides practice that contributes to fluency and accuracy (*ibid*). Moreover, it is especially beneficial in the case of errors which result in communication breakdowns (Lightbown,1998), and 'hard' rules, which are difficult to teach: "A fairly widespread assumption in the SLA literature is that while easy rules can be taught, hard rules are by their very nature too complex to be successfully taught in isolated instruction" (Spada & Lightbown, 2008:196). The reason for this might be that so-called 'harder learning targets' are difficult to learn as they seem to be "too hard to reduce to a form digestible by

non-linguists (most students)" (Long, 2011:381). Thus, such rules might be more successfully noticed and absorbed by learners when served in a purposeful and context-embedded communicative attire, provided by Integrated FFI.

Analysing Spada and Lightbown's recommendation for Integrated FFI application, it may be concluded that they often do not see it as being capable of teaching the students a targeted form, other than making them notice it. However, if it is assumed that noticing a form is a prerequisite to learning and using it (Schmidt, 1990, Truscott, 1998), or may even trigger acquisition (see Altman, 1990), then, indeed, success may be expected with Integrated FFI. Nevertheless, how explicit, salient and noticeable a targeted form is in the input which concentrates mainly on communication and not on form is another issue, which may call into question Integrated FFI's ability to teach in addition to merely providing useful practice of the previously learnt form. Spada and Lightbown admit that they perceive Integrated FFI as a way to reinforce more fluent, automatic and accurate use of the targeted forms for real life communication purposes, which does suggest that it may apply more to the forms learners have already become acquainted with.

Integrated FFI is also hypothesised to be particularly suitable for adult learners, as they have better understanding of the nature of FFI context, and can be more motivated knowing that linguistic help in a communicative task can be provided if needed (Spada & Lightbown, 2008). In addition, cognitive psychology and SLA theory are reported to be supporting Integrated FFI (*ibid.*). Referring to Long's interaction hypothesis (1996), Spada and Lightbown argue that "comprehensible input and meaningful interaction provide the raw material for language acquisition, they also provide the ideal context for spontaneous (i.e., integrated) attention to language form" (Spada & Lightbown, 2008:189).

4.5.3. Research on Isolated and Integrated FFI

The issue that could be of most interest to the present study is which of these two types of FFI could work better for mainstreamed EAL students, the field referred to in the two

previous chapters. When the present study was being undertaken, no research in grammatical forms comparing Isolated and Integrated FFI in EAL context seemed to be available: "No empirical classroom-based research directly compares the effects of isolated and integrated instruction" (Spada & Lightbown, 2008:193). Since then, only three studies juxtaposing these two approaches emerged in the published literature, contributing to a very narrow pool of research on the topic. None of these, however, compares the Isolated and Integrated FFI in a second language context of a mainstream school, with FFI understood traditionally as instruction in grammatical items (see a discussion on *form* towards the end of this chapter) - this seems only to have been carried out in the present research (see also table 9.1 in the Discussion chapter). This section is devoted to a brief analysis of the published studies on Isolated and Integrated FFI, and their findings.

Although there are a plethora of studies on FFI as such, and numerous studies researching FFI in communicative curricula, only three published studies directly compare the Isolated and Integrated FFI – File and Adams (2010), Elgün-Gündüz, *et al.* (2012), and Spada, *et al.*, (2014). There are also two other studies that are commented on towards the end of this section – an unpublished thesis (Tsapikidou's dissertation completed in 2013), and Barrot's study (2014) on the effectiveness of combined Isolated and Integrated FFI. These are all discussed below.

File and Adams (2010) investigated the effect of Isolated and Integrated Form-Focused vocabulary instruction on short and long term vocabulary gains in 20 ESL university students with intermediate-level English. The learning gains achieved through these two FFI types were compared to gains from incidental learning of the targeted forms. All the participants were tested in writing on completion of the experiment, and then again after 16 days. The study is quite noteworthy for the fact that both experimental groups were exposed to both types of treatments, Isolated and Integrated, as they learnt different vocabulary sets through each approach. Such a design helped eliminate a number of potential confounding variables (such as those connected with individual differences

between cases) – a procedure particularly useful with a small sample size, such as this. The same participants also served as the control group, having to resort to incidental learning in the case of the selected words not explicitly taught, but present in the input.

The data obtained from the tests showed that the learners' gains were significantly higher in terms of the vocabulary learnt through FFI than through the incidental exposure. However, no statistically significant difference was detected between the effects of Isolated versus Integrated FFI. Although, the study adds to the abundance of research indicating advantages of explicit instruction over incidental learning, it does not point to either FFI type as more beneficial to vocabulary learning. Yet, File and Adams (2010) mention the tendency for Isolated FFI to have better short-term effects than Integrated FFI, although this is not statistically significant. They attribute this tendency to cognitive load, as learners who are given an opportunity to concentrate on one element at a time, such as the meaning or pronunciation of a targeted word (rather than on how the word contributes to the overall context of the message in addition to that), are more able to memorise the targeted vocabulary (File & Adams, 2010). Another explanation they provide is that the Isolated FFI learners had more opportunity to encounter the targeted words, as these were first explained in the Isolated FFI and then noticed through enhanced text in the communicative context (the targeted words in the text were in bold), whereas in the case of the Integrated FFI learners, both the explanation and encounter in the context via the enhanced text technique took place at the same time. A clear limitation of this study comes from the small sample size, but also the duration of the experiment, as each of the groups received only two treatment lessons. Thus, the results may be more indicative than conclusive.

Another study comparing Isolated and Integrated FFI was conducted by Elgün-Gündüz, *et al.* (2012), who researched two groups of elementary EFL learners (120 students in total) subjected to Isolated and Integrated FFI for the duration of eight months, totalling 64 hours. The targeted forms were vaguely described as the grammatical and vocabulary items covered in the course programme, while the writing tests consisted of discrete point items

as well as essays. The results of this study revealed that the Integrated FFI was more successful at facilitating students' progress than Isolated FFI, both in terms of the discrete point tests as well as the essays. Also, the students' preference for the FFI approach was measured, and the students' voice was consistent with the learning gains, i.e. the participants from the Integrated FFI group were more satisfied with their lessons than the other group. It is argued that the Integrated FFI group's gains in the essay writing task indicate the automaticity of language as facilitated by this type of FFI approach (Elgün-Gündüz, *et al.*, 2012). There are, however, numerous limitations to this study, which may affect such a straightforward interpretation of these results.

Rather than adapting the teaching practices to suit Isolated and Integrated FFI's characteristics, the study utilised already existing methodologies and materials routinely used in two EFL schools in Turkey, and identified the instructional practices applied in one of the schools as corresponding to the Isolated FFI approach, and those in the other school as characteristic of the Integrated FFI approach. Such entrusting of each of the experimental groups to a different school raises the question of construct validity, as it could be argued that the results reflect each school's and each teacher's performance, rather than the measured effectiveness of the two FFI approaches. The confounding variables brought in by these two different settings might have influenced the results quite significantly. Also, although the study accounts for 64 hours of instruction - two hours of the FFI type per week per group, which makes it longitudinal - each week the students were receiving 10 English lessons, and little is known of what was happening for 80% of the teaching time, as it was not observed by the researchers, nor sufficiently accounted for in their paper. Other limitations include lack of the control group, and the significant discrepancy in the initial proficiency levels between the groups. The study does not include a delayed post-test.

The most recent study comparing the two FFI approaches was performed by a research team including one of the originators of the FFI distinction into Isolated and Integrated FFI

(Spada, *et al.*, 2014). Spada and her team investigated the effect timing of FFI had on the learners' written and spoken command of English. The study was conducted in a community learning programme in Canada, and the participants were adult migrants of intermediate English level. Initially 109 students were included in the study, but high attrition rates significantly reduced the number of cases the data analyses were based on. As a result, the total sample size at the written post-test consisted of 60 participants, further reduced to 46 at the delayed post-test. The oral post-test was applied to 51 learners and the delayed oral post-test to 47. Thus, in order to address this problem, the statistical analyses were conducted using the Multilevel Modelling statistical method to account for the missing data (see Spada, *et al.*, 2014).

The results obtained in this study is compared to that of File and Adams (2010) (Spada, *et al.*, 2014) in that, in both of these studies, the Isolated and Integrated FFI produced comparable results in written tests. Yet, as in the case of the results reported by File and Adams (2010), the Isolated FFI group learners similarly displayed a marked tendency for higher attainment than Integrated FFI, albeit the tendency again did not reach statistically significant levels, which may be due to a small sample size.

In terms of the oral proficiency, the test results indicated better outcomes in the Integrated FFI group, which the researchers interpreted as indicative of the Integrated FFI's stronger influence on implicit knowledge, arguing that:

> while the OPT [oral tests] used in this study cannot be described as a pure measure of learners' implicit L2 knowledge, there was greater time pressure to produce the passive in the OPT than in the ECT [written tests], thus forcing learners to rely more on 'feel' than 'rule' while completing it (Spada, *et al.*, 2014:464).

The time pressure as a factor reportedly ensuring the participants' access to implicit knowledge (Hulstijn & de Graaff, 1994) was combined with the oral tasks' orientation on meaning instead of the form.

In terms of the oral test analysis in this study, there are some similarities to Elgün-Gündüz's results as well. Both studies point to the benefits of Integrated FFI as promoting implicit knowledge of the language and automaticity of its use, although they operationalise testing the implicit knowledge differently – in written essay or oral production. Interestingly, in both of these studies, the Integrated FFI participants had more advanced language proficiency at the onset of the treatment than the Isolated FFI groups. The results might then indicate that the FFI instruction was more accessible for the more proficient learners, and the level of linguistic development of the less advanced learners meant that they were not ready for the instruction, as the teachability hypothesis might suggest (Pienneman, 1984). From the student voice in the study of Elgün-Gündüz, *et al.* (2012), it is clear that the participants enjoyed their Integrated FFI lessons, which may indicate these were not pitched exceedingly high but, instead, it is more likely that they were at the right level. On the other hand, the Isolated FFI group is reported to have found parts of their instruction boring. Due to the many confounding variables, it is not clear whether it was because of the very nature of this FFI type, the class dynamics, the teaching skills, or perhaps the inaccessibility of input being pitched too high for this less advanced group. It is likely, though, that the significant discrepancy between the participants' initial command of English in these two studies, reporting similar results in terms of implicit linguistic knowledge gains (Elgün-Gündüz, *et al.*, 2012; and Spada, *et. al.*, 2014), has significantly influenced these results.

Also, the way Spada, *et al*. conceptualised and operationalised implicit knowledge measures might be debatable. The pictures used in the oral test had printed words on them that students were supposed to use while talking. Such prompts might draw the participants' attention to form, as Spada and her team (2014) rightly admit. Thus, these word clues might have encouraged the students to monitor their output for grammatical accuracy as well as the meaning. Still, this can be only hypothesised, and as the researchers, again, rightly point out, more research is needed to confirm their findings.

Although, to date, only three empirical studies comparing Isolated and Integrated FFI have been published in peer-reviewed journals, there seems to be a growing interest in this pedagogical framework. One example would be obviously the present research, but another study worth referring to is Danae Tsapikidou's thesis (2013) completed at University of Cambridge. Her study investigated the effects of Isolated and Integrated FFI on 90 primary school pupils in Greece, and was set in an English as a Foreign Language framework. The additional dimension added to this study was the investigation of the influence the narrative tasks might have on the results. The outcomes suggest that the students receiving Integrated FFI and those receiving Isolated FFI developed their proficiency in the targeted forms at a different rate, and it was the Isolated FFI group's participants who outperformed the other group after the first six hours of the instruction. Towards the end of the whole 18-hour-long treatment, however, both groups equalised, and even in the delayed post-test their performances were comparable. As such, these results are similar to those of Spada's written tests (Spada, *et al* 2014), and File and Adams' findings (File & Adams, 2010), as no significant differences between the two FFI approaches were detected. Nevertheless, an observation could be made that in terms of students' written tests, each of these three studies, including Tsapikidou's, reports a tendency for Isolated FFI being more effective than the Integrated FFI, although these advantages were not statistically significant and/or sustained.

An interesting study was conducted by Barrot (2014), yet it is not classified here as one of the three pioneering studies comparing Isolated and Integrated FFI, as here, Isolated and Integrated approaches are applied together in a sequence, and juxtaposed with the more traditional presentation-practice-production (PPP) approach. Nevertheless, the study affords some interesting findings. The participants in this quasi experimental research study, 41 college students learning English as a second language in the Philippines, were divided into the experimental group (30 learners), for Integrated and Isolated FFI, and the control group (11 learners), accessing only the PPP-based instruction. The results

reportedly confirm that the programme of combined Integrated and Isolated FFI contributed much more effectively to the development of the participants' writing and speaking skills than the PPP-based instruction, although the latter group's modest sample size might considerably affect the results' generalizability. The author asserts that the findings confirm the complementarity of the two FFI approaches, Isolated and Integrated (Barrot, 2014), yet such a statement seems rather unfounded. Instead, on the one hand, the findings may provide some arguments for the inferiority of more traditional FFI types, such as PPP, and, on the other hand, they point to the benefits of embedding FFI within the communicative context, the characteristic feature shared by both Isolated and Integrated FFI types. As the author admitted, the discussion on the complementarity of the two FFI types would benefit from examining the Isolated, the Integrated FFI, and the two FFI types combined together (Barrot, 2014). What is interesting about the study, though, is the conclusion that is drawn from the performance of the students taught in the experimental group, pointing to noticing as one of the key contributors to the students' attainment. It is argued that the presence of communicative context in the Integrated FFI provides the opportunities for noticing of the targeted forms, and hence positively influences learning processes (Barrot, 2014).

While discussing the existing studies on FFI, including Isolated and Integrated FFI, It is worth noting how differently the term 'form' is interpreted. FFI is not necessarily associated with teaching of grammar items, although such understanding prevails:

> In most studies, *form* is assumed to be a structural feature. In fact,
> though, it need not be limited to these kinds of items. It can and
> should be viewed more broadly (Williams, 2005:673).

This broad interpretation of the term makes it even harder to compare studies on FFI. File and Adams (2010) chose vocabulary as the subject of their FFI instruction, while in Barrot's (2014) study, for instance, the form is referred to as "target essential forms" (*ibid*:284), which are never specified. The testing criteria used in the study appear to refer to language production skills with the main emphasis on style and discourse, two undoubtedly important

features of language production, yet rather remotely connected to what typically might be associated with *forms*.

4.6. Conclusion

In the jungle of the language instruction terminology and layers of taxonomy it may be difficult to define precisely how different aspects of instruction interrelate, not to mention an attempt to reach a unanimous conclusion on what type of instruction is most effective in various L2 learning settings (after first defining and agreeing on what 'the most effective' could mean). Despite accepting the fact that one size never fits all, it can be concluded from the research results, briefly referred to in this chapter, that FFI aids language learning, and explicit instruction is more beneficial than implicit instruction, especially in CLT and immersion classrooms. After all, it is very difficult to master a second language without being helped to notice subtle language features, or those language aspects difficult to acquire through hypothesis testing (Williams, 1995). The EAL mainstream setting, so popular nowadays in English schools, might benefit from these findings if educators decide to consider them while shaping their practice. As Ellis points out, "there is a need to try to draw together a set of generalisations that might serve as the basis for language teacher education" (Ellis, 2005d:210). In order to do so, however, there needs to be more specific research carried out in this field, which could contribute to the knowledge of the role of instruction in language learning.

Chapter 5.

Literature review: selected methods and theories behind form-focused instruction

5.1. Introduction

Teaching English as a second language (ESL), or as an additional language (EAL) as it is referred to in Britain, has not yet been embraced by an agreed common policy (Creese, 2010; Costley, 2014), and a number of different approaches have been applied in this field with varying effects. On the one hand, such a lack of policy may originate from the fact that many questions concerning the process of language learning, and effectiveness of various teaching approaches remain unanswered (Spada, 2011). On the other hand, taking into account the variety of learning styles, modes and experiences, as well as the nature of particular linguistic features, formulation of a single prescriptive practice, pedagogy or method is not possible or even advisable (see Kumaravadivelu's (2003) arguments on post-method pedagogy for language teaching). It needs to be stressed, however, that it may be desirable to find the best approach to suit particular learning situations (Ur, 2011), although fulfilling such a desire might be deemed a mere illusion (Macaro, 2003).

The present chapter looks at some chosen theories and studies connected with output, input and interaction, as relevant to the present research. It discusses a selection of hypotheses and studies within the field of second language learning which, limited by the scope of the current study, excludes some otherwise critical research, for instance from the field of sociolinguistics. Instead, this work places its focus on language instruction as such (with its different methods) as the agent of change in learners' developing system, and so the concepts discussed below revolve mainly around the roles of linguistic input and output in language learning, with due attention devoted to interaction and the role of linguistic feedback. This conscious restriction does not mean that this study ignores other factors affecting language learning processes. On the contrary, it does recognise the role of other

agents of change, such as, for instance, the learners themselves, and what they bring into their language learning, accepting what Bayley and Longman call "the agentive nature of language learning" (Bayley & Langman, 2011:293), when they refer to the case of a learner self-regulating her learning scope to suit her aims and identity. The concept of context, including social setting, and learners' identity, underlies many aspects of the present research. In that, both in terms of its fundamental assumptions as well as its empirical findings, the present study perceives their roles as crucial (see, for instance, Chapter 9 on the interpretation of the role of immersion setting as a noticing facilitator, or, on the contrary, its role in diminishing the student-generated, intrinsic need for FFI, and their perceived value of accuracy, as suggested in Chapter 3). Here, with instruction as an agent of change, the sociolinguistic issues are conceptualized as either the setting (EAL context), or as the many interfering variables to consider, such as learners' L1, personal circumstances or educational background (of which, quite typically for social science research, many could not be controlled in the present study - see Chapter 6).

Apart from the theoretical and practical aspects of instruction, the chapter also includes methods via which that instruction is channelled, such as task-based approach, awareness raising, or processing instruction.

5.2. Input, output, and interaction hypotheses

The most urgent questions still awaiting their answers in language learning research come down to two issues: what processes underlie learning a second language, and what methods facilitate them best. In the case of both of these questions, there is still no consensus among researchers. Equally, there is no agreement on the roles of input and output (Benati, 2005).

According to the input hypothesis proposed by Krashen, language is learnt through comprehensible input (Krashen, 1985), where its level is slightly above learners' interlanguage (IL+1). Such an assumption dominated in the 1980s (Swain, 2005), and the

pedagogical framework that draws on this hypothesis is the immersion model. Its effectiveness, however, as tested in French immersion programmes in Canada, cannot be proven. Although students learning French in this programme achieved great results in receptive skills, comparable to those of their native speaking peers, their productive skills, both oral and written, were not as good (Swain, 2005). This fuelled Swain's (1985) argument that regular opportunities for learner-generated output are needed in addition to comprehensible input (Swain, 1985). Therefore, in response to this, as it seems, unidirectional comprehensible input hypothesis, Swain proposed the output hypothesis (Swain, 1985). It postulates that also producing and using a target language aids its acquisition e.g. by testing language hypotheses, negotiating meaning and observing the impact of produced utterances. Swain (2005) lists a few main functions of output: a triggering function, where learners notice gaps in their interlanguage, and thus are seeking means of expressing themselves (Swain & Lapkin, 1995); the hypothesis testing function, where learners' output, based on their current proficiency, is subject to negotiations and alterations as a result of the feedback received; and finally, the metalinguistic or reflective function, which highlights the social aspect of language use.

A number of empirical studies confirmed the role of output in facilitating language development. Pica (1988) looked at the interaction between native and non-native speakers, and noticed that communication breakdowns successfully pushed language learners to 'repair' their utterances. Similar results are reported in a study conducted by Nobuyoshi and Ellis (1993), in which a teacher signalled an incorrectly used past tense as a breakdown in communication, making a learner modify their utterances to include more target-like forms. Again, here the results showed good improvement, and the effects proved to be durable. There are other studies (also those including some positive results of learner-learner interaction, e.g. Swain & Lapkin, 2002) reporting beneficial effects that negotiation of meaning and collaborative dialogue have on a language learner (Pica *et al*, 1996; Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

On the other hand, it could be argued that, because the French immersion students were able to achieve their communicative goals with non-target like utterances (Swain, 1985), they fossilized at a certain level of their interlanguage, not being pushed to develop their linguistic competence further, or, moving towards the role of noticing (Long, 1996; Schmidt 1990, 2001), could not, without instruction, notice certain linguistic forms. Therefore, it seems that providing learners with interactive and meaningful language use is essential, as it contributes to L2 learning. Yet, equally important, there seems to be "focus on task-essential forms" as one of the key principles of successful L2 practice advocated by Ortega (2007:185) (for more discussion on form-focused practice research see Chapter 4). Macaro, commenting on these very influential experiments in French immersion classes, notes:

> The issue is here not whether immersion is a good or bad teaching method, nor whether accuracy is important. Immersion may well deliver the objectives of fluency, range of vocabulary and idiom, and generate self-confidence. The issue was that, at a theoretical level, comprehensible input alone was not delivering the acquisition of all language patterns. If students were converting input into competence, why was that competence faulty? (Macaro, 2003:29)

Swain's concept of the role of output to some extent overlaps with the Interaction Hypothesis, which Long (1983) proposed also in response to Krashen's Comprehensible Input Hypothesis. The Interaction Hypothesis states that the comprehensible input needs to be negotiated, hence highlighting the role of interlocutors and, in particular, the more proficient language user in modifying interaction to co-construct the meaning. Such negotiation could be achieved through, for instance, comprehension checks, paraphrasing and requests for clarification. Later, Long (1996) enriched his hypothesis with the more cognitively-oriented features, such as the role of noticing or feedback. Some interesting studies examining the role of such broadly understood interaction were undertaken involving classroom exchanges (Gass, *et al.*, 2005; Sheen, 2004), but also featuring native and non-native interlocutors in more naturalistic settings outside of the classroom

(Fernández-García & Martínez-Arbelaiz, 2014), evidencing that the learning process benefits from such interactions.

Clearly, language learning is facilitated by all of these processes underpinning the hypotheses listed above – regular exposure to input, output through production, and meaningful interaction – but the methodology of deploying and utilising these processes varies, as well as the methods of including instruction within them: a crucial addition, as argued above (Ortega, 2007), as well as in the previous chapter. The paragraphs below investigate how the instructional component is applied in output- and input-based approaches to second language learning and teaching.

5.3. Output-based communicative approaches to language teaching

Providing an input is unquestionably a condition of language learning. What happens next, however, is determined by the methodology behind a particular teaching procedure applied. The first obvious step is to introduce a language feature. In traditional methods this was done by isolating it, but, in the case of more communicative approaches, targeted linguistic elements are presented while embedded in a meaningful context. In more traditional methodologies the main stress is placed on the more or less controlled output. Such methodology is applied for example in a popular PPP procedure – Presentation, Practice, Production – which relies on language drills, especially in its 'Practice' phase (2nd P). The theoretical framework for this approach is based on "the existence of a synthetic grammatical syllabus" (Ur, 2011:514), which imposes the order of items to be taught. What could be referred to as a *practice-makes-perfect* approach[5], although long time ago criticised for not following the state-of-the-art in applied linguistics knowledge (Skehan, 1997), this approach still prevails in ESL coursebooks, and implicitly in classrooms as well (Nitta & Gardner, 2005). The effectiveness of language drills is controversial, with some research data supporting its benefits and some denying them, as reported by Ur (2011). On

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[5]See Ortega's call for "matching of classroom tasks with essential form-function mappings" instead of only the simple provision of language production in EFL contexts (Ortega, 2007:186).

the one hand, it is argued that PPP does not account for Pienemann's (1984) teachability hypothesis, imposing new structures on learners when they are not ready for them (Huang, 2010). On the other hand, millions of language learners all over the world who use ESL textbooks are living examples of PPP's effectiveness, since this method still prevails in language teaching (see Nitta & Gardner, 2005). Also, historically, a few generations succeeded in learning languages, thanks to the traditional methods (Swan, 2005). Their success, however, may be due to factors other than just methodology.

On the opposite side of the input-output continuum, the supporters of learning through input instruction, like Wong and VanPatten (2003), underestimate, and even neglect the role of language drills, understood as controlled language practice, arguing that it does not aid learning (see section 5.4 below). On the other hand, it is argued that language drills do facilitate learning by preventing fossilization, so common in naturalistic settings, helping students to achieve higher levels of language competence, which might be impossible to accomplish exclusively through methods proposed by Wong and VanPatten (Leaver, *et.al.* 2004) that are based on input processing.

5.3.1 Task-Based Instruction

An alternative to the traditional output-based methods, such as pattern or drill practice discussed above, became task-based instruction (TBI). It is based on the communicative approach, also called Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), developed in the 1980s, which highlights language communicative function as a tool for learning, sees fluency as important as accuracy, and employs all four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In contrast to the traditional methods, task-based instruction does not follow an artificially designed linear syllabus, but instead takes into account the teachability hypothesis (Pienemann, 1984), and relies on negotiation of meaning as the vehicle for language learning (the interaction hypothesis). It also highlights output as being equally important as input (output hypothesis) (Ur, 2011).

The task-based instruction method has been criticised for being preoccupied with meaning while ignoring the form. Form-focused instruction in this method is incidental, with grammar elements limited to those required to accomplish the task. As such, this method is not very effective for more comprehensive or systematic language teaching:

> While TBI may successfully develop learners' command of what is known, it is considerably less effective for the systematic teaching of new language. (Swan, 2005:376)

In his paper, Swan regrets that the meaning-based methods, like the one being currently discussed, and form-based methods, such as the traditional ones, are viewed as contradictory (Swan, 2005). Nevertheless, not always are they perceived as such. Some models of so-called weaker CLT incorporate form-focused instruction into the communicative syllabuses. In the Task-Based Learning Framework proposed by Willis (1996), it is recommended that form-oriented language focus follows the meaning-oriented task-based instruction. The main focus here is still on the meaning, as the language focus stage "leads naturally out of the task cycle" (Huang, 2010:33), but there is plenty of space for linguistic forms practice as well. The focus on form instruction applied here consists of two stages: language analysis and language practice. The rationale behind positioning the form-focused phase after the meaning-focused phase in a single lesson unit is based on the assumption that the reverse order, applied in the traditional PPP method, is not beneficial for language learners, who may find it difficult to concentrate both on the meaning as well as accuracy of those forms already pointed out in the presentation phase of the lesson (1st P of PPP) (Willis & Willis, 2007).

What seems to be the weak point of this Task-Based Learning Framework, though, is that drawing learners' attention to a linguistic form only after they have dealt with a language task, might make learners doubt the relevance of these linguistic forms, and their usefulness in conveying meaning effectively. The fact that students have succeeded (supposedly) in a communicative task prior to being exposed to a new element of linguistic knowledge may fail to encourage them to make an effort to incorporate that linguistic form

into their interlanguage (IL). Thus, Swan's (2005) argument, cited earlier, that task-based instruction as a whole merely provides practice for the forms already learnt while failing to teach new ones, seems to be legitimate. Task-Based Learning Framework, though is only one of the examples of how CLT may be used to teach language forms. On the whole, when it is combined with form-focused instruction, it constitutes a very promising teaching method:

> Where a form-focused component was added to meaning-based instruction (i.e. weak form of CLT) *in general* it was found to be the most beneficial overall teaching approach. (Macaro, 2003:60)

5.4. Input-based approaches to language teaching

The methods discussed above concentrated on output as an indispensable way to learn a language. VanPatten and Cadierno (1993), in their paper on processing instruction, a method briefly mentioned earlier, explored a radically different approach, which essentially concentrates on input, neglecting the role of the output. The method focuses on manipulating input itself and the way it is presented, in order to influence how it is taken in by a learner, and thus manipulating the way in which it enters the learner's developing system. Not only does it contrast with the more traditional methods, which concentrate mainly on manipulating output by means of practice or corrective feedback, but also it stands in direct opposition to CLT methods, which rely heavily on negotiation of meaning through output. Processing instruction as a way of consciousness raising does not imply any language production (output) at all (VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993). If compared with the popular PPP method, it questions the merits of the second and third phases of PPP instruction, i.e. practice (drilling) and production, leaving presentation in its radically modified, manipulated form as the best facilitating, versatile condition for language learning.

5.4.1. Processing Instruction

The arguments presented above originate from one of VanPatten and Cadierno's (1993) experiments, which concentrated on word order and subject pronouns in Spanish. In this

study, 80 participants were divided into three groups: the first received processing instruction (PI), the second received traditional instruction (TI), and the third, control group, had no focused instruction on the targeted forms at all. The processing instruction activities, in which the first group was involved, were aimed at assisting learners in establishing a form-meaning connection, with no output activities administered. The TI group was taught through PPP methodology, and the control group was reading and discussing an essay. The instruction was carried out during two days. In the experiment, four tests were administered – a pre-test, an immediate post-test, and two delayed post-tests, aimed at assessing the participants' sentence-level interpretation and sentence-level production.

It is reasonable to expect that the group with experience in production should outperform the group with experience in interpretation and vice versa. Such results would seem logical, and in agreement with the principles of so-called transfer appropriate processing theory (TAP) (Segalowitz, 1997), which assumes that the knowledge gained under certain conditions is best activated in these conditions. As Spada and Lightbown argue, "the ability to use language automatically in communicative settings requires experience in doing exactly that" (Spada & Lightbown, 2008:188). The results of the study, however, differ greatly to the assumptions described above. Indeed, the PI group outperformed the TI group in the task the former had had more practice with, i.e. interpreting tasks, but, contrary to what could be expected, the TI group did not outperform the PI group in performance tasks, despite the fact that the latter had not had any training in output during the experiment. Taking into account TAP and the quotation cited earlier, it is very interesting that in order to produce targeted forms one needs to be just trained in noticing and analysing them. As VanPatten and Uludag (2011) note, commenting on yet another experiment confirming the benefits of IP: "even though processing instruction is input oriented, its effects are not limited to input-oriented tasks" (*ibid*:44).

These astonishing results of VanPatten's experiment provoked a heated discussion, as they seemed to introduce a totally new, revolutionary theory of language teaching and

learning, showing that "PI alone, without output practice, is sufficient to bring changes in both underlying knowledge and the ability to produce a new structure, albeit under controlled circumstances" (VanPatten & Uludag, 2011:44). As a result, the input processing theory has been the subject of many experiments testing its validity. Many of them supported VanPatten's findings, such as e.g. Benati's study (2001) comparing the attainment of Italian future tense in three groups of English native speakers. Also in this case, the outcomes confirmed that the group receiving the input processing instruction outperformed the group taught through more traditional language practice (output practice), especially in tasks requiring identification of the target structure. In terms of using future tense in production activity – both oral as well as written - both groups, the one taught through input processing, and the second one, taught by traditional language practice, achieved comparable results. It is worth mentioning also that the third, control group, which was exposed to targeted form without focusing on it, obtained worse results on all tests compared with the two experimental groups.

Despite confirming such interesting results, some experiments in input processing application have been criticised, and their validity questioned, provoking discussions on the efficiency of this method in the world of applied linguistics. In the case of Benati's study, a small sampling (39 participants), relatively uncomplicated targeted form, and an insufficient description of the control group's language exposure were the arguments against taking the results of the experiment as valid evidence of the method's efficiency (Macaro, 2003). Benati, not discouraged, kept researching the input processing (IP) phenomenon with different target languages and combinations of instruction types. One of his further experiments included PI, traditional instruction, and meaning-based output instruction in Simple Past Tense given to EAL learners in Greece and China (Benati, 2005). Here also, the PI turned out to be the most versatile, resulting in comparable gains in production and better gains in reception tasks, compared to the two other instruction types. Another study was carried out with learners of Italian. This time the IP was contrasted with its two

constituent parts: structured input (SI), and explicit information (EI) (Benati, 2004). The targeted form was Italian gender morphology, and students' proficiency was measured also in spontaneous production. This time also, the results confirmed the efficiency of input processing, with structured input being equally productive as shown in the tests on the participants, also in spontaneous production. The least fruitful method was providing students with solely explicit information about target structures. Although Benati selected various target linguistic features, and different settings, his sampling in both of those quantitatively analysed experiments were rather small (*circa* 10-17 cases per each independent variable). Thus, although the results are very interesting, they might not be generalizable.

There are also some studies whose results question the value of the input processing method. Some of them, like the research conducted by Allen (2000), failed to demonstrate the supremacy of IP over output-based methods. Others, such as the experiment directed by Erlam (2001), show that particular forms of production practice which employ drawing learners' attention to the relationship between meaning and form, can be more effective than the IP method (Erlam, 2001). Paradoxically, some studies on PI which were used as arguments against the superiority of this method seem to confirm processing instruction's long term effectiveness. Such an example is DeKeyser and Sokalski's (1996) research, whose results in the immediate post-test did not prove the IP experimental group to be any better than the output group. However, in the delayed post-tests, the retention of the targeted forms was higher in the IP group than in the case of the output group. As interpreted by VanPatten (2002), this means that IP provides more stable gains for the learners compared to output methods. Yet, DeKeyser argues:

> Despite the prominence of processing in VanPatten's account, the status of IP as a psycholinguistically testable construct is questionable. IP is difficult to relate to current approaches to sentence processing (DeKeyser, *et al.*, 2002:809).

In his paper, DeKeyser questions VanPatten's belief concerning the nature of attention, which the latter linguist sees as a limited resource, and due to such a characteristic, learners need to choose whether to concentrate on form or meaning, whereas "much recent attentional theory argues that attentional resource capacity is *unlimited* (Neumann, 1996; Robinson, [2003])" (DeKeyser, *et al.*, 2002:807). Many of the objections expressed in DeKeyser's paper seem to deal with the problem of a lack of explanation of processes underlying the functioning of the IP method, and its incompatibility with some of the existing theories and approaches. It is argued that the studies on IP carried out so far may claim to refer merely to "the learning of monitored knowledge", rather than language acquisition (DeKeyser, *et al.* 2002:819). On the other hand, some researchers perceive this to be an advantage, as "the aim of this technique is to guide learner processing input, perhaps a more realistic goal compared to explicit techniques that are aimed at immediate acquisition and use" (Williams, 2005:679).

VanPatten (2002) argues that negative voices regarding his results, and counterarguments supported by his opponents' research on IP's effectiveness, fail to be valid as they are often based on studies which do not replicate his experiment, and also because the underlying principles in these studies are different to those he adopted, hence he explains:

> For me and for those who agree with my conceptualization of the underlying system, input provides the raw data upon which internal mechanisms act. For DeKeyser and Sokalski (1996), for example, input is necessary only for the development of comprehension skills; there is no underlying system, but rather sets of procedural knowledge, one for comprehension and one for production. If this reading is correct, then the debate is not about input versus output in SLA (instructed or otherwise), but about an underlying system versus skills (or something else) (VanPatten, 2002:796).

5.5. The role of input, output, consciousness raising and noticing in language learning

Although VanPatten demonstrated in his research that output practice is not indispensable, and not even necessary for learners to be able to use new linguistic structures, he does recognise that there is a place for language practice in language teaching, as output production can help learners to use previously absorbed forms more automatically (VanPatten, 1996). He sees the role of output practice as a facilitator of "the development of fluency and accuracy as well as of other aspects of language development" (VanPatten, 2002:764). Advocating such a symbiotic relationship between input and output in SLA should be received with relief, as some researchers were afraid that the overwhelming novelty factor of IP, combined with rather fascinating results of testing output after the pure processing instruction exposure, might start a real revolution in the field of language teaching, and may even cause output practice to be perceived as outdated as, arguably, grammar translation method is nowadays. At least such anxiety can be sensed in the following lines:

> Bill VanPatten has made a very important contribution to the field by drawing attention to the importance of providing students with activities that engage them in processing crucial form-meaning links, in particular, in comprehension activities. As is often the case in the field of SLA, however, there has been a rush to overgeneralization and overinterpretation, which threatens to overshadow the very important message of PI [processing instruction]. (DeKeyser, *et al.*, 2002:820).

Ellis (2005b) seems more assured of the potential gains that may result from input processing method's application in SLA, arguing that VanPatten's method should provoke a rethink and reorganization of the way grammar is taught in order to incorporate the IP research findings in the practice of language teaching. Ellis goes one step further, even, and identifies computer assisted learning as one of the best areas to employ this method (Ellis, 2005b).

Returning to the discussion on input versus output relationship, Cadierno points out that despite the very good results the method of input processing instruction brings in the field of SLA, as shown by the experiments mentioned above, the language production practice represented by output in this discussion should not be abandoned completely. Instead, it should be applied in the following order – input based, then output based instruction (Cadierno, 1995). What is also stressed here is the importance of meaningful tasks, as opposed to language drills which are based on pure grammar objectives, as was the case with the PPP method. She argues also that the success of processing instruction method is subject to the input with focus on meaning rather than form itself (Cadierno, 1995). She seems to be advocating here that input containing processing instruction should be followed by the output in the form of a meaningful and purposeful communication.

Lightbown (1991) brings another important point to the discussion, reporting that learners who were subjected to focus on forms instruction retained linguistic gains, and some even improved their accuracy, if after that instruction they were exposed to communicative language in which these targeted forms were used. Noticing these forms in the communicative context motivated the learners to acquire them (Lightbown, 1991). A similar conclusion is drawn on the basis of Schmidt's (1990) self-observation – despite being exposed to certain language forms, he started using them only after having noticed them. This seems to add an important element to the discussion – the factor of noticing a linguistic form in input. As Fotos concludes: "just being taught a particular grammatical form was insufficient for subsequent use of the form […]" (Fotos, 1993:387). Fotos wonders whether learning is a consequence of a learner having noticed a targeted form often enough (threshold effect), or rather the noticing of a targeted form occurs because it has already developed in the learner's explicit knowledge (Fotos, 1993) by means of instruction. What Ellis argues is that when the latter phenomenon takes place, it facilitates the process of transferring that knowledge of the form in question into the long term memory (Ellis, 2005a).

Pica, reporting Schmidt's findings, argues that attention, and noticing the gap between the IL and targeted form, seem to be indispensable in learning a second language (Pica, 2005). Consciousness raising, defined simply by Nunan as "a type of focus on form approach to grammar teaching" (Nunan, 2005:234), is one way of making students notice the targeted form, its salience, and the gap between that form and their IL. However, the problem of how to make a learner notice specific language forms seems to be a pertinent one. One way of doing this may be through input enhancement (IE), which could then lead to consciousness raising (Sharwood Smith, 1993). This method implies making a particular linguistic feature look more salient, and thus more noticeable to the learner. This may be achieved through e.g. stressing such a form orally, or by visual input enhancement where a targeted form is e.g. highlighted in a text. The input enhancement method seems to be a very fruitful way to make a learner aware of the existence and salience of a targeted form. In the study produced by Rezvani (2011), he compared the effects of IE and output practice on the acquisition of grammatical collocations in 90 EFL adult learners. The results achieved were similar to those in the case of processing instruction, i.e. the IE group, which had not been involved in any output practising, achieved similar results in the language production post-tests to the output group. As can be concluded here, focus on form (FoF) consciousness raising techniques like IP or IE bring astonishing results, and should not be ignored while shaping teachers' practice. They do have their limitations, though, as pointed out by DeKeyser earlier in this chapter. One factor that should be kept in mind might be developmental readiness or, in other words, teachability theory (Pienemann, 1984). As shown in the example of Schmidt's (1990) self-observation study, even seemingly obvious grammatical structures may be ignored if a learner is not developmentally ready for their acquisition.

Input and output, as two sources of language learning, not only fail to form a dichotomy, as Cadierno (1995) has noticed, but also can merge into one, in that output can serve as input:

> it is possible that production of the structure [...] served as communicative input for learners, a process suggested by Sharwood Smith (1981, 1991) as one way to convert explicit knowledge into implicit knowledge (Fotos, 1993:399).

One such example could be formulaic chunks, which, when produced in the output, can serve as an input, giving learners the opportunity to 'unpack' the linguistic forms when learners are developmentally ready for them (Lightbown, 1998; Sharwood Smith, 2004). Swain (1998) has observed that while producing linguistic output, learners notice the gap between input and their output, and this facilitates their language learning. It seems then quite obvious that, both through input as well as output, the noticing process of consciousness raising activity may occur. In terms of VanPatten's processing instruction it is contained in input instruction, where learners' attention is drawn to a particular language form by means of the suitably manipulated material presented by a teacher, whereas in Lightbown's (1991) example discussed earlier, learners' attention is drawn by the fact that, in a communicative practice, they notice a form studied in a lesson previously.

The following conclusion can then be drawn from the above discussion: as learners are primarily unaware of how prominent or salient a certain language feature is, they do not know if it is worthwhile to learn it, or maybe even fail to pay enough attention to noticing it. When they see it bearing a specific meaning in a natural context, they can assess its importance and their acquisition can be reinforced. The process of importance assessment or noticing may be a complex and varied one, based on several aspects (e.g. situation, frequency, motivation), and it may depend on a personal judgment on how much a student can or needs to learn, broadening or narrowing the amount of language learnt accordingly. In the case of the processing instruction method, the importance-assessing or noticing process seems to be artificially precipitated in comparison to a natural context, by means of contrasting some meaning carrying linguistic features.

5.6. The role of corrective feedback and metalinguistic input in language learning

Corrective feedback and, often connected with it, the concept of metalinguistic input, have been interwoven in the discussion on language teaching approaches, as it is often perceived to be an integral part of FFI. This section looks at corrective feedback in more detail.

5.6.1 Taxonomies of corrective feedback

In terms of oral corrective feedback (CF), Lyster and Ranta (1997) distinguish six feedback types: repeating student's utterance while prompting for correction; providing a student with correct form; asking for clarification; recasts, metalinguistic feedback; and making students reformulate utterance by asking questions or pausing. As for the written CF, the taxonomy provided by Ellis (2009a) distinguishes between different ways of delivering written feedback and what is required of students in relation to this feedback. Thus, a teacher can correct the student's work (direct CF), or just indicate that errors exist, and perhaps locate them (indirect CF). Another means of error correction is reformulation, where a teacher rewrites the whole erroneous sentence so that it is correct, without pinpointing what was wrong with the original phrase. Another strategy is to equip students with some metalinguistic comments regarding their errors, enabling peer or self-correction. Ellis (2009a) distinguishes also between focused CF, limited to chosen linguistic points, and unfocused CF, with different types of errors referred to. As for the required response to feedback, the distinction is made between just providing students with the feedback, providing them with the feedback and asking them to study it, and providing them with the feedback following requirement to act on it by error editing (*ibid*).

5.6.2. The effect of corrective feedback on language learning

There are some interesting studies evidencing the effectiveness of CF (see e.g. Chandler, 2004; Ferris, 2004; Lyster & Ranta, 1997). Nevertheless, there is a slight controversy as to which of the CF types listed above are most beneficial for a language learner. For instance,

some studies support the supremacy of indirect CF as the method that activates learners' hypothesis testing process (Ferris, 2002), other argue for the superiority of direct CF for its role in internalizing language rules (Chandler, 2003). Such would be for instance studies carried out by Santos, *et. al.* (2010) and Sachs and Polio (2007), whose experiments compared the effects of direct feedback with the effects of reformulation, a technique in which students were asked to study their written work rewritten for accuracy by their teacher, take notes of the differences between the correct version and their original piece, and attempt to rewrite the same piece without resorting to the version with corrections. Both studies demonstrated that reformulation, as a CF technique, does not facilitate uptake as well as the direct method. They also proved the effectiveness of direct written CF on noticing and learning gains. However, there were also some studies, whose outcomes were unable to identify the most beneficial approach, with different CF methods scoring equally well (Robb, *et al.*, 1986).

Comparatively fewer studies research focused CF than unfocused CF, as Ellis (2009a) observes. The latter is investigated by, for instance, Chandler (2003) or Ferris (2006). This does not mean that either of these is inferior, as there is some strong evidence supporting the effectiveness of the focused CF. Sheen (2007), following her focused CF experiment, concludes that students who were provided with such feedback outperformed those in the controlled group and, what is even more interesting, the students presented with the focused direct CF were further outperformed by the group receiving focused direct metalinguistic CF as, in her experiment, Sheen was also investigating the analytic ability of her students, drawing on metalinguistic knowledge.

In terms of oral feedback, generous attention in terms of undertaken research has been devoted to recasts, a more implicit type of CF (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011), very popular in second language classrooms (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Macaro, 2003) for its unobtrusive and low key nature (Doughty & Varela, 1998; Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). However, for the same reason, there is a risk that recast might not be recognized by learners as a form of

corrective feedback but, instead, it may be perceived as a feedback on content (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011; Nicholas, *et al.* 2001), or as another element of the meaning-oriented communication (Schachter, 1981; Macaro, 2003). Recasts were reported to have low effectiveness in leading to self-repair especially in terms of grammatical errors (Lyster, 1998, 2004). Other studies also report low rates of self-repair (e.g. Havranek, 1999). However, Doughty and Varela (1998), in their experiment in ESL science lessons where recast was provided to teach the use of grammatical forms, found that this type of feedback contributed to learning of the forms, and the gains proved to be sustainable, securing a good rate of uptake. They attributed this success to the fact that recast was carefully planned and focused, i.e. was oriented at the targeted form. This type of recast, in narrow target of forms, is advocated by other researchers as well (e.g. Ellis, 2009b; Nassaji & Fotos, 2011). Nevertheless, it may be problematic to compare recast's effectiveness across different studies, since, as Lightbown and Spada (2013) point out, there are many types of recast, and they may contain different kinds of emphasis, e.g. in form of the intonation, or may take a form of what Macaro (2003) refers to as "teacher echo" (*ibid.*: 51), the least intrusive form.

Lyster (2004), reporting on his experiment, argues that prompts, a type of feedback which may include the following techniques applied by a teacher: requests for clarification; repetitions aimed at eliciting the correct form; metalinguistic information; or even direct questions eliciting the correct form, seem to be more effective than recasts (Lyster, 2004). In his study performed in eight French immersion classes of 10-11 year olds, Lyster compared FFI with prompts, FFI with recast, FFI with no particular type of feedback, and pure immersion with no FFI or feedback. The outcomes suggest that more significant learning gains were obtained through prompts, compared to plain FFI, pure immersion, or recasts, especially in written tasks. Lyster argues that prompts are particularly useful in the immersion settings. What is more, "prompts provide a solution to Swain's (1985) call for

immersion teachers to "push" their students to be more accurate in their output" (Lyster, 2004:404-405). He adds:

> In the immersion context, because learners have had years of exposure to L2 input, including the target forms that they consistently have problems acquiring, they need to be pushed, when their focus is on academic content, to use target forms that are in competition with highly accessible interlanguage forms (Ranta & Lyster, 2003; Swain, 1985). Prompts, therefore, may be particularly beneficial in immersion classrooms and other meaning-focused instructional contexts where continued recasting of what students already know may prove to be less effective for promoting the restructuring of interlanguage representations and the proceduralization of competing targetlike representations. (Lyster, 2004:406)

The results of this study suggest that FFI is beneficial for language learners, especially when combined with more explicit linguistic feedback. Such a conclusion is consistent with the results of Sheen's (2010) research on the effects of oral and written CR in ESL adult learners' use of articles. In her study, 143 participants were divided into five groups, who received oral recasts, oral metalinguistic feedback, written direct correction, and written direct metalinguistic feedback, with the fifth group acting as the control group. The post-tests, which included "speeded dictation test, a written narrative test, and an error correction test" (*ibid.*:204), revealed that all of the instructed groups outperformed the control group, except for the group receiving oral recast. Although it might be argued that the results reflect the assumption of transfer appropriate processing (TAP) theory (since the tests were in writing), or could point to the supremacy of written CF over oral CF, Sheen, in interpreting these findings, claims that: "what these results suggest overall is that the crucial factor that influences the effectiveness of CF is the explicitness of the feedback (i.e., whether its corrective force is clear)" (Sheen, 2010:225), thus pointing to the role of consciousness in language learning.

Not all studies, however, confirm the efficacy of corrective feedback, especially if TAP is taken into account. Frantzen (1995) completed an experiment with 44 university students learning Spanish as L2 in order to find out what effect FFI with CR had on knowledge of grammar and accuracy in writing. The control group had their errors pointed out, but no corrections or cues were provided to guide their self-correction. The post-tests, which included discrete point tests and writing of an essay, showed that both groups improved in terms of their accuracy but, in grammar tests, the explicit CR group scored better than the control group. However, in the essay writing measure, in some grammatical forms, it was the control group who outperformed the explicit CR group. The results were interpreted by Frantzen with accordance to the TAP theory, and were regarded as evidence of explicit FFI's ineffectiveness, and an argument for meaning–oriented interaction. Nevertheless, such interpretation might be questionable as, in essence, the control group also received a form of CF to their writing, albeit more implicit. In fact, the experiment was performed with university students - independent learners with good study skills who potentially might be motivated and able to research, correct, and learn from their errors, which were highlighted for them. The study might be more revealing if conducted with younger learners who might not have access or skills enabling them to independently reach for self-repair resources.

From the examples of studies quoted in this section, the conclusion can be drawn that the advantages of corrective feedback are clearly indicated, including the metalinguistic input (e.g. Sheen, 2007) pointing to explicitness of CF as a key to greater gains.

5.7. Conclusion

As can be seen in this section, researchers are cautious about announcing any breakthrough in ELT methodology, but explicit feedback, input processing, and other consciousness raising techniques, as well as the recognition of the importance of noticing, definitely deserve consideration. On the other hand, as can be seen in the case of the contemporary ELT coursebooks, (see Nitta & Gardner, 2005), it seems to take decades for

outdated methodologies to be replaced with new ones – those created on the basis of modern SLA research. Processing Instruction, as argued by Ellis (2005b), should contribute to new ways of looking at language teaching and learning. It reinforces noticing and employs consciousness raising, and, as we know now, learning a language appears to be a much more conscious process than previously thought (Pica, 2005). Approaches to communicative language teaching might benefit from combining input processing instruction with output practice, forming a much more eclectic approach; a marriage of consciousness raising techniques and meaningful output practice.

Chapter 6.

Methodology

6.1. Introduction

The present chapter draws on the literature review discussions in Chapters 4 and 5, which have laid the theoretical foundations for the fieldwork introduced here. The following sections present detailed operationalisation of the theories discussed so far, in the form of the intervention programme, data collection tools and methods.

The first section introduces the research questions, and provides analyses of the ways in which each of them can be answered. The next section, 6.3, comprises a short discussion on the most prominent paradigms in educational research, and locates the present research within this debate. Section 6.4, the largest part of this chapter, offers a detailed description of the fieldwork. It begins with a brief overview of the main study, and proceeds to sampling issues (section 6.4.1), principles of the intervention programme, and elements of instruction. Section 6.4.2 summarises what Integrated Form-Focused Instruction (Integrated FFI) and Isolated Form-Focused Instruction (Isolated FFI) are, and how they can be distinguished. Then it presents these two types of instruction in the context of the present research, and confronts them with other overlapping concepts. This exercise helps to shape the experiment in agreement with the Isolated and Integrated FFI theoretical boundaries, avoiding encroaching on other, similar, but well researched territories. Section 6.4.3 introduces some key elements of the intervention instruction, and the next section offers a useful overview of the way the Isolated-Integrated FFI distinction is operationalised in the fieldwork with the use of these key instructional elements. The control group procedures are discussed in section 6.4.5. The data collection and data analyses methods are explored in the next two sections, followed by the discussion on the role of the researcher, validity and reliability, and ethical considerations. The chapter concludes with

the timetable of the research, listing the main milestones in the study, followed by the final remarks from the author.

6.2. The research hypothesis and the research questions

The hypothesis tested in the present study was formulated as follows:

- Isolated form-focused instruction affects the written performance of EAL secondary-school students differently to Integrated form-focused instruction.

The hypothesis testing was based on the findings from a field study performed in an English mainstream secondary school, which included some experimental lessons, written tests, observations, questionnaires and interviews. The title of the thesis – 'The effects of Integrated *versus* Isolated form-focused instruction on the written performance of English-as-an-Additional-Language secondary-school students' – has been built on the hypothesis and questions arising around the two approaches to explicit grammar instruction, Isolated and Integrated, in the context of second language learners' writing proficiency. Each of these questions seeks its own answer, but, when put together, they are planned to provide a multidimensional tool for extending our understanding in this field. This section outlines these questions, and assigns to each of them the corresponding research methods with which the answers are sought – qualitative (QUAL) and/or quantitative (QUAN).

The literature review chapters have illustrated that, although many researchers are convinced of the beneficial effects of explicit instruction (e.g. Williams, 1995; Norris and Ortega, 2000; Spada, 2011), as Ellis (2005d) observes, most researchers view second language competence as the result of mainly implicit knowledge. Some of them doubt the possibility of transfer from explicit into implicit knowledge, questioning the role of explicit instruction altogether (e.g. Krashen, 1992) (for the discussion on the interface see Chapters 4 and 9). The investigation in the case study starts then with establishing whether explicit instruction and, more precisely, the instruction in grammatical forms, influences learners' developing system (or, in other words, interlanguage) in a significant and sustained way. It

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does not attempt to assess its influence on purely implicit knowledge[6], albeit there is some discussion on possible influence on it (see Chapters 9 and 10). The changes in the students' competence in the targeted forms are tested in writing, and the answers to the following questions were sought:

Question 1: What is the effect of explicit form-focused instruction on English-as-an Additional-Language (EAL) secondary-school students' written performance?

Sub-question 1: How does the performance of the experimental groups compare with the performance of the control group? (QUAN)

Sub-question 2: How do students respond to explicit grammar instruction? (QUAL)

Sub-question3: What are students' attitudes towards explicit grammar instruction? (QUAL+QUAN)

In order to find a comprehensive answer to the above inquiries, both quantitative and qualitative studies were carried out. The quantitative outcomes were provided by the post-test and the delayed post-test applied to three groups of participants – the one receiving Isolated FFI, the one receiving Integrated FFI, and the control group receiving no FFI. Then, the performance of those participants who had been receiving FFI instruction was compared with the performance of those who had not attended the FFI lessons. The qualitative part consisted of observations of students' progress in written tasks during the ten weeks of instruction, and was aimed at analysing the process of the targeted forms entering students' interlanguage, as well as observation of students' reaction to explicit teaching techniques applied, such as task based approach, language practice, or noticing and processing instruction. Questionnaires and interviews were administered to serve as a

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[6]It must be stressed that the present study is not aimed at establishing the ultimate link between FFI and building of implicit knowledge, due to the elusive character of the concept of implicit competence, and ambiguity in testing it. It is assumed that the meaning-based tasks and time pressure exerted on students trying to access their linguistic knowledge make it possible to measure the implicit nature of the competence (Ellis, 2005c, 2009c). Yet, this does not appear to be as straightforward as it seems (see e.g. the study by Spada, et al., 2014, who admit to being unable to test for purely implicit knowledge).

tool establishing which elements of the instruction the students found most and least useful. The outcomes were obtained through both descriptive analyses and quantitative calculations.

The second question comprises the heart of this research. Here, the impact of Isolated versus Integrated form-focused instruction on the EAL students' proficiency, as demonstrated in writing, was analysed. The following questions are asked:

Question 2: How does the effectiveness of Isolated versus Integrated form-focused instruction compare in the English secondary school setting?

Sub-question1: What are the differences between the two experimental groups in terms of the level of mastery of the targeted forms? (QUAN)

Sub-question 2: What factors influence the discrepancy? (QUAN + QUAL)

Further to investigating the purposefulness of the explicit instruction as such, its two dichotomous types were compared in order to check for any substantial differences between the two experimental groups in the level of mastery of the targeted forms. Also, each of the experimental groups was compared to the controlled group.

The answer to the first sub-question was sought through the statistical analyses comparing the two experimental groups on two levels: in terms of the ability to produce the targeted forms (form formation), and the ability to recognise the forms and their functions in context (form recognition). The second sub-question leaves scope for further exploration of factors which might influence the results. Both quantitative as well as qualitative analyses were employed in searching for common patterns, and data were obtained from students' profiles, students' voice, test results, and observations.

Some important elements of the investigation refer to the influence of the teacher's metalinguistic input on the uptake, and students' perception of the teacher's corrective feedback. Thus, the study sought answers to the following questions:

Question 3: What is the role of metalinguistic input and teacher's explicit feedback in each FFI approach?

Sub-question 1: To what extent does metalinguistic awareness influence the students' success and how does it compare across the groups? (QUAN + QUAL)

Sub-question2: How do students receiving each FFI perceive teachers' explicit feedback? (QUAL +QUAN)

As stated in the previous chapters, research has shown that corrective feedback is most beneficial when it is explicit, especially in communicative and content-based language settings (Lyster & Saito, 2010). The present study draws on these findings, and explores the teacher's explicit feedback from the participants' perspective. It investigates, with the use of the post intervention questionnaire, tests, video recordings and fieldwork notes, how such feedback and metalinguistic input influenced the participants' linguistic proficiency, and how the subjects receiving each instruction type – Isolated FFI and Integrated FFI – perceived the role of teacher's feedback in their learning process. A direct influence of metalinguistic awareness on the mastery of the targeted forms was also enquired. In order to answer all these questions, both qualitative as well as quantitative approaches were adopted. The student voice, observations and tests were applied to seek the answers.

One of the objectives of this research is to contribute towards establishing an EAL intervention model in a content-based mainstream secondary school that could be adopted in similar settings. Thus, the following questions arise:

Question 4: How can teaching of the language use, language structure, and subject content be combined to serve the purpose of improving grammatical competence in EAL students' writing in the context of a mainstream secondary school?

Sub-question 1: What is the educational value afforded by application of the two FFI types in the mainstream school? (QUAL+QUAN)

Sub-question 2: What would be the most effective way to combine explicit language teaching with content teaching? (QUAL+QUAN)

The final question is a rather broad one, but has a key role in the research success. Its answer is sought by combining analyses of all data collected in the study. The answers to all previous questions (*i.e.* 1-3) contribute to the discussion. The answer to this question constitutes wider interpretation of the outcomes of the study, and contributes to the study's implications formulated in the final chapter, Chapter 10.

6.3. Research paradigm

The debate over paradigms, as they are used in social science research methodologies, started with the prominent work of Thomas Kuhn, who defined a paradigm as a set of ideas, theories, and beliefs shared within a particular community, as well as methods and techniques used by it (Kuhn, 1970). This rather broad, ambiguous (Walker & Evers, 1999), or even elusive definition accounts for a variety of understandings and interpretations of the paradigm concept. According to Masterman (1970), Kuhn (1970) himself uses the term paradigm in 21 different ways. Such multidimensionality is welcomed with enthusiasm by some researchers, as it leaves space for manoeuvre as their understanding broadens (Guba, 1990). On the other hand, it accounts for some heated discussions on the scope and role of paradigms, with some researchers narrowing the discussion to the idea of a paradigm as a method, possibly just supported by a theory which dictates its choice. Thus, in practice, the approaches applied in educational research somehow imposed a strong polarization of methodology in this field, with quantitative and qualitative methods on two opposing poles. Such exclusiveness, even called 'paradigm wars' by some (Maxwell, 2011; Gorard & Taylor, 2004), or a 'knowledge war' (Johnson, 2011), originates from a philosophical approach to the term paradigm, and to viewing it in terms of a philosophical belief, thus, shaping research practice upon these philosophical assumptions (Maxwell, 2011). Hence, as Maxwell (2011) observes, supporters of such polarization argue that

quantitative and qualitative approaches originate from philosophically different paradigms; positivism or postpositivism laid the foundations for quantitative research, whereas constructivism gave theoretical background for qualitative research. More recently, however, researchers started to adopt a more eclectic approach, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches in the form of mixed methods research (MMR). For some researchers, such modus operandi comprise the third paradigm, in addition to well established quantitative and qualitative types (e.g. Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The wider paradigms corresponding with the MMR type of research are pragmatism, and realism (Johnson, 2011). Are MMR, quantitative and qualitative methods three types of paradigms, or are they three types of *methodological* paradigms, as Johnson calls them? The rather narrow-minded and unachievable search for a clearly structured world makes the author uncomfortable with the abundant capacity of Kuhn's definition, and perhaps she is not the only one to find it problematic. Walker and Evers (1999), commenting on Kuhn's revelations (Kuhn, 1970:109-110), write: "The key claim being made here is that paradigms include both substantive theories and the standards and criteria for evaluating those theories, or paradigm-specific epistemologies" (Walker & Evers, 1999:47). Drawing on this observation, it can be concluded that viewing Johnson's methodological paradigms as being on a different level in the paradigm taxonomy than philosophical paradigms will aid understanding, help to avoid confusion, and make it possible to establish the direction of further discussion in this section. In other words, it might help to structure the discussion more clearly, if philosophical paradigms, understood here to represent axiological assumptions, are distinguished from methodological paradigms, corresponding to epistemological assumptions. Therefore, in the following sections, the discussion on philosophical paradigms will be followed by the discussion on methodological paradigms.

6.3.1. Philosophical paradigms

Hartas (2010), in her interesting compilation of paradigms, groups philosophical paradigms according to quantitative and qualitative research types employed. Thus, Empiricism, Classical Positivism, Logical Positivism, Postpositivism, Critical Realism and Pragmatism utilise quantitative research, and Social Constructivism, Critical Theory, Structuralism, Poststructuralism and Postmodernism are expressed through qualitative research. Obviously, the list is not exhaustive. There are many more notions that are drawn on in research constructs, often standing in direct opposition to each other, such as monism and dualism, realism and constructionism, value neutrality and value relativism, determinism and holism or contextuality (Smith, 2006). Due to the constraints of the present chapter, however, both in terms of its main purpose, which is more of a methodological rather than theoretical nature, as well as in terms of the space available, only those paradigms which could be potentially related to the current research are discussed – Logical Positivism, Postpositivism, Critical Realism, and Pragmatism. Although, as noted by Smith (2006), many researchers believe that paradigms consisting of contrasting theories cannot be combined in one research, grouping them together around QUAL or QUAN method, as done e.g. by Hartas (2010), demonstrates that they do share a common denominator. The present study, adopting a mixed method design, attempts to draw even more from various paradigms. It should be noted that the author feels unable to commit to one existing paradigm theory, as she cannot uncritically accept all of its assumptions.

The first paradigm to be discussed here, Logical Positivism, was developed in the 1920s and 1930s by the Vienna Circle (Hartas, 2010). It was based on the assumption that research proof needs to be based on mathematical calculations, and there is an objective knowledge independent of an observer, together with universal laws that apply to it. Whereas some of the methods used by logical positivists (experiments, comparisons, and observations), were applied in the present study, the inflexibility of the viewpoint adopted here, and the understanding of knowledge as independent of human actions and beliefs,

make this paradigm an easy target for criticism. Postpositivists challenged some of these assumptions, and moved from the absolute truth of Positivist theory to the truth as constructed by all research, rather than individual findings (Hartas, 2010). The current study, drawing on the previous research in its field, and entering into discussion over its findings, fully agrees with this point. However, reality, which Positivists saw as a concept to be experienced, in Postpositivist tradition is sociolinguistically shaped (Hartas, 2010). As such, Postpositivism received criticism as, again, it promoted a rather narrow viewpoint, albeit one markedly different to its predecessor. Then, Critical Realism, with roots in the Postpositivist movement, seems to be also close to the current study's paradigm, as it is more open in its approach to research, knowledge, and reality. It admits that all beliefs, as man-made, are potentially erroneous, while the reality is made of many layers (Potomaki & Wight, 2000). However, perhaps because of that, it assumes that relationships of cause and effect, influenced by so many factors, should not be used to establish generalizable patterns (Kemp & Holmwood, 2003) – an assumption standing in direct opposition to what the current research hopes to achieve. A more flexible and eclectic approach is offered by Pragmatism, a movement developed in America, which seems to correspond even more closely with the paradigm behind the present research. It again rejects the existence of absolute truth, as "for pragmatists, knowledge is theory- and value-laden and capable of shaping human values" (Hartas, 2010:41). Similar to the Postpositivist view on research theory as a collective rather than individual construct, Pragmatists also see theories as only tentatively proven until they are challenged by other research outcomes, and, because of this, quantitative research is capable of finding valid patterns which can serve for further inquiry (Hartas, 2010).

6.3.2. Methodological paradigms

The methodological framework of the proposed study transpires from the discussions in the previous sections, especially in the literature review. There, some current approaches to language teaching and learning are introduced and analysed. The conclusions of these

discussions comprise the foundation for the research questions, and constitute the core methodology of the experiment in the study. The methodological framework of the proposed study is predicated on the premise that language instruction in general is beneficial for language learners (Doughty & Williams, 1998a), especially in communicative or content-based programmes (Spada & Lightbown, 2008). The epistemology of the research has been selected according to the popular belief shared in the literature that having various research questions requires applying different methods (Smith, 2006), and is in accordance with the Pragmatism theory, which advocates determining research methods by their suitability to address individual research questions (Hartas, 2010). The research questions aiming at establishing some patterns in students' reaction to teaching material, method and the teachers' feedback would involve resorting to qualitative and quantitative methods of study. Looking at the problem from different angles facilitates richer understanding of the phenomena examined, as Behrens and Smith, quoting Campbell (1978), point out: "there is no quantitative knowing without qualitative knowing" (Behrens & Smith, 1996:947). The qualitative research helps in analysing the detail of the phenomenon studied, whereas quantitative research makes it possible to aim at conclusions that provide some space for generalization of the findings. It might even be concluded that quantitative design answers the question of 'what' (what happens as a result of the treatment, what effect it has), whereas qualitative research design might offer more understanding as to 'why' it happens.

There are mixed views on qualitative and quantitative research compatibility. The potential of such mutual interrelation is illustrated by Stephen Stoynoff's (1990) research, described by Gall (Gall, *et al.*, 2003), in which the qualitative methods used made it possible to discover the reasons for results obtained through a quantitative method. The quasi-experimental design of the present field study reflects the quest to identify the causal relationship between each of the FFI types and students' written performance gains. However, common patterns and reasons for their occurrence are of equal interest to the

researcher. Therefore, the research does not only hope for but also relies on the compatibility and interdependency of the quantitative and qualitative methods.

6.4. The case study

The case study pursued in this research took the form of a quasi-experiment. Such a research design was dictated by the non-randomized sampling method, thus quasi-, (Creswell, 2014) (see section 6.4.1 in this chapter), and the research questions, which attempt to identify causal effects of two types of FFI instruction – Isolated FFI and Integrated FFI – on learning of the targeted grammatical features in English as an Additional Language students, thus – experimental. The explanatory sequential mixed-methods design was selected, where qualitative data are complementary to quantitative data. Here, the quantitative findings were used to provide key answers to the research questions, and qualitative tools were applied to further explore the processes and reasons behind the outcomes obtained through the quantitative analyses. These quantitative analyses triggered some new questions that would have remained unanswered if the qualitative analysis of the study had not followed. While the quantitative part of the analyses provided precise answers to such questions as 'what?' 'who?' and 'when?', the qualitative part offered some, often subjective but always insightful, answers to the questions of 'how?' and 'why?'

In order to enable methodological triangulation of the results, a number of data collection tools to serve quantitative and qualitative data analyses were applied. The quantitative tools included the pre-test, the post-test, and the delayed post-test. The questionnaires, one pre-intervention and one post-intervention, were used both quantitatively and qualitatively. Other qualitative tools included interviews, video recordings and observation of the lessons, as well as the researcher's field notes. The data collection tools and methods are discussed in section 6.4.6 below.

The fieldwork was carried out in one of the academies in the south-east of England. It commenced in September 2012 and concluded in March 2013 (see table 6.1. below), although some spontaneous encounters with its participants providing some feedback mentioned in the discussion chapter (Chapter 9) continued many months later.

Week	Date	Procedure applied
1	21st September 2012	Pre-test and pre-intervention questionnaire
2	Between 24th and 28th September 2012	Allocating cases to groups with the use of a well-matched assignment design, where students' background and pre-test scores are taken into account while dividing them into the groups, so that these variables are spread equally between the groups.
3	From 1st October to 13th December 2012	Intervention lessons (ten hours in each experimental group – an hourly lesson a week) Video recording, field note taking, observations
13	Between 10th and 13th December 2012	Post-intervention questionnaire (administered straight after the last lesson)
13	14th December 2012	Post-test
20	1st February 2013	Delayed post-test
25	Between 4th and 8th March 2013	Interviews

Table 6.1. Timeline of the main fieldwork.

The timing of the study was chosen to minimize the impact it might have on the school's curriculum implementation. Early in the year, there was less pressure on the staff and students to prepare for the end of year examinations and assessments, so it was easier to conduct testing and implement the experimental treatment. The intervention element of the fieldwork did not start until 1st October, to allow for the process of adaptation of the new students in Year 7, and to make sure the continuing students got used to the school routine again after the summer break. Initially, the main research case study involved 120 pre/intermediate EAL students aged between 12 and 16, out of which only 91 concluded the intervention, and so only 91 cases were included in the final analyses. The subjects were divided into three groups: two experimental and one control (see section 6.4.1. for

information on assigning to groups), and the pre-test was administered to all of them, together with the pre-intervention questionnaire. The participants in all three groups continued to attend their standard mainstream subject lessons, with English as a medium of content instruction. The students from one of the experimental groups received Isolated form-focused instruction, and the students belonging to the other experimental group received Integrated form-focused instruction for one hour a week for ten weeks. This meant that the individuals in the experimental groups had to be withdrawn from some of their mainstream classes. The students in the control group did not receive any specially targeted EAL instruction. Instead, they remained in their standard content-oriented mainstream subject lesson, which meant that while the experimental groups had their FFI sessions, the control group participants were subjected to content-oriented teaching without FFI.

Both experimental groups had informal writing assessments at several points during the experiment to observe the learning process of the targeted grammatical forms, monitor the pace and path of targeted forms development, and to check reaction to specific teaching techniques. Also, some classroom observation was conducted, and the way students interacted with the teaching materials and responded to the teacher's feedback was recorded and analysed. In the last week of the intervention, after all lessons had been conducted the post-intervention questionnaires were circulated among the experimental groups. The post-test was administered to the participants in all three groups a day after the last intervention lesson concluded. The delayed post-test was administered seven weeks later to all the participants, and the interviews with selected students followed five weeks later.

The pilot study

The main experiment was preceded by the pilot study, and drew on its results and conclusions, in that it was designed to overcome the problems encountered in it (Dörnyei,

2007). The aim of the pilot was also to reduce the potential issues connected with reliability, validity, but also practicability of the instruments (Oppenheim, 1992). The pilot study took place in April 2012 in the same institution as the main study. It involved ten different students aged between 16 and18 (sixth formers) – four in the Isolated FFI group, three in the Integrated FFI group, and three in the control group. In order to test the research tools, the participants were subjected to the pre-test and the post-test, and responded to the questionnaires. A number of conclusions were drawn, which significantly improved the quality of the main study (see Table 6.2.).

Sources of analysis:	Analyses-based implications for the main fieldwork
Conduct of the pilot study	- Invitations to take part in the study should be sent with plenty of notice to ensure a maximum response rate. - The main study should be carried out at a carefully chosen time and preferably not at the end of the school year. - The lessons should be arranged to take place early during the day to help students stay focused. - The researcher needs to ensure that the participants do not have any planned absences before embarking on the study. - The important milestones of the study, such as the post-test or questionnaire administration, should not coincide with or be scheduled near the date of school holidays, as it may increase the chance of participants' withdrawal. - Interfering variables, such as SEN, or length of stay in England should be taken into account while inviting students to participate in the study.
Tests	- The test tasks' weighting should be more balanced, i.e. each of the tasks should not be disproportionally heavily marked, yet the variety of tasks should be maintained. - The pre-test and the post-test should reflect each other both in terms of difficulty and format, as well as the targeted structures in each task. - Formatting, randomization and typo mistakes need to be eradicated. - Task F needs to be redesigned, so that only one targeted form is possible in each caption in order to avoid ambiguity in results interpretation. Alternatively, the format of this task needs to be reconsidered. - Some questions about students' educational background

	should be incorporated into either questionnaires distributed among all participants, or interviews for selected students, in order to be able to assign the participants' metalinguistic knowledge to prior education or the current intervention.
	• The pictures in the tasks should be improved in order to create less ambiguous context.
	• The pre-test results should not be disclosed to the participants during the intervention (unless the scores are made anonymous), as this may influence their further performance.
Observation and video recordings	• The technical problems with recording equipment should be looked into and eliminated.
	• A better angle for filming needs to be identified to include all participants and the teaching equipment (Smartboard, resources etc.).
	• More notes on an ongoing basis should be made while teaching, and analytical vignettes method might aid this. Each lesson needs to be reflected on immediately after it finishes to keep the notes as detailed as possible.
	• Students might need time to get used to being filmed.
The post-intervention questionnaire	• The question that asks students to rank the elements of lessons needs to be rephrased or redesigned.
	• The questionnaire should be administered as soon as possible after the intervention and before the post-test.
	• Include another questionnaire to be conducted prior to the intervention in order to measure students' preferences towards grammar instruction.
	• The participants should be more extensively informed about the value of their honest answers in the questionnaire.
	• The questionnaires need to be read to the students, and all the questions explained in order to ensure they understand what each of them requires the students to do.

Table 6.2. Analyses-based implications for the main study

6.4.1. Sampling

Initially, 120 participants aged between 12 and 16 were selected among the academy students to take part in the experiment. The discrepancy between the ages of the participants included in the main fieldwork and the pilot study results from the practicalities of the setting's constraints. The number of the 12-16 year-old academy students with EAL

status who met the EAL-level criteria was limited. Thus, it would have been unreasonable to construct a pilot group with participants who would otherwise ideally suit the main experiment. Such a decision helped utilise a greater number of participants without excluding any potentially qualifying learners from the main study due to experimental treatment pre-exposition.

The students were identified from the school cohort on the basis of their EAL proficiency level – pre/intermediate, as indicated in their language assessment routinely administered by the EAL teachers in the school. The number of EAL students in the academy at any point of the year approximates 50%, which accounts for between 400 and 450 students, out of whom a large group is of pre/intermediate EAL level. In September 2012, 120 students were identified as such, and invited to take part in the study. The students were divided into three groups: ISO – receiving Isolated FFI instruction, INT – receiving Integrated FFI instruction, and CO – the control group, not receiving FFI instruction. Absence of a few students in some intervention lessons, and ruling out one of the participants as an outlier in the analysis phase of the study, reduced the number of cases used in the analysis to 91 (ISO n=27, INT n=28, CO n=36). The number of cases in each of the groups was not equal, but was comparable. The participants were grouped with around 30 cases per group, as advised in the literature for quantitative research (Cohen, *et al.,* 2011), and in particular for correlational research (Borg & Gall, 1979). For experimental methodology research, or causal-comparative experiments, a minimum of 15 subjects for each subgroup is required (Borg & Gall, 1979). Although the sample size was rather modest, it allowed for some generalizability of the research outcomes. Yet, a larger sample would also, obviously, be desirable here because of the large number of variables in the study (Gorard, 2003), as each variable should be represented by an adequately significant sample size. Cohen and his colleagues (2011) suggest between six and ten cases per variable. The nature of variables can often dictate the sample size required, with categorical variables calling for larger samples than continuous data (Bartlett, *et al*., 2001). The mixed method research applied in this study, the multiplicity of variables to take into consideration, and the very

nature of these variables suggest that a larger sample would be advisable. Yet, taking into account the nature of the setting and the limitations of the educational research, this was not possible. For this reason, the research is of quasi-experimental design, as random participants' assignment to the groups was not feasible. This is a common situation in an educational setting, and quasi-experimental design has a long tradition in this branch of social science. Instead of randomization, then, the students were 'well-matched' (Slavin, 2010). "Randomized experiments are still preferable, but it is important to be aware that other alternatives can produce similar findings" (Slavin, 2010:105).

The students who were invited to the study needed to meet certain criteria, such as having EAL status or being at a similar starting English proficiency level – pre/intermediate. There were, however, a number of factors that the students did not commonly share. In a less homogeneous group, such as the one selected for the experiment, there is always a range of confounding variables such as age, overall academic achievement, mother tongue, gender, and others which need to be taken into account. Normally, in large populations, a researcher plans to control these by the process of randomization (Muijs, 2004), which helps balance the groups. However, in the current research, due to the entry criteria on the one hand, and the relatively small number of participants on the other, such randomization could not be afforded. Thus, before assigning the students into the groups, all individuals were screened for selected extraneous factors in order to ensure well-matched assignment. This was achieved by taking the following steps: the subjects were initially divided into several groups according to a number of confounding variables – age, mother tongue, pre-test score, and gender. Then, students from each of these groups were assigned into the three groups (two experimental and one control), so that each group had a similar profile of students with corresponding variables (similar numbers of girls and boys, Key Stages 3 (KS3) and 4 (KS4) students, etc.) (see Table 6.3 below).This enabled the researcher to have a greater control over these variables, and avoid any significant differences between

the groups. To some extent, such balancing of the groups addressed the issue of the sample size.

Participants' prifiles		ISO	INT	CO
year group	7	4	5	8
	8	6	6	6
	9	6	5	8
	10	4	5	6
	11	7	7	8
gender	female	13	13	20
	male	14	15	16
language group of the mother tongue	Semitic	3	-	2
	Cushitic	-	1	6
	Bantu	-	-	2
	Indo Iranian	13	16	13
	Slavic	4	4	1
	Baltic	-	1	2
	Italic (Latin/Romanic)	3	6	5
	Albanian	-	-	1
	Tai-Kadai/Daic	1	-	-
	Chinese	1	-	-
	Finno-Ugric	1	-	1
	Turkic	1	-	-
	Dravidian	-	-	2
	Malayo-Polynesian	-	-	1
pre-test score (mean and standard deviation)	form formation	M=23.76; SD=14.28	M=25.26; SD=9.82	M=23.73; SD=13.93
	form recognition	M=47.15; SD=14.33	M=50.96; SD=13.83	M=45.62; SD=17.60
	metalinguistic knowledge	M=14.00; SD=16.04	M=12.61; SD=12.04	M=13.11; SD=12.63

Table 6.3. Participants' distribution into Integrated FFI, Isolated FFI and the control group.

Each FFI cohort, Isolated and Integrated, was taught in three groups to maximise the effectiveness of the instruction, forming six experimental groups altogether. All the groups, including the control group, continued to be immersed in their usual mainstream subject lessons. However, the ISO and INT groups were withdrawn from one of their mainstream lessons per week for ten weeks in order to receive their intervention instruction. The withdrawal timetable was rotational at the school's request, to ensure students did not miss the same lesson each week and to minimize disruption.

6.4.2. The intervention programme principles

The main hypothesis of this research – Isolated form-focused instruction affects the written performance of EAL secondary-school students differently to Integrated form-focused instruction – concentrates on the topic of two contrasting types of form-focused instruction: Isolated and Integrated. The terms used by Spada and Lightbown (2008) refer to very specific concepts described in depth in their article – 'Form-Focused Instruction: Isolated or Integrated?' – and are discussed in Chapter 4. This section investigates both the differences as well as the common denominators of the two types in order to construct the procedures and materials used in the current experiment.

6.4.2.1. Integrated FFI and Isolated FFI – common features

The common denominator for both of the instruction types is the teaching framework within which they are applied – Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Spada & Lightbown, 2008) (further explored in section 6.4.3.2), or, "content-based language teaching" (Larsen-Freeman, 2011:525). In the intervention, the communicative context is provided by short films covering topics of racism, bullying, and relationships.

Another shared element in both types of instruction, also applied in the intervention programme, is the presence of the teacher's feedback as one of the instructional components. Another common feature is the subject of the instruction in the current experiment – grammatical forms used to express past events. The experiment designed to

test the hypothesis in the current research meets all the requirements described here as the 'common denominators'.

Beyond that, however, there are significant differences between the two FFI approaches, which, as the hypothesis quoted in the introduction predicts, might determine the advantage of one approach over the other in the learning situation typical for the mainstream secondary school setting. These hypothesized differences account for the fact that the two FFI types have potential for bringing desirable learning effects depending on a setting, targeted forms, or learners' characteristics (Spada & Lightbown, 2008). The sections below attempt to describe each of the instruction types to identify the distinctive features which could make each instruction type successful.

6.4.2.2. Integrated form-focused instruction.

Spada and Lightbown (2008) define Integrated FFI as the type of instruction in which "the learners' attention is drawn to language form during communicative or content-based instruction" (*ibid*.: 186) where, as the name suggests, the form instruction is fully integrated with the otherwise purely meaning-oriented content. The experimental treatment in the intervention was designed to reflect this description. As such, the instruction here was both: incidental, spontaneous and unplanned, more responsive in nature, or, on the contrary, planned for in order to fit a particular communicative situation. What is characteristic, though, is that such FFI consists of only "brief explanations" (Spada & Lightbown, 2008:187), and therefore it does not dominate the lesson. In the current research, both the choice of tasks (communication oriented), as well as timing (brief), and purpose (message oriented) of instruction in form were designed to preserve these characteristics.

Similar to the instruction, feedback in Integrated FFI also serves exclusively the purpose of communication, rather than mastering the form *per se*, as here its role is "to help students express meaning more effectively or more accurately within the communicative interaction" (Spada & Lightbown, 2008:187). As suggested here, in spite of the heavy focus on

communicative usefulness of the feedback in this type of FFI, there is a place for accuracy here as well, which indeed makes all the difference between this and a pure CLT approach. Taking this into account, the feedback in the intervention study was organized so that it did not interrupt the communicatively oriented purpose of the lesson, but rather complemented it with a finely balanced focus on form oriented to enhance the meaning. More information on feedback applied in the current study can be found in section 6.4.3.5.

6.4.2.3. Isolated form-focused instruction

Spada and Lightbown specify that "In isolated FFI, the focus on language form is separated from the communicative or content-based activity" (2008:186). On the other hand, however, although "Isolated FFI is provided in activities that are separate from the communicative use of language, […] it occurs as part of a program that also includes CLT and/or CBI" (Spada & Lightbown, 2008:186). Therefore, in the intervention, the communicative-oriented and the form-oriented parts of the programme were always separated. For instance, the first lesson of the Isolated FFI intervention programme started with an entirely communicative part – watching a short film, and discussing the topic of racism – and then, when it finished, the lesson focus moved on to Isolated FFI, so that, although Isolated FFI and its communicative context were sometimes delivered during the same session, these two never overlapped, merged or mingled. Care was taken, however, to ensure that the time devoted to the communicative tasks and FFI tasks was comparable in Isolated and Integrated FFI.

6.4.3. The intervention programme instructional elements

All the study participants were immersed in a secondary mainstream education, where methodologies adhered to resemble the strong form of CLT or CBI. For the purpose of the study, in addition to the mainstream instruction, the experimental groups were provided with communicative context offered by short films, and Isolated or Integrated FFI, taught outside of their timetabled lessons. The previous sections of this chapter have discussed the main

principles of each FFI type, now operationalized into a set of procedures resulting in the experimental lesson plans (see Appendix 2 for sample lesson plans used in the study). The following sections offer an overview of the practicalities of employing various methods and approaches in the intervention programme. They are devoted to the description of the elements of the intervention procedures. Where relevant, the differences between the two FFI types are pinpointed.

6.4.3.1. The form

The linguistic forms chosen to be the subject of form-focused instruction in both FFI approaches were the grammatical forms used to express past events. The forms selected for the intervention lessons and the tests were: the past simple tense versus the present perfect tense, the past perfect tense contrasted with the past simple tense, the perfect infinitive used to express probability, and the 3rd conditional. The choice of these linguistic features was influenced by several factors. One of these was consultation with the EAL teachers working in the participating school, and recommendation made by them, as well as the analyses of the writing samples of the participating students, undertaken prior to embarking on the research experiment – a method regarded as ''the most obvious […] time honored tradition of choosing forms that appear to be problematic for particular group of learners'' (Doughty & Williams, 1998c:212). While making decisions on the subject of the FFI, Pienemann's (1985) teachability theory had also been considered. The participants' current stage of interlanguage development – pre/intermediate – indicated that they were likely to be developmentally ready for the instruction in such structures as the past perfect or modal past forms, and they would not be required to skip stages in their learning sequence. Although the students selected to take part were indeed roughly at the same stage, they might, and most probably did, differ slightly in their level of proficiency and the nature of the gaps in their English language knowledge. Still, as mentioned above, they formed a group homogenous enough to assume they were not forced to skip stages. However, some of the less advanced learners might have needed to skip some steps within

a stage of language development. Indeed, it is not advisable to compose any taught language group so that all learners are exactly at the same micro-level of language development, because learners are not given opportunity to learn from each other by being provided with stimulating peer output.

On the other hand, it is quite impossible to design a uniform group either – ''heterogeneity of classes is a well-known reality, one that would make developmentally targeted teaching very difficult to organize'' (Lightbown, 1998:179). Research has shown that such heterogeneity is not the ground for an ultimate failure of FFI in the case of such students, as there is some evidence that learners could be successful at acquiring linguistic content ahead of the next step that they would normally acquire in terms of the order of second language acquisition (Zobl, 1983; Ortega, 2013), as long as that is indeed skipping a step and not a stage, understood as a transitional phase (Doughty & Williams, 1998c). Some other studies seem to support these findings. Students who are challenged beyond their immediate readiness, instead of being carefully guided step by step, are stimulated to respond quicker, acquire faster (see Gass, 1982), and maybe even to create their own inner type of scaffolding for those language elements, steps, that they had to skip on their way to grasp the more developmentally distant linguistic feature they have been pushed for (e.g. while teaching 3rd conditional before the 1st conditional).

6.4.3.2. Communicative Language Teaching and Content-Based Instruction.

Throughout the intervention, the communicative context remained a key element of the instruction in both Isolated and Integrated FFI, for, as Berns (1990) sensibly remarks, language is a tool for communication, thus it should be taught using communicative techniques. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) context seems the most appropriate approach here, although the term may be perceived as a little vague – as Littlewood states: "A recurrent comment about communicative language teaching is that nobody knows what it is" (Littlewood, 2011:541). Also, it seems to mean something different to various

researchers – "What is communicative language teaching? The answer to this question seems to depend on whom you ask" (Spada, 2007:272). Despite the broadness of the method, reflected for example by dividing it into 'strong CLT version' and 'weak CLT version', it apparently remains a very popular vehicle for language teaching, next to CLIL, with its predominant aim to help students to communicate rather than making them learn "bits of language just because they exist" (Harmer, 2007:70). In other words, the model of CLT aims to equip a student with communicative competence.

The current study aims to embrace both aspects of CLT learning: weak (also referred to as analytic) and strong (sometimes called experiential), which are at two ends of the CLT spectrum (Littlewood, 2011). What needs to be stressed, however, is that despite the fact that CLT is a very meaning-oriented approach, it "does not exclude a focus on metalinguistic awareness or knowledge of rules of syntax" (Savignon, 2005:645). What is more, "second language learners benefit from form-focused instruction which is provided within communicative contexts" (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). The analytical or 'weak' edges of the continuum were addressed in the Integrated FFI instruction, with the main focus on meaning expressed through form, for example by encoding a sequence of actions in a story by the use of past simple, past continuous and past perfect tenses, and asking the learners to identify the order of events. Another analytical CLT instruction element is "conscious learning and practice" (Littlewood, 2011:548), as opposed to "subconscious learning and integration" (*ibid.*). Also, this element was employed in the experiment, where rules were explicitly taught, and the targeted forms were used in the meaningful practice of working with stories or recreating film plots.

As for the pure strong CLT dimension, where no instruction in form takes place, it was evident in the context lessons of Isolated FFI, where the focus was placed solely on the meaning as opposed to the form (the form was in focus only during the Isolated FFI sessions). The units of Integrated FFI lessons adopted the weak form of CLT, which takes account of form and teaches it through personalised settings, drawing on CLT task design

principles such as information gap, or pair-work. The study was carried out with the assumption that students need a sense of security as to the rules of the language, way beyond the need to communicate and be understood. There was a possibility that some students might not understand the need for learning the less salient or less frequently occurring forms, and instead they might count on their experience of language acquisition in the immersion type of setting they found themselves in, all the more that it had worked very well with more basic or frequent rules, and especially with communicative competence, namely Cummins' (1979, 1999) Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS). What immersion programmes show, however, is that students' accuracy suffers when it comes to less salient or rarer forms (Williams, 1995). Whereas linguists may debate why learners fail to master the language in immersion programs, learners, having gone so far with their second language acquisition quite effortlessly, may hope that they can go even further with no instruction necessary. Thus, the inner drive to explore the language on their own might not be an initiative typically held among language learners in mainstream settings such as the one used in the current study. Applying a set of tools, such as consciousness raising and noticing techniques, which could help to reinforce the meaning making potential of grammatical forms, served as a means of addressing this issue in both Isolated and Integrated FFI (see section 6.4.3.4).

CLT and CBI, as more meaning-oriented than form-oriented approaches, constitute an appropriately contrastive background so that the instruction in form has a chance to conclusively either prove or deny its (instruction's) tangible benefits. As mentioned in the previous subchapters, all students invited to take part in the study were receiving education with a mixture of CLT and CBT in their mainstream classes. Additionally, in order to meet the requirements of the Integrated FFI, the treatment lessons constituted a series of coherent sessions designed around a strong communicative purpose with topics common to all learners and to some extent independent of the curriculum. This was due to the fact that the participants were of mixed aged groups, so adjusting the topic to correspond with

one of their mainstream subjects could be impracticable if not impossible. In Integrated FFI, the grammatical elements of the instruction, such as brief explanations or feedback, were offered during communicative tasks. On the other hand, as mentioned briefly in 6.4.2.3, Isolated FFI lessons were subdivided to include communicative context and instruction in form delivered separately. Not only did such procedure ensure that the amount of time devoted to FFI was comparable in both intervention groups, but also ensured that what the experiment was investigating was indeed Isolated FFI rather than focus on formS, *i.e.* that there was a direct and strong link between communicative activities and instruction in form. Separating teaching of the form from the communicative context into discrete, but linked, sessions enabled preservation of the characteristics of Isolated FFI, as described by Spada and Lightbown: "isolated FFI is attention to form in separate lessons that occur within a program that is primarily communicative in orientation" (2008:193).

6.4.3.3. Task-based approach

Task-based language teaching (TBLT), briefly introduced in Chapter 5, concentrates on what students can do with the language (Norris 2011), rather than what they know about the language, and it was chosen to be the leading theme of the experimental instruction, since it is congruent with the communicative context. Although the focus in both experimental treatment programmes was, to a greater or lesser extent, on form, that form served the purpose of communication and completion of the task, not the other way round. (At least the goal was to persuade the participants that this was the case, leaving the apparent study aims to the researcher). TBLT was chosen for implementation in the current research also for its holistic approach (Norris, 2011), and its potential to create a motivating climate for language application need, rather than simple language drill practice need. Moreover, the task-based approach allows the addressing of various linguistic forms (Norris, 2011). The TBLT concept was operationalized in the intervention programme through linking the classroom activities with the outside world by use of authentic materials, such as short films, or a discussion about real life issues such as tolerance. This afforded

the natural context for learning past tenses, i.e. writing a film storyline, or listening to and reading stories. The lessons also allowed for experiential learning, and noticing of forms via exposure to language in a "task input phase" (Norris 2011:583). Planning time was frequently used to allow for concentration on the form (Ortega, 2005), as well as pair and group work, "central to task-based teaching" (Ellis, 2004:253).

Ellis (2004) lists nine elements of task-based teaching, which he contrasts with a more traditional pedagogy. These are quoted below (Table 6.4), together with their manifestation or absence in the two FFI types, as per the characteristics of Isolated and Integrated FFI.

Elements of task-based teaching as identified by Ellis (2004)	Integrated FFI applied in the intervention	Isolated FFI applied in the intervention
The use of adjacency pairs rather than teacher-learner "initiate-respond-feedback" (Ellis, 2004:253).	Generously applied and encouraged, facilitated by use of tasks	encouraged
Students control topic progression and direction	To some extent – the teacher makes sure that the form focus of the lesson is still maintained, and that instead of the past students don't spend the whole lesson discussing the future, which could deprive them of occasions to use past tenses.	
Natural turn taking, rather than teacher selected speakers	To some extent (the teacher makes sure all students, including the less advanced or shy ones, have opportunity to contribute in the lesson).	
Use purposeful questions (referential questions), instead of the ones where the answer is known (display questions)	Used together with display questions ("questions that the questioner already knows the answer to" (Ellis, 2004:253)), in order to provoke use of the targeted forms, or to check understanding.	
Students play both responding as well as initiating roles	Yes – applied generously	To some extent– in a more grammar oriented context in Isolated FFI sessions, where students are e.g. required to explain a certain language use to their teams, or to another student.
Room for negotiating meaning in case of	Yes, but priority is given to feedback, as a remedy	Limited – not much need, as meaning not in focus

communication breakdowns		
Scaffolding applied to help learners communicate the meaning rather than to ensure correct form	Limited	No – the form is always in focus in the Isolated part of the intervention
Feedback focused on content	Limited – feedback focused primarily on form	No – feedback focused solely on form
Repetition – "a student elects to repeat something another student or teacher has said as private speech or to establish intersubjectivity" (Ellis, 2004:253), as opposed to teacher produced echoing used to reinforce utterance for the whole class.	Both student self-elected repetition as well as echoing by the teacher applied	

Table 6.4. Task based processes and their manifestation in Isolated and Integrated FFI.

Analysing the characteristics of the task-based instruction listed in the first column of Table 6.4., and juxtaposing it with the instruction applied in the present research intervention programme, it is evident that the latter is not faithfully following the task-based pedagogy, often resorting to more traditional, and what Ellis calls "stereotypical classroom processes" Ellis, 2004:253). Indeed, it would not be possible to provide form-focused instruction, let alone teach grammatical forms, through a pedagogic approach which, as Ellis (*ibid.*) points out, ideally should imitate natural use of a language, where focus on form seems to have little justification. Yet, it is acknowledged that, in reality, pure task-based approach lessons which faithfully follow all the principles of the TBLT pedagogy are rare (Nunan, 1987; Kasper, 1986). Nevertheless, the task-based sequences allow the incorporation of form-focused elements, especially at the end of the sequence of tasks (Willis & Willis, 2007). In the current research, the task-based pedagogy was used as a background for the FFI, which was in focus. Therefore, the task-based pedagogy was adapted wherever it seemed to limit or distort the FFI element of the intervention lessons.

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6.4.3.4. Consciousness raising, noticing and processing instruction

Noticing and consciousness raising activities, although with different intensity, were applied in both types of instruction. This helped to reinforce conscious attention to input and thus facilitated learning (Schmidt, 1990). In both instruction types, input enhancement served this purpose and manifested itself in a form of e.g. highlighted past tense forms in a text the students were working on in a lesson, or making a particular form seem more salient in the input by intensifying the frequency of its occurrence. In Integrated FFI, noticing and consciousness raising were also achieved by a dictogloss task (see 6.4.3.5.). Processing Instruction, on the other hand, was incorporated in Isolated FFI in line with the assumption that it belongs more to the instruction type where a targeted form is isolated in order to be analysed in more depth by the learners:

> [...] much as one might place a specimen under a microscope – so that learners have an opportunity to perceive these features and understand their function in the language they encounter in communicative interaction (Spada & Lightbown, 2008:186).

The processing instruction (VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993), which serves to induce input processing, has proven a very effective technique with good potential to serve the purpose of focus on form. The benefits and criticism of this method, together with the way it could be sequenced in a language lesson to complement language practice through production (output), have been discussed in Chapter 5. What the author was hoping to achieve through employing this technique in the experimental instruction was to make learners notice that a particular syntactic feature is not only a grammatical form, but plays a paramount role in establishing the meaning. For instance, while introducing a particular tense or form, students in the Isolated FFI groups were asked to match the pictures with the correct captions (e.g. When he entered the room she had already taken the pills/ she was taking the pills/ she took the pills). At this stage, the students were not required to produce any language themselves. The task served the purpose of making the students notice how

grammatical form alters the meaning of a sentence. This made them aware of the variety of ways to accurately express past events, and acted as a motivating factor for further noticing of the past forms in the written text they then engaged with. After studying the text, students were asked to find and underline past forms which introduced the sequencing of activities. As advocated by Cadierno (1995), input processing, as well as other consciousness raising activities, were complemented by some output practice of the targeted forms.

6.4.3.5. Feedback

The instruction in the two types of FFI included corrective feedback (CF) as "both isolated and integrated FFI can include explicit feedback on error, metalinguistic terminology, the statement of rules, and explanations" (Spada & Lightbown, 2008:187). Although the current research draws for evidence in written form, both oral as well as written feedback was provided, because, during the course of the experiment, the instructor–learner interaction involved plenty of speaking activities, serving as a prelude to writing, reading or grammatical tasks, depending on the FFI type. During such exchanges, in Integrated FFI, the oral feedback on the targeted forms was offered to the students with the level of intensity and volume typical of this instruction type, i.e. it was usually brief, and aimed at facilitating accuracy for the communicative purpose, whereas in the Isolated FFI, it was provided only during the instruction in form sessions, rather than in communicative (context) lessons that followed or preceded them.

As the current research investigates the effect of various *explicit* elements of instruction, the teacher's feedback followed the same pattern, and thus the direct CF was employed, rather than the less explicit indirect method. The intervention instruction was limited to forms used in expressing the past, therefore, CF drew the students' attention to the targeted forms only, and so it was of a focused type. Nevertheless, where other types of errors made the students' writing incomprehensible, the reformulation strategy was applied to non-targeted forms.

This study applied recasts, metalinguistic feedback, and what in the lesson plans here is referred to as 'elicitation' (see Appendix D), and is described by Lyster and Ranta (1997) as a CF strategy making students reformulate utterance by asking questions or pausing. These strategies seem to be least confusing for a language learner. While negotiating the meaning or straightforwardly providing students with a correct form all seem to be very useful techniques, in the case of the CLT teaching context, they might not be explicit enough to draw learners' attention to the form, make them notice it and thus provide an element of FFI (see Schmidt and Frota, 1986). In order to be faithful to the FFI types' characteristics, recast as one of the teacher's oral feedback types was used only in Integrated FFI (Spada & Lightbown, 2008), whereas Isolated FFI learners received more explicit feedback. Students were also provided with metalinguistic explanation of forms – more detailed and often pre-emptive in nature in Isolated FFI; brief, and often reactive in Integrated FFI. Drawing on Sheen's (2007) experiment, which clearly evidenced benefits of focused direct metalinguistic CF, the instruction in the present study also provided the participants with short metalinguistic explanation of the errors in the targeted forms.

The present intervention adopted two of the several strategies Ellis' CF taxonomy (2009a) (see section 5.6.1) identifies in terms of what students are required to do – study teacher's corrections and edit their errors. Long (1996) stresses the need to help learners to notice errors in form. Learning from feedback is a skill (Hamp-Lyons, 2006), and as such needs to be practiced. Therefore, FFI was also channelled through ongoing focused direct metalinguistic corrective feedback in response to the writing in students' exercise books, with short tasks drawing their attention to the correct forms, and reinforcing practice of the targeted forms.

In the Isolated FFI, the students' work was analysed without referring to the communicative goals of the lessons during which it had been produced. The corrections were screened by learners with the purpose of ensuring accuracy rather than communicating the message in an interesting and engaging way. The errors were discussed among the students, and the

teacher offered metalinguistic input as needed. In the Integrated FFI, the students analysed their work corrected by the teacher while maintaining the communicative purpose of the task – e.g. in the session when in pairs students had to rewrite a filmed story starting from a different point of the movie, they were asked to compare how successfully they communicated that story in writing, and which version proved to be the most interesting – linear, half-retrospective or retrospective. They were able to analyse how the form (past perfect, past simple, past continuous) conveys that meaning successfully and most interestingly. Attention to the targeted forms was the secondary focus of this task. The students receiving Integrated FFI were asked to correct their errors, but this was only a small part of a larger task of ensuring their stories were engaging and informative.

In the Integrated FFI a dictogloss task was applied - a reconstruction exercise, or in other words, grammar dictation (Wajnryb, 1990), designed around a communicative task. Students listened to a story read twice at a normal speed, and took notes with the objective to reconstruct the story. Then, working in pairs or teams of three, they wrote the whole story using their notes. The technique of dictogloss, although not strictly a CF strategy, enabled students to notice differences between the grammar structures in their version of the story and the original text, thus it also served as a consciousness raising and noticing technique. In terms of CF, the students exchanged peer feedback as they discussed differences and similarities between their versions and the original story. In addition, the plenary activity that followed provided learners with some teacher's feedback and metalinguistic explanations of forms they particularly struggled with or ignored in their work, in line with the characteristic of Integrated FFI's brief instructional spells, and heavy communicative focus.

6.4.4. The instructional similarities and differences in the two experimental groups – an overview

The previous sections briefly analysed Isolated and Integrated FFI types, their instructional elements, and the instructional context in which they function in this research. The present

section attempts to contrast both FFI types to emphasize the differences and similarities between them, as applied in the current study.

The application of two experimental groups, one receiving Isolated form-focused instruction and one receiving Integrated FFI, was aimed at establishing how intense and detached the focus on form needs to be in order to be beneficial, and which way of presenting a grammatical feature gives better results. "The challenge is to find the right balance between meaning-based and form-focused activities" (Lightbown & Spada, 2006:177). Although both are embedded in the communicative teaching syllabus, the two types of instruction are different in nature. In the current intervention, the Isolated FFI was based on more extensive and intensive FoF tasks, which comprised a substantial identifiable part of each session, and were clearly cut out in the programme of study, whereas Integrated FFI lessons had FoF fully embedded in the communicative context, more subtle, incidental, and remedial in nature. In short, the Isolated FFI group used meaning as a background to the taught form, and the Integrated one was taught the form through attention to meaning. For example, in the noticing activities, when students worked with a text, the Isolated FFI students were asked to find and highlight different past tense structures to discuss their roles in the sentences, whereas the Integrated FFI learners were required to discuss the content of the text concentrating mainly on the message of the story with only brief pointing to the form, its function and role in creating that meaning, in line with the premise that:

> Integrated FFI occurs in classroom activities during which the primary focus remains on meaning, but in which feedback or brief explanations are offered to help students express meaning more effectively or more accurately within the communicative interaction (Spada & Lightbown, 2008:187).

Although instruction in form was distributed differently in the Isolated FFI and the Integrated FFI groups, the overall amount of time each group was exposed to FFI was the same. This balance was ensured through careful lesson planning, and certain degree of flexibility, especially in the Integrated FFI, where instruction in form was interwoven in the lesson. In

order to monitor the time spent on FFI, each lesson was video-recorded and the recording was analysed on a regular basis in order to measure the instructional time during each session. Then, necessary adjustments were made in the following lessons to balance the FFI time across the groups.

Table 6.5 shows an overview of the instructional differences and similarities in the two instruction groups, as per the instruction in the present study.

	Integrated FFI	Isolated FFI
Focus on form	° During communicatively oriented lessons ° The same amount of time devoted to instruction in form as in Isolated FFI	° In separate sessions, but within a communicatively oriented curriculum ° The same amount of time devoted to instruction on form as in Integrated FFI
Teaching framework	° CLT/CBT	° CLT/CBT
Grammar points explanations	° brief ° planned and unplanned: proactive and reactive	° extensive ° planned, rarely unplanned
Specific teaching techniques applied in the lessons	° dictogloss ° elements of task-based approach ° use of adjacency pairs ° noticing and consciousness raising techniques ° input enhancement ° meaning based instruction prevails	° processing instruction ° some elements of task-based approach ° some use of adjacency pairs ° noticing and consciousness raising techniques ° input enhancement ° form based instruction common
Corrective feedback - characteristics	° usually brief ° focused ° explicit	° more intensive ° focused ° explicit

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	° metalinguistic
	
	° oral and written
	
	       ° making students reformulate utterance by asking questions, pausing, eliciting
	
	       ° recasts
	
	       ° study corrections, edit errors with focus mainly on content
		° metalinguistic
		
		° oral and written
		
		       ° making students reformulate utterance by asking questions, pausing
		
		       ° study corrections, edit errors with focus mainly on form

Corrective feedback - purpose	° to aid students to convey meaning in a more accurate way as they speak or write. ° used solely to aid communication instead of just promoting form learning for its own sake	° to help students master the targeted grammatical points in order to be able to incorporate them into communicative tasks later on, or reflect on a completed communicative task

Table 6.5. Isolated and Integrated FFI – an overview of the instructional differences and similarities in the two instruction groups.

6.4.5. The control group procedures

The participants of the control group in the main experiment were not taught English grammar, but continued attending their standard mainstream lessons together with their non-participating peers with English as a means of content-oriented instruction. Still, they took the pre-test, post-test and delayed post-test in order to provide the data necessary while comparing their language gains with these of the experimental groups.

6.4.6. Data collection

Student participants served for the unit of analyses in this research. From them, various types of data were obtained. This was done through application of a number of tools, as outlined below.

Data collection source	Data collected	*Modus operandi*
Information held by the academy about the EAL students	• information on students' background, level of English, gender, L1, academic attainment, date of birth, prior schooling, L1 literacy, length of stay in UK, length of stay in the academy.	• analysing and compiling documents held by the academy • designing a student database to be used in sampling procedures, for allocating students to the groups, and analysing the results
Tests (pre-test, post-test, delayed post-test)	• the tests results of two experimental and one control group	• comparing the attainment of FFI treated participants with the control group's attainment by means of statistical calculations (SPSS) • comparing the attainment of students in Isolated FFI group with this of the participants' in Integrated FFI group by means of statistical calculations (SPSS) • analysing influence of different intervening variables on the post-test results • describing common patterns if such arise
Students' voice	• information on participants' background, motivation, study skills and learning styles • participants' preferences for teacher's feedback • participants' preferences for teaching methods and materials	• written questionnaires given to all participants before the intervention, to establish background information, and after the intervention, to measure students' satisfaction and to get their opinion on intervention elements • interviews carried out with selected participants in search

		for common patterns, and to explain their test results
Observations	• information on students' interaction with the teaching material • information on students reaction to various types of teaching methods (task based, noticing, input processing) • information on students' response to teacher's feedback • information on techniques/ learning styles preference, motivation levels, and study skills	• audio and video recordings of the intervention lessons • researcher's fieldnotes – a diary.
Informal assessments (e.g. marking participants' books during the intervention), and post-intervention spontaneous encounters with some participants	• samples of writing of all students at different stages of intervention • post-intervention spontaneous conversations with some participants.	• researcher's diary and notes on patterns • triangulation of data.

Table 6.6. Data collection methods chart.

As evident in Table 6.6., some information obtained from different data collection tools overlap, allowing for triangulation, ensuring greater accuracy of the study (Creswell, 2012), and providing greater objectivity and a fuller scope for analyses, as well as a better control of such interfering variables as motivation or study skills. The mixed method design, benefitting from various data collection methods, can "add a richness and depth" and

"bolster trustworthiness and credibility" of the study (Hartas, 2010:220). Each of the data collection tools applied in the study is explored in the sections that follow.

6.4.6.1. Tests

The main data collection tool used in the study comprised three grammar tests – the pre-test administered ten days prior to the intervention, the post-test administered a day after the intervention, and the delayed post-test administered seven weeks after the post-test.

As Larsen-Freeman observes, grammar testing is usually based on discrete-point tasks, which test knowledge of grammar, but fail to test the ability to "use grammar correctly in real-life speaking and writing" (Larsen-Freeman, 2011:533). One reason behind such popularity of discrete-point tasks might be that such tests are easier and more objective to score, which definitely makes them more reliable than integrated tests. Nevertheless, the tests in the current study employed both discrete-point and partly integrated tasks. The test tasks included contextualized as well as decontextualized items in order to measure acquisition of both the form as well as meaning achieved by application of such form and understanding of the context in which it can be applied. The participants were required to assign meaning to a form and identify the role of a form in conveying the meaning, both at a sentence level as well as in a broader context. Also, to increase the range of tested skills, some tasks tested metalinguistic knowledge, by asking the students to justify the use of a particular form in a sentence and in the context. This enabled the researcher to determine the extent to which explicitness of such knowledge influences learning, and thus it may help determine whether metalinguistic elements of instruction can contribute to the success of the FFI.

To illustrate the points made here, Appendix C includes the pre- and post-test and delayed post-test, designed to measure proficiency in three language aspects – metalinguistic knowledge, form formation and form recognition. From open-ended tasks, through guided writing (which employs a structured response technique, where a student is required to

write a story based on the picture sequence provided), to multiple choice tasks, the tests were designed to suit different learner types to avoid bias. Table 6.7 shows the range of the tasks used, and divides them into three skills tested – form formation, form recognition, and metalinguistic knowledge. The metalinguistic knowledge tasks were not taken into account while assessing the intervention gains. Instead, they facilitated investigation into the influence of metalinguistic knowledge on the learning of the forms.

Task symbol	Task description	Skill tested
Task A	Matching context to the sentences with different grammatical forms	form recognition
Task B	Putting a short story on a timeline to indicate the order of events.	form recognition
Task C	Error correction task, and metalinguistic explanation of errors	form formation, metalinguistic knowledge
Task D	Matching the names of the tenses with the rules and examples of usage	metalinguistic knowledge
Task E	A multiple choice task – choosing the correct grammatical form to suit the context of a sentence	form recognition
Task F	Guided writing – writing a caption under each picture to form a coherent story as seen in the illustrations. Some openings and/or endings of the sentences are provided	form formation
Task G	Sentence completion with the grammatical form made from an infinitive provided	form formation
Task H	Sentence completion with the grammatical form made from an infinitive provided, so that the sentence illustrates the situation in the pictures	form formation

Table 6.7. Tasks used in the pre-test, the post-test and the delayed post-test

The forms that were the subject of assessments corresponded with the forms on which the instruction in the fieldwork lesson focused, i.e. tenses used to describe past events. Table 6.8 below describes the weighting of the tested elements in all the three tests, and their frequency in each of the test tasks. The post-test and delayed post-test included the same grammatical elements, although the content of the sentences used there was different to ensure greater validity and reliability (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011).

Grammatical form	Task symbols (A-H) and marks allocated to each task		
	form formation	form recognition	metalinguistic knowledge
Present perfect	G-3 F-1 C-1	A-1 E-2	D-2 C-1
Past continuous	H-1 F-1 G-3 C-1	A-1 E-2	D-2 C-1
Past perfect	F-3 H-1 G-4 C-2	A-1 B-2 E-2	D-2 C-2
3rd conditional	F-1 G-3 C-1	A-1	D-2 C-1
Probability	G-2	A-1	-
Past simple	F-1 H-1 G-3 C-1	A-1 B-1 E-1	D-2 C-1
Marks total	34	16	16

Table 6.8. Elements of the tests.

For assessment (tests), the partial scoring was adopted in order to provide a greater insight into the targeted structure development in the learners' linguistic competency. This enabled the researcher to score the effectiveness of the learning processes, even if these processes were incomplete. Innovations in the field of grammar assessment listed by Larsen-Freeman (2011) incorporate Purpura's (2006) interesting comments on the binary nature of discrete point tests, and her call for "scoring grammatical items polytomously" (Larsen-Freeman, 2011:534), so that the results more fairly represent those learners who obtained partial proficiency of a given linguistic feature.

Purpura (2006) experimented with multiple choice tasks, sequencing them along the language development path, with less demanding points preceding the more challenging

ones. In the present study, partial scoring was applied only to open-ended tasks, such as the gap-filling picture caption task (see Appendix C, Task F for an example of this task). For instance, half of the mark was given if a test item required past continuous form, and a student used 'was' instead of 'were' or, where past perfect tense was required, and s/he used 'had', but erroneously added -'ed' to an infinitive instead of entering a correct irregular form of a verb. This enabled the researcher to obtain detailed, even organic data, and more in-depth understanding of even partial progress that learners might have made in the course of the experiment, but which might not be visible if a traditional dichotomous scoring was adopted. "Among the 'wrong' (and sometimes the right) answers that students give to an item, it is sometimes possible to identify different kinds and levels of understanding" (Masters, 1988:280). Partial 'scoring' of some of the grammatical tasks during the instruction phase was also used in order to identify certain instruction-facilitated learning patterns (see field notes in Chapter 8).

6.4.6.2. Questionnaires

The questionnaires were distributed among the participants at the beginning and the end of the programme, and were intended to gain a useful insight into the subjects' attitude and preferences regarding the instruction and feedback methods, and their learning experience. There were open-ended questions as well as Likert scale type questions, true-false and sequencing questions. The lack of uniformity of the formula of the questionnaires was applied in order to prevent automatic responses and was meant to stimulate students' self-reflection.

The first questionnaire (Appendix B), administered before the intervention, gathered information about the students' educational and linguistic background, and enquired about their learning preferences. The second questionnaire, administered after the intervention (Appendix B), measured the participants' satisfaction with the teaching they had received, their preference for the tasks and techniques used, and further learning needs. The participants were asked to rate the elements of instruction including specific tasks and parts

of the lessons. The majority of them used the scale provided, in which 1 meant they found a particular element very useful, and 8 denoted the least useful. The students were allowed to use the same rating for a few elements, and the 'tick' answers used instead of numbers were assumed to be 1s.

6.4.6.3. Interviews

Whereas the post-intervention questionnaire investigated students' attitudes and preferences in order to juxtapose them with their immediate intervention gains, the aim of the interviews was to examine the phenomenon of the long term gains, and thus to find out why some of the participants lost some of the intervention gains, whereas some others improved even further after the instruction ceased. To this end, nine students were invited to take part in the interview. The main selection criterion was test scores; nevertheless it was not easy to determine which participants should be invited. Although the aim of the interviews was to unveil the mechanisms and reasons behind gaining new knowledge or losing previously achieved gains, there was a variety of interesting patterns in the students' scores to take into account while pinpointing the most informative cases. Still, some of the originally selected students did not consent or were not able to participate in the interviews, and thus had to be replaced by other students of a similar scoring profile.

In the presence of a myriad of interesting learning patterns, the selection criteria were narrowed down to the students who overall gained most from the intervention in their groups: (Yusuf ISO, Nabid ISO, Eyan INT, Marisa INT); those who gained most in their groups between the two post-tests (Iba ISO, Roshan ISO, Eyan INT, Humaila INT), and those whose delayed post-test result was lower than their immediate post-test result (Suraj ISO, Marisa INT, Amalia INT) (see Table 6.9 below).

Participant				Pre-test score (out of 100)	Post-test score (out of 100)	Delayed post-test score (out of 100)
ISO group (n=27)	L1	Age	Lenght of stay in the UK	M=33.73, SD=12.21	M=50.57, SD=17.81	M=47.67, SD=18.05.
Nabid	Bengali	13	13 years	32.79	63.93	65.57
Yusuf	Turkish	16	2 years	31.15	68.03	68.85
Iba	Arabic	12	2 years	42.62	56.56	70.49
Roshan	Nepalese	14	2 years	31.15	45.90	51.64
Suraj	Nepalese	13	5 months	34.43	55.74	34.43
INT group (n=28)	L1	Age	Lenght of stay in the UK	M=36.21, SD= 9.4	M=44.14, SD=10.44	M=43.38, SD=12.42
Eyan	Bengali	16	7 years	39.34	57.38	63.93
Marisa	Portuguese	15	3 years	29.51	53.28	43.44
Humaila	Bengali	12	12 years	37.70	40.98	50.82
Amalia	Slovak	16	2 years	22.95	51.64	42.62

Table 6.9. The profiles of the interviewed participants

The students' profiles made them a really interesting mix of characters, with varied backgrounds and educational experiences. Although such a variety might pose some threats to the validity and reliability of the obtained results, paradoxically the variety of students' profiles is typical, and representative of an EAL setting, which unlike many EFL settings is rarely homogeneous (Lightbown, 1998).

Brinkman and Kvale (2015:57) compare an interviewer to "a miner" or "a traveller", depending on the role they adopt in the interview process, and what outcomes they try to achieve. As such, these symbols "illustrate two different epistemological conceptions of interviewing as a process of *knowledge collection* or as a process of *knowledge construction*, respectively" (Brinkman & Kvale, 2015:57). In the present study, the interviewer positions herself closer to the image of a miner, aiming to uncover the knowledge already existing in the interviewed participants, their experiences and views, trying to stay objective and use non-leading and unbiased questions (Brinkman & Kvale,

2015). Despite this rather positivist approach adopted here, the researcher realises that "the interview is a social, interpersonal encounter, not merely a data collection exercise" (Cohen, *et al.* 2011:421). Thus, the interviews were semi-structured (the most popular model in Applied Linguistic research (Dörnyei, 2007)), in order to allow for considerable freedom in the way the conversation with each student developed. At times, the conversation digressed from the main topic quite significantly, e.g. in the conversation with Suraj and Humaila, in which they enquired about some resources for practising their grammar and vocabulary. Even then, after exhausting all core questions, such a conversation was still continued in order to ensure its originality and spontaneity, and to provide the students with the opportunity to express themselves more freely in search for some interesting patterns and relevant points:

> *The interviewer provides guidance and direction* (...)*, but is also keen to follow up interesting developments and to let the interviewee elaborate on certain issues* (...) (Dörnyei, 2007:136)

Cohen and colleagues (2011) stress the importance of establishing a positive rapport with the interviewees to ensure the right atmosphere for the conversation. In order to reduce any potential tension, the interviewer (the researcher) started the conversation with some easy topic, often with some praise, and then tried to recall the schedule of the intervention, trying to refresh the students' memory of the conversation's topic. She also informed the students' of their scores in their tests as a starting point to the conversation about the intervention and its impact. The core interview questions included the three items listed below, although some of them were divided into simpler questions, and their wording was often adapted to suit the informal context of the conversations, with the adaptations heavily dependent on students' self-reflection skills and their willingness to openly engage in the conversation. Still, all of the interviews incorporated the following points in some form:

1. Why do you think you scored so well/ not so well in the delayed post-test?
2. Do you use the knowledge you gained in the intervention?

3. What, if any, grammar teaching did you receive between the post-test and delayed post- test?

The first question attempted to get to the core of the learning process, and aimed to pinpoint the factors contributing to the success of the students who succeeded in improving their final test scores in relation to their post-test scores. Equally, it was designed to identify the reasons why some students lost some of their gains after the intervention ceased. The next question enquired about the application of that gained knowledge, and hoped to touch on such topics as generalisability of the gained grammatical knowledge as perceived by the learner, and the relationship between the intervention and the mainstream lessons. The last question listed above was aimed to determine whether the gains identified by the delayed post-test scores were indeed due to the intervention, or there were some other factors that could account for them.

As the interviews were semi-structured and conversational, they drifted towards the theme identified either by the researcher or a student, and thus many questions emerged unplanned. Many new questions were the researcher's responses to the students' answers to one of the core questions. For example, in one of the interviews a participant identified noticing through reading as the tool to enhance her learning of forms after the intervention. The topic of noticing was then raised with other interviewees in an attempt to identify a common pattern. However, care was taken not to suggest any answers to the interviewees. The format adopted here followed Dörnyei's (2007) characteristics of a semi-structured interview, in which "the interviewer will ask the same questions of all of the participants, although not necessarily in the same order or wording, and would supplement the main questions with various probes" (*ibid*.:136).

The interviews were audio recorded, which initially inhibited some of the respondents. Another interfering variable was the level of reflective thinking, which varied among the participants. It is rather evident that the older students were more reflective in their responses than the younger learners. As a result, some of the students contributed very

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little to the discussion leaving many questions unanswered. This was not ill-willed, but rather the result of a lack of introspective skills and analytical thinking. In such cases, the researcher resorted to closed questions, which usually brought some responses, although it was often rather limiting. Another strategy to ease the pressure off the more reluctant speakers was to interview them in groups of two and more, so that they could join in the conversation when they felt ready. This worked with some students, but not all, with some students waiting to be prompted for each answer by the researcher. The students' personality affected the flow of conversation, with more timid students likely to contribute less. Even what seems to be a cultural aspect influenced the interviews, such as when one Nepalese participant, most probably out of politeness, answered 'yes' to two contradicting questions:

Researcher (R): "Do you think the lessons in the intervention helped you?
Suraj (S): Yeah.
R:The lessons helped you ...
S: Yeah.
R ...or do you think it was because you listened well to your teachers in other subjects?
S: Yeah."

(A fragment of the interview with Suraj)

Despite many interfering factors as mentioned above, it was still possible to identify some common themes in the interviewees' statements. The successful participants in both experimental groups, those receiving Integrated FFI and those subject to Isolated FFI, reported similar learner's strategies applied in order to retain and even build on the gained linguistic proficiency, as seen in some of the interview reports (see Chapter 8).

6.4.6.4. Observations

The observation of the intervention lessons was undertaken by the researcher with the aid of video recordings and field notes. The data gathered by these tools were to complement the findings obtained through other sources of data in the process of triangulation, but was

not one of the main sources of data in the study. The video recordings and field notes allowed the researcher to notice and reflect on the groups' dynamics, the students' reaction to each of the two types of FFI – Isolated or Integrated – as well as to different types of tasks. Data obtained this way, although ancillary to other sources such as interviews, questionnaires or tests, brought some really valuable insights to the learning process, leading to greater understanding of the potential of the instruction types applied.

During the intervention, great care was taken not to interfere with the lessons while taking notes and video recording. Therefore, the notes were taken just after each lesson, or at the end of the school day, if more than one lesson was conducted on the day. As the researcher undertook a role of a teacher as well as an observer, it was unfeasible to make the notes during lessons, and so filming was used in order to compensate for what the researcher might have missed while teaching. The camera was filming from the back of the classroom to avoid inhibiting the participants, and to maintain a natural learning environment. At the beginning, the students were very conscious of the camera, which either manifested itself in their behaving in a restrained way, exhibiting initial reluctance to take an active part in lessons, or, on the contrary, trying to engage with the camera also via direct contact with it, or an individual performance in front of it. The latter was more typical of the youngest participants. It was rather apparent that initially certain students felt more uneasy than others while being filmed. Yet, after a couple of lessons, the students were much more relaxed, tended to forget about the presence of the camera, and behaved more naturally.

6.4.7. Data analysis

The explanatory sequential mixed method design applied in the current study dictated the order in which data were analysed. The primary source of the data came from the tests. In order to obtain the quantitative results from the tests, SPSS software was employed. Some important quantitative data were also sourced from the questionnaires, and also here, the same software was used to obtain quantitative results.

The findings from the tests determined the cases selected for the qualitative part of the analysis processes, e.g. they helped to identify the participants to take part in the interviews. The qualitative findings were gathered in a process of manual coding of the data sourced from the interview transcripts, students' comments in the questionnaires, and the teacher's notes. The procedure involved careful analysis of the raw data collected, coding of the data, and identification of the emerging patterns via analysis of the coded themes.

The use of a number of data collection tools enabled triangulation of data on two levels – within the quantitative and qualitative data sources, and then between these sources. The process of triangulation of data – the methodological triangulation – played an important role in ensuring reliability of the study. Equally, it made it possible to pinpoint certain patterns, and allowed for a more accurate interpretation of the findings, due to having been applied within the explanatory sequential mixed method design.

6.4.8. The role of the researcher

The researcher adopted multiple roles in the study. She was a research designer as well as an executor of the instruction, a data collector and an analyst. The complete list of roles is outlined as follows:

a) Selector – the researcher selected and invited participants, and then divided them into three groups for closest match.

b) Tests designer – the pre-, post- and delayed post-tests were designed by the researcher.

c) Tests administrator – the researcher administered all the tests and assessments.

d) Material designer – the researcher developed the teaching materials to correspond with the two FFI types – Isolated and Integrated.

e) Instructor – the researcher was the sole deliverer of the intervention programme to the participants in both experimental groups (the control group was in mainstream lessons taught by various subject teachers).

f) Observer – the researcher was observing and making notes on students' behaviour, attitudes and progress. The audio and video recording device aided the process.

g) Questionnaire designer

h) Questionnaire distributor

i) Data analyst

j) Disseminator – the research outcomes are described in this thesis and submitted to the university. The findings have already been disseminated to the participating school, the students and their parents. The research has been presented in two seminars at Oxford Brookes University (2014) and, to a wider audience, in an annual BAAL Conference (2014). A paper including the findings has been accepted for publication.

All these roles mentioned so far require different skills and abilities. As Hartas (2010) explains, depending on the role adapted by a researcher, "there are fairly obvious ethical and methodological issues at stake which can be related back to whether the data will be researcher-generated, participant-created or researcher-found – or a mix of the three" (Hartas, 2010:217). The issues she lists which are relevant to the current study include the need to establish an appropriate relationship with the participants, as shaped by the researcher's role in the study, the need of possessing technical skills (e.g. required for filming), and having the methodological knowledge necessary to be involved in a sampling process or material design. The researcher, as a fully trained EFL and EAL teacher with Qualified Teacher's Status and sound experience of working in both language and mainstream schools, meets these requirements.

Nevertheless, the fact that one person undertook such a myriad of roles may raise some issues that need to be taken into account. The monopolization of the study, the sole control of it assumed by the researcher may, on the one hand, question the reliability of the research, as all key aspects of the study depended on one person, but, paradoxically, it also brought some benefits, as it excluded some confounding variables which could emerge

with an increased number of agents in the study, e.g. intervention teachers (see e.g. Elgün-Gündüz's study (2012) discussed in 4.5.3.). The researcher was fully aware of the potential drawbacks involved in holding so many of the roles in the study. The close study of the literature on Isolated and Integrated FFI, the successful piloting of the study, and employment of data analysis tools, such as SPSS, were all aimed at reducing the negative impact the multiplicity of roles might have brought. The researcher's teaching qualifications and professional experience further suggested that these tasks were undertaken diligently with the rigorous research regime always in focus.

6.4.9. Validity and reliability

In order to discuss validity and reliability it is vital to define these two concepts. A simple definition is offered by Muijs (2004), who explains that a research is valid if it measures what it is intended to measure, and its reliability is determined by the extent to which it is free from measurement error.

In pursuit of greater validity in the case of the present study, it is necessary to establish intervening variables in the present research. The following two groups of intervening variables could be identified:

a) Objective: age, gender, L1, L1 literacy, length of stay in the UK, length of stay in the academy.

b) Subjective: motivation, aptitude, study skills, learning styles.

Each of these factors can pose a challenge for the validity and reliability of the research. Nevertheless, the 'objective' variables are easier to control, as the quasi-experimental characteristic of the research enables the equal spread of the variables among all three groups via the well-matched assignment design (see section 6.4.1 on Sampling). The three groups were quantitatively tested to ensure that the matching process was applied successfully, and that there were no statistically significant differences between the groups

in terms of distribution of the participants' prior knowledge, gender, age, or language group among the groups (see section 7.2).

The subjective variables are more elusive and their proper assessment cannot be afforded here, as it would take another whole research. Thus, they could not be so easily controlled. Nevertheless, some research instruments, such as questionnaires and observations, helped to identify what effect they had on the results obtained in the study. Analyses of the students' pre- and post-intervention questionnaires did not reveal any significant influence of the satisfaction levels or learning preferences on the intervention gains (See Chapter 7 and 8). Such analyses, however, were not very extensive as the aim of the research was not primarily to establish any relationship between these subjective variables and the students' progress. Instead, these analyses were useful to eliminate or reduce threats, which those variables might pose to the validity of the findings.

The instruments used in the experiment, such as questionnaires, tests and materials used in the treatment, had been trialled by means of the pilot study. Also, to ensure reliability and validity of the outcomes, they were tested for their internal consistency. With this purpose, the tests applied in the research were tested statistically by means of the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient (see Chapter 7). All three tests were consistent in terms of their format, task types and complexity and number of forms tested. They differed only in the content of sentences, which were different in each of the three tests to ensure greater internal validity. Great care was taken to eliminate cultural bias in the test, and where some historical events were referred to which might require knowledge of facts there was a clear context provided explaining that the events happened in the past.

The tests were always administered on the same day of a week, on a Friday at 8.45am to ensure the testing conditions were as similar as possible. Each time all the students were assessed together in one place, under exam conditions (see Figure 6.1 as an illustration of the participants taking the actual delayed post-test). The inter-rater reliability was ensured

by establishing clear rules of a single person – the researcher – scoring the tests and performing the marking, and applying the same criteria to all students.

The alpha level adopted in this study is 0.05, the most commonly selected level for research in social studies (Brown, 1990). It indicates that the risk of obtaining incidental results does not exceed 5%. This safeguards reliability, as any study which faithfully replicates the present research has 95% probability of the same results as found here.

The construct validity was safeguarded by strict adherence to the characteristics of Isolated and Integrated FFI approach, as described by the originators of the distinction – Spada and Lightbown (2008) – while operationalizing the two concepts into the intervention programme. This included fidelity in involving specific task types and strategies (e.g. processing instruction, metalinguistic input, teacher feedback, etc.), and ensuring that the intervention lessons took place within the communicative context.

The Hawthorne effect, by which the experimental groups might feel more obliged to do well in the tests, as opposed to the control group whose members did not have any instruction in form, was to some extent eliminated by inviting the control group to have additional FFI classes after the experiment. Also, conducting the intervention treatment during the normal school day through withdrawing the treatment groups from their timetabled lessons meant that the treatment groups' participants might not necessarily regard themselves as advantaged in any way. On the contrary, as reported in students' voice, many participants felt that by attending FFI classes they were missing some, more important in their opinion, learning, which otherwise would have been available to them in their subject classes (see Chapter 8). On the other hand, some discouragement or resentment among the control group is evident in the results of the immediate post-test, although it seems to have vanished completely by the delayed post-test, perhaps due to the fact that all the groups started to be treated equally again (no FFI provided to either of the groups in the interim period between the post-test and the delayed post-test). In order to avoid such negative

impacts of unequal treatment of the groups, the researcher had planned to withdraw the control group for some other practice not related to the FFI, but it was problematic for both ethical as well as practical reasons to organise such a 'placebo' withdrawal class at the cost of the mainstream subject lessons.

Although the withdrawal system brought certain ethical issues (see section 6.4.10), it had also some advantages. Attrition rate was significantly reduced by the fact that the students had their intervention lessons during their ordinary school day. Paradoxically, this also posed a certain threat of learners dropping out from the study in order to attend their standard classes. Nevertheless, the subject teachers' and tutors' support significantly reduced this threat.

Image removed from electronic version

Figure 6.1. A snapshot of the study participants during the delayed post-test, England, February 2013.

6.4.10. Ethical considerations

An educational setting, by simple involvement of dependency relationships and an educator's responsibility, poses some serious ethical issues. The area is even more delicate if vulnerable subjects are involved, e.g. minors, and in an educational setting this is often the case. Thus, it is especially vital to fully embrace and understand all the factors that

make this field so demanding in terms of ethical issues (Strike, 2006). There have been attempts to somehow differentiate the seriousness of ethical threats that should be considered in a quantitative study and those applicable to a qualitative study, with the latter bearing more weighty ethical problems to take into account (Punch, 2005). The reason for such a distinction is said to lie in the very nature of qualitative enquiry in which a researcher often aims to reach participants' personal and intimate experiences and touch sensitive issues (*op. cit.*), and to achieve this aim, sometimes may try inducing empathy (Dörnyei, 2007), or even flirting with subjects (Ryen, 2004). Regardless of the merit of Punch's statement, it might be argued that rather than posing more or less demanding ethical problems, the quantitative and qualitative research simply produces ethical challenges of a different nature. As discussed in the sections above, the present research benefits from both of the methodological paradigms – qualitative and quantitative, and, as such, indeed it needs to embrace a wider range of ethical aspects. Nevertheless, as the study investigates instructional effectiveness, participants were not required to reveal any information on a very personal level. Instead, the ethical dangers involved aspects connected with data handling, or the school's curriculum access, since within the school population, and within the EAL cohort, students' access to the mainstream curriculum, or to the EAL experimental instruction, were limited and rationed. The paragraph below considers these aspects, as well as some other issues in educational research ethics.

One of the problems that a researcher working with human participants needs to face in educational settings is the age of the subjects. The research project in the present study involves a vulnerable population – students aged between 12 and 16 in the main fieldwork, and young adults between 16 and 18 years of age in the pilot study. It was crucial to consider their welfare, and include their guardians at every stage of the process (Cohen, *et.al.*, 2011), from passing the information, and inviting to the study, to obtaining consent and disseminating results. In the present research, due attention was paid to helping the participants, and their parents and guardians, to make an informed decision whether to take

part or not (Creswell, 2012). The benefits for the students (instruction in a form of additional language tuition), the school (better-informed EAL practice), and wider research community (contribution to the state of knowledge) were explained to them. Similarly, the possible disadvantages of taking part in the study were listed, including the potentially stressful testing, lesson recording, or missing out on some mainstream material as a result of being withdrawn from mainstream curriculum lessons (see Appendix A).

The educator's responsibility constituted a separate problem, with a potential conflict of interest between all parties involved – the participants, the rest of the academy EAL student cohort, the researcher, and the mainstream teachers. While planning for the case study, the researcher was concerned with the welfare of students selected. The Academy, where the fieldwork was conducted, was very willing to participate in the research as, being an English subject specialism school, it was open to support programmes leading to an improved practice, and deeper understanding of language learning and teaching mechanisms. Such willingness was officially expressed in the form of a written consent obtained from the Headmistress of the academy, allowing for the research to be conducted in this institution. Each of the two programmes, Isolated and Integrated FFI, through incorporation of the explicit language instruction, constituted a form of enrichment to the students' standard mainstream curriculum, and as such was unlikely to present any harm or distress to the participants. Nevertheless, the data collection method, in the form of both instruction and testing, meant that the participants' access to the mainstream curriculum was slightly restricted, as they had to be withdrawn from one lesson a week in order to take part in the experimental intervention. To address this issue, the curriculum disruption was reduced to a minimum by varying the days and times of each instruction session. Therefore, although students were withdrawn from a total of 10 lessons, each of them missed only one, or a maximum of two lessons of any mainstream subject for the whole duration of the treatment. This again did not pose any exceeding discomfort to the participants, as withdrawing selected students in order to provide them with some focused tuition or testing had long

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been an element of teaching practice in the school, and short-term interventions were in agreement with the academy EAL department's policy.

In order to avoid disadvantaging students belonging to the control group, as well as any other EAL students not invited to participate in the research, upon completion of the fieldwork, the researcher offered them a set of English lessons similar to the ones used in the fieldwork. Another ethical issue might be the researcher's qualification and competence (Gall, *et al.*, 2003). Fortunately, the researcher of the present study is a fairly experienced EAL teacher with Qualified Teacher's Status (QTS), capable of meeting the demands of the fieldwork, as well as any voluntary work with EAL students following the intervention.

Other ethical considerations are connected with documenting the experiment, *i.e.* observations, and audio and video recording, which may pose some serious threat to the anonymity of the participants. In principle, the subjects should remain anonymous, however it is impossible to analyse data without being able to link individuals to their performance (Dörnyei, 2007). In the current study, the investigation of the students' reaction to the material presented, or teacher's feedback, could not be completed without access to data processed in this way. Nevertheless, every effort was made to protect the identity of the participants, and all of them were provided with pseudonyms. All video and audio recordings, in line with the university UREC code of practice, were accessed only by the researcher and her immediate university supervisors, and were destroyed after being transcribed and analysed. Besides, the video recordings and photos were taken from behind to protect the anonymity of the participants. This did not affect the analyses of the recordings, as students taught in small groups (maximum ten students per group) were easily identifiable to the researcher.

The issues discussed so far in this section are connected largely with considerations relating to the participants. There is yet another aspect in research ethics that needs to be discussed, namely the problem that might be labelled here as *research ethical quality*, an

area rather neglected, as the majority of the literature concentrates on participants. "Any ethical considerations from the point of view of non-participants in the research are […] largely ignored" (Gorard & Taylor, 2004:172). Strike (2006) distinguishes several issues which come to the fore here. One of them is a threat associated with research funding, where the researcher's interest and scope of study is determined by factors other than public benefit or research integrity. Depending on the sponsors, the research may be more or less objective. The present study, however, being independently funded by the researcher herself, is free from any bias of this kind. There is also the issue of expectations, as "educational researchers are often expected to serve the research needs of policymakers" (Strike, 2006:67). Such confinement might not be viewed as a threat, as some might argue that research utilised this way fulfils its role of serving individuals and communities by improving their situation (Strike, 2006). However, it is important to note that policymakers are often led by political discussions, and current ideological fashion (Slavin, 2010), and thus their demands, presumptions and anticipations might negatively influence the research direction, or the outcomes of results' interpretation. Perversely, the fact that policymakers do not pay due attention to research outcomes in the field of education (Slavin, 2010) may ease pressure exerted on independent researchers to follow particular ideological or political trends. On the other hand, if a little digression is allowed here, such a lack of implementation of new educational discoveries has led to the situation where, in terms of development, education may be perceived to be a hundred years behind some other branches of knowledge. As Slavin (2010) sarcastically adds: "At the dawn of the twenty-first century, education is finally being dragged into the twentieth century" (*ibid*: 102).

In the discussion on the non-participant ethical issues one may go perhaps too far. At the dissemination stage of the research, Slavin (2010) regards the sieve of peer review as a form of censorship, a limitation of the freedom to formulate hypotheses and hold theories different from what generally constitutes the current state of knowledge, or indeed widely adopted paradigms. He argues that the principle 'those who know rule' is not democratic

and thus not ethical. For a rather inexperienced researcher of no established position in this field of knowledge, such a daring statement might be difficult to ponder, yet it is an interesting point to add in this discussion.

The issue of research ethics has been merely touched on in this section, as, being a complex phenomenon, it can be analysed on different levels – participants', researchers', institutional, etc. While preparing the present research, the author constantly tried to find ways to minimise any potential negative impact exerted by the study on the people involved, and to maximise the benefits for the participants, research community, and the wider society.

6.5. Timetable of research

The chart below (Table 6.10.) presents the timeline of the study with the most important milestones (the more detailed timeline of the main fieldwork is provided in Table 6.1). Some of these steps took more time than others, and some took longer than initially anticipated. For instance, registering the research proposal took place quite late in the course of study, yet the delay allowed for detailed analysis of the setting of the study, and literature review.

The period of what could be called 'purposeful detachment' from the fieldwork and data gathered, which occurred between the end of the fieldwork study (March 2013) and the beginning of quantitative and qualitative data analysis (May 2013), was lengthy but of particular significance. It served the purpose of stepping back, and seeing the outcomes of the fieldwork from a fresh perspective; an exercise which proved particularly useful, if not necessary, for an early researcher who, faced with very rich data, at first tended to go into too much detail sourcing findings of little relevance to the aims of the study. More importantly perhaps, that time of 'detachment' was particularly vital since the researcher had been fully immersed in the fieldwork, having had a variety of different roles over the period of a year when both the pilot study and the main study were undertaken. Therefore, the act of stepping back was a necessary phase to regain objectivity and impartiality before

proceeding to analysis of the data gathered. Also, the analysis of the data, especially in terms of data triangulation, proved particularly laborious, as many different modes and sources of information had to be accessed, and provision needed to be made for efficiency in linking the themes within and between each data collection tool.

Stage	Steps	Time-frame
1.Developing the conceptual framework	**Step 1.** Exploring the field of English as an Additional Language	January-February 2011
	Step 2. Examining the educational setting – mainstream secondary schools, including academies – and English language instruction available to students taught there	February 2011
	Step 3. Reviewing and critically analysing the relevant literature	March – October 2011
	Step 4. Constructing research methodology	November December 2011
	Step 5. Registering the research proposal	December 2011
2. Constructing the research tools	**Step 1**. Reviewing the available research instruments	January 2012
	Step 2. Designing teaching and testing materials for the fieldwork	January-March 2012
	Step 3. Considering the ethical aspects of the field study, and the research as a whole	January 2012
	Step 4. Applying for ethical approval to UREC	January 2012
	Step 5. Designing a pilot study	January-March 2012
3. Transfer	**Step 1.** Applying for Transfer from MPhil to PhD	March 2012
4. The pilot study	**Step 1.** Selecting participants and obtaining consents	April 2012
	Step 2. Conducting the pilot study	May - June 2012
	Step 3. Drawing conclusions from the pilot in order to ensure validity, reliability and accountability of the main study	June 2012

	Step 4. Evaluating and establishing the research instruments for the field work	July 2012
5. Hypothesis testing	**Step 1.** Designing the main intervention study drawing on the pilot study outcomes	August 2012
	Step 2. Selecting participants and obtaining consents	September 2012
	Step 3. Conducting the intervention study, administration of tests and questionnaires	October 2012 - February 2013
	Step 4 Analysing test results to identify students to be invited to take part in the interviewing process	February 2013
	Step 5 Interviewing students.	March 2013
6. Thesis formulation	**Step 1.** Collating, analysing and interpreting data from classroom observations, and series of tests **a)** Comparing the effectiveness of Isolated and Integrated form-focused instruction in the mainstream secondary school context on students' written performance, and further to that, contrasting it with pure content instruction **b)** Comparing the effectiveness of teachers' explicit feedback on students' accuracy in the targeted written forms	May - September 2013
	Step 2. Formulating conclusions, and implications	October – December 2013
	Step 3. Making recommendations for further studies in this field	January 2014
	Step 4. Writing up the thesis and planning for dissemination in conferences and journals	February 2014- March 2015
	Step 5. Proofreading and final corrections	April – June 2015
7. Submission	Submission of the thesis to the university	July 2015

Table 6.10. Timeline of the study.

6.6. Conclusion

One of the aims of this study, apart from pursuing the researcher's personal interest in the concept described here, was the genuine desire and hope to use its outcomes in developing the understanding of FFI, but also to promote educational policy and practice changes, on a classroom as well as an institutional level. In spite of the supposed time gap between the research and policy changes (see Slavin, 2010), the researcher hopes to contribute a small brick in the form of the outcomes of this study, which could help to build a bridge between theory and practice rather than just disappear into the vastness of academic explorations. In order to achieve this goal, the quality of the research had to be maintained at a high level to provide some truly revealing findings. Careful consideration of all aspects of the mixed method research design applied in this study, and exploration of the essence of the researched phenomena were undertaken in this chapter in hope of getting closer to achieving this aim. The current chapter attempted to embrace the most important issues taken into consideration while designing this study. In the more theoretical part, it explored the research paradigm. Then, drawing on the previous chapters, it explained how the Isolated and Integrated FFI methodologies, with their various language teaching elements, such as feedback and instruction techniques, were employed to serve the purpose of this research. It explored the data collection tools and data analysis, and considered potential pitfalls while discussing the reliability, validity and ethical issues.

Chapter 7.

The initial research findings - quantitative analysis of the test results

7.1. Introduction

The current chapter presents the results of the experiment involving participants divided into three groups: Control (CO), n=36, Isolated Form-focused Instruction (ISO), n=27, and Integrated Form-focused Instruction (INT), n=28. The data analysed here was obtained from two questionnaires, one administered prior to the intervention, and one after the intervention, and three periodic tests – the pre-test (T1), the post-test (T2) and the delayed post-test (T3) administered seven weeks after T2. The alpha level selected for this study is 0.05, in line with the convention of research practice in social studies (Brown, 1990).

This report is divided into four sections. The aim of the first – Preliminary Analyses (section 7.2) – is to ensure the data is suitable for parametric testing, and all interfering variables, such as initial English level, age, gender, and mother tongue background, are controlled, and there are no significant differences between the groups prior to the intervention. The next section (section 7.3) investigates the outcomes of the three tests in each of the groups in isolation, whereas section 7.4 compares the groups' results with one another, providing the grounds for testing the main hypothesis, and research questions. It also lays foundations for the forthcoming discussion on the place of both types of FFI in this particular setting (see Chapters 9 and 10).

7.2. Preliminary analyses

The preliminary analyses have been performed as one of the measures ensuring validity and reliability of the study results. The close initial equivalence demonstrated between all three groups allows for better comparability between them and, as a result, better

generalizability of the findings, as does the examination of the tests' internal consistency. Both are undertaken in this section and presented below.

7.2.1. Internal consistency

The internal consistency reliability analysis test was performed through Cronbach's Alpha. The correlation between the two main elements of the test – form formation and form recognition tasks in all the three tests (pre-test: T1, post-test: T2 and delayed post-test: T3) and all three groups (ISO, INT and CO) – was investigated. The observed reliability coefficient was found to be high (α =0.88).

7.2.2. Distribution

The data were tested for a normal distribution using Shapiro-Wilk Test of Normality with all three groups (ISO, INT, CO) in all three tests, pre-test (T1), post-test (T2), and delayed post-test (T3), investigated.

- The outcomes of the Shapiro-Wilk Test proved not statistically significant (T1 CO: p=0.466, T1 ISO: p=0.426, T1 INT: p=0.176; T2 CO: p=0.299, T2 ISO: p=0.713; T2 INT: p=0.469; T3 CO: p=0.619, T3 ISO: p=0.906, T3 INT: p=0.090), hence the null hypothesis that the data are normally distributed could not be rejected. It can be concluded that no significant deviation from normality was found.

7.2.3. The pre-instructional group comparison

Pre-test results and some background information on the participants were used to check whether the well-matched assignment design applied in the study helped to successfully control such variables as the participants' prior knowledge of the targeted forms, age, gender, and mother tongue, as reported below.

The participants' prior knowledge

The homogeneity between groups was tested using a Univariate ANOVA, and pre-test as a between-groups factor, producing the results as follows:

- There was no statistically significant difference between the three groups in terms of their pre-test scores: $F_{2,88}=0.566$, $p=0.570$ (CO: M=33.06, SD= 13.80, ISO: M=33.73, SD= 12.21, INT: M=36.21 SD= 9.40), (see Figure 7.1).

- The two experimental groups (INT and ISO) were also compared with each other by means of Univariate ANOVA and, as expected from the overall comparison above, there was no statistical difference between these two groups in the pre-test (T1) ($F_{1,53}=0.718$, $p=0.400$).

- The control group's (CO) performance in T1 was then separately compared with ISO experimental group's performance in T1 using Univariate ANOVA with group as a between subjects factor: here also, no significant difference was found ($F_{1,61}=0.040$, $p=0.843$).

- The T1 performance of the control group (CO) was also compared to INT experimental group's performance in T1, still using Univariate ANOVA, and, again, no significant difference was found ($F_{1,62}=1.073$, $p=0.304$).

Also, the pre-test scores on two main components of the test – form formation tasks and form recognition tasks – were compared between the three groups by means of Univariate ANOVA (Figure 7.2).

- In form formation tasks there was no statistically significant difference between the three groups ($F_{2.88}=0.133$, $p=0.876$), with very similar mean scores in all three groups (CO M=23.73, SD=13.93, ISO M=23.76, SD=14.28, INT M=25.26, SD=9.83).

- In form recognition tasks there was no statistically significant difference between the three groups either, $F_{2.88}=0.951$, $p=0.390$ (CO M=45.62, SD=17.60, ISO M=47.15, SD=14.36, INT M=50.96, SD=13.83).

It can then be concluded that all three groups (CO,ISO,INT) entered the experiment with comparable initial levels of grammatical competency in terms of English past forms, both in terms of form formation as well as form recognition skills.

Gender

The effect of gender in all three groups was tested using Univariate ANOVA, and was found not to be statistically significant ($F_{2,88}$ =0.299, p=0.743), indicating that the ratio of males to females was comparable in all three groups (Figure 7.3).

Age

The effect of age was investigated in all three groups, and the differences between CO, ISO and INT was also found not to be significant ($F_{2,88}$=0.188, p=0.916), suggesting a comparable distribution of age groups in the experimental and control groups (Figure 7.4).

Participants' heritage languages

The intervention participants spoke twenty-one languages between them. For the purpose of statistical testing, these languages were clustered into fourteen language groups from which they derived (see Table 7.1), and the two experimental groups ISO and INT were then examined with an aim to establish whether the groups were comparably populated with speakers of various language groups. The Univariate ANOVA test did not show any significant differences between the two experimental groups in terms of language distribution within the groups ($F_{1,53}$=0.408, p=0.526) (see also Table 7.1 and Table 6.3).

Participants' L1	Language group	Language family
Arabic	Semitic group	Afro-Asiatic family
Somali	Cushitic group	
Swahili, Shona	Bantu group	Niger-Congo family
Bengali, Nepali, Urdu, Pashto, Kurdish, Panjabi, Dari, Farsi	Indo Iranian group	Indo-European family
Polish, Macedonian, Russian, Slovak	Slavic group	
Lithuanian, Latvian	Baltic group,	
Portuguese, Spanish , Romanian	Italic (Latin/Romanic) group	
Albanian	Albanian group	
Thai	Tai-Kadai/Daic group	Sino-Tibetan/Sino-Thai family
Chinese Mandarin	Chinese group	
Hungarian	Finno-Ugric group	Uralic family
Turkish	Turkic group	Altaic Family
Malayalam	Dravidian group	Dravidian family
Filipino	Malayo-Polynesian group	Austronesian family

Table 7.1. Participants' mother tongues (L1) in language groups.

The analyses reported in this section demonstrate comparable distribution of interfering variables, such as the participants' prior knowledge of the targeted forms, gender, age or heritage language family, among the three groups - the control, Isolated FFI, and Integrated FFI. The absence of any initial significant differences between the groups in terms of these variables makes it possible to determine a more indicative causal effect between the independent variable, the instruction, and the dependent variable, the gains.

7.3. Performance in tests in each of the three groups

Prior to the comparison between the three groups – Controlled (CO), Isolated (ISO) and Integrated (INT) – each group's performance was analysed separately by means of repeated measures GLM.

7.3.1. The control group's performance analysis

The overall performance analysis in three tests

The effect of tests in the control group was tested separately in order to determine whether the differences between the tests were statistically significant. Three statistical tests were performed – one comparing means of all three tests – pre, post and delayed (T1, T2, T3), then T1 was compared to T2, T2 to T3, and finally T1 and T3. In all these tests, repeated measures GLM was conducted providing the following outcomes:

- The effect of tests was found to be highly significant, with all three tests compared (T1, T2, T3), ($F_{1.636, 57.257}$ = 3.820, p=0.036). In order to investigate this difference further, all three test performances were compared with each other as reported below.

- There was no statistically significant difference between the control group's overall performance in pre-test and post-test (T1-T2) ($F_{1,35}$= 3.722, p=0.62).

- Equally, there was no statistically significant difference between pre-test and delayed test overall performance (T1-T3) ($F1_{,35}$ = 0.232, p=0.633).

- Yet, the difference between the control group's overall performance in the post-test and the delayed test (T2-T3) was found to be highly statistically significant ($F1,35$= 12,783, p=0.001).

As illustrated in Figure 7.1, the lowest performance mean in the control group can be observed in the post-test (T2).
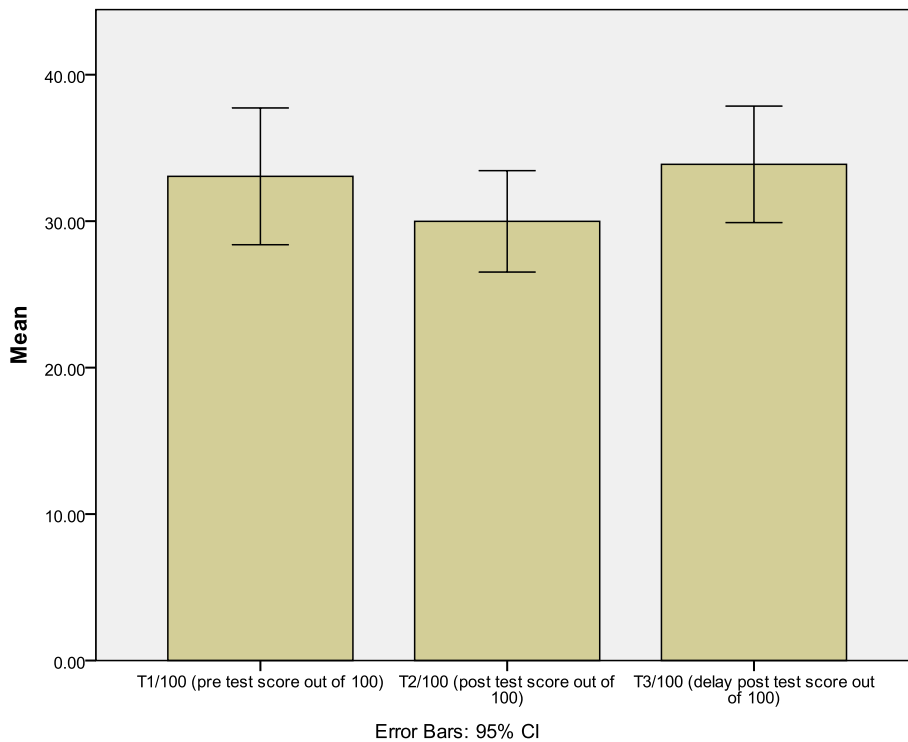
Figure 7.1. The control group students' performance (means ± 95% confidence limits) over three written tests.

Form formation and form recognition performance comparison

Repeated measures GLM with form formation performance as within-subjects factor produced the following results:

- In all three tests, there was a statistically significant difference in form formation task scores $F_{2,70}=6.602$, *p*=0.002. When investigated further, there was a statistically significant difference between T1 (M=23.73, SD=13.93), and T2 (M=20.36, SD=8.80) ($F_{1,35}=4.310$, *p*=0.045), and T2 and T3 (M=25.80, SD=12.55) ($F1,35=17.522$, *p*<0.001), but not T1 and T3, ($F_{1,35}=1.690$, *p*=0.202), with a noticeable drop in scores in T2 in relation to the two other tests (Figure 7.2). This indicates that there was no change in the control group's performance in real terms.
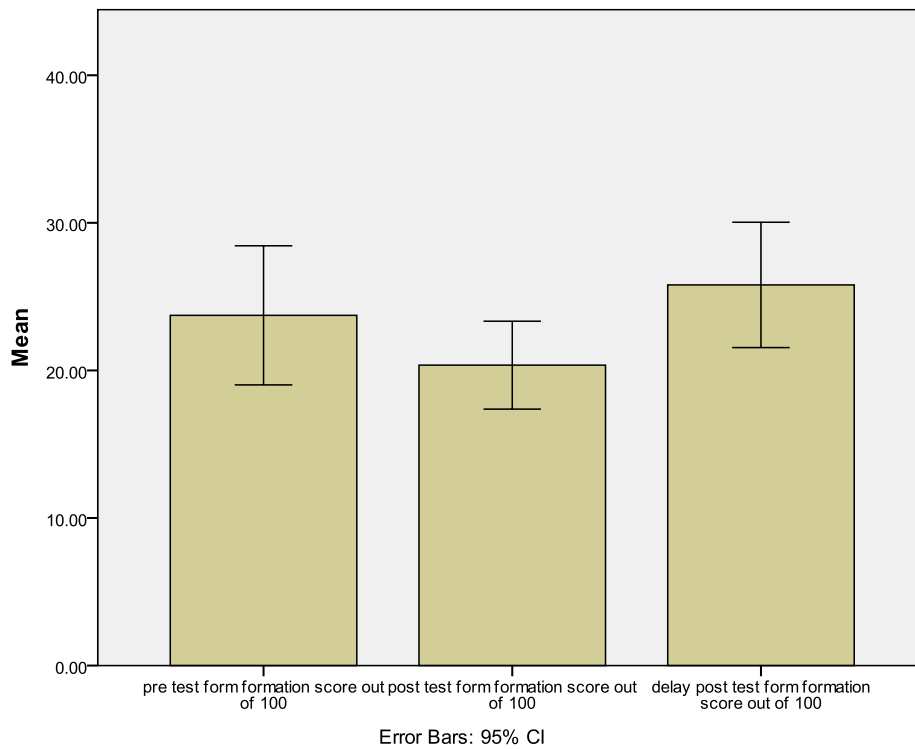
Figure 7.2. Control group form formation performance in all three tests (means ± 95% confidence limits).

Control group participants' performance in form recognition tasks was also investigated by means of repeated measures GLM with form formation recognition scores as a within-subjects factor. The following results were obtained, as shown in Figure 7.3.

- There was no statistically significant difference between form recognition scores in T1 (M=45.62, SD=17.59), T2 (M=42.95, SD=15.75), and T3 (M=44.77, SD=15.61), $F_{1.712,59.905}=0.536$, *p*=0.560.
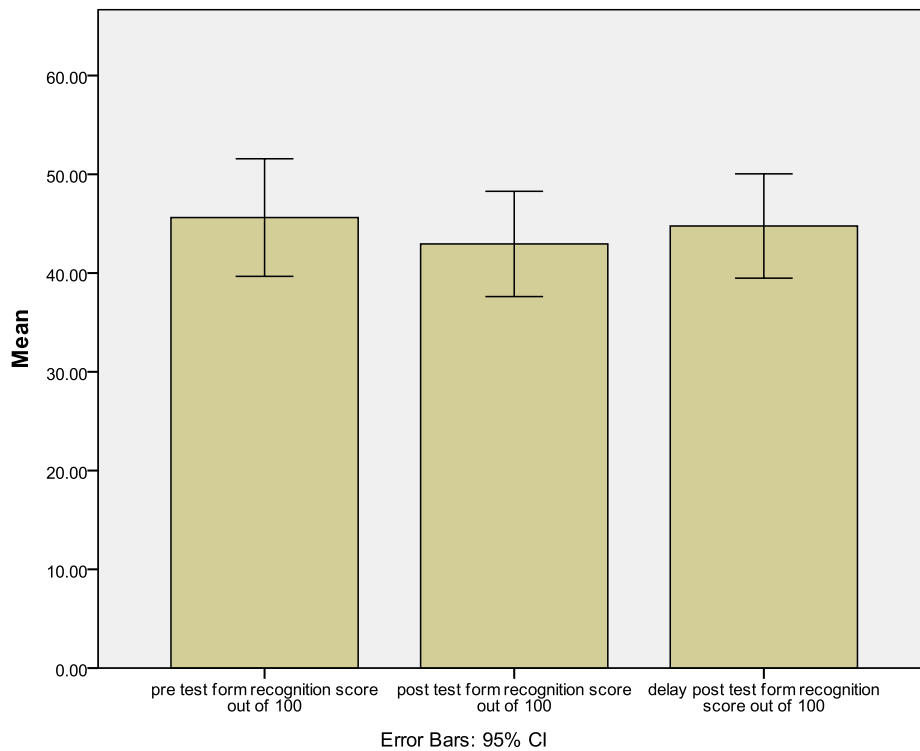
Figure 7.3: Control group form recognition performance in all three tests (means ± 95% confidence limits) over three written tests.

All of the tests performed above indicate there was no performance improvement in the control group.

The analyses of the control group's performance failed to demonstrate any significant improvement in terms of learning of the targeted forms. On the contrary, the significant difference detected between the outcomes of the post-test and the outcomes of the delayed post-test resulted from a decline in the control group's performance in the post-test. This was particularly evident in the case of form formation task, but was also significant when the test was analysed holistically, without the division into the two skills tested. There was no statistically significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test or the pre-test and the delayed post-test, and, as a result, no gains were reported for this group.

7.3.2. The Isolated FFI group's performance analysis

The overall performance analysis in three tests

The pre-, post-, and delayed post-test scores were compared also in the case of the experimental ISO group, who received Isolated form-focused instruction. Their overall performance in all three tests was compared by means of repeated measures GLM with tests as a within-subjects factor (Figure 7.4).

- The effect of tests was found to be highly significant ($F_{2,52} = 39.372$, $p<0.001$), when all three tests were compared (T1,T2,T3)

- There was a highly significant difference between performances in pre-test (T1) and post-tests (T2) ($F_{1,26}=59.540$, $p<0.001$).

- There was also a highly significant difference between performances in pre-test (T1) and delayed tests (T3) ($F_{1.26} = 36.758$, $p<0.001$).

- However, there was no statistically significant difference between performances in post-test (T2) and delay test (T3) ($F_{1,26}= 3.681$, $p=0.066$).

Error Bars: 95% CI
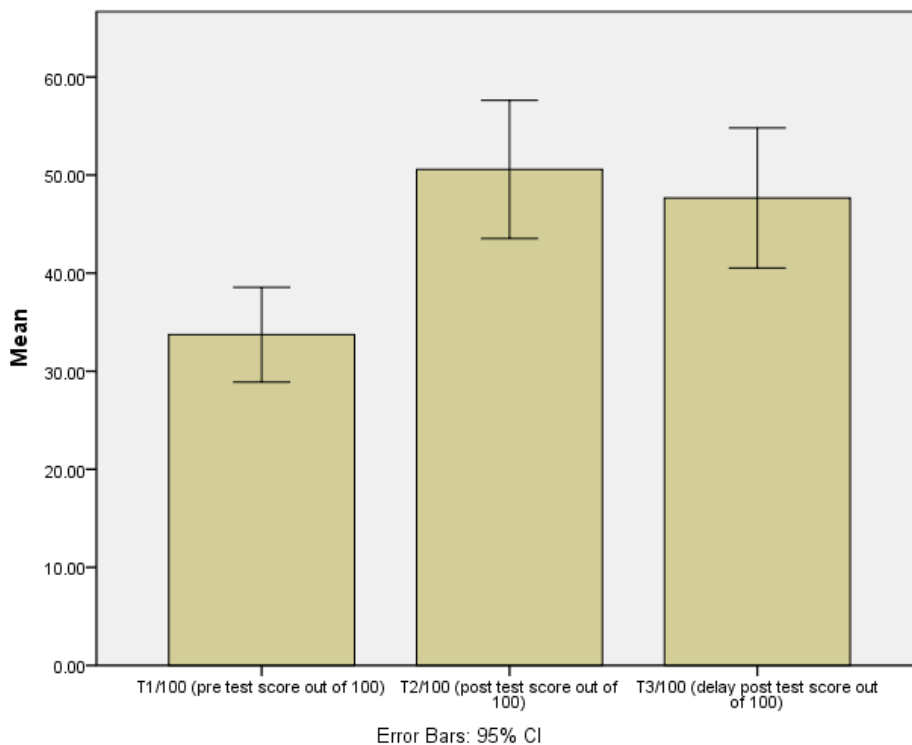
Figure 7.4. Performance of the students in the experimental group ISO, who received isolated FFI intervention (means ± 95% confidence limits).

Form formation and form recognition performance comparison

The repeated measures GLM model test was employed to compare the ISO group's performance in the two components of pre-test, post-test, and delayed post-test, i.e. form formation and form recognition. The analysis provided the following outcomes:

- There was a statistically significant difference between all three tests, as illustrated in Figure 7.5. $F_{2,52}=51.561$, $p<0.001$ (T1: M=23.76, SD=14.28, T2: M=46.35, SD=19.21, T3: M=43.81, SD=21.57). When tests were compared with one another, it turned out that this difference was highly statistically significant between T1 and T2, ($F_{1,26}=69.299$, $p<0.001$), and T1 and T3 ($F_{1,26}=65.778$, $p<0.001$), but not T2 and T3 ($F_{1,26}=1.485$, $p=0.234$), which mirrors the findings of the overall test score in section 2.2.1.
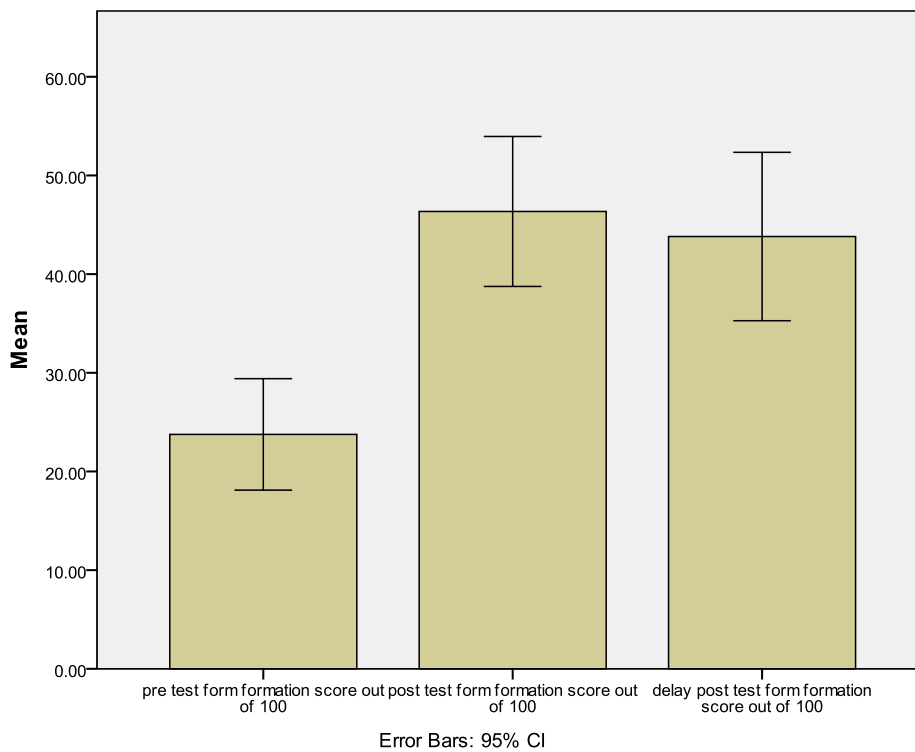
Figure 7.5. ISO group form formation performance in all three tests (means ± 95% confidence limits).

- In form recognition task analysis it was found that there was a statistically significant difference between scores in T1 (M=47.15, SD=14.34), T2 (M=56.27, SD=18.82)

and T3 (M=52.85, SD=16.37), $F_{2,52}$=4.794, p=0.012(Figure 7.6.). While investigating the gains at each testing point, the results revealed that the difference was statistically significant only in immediate gains, i.e. between T1 and T2 ($F1,26$=8.681, p=0.007), but not in the case of long term gains, i.e. between T1 and T3 ($F1,26$=3.357, p=0.078) or T2 and T3 ($F1,26$=1.601, p=0.217).
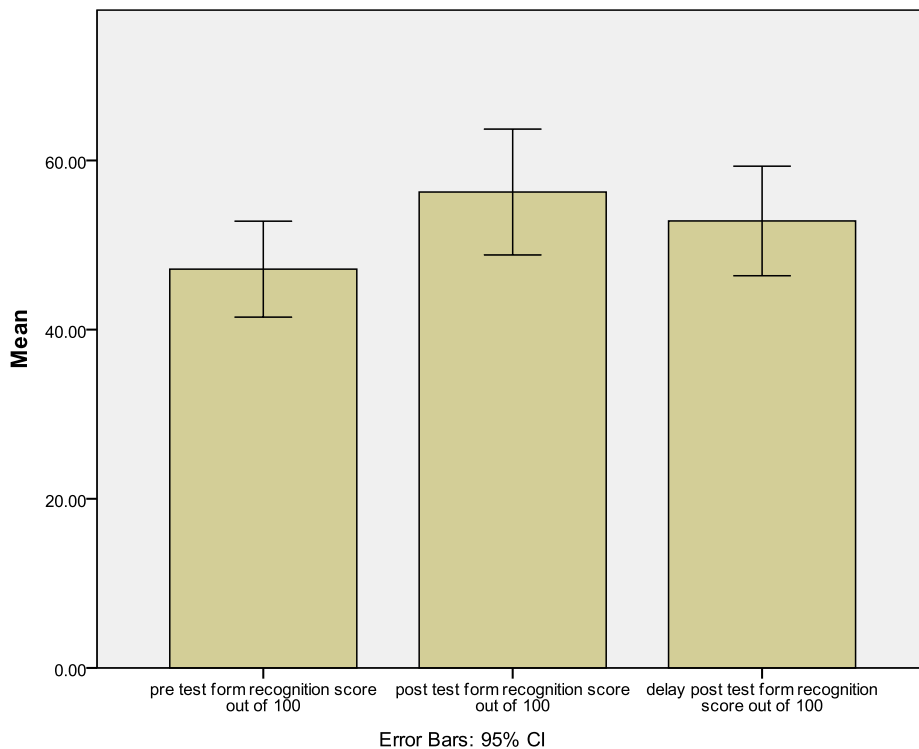
Figure 7.6. ISO group form recognition performance in all three tests (means ± 95% confidence limits).

The analyses above demonstrate a significant improvement in performance of the participants in ISO group, particularly in terms of the form formation skills, where the gains were most spectacular and maintained beyond the intervention. As with the form recognition skills, there was a significant improvement in students' performance, yet it was not maintained beyond the intervention. When considered holistically, without the division into the two skills tested, the Isolated group demonstrated significant gains, which were maintained over time.

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7.3.3. The Integrated FFI group's performance analysis

The overall performance analysis in three tests

The pre, post, and delayed test scores were compared in the other experimental group – INT, who received Integrated form-focused instruction (Figure 7.7.). Also here, repeated measures GLM with tests as a within-subjects factor was computed to compare the students' overall performance in all three tests.

- The effect of tests was found to be highly significant ($F_{2,54}=13.380$, $p<0.001$), when all three tests were compared (T1,T2,T3).

- There was also a highly significant difference between performances in pre-test (T1) and post-tests (T2) ($F_{1,27} = 18.333$, $p<0.001$).

- The performance in pre-test (T1) and delayed post-test (T3) was found to be also significantly different ($F_{1,27}=15.379$, $p=0.001$).

- However, similarly to the other experimental group, there was no significant difference between the students' performance in the post-test (T2) and delayed post-test (T3) ($F_{1,27}=0.319$, $p=0.577$).
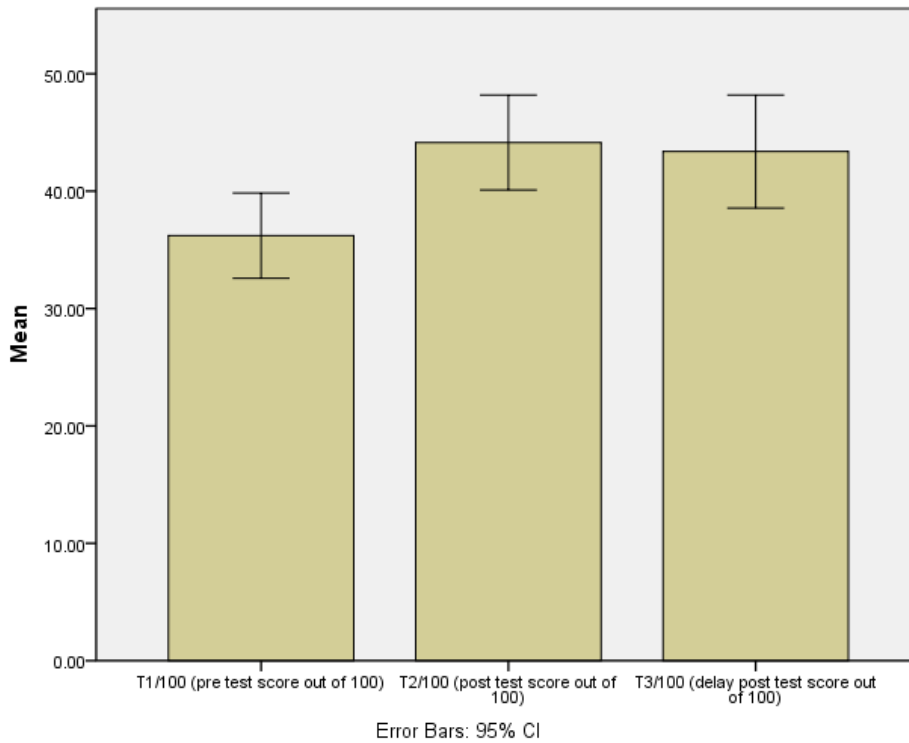
Figure 7.7. Performance of students in the experimental group INT, who received Integrated FFI (means ± 95% confidence limits)

Form formation and form recognition performance comparison

Form formation and form recognition task scores, the two components of the performance tests used in the study, were compared using repeated measures GLM test, which revealed as follows:

- There was a statistically significant difference between the three tests in form formation $F_{2,54}$=11.622, p<0.001 (T1: M=25.26, SD=9.83, T2: M=34.60, SD=13.05, T3: M=35.31, SD=14.76) (Figure 7.8). Further analysis revealed that while the difference was highly statistically significant between T1 and T2 ($F_{1,27}$=16.076, p<0.001), and T1 and T3 ($F_{1,27}$=14.614, p=0.001) it was not statistically significant in the case of T2 and T3 comparison ($F_{1,27}$=0.131, p=0.720).
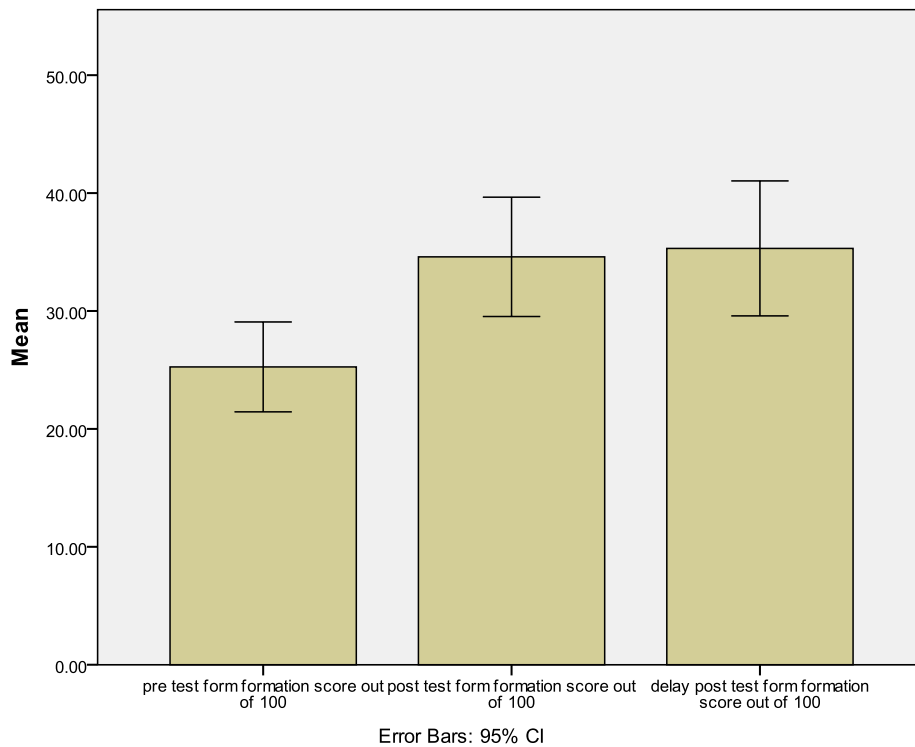
Figure 7.8. INT group form formation performance in all three tests (means ± 95% confidence limits).

- Also INT participants' performance in form recognition tasks was compared across all three tests, showing that there was no statistically significant effect of test (T1: M=50.96, SD=13.83, T2: M=57.00, SD=12.21, T3: M=54.26, SD= 13.98); $F_{2,54}$=2.702, *p*=0.77. However, in the case of immediate gains (T1 compared with T2), the difference in scores was statistically significant $F_{1,27}$=5.827, *p*=0.023(Figure 7.9). Neither the long term gains (T1 compared with T3; $F_{1,27}$=1.506, *p*=0.230), nor the difference between T2 and T3 test scores ($F_{1,27}$=1.103, *p*=0.303) were statistically significant, though.
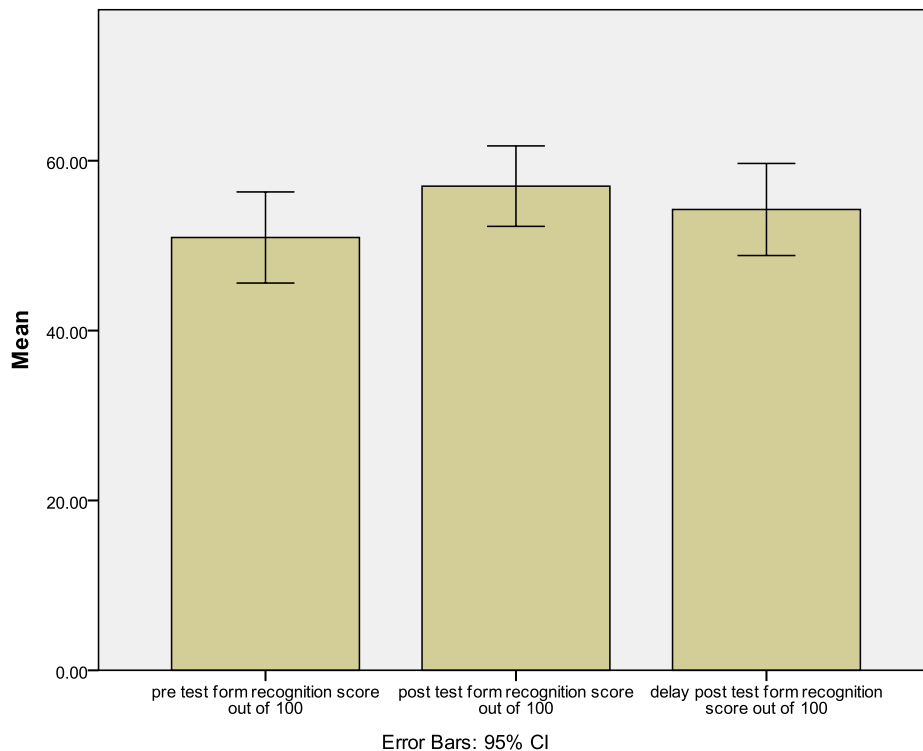
Figure 7.9. INT group form recognition performance in all three tests (means ± 95% confidence limits).

These data reveal that the Integrated group has made significant progress in learning of the targeted forms, and their gains were maintained beyond the intervention. Similarly to the Isolated group, the Integrated group demonstrated significant gains both in terms of the form formation skills and the form recognition skills. Nevertheless, the form recognition skills were not maintained over time.

7.4. Comparison between the groups

The real value of this study lies in the comparison of the performance between the groups. The sections below investigate the differences between the two experimental groups (7.4.1), and then juxtaposes the experimental groups with the control group for further comparison of gains (7.4.2).

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7.4.1. Isolated FFI versus Integrated FFI groups' performance

This section is directly linked to the main research hypothesis, and thus it analyses the performance of each of the experimental group - Integrated and Isolated FFI - with an aim to determine which of them is more effective on the written performance in the post-tests.

7.4.1.1. The overall performance of Isolated versus Integrated FFI comparison

The performances of ISO and INT groups were compared in all three periodic tests T1, T2, T3 by means of a repeated-measures GLM, with test as a within-subjects factor and intervention as a between-subjects factor.

- There was an overall highly significant effect of a test ($F_{1.712,90.750}=51.537$, $p<0.001$)

- There was a significant correlation between the test and the group ($F_{1.712,90.750}=6.239$, $p=0.005$).

The intervention gains after post-test and delayed post-test were then analysed as repeated measures GLM was conducted with test as a within-subject factor and intervention type as a between-subjects factor, which produced the following results, illustrated by Figure 7.10:

- In repeated measures GLM, the difference between ISO and INT group's performance just after the intervention – pre-test (T1) versus post-test (T2) analysis measuring the immediate intervention gains – was found to be statistically significant ($F_{1,53}=9.749$, $p=0.003$).

- The difference between the two groups in performances in post-test (T2) and delayed post-test (T3) was not found to be statistically significant ($F_{1,53}=1.130$, $p=0.293$).

- The difference between the two groups in performances in pre-test (T1) and delayed post-test (T3), measuring the long term intervention gains, was found to be statistically significant ($F_{1,53}=5.344$, $p=0.025$).

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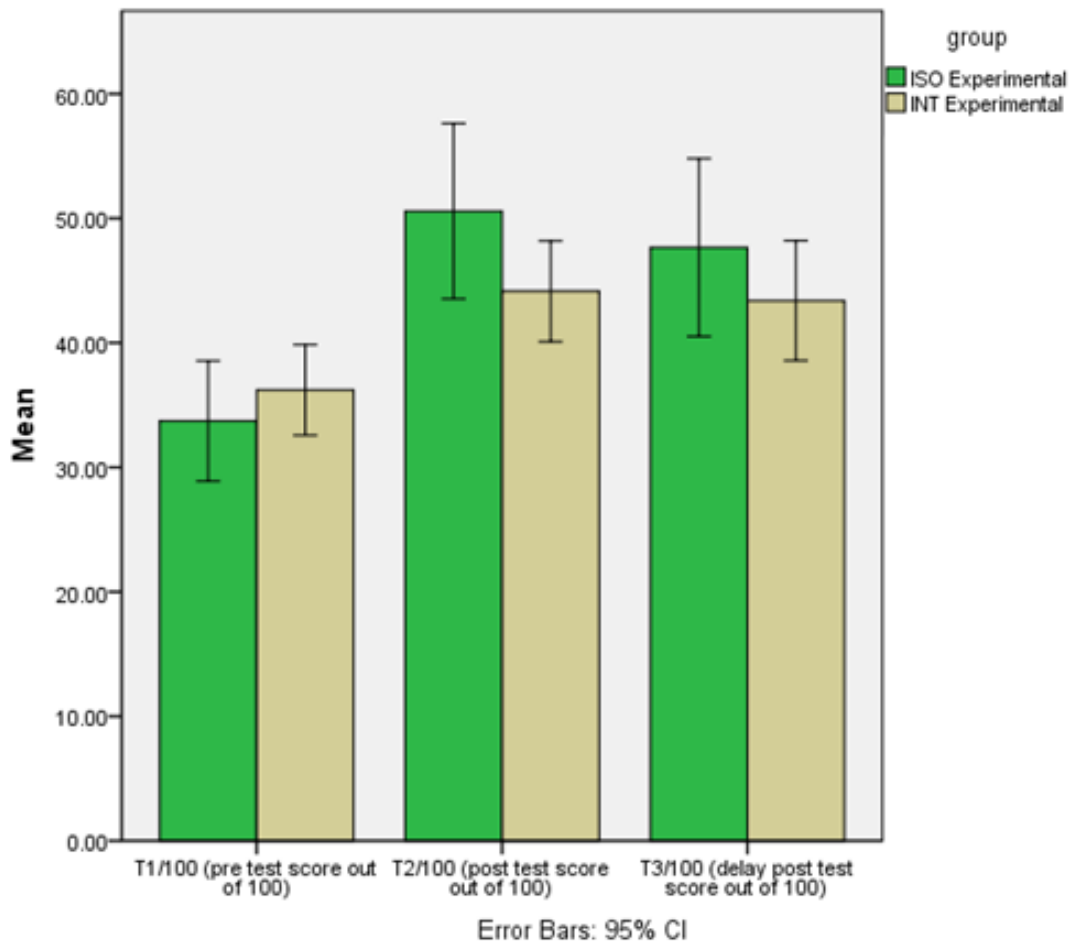
Figure 7.10. Performance of the ISO group participants, who received Isolated FFI, versus INT group participants, who received Integrated FFI (means ± 95% confidence limits), over three written tests.

7.4.1.2. The groups comparison with each composite of the test analysed

The ISO and INT groups' performances in the two competences tested – form formation and form recognition – were compared in all three periodic tests T1, T2, T3 by means of a repeated-measures GLM, with test as a within-subjects factor and intervention as a between-subjects factor.

Form formation

In the case of the form formation tasks, in all three tests it was found that:

- There was an overall highly significant effect of a test ($F_{2,106}$=56.697, p<0.001)

- There was a highly significant dependency between the test and the group ($F_{2,106}=8.416$, $p<0.001$) (Figure 7.11.).
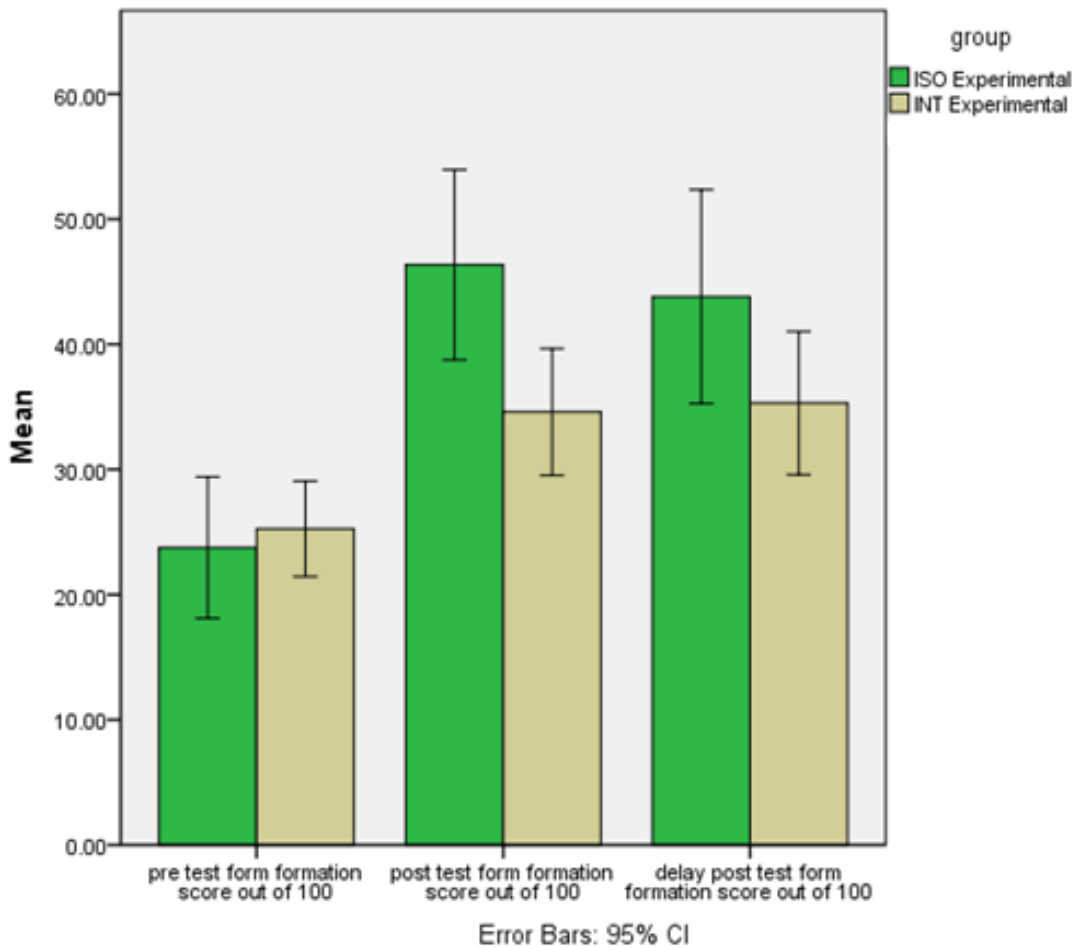
Figure 7.11. Form formation ISO versus INT group performance (means ± 95% confidence limits) in all three tests (pre, post, and delayed post-test).

When analysing effect of each individual test it was found that:

- There was a statistically significant difference between ISO and INT immediate gains in terms of form formation proficiency (T1 and T2 comparison), as found in the repeated measures GLM, with test performance as a within-subjects factor, and group as a between-subjects factor ($F_{1,53}=13.810$, $p<0.001$). The results indicate that ISO group outperformed INT.

- Also in long term gains in form formation (T1 and T3 comparison) ISO group scored higher than INT, and the difference was statistically significant ($F_{1,53}$=7.658, p<0.008).

- There was a noticeable difference between these two groups in terms of how they behaved in form formation tasks in the post-test (T2) and delayed post-test (T3) (Figure 7.12.). In ISO group, there was a not unexpected drop in scores between the post and delayed post-tests (in T2 M=46.35, SD= 19.21; in T3 M=43.81, SD= 21.57), although the drop was not statistically significant ($F_{1,26}$=1.485, p=0.234). In contrast, in INT there was no reduction in score at all, but an increase instead. Yet, this increase was so small that it was not statistically significant either ($F_{1,27}$=0.131, p=0.720). Overall, between the ISO and INT groups, there was no statistically significant difference in targeted forms knowledge gains or indeed losses in the interim period between T2 and T3 ($F_{1,53}$=1.286, p=0.262).

Estimated Marginal Means of MEASURE_1
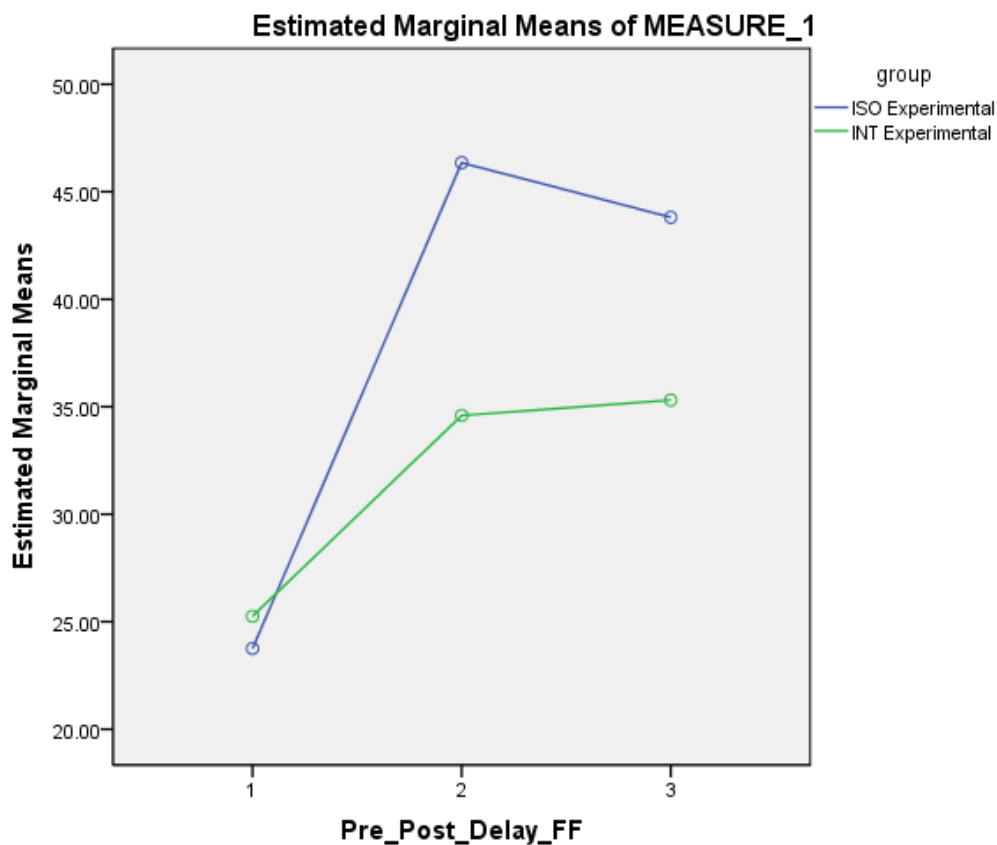
Figure 7.12. ISO and INT group performance in form formation tasks in Test 1, 2 and 3.

Form recognition

In the case of the form recognition tasks, in all three tests, using the repeated measures GLM for all three tests (pre-, post-, delayed post-test), it was found that:

- There was an overall highly significant effect of a test ($F_{2,106}$=7.471, *p*=0.001).

- However, in terms of form recognition, there was no dependency between the test and the group ($F_{2,106}$=0.335, *p*=0.716) (Figure 7.13.)

Error Bars: 95% CI
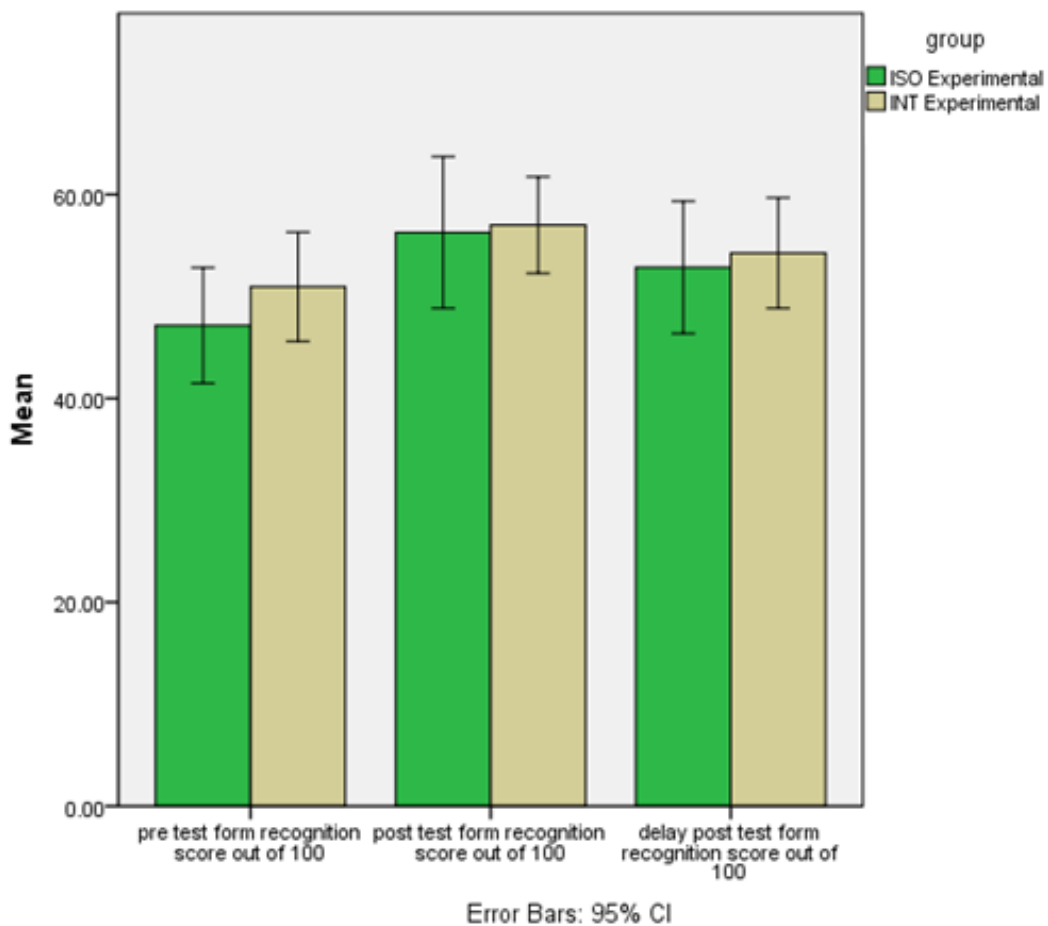
Figure 7.13.Form recognition ISO versus INT group performance (means ± 95% confidence limits) in all three tests (pre, post, and delayed post-test).

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When investigating short and long term intervention gains in terms of form recognition gains, it was found that:

- There was a highly significant effect of test in short term gains (performance in pre- and post-test compared, T1 and T2) ($F_{1,53}$=14.611, *p*<0.001), but an effect of group was found not to be statistically significant; $F_{1,53}$=0.599, *p*=0.442, despite the fact that, as illustrated in Figure 7.14, in relation to their initial performance in T1, on average ISO improved their scores more than INT (ISO immediate gain in score points M=9.12, SD=16.08, compared with INT immediate gain in score points M=6.05, SD=13.25).

- Similarly, there was a significant effect of test in long term gains (performance in pre-test T1 and delayed post-test T3 compared) ($F_{1,53}$=4.812, *p*=0.033), but an effect of group was not found to be significant ($F_{1,53}$=0.342, *p*=0.561).

- There was no statistically significant difference between ISO and INT performance in form recognition tasks in delayed post-test (T3) as compared with the post-test (T2), with both of the groups' scores decreasing. As illustrated in Figure 7.14., the drop is slightly more dramatic in the case of ISO (in T2: M=56.28, SD=18.82, in T3: M=52.85, SD=16.37, compared with INT in T2 M=57.00, SD=12.21, in T3: M=54.26, SD=13.98), but this minimal difference is not statistically significant, $F_{1,53}$=0.032, *p*=0.859.
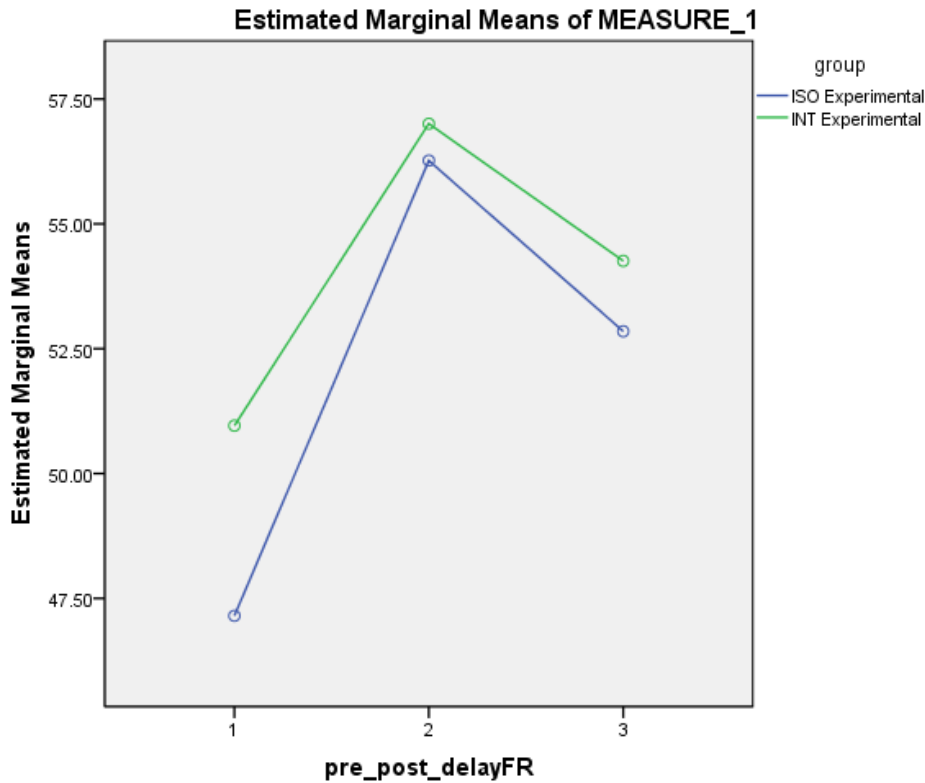
Figure 7.14. ISO and INT group performance in form recognition tasks in Test 1, 2 and 3.

The analyses reported in this section constitute the core of this research. The results obtained demonstrate that overall, the Isolated FFI facilitated learning of the targeted forms better than the Integrated FFI, which is confirmed both in the post-test and in the delayed post-test results.

The analyses of students' test scores in the two components of the tests revealed that, in the form formation tasks, the Isolated FFI group significantly outperformed the Integrated FFI group both in the post-test and in the delayed post-test. As for the form recognition tasks, the advantage of the Isolated FFI was not evident in any of the tests.

7.4.2. Experimental groups versus the control group

The performance of the control group (CO, n=36)), in which the participants did not receive the intervention, and both of the experimental groups (ISO+INT, n=55) whose members

received either type of focus on form instruction intervention, was compared over the three periodic tests by means of a repeated-measures GLM, with tests as a within-subjects factor and intervention (treatment) as a between-subjects factor. Both the overall performance as well as performance in each of test components (form formation and form recognition) are analysed in the sections below.

The experimental groups versus the control group overall performance comparison

The analysis of the overall performance in three tests resulted in the following outcomes (Figure 7.15):

- The effect of test proved to be highly statistically significant (effect of test – within subjects effect) ($F_{1.650,146.812}=16.661$, $p<0.001$), but was highly dependent on intervention ($F_{1.650,146.812}= 27.778$, $p<0.001$).

The comparison of immediate and long-term gains in the two groups (both experimental groups versus the control group) using repeated measures GLM brought the following results:

- In terms of immediate intervention gains – T1 compared to T2 results – the effect of group (intervention or no intervention) was highly statistically significant ($F_{1,89}=44.788$, $p<0.001$).
- In terms of the long term gains – T1 compared to T3 results – the effect of group was also highly statistically significant ($F_{1,89}=17.233$, $p<0.001$).
- The change in scores between the immediate post-test and the delayed post-test of the two groups were also highly statistically significant ($F_{1,89}=13.887$, $p<0.001$), with the control group slightly improving their scores and the intervention group slightly decreasing. This decrease in the intervention group was not statistically significant ($F_{1,54}=3.215$, $p=0.079$), but the increase in the control group - was ($F_{1,35}=12.783$,

p=0.001) (see also the control group's performance analysis over the three tests in section 7.3.1).
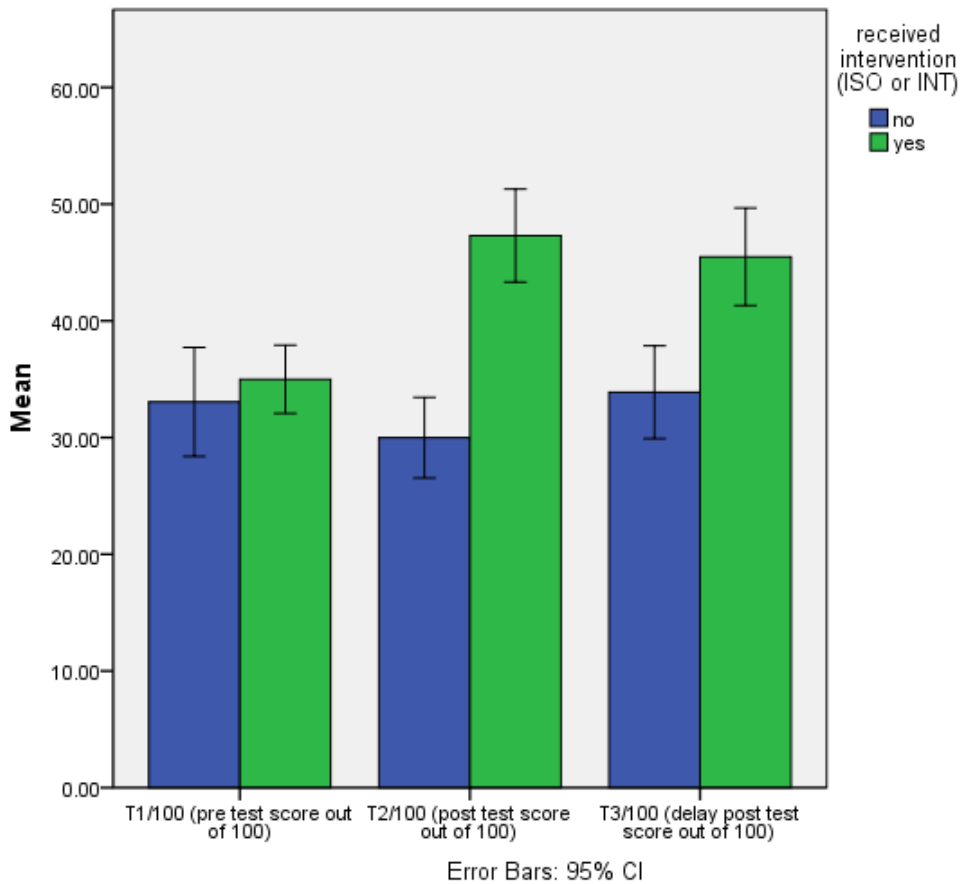
Figure 7.15. Performance of the control group students (means ± 95% confidence limits), who did not receive intervention, and performance of the experimental groups (combined) who received intervention, over three written tests.

Experimental and control group form formation and form recognition performance comparison

The analysis of the performance in form formation and form recognition tasks in three tests brought the following results:

- With all three tests analysed together by repeated measures GLM, the effect of test in form formation competence proved statistically significant $F_{1.794, 159.698}=24.165$,

p<0.001, and was highly dependent on the group (receiving and non receiving instruction) $F_{1.794,159.698}$=29.846, *p*<0.001 (Figure 7.16).

Further analyses were performed comparing the form formation immediate and long term gains in the control group and experimental groups. Repeated measures GLM revealed that the difference between the two groups in immediate gains (pre-test versus post-test scores) was highly statistically significant ($F_{1,89}$=47.640, *p*<0.001). Equally, the difference in long term gains (pre-test versus delayed post-test) proved to be highly statistically significant ($F_{1,89}$=22.904, *p*<0.001).
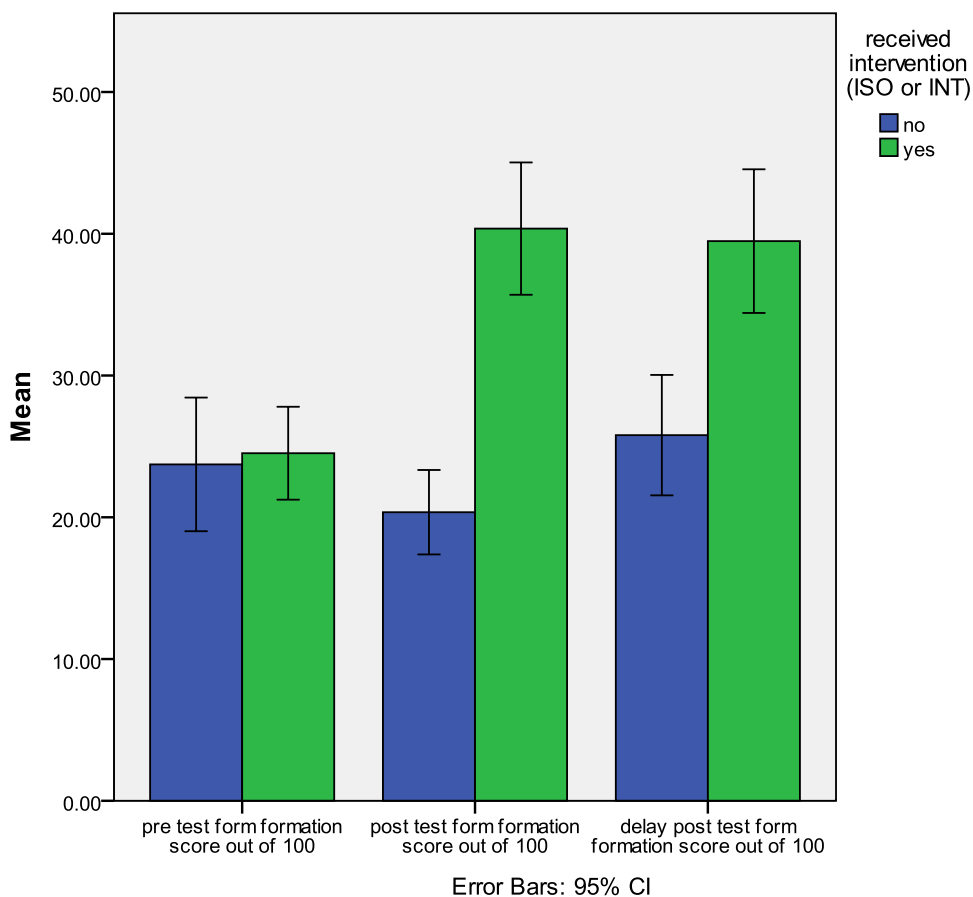
Figure 7.16. Form formation task scores comparison between instructional (ISO and INT combined) and control (CO) groups (means ± 95% confidence limits).

- In the case of form recognition task, the effect of a test was not statistically significant $F_{2,178}$=1.235, *p*=0.293, but the effect of a group was: $F_{2,178}$=5.025, *p*=0.008 (Figure 7.17.).

Repeated measures GLM revealed that the difference between the two groups in immediate gains was statistically significant ($F_{1,89=9.696}$, $p=0.002$). However, in long term gains the difference was not statistically significant ($F_{1,89=2.305}$, $p=0.133$).
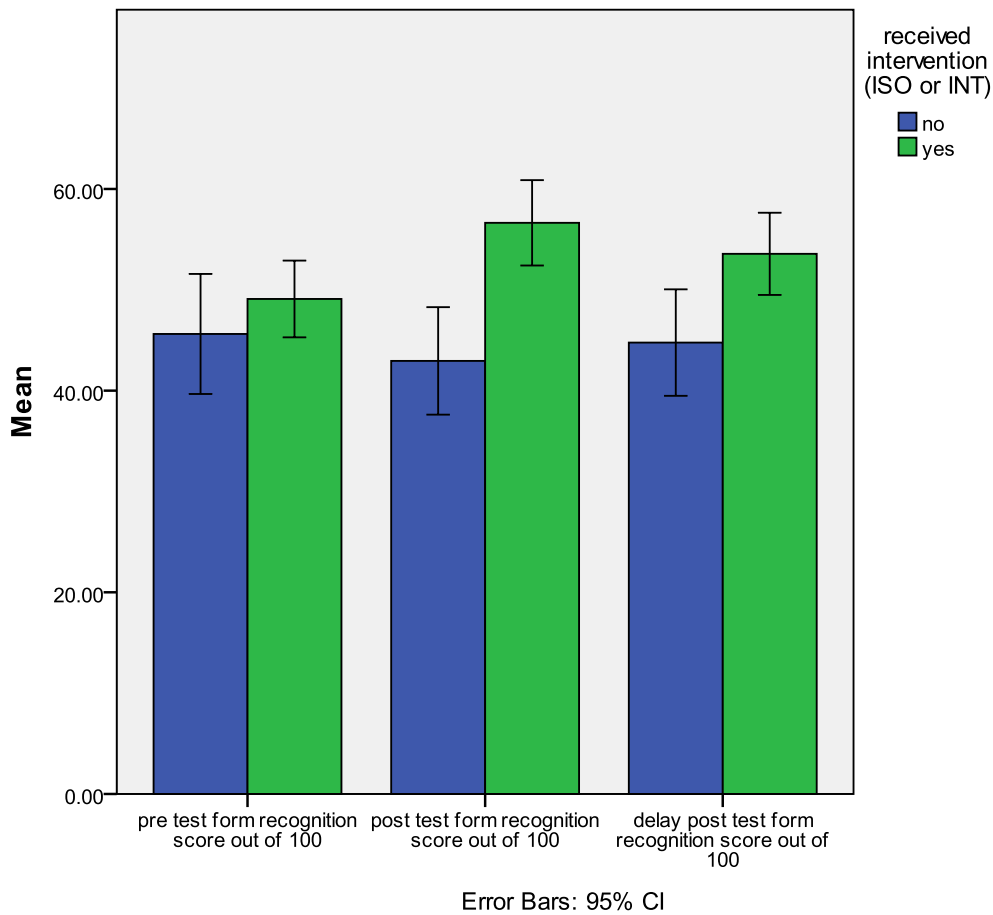
Figure 7.17. Form recognition task scores comparison between instructional (ISO and INT combined) and control (CO) groups (means ± 95% confidence limits).

7.4.2.1. Isolated FFI versus the control group

The performance of the control group (CO), was also compared individually to each of the experimental groups over the three periodic tests, by means of a repeated-measures GLM, with tests as a within-subjects factor and intervention (treatment) as a between-subjects factor. The overall performance in the tests was investigated first, and then performance in form formation and form recognition were analysed individually as well.

Isolated FFI versus the control group's overall performance

- In the ISO and CO comparison of overall performance in all three tests (see Figure 7.18) by means of repeated measures GLM, the effect of test was highly significant, as predicted in the previous computations ($F_{1.653, 100.814} = 22.600$, $p<0.001$), and it was strongly dependent on a group ($F_{1.653, 100.814} = 34.039$, $p<0.001$).

- Further analysis provided by GLM showed that the difference between the students' gains in the control group and the ISO group was highly significant - for the immediate gains: $F_{1,61}=57.089$, $p<0.001$, and in the case of the long term gains: $F_{1,61}=22.012$, $p<0.001$.
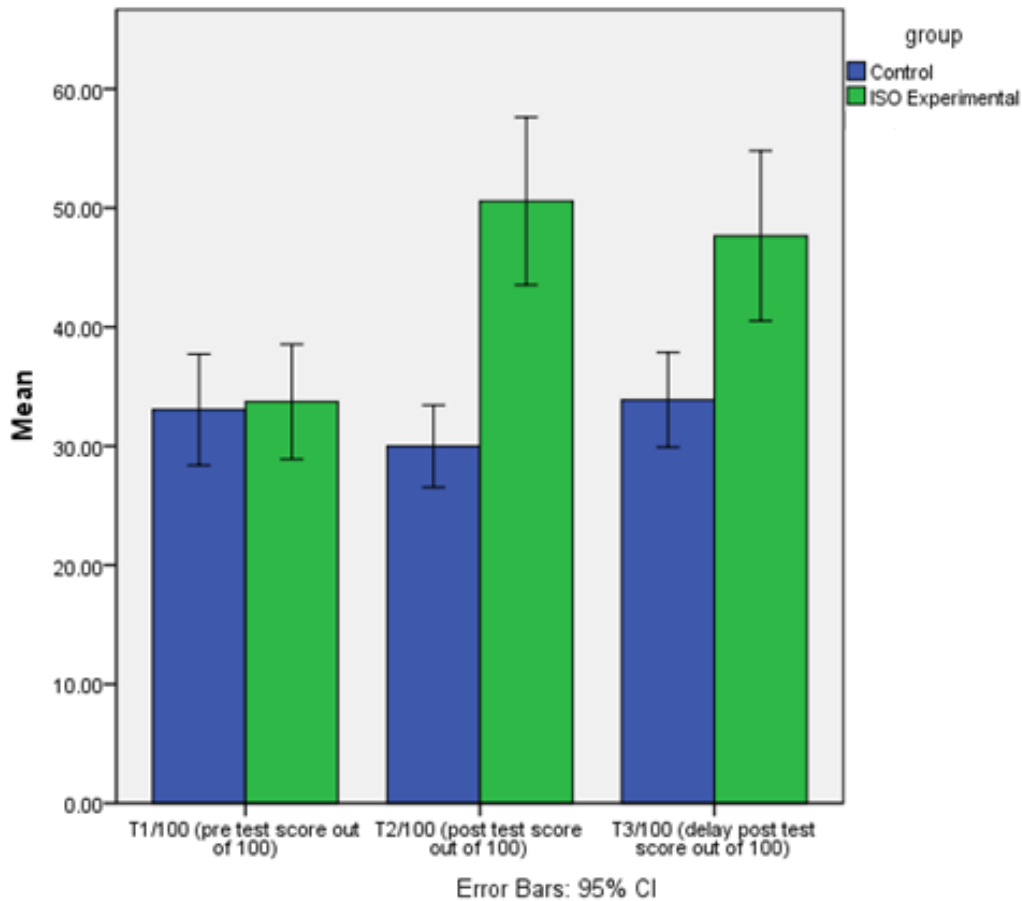
Figure 7.18. Performance the control group students (means ± 95% confidence limits), who did not receive intervention, and experimental group ISO, who received Isolated FFI intervention, over three written tests.

Isolated FFI versus the control group's performance in form formation and form recognition

The analysis of the ISO and CO participants' tests scores in form formation tasks performed by means of repeated measures GLM brought the following results (Figure 7.19):

- With all three tests compared, there was a highly significant effect of a test ($F_{2,122}$=38.598, p<0.001), and it was highly dependent on a group ($F_{2,122}$=47.264, p<0.001).

- The difference between CO and ISO in immediate gains (T1 compared with T2) proved to be highly significant: $F_{1,61}$=74.677, p<0.001.

- The difference in long term gains (T1 compared with T3) was also highly significant: $F_{1,61}$=40.805, p<0.001.

- The difference between the two groups in gains between T2 and T3 in form recognition was statistically significant $F_{1,61}$=11.570, p=0.001.

Error Bars: 95% CI
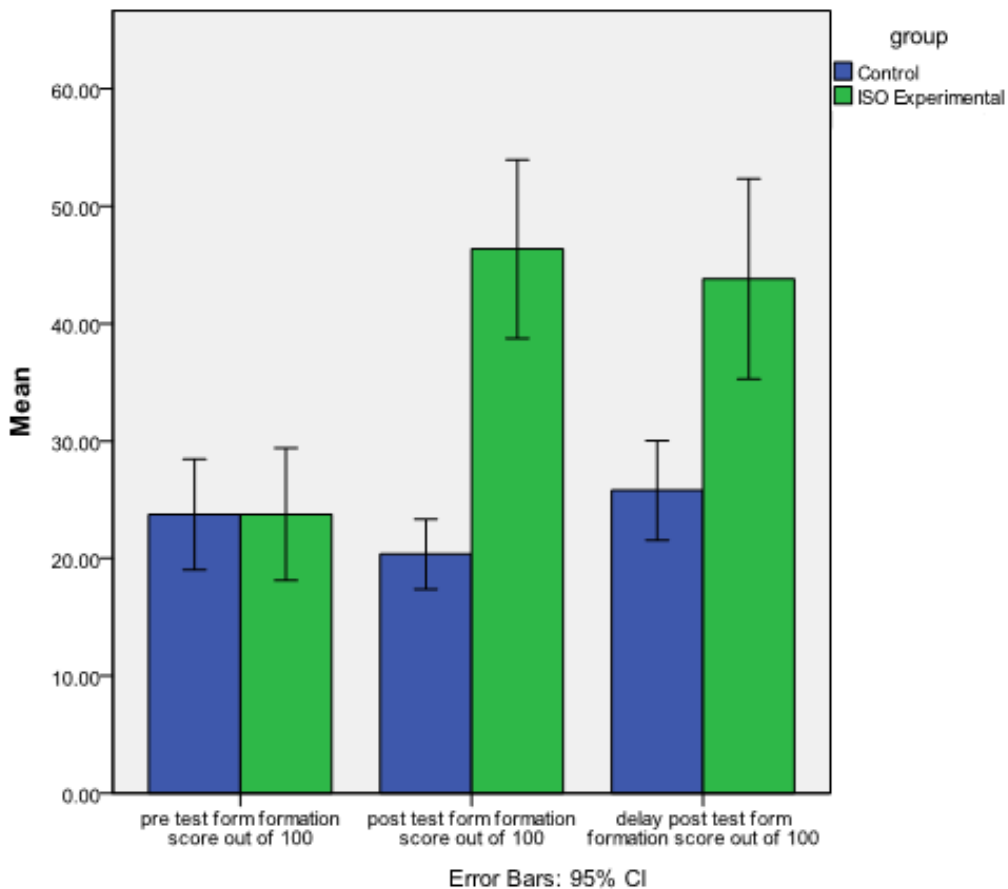
Figure 7.19. Form formation ISO versus CO group performance (means ± 95% confidence limits) in all three tests (pre, post, and delayed post-test).

Repeated measures GLM was also employed to compare CO and ISO groups' scores in form recognition tasks (Figure 7.20), bringing the following results:

- With all three tests compared, the effect of a test was found not to be statistically significant ($F_{1.825,111.343}=1.418$, *p*=0.247), but there was a statistically significant difference between the groups ($F_{1.825,111.343}=4.390$, *p*=0.017).

- The difference between CO and ISO groups' immediate form recognition gains (T1 compared with T2) was found to be statistically significant $F_{1,61}=8.170$, *p*=0.006.

- Yet, the difference between the long term gains (T1 compared with T3) was found not to be statistically significant: $F_{1,61}=2.204$, *p*=0.143.

- The difference between CO and ISO groups' scores in T2 compared with T3 was also not statistically significant $F_{1,61}=2.451$, *p*=0.123.
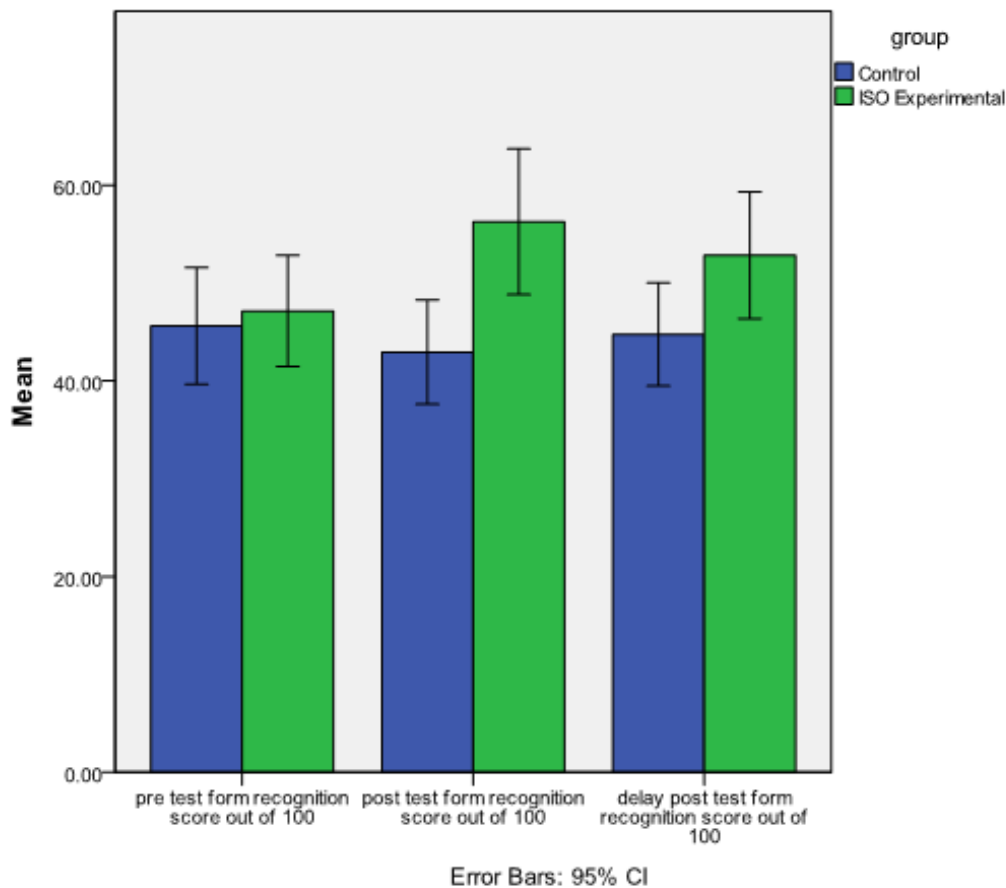
Figure 7.20. Form recognition ISO versus CO group performance (means ± 95% confidence limits) in all three tests (pre, post, and delayed post-test).

7.4.2.2. Integrated FFI versus the control group

The performance of the INT group and the control group (CO) was compared over the three periodic tests, by means of a repeated-measures GLM, with tests as a within-subjects factor and intervention (treatment) as a between-subjects factor. Again, the overall performance as well as performance in form formation and form recognition tasks was investigated.

Integrated FFI versus the control group's overall performance

- In the INT versus CO comparison of performance in all three tests (see Figure 7.21) by means of repeated measures GLM, the overall effect of a test was highly

significant ($F_{1.697,105.190}$= 6.407, *p*=0.004), and, again, it was strongly dependent on a group ($F_{1.697,105.190}$= 12.058, *p*<0.001).

- The two groups' immediate and long term gains were also investigated, and GLM computation showed that the difference between the two groups' immediate gains was statistically significant ($F_{1,62}$=20.424, *p*<0.001), as well as the difference between the long term gains (($F_{1,62}$=6.380, *p*=0.014).
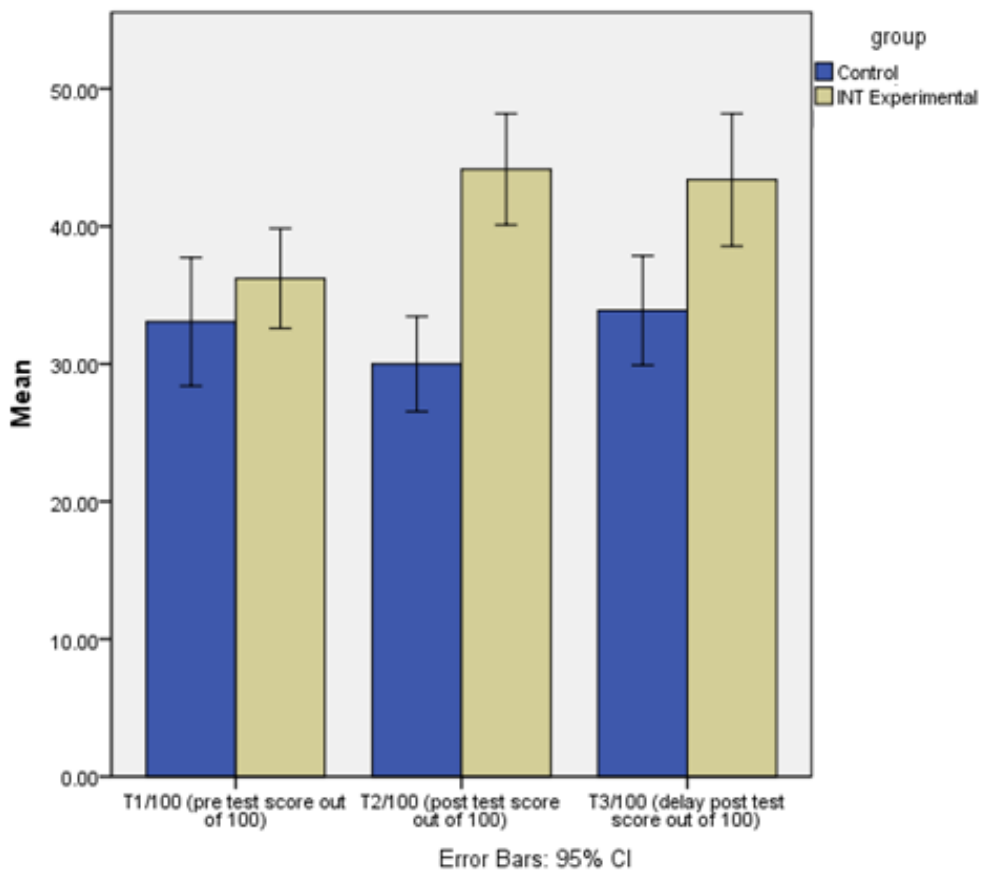
Figure 7.21. Performance of the control group students (means ± 95% confidence limits), who did not receive intervention, and experimental group INT, who received integrated FFI intervention, over three written tests.

Integrated FFI versus control group's performance in form formation and form recognition

The results of the INT and CO participants' tests scores analysis in form formation tasks performed by means of repeated measures GLM were as follows (Figure 7.22):

- With all three tests compared, there was a highly significant effect of a test ($F_{2,124}$=10.285, p<0.001), and it was highly dependent on a group ($F_{2,124}$=11.571, p<0.001).

- There was a highly statistical difference between short term gains in the two groups $F_{1,62}$=21.243, p<0.001.

- Also in terms of long term gains the difference between the groups was statistically significant $F_{1,62}$=7.418, p=0.008.

- The difference between T2 and T3, was also statistically significant $F_{1,62}$=4.291, p=0.042.
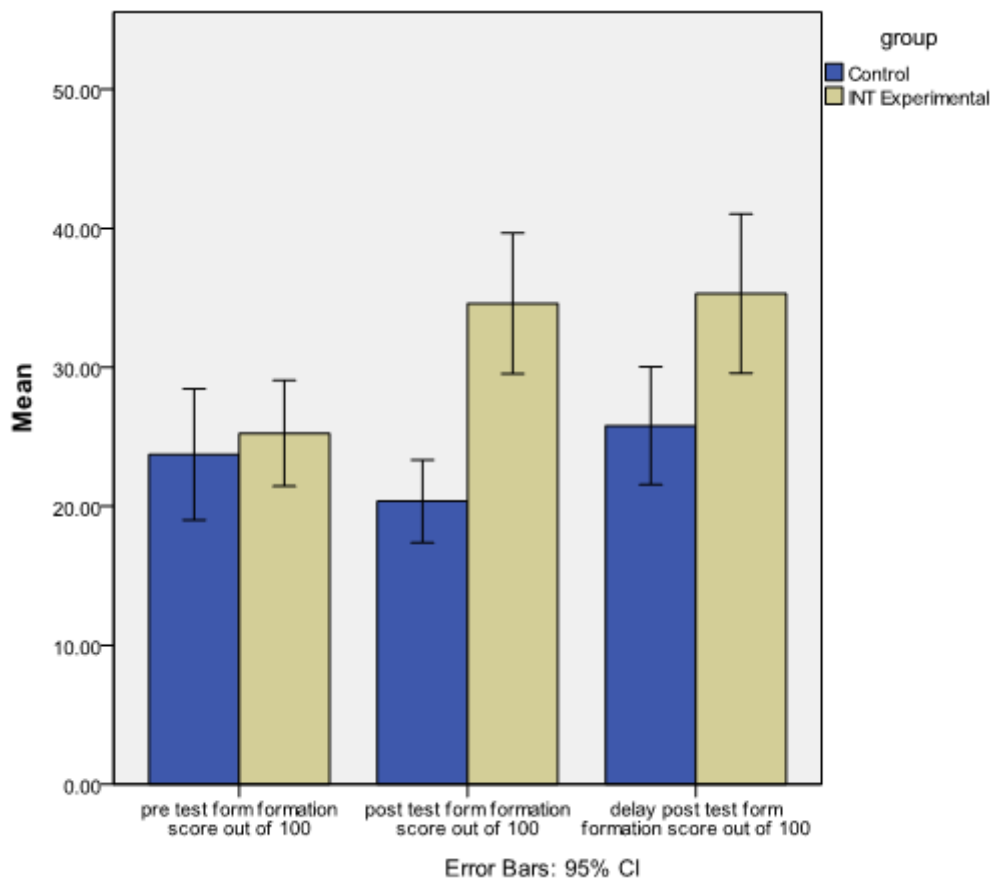
Figure 7.22. Form formation INT versus CO group performance (means ± 95% confidence limits) in all three tests (pre, post, and delayed post-test).

INT and CO participants' tests scores analysis in form recognition tasks performed by means of repeated measures GLM brought the following results (Figure 7.23):

- With all three tests compared, the effect of a test was found not to be statistically significant ($F_{2,124}=0.428$, $p=0.653$), and the difference between the groups was also not statistically significant ($F_{2,124}=2.677$, $p=0.073$).

- The difference in short term gains (T1 compared with T2) was statistically significant $F_{1,62}=5.290$, $p=0.025$.

- The difference in long term gains (T1 and T3 comparison) was found not to be statistically significant $F_{1,62}=0.990$, $p=0.324$.

- The difference in drop in scores after the intervention (T2 and T3 comparison) was also not statistically significant $F_{1,62}=1.924$, $p=0.170$.
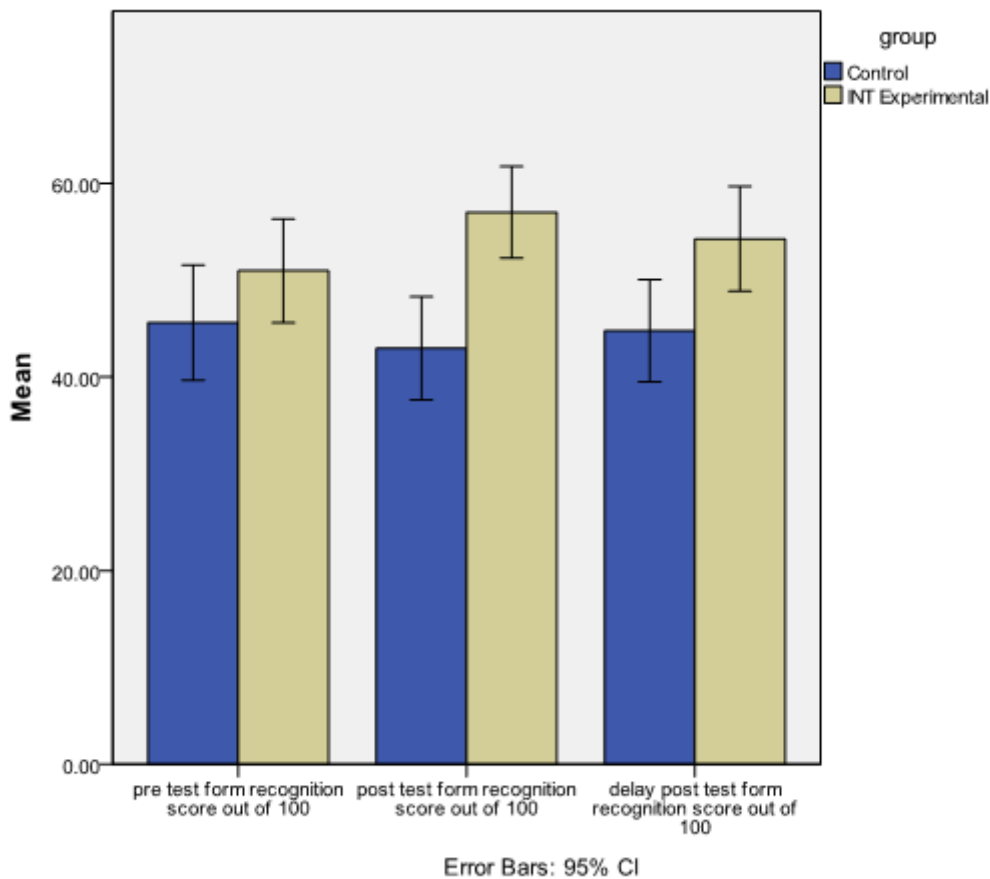
Figure 7.23. Form recognition INT versus CO group performance (means ± 95% confidence limits) in all three tests (pre, post, and delayed post-test).

In summary, the analyses above indicate that, overall, the students receiving FFI (the experimental groups) significantly outperformed those who were not receiving any FFI (the control group), and maintained their overall gains in the delayed post-test. When their performances in production and reception skills were compared separately, it was evident that the experimental groups performed significantly better in form formation tasks (production), in which they excelled both in the post-test and in the delayed post-test. In terms of the form formation tasks (reception), the experimental group outperformed the control group only in the post-test, but not in the delayed post-test.

The comparison of each of the experimental groups individually with the control group revealed that, overall, both the Isolated FFI and the Integrated FFI were significantly more beneficial to EAL learners than no FFI, both in long and short term gains. However, when the test results were examined with respect to different types of skills required, the analysis showed that in the case of both the Isolated FFI and the Integrated FFI, the instructed learners outperformed the control group in the form formation tasks in the post-test as well as in the delayed post-test, but in the form recognition tasks their advantage was statistically significant only in the post-test.

7.4.3. Metalinguistic knowledge

The pre-test, post-test and delayed post-tests (T1,T2,T3) were all measuring the participants' performance in comprehension and application of the targeted forms, but another part of the testing process included measuring the participants' metalinguistic knowledge. This section provides analyses of the metalinguistic knowledge gains (7.4.3.1 - 3), and specifies the relationship between the students' scores on the metalinguistic competence test with their scores on targeted forms tests (7.4.3.4).The participants' metalinguistic knowledge was tested at the same time as their targeted forms proficiency (*i.e.* in the three tests), and the results were analysed with repeated measures GLM.

Isolated FFI group's performance in metalinguistic competence test

- Analysis of scores in all three tests indicated that the effect of test was statistically significant $F_{2,52}=6.594$, *p*=0.003 (Figure 7.24).

- The difference between the scores in T1 (M=14.01, SD=16.04) and T2 (M=24.31, SD=21.93), indicating the immediate gains were also statistically significant $F_{1,26}=9.396$, *p*=0.005.

- Similarly, the long term gains (T1 compared with T3 (M=24.19, SD=19.58)) were also statistically significant $F_{1,26}=10.034$, *p*=0.004.

- Yet, the difference between T2 and T3 performance was not statistically significant $F_{1,26}=0.001$, *p*=0.971.
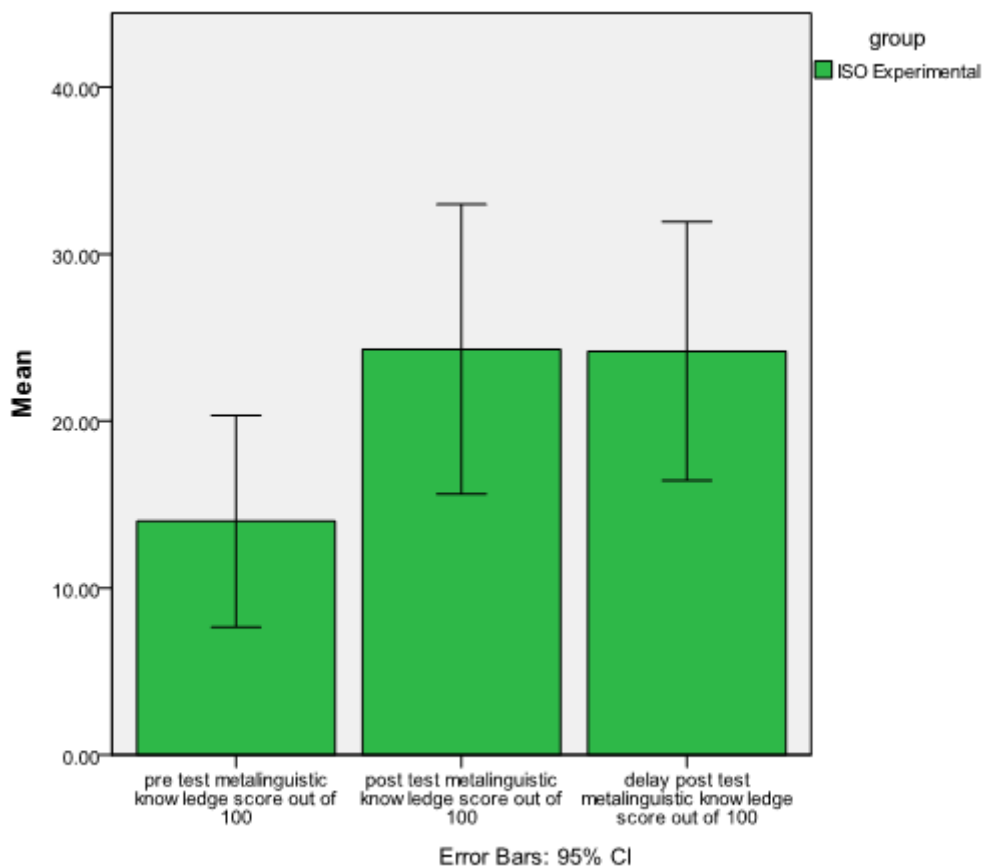
Figure 7.24. ISO group's performance in metalinguistic knowledge test at each testing point (pre, post, and delayed post-test) (means ± 95% confidence limits).

Integrated FFI group's performance in metalinguistic competence test

- In the case of INT group, the effect of a test was not statistically significant with all three tests compared together $F_{2,54}$=2.768, *p*=0.072 (Figure 7.25).

- The immediate gains, T1 (M=12.61, SD=12.04) compared with T2 (M=15.96, SD=19.14), were not statistically significant $F_{1,27}$=1.024, *p*=0.321.

- Surprisingly though, the long term gains, T1 compared with T3 (M=20.65, SD=18.17), were statistically significant $F_{1,27}$=5.536, *p*=0.026.

- There was no statistically significant difference between T2 and T3 $F_{1,27}$=1.730, *p*=0.200.
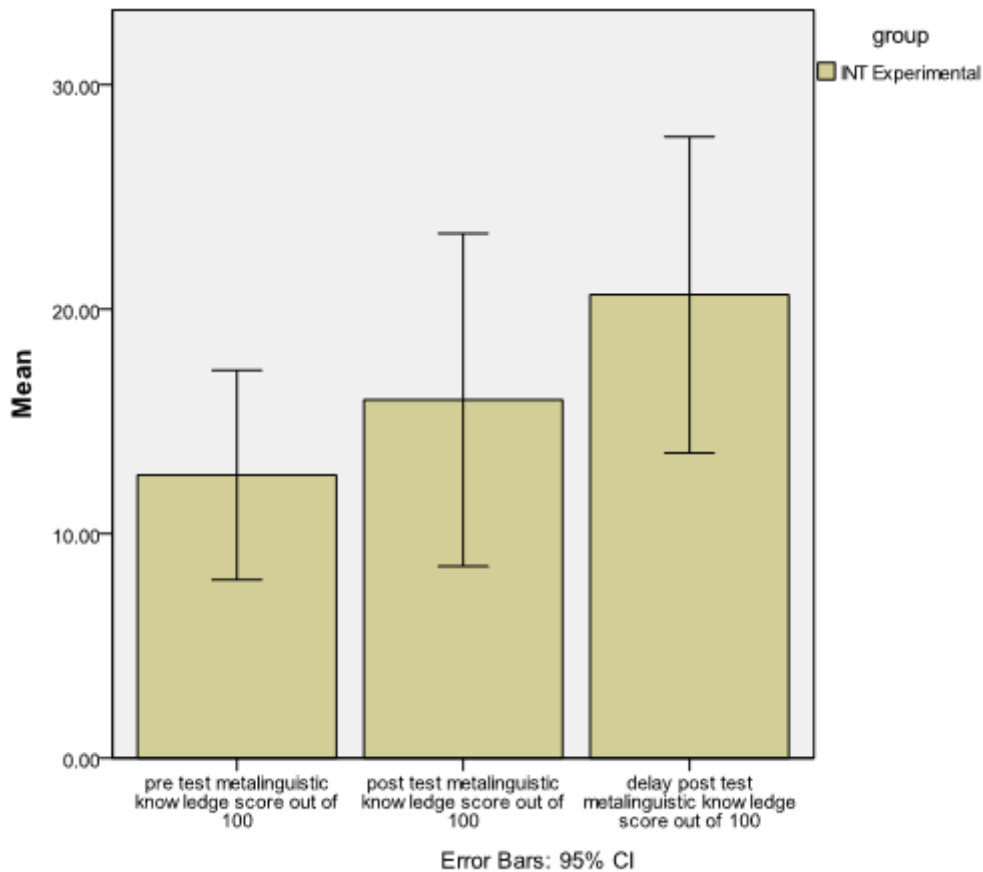
Figure 7.25. INT group's performance in metalinguistic knowledge test at each testing point (pre, post, and delayed post-test) (means ± 95% confidence limits).

Control group's performance in metalinguistic competence test

- There was no statistically significant effect of a test with all three tests compared $F_{2,70}=0.919$, $p=0.404$ (Figure 7.31).

- There was no statistically significant immediate gains, T1 (M=13.11, SD=12.63) compared with T2 (M=16.41, SD=12.93), $F_{1,35}=1.939$, $p=0.173$.

- There were no statistically significant long term gains, T1 compared with T3 (M=15.89, SD=15.77), $F_{1,35}=0.837$, $p=0.367$

- Similarly, the difference between T2 and T3 was not statistically significant $F_{1,35}=0.048$, $p=0.829$.
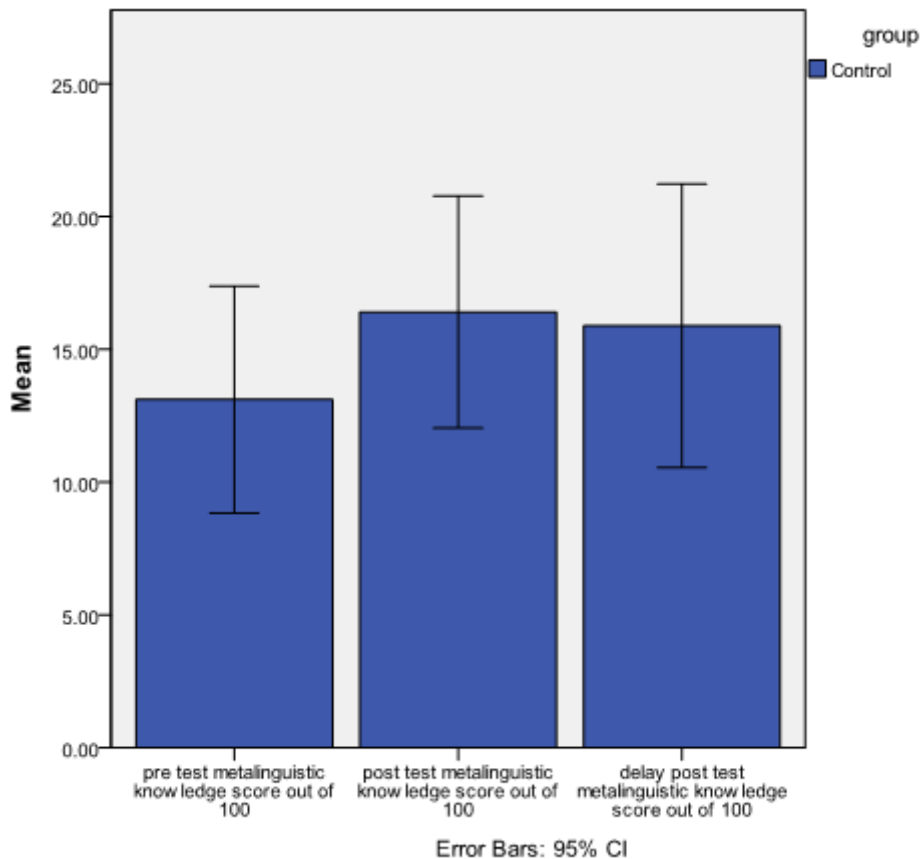
Figure 7.26. CO group's performance in metalinguistic knowledge test at each testing point (pre, post, and delayed post-test) (means ± 95% confidence limits).

The comparison between the experimental groups

The groups were then compared with each other by means of repeated measures GLM (Figure 7.27).

- There was a strong effect of a test $F_{2,176}=8.702$, $p<0.001$,yet it was not dependent on a group $F_{4,176}=1.380$, $p=0.243$.

- Despite statistically significant immediate metalinguistic knowledge gains in the case of ISO as opposed to INT (see 7.4.3.1 and 7.4.3.2), the difference between ISO and INT in terms of immediate metalinguistic knowledge gains (T1 versus T2) was not statistically significant $F_{1,53}=2.173$, $p=0.146$.

- Similarly, in terms of the long term gains, T1 compared with T3, the difference between the two groups was not statistically significant $F_{1,53}=0.209$, $p=0.649$.

- Finally, the groups' difference in T2 and T3 was not statistically significant $F_{1,53}=1.003$, $p=0.321$.
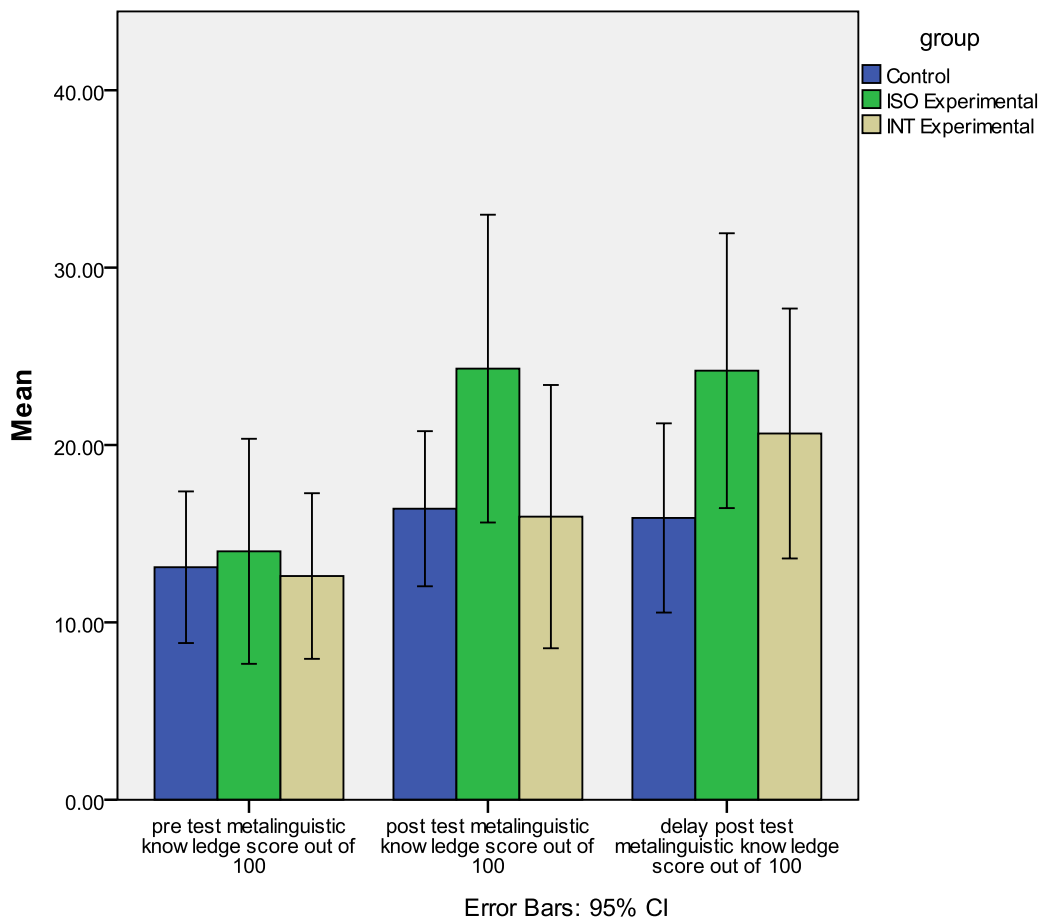
Figure 7.27. ISO, INT, CO groups' performance in metalinguistic knowledge test at each testing point (pre-, post-, and delayed post-test). (means ± 95% confidence limits).

7.4.3.1. Metalinguistic knowledge versus proficiency in the targeted forms

In order to define the effect of subjects' metalinguistic knowledge on gaining grammar proficiency as a result of the intervention, the performance of each experimental group, INT and ISO, in grammar tests was compared to their performance in metalinguistic knowledge tests. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was applied to observe the relationship between these variables, producing the following results:

- In the experimental Isolated FFI group (ISO) there was a statistically significant positive correlation between the participants' performance in the grammatical proficiency post-test (T2) and in the metalinguistic knowledge post-test (T2)

(r=0.610, *p*=0.001 (2-tailed)). The correlation is maintained as highly positive in the delayed post-test (r=0.515, *p*=0.006 two-tailed).

- Similarly, in the experimental Integrated FFI group (INT) in the post-test (T2) there was a significant positive correlation between the participants' performance on grammatical proficiency and metalinguistic knowledge (r=0.458, *p*=0.014 (2-tailed)).Yet, contrary to the results in ISO group, there was no statistically significant correlation between INT participants' performance on the grammatical proficiency delay-test (T3) and on the metalinguistic knowledge delay-test (T3) (r=0.341, *p*=0.076 (2-tailed)).

- Just as a comparison, in the control group (CO) there was no statistically significant correlation between the participants' performance on the grammatical proficiency test and the metalinguistic knowledge test in either post (r=-0.067, *p*=0.700 two-tailed), or delayed post-test (r=0.183, *p*=0.286 two-tailed).

Each of the grammatical test components – form formation and form recognition – was correlated against metalinguistic knowledge test results, again using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation in order to achieve better understanding of the metalinguistic awareness influence on general performance in the three tests, as discovered in the analyses in the points above. The following results were found:

- In terms of ISO T2 results, there was a high statistically significant correlation between participants' metalinguistic tasks mean scores in T2 and form formation mean scores in T2 (r=0.611, *p*=0.001 (2-tailed)), as well as between metalinguistic and form recognition proficiency in T2 (r=0.516, *p*=0.006 (2-tailed)).

- Similarly, also in T3 ISO metalinguistic tasks mean scores correlated significantly and positively with form formation tasks mean scores (r=0.501, *p*=0.008 (2-tailed)), as well as with form recognition tasks mean scores (r=0.444, *p*=0.020 (2-tailed)).

- The mean scores in metalinguistic tasks in the case of INT in T2 correlated statistically significantly and positively with form recognition tasks in T2 (r=0.413, *p*=0.029 (2-tailed)), but did not correlate with form formation tasks in T2 (r=0.352, *p*=0.066 (2-tailed)).

- In the case of INT metalinguistic tasks mean scores in T3, there was no correlation either with form formation tasks mean scores in T3 (r=0.339, *p*=0.078 (2-tailed)), or with form recognition tasks mean scores in T3 (r=0.228, *p*=0.243 (2-tailed)).

Summing up, the analyses of the metalinguistic competence in all three groups demonstrate that it was the Isolated FFI which facilitated this type of knowledge best, with the gains maintained over time. In the case of the Integrated FFI, there was evidence of delayed statistically significant gains, but no immediate gains were evident. The control group did not evidence any gains in metalinguistic competence at all. With the two experimental groups compared with each other, no statistically significant difference was revealed, though.

In terms of any correlation between metalinguistic knowledge and overall gains in the targeted forms, the positive correlation was evident in both Isolated and Integrated FFI groups in the post-test. Yet, in terms of the delayed post-test such positive correlation was detected only in Isolated FFI. When metalinguistic competence test results were correlated separately with form formation and form recognition task results in each FFI and each test, the outcomes showed that, in Isolated FFI, the metalinguistic test results correlated positively with both components in the post-test and the delayed post-test, whereas in the case of Integrated FFI, the positive correlation was only evident in form recognition tasks in the post-test, but there was no correlation in the other component tested, or the delayed post-test.

7.4.4. Other factors' impact on intervention gains

A few other variables were investigated in relation to the participants' performance in the tests. These include students' prior knowledge, age, length of stay in the UK, mother tongue, pre-intervention learning preferences, and satisfaction with the intervention.

Prior knowledge

In order to define the effect of subjects' knowledge of the targeted grammatical forms on gaining grammatical proficiency as a result of the intervention, the performance of each experimental group, INT and ISO, in the pre-test was compared to their performance after the intervention. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was applied to obtain the following results:

- There was no statistically significant correlation between Isolated FFI participants' pre-test score and their immediate gains (r=0.142, n=27, *p*=0.479, two-tailed), and equally there was no statistically significant correlation between Isolated FFI participants' pre-test score and their long-term gains (r=0.117, *p*=0.561, two-tailed).

- There was a negative statistically significant correlation between Integrated FFI participants' pre-test score and their immediate gains (r= - 0.409, n=28, *p*=0.031, two-tailed). Yet, there was no statistically significant correlation between Integrated FFI participants' pre-test score and their long-term gains (r= - 0.152, *p*=0.441, two-tailed).

Age

Repeated measures GLM was adopted to investigate the effect of age in all three groups with test as a within-subjects variable and age as a between-subjects factor, bringing the following results:

- In CO the effect of age was not statistically significant; $F_{6.281, 48.677}$=0.728, *p*=0.635 suggesting that the participants' age had no influence over their tests results (Figure 7.28).
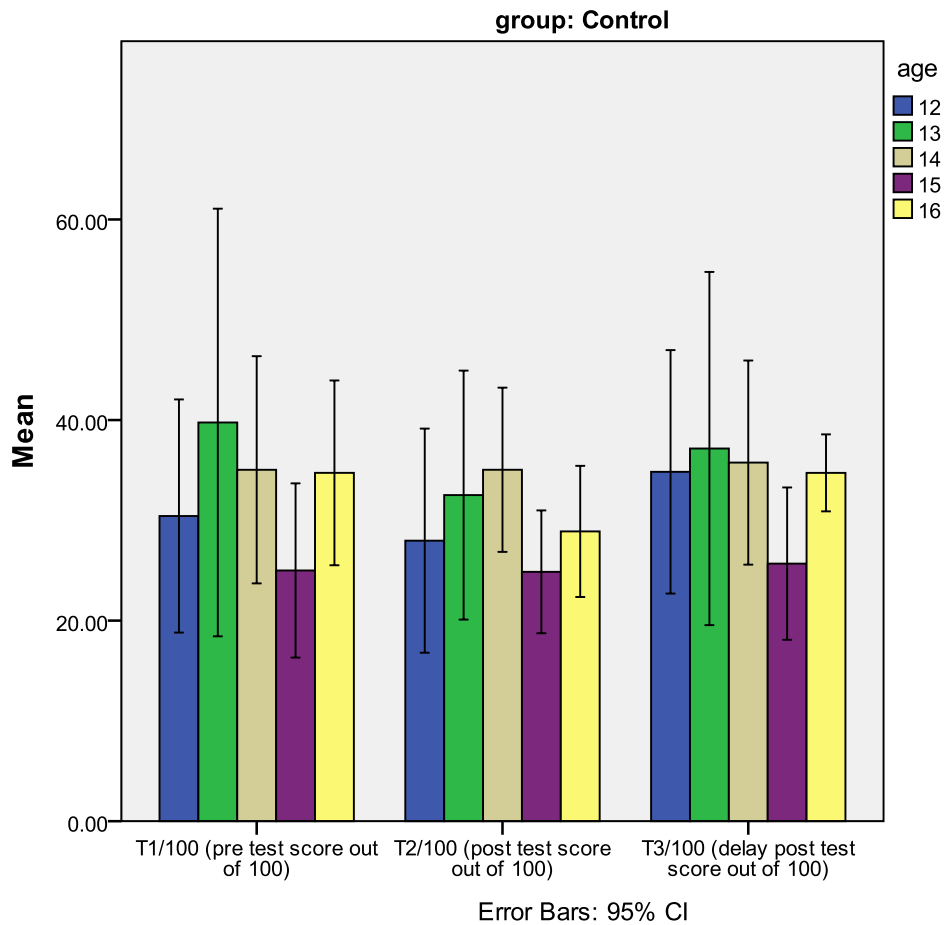
Figure 7.28. CO group's performance in pre-test, post-test and delayed post-test in each age group (means ± 95% confidence limits).

- Similarly in ISO the effect of age was not statistically significant; $F_{6.317, 34.741}=0.745$, $p=0.624$, and also here it can be assumed that participants' intervention gains were not influenced by their age (Figure 7.29).
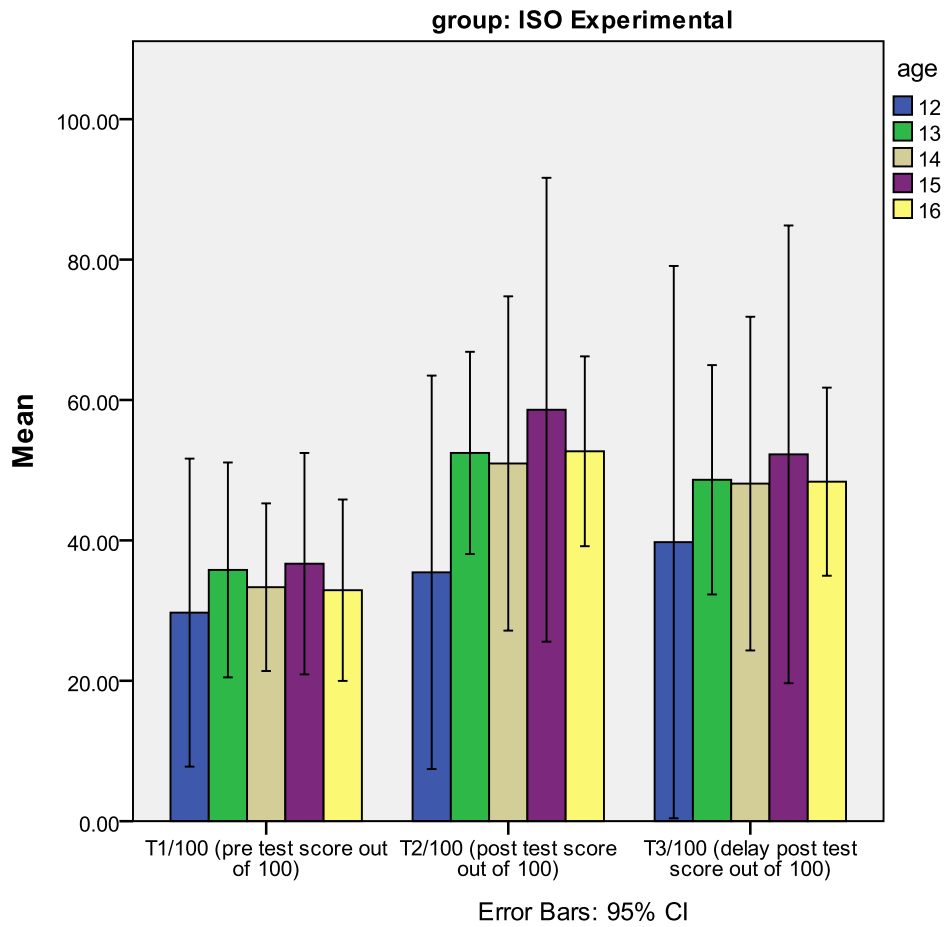
Figure 7.29. ISO group's performance in pre-test, post-test and delayed post-test in each age group (means ± 95% confidence limits).

- In INT however, the effect of age was statistically significant; $F_{8,46}=2.747$, *p*=0.014 suggesting that the age factor influenced the intervention gains (Figure 7.30).
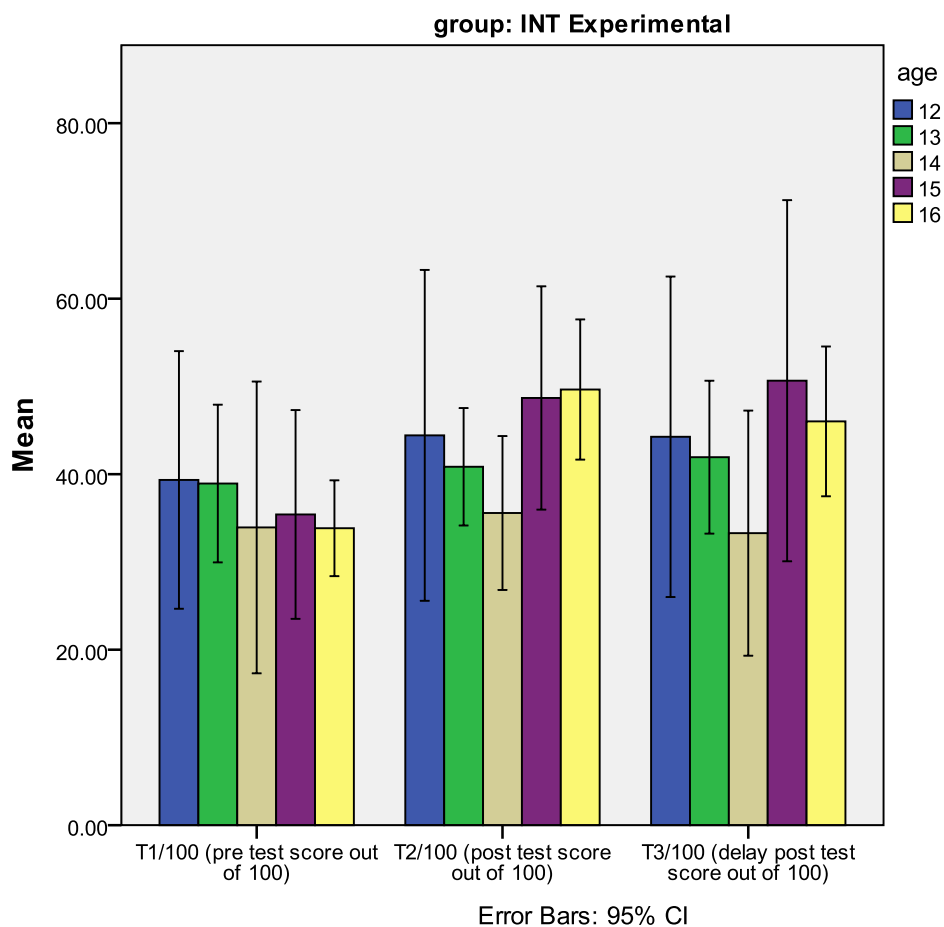
Figure 7.30. INT group's performance in pre-test, post-test and delayed post-test in each age group (means ± 95% confidence limits).

As illustrated in Figure 7.30 above, the age group with the lowest gains was the group of fourteen-year-olds (T1: M=.33.93, SD=13.39, T2: M=35.58, SD=7.06, T3: M=33.28, SD=11.25, n=5). The test was repeated without that age group to determine whether their performance was the factor significantly contributing to the result. Again repeated measures GLM was applied, and also this time there was a statistically significant difference between the remaining age groups' scores $F_{6,38}=2.412$, *p*=0.045, n=23. The next lowest instructional gain group were thirteen-year-old learners (T1: M=38.94, SD=8.56, T2: M=40.85, SD=6.38, T3: M=41.94, SD=8.30, n=6). The repeated measures GLM was once again employed to analyse INT group's gains across all three tests excluding the thirteen- and fourteen-year-old participants in order to estimate their influence on the above findings. This time the effect of age was not statistically significant $F_{4,28}=2.177$, *p*=0.098, n=17.

Further attempts were not undertaken as reducing the number of cases already compromised reliability of the results - each age group variable in INT group meant between five and seven cases.

In order to detect any remaining patterns related to the effect of age, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation test was employed to investigate whether there is any correlation between the participants' age and immediate as well as long-term intervention gains. The following results were obtained:

- There was no statistically significant correlation between age factor and immediate gains (T1 and T2 difference in mean scores) in CO r =-0.023, p=0.893 (2-tailed), and equally there was no significant correlation between the age and long-term gains (T1 and T3 difference in mean scores) r=-0.097, p=0.575 (2-tailed).

- There was no statistically significant correlation between age and immediate gains in ISO r=0.358, p=0.067 (2-tailed), or age and long-term gains r=0.147, p=0.463 (2-tailed).

- In the case of INT, however, there was a statistically significant positive correlation between age and immediate gains r=0.517, p=0.005 (2-tailed), as well as between age and long term gains r=0.410, p=0.030 (2-tailed).

Length of stay in the UK

The information about the length of stay in the UK was sourced from pre-intervention questionnaires, with a few participants withholding this information. Hence, not all cases are represented here (ISO n=24, INT n=23).

- The participants' length of stay in the UK had no effect on the immediate gains after the intervention in either of the experimental groups (ISO: r=0.189, p=0.376 two-tailed; INT: r=-0.095, p=0.666 two-tailed). Similarly, the length of stay did not correlate significantly with the long-term gains (T1 and T3 compared) (ISO n=24: r=0.222, p=0.298 two-tailed; INT n=23: r=0.008, p=0.971 two-tailed).

Interestingly, there is no correlation between length of stay in the UK and pre-test score in the experimental groups either (n=47) (r=-0.046, *p*=0.760 two-tailed) (the control group was not surveyed in the questionnaire that provided the source of this information).

Mother tongue language group

The outcomes of repeated measures GLM suggest there was no effect of the participants' mother tongue language group on overall performance in the three tests in ISO (F14.38=1.577, *p*=0.131), and INT group (F8,46=1.173, *p*=0.335). However, some language families were represented by only a few participants, making it difficult to come to valid conclusions.

Pre-intervention learning preferences versus the intervention type

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was adopted to explore the relationship between the immediate gains after the intervention (the difference between T1 performance and T2 performance) and whether the participants declared they generally learnt grammar by paying attention to rules or not. Here, no significant correlation was found in either of the groups (ISO, n=24, r=0.277, *p*=0.189 two-tailed, INT, n=21, r=0.247, *p*=0.279 two tailed). Also, as could be expected, in relation to the long term gains (the difference between performance in T1 and performance in T3), there was no significant correlation with this student preference variable (ISO, n=24, r=0.154, *p*=0.472 two-tailed; INT, n=21, r=-0.023, *p*=0.921 two-tailed).

The same statistical test was then applied to measure the correlation between immediate intervention gains and whether the participants believed they learnt grammar by using it to communicate. Also here no significant results could be reported in either of the experimental groups whether for long- or short-term gains (ISO: n=23, r=0.189, *p*=0.388, INT: n=21, r=0.060, *p*=0.796 – for short term gains understood as the difference between T1 performance and T2 performance; ISO: n=23, r=0.140, *p*= 0.525 two-tailed; INT: n=21, r=0.268, *p*=0.240 two-tailed – for long term gains, i.e. the difference between T1 and T3).

Students' satisfaction from the intervention

The effect of the students' satisfaction with the intervention on the immediate gains from the intervention was tested using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. The results revealed no correlation between these two variables (T1 versus T2 means scores difference compared to a Likert-scale type of a student satisfaction post-intervention questionnaire) in either of the experimental groups (ISO: r=0.035, p=0.873 two-tailed, n=23; INT: r=-0.011, p=0.959 two-tailed, n=25). Similarly, in terms of the long term gains (T1 versus T3 mean scores), there was no statistically significant correlation detected between the gains and students' satisfaction levels (ISO: r=-0.121, p=0.581 two-tailed, INT: r=-0.063, p=0.764 two-tailed).

As the number of cases for each variable (number ISO and INT students' responses at each Likert-style point in the participants' satisfaction questionnaire) fell far below the 30 recommended for quantitative analysis, it was not possible, without compromising reliability, to estimate the statistical power of influence that those differences could have on the intervention gains. However, the numbers of participant responses in different groups suggest some differences between them. Only 14 out of 23 respondents who received Isolated FFI regarded the lessons as enjoyable (quite enjoyed/enjoyed very much), compared to 19 out of 25 in the case of Integrated FFI. In ISO group, 4 out of 23 did not enjoy the lessons at all or did not enjoy them very much, compared to 2 out of 25 in INT group. The rest of the respondents did not have a specified opinion on their satisfaction. Figure 7.31. illustrates the differences between the groups.
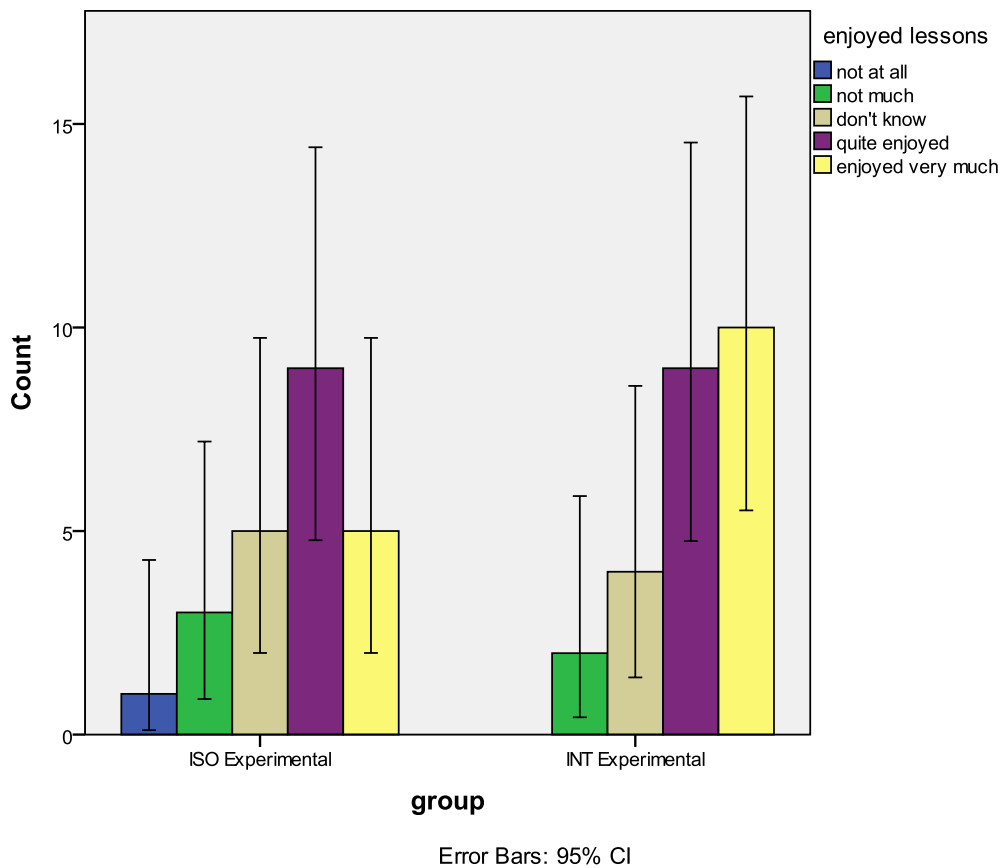
Figure 7.31. INT versus ISO participants' satisfaction with the intervention (means ± 95% confidence limits).

Analysing the influence of the selected variables discussed in this section on the test scores, some interesting patterns emerge, particularly in the case of prior knowledge and age in the Integrated FFI group. The negative correlation between the INT participants' command of targeted forms prior to the intervention and the post-test results showed that the less advanced the students were at the beginning of the intervention, the more progress they made during the Integrated FFI lessons. Also, the older students in this group made more progress than the younger ones.

What is interesting, the learners' length of stay in the country, or their satisfaction from the intervention did not influence their success in mastering of the targeted forms.

7.5. Conclusion

The statistical tests used here revealed some very interesting findings and clarified the role of each type of FFI in terms of the participants' gains and correlation with other variables. The main findings include conclusive evidence for superiority of FFI over no FFI, as the control group's performance failed to demonstrate any significant improvement in terms of learning of the targeted forms, whereas learners in Isolated and Integrated FFI secured significant gains maintained over time, particularly in terms of the form formation skills. The comparison of the two FFI approaches' effectiveness – Isolated and Integrated – revealed that it is the Isolated FFI which provides overall more spectacular results. In particular it facilitates form formation skills better than the other approach.

In terms of the metalinguistic knowledge, and its influence on learning of the forms, there has been some significant positive correlation detected in both experimental groups. In terms of the Isolated FFI, it was evident in both post-tests, whereas in the Integrated FFI, it was significant only in the delayed post-test, and only in the form recognition tasks. Both experimental groups made comparable gains in terms of metalinguistic competence, though.

The evidence discussed in this chapter suggests that the Integrated FFI particularly benefits those learners who are less advanced in comparison to others in their group. However, it seems to disadvantage younger pupils. Yet, the age implications should be interpreted with caution, due to limited number of cases per each year group investigated.

Overall, for statistical significance, the sample size was rather small, yet it was within the minimum size, if it is assumed that the minimal sample size per variable (here – Isolated and Integrated FFI) should approach 30 cases (Borg, *et al*., 1979; Cohen *et al*., 2011). Many of the effect levels in this study were found to be highly significant, making it viable to draw valid, indicative conclusions from the data presented here.

Chapter 8.

The explanatory phase research findings - the themes emerging from the qualitative analysis

8.1. Introduction

This qualitative results chapter attempts to provide some insight into the processes behind the language learning observed in the study. It draws on the post-intervention questionnaires, and interviews, but also on the researcher's observations, field notes and video recordings sourced during the instruction lessons, as well as from three encounters with some of the participants, which happened outside the intervention timeframe but were included here for their meaningful contribution to the analysis and triangulation. The findings obtained from each of these data collection methods are analysed and discussed below and, where applicable, juxtaposed with the findings from the quantitative analysis. Yet, the main purpose of this chapter is *not* to discuss the quantitative data complemented with the qualitative data and comparing the findings– these two types of analysis are synthesised in the next chapter – but rather to identify themes emerging from the qualitative analysis ready for the detailed synthesis, interpretation, and discussion of the results, unfolding in Chapters 9 and 10. The model of reporting the results and analysing patterns adopted in this work follows the explanatory sequential mixed methods design, which is characterised by "first reporting the quantitative, first-phase results and then the qualitative, second phase results. However, this design then employs a third form of interpretation: how the qualitative findings help to explain the quantitative results" (Creswell, 2014:225).

The first section (8.2) establishes some new research questions, which emerged as a result of the initial quantitative analysis (see Chapter 7). Section 8.3 identifies and discusses the main themes emerging from the qualitative findings, and supports them with the primary data. While reporting the data, all the students quoted and discussed in this work are

referred to by pseudonyms. Section 8.4 sheds some light on the process of learning of the targeted forms from the perspective of the students as well as the teacher. Finally, section 8.5 summarises the findings in an attempt to answer the qualitative questions listed in section 8.2, in preparation for the full discussion and implications, which follow in Chapters9 and 10.

8.2. Further questions

The explanatory sequential mixed method design entails that the qualitative analysis phase follows the quantitative analysis phase, in that it offers a plausible explanation for the quantitative results. As discovered in the quantitative analyses, some participants achieved better results in the tests than others, and for some of the learners those gains proved to be more durable than for others. Therefore, the most pertinent questions triggered by the quantitative data involve the investigation into possible reasons why some students were more successful than others, how the techniques used in the lessons contributed to their overall success, and how some of the learners succeeded in further improving their test scores many weeks after the intervention lessons ceased. Also, some of the research questions specified earlier in this work (Chapter 6) found their answers in the qualitative rather than quantitative phase of the data analyses. Table 8.1 below lists both types of these questions, the original ones, which could not find their answer in the quantitative analyses, and the newly emerged ones. Their sources are identified, and the relevant data collection methods assigned.

Emerging qualitative questions		Question source	Data collection tools
Why were some students more successful overall than others?		Triggered by the quantitative analyses finding - The overall intervention gains varied significantly between the two experimental groups but also within them.	Post-intervention questionnaire, observations from video-recordings and fieldnotes
Supporting questions	How important was teacher's feedback in each instruction type?	Sub-questions of the original research question - What is the role of teachers' explicit feedback in the FFI?	Questionnaires, observations from video recordings, and fieldnotes
	How did the tasks used in the lessons contribute to the students' overall success?		Questionnaires
How did some of the learners succeed in increasing their test scores in the delayed post-test?		Triggered by the quantitative analyses finding – in the case of some experimental group students the gains increased further in the delayed post-test despite a lack of instruction.	Interviews, fieldnotes
How do different students respond to explicit grammar instruction?		Sub- questions of the original research question - What is the effect of explicit form-focused instruction on English-as-an-Additional-Language (EAL) secondary-school students' written performance?	Interviews, observations, fieldnotes
Do students view various types of instructional elements differently within each FFI type?			Questionnaires
What are their preferences based on?			Interview, questionnaires, fieldnotes

Table 8.1 Qualitative questions

In order to find the answers to these questions, a number of research tools were employed. Qualitative analyses data were sourced from the fieldnotes and video recordings of the lessons made during the intervention, the post-intervention questionnaire (also used quantitatively, see Chapter 7), interviews, and the researcher's notes gathered during random encounters with the participants some time after the intervention. The findings brought by these tools are presented in the sections below.

8.3. The emerging themes

The richness of the data and triangulation of the results allowed for some common themes to be identified. One such theme is the teacher's feedback, which runs through observation notes as well as the students' questionnaires and interviews. The students' reaction to different tasks, as well as the tasks' observed effectiveness, also provided some valid clues. In addition, the noticing and consciousness raising were strongly represented in the interviews, in the fieldnotes, as well as during the spontaneous encounters with a few of the participants. Connected with these were some other themes which transpired from the analysis – the effects of newly gained metalinguistic knowledge, the students' motivation, and the perceived relevance of the instruction. Assembling the findings from many sources into these identified themes presented below not only allowed for better understanding of the processes behind learning of the targeted forms as presented in Chapter 9, but also facilitated formulation of pedagogical implications arising from the study, as discussed in Chapter 10.

8.3.1. Teacher's feedback

The teacher's feedback was given both orally as well as in writing throughout the ten intervention lessons, and is reported by the participants to have played a major role in the success of the instruction. Both groups were given time in their lessons to act on the written feedback, correct their mistakes, and refine their writing. They usually used this opportunity well and, throughout the duration of the intervention, the improvement in their use of the targeted forms was evident, and was recorded in the questionnaires and fieldnotes below.

A questionnaire entry:

> [I feel my English has improved thanks to these language lessons]
> *because we had to write a story by ourselfs and correct it by ourselfs*-
> Omkar (INT)[7]

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[7]All the citations retain the respondents' original spelling, syntax, and punctuation.

Fieldnote entries:

October. ISO. Nysha wrote a very good piece after having studied my corrections.

09.11.12. lesson 5 ISO. Soran seems to progress well. He corrected some of his mistakes in the sentences himself.

04.12.12. INT3 – The students reflected on my written feedback [on their stories]*. They all worked hard to act on my comments, and refined their work coming up with their final pieces. They had to rewrite them* [stories]*, and we voted for the most interesting and well-written story. I was very pleased with the concentration, hard work and devotion the students applied today!*

In the questionnaires, many students highlighted the importance of knowing the mistakes they were making, and the exact nature of the problem:

I like it when she [the teacher] *gave me feedback so I knew what I did wrong* – Yusuf (ISO)

[teacher's feedback was also helpful] *so than you can see what you are doing wrong and what you have to improve.* – Sofija (ISO)

The students perceived the feedback as the first step to learning, and declared they felt more able to use it in the future to avoid making similar mistakes.

Because if correct our mistake, we will do correct next time – Carla (ISO)

I like the teacher's feedback because then i can now what i need to improve– Nysha (ISO)

I think the teachers feedback how they improve us when we say wrong is good because we can learn from our mistakes– Amalia (INT)

When the teachers comment on your work you know what to work on and to correct your mistakes and then your know not to do it again– Humaila (INT)

For some students, the feedback was not only useful and empowering in the self-correcting phase, but also enjoyable to read and act upon:

> *I enjoyed reading it* [the teacher's feedback] *and correcting mistakes.*– Camilla (ISO)

Especially the members of Isolated FFI valued teacher's feedback as a learning tool. As revealed in the questionnaires, in the Isolated group, teacher's feedback was considered the most useful element of the intervention instruction (see Table 8.2). While rating the elements of the intervention, the students supported their choices in the following way:

> *I found very helpful that the teacher showed and explained my mistake* [and] *when the teacher explained why we use different tenses in different situations* – Viktoria (ISO)

> [teacher's feedback was most helpful] *because so, you know what you done wrong try to correct next time* – Roshan (ISO)

> [I found teacher's feedback to be most useful] *because I can use it more in the future and it will get my grammar better*- Nabid (ISO)

The INT group, on the other hand, ranked the teacher's feedback only third or even fourth on the scale of pertinence to their success in the intervention (see table 8.2). Still, in their comments, many of the respondents highlighted teacher's feedback as a positive influence on their learning, showing a great reliance on the teacher's expertise and guidance as a condition of success:

> *I think teacher's feedback is very useful because you can improve to what the teacher thinks is good for you* – Andrei (INT)

Both in the interviews as well as in the questionnaires, students highlighted the role of teacher's feedback, such as one of the top scorers, Roshan, who attributed his excellent attainment in the intervention to the teacher's instruction and feedback, explaining that it had facilitated retention of various grammatical structures.

The teacher's feedback had a considerable impact on metalinguistic awareness of the participants, helping them discover and explore the areas of the language they were not aware of, as expressed in a sample response below:

> *In case of mistake miss can correct that, or help us in something we don't know. I found useful the explanation about "have", "had", "was", "ed". The meaning is almost the same in my language* [Portuguese]– Jose (ISO) [while referring to different narrative tenses]

The evidence gathered in the process of qualitative analysis, as illustrated here by a few examples of the fieldnotes, and the students' voice taken from the questionnaires and interviews, clearly indicates that the teacher's feedback played a pivotal role during the intervention, and had some profound effects on the students in their learning of the targeted forms. Although the students' voice suggests that feedback had greater impact on the Isolated than the INT FFI group, this is not confirmed by the observations and the fieldnotes. However, as the ISO group made more dramatic progress in the intervention and, at the same time, they attributed their success largely to teacher's feedback, it seems logical to assume there may be a tangible causal link between these two.

8.3.2. The impact of the tasks

It is extremely difficult to pinpoint which activity employed in which group was most effective, as there is a myriad of factors to be taken into account. It must be stressed here that the study is only investigating how the participants and the teacher viewed the effectiveness of the intervention elements (e.g. tasks, or feedback), rather than the actual influence of these instructional elements on the students' progress. When the participants were asked to rank the intervention elements in the questionnaire, their choices often depended on their personal characteristics. A variety of different tasks included in the intervention (e.g. a discussion, acting scenes, watching films, writing, etc.) meant that the participants were more likely to find something appropriate for themselves, and suitable for their individual learning styles. For instant, some students learnt better through acting, and

thus identified it as the most useful technique, others preferred writing and listening tasks (e.g. dictogloss), as per the questionnaire comments below:

> *I liked the writing tasks because it helps me to explain my reason better*– Nabid (ISO)

> [I found matching pictures with sentences useful] *because the pictures gave more help*– Linah (ISO)

> [I liked it] *when we did a mind map of the key thing that happened in the move. I liked do mind map as it helps me to remember.* – Revi (INT)

> *I chose acting out situations for the first one* [most useful] *because it made the meaning more clear. I* [also] *liked when we made posters because they helped to remember when, how and why to use them* [tenses].– Fahemah (ISO)

In addition, during the interviews and lesson observations the participants' reaction to various tasks and lesson elements was evident. One of the interviewed students was Marisa, who was unable to determine the reasons for losing some of her immediate intervention gains, although she acknowledged that it was not unusual for her to forget what she had learnt soon after a test. Marisa's chatty and outwardly carefree personality may be one of the factors behind poor retention, as could be her attitude in lessons. Overall, Marisa admitted that the lessons had helped her, and seemed to be pointing to listening and speaking as the most effective learning channels in the instruction in her opinion. This seems to be something Marisa discovered during the intervention, as in the pre-intervention questionnaire she was not sure of her learning preferences. The fact that she was in the INT FFI group, with grammar taught through communicative tasks, might have positively impacted her post-test results. It needs to be pointed out, however, that there was no overall correlation between the students' preferred way of learning as revealed by the pre-intervention questionnaire, and their test scores (see section 7.4.4). When asked how

exactly the lessons had helped her, she was unable to give a coherent, revealing answer, though.

Despite the individual differences, there were some common patterns identified from the participants' and researcher's accounts, such as feedback, already reported earlier in the chapter. One of the questionnaire tasks asked students to rate the instructional elements according to their usefulness for learning the targeted forms. In the ISO group, the teacher's feedback was considered the most effective element overall, whereas in INT it was not seen as so pertinent to the students' success. Such a divide is understandable, since more intense emphasis was put on grammar in ISO group, and the students might deem teacher's feedback to have been essential to other tasks they had to do in the communicative part of their intervention. Conversely, in the INT, where the focus on form was not so evident, the students might have their own aims set, not related to the grammatical focus. The elements considered most effective by the INT group included discussion, peer correction and writing. Students' choices seem to closely correspond to the nature of Integrated FFI, where particular emphasis is given to conveying meaning and embedding form-focussed instruction in the communicative context. In such lessons, where problem solving or taking part in a debate and writing a narrative for many students might be perceived as the core lesson aims, the learners opted for the tasks that were most likely to help them to achieve these aims, such as the discussion, and writing tasks. In such circumstances, the more decontextualized the task was, the less appealing it seemed to be and, generally, the students preferred the more context-embedded elements. Interestingly, in INT group the third most popular element of the intervention, after discussion and writing activities, was peer correction (peer feedback), rated higher than the teacher's feedback. While justifying their first choices, INT students argued:

> *I found giving discussion on a given topic useful because i can share*
> *my ideas with the whole class* – Sabal (INT)

> [I selected peer correction] *because it helped me the most* [but]*I found all of them useful*[the elements of the intervention].– Sadar (INT)

> *I like the 1ˢᵗ one* [peer correction] *because it helped me the most because we had to correct eachother.* – Omkar (INT)

It is noticeable that the INT students valued the social aspect of the lessons, as the continuity of the communicative context was not interrupted by grammar-only time (as was the case with the Isolated FFI), and so promoted those tasks which better align with the communicative principles, such as the collaboration over written work in a form of peer correction tasks, or taking part in a group discussion. An example of comments on the social aspect of working together as a group comes from the post-intervention questionnaire:

> *I liked the way we all worked together and, done the answers in groups* – Iba (INT)

> [I liked] *group work because you have someone to help you.* – Linah (INT)

In the Isolated group, on the other hand, peer correction was not welcomed as enthusiastically. The students complained about the quality of peer corrections, and were much more willing to rely on teacher's feedback. Table 8.2, and a sample comment from the questionnaires, illustrate this point:

> *I think most of them* [elements of the lessons] *were useful, but I didn't like the peer assesment, because people who mark my work didn't do it propely*. – Camilla (ISO)

It needs to be pointed out, however, that the peer correction had slightly different aims in these two FFI approaches. Whereas in ISO, it always concentrated on accuracy (as per the instructions given to the students), in INT, it concentrated more on the story, the facts (although the INT students frequently commented on grammar, imitating the feedback they were receiving from the teacher –see 8.3.4). This may explain why different weighting was

given to peer correction in these two groups, and speaks volumes about the arbitrary nature of grammatical accuracy in students' perception.

An interesting observation could be made here about how the teacher's role is perceived in the two FFI approaches. It seems that the Isolated FFI lends itself better to a teacher-centred model, whereas Integrated FFI is better suited to a student-centred model of teaching (for further discussion see section 9.3.3.2). However, communication, the common denominator of both FFI approaches, was high on the agenda also in the Isolated FFI, although also here, as evident in the comment below, the utilitarian aspect of a discussion, and teacher-centredness, was detectable.

> [I found useful] *discussion, because we can work out in How we can answer the questions.* – Carla (ISO)

> *When we have discussions on the topic we are on it help to extend answers.* – Farhana (ISO)

> *Discussing on a given topic because then you'll know why something is right or* wrong [referring to teacher's explanation and discussion on grammar]. – Sofija (ISO)

Other elements of the instruction that many students valued included the communicative context provided by the films:

> [I like] *when we watch films that short it could give you ideas*– Nysha(ISO)

> *I like the films we watched, because you had to think about them a lot to explain*– Camilla (ISO)

Another highly effective task identified was matching pictures with sentences from a story in INT or processing instruction in ISO.

In the INT FFI group, the activity on answering questions about the film on an A3 poster was considered the least useful. It may be due to the intervention material having little relevance to the school curriculum that students regarded this task as less important than

others (see also section 8.3.5). In the ISO group, the least useful element was a gap-filling exercise based on a story. The students either found it not very relevant or too difficult:

> [I didn't find useful] *gap filling task, because was difficult.-* Carla (ISO)
>
> *I didn't like gap filling tasks because it didn't really help me and it wasn't useful.* – Nabid (ISO)

Isolated FFI group					Integrated FFI group				
Instruction element	Number of respon-ses[8]	mean	median	mode	Instruction element	Number of respon-ses	mean	median	mode
Discussion	15	3	2	2	Discussion	17	2.9	1	1
Teacher feedback	20	2	1	1	Teacher feedback	20	3.6	3	1
Peer correction	14	4.4	4	3	Peer correction	20	2.8	2	1
Writing task – a summary of a film plot	13	4.8	5	3	Writing task – a summary of a film plot	21	2.8	2	1
Grammar exercises tasks	15	4.2	4	4	Grammar exercises tasks	18	3.9	3	5 and 1
Matching pictures with correct sentences (PPT)	14	3.2	3	3 and 1	Matching pictures with sentences to make a story	18	3.9	3.5	1
Acting out situations	12	4.9	5	8	Story dictation – dictogloss	17	4.2	4	4 and 1
Gap filling	13	5	5	5	Answering questions about a film on an A3 poster	16	4.6	5	1, 6 and 7

Table 8.2 Students' instruction elements evaluation

In the final phase of the data analysis, the students' instructional element ratings in the questionnaires were divided into groups according to the respondents' immediate gains, and their ratings were analysed in the search for any patterns, such as low or high

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[8]Although everyone was requested to provide answers to all the questions, some students left their questionnaires blank, some filled them only partially, and some chose not to return them to the researcher. Although some answers were missing, it was still possible to obtain some very informative data from the responses available.

achievers and their most and least useful instruction elements, but no such patterns were revealed.

8.3.3. Noticing and awareness raising

The theme of noticing and awareness raising runs throughout all the primary sources discussed here. It also overlaps with every other theme identified in this chapter. Although there is clear evidence of students' progress in both experimental groups, ten lessons of instruction may not always be sufficient for the students to master so many targeted forms. Yet, the substantial number of forms presented in such a short period of time contributed positively to awareness raising in the students, who were given an opportunity to observe a number of grammatical forms in a meaningful context, notice how the forms relate to each other, and learn how to use them to shape the meaning. Awareness raising elements were applied in both types of intervention lessons, and facilitated noticing of the forms as well as noticing the gap between the targeted forms and students' interlanguage. There is frequent reference to noticing evident in the interviews, and although the students do not always use the same terminology, they point to the same phenomenon.

The nature of EAL, as distinct to EFL, lends itself very well to noticing, as learners are continuously surrounded by rich input in the target language. It also makes it possible to acquire the language unconsciously, but, as Shideh, one of the participants, remarked, the intervention sped this process up:

> [I would like my subject teachers to teach me grammar] *Because it helps me learn quickly and easily.* – Shideh (INT)

Besides, for some students, immersion would probably never result in acquisition of some forms, as suggested by research in immersion programmes (Swain, 2005), and confirmed by the emerging data obtained here. An example might be 16-year-old Jose (ISO), whose experience in using his mother tongue was more likely to result in negative transfer rather than acquisition. Not being aware of the possibility of having many linguistic forms to

express past events prevented Jose from noticing and learning them from the input he was receiving every day at and after school, as evidenced by the quote already referred to earlier:

> *I found useful the explanation about "have", "had", "was", "ed". The meaning is almost the same in my language* [Portuguese]. – Jose (ISO) [while referring to different narrative tenses]

Long after the intervention, a spontaneous encounter with Jose provided further evidence confirming that the experimental instruction indeed served as a trigger for exploration of the grammatical content of the input in his mainstream lessons. Five months after the intervention, the researcher happened to be in the EAL base of the school participating in the study, and, on seeing her, Jose approached her with the triumphal exclamation that he now understood what the present perfect 'have been/ have done' was used for. He wrote a sentence in the present perfect tense on a board in order to check with the researcher that his understanding was correct. It was correct, and Jose felt extremely proud of his achievement. This encounter suggested that the intervention worked by drawing his attention to the fact that the English language employs various tenses to express the past; something that he was not aware existed in his mother tongue. He needed five months to digest this information, observe the target structures in the input he had access to every day at school and after school, and make the necessary connections between the consciousness-raising stimulus he had received in the intervention, and the language surrounding him every day. It is worth mentioning that, during the intervention, Jose was a very inquisitive student, really eager to understand the language mechanisms, but not very quick at making the connection between the forms and their use. In the questionnaire, he expressed his willingness to receive more support with his English. His immediate gains were moderate, but they were maintained in the delayed post-test, suggesting that he was able to retain what he had learnt in the intervention. This random encounter, five months after the intervention, indicated that the intervention was not a closed entity, but a mere

trigger which enabled the student to advance his proficiency even further, and build on the language instruction he had received.

The awareness raising activities used in the intervention were likely to start a similar process in many other participants, as many of them further improved between the post-test and the delayed post-test. All this evidence suggests that the intervention was sustainable, and, for many participants, it was the beginning of the continuous conscious learning process rather than its solitary occurrence. For instance, while trying to understand his success, Nabid (ISO) in the interview refers to conscious learning by paying attention to teacher's instruction. He could now see the reason for his improved test scores. The student admitted that he was now more able to notice tenses, and that he started using more past tenses following the intervention. Another interviewed ISO student, Yusuf, commenting on his success, says he found the lessons useful and enlightening, as he had never been taught grammar before. The student clearly attributed his success to the lessons in the intervention. He confirmed he did not learn grammar outside the intervention, and the results were entirely due to the instruction and his conscious effort to benefit from it, to listen and pay attention. He referred to noticing and applying new knowledge in the mainstream lessons. Although he did not mention it explicitly, it is likely that those attempts resulted from some teacher or peer feedback he obtained in response to his output, which might have further reinforced noticing and the targeted tenses use. Yusuf mentioned that, following the intervention, he was more conscious during the language production process, which suggests he started applying a conscious grammar filter he had not used before. In addition, he was aware of the 'journey' he had made, and mistakes he used to make. He noticed the progress in his interlanguage; the gap between his language use before and after the intervention.

> *Researcher (R):* […] *that's why I wanted to speak to these people who managed to remember everything, and some of them even did...*
> *Yusuf (Y): ...better.*
> *R: Yeah! How did this happen?*

Y: I don't know!

R : [laughs] You don't know?

Y: [smiling] *No.*

R: OK, but that's a great success...

Y: But it was the lessons, which was useful.

R: OK

Y: Because I didn't know most of the stuff.

R: OK

Y: So it was good.

R: Did you practise at home?

Y: No, not mostly at home, mostly at school trying remember.

R: Ok trying to use it as well?

Y: Yeah in my other lessons. […] *When I'm writing in English, in my exams I'm thinking before – is it this or is it that?*

R: OK. And before that?

Y: No. I just wrote it down. […] *because I actually I know I was like...when I was like ... when I used to write it, I know now I did it wrong, like 'he would of' that's 'would have'*

R: OK

Y: I now notice the difference.

R: [...] *And you think it helped you?*

Y: Yeah.

R: Do you think it was before...because of the lessons or because of something else that you did?

Y: I'd say because of the lessons.

Most other students interviewed reported similar experiences. Commenting on his success, Roshan (ISO) admits to noticing more tenses now, and to using more tenses both in his speech as well as in writing. Likewise, Suraj (ISO) points to exposure to the forms in context while reading, which triggered noticing, and noticing of the application of the forms studied.

Similarly, the INT students referred to noticing as a long-term success factor. Eyan (INT) confesses that before the intervention she was not paying attention to tenses. While reading, she acknowledged the fact that a story happened in the past, but was not paying attention to how different tenses shaped the meaning in the story. After the intervention,

she started noticing the grammatical structures. Eyan identifies reading as one of the triggering factors, and reading stories as a way to remember the tenses and their usage beyond the intervention. She notices that due to the intervention lessons she is now able to notice more grammatical structures while reading books.

> *Eyan (E): So I had to think how to like change it from present tense, and... so when my story like going, talking about present and then going to past like a few years back so... In a way you taught me. That kind of really helped me helped me write the past tense stuff.*
>
> *Researcher (R): OK. So, can you see the difference between what happened before the lessons with me and what happened after?*
>
> *[…]*
>
> *E: Yeah. I read stories that are most in the past. Then I notice how the 'had been' or 'has been' is used.*
>
> *R: Fantastic. Before the intervention, before the lessons, did you notice it?*
>
> *E: No I don't... no I just read the book, so I didn't really like notice about… I knew the story was in the past, but I wasn't paying much attention, but now since you taught me I've been like paying attention to how it's been used and stuff like that in the story.*

Amalia, another INT student, also reports to have benefited from noticing of forms, especially while reading, which she identifies as the most likely factor contributing to her high score in the delayed post-test. It can be concluded that in the case of this student, reading enhanced further exposure, as Amalia argues it made her more aware of the forms, and helped her remember different grammatical rules she learnt in the intervention.

Not all the students realised how much they improved, and some were much more critical of themselves, and the intervention's effect on their learning. Reflecting on the usefulness of the intervention, Humaila (INT) sensed that she had not retained much since the lessons ceased. Yet, she seemed to change her mind when asked about seeing the newly learnt structures in her mainstream subject books. She admitted to noticing and remembering the structures. Yet, many of her reflections were limited to short answers, and thus were not very illuminating. Similarly, Suraj (ISO),in the interview prior to finding out his delayed post-test results, suspected his long-term gains were not impressive, and he was not certain how

much he had retained. In his view, he had forgotten everything. He pointed to the fact that the intervention might not be sufficiently intensive, or long enough for him to benefit fully when he said that he needed "more lessons to remember things better" (Suraj). Nevertheless, almost contradicting himself, Suraj admitted that the intervention had helped him to understand more grammar and aided both his reading and writing. He referred to explicit explanations in the intervention lessons and exposure to the forms in context while reading, which triggered noticing and noticing of the application of the forms studied.

8.3.4. Metalinguistic awareness

The students' feedback, as well as the researcher's field notes, support the quantitative analyses' findings (see Chapter 7), which established that both intervention types to some extent promoted metalinguistic awareness. Yet, there is some evidence of ISO participants using slightly more reference to tenses in their responses to questionnaires and interviews. As they seemed to be more confident describing their language learning experience, they were also more willing to comment on their learning experience in lessons.

Another indication of metalinguistic competence entering students' linguistic repertoire was provided by the peer feedback activity recorded in the researcher's fieldnotes. It illustrates how students attempted to provide some metalinguistic feedback to one another about their written work, and how by doing so they demonstrated their increased awareness of the targeted forms. It seems that the newly discovered metalinguistic terminology and concepts empowered them to express that awareness, as per the observation below:

> *07.12.12. INT2 – In their peer feedback for their story-writing task, the students have very often mentioned grammar as something they liked or disliked about the stories. This may be their reflection on how important accuracy has become to them as their awareness has risen. It suggests that the students are more conscious of grammatical forms as a result of the intervention.*

Interestingly, for some students, this metalinguistic knowledge gained in the intervention seemed to have been retained long beyond the fieldwork timeframe, as indicated by some more peripheral evidence acquired through the researcher's long-term engagement with the fieldwork school, resulting in some more or less unexpected encounters with the intervention participants over the course of a year after the intervention lessons finished. Following the fieldwork study, the researcher was professionally involved in the EAL activities at the fieldwork school, delivering a part of IGCSE-as-a-second-language course to a group of sixth-formers. One of the students in the course was Soran, a Dari speaker, who in the previous academic year had participated in the intervention as a Y11 ISO student. One of the IGCSE lessons' tasks was to study and write a narrative, and the students were discussing how different tenses were used to set the scene and tell a story in a text that they were reading. The learners discussed three pre-highlighted past tenses in the story, and everyone discussed their use in the narrative. The only person who could name and explain the use of the past perfect tense was Soran, and he revealed that he remembered this from his intervention ISO classes. Interestingly, in the intervention, his metalinguistic knowledge, as measured by the three tests, rocketed from 18.75 points (out of 100) in the pre-test to 59.38 in the post-test, and further to 62.5 in the delayed post-test. His performance in the IGCSE lessons suggested that his knowledge of the tenses was not just theoretical, but it also translated into the ability to use them fairly correctly in the unstructured writing task.

8.3.5. Motivation and relevance

An important part of the data presented in this chapter contributes to fostering understanding of what motivated the students to continue with the intervention, what hopes they had, and how relevant they perceived the intervention to be in relation to their own educational goals. Some students reported the feeling of a lack of immediate application to the 'there and then' of their educational setting, which seemed to interfere with their level of commitment in the study. A perfect example would be an INT student, Juliana, who, in the

questionnaire, claimed the intervention had not helped her to improve her English at all, although, in fact, she made some good progress.

> [The intervention] *is not useful I haven't learn nothing in here*–Juliana (INT)

Some students were inclined to judge the instruction's success or formulate their hopes and needs on the basis of their mainstream subject assessment levels, and they could see the link between the intervention and their school performance, as illustrated by the questionnaire quotes, and the fieldnote entry below:

Questionnaire entries:

> *I want it* [EAL support] *in lesson's because I can have more time to learn and get to a level 5c.*– Nysha (ISO)

> *I have a better level than last year*– Farhana (ISO)[9]

A fieldnote entry:

> *23.11.12. ISO 3 – A couple of students were not happy to be there. They wanted to vote with their feet and not to come, but had been sent here by their mainstream teachers. Those were Hakim and Charvi. Some other students tried to explain to them why they were there, e.g. Iba said "It is for your English to get better". Yet, there were students who were working very well, and definitely this time, the group was much more receptive, especially that the most disruptive student had been spoken to by me two lessons before. (...) I have managed to explain some past perfect very briefly while doing gap-filling task in a summary plot of the film about Britney, but some students were reluctant to take it on board, or even to start as they were unhappy to be there. Then, however, after explaining and a short discussion they did the work. Even Roshan put up his hand to read some text. Even Hakim did some work for me, although he didn't want to be there at first. The students who made the most progress in*

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[9]The intervention started in September with the pre-test, and finished in February with the delayed post-test, so she must have referred to her level from before the intervention, in the previous academic year.

> *the lesson were Farhana and Iba. They both were able to justify their*
> *choice of structures.*

Evaluating the intervention in the questionnaire, some participants directly linked the intervention to their success in the mainstream English lessons, e.g.:

> *my grades has improved in my English lesson*– Shideh (INT)

> *because they* [lessons] *made me more confident in my writing*– Humaila (INT)

A rather delayed feedback on the intervention's relevance was provided by Viktoria (ISO), a year after the intervention, during the student's work experience in one of the city companies. The intervention was mentioned during a work experience visit, as Viktoria highlighted its impact on her writing, and remarked on how it had helped her to feel more confident when producing some written work in her mainstream lessons since that time. In the intervention, Viktoria was a very attentive student. She was always quick to act on the feedback she received, and always tried to make full use of it. Viktoria, a Hungarian speaker, was one of the intervention's most improved students. She then lost some of her gains when the intervention finished, but still her long-term gains placed her well above the mean of her group.

Whereas the students' mainstream progress should indeed be a good indication of the instruction's effectiveness, as argued in Chapters 2 and 3 grammatical accuracy is usually not on the mainstream subject teachers' agenda, as it is not listed, or is of limited importance in many mainstream subject level descriptors. Therefore, despite some good progress made by many participants in the study, there was little opportunity to recognise their grammatical attainment in their mainstream lessons, with grammatical accuracy not being very high on their teachers' assessment agenda, as e.g. stated in the interview below with Amalia (INT):

Researcher (R): *In your English lessons, do you, uhm, do your teachers mark your work in terms of grammar?*

Amalia (A): *Well, I'm not sure about it. I don't think so. They basically, uhm, checking more like the stories behind.*

R: *The meaning?*

A: *Yeah.*

In the interview, Amalia presented herself as a rather conscious learner. She highlighted the importance of understanding grammar, and stressed how much she valued the benefits of explicit instruction received in the intervention. She mentioned she preferred conscious grammar learning to the unstructured acquisition that she had experienced at school. Amalia also referred to her written production and stressed that it had benefited from the intervention. She recalled her learning experience before she was invited to take part in the intervention, and highlighted the benefits of the experimental grammar lessons, which had made her a more conscious learner and a more linguistically aware writer. She linked the lessons with her successes in the mainstream subjects and exams. The positive aspects of learning grammar reported by the student must have influenced her motivation and made her more linguistically aware to further notice the forms in the interim period between the post-tests, as suggested by her high delayed post-test score. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, Amalia noticed there was little incentive in the mainstream lessons to pay attention to grammar during language production. From her remarks, it may be concluded that learners, when faced with a similar mainstream teaching system, might find it difficult to secure some extrinsic motivation for grammar learning.

Added to this was the dilemma of exam pressure for some, usually older students, who had to choose between the intervention and their exam revision mainstream lessons. A few of the KS4 students complained about being withdrawn from their mainstream classes, and were concerned with how their absence from those could affect their GCSE grades:

> *I didn't like the fact that I had to be taken out of lessons, and miss on my GCSE work but I still found it quite useful to be in these* [intervention] *lessons.* – Sofija (ISO)

The withdrawal timetable set for the intervention was not an ideal solution either for the researcher (high risk of attrition), or the students, as evidenced in the fieldnote entry below:

> *09.11.12. ISO1 5ᵗʰ lesson. – Today, Camilla wanted to go to Science rather than the grammar lesson, and I gave her a choice. She initially went to Science but soon came back, so she was with us!*

It is easy to imagine that in the participants' eyes this might contribute to a further widening of the gap between the school's priorities and the intervention focus, making the latter marginal or even undesirable, as per the questionnaire feedback below:

> *Don't take us out in our Science lessons because Science is more important than EAL.* – Mehtab, (ISO)

The students' interviews may serve as further evidence supporting this argument, since a few of the students related their perceived intervention gains to be useful only in the English subject, and not in any other mainstream subjects, where grammatical proficiency is not routinely insisted on, or even marked. For example, Iba, although not very reflective in the interview, admits that the intervention was useful, and she now knows a lot about tenses, and perhaps uses more of them than before. She attributes her improvement in grammar solely to the intervention lessons, not being subjected to any other explicit grammar teaching. However, as she evaluates the intervention, Iba, like a few other participants interviewed, is rather reluctant to admit any wider applicability of the gained knowledge, and says that if she notices the forms studied, it happens only in the English subject while reading novels. This again may suggest that students' language awareness is not high on other subject teachers' agenda, which may translate into reduced student attentiveness to linguistic forms.

One student referred to the fact that, in order to attend the intervention classes, he needed to be withdrawn from one regular mainstream lesson each week, which then made it difficult for him to catch up with the rest of his class.

> *I miss some* [mainstream] *lessons all the time and don't know who* [what] *to do in them.* – Darijus (INT)

It seems that he perceived the intervention lessons as an obstacle in making progress, rather than as a facilitating factor. This may be due to a lack of easily identifiable 'academic' content in the communicative context of the Integrated approach programme. Although the topics of the lessons were chosen to suit students of secondary school ages, they were not mainstream subject-oriented, as it was not feasible with the students being of different age groups and option classes. From some students' perspective, it might have been difficult to see an instant value in the INT version of the intervention, as the real objective, and potential gain in grammar proficiency, might have been absorbed in the communicative purpose typical of INT FFI, and thus difficult to identify.

It is rather interesting how differently the students in these two programmes perceived the intervention. The fact that more Integrated than Isolated instruction students reported that they had enjoyed their lessons might be explained by the provision of the immediate communicative context in Integrated FFI setting, as opposed to more abstract teaching due to the context-delayed nature of the Isolated FFI setting. However, form-focussed instruction in Integrated FFI appeared too diluted in the communicative purpose to be perceived as an ultimate goal of the intervention by some of the students. On the other hand, although the participants generally liked the idea of using the short films in their lessons, the context provided by these films was not academically oriented, and for some not challenging enough, which was reported in the questionnaires, e.g.:

> *I think that they* [elements to be ranked] *are average in importance apart for grammar which is quiet important.* [What was not useful was] *too easy work.-* Vitor (INT)

There were also three responses claiming gains in other areas than grammar, especially lexis, indicating that through the contextualised grammar lessons the students enriched their vocabulary, e.g.:

> [I feel my English has improved thanks to these language lessons] *because I know what kind of words to write. –* Usman (INT)
> [I feel my English has improved thanks to these language lessons] *because I can use better words in my sentences.–* Sabal (INT)

Punctuation was also mentioned as a language area improved by the intervention:

> [I feel my English has improved thanks to these language lessons] *because it has helped me to* improve on full stops and capital letters.
> – Fuada (INT)

These students seemed to have achieved, or even set themselves some individual agendas for which they were developmentally ready, and then reflected on these supposedly gained areas of language competence. All the above-mentioned students achieved the intervention gains presumably alongside other gains they mentioned, apart from Fuada, who was one of the weakest in her group. It is interesting to note that, perhaps due to this earlier mentioned *dilution* of the grammar focus in the Integrated FFI, some of the INT students were more open to other areas of language in comparison to ISO learners, who did not report any additional learning aims. The reason for INT students claiming to have achieved other intervention gains, not targeted by the intervention aims, might originate from their personal characteristics, but equally it could be a manifestation of the distinct characteristics of the Integrated FFI itself. Since the communicative purpose was always in focus, and students had to make more effort to pay attention to both the meaning and the form, the students might have been more receptive also to other areas of the language in the input. In other words, the Integrated FFI might have made them more sensitive to various forms in the communicative input, and trained them better to be vigilant to and expectant of various forms in the language surrounding them. Perhaps, in this way the participants were better prepared to effectively harness the richness of the linguistic

input of their mainstream lessons, and to facilitate further noticing and learning of the forms after the intervention finished – the phenomenon which might explain their slight advantage in maintaining and building on the intervention gains observed in the INT group (see Chapter 7).

It needs to be pointed out that, overall, more students in INT than in ISO FFI programme declared they had enjoyed their intervention lessons, yet it was the ISO students who secured better immediate gains (see Chapter 7). As the questionnaire responses were vetted in the quantitative phase of data analysis, it was found that the participants' satisfaction with the intervention did not correlate with their immediate gains (see 7.4.4). Yet, it should be noted that those students whose immediate gains were most spectacular reported to have enjoyed or very much enjoyed the lessons, although the students' satisfaction with the lessons did not always translate into good intervention gains.

Interestingly, in spite of the Integrated FFI being more positively viewed than Isolated FFI, it was the ISO students who were more eager to continue with receiving EAL support. Again, it seems to be the characteristics of the ISO FFI, with its obvious focus, which seems to have influenced the students' responses. When asked whether they would like to have some additional support with their grammar, 9 out of 22 ISO students said they would welcome further lessons on grammar, 9 were not sure about it and 4 were against and a few respondents did not provide any answer. In contrast, in the INT FFI group, 6 out of 25 were interested in the additional support with their grammar, 11 were unsure, and 8 were not interested in such support. There was no apparent pattern that might suggest a relationship between gains in the intervention and the declared need for extra support in grammar in either of these FFI groups.

It seems that, typical of Isolated FFI, more straightforward and intense form-focused instruction was more successful at increasing the participants' awareness of the need for explicit teaching, and its benefits to their language development than the more embedded

Integrated FFI. The ISO participants seemed to be more willing to offer some feedback on their learning experience and share their opinion on the intervention experience in the questionnaires. They were more likely to write comments and, when they did, they seemed to be more insightful too. This may be the result of the awareness raising, or a side effect of more intensive metalinguistic input making students more conscious of the matter of the intervention. It seems that ISO students had better understanding of the purpose of the intervention, and therefore they felt in a position to formulate their judgements on how this purpose related to what they were trying to achieve:

> *because grammar is the main point to write or speak a language.–* Soran (ISO)

> *because I want to improve my level. –*Nysha (ISO)

> *I think grammar would be useful because grammar is very important and would need to use vocabulary and it will help my GCSE. –* Nabid (ISO)

> *I would want a teacher to help me with reading and writeing.–* Niyan (ISO)

As for the form of these additional grammar lessons, the students in both groups had mixed views. Seven of the ISO FFI participants suggested that they would welcome some extra support with their English in their mainstream lessons:

> *I think it could be useful to do some more English writing but in school in lesson.–* Camilla (ISO)

> *I think we can have EAL teacher helping us in a normal lesson.–* Carla (ISO)

Two students chose withdrawal lessons, including one-to-one. One student expressed her willingness to work after school with EAL teachers, and two preferred to work with an EAL teacher at break time:

> *I think it would be quite useful for students like me if they use their own time either after school or at breaks to improve their English by coming to grammar or EAL lessons if they are provided for them.–* Sofija (ISO)

In the Integrated FFI, when asked what form of support the students would welcome, four respondents saw EAL teachers as the most appropriate to support with English:

> *EAL teachers should help EAL students.*– Eyan (INT)

> *I think EAL teacher supports will be fine @ break times or whenever.*– Amalia (INT)

Three students suggested after school sessions:

> *I think it would be going to after school lessons, because it will help allot. I also think having lots of support from teachers.* – Humaila (INT)

> *I think it would be better after school for English language.* – Yamuna (INT)

Two students recommended break time sessions, and four indicated that teaching English language, including grammar, should be done by a mainstream teacher:

> *people should get help with gramma during lessons.* – Rupa (INT)

8.4. The perceived effectiveness of the intervention

According to the questionnaires, 16 out of 28 students in the Integrated FFI responded that they felt their English had improved due to the intervention. They mentioned they had gained new areas of knowledge of the English language and its application, as illustrated by the quotes:

> *before i never knew where to use Grammar but now i do* – Sefu (INT)

> [I feel my English has improved thanks to these language lessons] *because I have learnt loads of things.*– Sadar (INT)

> [the intervention] *taught me things I never knew* – Eyan (INT)

> *I can properly include past or present tense in my sentence*– Andrei (INT)

> [I feel my English has improved thanks to these language lessons] *because now I know how to use the past tenses the correct way.*– Amalia (INT)

The remainder of the INT students, 12 out of 28, were unsure whether their English benefitted from the intervention. Some of these students chose not to comment, but there were a couple unable to notice any immediate effects on their language proficiency. Two students pointed to the poor quality of the intervention lessons as the reason for them not improving their English. They argued that:

> *the lessons were not that helpful* – Sadia (INT)

> *the lesson's are not very helpful and moch to enjoy* – Hibbah (INT)

The students' critical opinions quoted above did not find their reflection in their immediate gains, as all of them improved on their pre-test scores. In addition, each of them, except for one, maintained some of those gains in the longer term, as found in the delayed post-test.

In the ISO FFI group, 11 out of 27 participants felt that their English had improved because of the intervention, fewer than in the INT FFI group. Their responses included such statements:

> *I have learnt different tenses and when and how to use them.* – Fahemah (ISO)

> *I can use the tenses easily.* – Li (ISO)

> [I feel my English has improved] *because of the lesson what we learn and we learned past tense.* – Nysha (ISO)

Some students pointed to a particular skill or ability gained:

> *I find it easier to write in English, also I make less mistakes.* – Viktoria (ISO),

> *now I don't use them* [different tenses] *only when I am speaking but when I am writing as well* – Sofija (ISO)

> *I can now tell when I am writing stuff wrong.* – Yusuf (ISO)

There were also responses which indicated that the improvement was due to quantity, not only the quality of the lessons:

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> [I feel my English has improved] *because we have extra english lesson than others*– Roshan (ISO)

> *because of lessons of EAL I have improve my English.*– Wazir (ISO)

Three ISO FFI group learners declared they did not feel they had made any progress due to the lessons due to lack of motivation:

> *I already knew most of these stuff*– Linah (ISO)

> *I don't like it so i didn't learn*– Hakim A. (ISO)

One student did not comment on her response. Yet, all three of them improved on their pre-test scores, and hence proved to have made some good progress during the intervention.

The rest of the respondents from ISO group (10 out of 27) declared themselves unsure as to whether they had gained anything from the lessons. Some of their arguments were similar to the INT group's:

> [I don't feel my English has improved thanks to these language lessons] *because I'm good at my english better than my own language.*– Nabid (ISO)

They also pointed to the lessons not being effective enough in their opinion:

> *we always do the same project and everyone's very loud so it does not give you a chance.* – Iba (ISO)

> *I haven't felt an improvement this should have helped but hasn't.* – Charvi (ISO)

Some expressed the need to have their progress quantified by an assessment:

> *I didn't do a test yet so I don't know.*– Haaris (ISO)

Nine of these ten doubtful students need not have worried about their gains as they improved their scores in the post-test.

Despite the scepticism of a few students, the fieldnotes confirm that the learning process was evident. There were students who overused targeted tenses just after the structures had been introduced to them. In the case of some participants, it might mean they started to

add the new grammatical forms into their linguistic repertoire, and they merely needed more time and practice to internalise the structures and/or systematise them in their interlanguage.

A fieldnote entry:

> *22.10.12. ISO3 – From Farhana's writing I can see she started to overuse the Past Perfect tense putting it almost in every sentence of her written response. It suggests she is absorbing what she is taught, although it needs time to be digested.*

Yet, for other, the less advanced students, such overuse might indicate more confusion at the time, and inability to process the new language items with their existing linguistic competence, as the researcher recorded below:

> *16.11.12. ISO – While marking Carla's writing, I noticed that she overused the Past Perfect tense. This may suggest some positive changes in her interlanguage. However, the uncertainty of her choices in the first part of the lesson, as well as her basic mistakes when she was writing the extension task at the end of the lesson (the present perfect tense used instead of the past simple when writing about her past experiences), suggests that she might not be developmentally ready for the Past Perfect or 3rd conditional.*

Carla's immediate intervention gains were rather modest, but still she kept them, and even improved her score slightly in the delayed post-test. This may suggest that she was able to build on what she had learnt, despite the fact that her pre-test placed her among the less proficient students, as she scored a little below the average for her group.

Some signs indicating that the intervention was working were recorded in the fieldnotes, as both the researcher and some students noticed some good progress, which is illustrated in the string of fieldnote entries below in chronological order.

> *18.10.2012 (lesson 3) ISO – Niyan and Camilla seem to have a lot of mistakes in their gap filling sentences. Especially Camilla corrected her writing on many occasions as we were reading the sentences*

aloud. Agnieszka was the one to explain the usage of each tense most willingly

19.10.12. lesson 3 ISO2. Fahemah has done all the tasks correctly and when asked why she had so many mistakes in the pre-test she's said she didn't know some of the tenses and when to use them, e.g. past continuous, but now she knows.

23.10.12 INT1 Eyan used the Past Perfect correctly in writing about the film. I'm delighted, as she was not very good at grammar when we started. Amalia used it incorrectly, but still tried hard.

16.11.12. ISO2. (...) As for the first part of the lesson when they had to choose the correct sentences (3ʳᵈ conditional) [processing instruction task] *they made some mistakes. In the final slide* [of the PowerPoint presentation]*, however, each of them was correct, which suggests that my explanations worked.*

28.11.12. INT3. - The students used the targeted structures in most of their writing (a story behind the picture). I am really pleased with their efforts, although sometimes they used the past perfect in wrong places or didn't use the past continuous at all. Yet, I did want them to concentrate primarily on the meaning rather than form, in line with the INT characteristics

Lesson 9 ISO – Camilla – good progress. She is much more relaxed now and perhaps even ready to progress on to other things, maybe a little bored, or perhaps a little anxious that she is missing Science (her exam is next month), as she previously said so. Mehtab and Niyanhave said today they would prefer not to miss Science either. Niyanhas expressed her opinion on Camilla's performance today saying that Camilla's grammar is so good she need not be here [in the intervention lessons]*. The group agreed with her opinion.*

12.12.12. Lesson 10. ISO – Today, Viktoria has told me she thinks her grammar has improved, and it is evident in her writing.

8.5. The qualitative questions answered

The emerging themes and patterns observed in the process of qualitative analysis contribute to gaining understanding of what processes might have taken place during and after the intervention, and why. It seems that the data discussed above provided some plausible answers to the qualitative research questions posed in section 8.2, restated in the bullet points below. The tentative answers provided here are further developed in the discussion chapter, which follows next (Chapter 9).

- Why were some students more successful overall than others?

The answer to this question seems to be emerging from the interviews, although it is not overly indicative, since only a small representation of the students were consulted. However, based on the evidence from qualitative analyses it seems that the most successful individuals were those who:

  - being attentive in the FFI lessons, became highly conscious of the targeted grammatical forms,

  - tried to apply the newly learnt forms in their mainstream subjects,

  - continued to notice the targeted forms, also via taking conscious actions – e.g. reading.

It appears that Isolated FFI approach lends itself better to facilitating some of these conditions, as it promotes undivided attention to grammar, while still providing a strong reference to the context and communicative purpose. This seems to be supported by the post-test results, which indicate Isolated FFI's supremacy in terms of the overall intervention gains.

- How did some of the learners succeed in increasing their test scores in the delayed post-test?

Noticing and awareness raising emerged as the main factors which accounted for the increased delayed post-tests results according to the most successful interviewed students.

It seems that these learners were more ready to harness their mainstream setting to further notice and apply the forms made explicit to them via the intervention. It may seem that although this explicitness seems to have been better facilitated by Isolated FFI, the ability to juggle the form and the context it appears within might be promoted more successfully by the Integrated FFI, as more INT members somehow made spectacular gains in the interim period between the post-test and the delayed post-test (for more discussion see 9.3.1.1in the discussion chapter).Integrated FFI approach's versatility and the presumed ability to train students in being attentive to linguistic forms while in CLT context is also illustrated by the INT students claiming to have made other language gains than just those connected with the targeted forms (see 8.3.5).

Regardless of the FFI approach, the mainstream curriculum and English-speaking community in which the participants were immersed provided a rich linguistic environment outside of the FFI classroom, ensuring plenty of context for the use of the targeted forms. It seems that this continuous exposure was not without significance for maintaining and further increasing the learning gains of those who were prepared to take this opportunity.

- How do different students respond to explicit grammar instruction?

The student voice revealed that many participants perceived explicit grammar instruction as an important element of their intervention lessons, and appreciated its significance, sometimes unexpectedly even to them, seeing it as a missing element of their educational diet. Nevertheless, it seems that, overall, the participants' approach to grammar instruction was shaped by the FFI type they had been allocated to in the intervention, with Isolated FFI making grammar more pertinent than Integrated. Another crucial factor indicated by the students' voice as affecting their attitudes to grammar instruction was their mainstream educational setting, which does not routinely promote grammatical accuracy (Destino, 1996; Gravelle, 2003; Harklau, 1994), and, hence, tends to undermine its value.

- How did the tasks used in the lessons contribute to the students' overall success?

The answer to this question was again sourced mainly from the students' voice. It seems that the real strength of the intervention lay in the variety of tasks it offered to its participants in both of the groups, as many could find a suitable task for their learning styles. The choice of films as the communicative background was mentioned by some students as useful in generating the communicative context and providing ideas for a discussion on use of the targeted forms. The teacher's comments highlighted the processing instruction tasks as bringing particularly good results in the ISO lessons.

- How important was teacher's feedback in each instruction type?

The student voice and the observations confirm the pivotal role that the teacher's feedback played in the students' success in both Isolated as well as Integrated FFI. Teacher's feedback was viewed as central to the students' learning by more ISO than INT participants, and it seems that the learners' perception of their intervention programme objectives strongly influenced how teacher's feedback and its role in their learning process were perceived. In the Isolated FFI, where grammatical accuracy was more in focus, corrective feedback was valued much more than in the Integrated FFI group, where communicative aims came to the fore.

- Do students view various instructional elements differently within each FFI type? What are their preferences based on?

The students' satisfaction questionnaire and rating of the elements of the intervention indicate that students' perception of the role of the intervention and the techniques used differed between the participants, and this was influenced by a number of factors. Some differences were determined by the learners' personal characteristics such as age, linguistic background, perceived needs, motivation, and learning styles. Nevertheless, some strong common patterns could be identified. There is a noticeable difference between the Isolated

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and INT FFI groups' perception of the importance of various techniques used. The Integrated FFI, on the whole, seemed to favour those techniques and elements of the instruction which allowed learners themselves to be in the focus of the changes, letting them co-construct their learning process. Such elements of instruction included discussions, and peer-feedback, ranked the most useful by the INT FFI group. The ISO FFI students, on the other hand, seemed to appreciate the role of a teacher as an agent of change, which is manifested by the teacher's feedback being granted the highest status in this group's ranking of the intervention elements.

It seems that the factor steering the ISO participants towards a more traditional, teacher-centred model of learning, and INT participants towards a more learner-centred model must depend on the very nature of the Integrated and Isolated approaches, and differences between them. This observed discrepancy in the groups' evaluation of the intervention elements seems to be largely independent of the influence of the teaching style or group dynamics since the same person taught all the participants, and the participants were divided into groups regardless of their learning styles. It is likely, therefore, that the factor influencing the participants' perceptions of the intervention techniques was connected with the perceived focus of the FFI approach they participated in (see the answer to the previous question above).

8.6. Conclusion

Through the students' voice and the teacher's observations from the fieldwork, there emerged some tentative answers to the further questions posed at the beginning of this chapter. These answers, although quite subjective, are already much strengthened by the triangulation of various data sources, built on the solid foundation of the quantitative results. Together, the findings supply some strong arguments to support the main hypothesis and provide a ground for discussion, which follows in the next chapter.

Chapter 9.

Discussion: The role of explicit FFI in its two approaches, Isolated and Integrated – the research questions answered

9.1. Introduction

The two previous chapters, Chapter 7 on quantitative analysis and Chapter 8 on the qualitative analysis, outlined the main findings of the study. This chapter, in line with the explanatory sequential mixed method design, draws on these findings and offers a discussion which "specifies how the qualitative results help to expand or explain the quantitative results" (Creswell, 2014:225). It develops the arguments introduced in the results chapters, and combines the qualitative findings with the quantitative data for the purpose of the discussion, juxtaposing these compiled results with other relevant research, and positioning the current study within the form-focused instruction-oriented research literature.

This chapter is divided into three sections. Section 9.2 summarises the most prominent discoveries of the current study, providing a concise overview of the most important findings, which then are discussed in section 9.3. The discussion is organised by the research questions already introduced in the methodology chapter, which serve as the common denominator of all the chapters, and the core element of this study. Within each research question-driven section, the findings are discussed in order of prominence and accordance with the themes identified both in the qualitative and quantitative data analyses, as listed in figure 9.1 below:

Quantitative data themes   Qualitative data themes

production vs reception tasks' results / metalinguistic awareness   students' motivation
the effect of type of instruction   sustainability of gains   perceived relevance
the effect of students' profiles   teacher's feedback   of the instruction
(e.g. age, background etc)   student satisfaction
                                         and learning
                                         preferences

Figure 9.1: Themes emerging from quantitative and qualitative data analyses.

The chapter culminates in a review of the overarching research hypothesis (section 9.4), which is examined and tested in the light of the discussion and all the evidence obtained from the study analyses.

9.2. Summary of the results

The main purpose of the study was to establish whether – and, if so, to what extent – the two approaches to form-focused instruction (FFI), Isolated and Integrated, benefit the EAL students in a mainstream state secondary school in England. The core findings are intended to determine which of these approaches provide the students with better results in written use of the selected forms applied to express past events. The operationalisation of these two approaches was based on the principles specified by Spada and Lightbown in their article, 'Form-focused Instruction: Isolated or Integrated?' (2008). The main hypothesis of the present study is: Isolated form-focused instruction affects the written performance of EAL secondary-school students differently to Integrated form-focused instruction. This hypothesis is underpinned by an assumption that FFI has potential to facilitate language learning (Spada, *et al.*, 2014). The results of the study support this argument, demonstrating that explicit language instruction facilitates language learning. After ten

hours of FFI, the participants in the instruction groups outperformed those who did not receive FFI instruction, and this trend was maintained in the long-term intervention gains. The qualitative data suggests that this success can be assigned to consciousness raising and noticing as the facilitators of maintaining the gains, and to some extent to teacher's feedback and metalinguistic input. It is important to note that the advantages of FFI occurred regardless of the FFI type, while there was no significant progress in the control group (see section 9.3.1).

However, the main aim of the study remains a comparison between the Isolated and Integrated FFI approaches, and the study analyses provide evidence of differences in the level of effectiveness of each FFI. In this educational context, it was Isolated FFI that, overall, produced more successful outcomes, both in terms of the immediate intervention gains as well as the long-term gains. There are, however, differences in the groups regarding the ability to use the forms. In the ISO FFI group, intervention gains were significantly higher than in the INT FFI group only in form formation tasks (production), where participants had to provide the correct form themselves rather than select the most suitable form to a given context from the options already provided – form recognition tasks (reception and comprehension). In the case of the latter skill, the difference between the experimental groups' gains was not statistically significant. Still, the production task gains secured by the ISO FFI group proved, overwhelmingly, to be so far in advance of the INT FFI group's gains that, even when combined together with the form recognition tasks for overall progress analysis, the test results clearly showed that the group receiving Isolated FFI performed significantly better than the group receiving Integrated FFI. The ISO FFI students attributed their success to the teacher's feedback more commonly than the INT FFI group.

Both groups significantly improved their initial scores in form formation (FF) and form recognition (FR) tasks as a result of the intervention, but, in both groups, the immediate gains were more significant in FF than in FR. Yet, the students' initial FR proficiency was

significantly higher than their initial FF proficiency, as indicated by the pre-test results. This difference could originate from the very nature of the setting the students were immersed in, namely, the mainstream education classroom, which creates ample opportunities to recognise and assign a meaning to a form. Such exercises are performed regularly by EAL students in their mainstream subject lessons, where they learn to 'survive' by noticing how linguistic forms shape the meaning while guessing the meaning from its context.

9.3. The research questions answered

This section revisits the four research questions accompanied by the sub-questions, all of which have been raised to operationalise the study's main hypothesis. The questions, first introduced in Chapter 1, and then discussed in more detail in Chapter 6, find their answers in the discussion below. Within each of these questions, the corresponding themes, identified in Chapter 8 and outlined in figure 9.1, are examined in relation to the quantitative and qualitative evidence, and the relevant research literature. For greater clarity and focus, the questions are restated below:

Question 1: What is the effect of explicit form-focused instruction on English-as-an-Additional-Language (EAL) secondary school students' written performance?

Sub-questions: 1. How does the performance of the experimental groups compare with the performance of the control group? **2.** How do students respond to explicit grammar instruction? **3.** What are students' attitudes towards explicit grammar instruction?

Question 2: How does the effectiveness of Isolated versus Integrated form-focused instruction compare in the English secondary school setting?

Sub-questions: 1. What are the differences between the two experimental groups in terms of the level of mastery of the targeted forms? **2.** What factors influence the discrepancy?

Question 3: What is the role of metalinguistic input and teacher's explicit feedback in each FFI approach?

Sub-questions: 1. To what extent does metalinguistic awareness influence the students' success and how does it compare across the groups? **2.** How do students receiving each FFI perceive teachers' explicit feedback?

Question 4: How can teaching of the language use, language structure, and subject content be combined to serve the purpose of improving grammatical competence in EAL students' writing in the context of a mainstream secondary school?

Sub-questions: 1. What is the educational value afforded by application of the two FFI types in the mainstream school? **2.** What would be the most effective way to combine explicit language teaching with content teaching?

9.3.1. The effect of explicit form-focused instruction (FFI) on English-as-an-Additional Language (EAL) secondary-school students' written performance

The research question addressed in this section deals with the explicit form-focused instruction as the teaching method applied in both of the intervention groups, and refers to the findings reported in section 7.4.2, Chapter 8, and the corresponding literature. The instructional and the control groups' tests results are compared and contrasted, and an exploration of the students' experience follows.

9.3.1.1. The experimental groups' versus the control group's performance

The quantitative analyses of the study's participants' test results revealed that regardless of the type of the intervention – Isolated or Integrated FFI– the two groups who had received form-focused instruction made significant progress in learning of the grammatical forms in focus, whereas the control group, who had had no access to FFI during the experiment, failed to make any real progress in the acquisition of the targeted forms. The only statistically significant difference in the control group's scores was evident in relation to their immediate post-test, where the group experienced a significant drop in scores in the form formation (FF) tasks (production), compared to their pre-test and delayed post-test results.

Such a decrease could be attributed to a lack of motivation and incentive to invest effort in taking a test where no instruction had been offered. On the other hand, the control group's pre-test and the delayed post-test results remained the same. Here, the motivation to put the maximum effort could have been much stronger – the control group students might have felt much more in a position to compete with the other two groups at the time of the delayed post-test, as none of the groups had received any FFI teaching since their previous test. Similarly, at the time of the pre-test all the participants had potentially equal chances to score well. The comparison between the control group's form formation and form recognition tasks scores seems to support this line of argument. The control group maintained comparable results in all three tests in form recognition tasks, which, unlike the form formation tasks, by nature tend to require less attention (Schmidt, 2001). They are less time consuming and require less effort than the production tasks. Although the fluctuation between the test scores in the control group's performance is evident, the observed change does not reflect any real linguistic gains in this group.

The significant success of the FFI intervention groups compared to the control group confirms similar findings reported in the literature. Although there is still no absolute unanimity among researchers on the benefits of explicit language instruction in forms, the current study adds to the abundance of research suggesting that explicit FFI in communicative context plays a major role in second language learning (e.g. Spada, 1997; Norris and Ortega, 2000). Still, there is an opinion that because a great deal of development of learners' interlanguage is a result of acquisition and, according to Long's Interactional Hypothesis, is facilitated by negotiation of meaning, the extent to which explicit FFI could be useful is often seen as limited (Frantzen, 1995; Whong, 2011). Nevertheless, as was evident in the case of all three tests in the control group, as well as in the pre-test of all three groups, the pure exposure to language and negotiation of meaning, which the participants experienced routinely in their mainstream classes, were not enough to draw their attention to certain linguistic forms. This finding supports similar evidence from

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research done in immersion and content-oriented classrooms, where students failed to notice certain forms in input, and thus their interlanguage was not able to reach certain levels of accuracy (Swain, 1988; Harley, 1993; Lightbown, 2002).

Noticing, argued to be one of the conditions of language acquisition (Schmidt, 1990), is strongly represented in the interviews with the participants of both experimental groups. The fact that the experimental groups improved their targeted form proficiency due to the intervention diet rich in consciousness raising activities suggests that noticing of the targeted forms was one of the conditions of the success. Cited in Chapter 4, Fotos (1993) speculated about learning being a consequence of students' having noticed a targeted form enough times, versus the noticing of a target form occurring because the target form has already developed in the students' explicit knowledge, e.g. by means of instruction. In other words the question was whether the form is not learnt unless it is noticed or it is not noticed unless it is learnt. The present study seems to provide a viable solution for this causality dilemma. From the data gathered in the study it appears that these two concepts do not need to be exclusive, but rather could be combined together in the form of a learning cycle. The evidence produced by the promising post-test and delayed post-test results (compared with no progress in the control group), as well as the interviews and random encounters with the participants, who described how they started noticing the targeted forms beyond the experimental lessons, all support this argument. Such a conclusion would be consistent with Lightbown's (1992) findings in her empirical study on instruction in question forms, where learners secured and further improved their proficiency as a result of continued, post-intervention, exposure to communicative input inclusive of the targeted forms. Also, in the present study, it seems that when the consciousness raising activities prompted students in the experimental groups to notice the targeted forms, they were able to successfully learn these forms. This, in turn, allowed them to start noticing the forms in the subsequent input both during the intervention's communicative tasks, as well as in the mainstream lessons after the intervention ceased. This, then, might have helped them to

internalise the newly learnt forms. As Ellis (2005a) argues, the noticing of a targeted form which already developed in the learner's explicit knowledge facilitates the process of transferring that knowledge of the form into the long-term memory. The promising results of the delayed post-test, which did not indicate significant loss of the gained proficiency, suggest that such transfer occurred, and the internalisation of the targeted forms might be then the next step. Such a possibility is suggested by Fotos (1993) in discussing the research findings of Ellis (1990), Schmidt (1990), and Lightbown (1991):

> Noticing has thus been suggested to perform an interfacing function between the development of explicit knowledge of a feature through formal instruction and the eventual acquisition of that feature – the development of implicit knowledge.
> (Fotos, 1993:387)

Although this seems a rather bold presumption, as the discussion over the interface position remains heated, there is much evidence for noticing playing an important role in securing sustainable, long term success of an explicit FFI instruction, such as the one presented in the current study.

It could be potentially argued that the control group also had some form of awareness raising input, and that was in the form of the pre- and post-tests. It might be claimed that the control group students must have noticed that different forms might carry different meanings and be used in different contexts by simply attending to the tests. All the tests were devoted to expressing the past; also, these tests could have drawn students' attention in being quite unusual for them, as normally in their school tests, exams and assessments the participants were expected to concentrate more on the message they wanted to convey, and not so much on the form of that message (Leung & Franson, 2001). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, and in Chapter 3, such an attitude was promoted by the marking system adopted by the mainstream teachers (Harklau, 1994; Destino, 1996), if not the mainstreaming culture of the school as a whole. Having those hints, potentially useful for improving their language use abilities, why did the control group fail to benefit from being

potentially alerted to the existence and distinctiveness of the targeted grammatical forms by their occurrence in the tests? Why did the tests fail to act as consciousness raising activities, despite being repeated three times (pre-, post- and delayed post-tests)? The answer could be that either the students did not notice any patterns in the tests, or that it takes much more for noticing to be activated *and* then used for learning. Both of these conclusions could be accepted though, as for some, less observant students, it might indeed be impossible to deduce any common theme from the tests. However, it might be expected for the more linguistically talented students to notice that the whole tests were devoted to tenses used for expressing the past, that there are various tenses used for doing so, and that they are used in different contexts. The students in all three groups already spoke at least two languages, so they could be expected to be more sensitive towards grammatical forms, and to be more flexible in dealing with the language. Despite these assumptions, no progress was detected as a result of participation in the mainstream lessons or sitting all three tests. Therefore, it can be assumed that the tests did not act as consciousness raising activities, and this fact is not likely to be the result of students' aptitude level. Instead, it can be concluded that for noticing to occur, the consciousness raising activities need to be directed and explicit, such as was the case in both Isolated and Integrated FFI treatment programmes. This argument is obviously built on the premise established earlier that noticing plays a major role in learning of the forms.

How were the Isolated and Integrated FFI approaches better suited for providing the necessary stimulus to result in noticing taking place than was the mainstream setting alone? When advocating explicit and directed consciousness raising activities, it is meant that such tasks should provide students with active guidance directed towards noticing of the targeted forms, ensuring that noticing is not a matter of more or less developed sensitivity to language or linguistic aptitude. In both FFI types, students were aware that at some point in a lesson grammar elements were in focus because the teacher drew their attention to this fact. In less explicit techniques, such as text enhancement, students were

also informed about the purpose of the technique used, in order to ensure that the less observant learners could still benefit from such a form of consciousness raising method.

Taking into account the control group's experience and the relative futility of their exposure to the targeted forms in the mainstream lessons or the tests, it can be concluded that the explicit form-focused input, whether in the form of the consciousness raising activities, grammar point explanations, or teacher's feedback, is the prerequisite for faster language learning. All of the participants must have encountered the targeted forms before the intervention in their mainstream lessons. Yet, as evident in the pre-test, they either failed to notice them, or they could not make sense of them, or they did not understand their importance, and as a result failed to learn or acquire them. What the explicit FFI did for the students was to provide them with a code that helped them to systematise the many forms they had encountered both in the mainstream as well as during the intervention. The difference between the control group and the experimental groups could be compared to a maze in which both groups have to try to find their way through. One is given a map, the other is not. The map symbolises grammatical rules, and it seems that even noticing may fail to start a learning process unless it is properly channelled or, in other words, directed via an explicit instruction, provided in e.g. consciousness raising activities in the Isolated and Integrated FFI. What immersed learners really need is to make sense of the rich, surrounding linguistic input, which often overwhelms them. Explicit FFI provides them with information that makes it possible to decode grammatical elements of that input, and systematise this knowledge in their interlanguage.

9.3.1.1.1. Form Recognition versus Form Formation competence

Despite the fact that the FFI-exposed students proved to secure better results than those deprived of the instruction in form, the scope of this advantage to some extent depends on the type of skill tested. The participants' performance in form formation (FF) tasks was significantly better in the experimental groups compared to the control group in immediate

as well as long-term gains. However, the fact that there was no difference between the experimental groups' and the control group's long-term gains in form recognition tasks (FR) yields a question about the nature of the language competence the students gained as a consequence of the form-focused instruction. Although both experimental groups outperformed the control group in FF tasks in terms of short- and long-term gains, it is important to understand why, in the case of the FR tasks, both Isolated and Integrated FFI groups were able to outperform the control group only in the short-term gains, but failed to maintain their dominance over a longer period of time, as evidenced in the delayed post-test results (quite a common occurrence in experimental studies, see e.g. Yiakoumetti, 2007). Again, this pattern is not a result of the control group gaining any competence between the pre-test and the delayed post-test, as such was not evident. Instead, it originates from relatively low (although still statistically significant) immediate gains in FR in both intervention groups, and then slight decrease (not statistically significant) in terms of the progression between the post-test and the delayed post-test, which reduced the long term gains to the non-significant levels (see 9.3.1.1).

Swain (2005) reported a similar phenomenon in the research on French immersion programmes, in which learners secured native-like proficiency in receptive skills, yet their oral and written productive skills were much poorer. When comparing the traditional grammar teaching model with processing instruction, Cadierno (1995) also observed a similar pattern in the students' gains in sentence production versus sentence comprehension tasks. In her experiment the traditionally taught participants made more progress in language production than comprehension. Linking it with Krashen's acquisition versus learning non-interface theory, she speculated that the two skills tested brought different results, because they became parts of two different 'storage' systems in learners' brains. It is worth exploring potential application of such a hypothesis to this study. As evident in the pre-test, all three groups, Isolated FFI, Integrated FFI, and control, were initially much stronger at FR than FF tasks. Because all of the participants had been

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receiving a diet rich in content-based instruction prior to the intervention, it can be assumed that their knowledge of the language measured in the pre-test was a product of more or less incidental language acquisition rather than conscious learning. Since the participants' knowledge was stronger in form recognition, it seems that acquisition leads more to comprehension measured by the FR tasks rather than production as measured by FF tasks. This leads to a conclusion that as a result of the intervention the students have advanced further in their form formation ability than their form recognition ability because, having been taught the language explicitly through form-focused instruction tasks, they were only able to learn it rather than acquire it. As demonstrated in the tests results, it seems that explicit FFI led to advancement in active knowledge of the language as opposed to passive. This reintroduces the issue of internalisation of newly gained knowledge, and whether the explicitly learnt knowledge can become implicit with time and practice, as some researchers suggest (DeKeyser, 1998; Paradis, 2004) or will never become automatized as others claim (e.g. Schwartz, 1993). A further study in spontaneous use of the forms might help to answer this question. Equally, the comparison of Isolated versus Integrated FFI studies carried out in an EFL setting might shed some more light on production versus comprehension gains. At the moment, however, scarcity of studies comparing Isolated and Integrated FFI, as defined by Spada and Lightbown, makes it difficult to draw any definite conclusions about the nature of the gains (see a discussion on the few existing studies in 9.3.2.1.2).

9.3.1.1.2. Durability of gains

The fact that both experimental groups maintained their overall gains over a seven-week period after the intervention finished is, as Ellis (2012) points out, not only desirable but also quite frequent in FFI studies (e.g. White *et al*., 1991; Norris & Ortega, 2000). Securing long term gains is more typical of instruction programmes lasting longer than a couple of hours (Norris & Ortega, 2000), and those that present the language in communicative context (Lightbown, 1992). In the present study both of these conditions were met, which seems to

confirm these assumptions (for a further discussion on the influence of the context on durability see 9.3.2.1.1). Another condition for supposedly ensuring long lasting effect is the continuation of FFI beyond the experiment (Lightbown, 1998). It seems that in the case of this setting (immersion), it was a condition that could not be met, although pure exposure to the targeted forms in the content-focused instruction of mainstream lessons seems to have provided a form of continuation of awareness raising activities in the absence of FFI instruction. Taking into account sustainability of gains in both experimental groups, and, in the case of many learners, even further improvement after the intervention finished, it seems that the FFI not only taught the students the targeted forms, but also, more importantly, triggered the learning process to continue beyond the intervention. Although the observed score increase between the immediate post-test and the delayed post-test is not statistically significant, it is evident in the performance of a large number of experimental group participants, especially in Integrated FFI. The long-term influence of the FFI lasting beyond the intervention is manifested in the students' voice (interviews and post-intervention encounters), which illustrates how the intervention gains activated their further analytical sensitivity towards the targeted forms as they encountered them outside of the instruction setting, e.g. in a form of mainstream input.

Another issue is what is understood by the 'intervention gains'. So far, the discussion has focused on the students' performance in the tests. The wider question would regard the nature of the gains, and whether they could translate into more natural, spontaneous language use, typical for everyday exchanges but also necessary for building classroom discourse. The transfer appropriate processing theory (TAP) (Segalowitz, 1997) argues that the knowledge gained under certain conditions is best activated in these conditions, and thus could be limited to these conditions only. Although the principles of this theory have been challenged, for instance by the results of some empirical studies on Input Processing, the current study does not offer a comparison of more spontaneous language production such as oral language use or free writing, which might test the students' accuracy in using

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the targeted forms in more spontaneous contexts. However, it is important to stress here that it was not the aim of this study to investigate these kinds of different contexts of language use. The results obtained here indicate some substantial changes in the developing system of the intervention participants, and, as such, the obtained results fulfil this aim very effectively. Nevertheless, contextualised language use, as an ultimate aim of any language instruction, was paramount in this FFI treatment. It is important to emphasise that during this study the students' use of the targeted forms was not limited to discrete-point tasks. On the contrary, both groups at some point of the intervention programme had ample opportunity to use the targeted forms in communicative contexts far different to how they were presented in the tests. The INT FFI students were applying new forms during the FFI intervention lessons, whereas the Isolated group students had their communicative context lessons, where they were using the forms taught in their intervention instruction classes. Even in the tests, apart from the discrete points, there were some opportunities for students to express themselves more spontaneously (e.g. when writing cartoon captions), although these were rather limited and did not constitute the main focus.

The discussion on the value of the gains achieved by the students again seems to be calling for a discussion on interface, to which, due to the scope of this research, this study was not in a position to contribute. Macaro (2013), referring to Franzen's (1995) study on explicit grammar teaching inclusive of corrective feedback, argues that "discrete-point tests and essays [...] give evidence of different types of grammar abilities" (Macaro, 2013:50). Ellis (2005d) puts forward an argument that communicative tasks are superior in testing language proficiency to metalinguistic judgement tests, selected responses tasks such as gap filling, or constrained constructed response tasks like multiple choice, because they best imitate natural use of the language. He argues that "the ability to get a multiple choice question right amounts to very little if the student is unable to use the target feature in actual communication" (Ellis, 2005d:221). However, if a student is unable to *get a multiple choice question right* then s/he equally is not likely to apply the targeted form correctly in

the communicative task. It seems that being able to apply the correct form in the more artificial linguistic context of a discrete-point test is an indicator of certain potential for using that form in more spontaneous circumstances. The successful application of the targeted form in such a constrained context demonstrates important changes in learners' developing system. In the case of the present study, both experimental groups maintained their ability to produce the targeted forms seven weeks after the intervention had finished, and in many cases they even surpassed their immediate gains, which suggests they were able to build on their newly gained competence. Therefore, if we accept the interface theory, it can be assumed that there is a possibility that this competence can be internalised to the point of more spontaneous use of the targeted forms in the future. The study did not explicitly investigate it, as the focus of the study was not on the ability to use the forms spontaneously, but rather on evidence of inclusion of these forms in a developing linguistic system which involves explicit proficiency. However, as argued earlier (see the discussion in 9.3.2.1.1), by transferring the newly gained competence into the long-term memory the participants came closer to automatising the targeted forms (Ellis, 2005a), Also, the immersion language context supported further noticing, which contributed to potential transformation of the gains into implicit competence (see Fotos, 1993).

It would be interesting to consider how else the current study contributes to Ellis' (2005d) argument about the futility of using the metalinguistic judgement tests, selected responses tasks such as gap filling, or constrained constructed response tasks like multiple choice to assess language proficiency. It seems that all these types of tasks that he blacklisted correspond to what in the current study would be classified as either metalinguistic tasks (not taken into account while measuring the proficiency gains in the post-tests), or FR proficiency assessment tasks, which measured only one element of the participants' linguistic progress, and thus would indeed be not a very good predictor of linguistic proficiency in terms of language production abilities.

9.3.1.2. Students' response to explicit grammar instruction

The researcher's notes and evidence from the video recordings provided a rare window to observe how the students' interlanguage was affected by the intervention. The learning process was evident in frequent overuse of the taught forms, such as the past perfect tense, shortly after they were introduced, which was especially evident in the Isolated FFI group. In students' output it was noticeable how, in many cases, the introduced forms were correctly systematised in their interlanguage. The current study, despite shedding some light on the process, is more concerned with the product, *i.e.* the effectiveness of the two teaching approaches. It is nevertheless interesting to find confirmation of the existence of such processes along the way, as it provides a valuable insight, and indicates that the changes in students' interlanguage happened indeed due to the intervention, as the overuse of the targeted forms coincided with the introduction of these forms.

As indicated further in this chapter, in 9.3.1.3, the students were responsive to the instruction regardless of their level of engagement or attitude to FFI. There were, however, more variables that could potentially influence their ability to benefit from the instruction, such as initial proficiency levels or age. According to the teachability hypothesis (Pienemann, 1984), students learn another language in a particular order sequenced along certain stages, which may be achieved only when learners are developmentally ready for them. The student cohort in this study, although assessed as pre/intermediate learners of English, was not homogeneous. The participants had been learning the language for various lengths of time, and there was a mixture of more and less advanced students within each group. At the stage of dividing the students into the three groups, this variable was taken into account, so that each group was representative of these differences between the learners. The pre-test indicated that this was successful, and the three groups were not significantly different in terms of their members' initial linguistic proficiency, at least in terms of the targeted forms. The teachability hypothesis is strained by a piece of data emerging from the results of the Integrated FFI cohort, namely the significant negative correlation

between the immediate intervention gains and the pre-test results. In other words, this data suggests that the lower the students' level of English was in terms of the targeted forms at the start of the intervention, the more progress in the intervention they made, and such a strong relationship was observed only in the case of the Integrated FFI, but not Isolated FFI. It seems that, embedded in communicative environment, and engaged with communicative purpose, Integrated FFI made it possible for the less developmentally ready students to move through the stages faster than expected. Such students might have been more cognitively challenged by the instruction, or perhaps more motivated by the immediate communicative goal, and it seems that presenting the form readily with its communicative application aided this process, as in the case of the Isolated FFI such a relationship was not detected. This seems to be in line with some other research suggesting that it is indeed possible for instruction in form to achieve such acceleration of progress (e.g. Doughty, 1991; Gass, 1982). The statistically significant correlation between the immediate gains and students' initial proficiency level in the targeted forms is negative, thus it means that the more advanced students made the least progress. This suggests that the Integrated FFI approach is not equally efficient with students at all levels. It may, in fact, be more beneficial for less advanced students, but the question is whether the correlation would have been the same if these lower level students had been put in a group with even less advanced participants. If the correlation had not been detected in this hypothetical situation, then that would mean that Integrated FFI works better for low intermediate students, but not so well with intermediate ones. However, it is perhaps unlikely that the Integrated FFI has such a limited application. It is then more plausible that in such a situation the correlation would have still been negative, with the even less advanced students outperforming the slightly more advanced ones, provided the subject of instruction had been accessible for them. These very hypothetical conjectures, combined with the analysis of the negative correlation, as observed in INTFFI group's pre- and post-test scores, to some extent help to construct a thesis that it is the nature of the Integrated FFI methodology that promotes the less proficient students to compete with or try to catch up with the more proficient ones, in order

to achieve common communicative goals set during lessons. Most probably, it is the spirit of collaboration rather than competition that prevails here, as the more advanced students do not seem to make a similar effort to make comparable progress. It seems that the achievement of communicative goals in the experimental lessons to some extent might mark the end of efforts to master the targeted forms for both less and more advanced students. The lack of correlation with the delayed post-test results further supports this interpretation. Outside of the FFI environment, less advanced students' motivation to achieve communicative goals while maintaining high levels of accuracy might not be so strong, lacking the drive provided by striving towards the co-construction of a communicative task, characteristic to the Integrated FFI. However, rather than a lack of motivation, the reason for such losing momentum among the less advanced learners might lie in the absence of the stimulating interaction capable of creating "a new, clearer, and more explicit representation of the relevant knowledge" (Mercer, 2013:156) so advantageous to language development and advancing understanding (*ibid.*). On the other hand, the more advanced students could at last fully embrace the increased challenges that mainstream lessons imposed on them, and could further build on their newly gained knowledge, largely through noticing and practice, despite being deprived of FFI. It may seem that, in the case of such learners, interaction with less proficient peers was not stimulating enough. It needs to be stressed that this phenomenon does not appear to affect those subjected to the Isolated FFI, as no correlation pattern has been detected between the pre-test and the post-test results in this group. This further supports the argument that this correlation was the sole effect of the instruction type administered and interaction between the students that was promoted by Integrated FFI. This observation provides a further argument behind the directionality of learning and teaching in these two FFI approaches. It appears that in the Isolated FFI teaching is a 'top-down' process, in which the instruction flow is expected to start with the teacher and end at individual learners, whereas in the Integrated FFI, it is allowed, or even expected to act 'sideways', as knowledge and meaning are co-constructed in the process of interaction. As such, it seems

that through so called "assembly bonus effect" (Mercer, 2013:155), the less advanced learners in the INT FFI group were capable of successfully meeting more demanding learning aims that they were not able to meet by themselves, after the experimental lessons finished. This may explain why the negative correlation was evident only in the post-test, but not in the delayed post-test.

On the other hand, it is possible that Integrated FFI brings about a side effect in a form of a 'communicative ceiling effect', limiting students' grammatical accuracy efforts to moments in which they are working together while trying to achieve pre-set communicative goals. Assuming that they were not primarily trying to expand on their grammatical proficiency (as seems to be the case with Isolated FFI), and instead they were mainly concerned with achieving communicative goals set by the teacher, the INT FFI group's weaker students might gain more by aspiring to work hand in hand with the stronger students, whereas the stronger students would not have such motivation in the form of others to look up to. It needs to be stressed, however, that the intervention materials or the FFI tasks were not the factors limiting the INT FFI students' progression. They were aspirational and rather engaging, but equally challenging as those used in the Isolated FFI in terms of the complexity of the forms. Taking focus on form away from the spotlight and the main focus of attention, as characteristic of Integrated FFI, meant that something else must have appeared as a focal point. As may be concluded from this discussion, and as evident in students' rating of the most important elements of instruction, this focal point was *co-construction of the communication*, and students' learning of the forms started there, but also ended there. Paradoxically, this might be the reason why, in terms of production skills, the INT FFI group has been significantly outperformed by the ISO FFI group.

Nevertheless, although form-focused instruction has been proven to accelerate learning of forms beyond students' linguistic readiness, such effect seems not to be universal for all aspects of grammatical proficiency, as Ortega (2013) argues:

> for some developmental areas, such as sequences for word order […] and tense and aspect morphology […] learners appear psycholinguistically unable to skip stages. But for other areas of the grammar, instruction above the cutting edge of a given interlanguage may accelerate development (Ortega, 2013: 138).

Although tense appears to be excluded from the rule of so called 'maximisation hypothesis', the less advanced students in INT FFI group indeed outperformed the more advanced ones. Does it then depend on the type of instruction whether maximisation or skipping stages is possible, rather than, or in addition to, the subject of the instruction, as suggested by Ortega? What role does the ability to further build on the newly gained areas of linguistic competence, displayed by many INT FFI students, play in this? Perhaps, as a consequence of instruction more immediately embedded in communicative context, by accelerating the progress beyond what was deemed to be the next step of their developmental sequence, INT FFI students also acquired the skill to be more open to the targeted forms in the mainstream environment.

It is interesting to note also that it was the Integrated FFI setting where many students reported noticing some intervention gains other than grammatical proficiency, such as punctuation or lexical gains. Although this was not tested, the students' subjective evaluation of their progress resulting from the intervention suggests that, on the one hand, they were embracing the areas of language they were developmentally ready for, and, on the other hand, it also points to the potential richness of Integrated FFI, as opposed to the more monochromatic Isolated FFI, in which the focus on the targeted form might have been so strong and uniform that it did not leave any room for concentrating on any other peripheral but potential aims.

9.3.1.3. Students' attitude to explicit grammar instruction

This section deals with the participants' perception of the instruction in form in the context of their educational setting. It is clear that the population of the experimental groups was not

homogeneous, and the students represented various levels of engagement, educational background, and different expectations. Yet, due to this rich variety, they fairly represented an average English secondary school EAL cohort with their various layers and characteristics. Apart from the students' individual differences, also the educational setting in which they were immersed influenced their linguistic needs, and therefore had a profound impact on their attitudes towards the intervention. Linguistic accuracy was not routinely expected of the EAL students, nor insisted on by the mainstream subjects' teachers in this school – an approach typical of mainstream settings (Destino, 1996; Gravelle, 2003; Harklau, 1994). This might have had potentially negative consequences on the success of the experiment, as emerged from the lesson observations, questionnaires and interviews. First of all, such absence of linguistic accuracy expectations among the mainstream teachers might have resulted in reducing extrinsic motivation in some participants to make the effort to learn the targeted forms during the course of the intervention. In the intervention evaluation, a group of students from both Integrated and Isolated FFI expressed their doubts about the usefulness of the intervention. In addition, the majority of participants either did not want, or were not certain, whether grammar instruction should be continued beyond the intervention (see section 8.3.5). This could further contribute to fostering negative attitudes towards the withdrawal intervention classes, lessening their perceived importance, as some students preferred to attend what they regarded as 'more important' mainstream subject lessons, e.g. Science, or more 'fun' classes such as PE. Finally, the weak emphasis on accuracy, typical of many mainstream lessons, might have contributed to how the students perceived the relevance of the newly gained linguistic knowledge to their overall education. There were only a few students who admitted that the FFI could influence their performance in mainstream subjects, and the great majority of those respondents limited such benefits to English only, thus divorcing linguistic proficiency from potential overall, more holistic educational success. The 'communication first' approach prevailing in the majority of the mainstream classes did not facilitate aiming at accuracy among the students prior to the intervention. Higgs and Clifford (1982) even argue

that "premature immersion of a student into an unstructured or "free" conversational setting before certain fundamental linguistic structures are more or less in place is not done without cost" (*ibid.*: 73), and may have a harmful effect on a student's grammatical competence as the incorrect utterances are rewarded as long as they successfully fulfil a communicative goal. In such education environment, it seems that fossilization is often a negative consequence of lack of focus on form, as can be also observed here, in those participants who have spent the majority of their lives in the L2-speaking environment.

Nevertheless, the lack of focus on accuracy in the mainstream setting did not prevent the participants from securing some of the linguistic proficiency necessary to participate in the wider curriculum. Indeed, as evident in the pre-tests, they were able to acquire some language proficiency in this more naturalistic setting. Judging from the responses to the research questionnaires, the majority of the participants perceived such naturalistic approaches as fairly effective, as they did not opt for having FFI embedded in the school's practice. In fact, it seems that the students were not the only ones who preferred acquisition over more conscious language learning. Insisting on instructed, explicit form-focused language programmes may not be broadly appealing to the learners, as it is language acquisition that seems a general preference. As Lightbown admits: "Ideally, it [accuracy] will be an outcome of the acquisition process" (Lightbown, 2002:532). It seems that this is indeed a premise many researchers, practitioners, as well as language learners themselves share. The way some students in the intervention group reacted to the FFI supports what was already stated in Chapter 2 that by sheer attendance in language lessons students might feel inferior and stigmatised. Some EAL learners, especially those whose English is at communicative language levels, failed to see the necessity of attending any EAL lessons, including the intervention sessions. This was evident in the case of numerous participants in this study. Having acquired the language to and above the communicative level, many learners opted for continuing with the immersion as their preferred channel of mastering the language, even though, as some pointed out in the post-intervention questionnaires, they

were aware that FFI could help them to accelerate the language mastering process. The discreet and almost imperceptible nature of pure language acquisition is more attractive to many learners than 'fast-track' but more exposed FFI, in the sense that the EAL learners might feel 'equal' to native speakers in uniformed, mainstream programmes. Indeed, the acquisition is usually more effortless than learning the language, yet it seems that the students' preference is not entirely due to this fact, but to a large extent to the fact of stigma that EAL status still brings (Chalmers, 2014). It is interesting to know that it is not only the students, but also researchers, e.g. Lightbown (2002) quoted above, that suggest superiority of acquisition over learning. Obviously, there is a wider discussion (above and in section 4.3) regarding the interface, part-interface and non-interface position in relation to the alleged differences between the acquired and learnt language competence touched on here. Yet, in terms of the implications for the educational settings, the conclusion might be that more promotion of the EAL status needs to be recommended as a way of encouraging students to take advantage of FFI that may be provided to them. Many participants in the current study seemed to understand this. Despite the low motivation to learn grammatical accuracy, as evident in the case of some students, and the fact that such accuracy was not consistently promoted by their mainstream teachers, a number of participants recognized the advantages of explicit FFI as a way of securing fast track progress. Indeed, the argument that grammar intervention accelerates the rate of language learning has been confirmed by plentiful evidence in literature (Ortega, 2013). Some participants, communicating their satisfaction with acquiring new areas of knowledge, admitted that they had not realised some of the targeted forms existed, often due to over-reliance on their L1 as a strategy for language learning. As Ellis notes, especially in such cases explicit FFI proves particularly useful (Ellis, 2005a).

Nevertheless, those participants who would welcome enriching mainstream with language learning tasks were not in the majority. It seems that the reason for such inconsistency, and dissonance between what the learners valued about the intervention and what they would

like to see implemented in everyday practice, could stem from their preference for acquisition over learning, and the need to disguise their language needs, blending into the mainstream with the native speakers. Regardless of these students' preferences, it seems obvious that explicit FFI provision needs to be made available routinely to mainstreamed students. As illustrated by the outcomes of the current study, the advances in using forms accurately, as demonstrated by the ISO FFI group in particular, surpass the mainstream acquisition process, and therefore should be recommended in similar settings. The fact that ISO students were less satisfied with their FFI treatment than INT students yet outperformed the latter group, further supports this argument. The data analysis did not confirm any relationship between such variables as students' preference for the type of instruction (pre-intervention questionnaire) or satisfaction with the intervention programme (post-intervention questionnaire) and short or long intervention gains. Therefore, however unwelcome the instruction in form might have been, it was still worth pursuing, as the prospects of gains with explicit grammar instruction were worthwhile.

9.3.2. The effectiveness of Isolated versus Integrated form-focus instruction in the English secondary school setting

This section deals with the most pivotal of the research questions, closely corresponding to the main hypothesis. The discussion concentrates on the differences between the two FFI types' efficiency in the EAL context of the secondary school, and the factors that were likely to have influenced these differences. The discussion also includes pre-assumptions widely associated with each of the FFI types, and compares the results with those obtained from other studies on the Isolated versus Integrated approach.

9.3.2.1. Differences between the two experimental groups in the level of mastery of the targeted forms, and the factors influencing these.

As discussed in the previous sections, the explicit form-focused instruction has proven to be very effective compared with pure language exposure. Yet, within this educational context,

it was Isolated FFI which excelled and produced better overall intervention gains. There are, however, differences in the groups' performance if the participants' form formation and form recognition abilities are considered separately. In form formation (FF) tasks, both immediate as well as long-term intervention gains were significantly higher in the ISO FFI than the INT FFI group, whereas in the case of the form recognition (FR) tasks, the difference between the groups was not statistically significant either in short- or long-term gains, which means that both groups secured significant, but comparable gains. This clearly indicates that both types of intervention were equally successful at facilitating the receptive, or, in other words, more passive knowledge of morphosyntactic features, as manifested in the tasks requiring selection of the most suitable form in a given context from options already provided. As discussed earlier, and demonstrated by the pre-test scores, the skills which the FR tasks exploit are more likely to be facilitated quite well by naturalistic, immersion settings, where students are participating in real, meaning-oriented communication, in comparison with the production skills. Further and successful development of these skills, as observed in the immediate post-test results, suggests that the participants of both groups made use of the communicative context (whether immediate, as in the case of Integrated FFI, or deferred, as in Isolated FFI) to confront the form-meaning relationships within the newly gained knowledge. Lack of any significant differences between these groups in FR tasks may suggest that the time gap between the instruction delivery and opportunities to test hypotheses in a wider communicative context, as experienced by ISO FFI group, did not prevent the learners from securing good FR gains. Thus, gains in the ISO FFI group were similar to those achieved by the INT FFI group, who had immediate access to testing out their hypotheses in a readily available communicative context. It is likely that the FR proficiency was further developed, or at least practised, in the mainstream lessons, and that could be the factor alleviating any potential differences between the two groups in terms of FR proficiency. Such an explanation seems to be supported by the students' pre-test scores, where FR proficiency was significantly stronger than FF proficiency, which, as argued earlier, could suggest that the immersion

lessons facilitate the type of language proficiency measured by FR tasks. If that is the case, then having equal access to plentiful mainstream lessons, both groups were in a position to make comparable progress in that skill.

The fact that the control group did not secure any gains in FR proficiency, although its members had also participated in the same content-oriented curriculum as the experimental students, clearly indicates that the mainstream linguistic environment could act as a form-facilitating or form-consolidating factor only because Isolated and Integrated instruction must have activated some linguistic mechanisms enabling students to use the mainstream lessons in this way. From the conclusions in the previous sections, it seems apparent that the key instructional element enabling this must be awareness raising tasks, and the key mechanism - noticing.

As can be seen in the example of the FR proficiency, and was evident in the students' interviews, both groups benefited equally from awareness raising instruction and, resulting from it, noticing. Therefore, there must have been other elements and factors that influenced the discrepancies between the groups to justify the ISO FFI group's overwhelming advantage over the INT FFI group in terms of the targeted forms production gains. If we accept the argument that the mainstream lessons, rich in targeted forms input, were able to compensate for the differences between the effects that each of the FFI types had on the participants' FR proficiency, then it may be surprising that the mainstream context did not influence the students' FF proficiency in quite the same way. The possible explanation for the ISO FFI students greatly outperforming the INT FFI learners in the production (FF) tasks could be that the mainstream context, although rich in examples of various past tenses available as language input, was much more limited in creating opportunities for the students to produce the targeted forms. Even if such opportunities were created frequently and in abundance, the mainstream teachers were not prepared to provide the necessary corrective feedback or linguistic and metalinguistic instruction necessary to draw students' attention to the targeted forms. Lacking in corrective feedback

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and metalinguistic instruction, the mainstream subject lessons might not have been effective enough at facilitating targeted forms production skills as to reach the threshold point at which the two FFI types' instructional differences could be offset, as supposedly was the case with the FR skills.

The absence of frequent and explicitly teacher-monitored targeted form practice outside of the intervention classroom clearly points to the instructional differences between the two FFI approaches as the causes for significant discrepancies in FF scores in ISO and INT groups. Both groups had access to feedback and metalinguistic input during the intervention, and in both groups the cumulative amount of FFI was similar, just spread differently according to the two FFI approaches' characteristics. A quite obvious conclusion would be that it is the timing of the FFI that is critical for the success of the targeted forms production proficiency. It seems that, although the INT FFI students overall were much more content with the intervention programme than ISO FFI students, their Integrated FFI programme posed a more cognitively demanding challenge, as they had to respond to FFI tasks and maintain communicative focus at the same time. The ISO FFI group did not have to be that versatile, as its participants were not required to divide their attention between the meaning and the form in quite the same way. As they were producing the language they were concentrating either on communicating messages or mastering accuracy, while their peers from the INT FFI group had to focus on these two tasks simultaneously. It seems that the theory about learners' limited attention capacity (Skehan, 1996b, 2009; Skehan & Foster, 2001) drawn on and explored by VanPatten (1990) (see section 4.5.2.1) could be applied here to provide explanation for Isolated FFI's supremacy. The challenges present when meaning and form compete for learners' attention in the process of output monitoring are reported to be less serious in the case of learners subjected to a considerable amount of explicit teaching (Kormos, 2000, 2006). Still, the intervention offered to the ISO and INT groups' participants, limited to ten hours, seemed insufficient to deal with these issues.

As the INT learners were challenged with a more demanding cognitive load, they made less progress in language production skills compared to ISO group. Yet, after the intervention, it was the INT group which seemed more successful at building on these gains, advancing them even further beyond the duration of the intervention (see Chapter 7). As a comparison, the ISO students' proficiency in production gains slightly decreased after the intervention had finished, albeit the fall was not statistically significant. Although, neither the increase in INT nor the decrease in ISO delayed post-test results was statistically significant, they could signal certain trends in the two groups (see figure 7.12), but may also point to factors characterising the two FFI approaches. It seems that the ISO students' proficiency at applying the accuracy monitor had a tendency to decrease after the learners had been separated from the FFI in the interim period between the immediate post-test and delayed post-test. The INT participants, on the other hand, by practising juggling meaning and form simultaneously in a communicative environment, might be more able to use the forms in the context beyond the intervention lessons, and use this context effectively to reinforce their understanding of the form's application. This is in line with arguments about communicative context, which can facilitate further progress in learning of the forms (Lightbown, 1992) (see section 9.3.1.1). Although, according to the interviews, noticing activities are identified by both of the groups as promoted by the intervention, it might be that INT group were better prepared to notice the forms in communicatively oriented mainstream contexts, as Integrated FFI, due to its very nature, prepared the students to successfully divide their attention between the form and the communicative focus.

9.3.2.1.1. The pre assumptions concerning each of the approaches

Durability of gains

There are some assumptions outlined in section 4.5.2 regarding the suitability of each FFI in a particular learning situation. The Integrated FFI is predicted to be particularly effective at reinforcing automaticity of targeted forms use (Spada & Lightbown, 2008). To some extent, the results of this research may contribute to supporting this assumption, as, in the

INT group, FF mean gains have more tendency to further increase between the post-test and the delayed post-test, that is in the seven weeks after the intervention, while the ISO group experienced a slight decrease in mean gains when intervention finished. Although neither of these differences is statistically significant, this might suggest that in the case of many INT participants, the targeted forms formation processes are more internalised than in the ISO group, and that by automatizing their language use as a result of the intervention, some members of the INT group were in a position to benefit further from the noticing of forms, in the mainstream context also. The argument for noticing as a possible benefit of Integrated FFI is also used by Spada and Lightbown (2008), as they recommend Integrated FFI for forms students already noticed. Yet, as observed during the intervention, there were forms, such as the past perfect tense, that the INT group members were not fully aware of prior to their FFI lessons. Making such forms more salient and more meaning-oriented helped the students to notice and start using them.

Age

In terms of Isolated FFI, it is argued that older students prefer this type of instruction (Spada & Lightbown, 2008), or it can also be valued by children, who tend to have difficulty distinguishing between form and content instruction (Lyster & Ranta, 1997). ISO group's results could not confirm these assumptions. However, the number of cases for each age variable was too small to be able to provide grounds for generalising any findings in this area. Yet, the correlation tests performed did not find any relationship between the participants' age and the intervention gains in the ISO group. What is interesting, however, is that in the INT group, age may be a rather important factor, as it does correlate positively with the intervention's immediate gains (r=0.517, p=0.005), as well as the long-term gains (r=0.410, p=0.030), suggesting that the older participants' gains were higher than their younger colleagues'. A possible explanation could be Lyster and Ranta's (1997) argument that in a more communicative instruction type, children may struggle to correctly differentiate between content and form instruction. Moreover, in a more communicative approach students need to be more cognitively capable of processing information. As

argued earlier, they are required to process and monitor meaning at the same time as the form, which presents them with a more challenging cognitive load.

9.3.2.1.2. The comparison of results with other studies on Isolated and Integrated FFI

There are few studies comparing Isolated and Integrated FFI, thus opportunities to relate the results of the present study to other findings on these particular two FFI approaches are limited. One of the three published studies is Spada and her team's (Spada *et al*., 2014) own research into the effectiveness of Isolated and Integrated FFI in ESL context in Canada. Unlike in the current research, in their study neither of the two approaches proved more beneficial to written grammar tests (reported by Spada's team (*ibid.*) the advantage of Isolated FFI group's results over the Integrated FFI in written tests did not reach statistical significance).Interestingly, however, in oral performance tests it was the recipients of the Integrated FFI who outperformed the other group (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). These results are interpreted as evidence for the superiority of Integrated FFI over Isolated FFI in fostering implicit knowledge of the language, since oral tests are sometimes used to operationalize the concept of testing the participants' implicit knowledge (see e.g. Benati, 2004; Ellis, 2012). The rationale behind such classification of oral tasks is that they do not allow much time for processing, and their primary focus is on communication (Spada *et al*., 2014). It is, however, difficult to agree with this point, since in an artificial situation, such as the language test, it is difficult to imagine language students concentrating exclusively on communicating their message, oblivious to the fact that they are being tested. Perhaps, achieving such a goal would be more likely if the participants were emotionally engaged in a discussion on a controversial or personal issue, rather than a picture story largely unrelated to them. Also, although the pressure connected with the time allowed for processing serves here as a factor allegedly ensuring that implicit rather than explicit knowledge is accessed and tested, the amount of time needed to ensure this is hard to estimate (de Graaff, 1997). Equally, the complexity brought in by the implicit-explicit

knowledge dichotomy makes it difficult to pinpoint which one is being tested (see e.g. a brief discussion on implicit versus automated explicit knowledge in Ellis, 2006).

Setting these deliberations aside, as Spada and her team (Spada, *et al.*, 2014) admit themselves, their results need to be approached with caution due to the significant attrition rate of their sample size, and the statistically significant difference between the Isolated and Integrated FFI participants' pre-test scores. It seems that also the duration of this intense, but very short intervention treatment, spread across only three days, makes it difficult to be compared with the current study, in which no rigorous mid-intervention tests, capable of evidencing the early rate of progress in the two groups, were performed. Finally, the setting of the study – a community language course – albeit still ESL, tests the two FFI approaches outside of the wider academic context afforded by a secondary school, and concentrates on adults in a largely voluntary language programme. Therefore, Spada and her colleagues' research (*ibid.*) and the present study do not seem to enable a direct enough comparison of the results to shed new light on possible interpretation of the present study.

Another study examining Spada and Lightbown's (2008) dichotomy, carried out by Elgün-Gündüz, *et al.*,(2012), reports different results, indicating that Integrated FFI brings better results than Isolated FFI in learning of forms. This study explores the two types of FFI in an English as a foreign language (EFL) context (rather than second language), where participants might have less frequent and intense contact with the target language than those immersed in the target language speaking environment. Thus, they need different types of stimuli than second language learners. Although Elgün-Gündüz's (2012) study was set in a primary school and had a different focus, by juxtaposing it with the results of the present study some interesting conclusions may be drawn. It seems that, when provided with Isolated or Integrated FFI, language learners respond with better progress to this type of instruction which their long-term or standard teaching programmes are deficient in. Therefore, in the EFL context, where learners do not typically have much access to authentic and communicative language use, they gain more when this element is provided

to them in their FFI lessons. Analogously, in the EAL context, where learners have plenty of communicative input, but no, or limited access to FFI, they benefit from being stimulated to notice certain language rules, and FFI enables them to 'sort' what otherwise might be in a stage of linguistic chaos in their interlanguage, or in a state of fossilization. These only seemingly inconsistent results of the present study and that of Elgün-Gündüz (2012) appear to support the notion of "complementarity of the two types of instruction", which Lightbown and Spada (2013:191) proposed. Both FFI approaches respond differently in different linguistic contexts, and can be equally useful depending on certain factors, and such seem to be created by the different settings – EFL versus EAL/ESL.

A conclusion made by Elgün-Gündüz *et al.* (2012) based on their findings is that Integrated FFI promotes automaticity of language use as shown in the results of essay writing analyses (*ibid*.), and thus, it seems to contribute to implicit language learning. In their discussion, the researchers refer to the fact that the participants found the Integrated FFI lessons more engaging, whereas the participants from the other group found parts of the Isolated FFI boring, and, as a result, they tended to switch off and talk among themselves, ignoring the teacher's FFI input. The students' satisfaction levels reported there confirm the findings of the present study, as the INT FFI participants were as a whole more positive about their intervention lessons compared to the ISO FFI students. Nevertheless, since Elgün-Gündüz's case study took place in two different schools, it is hard to judge whether the reported findings could be directly attributed to the differences in the two FFI approaches, or, rather, are indicative of two different teaching styles, behaviour management skills, the ability to maintain students' interest by the individual teachers, or particular schools' ethos. Equally, taking into consideration the fact that the targeted forms and vocabulary were not precisely specified, and little is said about the scoring criteria for essay marking applied in the experiment, it is not very clear whether the difference in the students' scores can be attributed to the characteristics of the Isolated or Integrated instruction the students received.

The third study comparing the effectiveness of Isolated and Integrated FFI is the experiment undertaken by File and Adams (2010). Unlike the other two studies, these researchers chose vocabulary to be the instructional form. The study is set in an ESL context in New Zealand. The results obtained by them were different to Elgün-Gündüz's (2012), Spada's, (2014) and their teams', since the outcomes of File and Adams' study did not conclusively establish superiority of either of the two approaches for learning of the targeted vocabulary in any of the aspects tested. However, they reported a tendency for Isolated FFI to have better short-term effects than Integrated FFI, and although this trend did not reach statistical significance, to some extent it corresponds to the findings of the present study. Here, the Isolated FFI participants outperformed the Integrated FFI participants; however, in the long term the Integrated FFI learners showed some advantages over the Isolated FFI learners, as they were more successful at building on their immediate intervention gains in the language production tasks, advancing them even further beyond the duration of the intervention. Conversely, in the Isolated FFI, there was a tendency to decrease the intervention gains, as observed in the delayed post-test. Although neither the increase trend in the Integrated FFI nor the decrease trend in the Isolated FFI in the delayed post-tests were statistically significant, they seem to confirm the observation made by File and Adams that the Isolated FFI approach could be more beneficial in producing short-term gains. File and Adams (2010) relate this tendency to the cognitive load being increased in terms of the Integrated FFI participants, who needed to concentrate on both the context as well as the targeted forms. Equally, in the present study the potentially less demanding cognitive load seems to explain why the ISO FFI outperformed the other experimental group. In addition, the present study attributes the INT FFI group's success in the delayed post-test to that same issue of cognitive load, which, increased in the case of Integrated FFI, might have prepared the learners better for the demands of the multifocal nature of the mainstream setting they were immersed in.

The table below (Table 9.1) presents the three published studies discussed above, juxtaposed with the present study. It is interesting to note that, compared to the two ESL context studies tabulated here, in the present research the participants had more time to confront what they were taught with the target language they were immersed in outside of the FFI classroom, as FFI instruction was spread in time. FFI lessons in the study carried out by File and Adams (2010) lasted only for 2 hours, and, in the case of the instruction reported in Spada *et. al.* (2014), the 12-hour-long treatment was completed in only three days. Among other discrepancies, this makes the direct comparison between these published studies and the present research even more challenging, as the ability to confront the newly learnt structures with the more naturalistic sources of input seems to play a major role in the success of both of the experimental treatments. The role of the mainstream environment and linguistic context beyond the school setting is not directly measured or tested in the present study. However, it does emerge in the qualitative analysis and is implicitly observed (see Chapter 8).

	File and Adams (2010)	**Elgün-Gündüz, *et al.* (2012)**	**Spada, *et al.*(2014)**	**The present study**
Main research focus	FFI versus incidental learning, and ISO versus INT	The differences between ISO and INT in development of writing, grammatical and lexical proficiency, plus the differences in attitudes towards the two instruction types	Timing of the instruction in form	Comparison between ISO and INT's effectiveness in mainstreamed secondary school EAL learners
Participants	20 university students, intermediate level, various L1, ESL setting	120 EFL primary school students of A2 English level, shared L1 (Turkish)	109 intermediate ESL adult learners in a community programme, various L1. Only 46, and 47 in written and oral delayed post-tests, respectively.	91 EAL secondary school students pre/intermediate level, various L1
Targeted	Selected general	Various	Passive voice	Grammatical

forms	vocabulary	grammatical forms and vocabulary as per the courses' coursebooks	constructions	constructions used to write about past events (tested on a sentence level)
Treatment duration	2 lessons per each experimental treatment, ISO and INT	2 hours a week over 8 months under research conditions (64 hrs)	12 hours over 3 days	10 lessons per each FFI over 10 weeks
Control group	Yes – incidental learning	No	No	Yes – mainstreaming/ immersion
Tests	The Vocabulary Knowledge Scale – written	Written KET, discrete points and essay writing tasks	Written and oral (error correction task in written tests, oral production task based on picture clues)	Written – production and reception: open ended sentences, multiple choice, gap fill, matching, etc.
Delayed post-test	Yes – after 16 days	No	Yes – after 2 weeks	Yes – after 7 weeks
Main results	Experimental treatment more effective than incidental learning, no statistically significant difference between ISO and INT	The Integrated group outperformed the Isolated group both in discrete point and essay tasks.	No statistically significant difference between ISO and INT in written test, INT outperformed ISO in oral test	Experimental groups outperformed the control group, ISO outperformed INT in post-test and delayed post-test, but only in production, not reception tasks
Main limitations	Quite small sample, short treatment	Unequal initial proficiency levels in the two groups, no control group, no delayed post-test, each group taught in different school by a different instructor, uncertain procedure outside of the researchers' observation window	Unequal initial proficiency levels in the two groups, no control group, significant attrition rates resulting in a quite small sample size	No spontaneous language use tested, quite small sample size

Table 9.1. The present study juxtaposed with the existing published studies comparing Isolated and Integrated FFI's effectiveness.

9.3.3. The role of teachers' metalinguistic input and explicit feedback in each of the FFI types

Teacher's feedback and metalinguistic input – the two elements of the instruction applied in both of the groups, albeit with different timing and intensity – are reported in the literature as prerequisites to success in FFI (see Spada, 1997). The results in the current study provide some further grounding for this argument, as discussed in the sections below. The two elements are combined into one research question for they are interwoven in lessons, as feedback often includes metalanguage.

9.3.3.1. The influence of metalinguistic awareness on students' success in Isolated and Integrated FFI

The evidence from the quantitative analysis suggests that the metalinguistic knowledge, i.e. the knowledge about the language as opposed to the knowledge of the language, might have played a contributory role in the students' success with learning the targeted forms. The positive correlation between both experimental groups' grammatical accuracy immediate gains and the score in the metalinguistic tasks in the post-tests demonstrates that the progress in the knowledge of the language mirrored the increase in awareness about the language. It could be argued however, that although the correlation is strong and positive, it does not prove causality in the relationship between the metalinguistic knowledge and the accuracy gains. Yet, as evident in the questionnaires and interviews, many participants highlight the importance of teachers' instruction, including its metalinguistic element, and its role in learning the targeted forms. Also, from the observation notes it can be concluded that the students valued the metalinguistic feedback offered by the teacher, as they, especially in the ISO group, frequently referred to metalinguistic comments in peer feedback activities. It is evident that the ISO group's members used metalinguistic terminology with greater ease and frequency than the INT students, a tendency observed also in the interviews and questionnaires. The two groups'

proficiency differed in terms of the post-test scores on metalinguistic knowledge, with ISO students making much better progress on the metalinguistic knowledge post-test. It is perhaps not a coincidence that it was the ISO group who secured better accuracy gains in the production of the targeted forms. It seems that their metalinguistic proficiency was not without significance for their success in outperforming the other experimental group in terms of proficiency in forms.

The ISO students could have been more predisposed to secure greater gains in the metalinguistic knowledge test than the INT students, simply because they were subject to more intense and condensed metalinguistic instruction. The role of metalinguistic knowledge as a facilitating factor in gaining grammatical accuracy cannot be confirmed with absolute certainty, however, as discussed in Chapter 4, "the development of explicit rule-based knowledge" is crucial for the language learning process, as it helps students to analyse input and aids output (Williams, 1995:12). As the process of building on this necessary knowledge about the language was better facilitated by ISO FFI, it was also the ISO group that could benefit more from the advantages afforded by this knowledge on linguistic proficiency gains, as specified by Williams.

An interesting finding of the current study was the dramatic improvement in the metalinguistic delayed post-test score in the INT group, in absence of statistically significant metalinguistic awareness progress in the immediate post-test in this group, compared to the ISO group who significantly increased their metalinguistic awareness during the intervention, and maintained it until the delayed post-test. Interpretation of these, seemingly odd, results is possible when the setting of both groups is considered. Neither of the groups had access to metalinguistic input at school beyond the intervention, and the post-intervention interviews did not indicate any continuation of explicit independent learning on the part of the students. Therefore, it is clear that the observed effect must have resulted solely from the intervention, and the discrepancy between the groups in relation to how soon the metalinguistic input reached their developing system must then lie in the

intervention differences themselves. As discussed in section 9.3.2.1.1, the communicative context may make it difficult for some learners to distinguish between the content input and the form input, which, if the case in the current study, could have affected the learners' success in metalinguistic post-test.

Another explanation for their lower scores in the metalinguistic immediate post-test might be that the form input competed for the students' attention with the content input, and the more familiar of these was prioritised. As the students had already acquired some language proficiency while immersed in the communicative context of the mainstream subject teaching, it seems that they would choose to attend to the meaning, i.e. content, rather than the metalinguistic input. In fact, learners "tend to prefer meaning over the form in terms of priority for processing" (Swain, 1985:248), so it may be irrelevant how they acquired their proficiency. The question remains why they managed to improve their metalinguistic awareness long after the intervention finished. The answer to this question may be found in the work of Ellis (2007), who concludes that certain instruction gains enter students' system long after the treatment, "i.e. they fail to appear in an immediate post-test only to emerge in a delayed post-test" (Ellis, 2012:299). He experienced a similar phenomenon in his study where instruction was provided via explicit corrective feedback, and in the case of comparative adjectives the gains were evident in the immediate post-test, while in the case of past tense –ed did not surface until the delayed post-test. Delayed intervention gains are also reported in mentioned in Chapter 5 Processing Instruction experiments (DeKeyser & Sokalski, 1996).

It seems that the INT students' further improvement in the metalinguistic knowledge differs from a similar, albeit not statistically significant, pattern some members of this group exhibited in the case of the language production (FF) tasks. In the case of metalinguistic awareness, the increase was noted exclusively in the delayed post-test score, but not in the immediate post-test score, while the language production gains were evident in the immediate post-test but also further gains continued to be built on the existing gains, as

indicated in the case of some learners in the delayed post-test. The interviewed students explained these further test gains in FF tasks as having to do with their increased ability to notice the forms in their mainstream lessons. However, this explanation cannot be applied to the metalinguistic input, as it did not continue in any form in absence of the intervention. Therefore, in terms of the metalinguistic gains, it is more likely that Ellis' interpretation of the delayed gains is more viable.

9.3.3.2. INT and ISO students' perceptions on teacher's explicit feedback

Teacher's explicit corrective feedback, both oral as well as written, was an important element of the two experimental groups' instruction, although it occurred with varying intensity depending on the group (see Table 6.5. in Chapter 6). It is interesting to discover how differently its effects were perceived by the two groups. It can be assumed that students in each group identified the agenda of their intervention lessons in a distinct way, and thus assigned more value to those lesson activities which seemed to facilitate achievement of these specific agenda points. Thus, for the INT FFI group, communication and collaboration activities, such as discussions or peer feedback, were reported to be more appealing and effective than teacher's feedback. Conversely, the ISO group pointed to teacher's feedback as the most important element contributing to their grammatical competence gains, as it concentrated on grammatical accuracy, which was so prominent in their intervention lessons. It seems that, by explicit and more intensive reference to grammatical accuracy, the teacher enhanced the importance of the targeted forms in students' writing, an approach which must have contrasted quite heavily with their usual mainstream setting, where accuracy in using forms was not routinely attended to. With these newly recognised criteria of grammar accuracy, the learners started appreciating the means best suited to achieving these criteria, of which a very important one was teacher's feedback. In comparison, it seems that in INT, the grammatical focus was diluted with communicative focus, and thus the pressure 'to get it right' was not so strong. Here, the communication was the ultimate goal, and thus the tools to achieve these goals were

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different. Nevertheless, also here the students appreciated teacher's feedback, as, in the students' voice, the participants of both FFI types highlighted the role of teacher's feedback, indicating that it was important for them to know what they needed to improve for greater accuracy and how to achieve this.

ISO students' strong reliance on teacher's feedback, as evidenced by the results of the students' ranking (see Table 8.2 in Chapter 8) and the students' questionnaire comments, may be interpreted as a reflection of a teaching model emerging from the Isolated FFI, in which a teacher adopts the expert role in deciding on what is and what is not acceptable in terms of grammatical accuracy. Conversely, it seems that the Integrated FFI lends itself to a more democratic model, in which the participants agree for the knowledge to be co-constructed by all of them. These two models could not have emerged from different teaching styles here, as both groups were taught by the same instructor – the researcher. Nor is it likely that only the more cooperative students found their way to the Integrated FFI. In fact, the pre-intervention questionnaires asked the participants to identify their learning preference – the number of responses in favour of grammar explanations versus learning grammar through communication is comparable in both groups. The difference in the students' perception of the teacher's, their peers' and their own roles in the process of learning must then lie solely in the differences between the Isolated and Integrated FFI approaches. It seems that by isolating the grammatical element, it gains in importance in learners' perception, and becomes a focal point of an intervention programme; its main agenda. As accuracy becomes an important learning aim, the reliability of source of grammatical information with respect to that factor (accuracy) matters as well. This is, for example, evident in ISO FFI students' dissatisfaction with the quality of peer feedback (see a student's quote in section 8.3.2). In the Integrated FFI, on the other hand, where the focus remains on communication for the whole duration of the intervention programme, accuracy is one of many items on learners' agenda, and at no point their sole focus. When the pressures of accuracy are weakened, and communication is the main objective, each

person's contribution to achieving this goal, including the teacher's and students', may be perceived as being of comparable value. This is because everyone takes part in co-construction of meaning, and is not locked into the binary of right-wrong answers so frequently associated with grammatical accuracy. It needs to be stressed, however, that the points made here do not demonstrate that the Isolated FFI fails to promote collaboration and communication, as it was discussion that its members deemed to be the second most important element of instruction (after teacher's feedback).

9.3.4. Combining teaching of the language use, language structure, and subject content to improve linguistic proficiency in writing in the context of a secondary school EAL provision

It is not the intention of this study to identify a prescriptive approach that could be recommended in teaching of morphosyntactic features. Such an exercise would soon prove to be futile, as much depends on the context in which any method is applied. However, the initial trigger for this study was not only the gap in the research, as identified by Spada and Lightbown (2008) or Andrews (2009), but also a gap in practice, the scarcity or lack of attention to form provided to learners in mainstream education contexts, as described in Chapter 3. While theoretical deliberations have certain value, the ultimate goal of research in second language pedagogy is surely to affect and shape teaching practice. This section investigates the findings in an attempt to identify some possible applications they may have for the mainstream setting.

9.3.4.1. Educational value afforded by application of the two FFI types in the mainstream school

As evident in the participants' performance in the pre-test, mainstreaming of EAL learners without explicit attention to form does not facilitate the development of a full range of language skills. This conclusion is supported by other studies, e.g. the renowned research in Canadian immersion programmes (Swain, 2005). Both there as well as here, the

uninstructed acquisition led to some really good levels of passive knowledge of the language – the reception skills. From the point of view of a mainstream teacher, this might enable an EAL learner to comprehend a lesson and confidently access the material. However, when it comes to the ability to produce the output of a target-like quality, it soon turns out that the passive knowledge levels do not correspond with active knowledge, which requires a learner to undertake a range of decisions necessary not only to select, but also to build an appropriate form to suit their purpose. The present intervention proved that this gap between the levels of language proficiency achieved through pure acquisition and the target-like level of proficiency students are expected to possess in a secondary school can be significantly narrowed down in a very short period of time – 10 lessons per a range of grammatical forms. What is more, the newly gained proficiency in the experiment proved to be sustainable, i.e. it did not result only in short-term, surface learning, but instead it enabled the learners to maintain their gains after the intervention finished, and thus it facilitated deep learning. Better still, not only was it durable, but it also seemed to be *active*, in that the instruction, and in particular consciousness raising instruction, activated learners' sensitivity towards targeted forms outside of the FFI classroom, as reported by some participants. This, in turn, enabled many of them to further improve their language production abilities with respect to the targeted forms. The mainstream context has proven to be advantageous, playing a facilitating role in language production. It clearly shows that in order to maximise the benefits of the mainstream context *beyond* its usefulness for building on language reception skills, it is necessary to expose students to Isolated or Integrated FFI *in addition to* immersing them in the linguistically rich content-based instruction. It seems that Isolated FFI is even more beneficial in this context compared to Integrated FFI (as opposed to EFL context – see 9.3.2.1.2.), as it provides a missing element in a form of focused, explicit, grammatical instruction, which EAL mainstreamed learners are not able to source from their other lessons.

9.3.4.2. Combining explicit language teaching with content teaching

The previous section argued, using the evidence from the current study, that implementing either Isolated or Integrated FFI is extremely beneficial for EAL learners (Spada, *et al*., 2014), as it introduces a vital grammatical component to the immersion setting. This section looks at the ways in which this could be implemented in practice.

According to the students' voice data, it seems that one of the most important factors in Isolated FFI is the teacher's feedback, whereas in Integrated FFI it is the benefit of immediate contextualising of the learnt forms. In both of the FFI types the triggering factor seems to be the consciousness raising activities, which promote noticing of the forms during FFI lessons as well as during mainstream content lessons, as evident in the interviews and random encounters with the participants. Acknowledging these contributing factors helps to establish possible ways in which these findings could be implemented in this and similar educational settings.

The school which participated in the experiment did not routinely offer its EAL students any particular instruction in form although, as is evident in this and similar studies, such could accelerate the students' linguistic proficiency and prevent fossilization. It seems also that the EAL students' attitude towards linguistic instruction aimed at them was often quite negative, which seems to stem from EAL status being perceived as lower than the native speaker's status in the school (Chalmers, 2014). Also, the lack of focus on accuracy, evident in the majority of the mainstream subject teachers' practice (Gravelle, 2003), contributed to low motivation to improve their linguistic competence, which in turn inhibited their grammar learning process. It seems that the issue is a complex one, incorporating many different aspects that need to be addressed, such as social, linguistic and policy-based. As argued by Higgs and Clifford (1982), rewarding students for successfully achieving communicative goals without attention to form sanctions and promotes non-native forms in students' interlanguage. It seems that some systemic changes need to be made to encourage educationalists to reward accuracy *alongside* fluency and drive for

comprehension and communication. A more holistic approach would be beneficial. Students' attitudes to FFI should be positively influenced and their aspirations to achieve grammatical accuracy need to be reinforced by the mainstream curriculum. Also, it is extremely important to promote the EAL status, and prevent the stigma often associated with EAL. Where multilingualism is perceived to be an asset, learners do not feel inferior, and are more willing to ask for and receive some targeted linguistic instruction.

The final strand of this complex issue is the EAL policy, or rather lack of it (Creese, 2010, Costley, 2014; Yiakoumetti, 2015a). The variety of different provisions in mainstream schools across the country must mean that the linguistic theory and research findings are not always taken into account, or they are not interpreted in the same way by all authorities. It also means that EAL learners' experiences can be random, and not always dictated by what is in their best interest. There is an important role that the educational authorities could play in responding to these issues. Firstly, reintroducing greater focus on linguistic accuracy in students' written production in mainstream subjects and exam criteria could shift attention to form to a more prominent position on the mainstream subject teachers' instruction agendas. Consequently, EAL learners' attitude to learning of the forms and their perception of relevance of instruction in form would also change, making them more aware of the value of mastering target-like use of the language. Also, it is important to adequately assess EAL students' needs in this respect, and acknowledge that, with regard to grammatical instruction, their needs differ from native speakers' needs – the fact often neglected by policymakers. Finally, in order to successfully implement such changes, it is absolutely vital to equip the mainstream teachers with the necessary skills to support their EAL learners, and deliver form-focused instruction. As evident from the discussion in Chapter 3, the governmental guidelines on working with EAL learners, and the available literature on collaborating with EAL specialists and external support agencies, are not always helpful (Ellis, 1985; Riley and Bleach, 1985; Haworth, 2009), and thus by and large fail to benefit language development in an EAL learner. It is therefore particularly crucial to embed good EAL practice, inclusive of explicit language teaching to EAL students, into

secondary teacher training courses such as PGCE in England. At the moment, EAL training is not a compulsory module on PGCE courses, and a novice teacher might not be aware of its importance to their future teaching practice, until they are confronted with a classroom populated with EAL learners.

The current study clearly shows the necessity of introducing instruction in form in mainstream schools with EAL cohorts, as it provides long lasting effects and accelerates learning of the language. It seems that short intervention classes, when introduced routinely, might serve as a very useful tool for consciousness raising that could result in noticing and then acquisition in a mainstream class. It also seems that teacher's explicit corrective feedback on morphosyntactic aspects of students' output is crucial as a personalised teaching tool that could be used both in intervention classes and in the mainstream. Promoting the importance of accuracy by making it an agenda for mainstream learning might reinforce students' awareness and motivation.

Considering which of the two approaches, Isolated or Integrated FFI, would be more suited for implementation in mainstream schools, it seems that for both of them there are some advantages and disadvantages. The Isolated FFI might provide students with better and more immediate results, however it requires a separate intervention time to be organised, and such a solution may be impracticable in a secondary school. It may require additional staff, and may mean that learners miss some of their mainstream instruction. The Integrated FFI, on the other hand, if provided within mainstream lessons, would rely heavily on mainstream staff's expertise in teaching linguistic elements to EAL students. Without adequate teacher training provision this may be difficult to secure (for more discussion see section 10.2.3).

9.4. Research hypothesis reviewed

The available data supports the main research hypothesis confirming that indeed Isolated form-focused instruction affects the written performance of EAL secondary-school students

differently to Integrated form-focused instruction. It is Isolated FFI which provides better overall outcomes, and helps to secure greater gains, especially in production tasks. In terms of durability of the gains, both types of FFI proved to be equally effective, as no statistically significant differences emerged.

Although some of the discussion in the sections above seems to be only loosely connected to the main hypothesis, the issues of applicability and purposefulness of both FFI types contribute enormously to the full understanding of the impact of these instructions in form on EAL language learners. The hypothesis concerns the impact of the two FFIs on written performance as observed in tests, yet this inevitably ties in with the observed impact on the learners themselves, their perception, awareness, and understanding of their linguistic needs, and the constraints of the provision they are immersed in. Thus, although the hypothesis is limited in its scope to mere differences in efficacy of the two FFI types, in reality it incorporates many issues around applicability and the exigency of introducing the most effective type of FFI into the education menu of EAL learners at a secondary school level.

9.5. Conclusion

The results of the study shed some light on the effectiveness of the two approaches – Isolated and Integrated FFI – on language learning, and may suggest some ways of accelerating students' progress. However, the findings also added some arguments in favour of explicit FFI in mainstream schools as such, as it seems that relying only on language acquisition in a context deprived of instruction in form is not as beneficial as a model where this focus on form is present in an otherwise fully communicative syllabus. Additionally, the more explicit and attention-drawing the focus on form in an EAL context at a secondary school, the better the results, as this study suggests. When put in a wider context, the current research, by contributing to a limited albeit pertinent pool of studies on Isolated versus Integrated FFI, demonstrates that very specific circumstances created by a particular learning environment can activate the two FFI models in a different way,

depending on the educational setting. Although the current study pinpoints some of the

benefits of these FFI approaches, more research in various contexts is needed.

Chapter 10.

Conclusion and implications: the significance of the study in its pedagogical and theoretical dimensions, and the ways forward

10.1. Introduction

The previous three chapters were devoted to presentation, discussion, and interpretation of the research findings in order to answer the research questions. This process abounded with a number of arguments supporting some, and questioning other hypotheses and theories behind explicit teaching of forms. The present chapter investigates what significance the current study has, and what implications it entails for linguistic theory, pedagogy and policy. It also acknowledges the limitations of the study and recommends further pathways to broadening the existing body of knowledge on the topic.

The chapter starts with an introduction of the implications for theories of language learning, which then constitute the groundwork for implications in other fields, such as methodology or policy areas. These are discussed in the following sections: section 10.3 acknowledges major strengths of the study, and section 10.4 points to its limitations, naturally leading to recommendations for further research on the topic of FFI, which follows in section 10.5. The final section of this chapter, 10.6, presents arguments on the originality of the current study, providing evidence of filling a gap in the current state of knowledge on the topic of Isolated and Integrated FFI, but also taking into account the underexplored setting of the study and some valuable contributions to the selected linguistic theories.

10.2 Implications

There are four areas in which the results of the present study carry implications: linguistic and language acquisition theories, language pedagogy, language policy, and research methodology. Each of these areas are explored separately in the sections below.

10.2.1. Theoretical implications

The current study supports the theory that explicit language teaching secures better and more immediate results than pure language exposure and incidental acquisition, and so it adds to the abundance of studies whose outcomes stand in direct opposition to the naturalistic approach. Above all, some of the most vital findings support the argument that language awareness and noticing are vital for language learning. The conclusion from the discussion chapter extends this, suggesting that consciousness raising tasks need to be explicit, focused, and directed to ensure that noticing takes place. Therefore, the role of immersion in the linguistic environment as an acquisition triggering factor is limited unless accompanied by FFI, which was evident in the case of the control group's attainment, and in the case of all the participants' pre-test results.

The benefits of explicit FFI, especially when it is Integrated, extend beyond the intervention. Thus, noticing can be viewed as a sustainable process, which, from the moment it is induced by a consciousness raising activity, acts as a trigger for a series of language developing mechanisms that follow. These include a gained ability to further notice the already acknowledged targeted forms in the mainstream context without them constantly being pointed to. This often leads to a transformation of short-term, surface learning into more sustainable, deep learning, as seen in the experiment. Such a phenomenon is evident in the case of both Isolated and Integrated FFI, as both groups maintain the long-term intervention gains. Nevertheless, it seems that it is the latter approach that, through the constant demands of combining content and form, better prepares students to benefit from the richness of the multi-layered mainstream linguistic environment. Such an implication, however, should be considered with caution, as the minimal differences between the two FFI approaches' long term gains took a form of very weak and rather incipient, albeit distinct, trends, and were not statistically significant. Further studies on the Isolated and Integrated FFI, with a series of delayed post-tests spread in time might be able to determine

whether these emerging trends were only incidental, or perhaps they could develop into significant differences in sustainability of gains in the two approaches.

Another strand of the theoretical implications suggested by the results of the study contributes to the discussion on teachability hypothesis and interaction hypothesis. The former seems to be challenged by the results of the Integrated FFI treatment, which encourages speeding up of the transition between stages, and perhaps even allows learners to skip some of these, as could be observed in negative correlation between the participants' initial proficiency and immediate intervention gains. However, the Isolated FFI must also promote acceleration of the learning process and promotes an even steeper learning curve, as the Isolated FFI participants, slightly weaker than Integrated FFI, significantly outperformed the other experimental group.

The Integrated FFI results provide some very interesting observations of how negotiation of meaning, one of the key elements of learning through interaction theory, can benefit some students, but also how it may limit attainment of targeted forms in the case of some other students. The experiment shows that in the Integrated FFI, the poorer the initial participants' command of the targeted forms was, the more progress they made as a result of the intervention, and the occurrence of progress as a result of interaction may provide arguments confirming the legitimacy of Long's interaction hypothesis (Long, 1996). However, the negative correlation detected here reveals also the inverse trend, showing that the better the initial command of the targeted forms, the less progress the students made in the intervention. Such a finding is here interpreted as a result of lack of motivation to aspire to reach for more advanced linguistic tools provided by the intervention programme, in the absence of interaction partners who, with their higher proficiency level, could exert the use of these more advanced targeted forms during negotiation of meaning. It is suggested that, through its communicative purpose being finely blended in with focus on form purpose, and by over-reliance on the communicative goals as a facilitating factor, Integrated FFI promotes a progress-hindering phenomenon named here 'the

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communicative ceiling effect'. As is evident in the questionnaire responses, the students from INT FFI group considered interaction with their peers and communication (discussion, peer correction, and summary writing) as the elements contributing the most to their attainment during the intervention. It is clear that when the main aim is communication, and such is the aim of Integrated FFI, focus on form and accuracy become, at best, of secondary importance. The means to achieve the goals are evaluated according to their usefulness in achieving that goal (as a comparison, ISO FFI students favoured teacher's feedback most). This further supports the argument that negotiation of meaning and communication as a whole was the main vehicle for learning of the forms in the Integrated FFI, and as such it might have failed those students who had least problems with achieving these communicative goals even without full command of the targeted forms, despite being stretched by the teacher. Therefore, the key role of interaction and negotiation of meaning for language attainment as advocated in Long's Interaction Hypothesis might be only partially supported by these outcomes.

The Integrated and Isolated FFI test results seem to contribute to another theory on language learning referred to in the literature review and discussion chapter as 'limited attention capacity', which means that meaning and form in the input compete for learners' attention, and, as Swain (1985) remarks, the preference is first for meaning prior to the form in terms of processing. Kormos (2000, 2006) notices that explicit instruction makes it less difficult to attend to both meaning and form, which seems to be cautiously supported by the results of the present study – analysing how much the two FFI groups benefited from post-intervention language exposure in the mainstream, it seems that the Integrated FFI better trained the students how to deal with increased cognitive demands of processing both content and form. On the other hand, it seems that it is the lack of this ambiguity of input in Isolated instruction that allowed the learners to significantly outperform the Integrated FFI in terms of language production. This fact further strengthens the arguments supporting the

notion of cognitive processing load's profound influence on learners' attention and, as a consequence, on language learning.

Among the theoretical implications, it should be also mentioned that the study sheds some light on the nature of language proficiency gained through language acquisition as opposed to language learning. The fact that all three groups, ISO, INT and control, were much more confident with form recognition tasks (reception) than form formation tasks (production) further suggests that immersion and naturalistic settings fail to develop the latter type of linguistic proficiency, and seem prone to resulting in passive knowledge of a language rather than active, at least in terms of language accuracy and morphosyntactic diversity.

10.2.2. Pedagogical implications

As could be expected, much of the methodological significance of the current study stems from the theoretical implications discussed in the section above. Such would be for instance the great value of consciousness and linguistic awareness raising tasks. Both of the groups improved more significantly in production tasks than recognition tasks, which paradoxically did not have to result from plentiful output practice, but also consciousness raising activities. In Isolated FFI, whose students excelled at the production tasks, the instruction was frequently enriched with processing instruction types of activities, which employ the notion of consciousness raising, and as such have been reported to have particularly good influence on language production proficiency (e.g. VanPatten, 2002). Also, in Integrated FFI, consciousness raising techniques occurred, such as for instance text enhancement. The fact that both experimental groups - who were provided with frequent and scaffolded opportunities to notice and analyse how different forms shape the meaning - significantly outperformed the control group, clearly illustrates the importance of including linguistic awareness techniques in language methodology. This is particularly beneficial since, once initiated, the ability to notice targeted forms is not limited to the duration of instruction, but

extends beyond FFI lessons, becoming a self-perpetuating language learning tool, able to be fully utilised in linguistic environments outside the FFI classroom.

Another very important pedagogical implication revolves around the way in which learners perceive agendas of their learning programmes, as these often influence their aspirations and levels of response to elements of instruction. Here, it was evident in the way the participants in the two FFI approaches evaluated the elements of their intervention lessons, and effectiveness of these elements as ways to achieve what they perceived as their educational aims. For many decades grammar teaching has not been very high on the agenda in English schools, and has often been perceived as dated, and belonging to a long gone era of traditional approaches marked by decontextualized language drilling. Accuracy and grammar teaching have been often viewed as pejorative notions (Crystal, quoted in Brown, 2014; Watson, 2012). As a result, the demands made on learners, including EAL students, fail to adequately promote grammatical accuracy (Destino, 1996; Harklau, 1994), as is also evident in the relaxed approach exhibited by many mainstream teachers in the present study. This negative, or, at best, ambivalent attitude to explicit grammar teaching is very slowly but steadily being altered in a bid for more balanced, fuller curriculums (for an example of such changes see section 10.2.3 on policy implications).

The message emanating from this study is that, in order to effectively promote learning of grammar among EAL students (as well as native speaking learners), it is necessary to give back due status to accuracy and morphosyntactic diversity in terms of the attention they receive at schools. If students perceive them as one of their learning aims, they are more open to tasks, techniques and teacher's feedback applied to help them achieve such linguistic goals. Naturally, this is not a call to go back in time, to grammar drills. Decontextualised focus on formS is not advocated by the results of the current study. Instead, its success lies in the FFI being embedded in the communicatively oriented curriculum, which constitutes an inherent, underlying background for purposeful teaching of

forms. The fuller the symbiosis between the focus on communication and form, the more it is attractive to EAL learners, as this, and other studies, show.

Very important elements, not only facilitating learning but also promoting focus on form among students, are teacher's feedback and metalinguistic input (often delivered together in the experiment). The Isolated group, who seemed more conscious of the focus on form agenda of the intervention, valued teacher's feedback as the most effective tool to improve their proficiency. Also, in the other group it was rated quite highly by many students. Together with metalinguistic input, it helped the learners make sense of the variety of the input available to them in and out of the intervention lessons. Metalinguistic input can help students systematise the many linguistic forms in learners' fragmented interlanguage. Its application could seem an attempt to create something that perhaps one could compare to a concept of the early days of the very incomplete, but already systematic, periodic table when first proposed by Mendeleev, with certain gaps, but also an expectation of what could be missing, and ability to talk about both the present and the missing elements. In the same way the intervention students – the Isolated FFI group more confidently than the Integrated FFI learners – could examine their existing knowledge of the language, and realise some gaps they could now explicitly express through the tools offered to them by metalinguistic input.

Perhaps the most important pedagogical implication from the point of view of this study's hypothesis is the two FFI approaches' applicability, and their usefulness to language teaching. There are very few published studies on this topic to provide guidance on which of the methods is more beneficial, as already mentioned in the discussion chapter. Because of the setting of this study, only EAL/ESL methodology implications, as opposed to EFL, will be made here, since the presence or absence of immediate access to target language determines the way each of the two FFI approaches more effectively affects language attainment.

In general, as evident in the present study, both Isolated and Integrated FFI could be advocated as more beneficial in promoting the learning of the targeted forms than very occasional attention to form, immersion, or similar naturalistic settings. The Isolated FFI promises to be a very well-suited approach to secure fast and sustainable progress in understanding and written production of forms, and might be the best choice for immersion and mainstreamed secondary students in English speaking countries, when it comes to affecting their developing linguistic system. However, to some students, it may be less appealing than the other FFI approach, depending on their expectations and language learning aims. The Integrated FFI, on the other hand, is more likely to be enjoyed by most learners for its closer unity with the communicative context, but it is not as spectacular at securing fast language production gains as the Isolated FFI. A possible advantage of Integrated FFI, however, might be its potential to train learners to attend both to meaning and form at the same time while exposed to communicative input, which is particularly useful when they have access to the target language outside of school. This possible advantage may play an important role in securing sustainability of gains, and even allowing learners to exceed the intervention gains by strengthening noticing skills to promote further learning. Nevertheless, the results of the current study were too inconclusive to categorically favour Integrated FFI over Isolated FFI as the approach which could promote greater sustainability of gains.

10.2.3. Policy implications

The discussion in this as well as the previous chapters contains some very strong arguments that there are approaches to language teaching and form-focused instruction, such as Isolated and Integrated, which can offer very good results for EAL students, far superior to the language gains achieved through the commonly applied mainstreaming policy. However, some may argue that there have already been some changes in attitudes and educational foci, as explicit grammar teaching has finally come to the attention of the policy makers and has just gained its due place in the national curriculum. Indeed, in recent

years, the Department for Education seems to have noticed the importance of explicit grammar teaching, especially at the primary level of education, where compulsory tests on spelling, punctuation and grammar have just been introduced.

Obviously, the raised status of grammar teaching, by being limited to primary school pupils, will leave out many of the mid-term admission migrant children who arrive in the UK only when they are of secondary school age, or join the last years of primary schools with command of English too limited to fully embrace any potential benefits of the new programme. Nevertheless, even though it is mainly at the primary level, the policy has changed to include explicit grammar teaching. Does this mean that the new curriculum has started promoting FFI approaches such as Integrated or Isolated? Unfortunately, it does not. Although the realisation of the 'grammar gap' in students' education should be highly welcome, the proposed ways to close this gap are not necessarily what EAL learners might need. The DfE documents clearly state that the aim of the so called 'grammar teaching' is to enable students to transfer their implicit understanding of grammar concepts into explicit knowledge, enabling them to be more conscious of their linguistic choices. Therefore, the underlying assumption is that students must already possess certain levels of language proficiency, implicitly gained via acquisition. Based on this knowledge, the explicit understanding of the language will be built. The preamble for the *English Appendix 2: Vocabulary, grammar and punctuation* (2014) informs as follows:

> The grammar of our first language is learnt naturally and implicitly through interactions with other speakers and from reading. Explicit knowledge of grammar is, however, very important, as it gives us more conscious control and choice in our language (DfE, 2014:1).

Clearly then, such a curriculum seems to be tailored much better to the profile of native speakers of English than EAL learners, and appears to blatantly ignore the distinct needs of the latter group of over one million learners for whom the above quoted '*our* first language'[10]

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[10]*The emphasis was added by the author.*

is not 'first' at all. What is more, their linguistic needs are very specific, and usually require input on how to construct grammatically accurate sentences before being taught how to manipulate these sentences for different effect, audience and purpose. Where the new curriculum for KS4 urges that "Pupils should be taught to control their speaking and writing consciously, understand why sentences are constructed as they are and to use Standard English" (DfE, 2014), the question arises whether the 'why' in this statutory guidance quoted above should be replaced with 'how' ("understand" *how* "sentences are constructed") in order to better serve EAL students' needs (Leung, 2013).

The concerns regarding the extent to which the new 'grammar policy', enforced particularly strongly in KS2, can genuinely serve as a long awaited grammar teaching tool, refer not only to EAL but also to native speaking learners, since already, before its full implementation, it has been accused of promoting "a *naming of parts* approach […] an approach to teaching of grammar that does nothing to improve reading or writing" (Gibbons, 2013:13). Indeed, studying the Y6 spelling, punctuation and grammar test (2014), which DfE made available for public perusal, it can be concluded that there is little opportunity created for language production, let alone making accurate grammatical structure choices through form formation tasks. It can be assumed that teaching practices adopted to cover this new curriculum at schools will reflect the level of difficulty and will correspond to the skills required in these tests.

The arguments above demonstrate that, in spite of certain changes made to include explicit grammar teaching in the mainstream curriculum, the very specific EAL learners' linguistic needs, including learning how the language works, remain largely unsupported by the strategic programmes or the official guidelines, especially at the secondary education level. The explicit teaching of forms, and the teaching of *how* sentences are constructed in the English language require a different approach to the one just implemented by DfE. The current study seems to offer more viable alternatives, at least in terms of how effectively the instruction examined here served the EAL learners' needs; both Isolated and Integrated FFI

approaches provided better outcomes in learning of the targeted forms than the sole mainstreaming.

The points raised above, regarding some serious doubts whether the new curriculum has been designed to appropriately support the language learning process of EAL students, further strengthen the argument that perhaps such approaches as Isolated or Integrated FFI might be better suited for the EAL students in English mainstream schools. However, application of such approaches might entail certain challenges on a more pragmatic level. The research analysis revealed that overall the Isolated FFI was more effective than Integrated FFI in teaching the students of the targeted forms in ESL or EAL settings. However, from a more practical, logistic perspective, a sustainable, explicit and tailored Isolated FFI provision, might be hard to implement in mainstream secondary schools due to staffing, curriculum and timing constraints that scheduling such EAL classes might need to allow for. Isolated FFI may involve withdrawal from other lessons, which may be logistically and/or ethically problematic. On the other hand, Integrated FFI, with its flexibility to fit around many mainstream curriculum subjects, might be a more suitable option for tight curricula and limited EAL specialist staffing levels. However, it would be a second choice, as Isolated FFI seems to be more productive in EFL than EAL/ESL settings. It needs to be stressed, however, that broad implementation of Integrated FFI across mainstream subjects would require mainstream teachers to act as both EAL specialists as well as subject teachers. Fragmentation and scarcity of professional EAL training available to all mainstream teachers, combined with optional, or fortuitous EAL focus in PGCE programmes (now largely delivered through school placements), makes it almost impossible to impose such a burden on secondary school mainstream teaching staff. Teachers often feel unprepared or incompetent to teach grammar (Kelly & Safford, 2009; Spada & Lightbown, 2008), which is also reportedly the case in other Anglophone countries, e.g. in the USA (Hadjioannou & Hutchinson, 2010).An alternative approach could be establishing models of long lasting collaborative practices between mainstream teachers

and EAL specialists, but also here, the mainstream teachers' awareness of EAL pupils' needs is crucial for negotiation of the roles in a mainstream classroom, as seen in examples of collaborative teaching reported by Creese (2002, 2005) (see also section 3.4):

> There is recognition that language work in the mainstream classroom is only peripherally considered when set alongside the teaching of subject content. (Creese, 2005:189)

DfE has already realised that grammar proficiency is a skill that needs to be taught explicitly, and although the policy makers might not have grasped the whole of the problem, the task of teaching grammar to children has been already given to primary school mainstream teachers. What now needs to happen is increased awareness among the policy makers of the *EAL* students' linguistic and pedagogical needs, combined with more intense and focused teacher training in the area of EAL theory and practice. What is crucial is that any training, provision, and change of perception should be extended into secondary level, also for the benefit of those learners who missed the primary stage of L2 education.

The current study's results contribute to the discussion on EAL policy, or rather lack of it, with arguments which expose the inefficiency of the current practice of mainstreaming that fails to fully develop EAL students' mastery of the language. Despite the recent changes to the curriculum, this situation is likely to continue, at least until this curriculum is further developed to include more focused, EAL-tailored FFI. This can be only achieved by consulting research in EAL FFI, and the present study has augmented the amount of data in favour of curricula inclusive of explicit FFI. EAL is not usually a priority when planning policy changes, as can be seen in the new curriculum referred to above, or as is evident in the lack of official EAL policy in England, and EAL lacking the status of a school subject (Anderson & Macleroy, 2015). There seems to be much that needs to be done before one of the FFI approaches investigated here might be considered for implementation in the curriculum. The recently increased policy makers' interest in grammar is perhaps the first step to opening a dialogue on the place of grammar in the curriculum. Even if this dialogue

does not lead to any further changes towards inclusion of EAL students, at least it may gradually begin influencing teachers' expectations of pupils' accuracy in writing, including EAL learners'. The current situation, where linguistic accuracy is at the bottom of the agenda in many subjects in mainstream classrooms, as exemplified in the setting of the present research, is at the roots of the grammatical fossilization and lack of aspiration to master the language in EAL learners. Once this is changed, the EAL students' linguistic needs will be exposed, and that may be the moment in which practitioners and policy makers will turn to research studies in search of suitable approaches to raising students' grammar awareness, such as Isolated and Integrated FFI.

10.2.4. Methodological implications

It was through the application of mixed-methods design that the various implications listed above could be formulated. Employing a mixed-methods design allowed the research to benefit from two methodological paradigms, namely the quantitative and qualitative approaches. Thus, the current study was in a position to obtain a multidimensional understanding of the phenomenon studied (Sandelowski, 2003). The research utilised a variety of data collection tools, including those typical of qualitative investigation, such as tests and questionnaires, and those most commonly used in quantitative research, for example interviews and observations. This, in turn, allowed for thorough triangulation while analysing the data and ensured greater validity.

The choice of the most adequate model of mixed-methods research should always be dictated by the nature of the investigation and the research questions. In this case, a sequential explanatory design was selected as the most suitable model. This allowed for the group comparison necessary for hypothesis testing, and in the qualitative phase, it further enabled investigation into the possible reasons for the quantitative results. Such a design can be then recommended in studies that aim not only to select the most advantageous approaches to teaching in a given situation but also seek to establish why

such approaches work well and how various aspects interrelate to produce the initial results. In the current study, after the quantitative phase of the experiment – which supported the hypothesis that one of the FFI approaches is more beneficial than the other – there emerged new evidence that called for new questions considering why this is the case.

The qualitative phase revealed interesting patterns of data; in the final discussion chapter, these provided grounds for addressing the research questions and thus helped to elucidate the phenomenon studied, a goal that could have not been achieved had a mixed-methods design not been adopted in particular model (*i.e.* sequential explanatory design). This model of mixed-methods research prioritises the quantitative over the qualitative phase, in that the quantitative data inform the qualitative phase of the study, for example, when selecting the participants to be interviewed. For this reason, the overall research design in this study followed a quasi-experimental approach suitable for quantitative comparative research, which ensured that the study was adequately rigorous.

Mixed-methods research, once treated with suspicion since it went beyond the well-established quantitative–qualitative dichotomy of methodological paradigms, is now becoming a much desired, advocated and frequently selected research method. As Cohen *et al.* (2011) note, "Mixed methods research recognizes, and works with, the fact that the world is not exclusively quantitative or qualitative" (*ibid*.: 22). The richness of findings and depth of analysis in the current work provide support for such an approach. It also seems that the mixed-methods design model, whether it is sequential explanatory, sequential exploratory, convergent parallel or any other type, restricts or enables the researcher's ability to reach various layers of findings. As the study's results demonstrate, the phenomenon studied here appears to lend itself well to the design selected in this study – the sequential explanatory design.

10.3. Strengths of the study

The strengths of this study can be best perceived from the perspective of its rich outcomes; its contribution to linguistic theory, recommendations for grammar policy and practical implications. Similarly, the substantial contribution to filling in the research gap can also be classified as one of the strengths (discussed in section 10.6). However, the success of this study should be measured not only by its contribution to our understanding of theories and what it could potentially mean in academic terms, but, even more importantly, by what it actually did or can do for students who were taught or may be taught in the future through the two FFI approaches.

The fulfilment of all the aims referred to above comes from the rich data obtained from this study, and this was possible due to the application of an explanatory sequential mixed method design. It was this design that allowed the researcher to reach more deeply buried answers as quantitative and qualitative findings were sought. The mixed method design imposed aggregating a number of various data collection tools, such as tests, fieldnotes, video and audio recordings, two sets of questionnaires, or interviews. This in turn allowed for really far-reaching triangulation, strengthening the implications of the study, and adding another dimension to some of its many findings.

Another methodological strength, and a very important element adding to the significance of the findings, is the inclusion of the control group in pursuit of an informative, quasi-experimental characteristic of the study, as well as the well-matched assignment design used for division of cases between the groups to control many of the interfering variables, typically occurring in educational settings, such as education background, mother tongue, gender or initial attainment level. The pre-experimental comparison between the groups conducted via statistical tools revealed no significant differences between the three groups, making interpretation of the findings even more viable.

Another advantage of this study is the fact that the researcher had a full control over the design of the whole study, and each of its many steps. Ranging from designing of the bespoke materials to suit the methodology, as described by Spada and Lightbown (2008), to sole delivery of all the lessons in both groups, and overseeing the data-collection process, the researcher ensured consistency and complete, smooth implementation of the principles of the two FFI approaches. The researcher's familiarity with the provision and ethos of the school allowed for fuller, albeit unbiased, understanding of the setting and its implications in the light of the experimental treatments.

10.4. Limitations of the study

When discussing applicability of the findings it is important to take into account the methodological limitations of the study. There are a number of issues in the present study that could counsel caution with interpretation or generalising of the results. One of these is the lack of homogeneity in the sample group in terms of linguistic, educational background and age. These are the factors which potentially could be controlled. Nevertheless, in this particular setting any attempt to control these variables would compromise the sample size, which already was relatively small. The sample size, although still within limits for quantitative study (around 30 cases for each variable – Isolated FFI, Integrated FFI, no FFI), might also limit the extent to which the results could be generalizable. Extending the setting to include a number of schools might provide a solution to this problem, but limiting the number to only one school was aimed at maximising reliability of the results. In the absence of EAL policy, the EAL provisions at schools differ, which could potentially affect how the intervention might influence participants in a few different settings, making it more problematic to compare the intervention gains between the groups. The lack of homogeneity in aspects mentioned above could be potentially viewed as an advantage, though. The myriad of languages and educational backgrounds represented by the participants reflect the reality of English state schools, therefore such a setting seems to be best suited for testing of the two methodological approaches. In order to maximise validity

of the experiment, a well-matched assignment strategy was used to divide up the variables such as gender, age, language family and pre-test score as equally as possible between the three groups.

Another potential limitation is the fact that the researcher undertook all the roles in the study, being a language instructor, an observer, an interviewer, a lesson materials designer, a test and questionnaire designer and an administrator. This might have had some impact on the objectivity of the research, as well as perception and interpretation of the qualitative results in particular. Equally, it might have influenced the study's participants, for example while providing feedback on the intervention gains. On the other hand, this multifaceted role helped reduce some interfering variables, as having one teacher for all the groups significantly improved the reliability of the results. This full involvement contributed to building deeper, more direct and uncompromised insight into the effect of the intervention, setting and students.

An important limitation, which has emerged in the discussion chapter, is the fact that the present study excludes tests of spontaneous use of the language, and as a consequence does not make any attempts to assess the two FFI approaches' effectiveness at promoting internalised proficiency. As mentioned in the previous chapters, some studies would consider spontaneous communicative-oriented oral production tasks as means to test implicit knowledge of the language (e.g. Spada *et al.*, 2014). Explicit knowledge is often viewed as the interim goal on the way to full proficiency, which is deemed to be implicit. Thus, securing sound gains in explicit knowledge, as demonstrated by written grammar tests, may be viewed as an only partial success. In this light, the results of the present study may seem less significant than they really are. However, the goal of this study was not to find arguments for or against the interface theory, but rather to determine whether the two FFI approaches, Isolated and Integrated, influence the participants' developing linguistic system, and if so, which of them is more effective. The researcher agrees with DeKeyser (1998) and Paradis (2004) that explicit proficiency may become implicit with

practice, but this transition, however intriguing, would position itself outside the scope of this study.

10.5. Recommendations for further study

The current study has made a very important first step to investigating the two FFI approaches in the secondary school context, and when compared with the few existing studies on these phenomena, it seems that the different outcomes result from different settings and research designs. This makes it difficult to come to unequivocal conclusions and systematise the findings to characterise benefits of each instruction type. One of the biggest barriers to doing so is the scarcity of studies exploring Isolated and Integrated FFI. The list of recommendations for further research is then quite long, all the more so since this study, while making some exciting discoveries, has also posed some further questions brought about by the rich data, and the exploratory discussion of findings.

From the perspective of this piece of research, more studies with morphosyntactic focus would be welcome in order to advance, extend and build on some of the arguments and hypotheses constructed here. It would be particularly useful to carry out comparative experimental studies in both EFL and EAL settings, ideally with much larger sample size to further support or reject the hypothesis formulated here that benefits of each of the FFI types are determined by the setting being EAL or EFL. Such study would be highly desired, not only to advance our knowledge of the timing of the FFI – during or before/after the communicative phase, but also in order to conclusively establish the significance of noticing and awareness raising, and the role of mainstream setting in this process. Particularly, delayed post-tests would be able to contribute to the discussion on the role of noticing, and the extent to which students are able to extend instruction, including metalinguistic input, to a mainstream context. It could be hypothesised that if noticing plays such a vital role in both FFI types, securing and further developing learners' linguistic proficiency through the unlimited availability of the target language, the EFL setting could bring much worse

delayed post-test results due to being deprived of this rich linguistic environment. It seems that the Integrated delayed post-test might serve as a more accurate marker of the power of noticing as a learning triggering factor, because the participants of this group displayed a tendency to further increase their gains between the immediate post-test and the delayed post-test. There is yet no data to consult about this subject, as the only EFL study published on Isolated and Integrated FFI (Elgün-Gündüz, 2012) did not include any delayed post-test.

In the EAL setting, the effectiveness of the two FFI types would benefit from being compared over more than one delayed post-test. As argued in the discussion chapter, the results obtained in the present study may imply that Integrated FFI could be better suited for promoting automaticity and transfer of the surface learning to deep learning, as suggested by the upward tendency of long-term gains secured by this group, as opposed to falling tendency in the Isolated FFI group. Since, at this stage, neither of these trends was statistically significant, future studies might be needed to investigate whether one of the approaches indeed provides such far-reaching benefits to learners. This might be achieved through inclusion of multiple testing points, and through controlling participants' interaction with the targeted linguistic forms in naturalistic setting on completion of the FFI intervention.

A useful addition would be to include some studies with more homogeneous groups of students in terms of age or linguistic background in order to limit the number of interfering variables and ensure comparability of results. Equally, more longitudinal treatments with larger number of participants would provide further evidence for benefits and constraints of the two approaches.

An answer to some newly emerging questions regarding the Integrated FFI approach's hypothetical 'communicative ceiling effect' might be provided by a study investigating how various levels of participants' initial proficiency influence the interaction between the students, and how this interaction affects the students' immediate intervention gains as compared within the group and with the Isolated FFI.

Finally, the two FFI approaches' effect on more spontaneous written and oral language production could be examined in order to further explore the applicability of the two FFI approaches, and to further contribute to the interface theory, and the discussion on implicit and explicit nature of language proficiency facilitated by these FFI types.

10.6. Originality of the study

The present study makes some significant original contributions to the research on Isolated versus Integrated FFI second language pedagogy, EAL, as well as to selected language acquisition theories.

It accomplishes the theoretical purpose of forwarding our understanding of the mechanisms behind learning of the forms, as it particularly contributes to the theory of noticing, highlighting its role during the Isolated and Integrated FFI treatment, as well as in the post-intervention phase of the experiment. It also implicitly contributes to Long's interaction hypothesis, suggesting its limitations in benefits for more advanced students' linguistic development, as described earlier in this chapter and in the discussion chapter (Chapter 9).

In terms of the original input into language pedagogy, this study appears to be the only piece of research that investigates the effects of Isolated and Integrated FFI on secondary school students. As such it also positively responds to Andrews' (2009) call for more EAL research on the secondary education level, as this setting in the EAL research area is underexplored.

The Isolated and Integrated FFI approaches have not received much research attention at all. Since the formulation of their definition by Spada and Lightbown in 2008, only three studies researching the two FFI types have been published in academic journals (see section 4.5.3). As performing experimental studies and publishing the results take a considerable amount of time, it is very likely that more of such studies might start emerging very soon. However, at the moment, the three existing studies have been only joined by two doctoral theses reporting research on this topic, including the present study.

However, the real significance of the present research does not lie in the sheer scarcity of such studies. Apart from bringing an element of novelty to the slowly built state of knowledge on Isolated and Integrated FFI, it also points to the advantages of each of these two approaches, specifically for teaching of grammar, and thus contributing to research on teaching grammar in particular. These are the characteristics which make this study unique, and likely to act as a point of reference for any further studies on the two FFI approaches, or even more general focus on form studies in secondary EAL/ESL contexts.

10.7. Conclusion

This thesis aimed to establish which of the two approaches to form-focused instruction – Isolated or Integrated – can secure better progress in learning of the past tenses in secondary school-aged EAL students. The answer to this question was provided by quantitative analyses of the series of tests, and revealed that it was the Isolated FFI which brought better results both in terms of short- and long-term intervention gains, particularly in the case of language production, which, in comparison with language recognition, was much less developed in the learners' interlanguage prior to the intervention. However, due to the character of the explanatory sequential mixed method design applied in the present study, through triangulation of the data collection methods, and by juxtaposing the current study with other research on the two FFI types, this research has brought some interesting observations about the nature of Isolated and Integrated FFI, and the effect each of them had on the students' progress and attitudes.

A potentially important observation was made with regard to the impact of the EAL context on the success of the two FFI approaches. The qualitative analyses of data obtained from both FFI groups revealed that the availability of linguistically rich input outside of the FFI classes acted as reinforcement of the intervention lessons' instruction, and provided an opportunity to notice the forms which had been highlighted during the instruction sessions. The EAL learners are not routinely taught grammar in the EAL setting, and this is for

various reasons. First of all, curriculum-wise grammatical accuracy is not insisted on, but also, particularly native speaking teachers "may not have as good a grasp of the formal grammar of the language" (Spada & Lightbown, 2008:199) to elect to provide FFI to their EAL pupils. Therefore, the mainstream diet is deficient in instruction in form, and perhaps for this reason the Isolated FFI seems better suited in this context, as found in the results of the post-tests. Such a conclusion may be reached also through a comparison of the outcomes of this and Elgün-Gündüz's (2012) study. Although these two studies brought contradictive results, they were set in different settings – EAL and EFL respectively – where attention to grammar is dramatically different (Mitchell & Hooper, 1992), and this might be the decisive factor as to which FFI approach is more effective in a particular setting. Moreover, even within the EAL context, it seems that both FFI types had some distinct strengths with relation to various interplay between each of them and the EAL setting. The quantitative results clearly point to the advantages of Isolated FFI as the most beneficial to EAL learners, yet both approaches seemed to provide students with equally sound grounding to harnessing the mainstream to notice and practice the targeted forms.

The study also brought some observations of students' reactions to each FFI type. The students' perception of relevance of each type of FFI to their learning goals seems to have been shaped by the lack of focus on grammatical accuracy in their mainstream lessons. Therefore, Isolated FFI, where grammar is in a more prominent position than is the case with Integrated FFI, was less popular among the mainstreamed participants, despite being more effective. One of the reasons for such students' view might be the fact that Isolated FFI instruction did not correspond with the participants' mainstream subject learning focus. Such attitudes, and lack of FFI in mainstream lessons, resulted in low grammatical proficiency prior to the experiment, particularly in terms of language production skills, demonstrating that immersion, despite facilitating reception skills via the process of language acquisition, is not capable of developing a full range of language proficiency, as the pre-test confirms. It is therefore vital to change students' and teachers' attitudes to FFI,

by making grammatical accuracy more prominent in the mainstream curriculum, and, more importantly, by equipping teachers with the necessary skills to incorporate FFI in their teaching practice. This is particularly important in the case of secondary sector teachers, who seem to have been left out in the very recent process of reintroducing attention to grammar in primary schools in England (see section 10.2.3). However, even internationally, it seems that standard education provided to young learners has always been more language-oriented than in the later stages of education, because during the first years of schooling, while children learn to read and write, literacy is very heavily focused on. Although the linguistic instruction offered in primary schools does not necessarily exactly correspond to EAL students' needs, still, by the very focus on literacy, it is more EAL-friendly than is the case in secondary schools. Yet, introduction of greater focus on FFI in secondary schools without adequate and routinely offered EAL teacher training could result in enormous pressure on mainstream teachers, which would be impossible to meet without clear guidance and preparation.

The study results also revealed another characteristic of each FFI approach investigated. As the students' voice indicated, the Integrated FFI might be more useful in promoting students' independence, whereas the Isolated FFI makes the learners more reliant on the teacher's role in facilitating their learning process. When deciding on implementation of either of these two approaches, this might be an important aspect to take into consideration. Also, it seems that the Integrated FFI lends itself better for implementation by properly EAL-trained mainstream curriculum teachers, as interruption to content delivery is minimised in comparison to Isolated FFI. The latter approach seems better suited for withdrawal classes led by EAL specialists, and when fast results are expected.

The study has brought some interesting findings regarding the role of teacher's feedback and metalinguistic input. The teacher's feedback was very highly regarded by the students, particularly in Isolated FFI, but less importance was attached to it by the Integrated FFI students. This discrepancy between the ways teacher's feedback was perceived by each of

the two groups seemed to be connected to the nature of the attention to form. Where FFI was more intensive, as in the case of Isolated FFI, the means to achieving the accuracy aim, highlighted by isolating the targeted forms and explicitly focusing on them, seemed more important to the learners. Teacher's feedback was then highly regarded as it contributed to achieving this aim. Where grammatical focus was more embedded in communication, and therefore not so much a focal aim of the instruction, the role of teacher feedback was not perceived to be quite as prominent, and, instead, interaction between participants was valued more, e.g. in the form of a group discussion or peer feedback.

The metalinguistic input proved to play an important role in the instruction, as shown in the results of the post-test. Nevertheless, the quantitative results indicate that the metalinguistic input was better absorbed by the Isolated FFI learners, which in turn might have translated into better overall results in production of the targeted forms by this group, highlighting the relationship between gaining of the explicit metalinguistic knowledge and learning of the forms.

The study bears immediate relevance to the contemporary issue of meeting the linguistic needs of the growing EAL population in mainstream schools, where often limited or uninformed choices of adequate pedagogies, and the burning issue of lack of EAL policies affect teachers and language learners globally. This research demonstrates the need for explicit FFI in mainstreamed EAL learners' educational diet as an element crucial for the advancement of their production skills. In particular, it evidences the distinct advantages of Isolated and Integrated approaches to FFI, contributing to the recently opened discussion on their effectiveness and applicability. The research pool concerning these two FFI approaches is extremely narrow, and undoubtedly there are more studies needed in order to fully investigate these phenomena. The present research contributes some revealing insights into the mechanisms of Isolated and Integrated FFI, and their role in the rather underexplored context of secondary school-aged mainstreamed EAL learners.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Research Information and consent sheets

- Research Information Sheet for Parents and Carers.

- Research Information Sheet for Students.

- Consent form (parents and students)

Appendix B: Students' voice collection tools

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Appendix C: Tests

- Pre-test

- Post-test

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Appendix D: Teaching materials

- Sample lesson plans for Isolated FFI (grammar teaching part)

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Appendix A

Research Information and consent sheets.

Content:

- Research Information Sheet for Parents and Carers.

- Research Information Sheet for Students.

- Consent form (parents and students)

Research Information Sheet for Parents and Carers.

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irena.gwiazda-2011@brookes.ac.uk

Study title: The effect of explicit form-focused instruction on the written performance of English –as-an-Additional-Language (EAL) secondary-school students.

Your child's school has agreed to take part in a research project that I am conducting this year as a student at the School of Education, Oxford Brookes University. The results of the study will be used to complete my doctoral thesis for the degree of PhD in Education. Your child is invited to take part in this study. Before you decide whether or not you would like him or her to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done, and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

What is the purpose of the study?
The purpose of the study is to establish the best way to support students, whose mother tongue is other than English, in mastering English grammar and ensuring grammatical accuracy in writing. This in turn will help them to achieve better results in their mainstream subjects, and consequently do well in their GCSE exam. The main focus of the study is on teaching and learning English grammar, the language feature which is usually not explicitly taught in mainstream lessons, but is crucial in order to develop second-language writing competency. The study will take place between October 2012 and March 2013.

Why has my child been invited to participate?
I am inviting 120 students who are under the age of 16 and who speak English as an Additional Language at a pre/intermediate level. Your child has been invited to take part in the study because s/he meets all of these criteria. Those students who volunteer to take part in the research project will be divided into three groups. When placing students in these research groups, the researcher will be looking for a balance of such factors as mother tongue, length of stay at this school, gender, etc., to make sure the students are evenly spread across the groups. Hence, it might be necessary for the researcher to select from those who volunteered to ensure this balance. Do not be disappointed if your child is not selected to take part.

Your child has been invited to participate, and it is up to you to decide whether or not your child can take part. If you do decide to allow your child to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and asked to sign a consent form. Your child will be given a consent form to sign as well. If you give permission for your child to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. I would also like to point out that I do not teach your child at present, and your choice to either take part in the study or not will have no impact on your child's marks, assessments, or future studies, other than possible language gains in the lessons taught during the project.

What will happen to my child if s/he takes part?
The study will consist of 10 hourly English language lessons taught in small groups of up to15 students, and three hourly testing sessions spread over a period of 19 weeks. The lessons will be devoted to teaching your child some of those aspects of English grammar that your child finds problematic, or does not know very well. The lessons will be delivered by the researcher, who is an experienced CRB-checked and EAL-qualified teacher. The lessons will be video-recorded to help the researcher monitor the learning and teaching process. Additionally, participants will be asked to fill in two questionnaires asking for their opinions about the lessons, the methods of teaching, and their learning experience. Some of the students will be also invited to take part in a 20-minute-long

interview with up to three other participating students from their school. In this interview, the researcher will ask them questions similar to the ones in the questionnaire. The interviews will be audio-recorded to aid note-taking.

What are the possible benefits or disadvantages of taking part?
The study will be beneficial in two ways. Firstly, it offers your child extra English grammar instruction, during which the child will have the opportunity to practise those skills and structures they lack confidence in. The participants will be taught by an experienced EAL teacher. Secondly, it will provide a greater understanding of how teaching grammar and writing can be incorporated into the curriculum in schools similar to this one, for the benefit of students for whom English is a second or another language. The results of the study will be made available to the school once the research has been completed. At the moment, there is little research in the field of EAL in secondary schools, and there is a great need for studies that may help identify useful methods of teaching grammar in these institutions.

As far as possible, the sessions will be organised in such a way as to ensure minimal disruption to the mainstream subject lessons and the school's daily routine. This may not always be possible, and students might have to miss some lessons, but usually no more than one particular subject lesson for the whole duration of the teaching programme.

Will what my child say in this study be kept confidential?
All information collected about your child (e.g., name, age, school) will be kept strictly confidential (subject to legal limitations). All data will be anonymised, and your child's name will not be disclosed in any presentation, documents, or publications based on this study. All personal data, such as names or year group, whether from student-generated pieces of writing or any other material collected in the study, will be removed, and the material will be stored securely in line with the University's rules and regulations. With permission, interviews and lessons will be recorded to aid note-taking. These recordings will serve no other purpose than data analysis, and will be accessed only by the researcher and her immediate University supervisors. The study will at all times abide by the Data Protection Act. Data generated by the study will be retained in accordance with the University's Policy on Academic Integrity. It will be kept securely in paper or electronic form for a period of 10 years after the completion of the research project. After this period, the video and audio recordings will be destroyed.

The research has been reviewed and approved by both the Oxford Brookes University Research Degrees Sub-Committee, and the Oxford Brookes University Research Ethics Committee.

What should I do if I want my child to take part?
If you would like your child to take part in this study, please complete the attached consent form and return it to the school, submitting it to the school reception or your child's tutor.

Contact for Further Information
If you require any further information or would like to discuss the content of this information sheet please contact me on irena.gwiazda-2011@brookes.ac.uk or 01865 488600.
 If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, you should contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee on ethics@brookes.ac.uk.

If you wish to contact the researcher's PhD supervisory team you can do so at:

Dr Androula Yiakoumetti (Director of Studies)
School of Education
Faculty Of Humanities And Social Sciences
Oxford Brookes University
Harcourt Hill Campus
Oxford OX2 9AT
ayiakoumetti@brookes.ac.uk

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet.

September 2012

Research Information Sheet for Students.

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What is the effect of grammar instruction on writing in English as an Additional Language (EAL)?

Your school has agreed to take part in a research project this year, and you are invited to take part in this study. I am conducting this research as a student at Oxford Brookes University, and the outcomes of this research will be used to complete my doctoral thesis for the degree of PhD in Education. Before you decide if you would like to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what you will be asked to do. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

Why is this study important?
The aim of the study is to answer the above question on grammar instruction, and to find out the best way to help secondary school students to improve their grammatical accuracy in writing, in order to help them achieve better results in mainstream subjects, and consequently do well in their GCSE exams. The study will take place between October 2012 and March 2013.

Why have I been invited to this study?
Did you know that over half of your school's student population speak more than one language? There are students who speak very little English, and students who speak English well. This study is interested in those students who speak English well at the pre/intermediate level. This is why you are in a group of over 120 students who meet these criteria. There might be more volunteers than places, so it might be necessary for the researcher to select from those who volunteered to make sure each mother tongue, gender, etc. is equally represented in the study. Don't be disappointed if you are not selected into the final group despite volunteering.

I would be very happy if you would like to take part in my research, but you don't have to. If you decide you want to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep, and be asked to sign a consent form. This is to confirm that you agree to participate. Even if you say yes now, you can change your mind at any time during the programme, and you do not have to tell me why. Your choice will not influence your marks, assessments, or future studies. This means that I will not contact your teachers to let them know about your individual progress in the study.

What will happen to me if I take part?
You will be put in one of the three groups, and will be offered a total of 10 hourly extra lessons of English taught in small groups (between 10-15 students), and three hourly written English language assessments spread over 11 weeks. You may learn a lot of important things about English language that you do not know now. There will be language games and some writing will be involved as well. I will make sure you spend your time doing interesting, useful, and fun tasks. The lessons will be designed and taught by me, the researcher, who is an experienced EAL teacher. The lessons will be video recorded to help me analyse the learning and teaching process, but the recording will not be seen by anyone other than me and my supervisors at the University. You will be asked to fill in two questionnaires about yourself, these lessons, and your learning experience. Some of the participants will also take part in a short group interview with up to three other students from your school. In this interview I will ask similar questions to the ones in the questionnaire, and I may ask you to have a short discussion with me and/or other students about the lessons and your experience of participating in them. The interviews will be audio recorded to help me remember what has been said. I may quote what you said, but I will not use your real name.

What are good points and bad points of taking part?
The study will be good for you in two ways. Firstly, you will have additional English lessons, during which you can practise those skills and structures you lack confidence in. Secondly, it will help me and other teachers and academics to understand what methods of teaching grammar and writing are most productive. I will ensure your mainstream subject lessons, and the school daily routine is disrupted as little as possible, but you might have to miss some lessons. This should be usually no more than one particular subject lesson for the whole duration of the programme.

Will anyone know what I say or how well I do in the programme?
All information collected about you will be kept strictly confidential, and all data collected in lessons, tests, questionnaires and the interview will be kept safely, and if they are quoted this will be done anonymously. The study meets regulations set by the University, as well as the rules set by law called the Data Protection Act.

What should I do if I want to take part?
If you are happy to take part in this study, please complete the attached consent form, sign it and return to the school reception or your tutor. If you have any questions, or if you are worried about anything in connection with this offer, please talk to your teacher, the principal, or your parents, who also received a copy of this information sheet, and my contact details.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet.

January 2012

CONSENT FORM (parents and students)

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The effect of explicit form-focused instruction on the written performance of English –as-an-Additional-Language (EAL) secondary-school students.

Mrs Irena Gwiazda
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Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. ☐

3. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

4. I agree for my child's record to be accessed by the researcher. ☐

Please tick box

	Yes	No
4. I agree to the interview being audio recorded.	☐	☐
5. I agree to the instruction being video recorded.	☐	☐
6. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications.	☐	☐

_____	_____	_____
Name of Parent	Date	Signature

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant (student)	Date	Signature

_____	_____	_____
Name of Researcher	Date	Signature

Appendix B

Students' voice collection tools

Content:

- Pre-intervention questionnaire

- Post-intervention questionnaire

- Interview procedure and questions

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Study title: The effect of explicit form-focused instruction on the written performance of English –as-an-Additional-Language (EAL) secondary-school students.

Thank you for your time taken to participate in the research study. The English language instruction phase has just finished, and I would like to invite you to fill in this questionnaire regarding your learning experience. Please read the questions carefully and give thoughtful answers. Your responses matter, because I would like to know what you really think. Remember that there are no right or wrong answers. Everything you write will be kept confidential.

Pre-intervention questionnaire 1   Name…………………………………………………

Part 1 – You 😊

  1. How long have you been in the United Kingdom? …………………………………………

  2. Where were you born?…………………………………………

  3. What is your mother tongue (your first language)? …………………………………………

  4. What language/s do **you** speak at home?…………………………………………

  5. What language do your **parents/carers** speak to you? …………………………………………

  6. What language is the main language spoken at your home? …………………………………

  7. Where have you learnt English? You may tick ✓ more than one answer.

a) at home ☐   b) from friends ☐   c) at school ☐

d) in private language lessons ☐   e) my primary school teachers taught me ☐

f) other ☐ - (if 'other' please explain) ……………………………………………………………………

Part 2 - Grammar instruction preferences

  1. What is grammar?……………………………………………………………………………………………

  2. Do you think you are good at English grammar? YES ☐   NO ☐

      Why?………

  3. Do you agree with the following statements? Please tick ✓ your answer
      for each of the sentences below:

	YES	DON'T KNOW	NO
You have to know grammar well to get better grades.			
You have to know grammar well for your writing.			
Grammar knowledge is only useful in English subject.			
To learn grammar well someone needs to explain it to you.			
I would like to do better at English grammar.			
I learn grammar easily.			
I could explain grammar to other students.			
I learn grammar by using it to communicate.			
I learn grammar when I pay attention to grammar rules.			

Post- intervention Questionnaire

1. **Have you enjoyed the English lessons in the programme?**

   ☐ I have enjoyed them very much
   ☐ I have quite enjoyed them
   ☐ I don't know
   ☐ I have not enjoyed them very much
   ☐ I have not enjoyed them at all

2. **Do you feel your English has improved thanks to these language lessons?**

   ☐ YES   ☐ DON'T KNOW   ☐ NO

   Why/Why not? _____

   _____

3. **Did you like the fact that we were using short film(s) in our lessons?**

   ☐ YES   ☐ DON'T KNOW   ☐ NO

4. **Which element of the lessons did you find most helpful in learning how to write using correct grammar forms?** Number the boxes 1- most useful, 8- least useful.

   ☐ discussion on a given topic
   ☐ teacher's feedback (correcting your mistakes)
   ☐ peer correction – correcting each other's work
   ☐ writing tasks – a summary of the film plot
   ☐ grammar exercises tasks
   ☐ matching pictures with sentences tasks – on a powerpoint
   ☐ acting out situations in pictures and sentences (-only ISO group)
   ☐ gap filling tasks (– only ISO group)
   ☐ story dictation exercise (– only INT group)
   ☐ answering questions about one of the films on A3 posters (– only INT group)

Can you explain your choice? _____

_____

5. **Is there any other element of these lessons, either mentioned above or not, which you also found useful? What did you like about it?**

   _____

   _____

   _____

6. **Is there any other element of these lessons, either mentioned above or not, which you think was <u>NOT</u> useful? What didn't you like about it?**

   _____

   _____

   _____

7. **Would you like your other subject teachers to use some of the elements listed in question 5 to teach you English grammar <u>in the mainstream subject lessons</u>?**
   ☐ YES   ☐ DON'T KNOW   ☐ NO

Could you explain your choice? _____

_____

8. **Do you feel you are getting enough English language support at school?**

   ☐ YES   ☐ DON'T KNOW   ☐ NO

9. **Would you like to get more support with your grammar?**

   ☐ YES   ☐ DON'T KNOW   ☐ NO

10. **What English language support do you think could be useful for students like you?**
    You may say what kind of people in your opinion would be best to help EAL students write better in English (mainstream teachers, EAL teachers, TAs, native speaking peers, family, etc).
    You may state where and when it would be best to be getting this support (at school, after school, in lessons, at breaks, etc).

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

11. **Is there anything else you would like to add?**

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

Thank you for taking time to fill in this questionnaire.

Interview procedure and questions:

OXFORD
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I. Information to share with participants before the interview starts:

- Explain why these students have been selected for an interview (they are taking part in the research study).
- Remind them what I want to use this interview for (to find out how to best support EAL students in English schools).
- Remind them that what the participants say will be strictly confidential.
- Ensure that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions they will hear, everyone is entitled to their own opinion, and I would like to hear what they really think.
- Tell students the interview will be audio recorded in order to help me remember their answers. Check if they are still fine with it.
- Tell them they don't have to limit themselves to answering questions, but they can add something and comment on other students' answers as long as this leads to a polite and supportive discussion.

II. Interview questions:

12. Have you enjoyed taking part in the project? Why/Why not?
13. Do you feel you benefitted from these English language lessons. Why/Why not?
14. Which element of the instruction (lessons) did you like most? What did you like about it?
15. Which element of the instruction (lessons) did you dislike most? Why?
16. If you could change one thing in these lessons what would it be?
17. If you could transfer one thing to mainstream subject lessons what would it be?
18. a) What do you think helped you score so highly in the final test?
    b) What do you think was holding you back while taking the final test?*
19. Do you think learning grammar is important? Why/Why not?
20. Would you like to see more grammar teaching in the mainstream subject lessons? In what form?
21. Do you feel you are getting enough language support at school given that English is not your native language?
22. Would you like to get more support? What kind of support. Where, when and from whom?

_____

Which of these questions will be asked will depend on which interview group is spoken to – highest or lowest scorers. Yet, students will not be informed that they have been assigned to the interview groups using this criterion.

Appendix C

Tests

Content:

- Pre-test

- Post-test

- Delayed post-test

PRE-TEST – PARTICIPATOR'S COPY – 55 MNS (72 MARKS)

Task1. G (20marks)

Complete these sentences. Use the verbs in brackets in the right grammatical form.

*Example: By next week I ......will..have..taken....... (take) 10 exams.*

1. Yesterday I ...bought...(buy) some fantastic shoes.

2. My grandma told me that she .never.had.(never have) a pet in her life.

3. I am so sorry we lost the match yesterday. If we ...played......(play) a little better,
   I'm sure we would have win..(win) this game.

4. Yesterday when you phoned me I couldn't (cannot) pick up the phone because I
   having....... (have) a bath.

5. So far I ..visited.. (visit) ten countries in the world.

6. When I came home she ...already left(already/leave), so I didn't see her at all.

7. - What would Europe look like if Germany ...won.........(win) the war in 1945? – I
   don't know. I'm happy that they ...lost.......... (lose)

8. Do you think that Lady Diana, who died in 1997, would like(like) Kate
   Middleton to be her daughter-in-law?

9. My brother is a fast reader. He read..........(read) 20 books this year.

10. If I had known you a year ago, I would have married..(marry) you straight away.

11. The police arrested the robber in his flat as he was having(have) dinner. He later
    complained about his half empty stomach!

12. I knew..........(know) her since 2001. She's an honest person.

13. Before I bought my house I ..rented......(rent) a flat for 10 long years.

14. I think I know why you felt sick yesterday. It ..must have been. (must be) too much
    chocolate.

15. The teacher caught me as I ..used..........(use) my phone in a lesson.

16. If I ..had............(have) more luck yesterday I would be rich today.

17. When I finished the Japanese language course, I slowly started forgetting everything I
    ..learnt....(learn). It is important to practice a new language.

13+ 11+6

Task 2. F 6 marks

Look at the pictures. They tell a story in the past. Without changing the order of the pictures complete the captions. Use the words provided. Write up to 3 words *for each picture.*
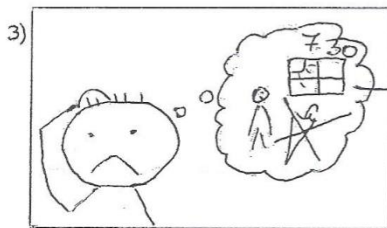
My first day at school (1999)

1)
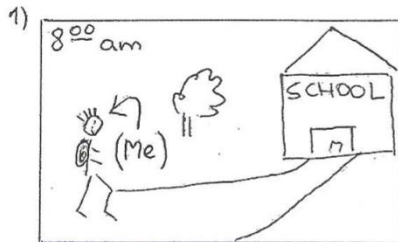
It ....was.........my first day at secondary school. I set off really early, because I like being on time.

2)

As I ...went........................ to school it started raining very heavily.

3)

Then I remembered that I ...forgot to bring.........my umbrella!

4)

I wish I ..listened to my mum when she warned me about the weather.

5)

When I got to school I was totally wet, and so was the floor around me. The teacher said that I ..have to..clean it all
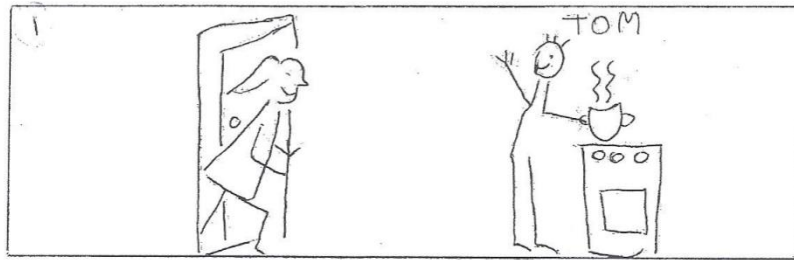
6)

Since that time I ....have.never to take ..forgot to take an umbrella! I take one with me every day.

0,5
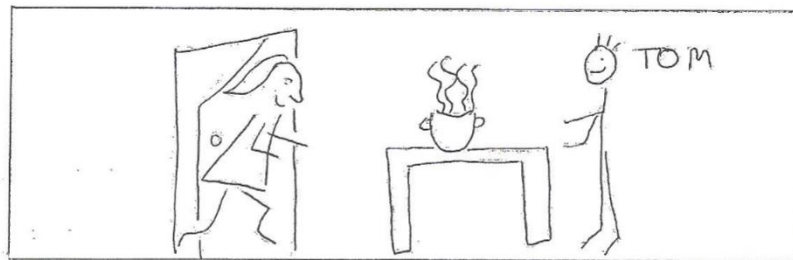
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Task3 H (3 marks)

*The scenes are illustrating situations from **the past**. Fill in the sentences with the correct form of the verb* **'cook'** *to describe them.* **Don't put more than two words in each gap.**
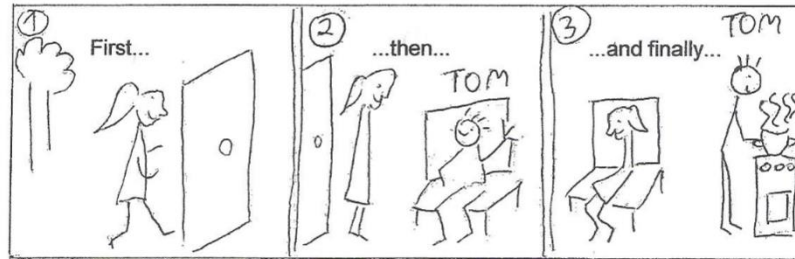
When I came home Tom ⟨was cooking⟩ the soup.

When I came home Tom ⟨was heat up⟩ the soup.

When I came home Tom ⟨had already⟩ *already cooked* the soup.

Task 4 A (6 marks)

*Match the sentences on the right with the ones on the left so that they fit the context. Put the corresponding **number in each box**.*

1	I'm so sorry but I can't give you your money back. I don't have it	4	These two criminals would have stolen all your money. _4_	1
2	I was on the stairs and heard some noise. When I came closer I saw that…	3	These two criminals might have stolen all your money. _1_	0
3	I have been robbed and you don't want to lend me even 10 pounds? I wish …	2	These two criminals have stolen all your money.	0
4	It's good that you kept all your money in the bank. If you had kept it at home …	5	These two criminals had stolen all your money.	0
5	I don't know where your money is, but I saw two people observing your house yesterday. I'm not sure, but I think …	6	These two criminals stole all your money.	1
6	I saw everything. It happened within seconds. First, they hit you in the face, and then …	2	These two criminals were stealing all your money.	1

Task 5 B (3 marks)

Read the text and put the described events on a timeline. Do this only with the sentences marked with letters. One is done to help you.

0 [b]   1 [c]   0 [d]   [a]

yesterday evening   yesterday night   two hours ago   now
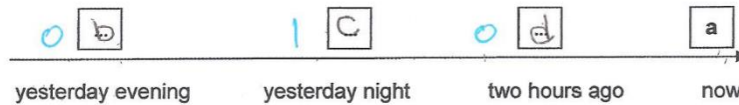
(a) Jeremy is a happy five year old boy, who lives in London with his family.

However, it has not always been like that.

(b) When I spoke to him in his house he was very upset.

He seemed even frightened. So I started a conversation. I found out that

(c) apparently, he had seen a scary ghost with a horrible face standing outside his house.

When I investigated it I found out to Jeremy's relief that the ghost had not been a real ghost. It turned out that

(d) one of the children in his neighborhood had dressed up as a ghost to celebrate Halloween.

What a happy ending!

Task 6 E (17 marks)

Circle the correct form.

1. I'm so happy. My school ……... the award!

        a) has won   b) won   c) had won   d) was winning

2. When I went outside, it ………, so I came back and took my umbrella.

        a) has rained   b) rained   c) had rained   d) was raining

3. Jimmy is 1 year old this month, but he …….. to walk yet.

        a) hasn't learnt   b) didn't learn   c) hadn't learnt   d) wasn't learning

4. This year we are going to Greece again, because we ,……it very much there last year.

        a) have liked   b) liked   c) had liked   d) were liking

5. Before I took the exam I ……. translation for 4 years.

        a) have studied   b) studied   c) had studied   d) was studying

6. She phoned Tom when he ……[1] a test. He was asked to leave the room,

   although he …………[2]

       [1] a) has written   b) wrote   c) had written   d) was writing

       [2] a) hasn't finished   b) didn't finish   c) hadn't finished   d) wasn't finishing

7. If you …………………… about this in the paper you wouldn't believe it.

        a) haven't read   b) didn't read   c) hadn't read   d) was reading

8. This is the funniest thing I ………………… in my life!

        a) have heard   b) heard   c) had heard   d) was hearing

9. Where would I be now if you …………………me when I was totally broken! Thank you!

        a) haven't helped   b) didn't help   c) hadn't helped   d) weren't helping

10. When we arrived at the cinema Jane told me she ………………… this film before.

        a) has seen   b) saw   c) had seen   d) was seeing

11. If only I ………………… a different GCSE option! But now it's too late.

        a) have chosen   b) chose   c) had chosen   d) would have chosen

12. When ……………… World War II …………?

        a) has/ begun   b) did/ begin   c) had/ begun   d) was/ beginning

13. If I'd known you were coming, I ………………some cakes.

        a) will have made   b) make   c) would have made   d) would make

14. He ………………… on his mobile when his car crashed into a lorry.

        a) has been chatting   b) chatted   c) had chatted   d) was chatting

15. My sister was so naïve when she thought her husband ………………… after their wedding.

        a) will have changed   b) changes   c) would have changed   d) would change

16. If you ………………me about the concert, I'd have gone.

        a) have told   b) told   c) would have told   d) had told

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Task 7 C (12 marks)

*Read the text written by a student. There are **6** more grammar mistakes in it. Underline them, correct them, and write what is wrong and why. Use arrows if necessary. Please see example below.*

corr (3)

Text	What is wrong and why + your corrections
Mary is a young, pretty woman who <u>live</u> in Mexico. She lives there all her life. When she was 22 she rescued a teenager as he was being kidnapped by a gang, and she accidentally killed one of the kidnappers. The paragraph below is taken from a book written about her story.	(lives) -s is needed as it is 3rd person singular in present simple tense.
It was 7th November 2010. When she came back home she was <u>tremble</u> and her forehead was covered with sweat. She couldn't believe that she killed a man. Not her – a fragile, delicate woman, who before that horrible night had never harmed anyone. 'How am I going to live with it?' – she think. She wished she did not go for a walk that night when it happened. <u>Or maybe if one of the policemen had been there, it will not happen.</u> Mary was nervously smoking her cigarette in the dark <u>of</u> her house, thinking of what she had <u>did</u>, when suddenly she heard a knock on the door. It was the Police. They came to check if everything was all right. Nothing was all right, not for her at least.	▷ (Trembling) -ing is needed as it's the 2 persd. ⌐

▷ There shouldn't be or a f. a full stop.

▷ It needs "It wouldn't have happened" because it doesn't make sense like that.

▷ It needs "in" because Mary is in her house inside the house.

▷ It should have "done" because she's thinking about the past. |

Task 8 D (5 marks)

*Match the tenses with their examples and rules. Connect the boxes **with lines.***

6

Grammatical structure	sentence	rule
Present Perfect	We had finished writing.	Used to describe unfinished activities in the past, sometimes interrupted by other activities.
Past Perfect	We were finishing writing.	Used to describe events that happened at a certain time in the past.
Past Simple	We have finished writing.	Used to describe events that have an effect now.
Past Continuous	We would have finished writing.	Used to make hypothesis about events in the past - things that really did not happen.
3rd Conditional	We finished writing.	Used to describe events that happened before some other events in the past.

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POST-TEST – PARTICIPATOR'S COPY – 55 MNS

Task1. G (20marks)   _Name.._ ▮▮▮▮▮ .... _Tutor group._ ▮▮

Complete these sentences. Use the verbs in brackets in the right grammatical form.

1. My friend is a keen traveler. He .had. visited..(visit) 15 countries so far. ◯

2. If Tom had bought the ticket, he .would. have. entered (enter) the yesterday's competition.

3. Last night at 11pm my neighbours ..Listened....(listen) to some loud music. ◯

4. Mark is my old friend. I .have. known (know) him for 7 years now.

5. Before I went to China I ..Studied..(study) the language for 2 years. ◯

6. I'm not sure why you lost your job, but knowing you it .might. have. been (must be) poor attendance and punctuality.

7. The fire alarm started when I .was. writing.(write) an exam, so I didn't finish it.

8. If you .had. told...(tell) me yesterday about the test I wouldn't be in trouble now.

9. When my late grandfather turned 90 years old he slowly started forgetting everyone he .had. met..(meet) in his life. I am so sorry he passed away. have

10. Last year we .visited..(visit) a great place. ◯

11. When I spoke to Eric last night, he said that he .has. never. been (never go) abroad before. had   wouldn't have

12. If no one .invented....(invent) the wheel, Henry Ford .made.........(make) the first car in the world.

13. I .could. not. (cannot) come to see you yesterday at 3.30 because I .had. do to do (do) my homework in the library. ◯

14. My boyfriend .have. changed.......(change) jobs six times this year! ◯

15. When I came home the box was empty. The children .have. eaten..(eat) all the sweets! ◯

16. –What would the United Kingdom do now if it ...took.......(take) Euro in 2002? – I   had don't know. With the current crisis, I'm happy that they .had made.. (make) decision not to. ◯

17. Do you think that Marylin Monroe, who died in 1962 .liked...........(like) to star in   would have modern films?
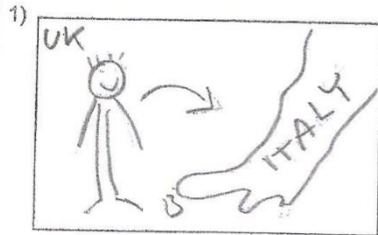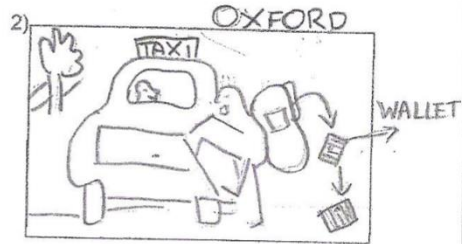
18 + 17 + 1

386

Task 2. F 6 marks

Look at the pictures. They tell a story. Without changing the order of the pictures complete the captions. Use the words provided. Write 1-2 sentences for each picture.
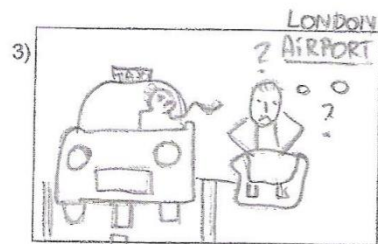
My first trip abroad.

1) Last year I ...name...... ( )
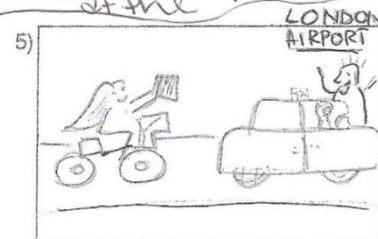
...been to............to Italy.

2) As I ...was going into the taxi

my wallet... fell out.....

3) When ... It remembered

I came last of the

arrived at the Airport

at the

4) I remembered that ...I had...

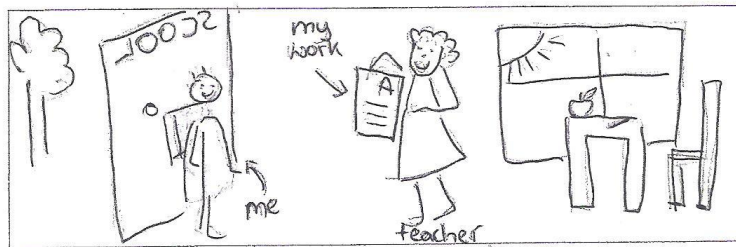...put it........into my bag.

5) Then my sister... drove on her
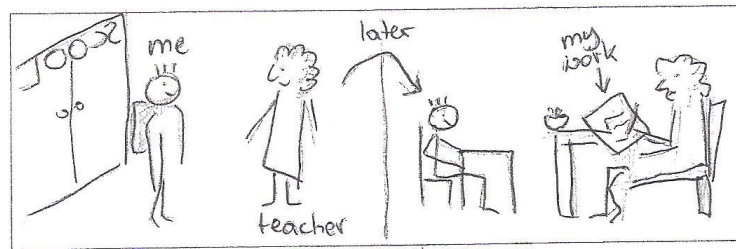
bike and ...gerve me the

wallet.
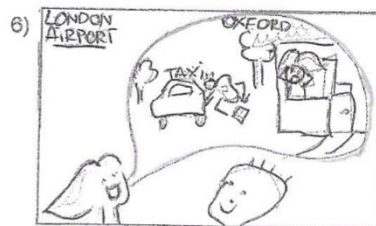
6) She said ...it fell out....

when I got into

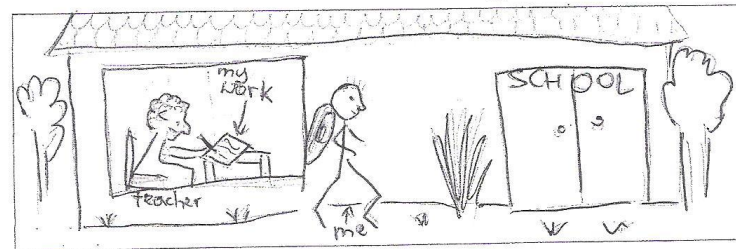the taxi.

Task3 H (3 marks)

The scenes are illustrating situations from the past. Fill in the sentences with the correct form of the verb '*mark*' to describe them.

When I came to school the teacher ...~~should~~ marked... my work.   ⓪

When I came to school the teacher ...~~was marki~~ didn't ...my work.   ⓪

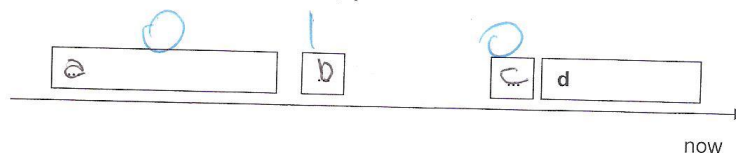When I came to school the teacher was marking my work.   ①

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Task 4 A (6 marks)

Match the sentences on the right with the ones on the left so that they fit the context. Put the corresponding number in each box.

1	It is your fault that we will need to sleep in the car! If you had told me about your problems with booking, I'm sure…	3	I booked a hotel. ○
2	It's a bit late for you to tell me I can't go anywhere. I haven't paid for my holidays yet, but what if I had paid already? For example…	5	I have booked a hotel. ○
3	I am planning my trip. I will need to pay for many things while organizing this. So far …	1	I would have booked a hotel. |
4	The weather was horrible, and all the students who were sleeping in the tents were cold and wet. I was so happy that…	6	I was booking a hotel. |
5	When we finally decided where to go, ….	2	I might have booked a hotel. |
6	I went on the travel agent's website, entered my credit card details, and then suddenly the computer crashed just as …	4	I had booked a hotel. |

Task 5 B (3 marks)

Read the text and put the described events on a timeline. Do this only with the sentences marked with letters. One is done to help you.

```
 _____        ___        _____
|   a    |      | b |      | c | d |
 ‾‾‾‾‾‾‾‾        ‾‾‾        ‾‾‾‾‾‾‾
———————————————————————————————————————>
                                      now
```

(a) For my last birthday I got a really cool present from my wife – a key fob that could be located by whistling.

The present was spot on because

(b) by that time I had lost my car keys and my house keys several times.

My mum warned her that

(c) I had always been like that.

(d) Since that time I haven't lost my keys even once!

What a fantastic gift!

Task 6 E (7 marks)
Circle the correct form

1. This week they are hoping to move to their new house they ………. last month.
   a) have bought   b) bought   c) had bought   d) were buying

2. Before they became flight attendants they ……. for 10 months.
   a) have trained   b) trained   c) had trained   d) were training

3. When I ……[1] my soup I spotted a long black hair in it. I left the restaurant although I was still hungry and I ……. [2] my meal.
   [1] a) has eaten   b) ate   c) had eaten   d) was eating
   [2] a) hasn't finished   b) didn't finish   c) hadn't finished   d) wasn't finishing

4. It is a disaster! My favourite team …….. the match!
   a) has lost   b) lost   c) had lost   d) was winning

5. When I went outside, it ………, so I decided to stay in.
   a) has snowed   b) snowed   c) had snowed   d) was snowing

6. Anna's exam is next week, but she …….. revising yet.
   a) hasn't started   b) didn't start   c) hadn't started   d) wasn't starting

7. If you ………………. me about the party I wouldn't even know that she is organizing it.
   a) haven't told   b) didn't tell   c) hadn't told   d) wasn't telling

8. That is the most boring book I ………………….. in my life.
   a) have read   b) read   c) had read   d) was reading

9. I wouldn't have survived if you ………………….. me from this accident last night.
   a) have not saved   b) did not save   c) had not saved   d) was not saving

10. When I saw her in the pub I realized I ……………… her somewhere before.
    a) have met   b) met   c) had met   d) was meeting

11. If only I ………………….. to his advice! Now it is too late, and I lost everything.
    a) have listened   b) listened   c) had listened   d) was listening

12. When …………………you …………………. to this country?
    a) have/ come   b) did/ come   c) had /come   d) were / coming

13. If she'd known that it was such a difficult course, she ……………… a different subject.
    a) will have chosen   b) chose   c) would have chosen   d) would choose

14. Tim …………………….. a bath when the phone rang. Fortunately his mum picked it up for him.
    a) has had   b) had   c) had had   d) was having

15. I gave her my new dress, and she promised she ……………… it after the prom.
    a) has returned   b) returned   c) will return   d) would return

16. If you …………………me that you needed my help, I'd come, but I didn't know.
    a) have told   b) told   c) would have told   d) had told

Task 7 C (12 marks)

*Read the text written by a student. There are **6 more** grammar mistakes in it. Underline them, correct them, and write what is wrong and why. Use arrows if necessary. Please see the example below.*

Lov → ②

Text	What is wrong and why + your corrections
Keith is a nice, 22-year-old chap who <u>live</u> in London. He shares a flat with his two friends – Tom and Bob, <u>whom</u> he <u>knows</u> since he was a teenager. Keith can't afford to rent a flat on his own, and he is happy to share the bills with his friends, although they have some bad habits which <u>annoy</u> Keith a lot. Last week, for example, when <u>Keith studying</u> for his exams, Tom turned on the music so loud that one of the neighbours, an old lady have come to complain. Tom told her that he <u>has listened</u> his music so loud for years and he would not stop just because she was not happy about it. The old woman had no other choice but to move out. But before she did, there were many more parties since that complaint. Poor Keith! If he didn't spend all his money on travelling the world in his gap year, he would have <u>take</u> a mortgage to buy his own flat by now.	(lives) -s is needed as it is 3rd person singular in present simple tense....................... → who is needed as it's 3rd person "known" – It should be that because it's past tense. → It should be "annoys" as it's 3rd person singular in present. → was is needed because it's past tense. → It "needs" "has been listening" because a situation in the past is being described. → Taken is needed as it's past perfect.

Task 8 D (5 marks)

Match the tenses with their examples and rules. Connect the boxes with lines.

①

Grammatical structure	example	rule
3rd Conditional A	You had started the fight.	Used to describe unfinished activities in the past, sometimes interrupted by other activities. B
Past Perfect B.	You were starting the fight.	Used to make hypothesis about events in the past - things that really did not happen. D
Past Simple C	You have started the fight.	Used to describe events that have an effect now. E
Past Continuous D	You would have started the fight.	Used to describe events that happened at a certain time in the past. A
Present Perfect E	You started the fight.	Used to describe events that happened before some other events in the past. C

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Task1. G (20marks)   Name.................................... Tutor group.

Complete these sentences. Use the verbs in brackets in the correct grammatical form.

1. My sister is a writer. She ...wrote...........(write) twelve books so far.

2. If you had studied the book carefully, you would've ^ passed.....(pass) the exam yesterday.

3. I couldn't pick up your phone yesterday at 10 am, because I ...was writing...(write) a test at school.

4. I know Oxford very well. I have been living...(live) here for 3 years now.

5. When I became a teacher I ...already ^ worked....(already work) at school as a TA for 2 years.

6. I'm not sure why you had detention yesterday, but I think it ...could be....(can be) because of the fight you had last Monday.

7. The teacher caught me as I ...cheated....(cheat) in the test.

8. If I had done....(do) my homework yesterday, I my teacher wouldn't be angry now.

9. When I lost my job as a postman, I ended up spending all the money I ...saved............ (save) while working at a post office.

10. Last week I ...met.........(meet) a great person.

11. I spoke to my grandma last night, after her birthday party, and she said she had never got ^...(never get) such beautiful flowers before.

12. If no one ...took............(take) part in the cross-country competition last week we would have been...(be) disappointed. Luckily, plenty of students came.

13. I couldn't (cannot) see you yesterday in the afternoon, because I was ^ helping.......(help) my mum preparing my little brother's birthday party.

14. I want to buy all Harry Potter books. So far I ...bought.... (buy) three for my collection.

15. When I came home the house was empty. Some burglars ...stole............(steal) all the furniture!

16. –What would USA look like now if people choose..Mit Romney (chose) instead of Obama in the last elections? – I don't know. I'm happy that they made........ (make) decision to choose Obama.

17. Do you think that King Henry VIII, who became the Head of The Church of England in 16th century , would've liked.......(like) the idea of women priests?
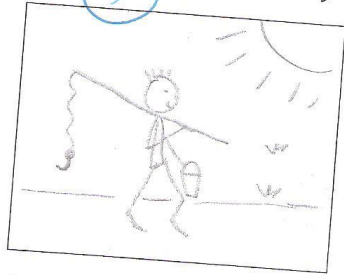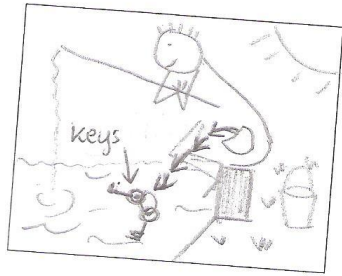
21 + 18 + 6.5

Task 2. F 6 marks

Look at the pictures. They tell a story. Without changing the order of the pictures complete the captions. Use the words provided. Write 1-2 sentences for each picture.
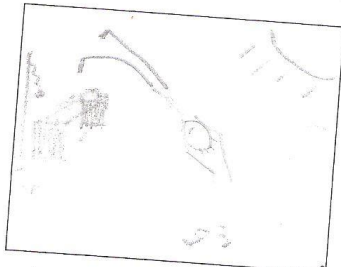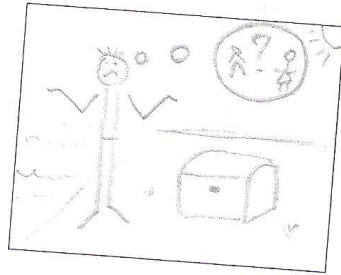
'My fishing adventure'

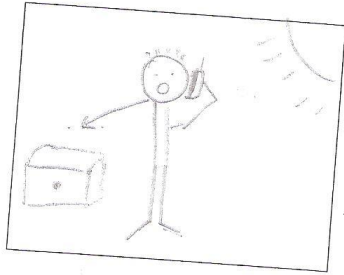One day I _got my fishing Rod and went_ fishing.

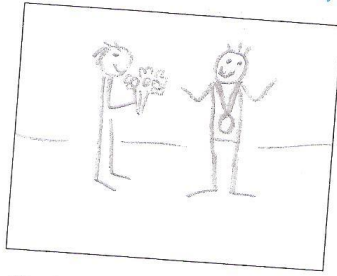While I _was fishing_ my keys _fell into the water._

I _dived into the_ _pond_, but

Instead of the keys I found a box.
It was full of strange old coins.

I didn't know who _it belonged to_ _because no one_ ~~or what was~~ _was_ there.

So I phoned the police and told them that _I had found_ _a box full of coins._

The box is now in a museum, and today I _won_ a medal! for finding it.

Task 6 E (7 marks)
Circle the correct form

1. Tomorrow we are going on holidays we .... last week.
   a) have booked   b) booked   (c) had booked)   d) were booking

2. Before I became a teacher I .... for five years.
   (a) have studied) b) studied   c) had studied   d) was studying

3. When I ......¹ coca cola my mum noticed me and said it was not healthy at all. She threw my half-full bottle to the bin, although I ....² it all, and there was plenty left.
   ¹ a) have drunk   b) drank   c) had drunk   (d) was drinking)
   ² (a) haven't drunk) b) didn't drink   c) hadn't drunk   d) wasn't drinking

4. I'm so happy! We .... the match! At last!
   a) have won   (b) won)   c) had won   d) were winning

5. When I went outside, it .... heavily. I didn't have an umbrella, so I took a taxi.
   a) has rained   b) rained   c) had rained   (d) was raining)

6. Tommy has a lot of homework set for tomorrow, but he .... it yet.
   (a) hasn't started)   b) didn't start   c) hadn't started   d) wasn't starting

7. If you .... to England a few years ago, you wouldn't speak English now.
   a) haven't come   b) didn't come   (c) hadn't come)   d) wasn't coming

8. That is the worst film I .... in my life.
   (a) have seen)   b) saw   c) had seen   d) was seeing

9. I wouldn't have done my homework if you .... me. Thank you!
   a) have not helped   (b) did not help)   c) had not helped   d) was not helpng

10. When I heard that song last night I realized I .... it somewhere before.
    (a) have heard)   b) heard   (c) had heard)   d) was hearing

11. If only I .... harder last term! Now it is too late, and I failed my exams.
    a) have worked   (b) worked)   c) had worked   d) was working

12. When ....you .... this school?
    a) have / joined   (b) did / join)   c) had / joined   d) were / joining

13. If he had known that German was such a difficult language, he .... French.
    a) will have chosen   b) chose   (c) would have chosen)   d) would choose

14. Rob .... a shower, and was all covered in soap when a pipe broke and flooded the whole bathroom.
    a) has had   (b) had)   c) had had   d) was having

15. He had to go back home, but he promised he .... me a letter soon.
    a) has sent   b) sent   c) will send   (d) would send)

16. If I .... that you were in town I would have contacted you, but I didn't. Sorry.
    a) have known   b) knew   c) would have known   (d) had known)

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Task 4 A (6 marks)

Match the sentences on the right with the ones on the left so that they fit the context. Put the corresponding number in each box.

|			
1	I totally forgot about grandma's birthday, but you should have told me. I know she likes flowers, and if you had reminded me about it I am sure …	5	I bought her some flowers.
2	I know it was Ivy's birthday yesterday. I didn't buy her anything, because she is a bad person. Perhaps if she was nicer …	3	I have bought her some flowers.
3	It's my girlfriend's birthday today. I want to buy her a lot of presents. So far …	1	I would have bought her some flowers.
4	After an argument between my girlfriend and me everyone was surprised to see us together again yesterday. She wasn't angry with me anymore because...	6	I was buying her some flowers.
5	My friend helped me to get a good job, so, when I got my first money, ….	2	I might have bought her some flowers.
6	It was Valentine's Day, and I wanted to make a surprise for my girlfriend, but unfortunately she came to the shop and saw me just as ….	4	I had bought her some flowers.

6

Task 5 B (3 marks)

Read the text and put the described events on a timeline. **Do this only with the sentences marked with letters.** *One is done to help you.*

d	b	c		a

now

3
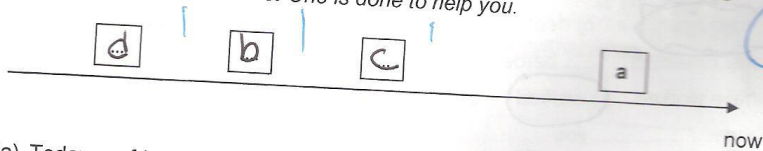
(a) Today my friend, Jim has phoned me and said he was in prison!

I couldn't believe it because he is a decent man. Then he told me what had happened.

When he was coming back from his holidays abroad,

(b) a policeman arrested him for having some drugs.

(c) At the police station, he said that

(d) a nice girl had asked him to take some medicine to England for her ill grandma.

He agreed not knowing that it was drugs not medicine.
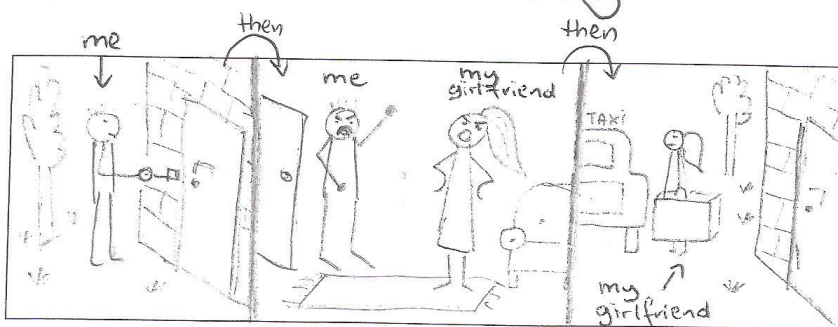
395

Task3 H (3 marks)

The scenes illustrate situations from **the past**. Fill in the sentences with the correct form of the verb '***move***' to describe them.
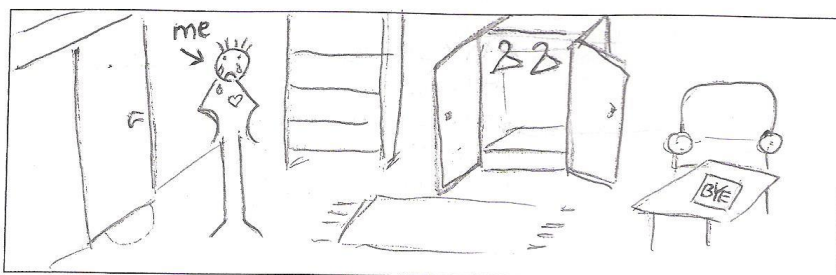
When I came home my girlfriend .....moved...................out. ◯
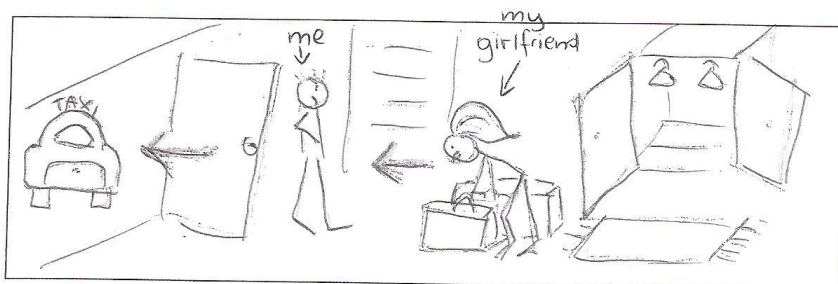
When I came home my girlfriend was moving......out. ②

When I came home my girlfriend ...already moved....out.

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Task 7 C (12 marks)

*Read the text written by a student. There are **6 more** grammar mistakes in it. Underline them, correct them, and write what is wrong and why. Use arrows if necessary. Please see the example below.*

Corr ③ mete ⓪,⑤

Text	What is wrong and why + your corrections
Robert is a teenager. He <u>live</u> with his older brother in a flat in Birmingham. He knows this city very well, because he <u>lives</u> there all his life. He used to like this place, but he has recently got more and more bored with his life there. This started <u>when one day</u>, while he <u>listening</u> to the radio, he heard about a boy who became a millionaire after he has come to Los Angeles. In the interview the boy, who is now a famous actor, <u>say</u> about how this happened that he had become such a popular star. He admitted that it hadn't been easy, and said that he applied for many jobs there before he had been successful. "If I wasn't so determined – he said – I <u>will never</u> become the person I am at the moment!"	(lives) -s is needed as it is 3rd person singular in present simple tense. "lived" because it's past tense shouldn't be a "when" should be "was listening" because it's past.

Handwritten annotations in left margin:
"Said" past tense of say it "said".
It ~~should~~ should've "would have never"

Task 8 D (5 marks)

Match the tenses with their examples and rules. Connect the boxes with lines.

(marginal letters: A B C D E ; circled 6 next to "rule")

Grammatical structure	example	rule
Past Simple	He had stayed at a hotel. *C*	Used to describe events that happened before some other events in the past. *C*
Past Perfect	He was staying at a hotel. *E*	Used to make hypothesis about events in the past - things that really did not happen. *D*
3rd Conditional	He has stayed at a hotel. *B*	Used to describe events that have an effect now. *B*
Past Continuous	He would have stayed at a hotel. *D*	Used to describe events that happened at a certain time in the past. *A*
Present Perfect	He stayed at a hotel. *A*	Used to describe unfinished activities in the past, sometimes interrupted by other activities *E*

Appendix D

Teaching materials

Content:

- Sample lesson plans for Isolated FFI (grammar teaching part)

- Sample lesson plans for Integrated FFI

- Sample materials used in the lessons.

Isolated FFI sample lesson plans

a) Context session and FFI lesson

Aim: to provide the context for and to notice different past tenses.

The aim of the first part (Stage 0) of this lesson is to provide a necessary communicative context for the Isolated FFI. In this case it was the film 'Strangers' directed by E. Tadmor, and G. Nattiv.

Lesson stage	procedures	Techniques applied
Warm up	Discussion on means of transport and how safe or dangerous they can be.	Pre FFI – setting the scene, providing the CLT context common to all students
Stage 0	Watch the film "Strangers" telling a story of Muslim and Jewish men who have to unite to defend themselves against a Neo Nazi group.	
Stage 0	Discussion about the film. Discussion about discrimination.	
Stage 1	Input – retelling the story together using past simple, past continuous and past perfect in order to prepare the students to help them start writing.	• oral feedback – direct CF, • elicitation of the correct forms, • metalinguistic input, • direct instruction in past perfect
Stage 2	Students do a grammar task from 'New First Certificate Masterclass Student's Book (page 66 task 1), looking at past tenses in details (unconnected sentences about the past– explaining, and eliciting correct interpretation of the sentences, and naming the tenses).	• metalinguistic instruction – naming tenses, discussion on use and formation of them. • time graph and pictures on the board as visual illustration of the meaning and use of particular structures.
Stage 3	Learners write what happened in the story. Their task is to use past tenses to report a story. To elicit past perfect the students are required to finish the story with the sentence "They were successful because they…"	• teacher monitors, and helps students with various linguistic problems, but also helps them to organize the facts • oral feedback • pair work

b) FFI lesson

Aim: to practise using different tenses to express the past

Lesson stage	procedures	Techniques applied
Warm up	Students try to remember what they did last lesson – a short discussion with past forms input from the teacher.	• explicit direct CF as well as • recast (occasionally)
Stage 1	Students read each other's work to correct mistakes. Students work individually, but the teacher monitors and responds to questions. While reading students discuss among themselves how successful the pieces of work are.	• peer correction, • kinaesthetic approach – students walk from one piece of work to another, and using green pens they comment on them, and correct mistakes. • TBLT – students play both responding as well as initiating roles.
Stage 2	The students look at their peer corrected work. They decide which work was the best and why.	• Awareness raising (noticing)
Stage 3	The students look at the photocopy of their work corrected by the teacher, and copy the corrected sentences into their books. They can also write some notes if they wish.	• written focused explicit and direct CF • metalinguistic CF
Stage 4	Students match sentences with illustrations showing different situations	• input processing task – processing instruction • first sentences draw on the CLT activity from the previous lesson – communicative context
Stage 5	Students act out some of the sentences from the PPT to understand the difference in meaning achieved by manipulating the tenses.	• metalinguistic instruction • group work – role play
Stage 6	Discussion stage – students orally reflect on events from their life – they use past perfect tense.	• direct CF, • elicitation of the correct form
Stage 7	Spotting past perfect in the sentences Students together work out the rule for using past perfect.	• noticing • metalinguistic input

c) FFI lesson

Aim: to practice using 3ʳᵈ conditional and probability in the past

Lesson stage	procedures	Techniques applied
Warm up	Small talk, students look at their notes from the last lesson.	• noticing (task continued from last lesson)
Stage 1	Students write the summary of the story they watched in the last lesson (Context lesson), trying to avoid the mistakes they made last that time.	• teacher provides some ongoing oral explicit feedback and instruction as and when required by students
Stage 2	Students compare their work to see if they have made fewer mistakes this time.	• noticing
Stage 3	Learners work on the summary written by the teacher. They need to choose correct grammatical forms to go with the story -a multiple choice activity.	• teacher provides explicit oral instruction in past tenses as needed by students. • (the activity done in pairs)
Stage 4	The students read the sentences and the whole group discusses if the form used is or is not correct and why. The teacher, together with the students establishes the correct form.	• metalinguistic knowledge, • instruction in form, • visual representation of the use of the tenses in a form of a time graph, • elicitation of the correct form
Stage 5	Students compare their finished task with the text on the Smartboard	• text enhancement – past forms in bold
Stage 6	Students chose between different types of conditionals to illustrate a picture in the PPT (*ibid*).	• processing instruction elements, but with immediate feedback, • metalinguistic information • the task uses sentences based on the story they watched two weeks ago (the CLT context element of the programme)
Stage 7	PPT (*ibid*)- Students analyse two meanings of modal verb 'must' – obligation and probability; they read a joke based on that division, and then analyse sentences to identify the purpose of 'must' in each of them. Also, with teacher's guidance they identify which sentences describe an event in the past and which relate to 'here and now'.	• display questions, • consciousness raising
Stage 8	Students choose the correct sentences which express probability in the past to match the situation in the pictures.	• processing instruction elements with the discussion about the correct forms

Integrated FFI

a) FFI Lesson (Context and FFI delivered simultaneously)

Aim: to provide the context for and to notice different past tenses.

Lesson stage	procedures	Techniques applied
Warm up	Students are asked to think and write about an event in the past that has changed everything for them.	- heavy communicative purpose of the discussion - referential questions - natural turn taking - students play both responding as well as initiating roles - direct oral CF - explicit instruction on past perfect as students struggle to build correct sentences. - use of visual aids, such as a time graph, to illustrate the meaning of past perfect and past simple.
Stage 1	The students watch the film 'Strangers' and briefly say whether they like it and what the film was about.	- natural turn taking - display as well as referential questions
Stage 2	Students write on poster paper what the film was about and note all the facts they can remember.	- pair work - adjacent pairs - peer monitoring encouraged - teacher recalls some facts and clarifies the context of the film - some display questions to aid the above
Stage 3	Students swap places and in pairs add on the posters other facts from the film that are missing there.	- peer correction - kinaesthetic element - natural turn taking - focus on meaning and form - metalinguistic explanation of tenses used
Stage 4	Students comment orally on the contribution of other pairs.	- communicative element - peer referential questions - negotiation of the meaning
Stage 5	Students orally prepare for the writing task.	- teacher clarifies use of various tenses as the students make mistakes - brief explanation - recast
Stage 6	One pair is asked to write the story in a linear order, the other one is asked to write	students write in pairs

	it retrospectively.	Retrospection serves the purpose of using more of the past perfect tense, which can be then used for noticing purposes at later stages of this activity.
		(In the main experiment, with larger groups of participants, more variations of the retrospection may be employed – starting retelling from the end, middle of the story, etc).
		• teacher provides help when and as requested.
		• adjacency pairs

b) FFI lesson (Context and FFI delivered simultaneously)

Aim: to practise using different tenses to express the past

Lesson stage	procedures	Techniques applied
Warm up	The students talk about the film they watched last lesson.	• the teacher elicits retelling the story using past tenses • recasts
Stage 1	The students look at their own work from last week – the story. They are asked to proofread it and correct any mistakes they can spot, both in meaning as well as in form.	• pair work • adjacent pairs
Stage 2	Then the students swap work with another pairs and, using green pens, write comments on their work, and correct any mistakes they can see.	• pair work • teacher helps and provides explanation when asked. • display questions
Stage 3	Students return the work to its authors. Then they look at peer correction. They discuss which story is more interesting and why. The most interesting story is voted for.	• natural turn taking • noticing (the gap)
Stage 4	Students get the photocopy of their original story they wrote yesterday with teacher's comments and study their mistakes	• noticing (the gap)
Stage 5	The teacher tells the students a story from her life, about being burgled and how the burglars had left horrible mess. The story introduces students to the next activity and gives them some past perfect input.	• enhanced oral input – accumulative use of past perfect tense.

Stage 6	Students choose a card. Their task is to write on the reverse what had happened in the situation described in the card.	• TBLT
Stage 7	Students then circulate the cards passing them clockwise, and each student tries to guess what had happened, reading the description of the consequences written on the card by another student, but not being able to access what is printed on the reverse of the card. As the cards come back to their 'owners' the students check who was closest to the truth reading other students' contributions and discussing them together.	• TBLT • communicative purpose, with the induced target structures use • natural turn taking possibility • teacher's feedback
Stage 8	The teacher reads a story similar to the ones described in the previous task, and students need to make notes as they listen to it twice. Then in pairs they compare their notes, and recreate the original story.	• TBLT – the objective is to have all facts included in the writing • dictogloss • pairwork
Stage 9	Students swap their work in pairs, get the printed text of the story and check their colleagues' work against the original text. The targeted forms are printed bold in the story. The group that is more faithful to the original wins.	• TBLT • peer correction • pair work • text enhancement • noticing • direct CF • brief explanation of the rules by the teacher as necessary

c) FFI lesson (Context and FFI delivered simultaneously)

Aim: to practice using 3rd conditional and probability in the past

Lesson stage	Procedures	Techniques applied
Warm up	The students recall what they were doing last lesson.	• display questions
Stage 1	Short discussion about swear words.	• to some extent students control topic progression and direction, • referential questions • natural turn taking
Stage 2	Students watch a short film 'The Crush' telling a story of a 8-year-old boy who falls in love with his school teacher.	• providing the CLT context

Stage 3	They discuss the film.	• communicative purpose • natural turn taking • meaning oriented activity • referential and display questions (to check understanding) • recast • elicitation of the correct forms
Stage 4	The teacher draws students' attention to one of the sentences the main hero said in the film, and asks the students to finish that sentence in writing.	• noticing – 3rd conditional • eliciting the correct form • brief explanation of the use of that structure
Stage 5	Students recall what they expected to happen next at different stages of the film, and say what could have happened.	• reference questions • explicit CF • eliciting of the correct forms
Stage 6	Students move around the class and write on poster paper their answer to each of the four question headings. The task is to write their predictions in response to the questions. Having answered each question, they fold the paper so that the next person to write the answer cannot read other answers.	• explicit CF during the task • meaning oriented task • teacher's CF
Stage 7	When everyone have written their response, each student reads all answers on a sheet in front of them (unfolding them first), and decides who has given the most unusual, interesting, or longest answer. The students discuss grammar mistakes at the same time.	• brief, reactive CF • focus primarily on meaning • TBLT
Stage 8	The teacher provides some instruction on the erroneous structures in the students' work (posters), and asks students to correct the mistakes.	• explicit instruction • explicit focused oral CF provided by the teacher • peer correction – written feedback

Integrated FFI writing activity cards*:

Parents arrive home from holiday having left their teenage son in charge of the house. They soon realize he's had a big party while they have been away. Start: When they arrived home they saw...

A man arrived home having left his new puppy on its own for the first time. Start: When he arrived home he saw...

Someone arrived home to discover his/her partner has clearly found out about the affair he/she'd been having with his/her secretary. Start: When s/he arrived home s/he saw...

A teacher came back into the class and realized she shouldn't have left the students on their own for that long. Start: She walked back in and saw...

FFI ISO PPT

Isolated FFI PowerPoint:

Slide 1

Past tenses.

Slide 2

Choose the correct sentence to illustrate the situation below:

1. When he had read the newspaper some hooligans sprayed the Nazi symbol on it.
1. While he was reading a newspaper some hooligans sprayed the Nazi symbol on it.

(Image removed for copyright reasons)

Slide 3

Choose the correct sentence to illustrate the situation below:

- 1. When the phone was going off the Nazis noticed the other man.
- 2. When the phone went off, the Nazis noticed the other man.
- 3. When the phone went off the Nazis had noticed the other man.

(Images removed for copyright reasons)

Slide 4

Choose the correct sentence to illustrate the situation below:

- 1. They managed to run away because they were planning to do it together.
- 2. They had managed to run away because they planned to do it together.
- They managed to run away because they had planned to do it together.

(Images removed for copyright reasons)

Slide 5

Choose the correct sentence:

1. When Anna finally called Rob, he fell asleep.
2. When Anna finally called Rob he has fallen asleep.
3. When Anna finally called Rob, he had fallen asleep.
4. When Anna finally called Rob he was falling asleep.

(Images removed for copyright reasons)

Slide 6

Choose the correct sentence:

1. When I got to the church the wedding was starting.
2. When I got to the church the wedding started.
3. When I got to the church the wedding had already started.

(Images removed for copyright reasons)

Choose the correct sentence:

1. When Ann brought me some food I had already had my dinner.
2. When Ann brought some food I was having my dinner.
3. When Ann brought some food I had my dinner.

(Images removed for copyright reasons)

7

Choose the correct sentence:

1. While I was taking a shower the phone rang.
2. While I was taking a shower the phone was ringing.
3. While I was taking a shower the phone had rung.

(Images removed for copyright reasons)

8

Go over the sentences in the slides and try to act their meaning.

1. When Anna finally called Rob, he fell asleep..
2. When Anna finally called Rob, he had fallen asleep.
3. When Anna finally called Rob he was falling asleep.
4. When I got to the church the wedding was starting.
5. When I got to the church the wedding started.
6. When I got to the church the wedding had already started.

9

Go over the sentences in the slides and try to act their meaning.

1. When Ann brought me some food I had already had my dinner.
2. When Ann brought some food I was having my dinner.
3. When Ann brought some food I had my dinner.
4. While I was taking a shower the phone rang.
5. While I was taking a shower the phone was ringing.
6. While I was taking a shower the phone had rung.

10

Have you ever experienced any of the folllowing?

- You heard a joke but you didn't laugh because you had heard it before.
- You came to an exam when it had already started.
- You were listening to a teacher when your telephone rang.
- You learnt very hard for a test and you passed it very well.
- You didn't do well in a test although you had studied hard for it.
- You were told off by a teacher because you were chewing.

11

FFI INT PPT

Integrated FFI PowerPoint:

The Crush
2011 award winning Irish film
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bbGmy9ZfmuY

(Image removed for copyright reasons)

- The boy said:
'I would have taken you for lunch. I woud have missed the football and taken you for lunch'
- What did he mean by that?

Finish the sentence:

- I woud have missed the football and taken you for lunch if .....

(Image removed for copyright reasons)

What was your initial thought when you…

- … saw Ardal seeing his dad hiding the gun?
- … saw Ardal with the gun?
- …heard the bang?

Write your ideas in your book.

(Image removed for copyright reasons)

- Do you think the gun could have been real?

- Do you think Miss Purdy should have decided to tell Ardal's parents about the incident?

- Do you think her fiance would have married her if Ardel hadn't interfered?

Discuss…

(Image removed for copyright reasons)

What would have happened if…

- Write your ideas in the posters under each heading provided.
- When you finish writing, fold the poster so that others can't see your ideas.
- When you have written your ideas on each poster, unfold all of them and read the answers.
- Whose ideas are most down to earth? Whose are most crazy?
- Do you think such situation could have really happened?

- The film starts with the following scene.

(Image removed for copyright reasons)

- Do you think the words were there for a reason?

FFI INT

Questions used on posters in one of the tasks in Integrated FFI*:

What could have happened if Ardel's dad hadn't bought him the toy gun?

What could have happened if Ardel's dad was not a security guard?

What could have happened if the man hadn't attended the duel?

What could have happened if Ardel's parents had spent more time with him chatting over dinner?

*The use of "could" instead of "would" or "might" was applied in order to practise this particular structure, and could be justified in the teaching context.

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FFI ISO PPT

Isolated FFI PowerPoint:

Past tenses

Check your work

I can remember it very clearly. It **happened** in Paris. One evening, when I **was coming** back from work reading my favourite newspaper on a half empty tube, a Jewish man **sat** on the seat next to mine. It wasn't anything special, as I **knew** how multicultural Paris was. There was just something rude in his behaviour, something annoying about him, that I **had never experienced** before. He **was behaving** provocatively, and **looked** at me once or twice exposing his Jewish pendant to manifest his culture and religion. At first, I **thought** I knew that man, and I tried to think when I might **have seen** him. But soon I realized that he was a stranger, and that I **had never met** him in my life. At that time, if someone **had told** me the end of this story, I **would have thought** of it as a joke.

Conditionals

- Grandpa, what would you do, if grandma said 'No' when you proposed to her?
- Grandpa, what would you have done if grandma had said 'No' when you proposed to her?

(Images removed for copyright reasons)

Choose a true statement about yourself.

(Image removed for copyright reasons)

1. If I hadn't watched the film 'Strangers' I couldn't have written its summary.
2. If I didn't watch the film 'Strangers' I couldn't write its summary.
3. If I don't watch the film 'Strangers' I can not write its summary.

Is this joke funny? Why?

- A: Hi mate! How are you doing?
- B: Not too bad, mate. I've got married this month.
- A: You must be happy!
- B: Yeah, I must…

(Images removed for copyright reasons)

In what way are these 'musts' different?

1. Mrs Gwiazda **must** be really tired today – she has worked so hard to prepare today's lesson for us.
2. Mrs Gwiazda **must** have spent hours cuttig and pasting pictures into this powerpoint.
3. Mrs Gwiazda **must** give me some chocolate after this lesson or I will never come here again.

Which sentence is correct?

- The man in the story must have been a racist, as he didn't like the Muslim man.
- The man in the story must be a racist as he didn't like the Muslim man.

(Image removed for copyright reasons)

FFI ISO

Isolated FFI task:

ISO
Read the story and fill in the gaps with the most suitable option.

I can remember it very clearly. It 1)……………….. in Paris. One evening when I 2)……………….. back from work reading my favourite newspaper on a half empty tube, a Jewish man 3)……………. next to me. It wasn't anything special as I 4)……………….. how multicultural Paris was. There was just something rude in his behaviour, something annoying about him, that I 5)……………….. before. He 6)……………….. provocatively and 7)……………….. at me once or twice exposing his Jewish pendant to manifest his culture and religion. First, I 8)……………. I knew that man, and I tried to think when I might 9)……………….. him. But soon I realized that he was a stranger and that I 10)……………….. him in my life. At that time if someone 11)……………….. me the end of this story I 12) ………………..…… of it as a joke.

1) a) happen   b) happened   c) was happening   d) had happened

2) a) come   b) came   c) was coming   d) had come

3) a)sits   b) sat   c) was sitting   d)had sat

4) a)know   b) knew   c) was knowing   d)had known

5) a)never experience b) have never experienced   c)never experienced   d)had never experienced

6) a)behaves   b) have behaved   c) was behaving   d)had behaved

7) a)looks   b)looked   c) was looking   d)had looked

8) a)think   b) thought   c) was thinking   d) had thought

9) a)see   b) have seen   c) saw   d)had seen

10)a)never meet   b)never met   c)have never met   d) had never met

11) a)tells   b)have told   c) was telling   d)had told

12) a)will think   b) would think   c) would have thought

Isolated FFI task:

Are these sentences correct? Bid for them 10, 20, 30, 40 or 50 points.

Sentences	Bid for correct	Bid for incorrect	Score
1. If there would have been more people on the train, the Nazi wouldn't have approached the young man.			
2. I would have enjoyed the film a bit more if I had been watching it on a sofa.			
3. The Jewish man wouldn't be in trouble if it hadn't been for his characteristic ringtone.			
4. If I had not watch this film I would regret it now.			
5. If the Nazi hadn't come the Jewish man would have been the main bully.			
6. I would make the film more violent if I directed it.			
7. We wouldn't have a problem now if we had studied conditionals before.			
8. If I was given a choice I wouldn't have watched this film – it was boring.			
9. The men could have called the police if they weren't on a tube deep under the ground.			
10. I would do the same if something like this happen to me.			
	Total:		