HOW MUCH DOES SPOKEN GRAMMAR FIND ITS WAY INTO TURKISH TEACHERS OF ENGLISH?

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Abstract

The last 15 years bear witness an increasing interest in spoken grammar of English and whether and how it should be made use of in English language teaching has been the focus of a growing number of research studies. This study sets out to determine, using a questionnaire and semi-structured interview, whether a) Turkish teachers of English are aware of and use features of spoken grammar in their own communication with other speakers of English and b) teach these features, implicitly or explicitly, in their English classes to their students. It is also asked to teachers where they learned, if any, features of spoken grammar, like ellipsis, vague language, placeholders, etc. to find out the sources where and in what proportion people pick up such spoken grammar features. The results show that Turkish teachers of English use and teach features of spoken grammar but inadequately and much remains to be done in their training in this respect. Some pedagogical implications are offered at the end of the article.

Key Words: *English as a native language, spoken grammar, spoken grammar features, English as a lingua franca, teacher education, Expanding Circle*

İngilizce Konuşma Grameri Türk İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Repertuarında Ne Kadar Yer Almaktadır?

Özet

İngilizce konuşma gramerinin önemi son yıllarda giderek artmakta ve bu gramerin İngilizce öğretiminde nasıl kullanılabileceği ile ilgili pek çok çalışma yapılmaktadır. Bu çalışma, yapılan anket ve mülakatlar ile Türk İngilizce öğretmenlerinin konuşma grameri biçimlerini günlük hayatta kullanıp kullanmadıklarını araştırmaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra, çalışma Türk İngilizce öğretmenlerinin konuşma grameri biçimlerini İngilizce derslerinde öğretip öğretmediklerini de araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Katılımcıların, konuşma grameri biçimlerini hangi kaynaklardan öğrendikleri de araştırmanın diğer amacıdır. Yapılan analizler göstermiştir ki ne kadar yetersiz gözükse de, Türk İngilizce öğretmenleri konuşma grameri biçimlerini belirli oranlarda hem kullanmakta hem de öğretmektedirler. Sonuçlar ışığında, bu çalışma Türk İngilizce öğretmelerinin gerek hizmet öncesi ve gerekse hizmet içi eğitimi hakkında bir dizi öneriler de verecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Konuşma grameri, Konuşma grameri biçimleri, öğretmen eğitimi*

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Introduction

The unprecedented growing of English all over the world has allowed it to become a lingua franca, thereby leading English to be the most universally read and spoken language. Yet, today defining English varies in all three Kachruvian Circle countries. Put simply, while Inner Circle countries conform to ENL patterns (English as a Native Language) and its SGE (spoken grammar of English) features; Outer Circle countries embody more nativized or indigenized English, supporting World Englishes (WEs). Unlike the former two Circles, Expanding Countries are in line with expanding English, becoming a Lingua Franca (ELF) and a widely espoused paradigm.

Since English has today reached beyond an estimated 1 billion L2 users (Crystal, 2000), it should not come as a surprise that 80 per cent of all English teachers are non-native English speaking (NNES) teachers (Canagarajah, 1999). Therefore, NNES teachers are in increasing demand to meet the growing need. In this vein, deciding which abovementioned paradigms teachers to approximate, specifically ENL and ELF, is at issue to be researched over the last few decades. In other words, whether teachers and learners should incorporate ENL or ELF patterns into their repertoire is debated both with regard to sociolinguistic realities and intelligibility framework.

As for the distinction between ENL and ELF, it is apparently obvious. Defined as "a vehicular language spoken by people who do not share a native language" (Mauranen, 2003: 513), ELF is, in fact, "not primarily a language of communication between its native and non-native speakers, but among its non-native speakers" (Jenkins, 2007: 4). Thus, ELF finds a common ground mostly in Expanding Circle countries. In ENL paradigm, on the other hand, native speaker spoken features are suggested to teachers and learners to achieve aestheticity, "efficiency and economy, i.e. fluency" (Mumford, 2009: 142). To wit, linguistic norms of Inner Circle countries or SGE features shape ENL paradigm.

Mumford defines SGE as "those aspects of English associated with spoken language or its written representation" (2009: 137) and as "deviation from written grammar" (Mumford, 2009: 142). Most commonly investigated spoken grammar features in both corpus studies (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad, & Finegan, 1999; Carter and McCarthy, 2006), in research studies (Timmis, 2005; Mumford, 2009), and also used in this study are as follows:

'Headers' direct the listener to what the speaker is saying about and they are used at the beginning of the speech. E.g. **A funny beginning**, is that what we want in a story?

'Tails' are found at the end of the clauses and emphasize what the speaker has stated. They provide the conversation more like a chat. E.g. Jane is a good cook, **she is**.

'Ellipsis' takes place when subjects and verbs are omitted since we posit the target listener will grasp what we mean due to shared background knowledge.

E.g. sounds good to me. (**That** sounds good to me)

'Placeholders' are sometimes found in the middle of the phrases, and they are used when the speaker doesn't remember or know the target vocabulary, which stimulates the listener to hold the place. E.g. I need a *thingummy* for the slide project?

'Lexicogrammatical units' help to keep the conversation channel open. They unite with other structures and form larger syntactic units. E.g. **Well, I mean** it is not big. **It's just like** a mini mall.

'Vague language' is not exactly clear, but native speakers employ it to be more polite and friendly, and to make a less definite statement. *E.g.* I have to talk to director or teacher or **someone like that.**

'Quasi-Grammar' seems actually incorrect in terms of written grammar, but it is usual and correct in spoken grammar. E.g. there **is** lots of cars

In short, one major goal of the present research study is to explore the extent to which NNES teachers in an Expanding Circle country, Turkey, use these SGE features in their interaction with other speakers of English. The other goal of the study is to find out whether NNES teachers teach SGE features in their classes. Further, the main sources where teachers pick up SGE features are also investigated in the present study.

Descriptive Studies

Which paradigm, whether ENL or ELF, teachers should incorporate and conform requires many more descriptive works and detailed analyses of NNES teachers' attitudes to these paradigms. One such descriptive work is Timmis's study (2002) looking into the perceptions of 600 teachers and learners from 45 different countries, asking questions about their attitudes to native and non-native speaker pronunciation, standard grammar, and spoken grammar of English. Timmis found a large majority of the respondents, two thirds of them, prefer to use native speaker features.

In a more precise study, supporting to some extent the findings of Timmis (2002), Jenkins (2009; see Jenkins 2007, ch.6) analyzed the data from 326 respondents in six Expanding Circle countries (Brazil, Spain, Germany, Sweden, China, Japan); three Inner Circle countries (the USA, the UK, Australia), and one from Outer Circle countries (India). Jenkins asked respondents' preferences towards 'standard' UK and USA accents and 'proper' variants of English with regard to their correctness, pleasantness, and international acceptability. Not surprisingly, though, the analysis revealed that non-native accents are found difficult to understand, and thus to maintain intelligibility. Further, a large majority of the respondents supported native speaker variant of English.

Decke-Cornill (2003), in another descriptive study, asked the German teachers of English whether they should adopt ENL or ELF variant and whether native speaker cultural domain, manner and influence in teaching English should change. Still, most teachers concurred with the idea that they feel obliged to teach their classes standard native speaker norms. This result shows that native speaker normative influence is still preferred in today's Expanding Circle countries.

In Murray's survey study (2003); exploring the attitudes of Swiss teachers to Euro-English, native speakers (54.6 %), NNES teachers (41.1%) and full bilinguals (4.3%) participated. The respondents were from German, French, and Italian speaking regions of Switzerland. The results as in the previous studies displayed that NNES teachers did not

find lexico-grammatical formations other than those of ENL variant a proper classroom target. Teachers, namely, had doubts about ELF, but not on ENL patterns.

Further, Sifakis and Sougari (2005) investigated beliefs of 421 Greek teachers of English in three different types of schools (primary, lower secondary, upper-secondary). Sifakis and Sougari looked into teachers' views about pronunciation, their teaching practices, and their perceptions regarding accent-related matters in the framework of ELF. The results mainly revealed that teachers adopt more native-like accent and pronunciation and less like ELF variant.

By the same token, to voice out the views of 37 teachers from China and 38 from Singapore, Goh (2009) did another study and asked the respondents whether British spoken norms keep communication channel open, thus improving speaking performance. As one of the Expanding Circle countries, 87 per cent of Chinese teachers embraced more normative ENL variant and its SGE features. As an Outer Circle country, in Singapore, 58 per cent of Singaporean teachers found SGE features useful. In addition, another 50 per cent believed that those features could improve their spoken language performance.

All these research studies involving teachers mostly from Expanding Circle countries focused on the attitudes of teachers of English regarding ENL and ELF patterns. Although much has already been learned about teachers' views about the paradigms, much more still lies undiscovered. Untouched much is the area of whether NNES teachers in Expanding Circle countries use and, if any, teach SGE features of ENL variant both in their interactions with other non-native speakers and in their classes. Somewhat more specifically, the research questions are as follows:

a) Do teachers of English in Turkey use SGE features of ENL variant in their usual communication with other speakers of English?

b) Do teachers of English in Turkey teach these features in their classes? If yes, how often?

c) Is there a correlation between teachers' use of SGE features and the extent of their teaching them to their students?

d) Is there a statistically significant difference between teachers' use and teaching of SGE features and the independent variables of gender, years of teaching experience, the school types teachers work at and the departments they graduated?

e) From which source(s) did teachers of English in Turkey learn these features of spoken grammar, if at all they did?

The Study

Participants

This study was implemented in the fall term of the academic year 2010-2011 within three months. A questionnaire was administered to 189 teachers of English, all Turkish, (125 female, 64 male) randomly selected from five private, and four state universities,

five private high schools and 28 state primary and high schools in İstanbul, Turkey. While choosing the school types, all the school types (e.g. state and private universities, Anatolian High School, Anatolian Teacher Training High School, Science School, etc.) in the Turkish education system were included. 75.7% of the teachers were university lecturers. 15.9% worked at state schools whereas 8.5% worked at private schools. 55.4% of the teachers were graduates of ELT (English Language Teaching) departments whereas 32.8% were from Literature Departments and 5.4% were Linguistics graduates. Another 6.5% were from departments not related to English (named in the questionnaire as 'other'). As for the age groups of the participant teachers, 35.5% of them were below 26, 19.4% were between 27 and 29, 21% were between 30 and 34 and 24.2% were 35 and over, with a general mean of 30.80. Finally, the teaching experience of the teachers was grouped into 4 categories with the following percentages: 1-5 years, 51.1%; 6-10 years, 25.5%; 11-15 years, 12.2%; 16 years and over, 11.2%.

Procedure and Method

The questionnaire was prepared by two researchers, reviewed by two other professors in the field of ELT and an expert in statistical analysis. It was piloted on 18 randomly selected instructors in a Turkish private university. The questions where the instructors found ambiguous or difficult to understand were reworded. After the necessary modifications were made, it was administered on a large-scale basis. The survey was comprised of three parts: first, demographic data, second, 14 items asking whether English teachers both use and teach distinct features of spoken grammar forms of English and finally, seven items questioning from which sources they acquired these forms. To test the reliability of the questionnaire, the Cronbach's Alpha was computed (α=.616). This shows that the instrument used in the study was quite reliable, if not at an ideal level.

After the informed consent of the administrators of the university/school, the participants started completing the questionnaire. In the administration of the questionnaires, first, the participants in each school gathered in meeting rooms and the researchers introduced some theoretical knowledge about spoken grammar forms, notably some ambiguous terms of spoken grammar to the teachers. Second, the items were explained through power point presentations in order to impede any misunderstanding. The researchers were together with the participants in the whole questionnaire answering sessions and ready to answer any questions. This increased the reliability of the questionnaire to a considerable extent.

For the triangulation of the data gathered, a semi-structured interview was administered to a sample of 8 teachers. The interviews were held with randomly selected teachers from different age groups and different school types and were conducted as a conversation but were accomplished with the support of an interview guide in which the themes were put in an order according to the topic (Kvale, 1997, cited in Sandberg, 2007). The interviews lasted for approximately 15 minutes, recorded and then transcribed. A research assistant helped in the transcription and coding process in order to prevent the researchers' bias.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were performed to get the mean scores of whether teachers use and teach SGE features in interaction with other non-native speakers. One-way ANOVA was also conducted for the analysis of whether gender, years of experience, graduated department, and school types have statistically significant impact on whether teachers use and teach. To enhance the reliability of the data collected through the questionnaire, interviews were held with the participants and pattern coding was used for the analysis of the transcriptions.

Findings

Descriptive statistics showed that a large majority of the respondents have a tendency both to use and teach SGE features in their interactions (see Table 1). Most respondents are more in line with using and teaching SGE features 'sometimes'.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of whether Teachers Use and Teach SGE Features*

SGE features	Use in communication		Teach in class	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Headers	3.18	.723	2.79	.754
Tails	2.50	.705	2.38	.640
Ellipsis	3.34	.788	2.73	.801
Vague Language	3.50	.665	2.86	.772
Placeholders	2.52	.747	2.18	.425
Lexico-grammar	3.83	.449	3.44	.724
Quasi-grammar	2.63	.764	2.27	.581

*1-never, 2-rarely, 3-sometimes, 4-usually, 5-always

The most common SGE features that teachers use in their own communication are lexico-grammatical units (M = 3.83, SD = .449) followed by vague language (M = 3.50, SD = .665), ellipsis (M = 3.34, SD = .788), and headers (M = 3.18, SD = .723). On the other hand, the least frequently used SGE features are placeholders (M = 2.52, SD = .747) followed by quasi-grammar (M = 2.63, SD = .764) and tails (M = 2.50, SD = .705).

As for teaching, the most frequently taught SGE features are lexico-grammatical units (M = 3.44, SD = .724) followed by vague language (M = 2.86, SD = .772), headers (M = 2.79, SD = .754), and ellipsis (M = 2.73, SD = .801). The least taught SGE features are, on the other hand, placeholders (M = 2.18, SD = .425) followed by quasi-grammar (M = 2.27, SD = .581) and tails (M = 2.38, SD = .640).

The main results of the analysis elucidate that a large majority of teachers both use and teach lexico-grammatical units, vague language, ellipsis and headers in their interaction

with other speakers of English. Yet, it is not the same as for placeholders, quasi-grammar, and tails. In order to see whether there is a statistically significant correlation between the personal use of each SGE features and their teaching, a Chi-Square test was administered (see Table 2).

Table 2: Correlation between the Use and Teaching of SGE Features

Use in communication	Teach in class	Pearson Correlation	p
Headers	Headers	.495	.000
Tails	Tails	.629	.000
Ellipsis	Ellipsis	.422	.000
Vague Language	Vague Language	.400	.000
Placeholders	Placeholders	.513	.000
Lexico-grammaticalU.	Lexico-grammaticalU.	.408	.000
Quasi-grammar	Quasi-grammar	.595	.000

The results for each item (e.g. headers communication – headers teaching) showed that there is a statistically significant relation between teachers' use and teaching SGE features ($p<.01$). The main analysis of the table reveals us that the highest correlation is for tails and the lowest is for vague language. These results show that the more a teacher uses any SGE feature in his/her personal communication, the more he/she teaches it (here only the teachers` self-report is made use of – success and retention of the students have not been taken into account), which has clear implications to be presented in the discussion section of the article.

To find out whether there is a statistically significant difference in teachers' use and teaching of SGE features in respect to the gender variable, one-way ANOVA test was run (see Table 3). In the use of placeholders, there is a statistically significant difference between male (M = 2.78, SD = .844, $p<.01$) and female teachers (M = 2.40, SD = .659, $p<.01$). For the use of lexico-grammatical units, there is a statistically significant difference between male (M = 3.68, SD = .587, $p<0.01$) and female teachers (M = 3.91, SD = .336, $p<.01$). The mean scores of placeholders are higher for male participants than those of females, whereas male teachers' average responses on lexico-grammatical units are less than those of female respondents.

As for teaching of placeholders, there is a statistically significant difference between male (M = 2.28, SD = .518, $p<.05$) and female teachers (M = 2.12, SD = .359, $p<.05$). With regard to the teaching of lexico-grammatical units, another statistically significant difference was found out between male (M = 3.29, SD = .790, $p<.05$) and female teachers (M = 3.52, SD = .678, $p<.05$). While the average scores of male respondents for placeholders are higher than those of females, male teachers' average responses on lexico-grammatical units are less than those of female respondents.

Table 3: ANOVA Results of SGE Features based on Gender

	Gender	Use in communication				Teach in class			
		Mean	SD	t	p	Mean	SD	t	p
Headers	male	3.28	.723	1.308	.193	2.92	.725	1.591	.113
	female	3.13	.722			2.73	.763		
Tails	male	2.55	.713	.692	.490	2.44	.690	.853	.395
	female	2.48	.702			2.36	.614		
Ellipsis	male	3.37	.786	.321	.749	2.84	.820	1.285	.201
	female	3.33	.792			2.68	.789		
Vague Language	male	3.42	.730	1.195	.233	2.82	.724	-.495	.621
	female	3.54	.628			2.88	.798		
Placeholders	male	2.78	.844	3.410	.001	2.28	.518	2.352	.020
	female	2.40	.659			2.12	.359		
Lexico-gram.	male	3.68	.587	-3.339	.001	3.29	.790	-2.093	.038
	female	3.91	.336			3.52	.678		
Quasi-gram.	male	2.65	.760	.274	.784	2.25	.563	-.360	.719
	female	2.62	.769			2.28	.592		

The research study also looked into such independent variables as teachers' experience in teaching English, the departments they graduated and the school types they work at. One-Way ANOVA showed us that for the first two, there was no statistically significant difference for any of the seven spoken grammar features. But for the last variable (type of school they work at), statistically significant differences were found for the use of ellipsis in communication [$F(1, 189) = 5.501$, $p < .05$] and lexico-grammatical units [$F(1, 189) = 3.151$, $p < .05$]. Types of schools in which teachers teach English had statistically significant difference in teaching tails [$F(1, 189) = 4.256$, $p < .05$], lexico-grammatical units [$F(1, 189) = 5.500$, $p < .05$], and quasi-grammar [$F(1, 189) = 3.106$, $p < .05$] (see Table 4).

When these findings are examined more closely, we see that the university instructors use ellipsis in their own communication more than state school teachers and private school teachers ($M = 3.45$, $SD = .738$, $M = 3.03$, $SD = .850$, and $M = 3.00$, $SD = .894$, respectively). Private school teachers use lexico-grammatical units more than state school teachers and university instructors ($M = 4.00$, $SD = .000$, $M = 3.96$, $SD = .182$, and $M = 3.79$, $SD = .501$, respectively).

State school teachers teach tails more than university instructors and private school teachers ($M = 2.56$, $SD = .626$, $M = 2.39$, $SD = .662$, and $M = 2.00$, $SD = .000$, respectively). State school teachers teach quasi-grammar more than private school teachers and university instructors ($M = 2.50$, $SD = .731$, $M = 2.33$, $SD = .723$, $M = 2.21$, $SD = .519$, respectively). As for the lexico-grammatical units, state school teachers ($M = 3.83$, SD

= .379) teach more than private school teachers (M = 3.50, SD = .730) and instructors at University (M = 3.36, SD = .755), respectively.

Table 4: SGE Features with regard to Type of School

		Use in communication				Teach in class			
		Mean	SD	F	p	Mean	SD	F	p
Headers	Instructors at University	3.24	.694	2.868	.059	2.75	.735	1.004	.368
	State School Teachers	2.90	.758			2.93	.739		
	Private School Teachers	3.18	.834			2.93	.928		
Tails	Instructors at University	2.53	.740	1.179	.310	2.39	.662	4.256	.016
	State School Teachers	2.50	.629			2.56	.626		
	Private School Teachers	2.25	.447			2.00	.000		
Ellipsis	Instructors at University	3.45	.738	5.501	.005	2.75	.798	.194	.824
	State School Teachers	3.03	.850			2.72	.840		
	Private School Teachers	3.00	.894			2.62	.806		
Vague Lang.	Instructors at University	3.53	.647	.589	.556	2.86	.765	.033	.968
	State School Teachers	3.43	.727			2.90	.803		
	Private School Teachers	3.37	.718			2.86	.833		
Place holders	Instructors at University	2.58	.772	2.230	.110	2.20	.452	.824	.440
	State School Teachers	2.26	.520			2.10	.305		
	Private School Teachers	2.56	.813			2.13	.351		

Lexico-gram.	Instructors at University	3.79	.501	3.151	.045	3.36	.755	5.500	.005
	State School Teachers	3.96	.182			3.83	.379		
	Private School Teachers	4.00	.000			3.50	.730		
Quasi-grammar	Instructors at University	2.65	.751	1.013	.365	2.21	.519	3.106	.047
	State School Teachers	2.66	.844			2.50	.731		
	Private School Teachers	2.37	.718			2.33	.723		

As for the last item in the questionnaire, the participants were asked to mark the sources where they believed they learned various SGE features. For each of the seven features, the participants could mark one or more of the eight different sources, including "did not learn at all" (See Table 5). Except for two items (headers and tails), media is the main source for acquiring SGE features. The percentage of the features learned through media is 65-75% more than those learned from books (with again the exception of headers and tails). Participants of the study learned the least number of SGE features at primary school and by interacting with NNS, which is quite natural especially in an EFL setting. Interaction with native speakers has a relatively high role in acquiring SGE features especially with regard to lexico-grammatical units followed by quasi-grammar (non-standard grammar), vague language and ellipsis, respectively. Placeholders are the least learned SGE followed by tails and quasi-grammar. On the other hand, mostly learned SGE is lexico-grammatical units followed by vague language and ellipsis.

Table 5: Frequencies for the Sources of Acquisition of SGE Features (in percentages)*

	Primary school	High school	University	Books	Media	Native speakers	Non-native speakers	Not learned at all
Headers	12.2	39.7	27	21.2	31.7	23.3	5.3	5.3
Tails	5.3	31.7	24.3	21.7	22.8	20.6	4.8	12.2
Ellipsis	6.9	19	33.9	29.1	44.4	32.8	11.1	4.4
Vague Language	8.5	24.3	30.7	28.6	44.4	33.9	10.6	3.7
Placeholders	4.2	13.2	25.9	16.4	32.8	21.2	5.3	21.2
Lexico-grammatical units	7.4	36	39.2	34.4	52.4	44.4	13.2	1.1
Quasi-grammar	5.8	14.8	21.2	14.3	30.2	34.9	11.6	11.6

*Since the respondents could mark more than one source, the sums for each SGE features do not end up in 100.

As to interviews held with the teachers to triangulate their questionnaire responses, the main analysis revealed that teachers' perceptions were almost completely in line with the general questionnaire results. Two main conclusions emerged in coding the patterns:

a) Most teachers stated that they had not learned SGE features via formal instruction but rather they mostly "picked up" spoken grammar mainly from films.

b) Though they did not generally have a conscious effort to teach SGE features in their classes they believed that the SGE they used in their personal communication were also adopted by some of their students, if not perfectly.

These two conclusions together with the results of the questionnaire have clear and practical implications both for teacher training and for teaching practices in classrooms.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study has brought about some important conclusions which have pedagogical implications both for classroom teaching and teacher education. Regarding the first research question, it can be concluded that teachers of English in Turkey use SGE features with varying levels of degree in their own communication. The three most common SGE features that teachers use in their own communication are lexico-grammatical units, vague language and ellipsis respectively whereas the least frequent SGE features are placeholders, quasi-grammar and tails. Likewise, as the second research question queries, Turkish teachers of English teach SGE features in their classes, again with varying degrees of density. The most frequently SGE taught by the same teachers are lexico-grammatical units followed by vague language and ellipsis, and the least SGE features taught are placeholders followed by quasi-grammar and tails. Two points are worth considering here. First, this study is based on self-report of the teachers. In order to verify teachers' statements about their use and teaching of SGE, a further study is needed, where through a more elaborate research design (including in-class observations), teachers' classroom talk is observed, recorded and examined from a SGE perspective. Second, as six out of eight teachers who were interviewed stated, this "teaching" of SGE was mostly not explicit, direct and intentional teaching of these features; rather, the teachers believed that as they used SGE in their 'teacher talk' and the class activities, the students "picked them up". Once again, a further study should be conducted to find out whether and how teachers' use of SGE is acquired by students.

The statistical analysis conducted to reveal the correlation between teachers' own use of SGE and the extent they teach them to their students (research question 3) has indicated that for each of the seven features of spoken grammar features studied in this article, there is a very high correlation (all $p<.01$, $p=.00$). What follows is the need for teacher training of SGE both in pre- and in-service periods. When we look at Turkish ELT Departments, we can claim that much remains to be done in this respect. As one study also revealed (Karaata, 2010), the in-service training quantity and quality of teachers of English is still very much in its infancy. While designing in-service training programs for English teachers, one component (most probably under the heading of 'teaching the

speaking skill') should be the teaching of SGE with an awareness that students might need these features and should be made aware of them without any effort to impose them as the norms of ENL.

This study has also investigated whether there is a statistically significant difference between teachers' use and teaching of SGE and the independent variables of gender, years of teaching experience, the school types teachers work at and the departments they graduated (research question 4). With respect to gender, a statistically significant difference has been found between male and female teachers in the use and teaching of placeholders and lexico-grammatical units (p=.001, p=.001 for communication of both forms and p=.020, p=.038 for teaching, respectively), but no significant difference in the use and teaching of the other five spoken grammar forms (vague language, quasi-grammar, tails, headers and ellipsis). As also stated in the findings section of the article, male teachers use placeholders and teach them more than female teachers and vice versa for lexico-grammatical units. The reason for statistically significant difference cannot be found out via this study, but it might be a further topic for another study.

As for the school types teachers work at, statistically significant differences were found. Ellipsis for communication, tails and quasi-grammar for teaching, and lexico-grammatical units both for teachers' own communication and teaching in their classes bear statistically significant differences with regard to the school types teachers work at. The results are a bit mixed, though. With respect to the use of SGE in teachers' personal communication, it is observed that university instructors use ellipsis more than state school teachers and private school teachers whereas private school teachers use lexico-grammatical units more than state school teachers and university instructors, all respectively. As for teaching, state school teachers teach tails more than university instructors and private school teachers and state school teachers teach quasi-grammar more than private school teachers and university instructors, again all respectively. Since a definite and stable pattern has not emerged, this inconsistency in the results can be attributed to the uneven distribution in the number of the participant teachers. If an equal or approximately close number of teachers from different types of schools could have been involved in the study, the results might have been easier and more reliable to interpret. One conclusion that can be drawn out of all this is, from a SGE perspective, there is not a standard level among teachers, which should be handled again both during pre- and in-service training programs. A minimum level can be determined and teachers can be trained accordingly, in accordance with a set of standards.

The last research question was about the teachers' sources to acquire SGE. Media (internet, video, movies, etc.) and interaction with native speakers have the most important role in this respect. Since interaction with native speakers is not that practical in EFL settings, the use of media should be fostered both in pre- and in-service training of English teachers from a spoken grammar perspective. Since the use of Internet and digital sources is widely spread in today's world, teachers of English should definitely be trained in the use of them in teaching English, including spoken grammar. Films have been mentioned

in the interviews as one great source for the acquisition of SGE features, so the use of films in teaching SGE can be an element in the ELT curricula at universities and in in-service training programs. Generally speaking, when the ELT curricula at Turkish universities are examined, the emphasis on written grammar and formal aspects of language will be seen immediately. In speaking classes and students' overall assessment, the use of language with an oral fluency should be a basic component. Teaching SGE might be one major element for the achievement of this fluency.

A major issue to be handled (though not in the scope of this study) is the design of materials used in ELT. As the above mentioned studies suggest, there is a `missing link` (Cullen and Kuo, 2007) between corpus studies and ELT practices. Materials designers should take into account the corpus findings and incorporate SGE, at least in textbooks aimed to make the learners communicatively competent.

As a last word, one major finding of this study, which is the more teachers use SGE in their own communication, the more they teach, should be tested from the point of view of students' success in learning them and retaining in their use, which is the subject of a further study. It might be a noteworthy finding if there is a statistically significant difference between teachers' use of SGE in their own communication and their students' learning (or acquiring) them and retaining them for their future use, which would make curriculum designers more and more confident in fostering the incorporation of teaching spoken grammar to prospective and practicing English teachers.

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