

A CIPP Approach to Evaluation of Grammar Teaching Programs at Iranian High-schools: A Case Study

Susan Jafari *

Department of English, Shahreza Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

Mohsen Shahrokhi

Department of English, Shahreza Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

Abstract

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching L2 grammar at Iranian high-school from the perspectives of instructors and students. To this end, The CIPP (context, input, process, and product) evaluation model developed by Stufflebeam (1971) was utilized. One hundred twenty students attending the second grade high-school in the 1393-1394 educational year, and 10 instructors teaching in the program participated in the study. The data were gathered through a self-reported student questionnaire. An interview which was designed for the instructors was also used. While the data based on the questionnaire were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics, content analysis was carried out to analyze qualitative data. Results of the study indicated that the grammar program at a high-school served for its purpose. The findings revealed that improvements in the objectives, teaching methods, and grammar curriculum are required to make the grammar program more effective.

Keywords: curriculum, curriculum evaluation, grammar, Iranian high-school

INTRODUCTION

The role of English in Iran is quite important as it is in many other developing countries. New technology and the adoption of the internet have resulted in a major transition in terms of business, education, science, and technological progress, all of which demand high proficiency in English. With the economic downturn in Iran a few years ago, a large number of Iranian companies have embraced cooperation regionally and internationally. Mergers, associations, and takeovers are common and English is used as the means to communicate, negotiate and execute transactions by participants where one partner can be a native speaker of English or none of the partners are native speakers of English. According to Navidinia (2009) Iran has always been a country with one official language, called Persian. We are proud that we have never been colonized. Another reason for having been a country with one language is the concept of national

stability. There have been proposals to make Iran a country with two languages, Persian and English, but this has never materialized due to the above mentioned reasons.

Any educational system is composed of five important components (students, a teacher, materials, teaching methods, and evaluation) which are closely interrelated. In Iran, educational policies are decided primarily by the central government. All of the decisions made by the central government are passed down through provincial organizations for implementation at lower levels which have less authority in decision-making. All major educational policies concerning the school systems, the curriculum standards, the compilation of textbooks, the examination system and so on, are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education (ME). According to Jahangard (2007), students' aural and oral skills are not emphasized in Iranian prescribed EFL textbooks. They are not tested in the university entrance examination, as well as in the final exams during the three years of senior high-school and one year of pre-university education. Teachers put much less emphasis, if any, on oral drills, pronunciation, listening and speaking abilities than on reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary. The main focus is to make students pass tests and exams, and because productive abilities of students are not tested, most teachers then skip the oral drills in the prescribed books.

Similarly, according to Namaghi (2006), there are sociopolitical forces which help determine teachers' work in Iran. First, since teachers cannot choose a textbook which is in line with their students' needs, their input is controlled by the prescribed curriculum. Second, the output is controlled by the mandated national testing scheme so that teachers cannot develop tests which have positive wash-back on teaching and learning. Third, since a higher score is culturally equal to higher achievement, the process of teaching and learning is controlled by grade pressures from students, parents and school principals. Consequently, as Namaghi (2006) argues, teachers become mere implementers of prescribed initiatives and schemes without recourse to their own professional knowledge and experience.

Grammar is an essential component that should be learnt in order to master a language. If one uses incorrect grammatical pattern in constructing a sentence, there is a tendency that the sentence will constitute different meaning from what it is intended, or even meaningless. Therefore, grammar is called as 'sentence-making machine' by Thornbury (2006). That is to say, even though one has sufficient number of vocabularies, without having good grammar mastery, one will encounter problems in arranging those vocabularies into good sentences. As what is said by Ur (1998), one cannot use words unless he/she knows how those words should be put in use. Considering the significant role of grammar in mastering a language, grammar is important to be learnt by the learners of the language. Thus, language teachers need to teach grammar to their learners.

In general, there are two approaches in teaching grammar, inductive and deductive approaches. According to Brown and Thornbury (2009), both inductive approach and deductive approach have their strengths. The strengths of deductive approach are: (1) the approach is straightforward, so that it will not waste too much time for explanation.

It gives more opportunities for learners to apply the rules; (2) it respects the intelligence and maturation, especially for adult learners; (3) it confirms many learners' expectation, especially for those who want to have an analytical learning style. On the other hand, inductive approach is good for some reasons: (1) it will help the learners, especially young learners, who cannot understand the abstract concept of grammar to learn grammar unconsciously; (2) it will make the learners become autonomous learners; (3) it will make grammar learning more meaningful; and (4) it will make the learners become more active in teaching and learning process. Moreover, deductive approach will be more appropriate to be applied for adult learners, while inductive approach will be better for teaching young learners. It is obvious since young learners usually do not like a serious circumstance. They love to play and only have a short span of concentration. Conversely, adult learners may take benefit from deductive approach, because they can make use of abstract things to gain knowledge. They can get involved in a serious circumstance and can concentrate longer than young learners. Combining deductive and inductive approach has been done by Nunan (2002). He argues that combining deductive and inductive approaches for teaching grammar will be good especially in focusing a certain purpose of grammar teaching. In addition, by combining both deductive and inductive approaches because it is expected that the learners are not only able to remember or understand the English tenses, but also able to use it communicatively.

Generally, learners can be divided into three categories based on their age, namely young learners, adolescents, and adult learners. Young learners are those whose ages are between 2 and 12 years old, adolescents are those who are around 12 to 17 years old, while adults are commonly 17 years old and above. From teaching English as a foreign language point of view, young learners are those who learn English as a foreign language for the first six or seven year of the formal school system that is usually in the elementary school level. Age is one of the major factors which should be taken into account in deciding how to teach grammar to learners. It is because learners with different ages will have different characteristics. Young learners do not only focus on what is being taught, but they learn something else at the same time, such as acquiring information from their surroundings. Moreover, young learners may consider seeing, hearing, and touching are as important as the teacher's explanation. They usually respond the activities focusing their life and experience well. They can be good speakers of a new language if they have sufficient facilities and enough exposure to the target language. They may learn foreign language better through a game. Young learners love to play and to learn best when they enjoy themselves. Adult learners have mature personality, many years of educational training, a developed intelligence, a determination to get what they want, fairly clear aims, and above all strong motivation to make as rapid progress as possible. An adult is no longer constrained by the educational system or parental pressure to learn English, so the problem of dealing with conscripts does not exist.

Since the introduction of foreign language instruction into the Iranian education system, there has been an increasing need for intensive English education at high-schools. One

of the important and necessary parts of English is grammar, because it could have positive effect on four basic skills if it taught by new methods. The researchers have observed many occasions when the instructors and students express their discontentment regarding the effectiveness of English grammar program implemented at high-schools.

Despite the fact that a substantial amount of time, money and effort is allocated for teaching grammar, neither the students nor the instructors appear to be pleased with the outcome of grammar program. Furthermore, since the program has been established, no research has been carried out to see how effective the implemented grammar program is.

Thus, the questions such as to what extent the instructors and students are satisfied with the grammar program, whether the materials are sufficient in achieving the aims and whether the assessment procedure are parallel to the instructions are left unanswered. With all those points in mind, the researchers aimed to find out whether the developed and organized experiences are producing the intended outcomes or result and to diagnose the strength and weakness of grammar instruction in Iranian high-schools.

THIS STUDY

The main purpose of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of high-school grammar program through the perspectives of instructors and students using context, input, process, and product components of the CIPP evaluation model developed by Stufflebeam (1971). More specifically, the environment that the English program takes place in, the students' and instructors' perceptions in terms of objectives, content, teaching methods, materials and assessment dimensions of the grammar program and the students' perceptions of their own competencies are aimed to be examined. By means of this study, the researchers' ultimate aim is to suggest relevant adaptations and to contribute to the improvement of the high-school curriculum.

This study has four major research questions which are listed below:

1. Context: What kind of educational setting does the English grammar program take place in?
2. Input: What are the students' and instructors' perceptions of the objectives and content dimensions of the program?
3. Process: What are the students' and instructors' perceptions on teaching methods and assessment dimensions of the grammar program?
4. Product: What are the students' perceived competencies in grammar based on the current teaching grammar program?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Evaluation Model

Stufflebeam is an “influential proponent of a decision-oriented evaluation approach” designed to help administrators make good decisions (Worthern, Sanders, & Fitzpatrick, 1998, p. 98). His approach to evaluation is recognized as the CIPP model. The first letters of each type of evaluation—context, input, process and product—have been used to form the acronym CIPP, by which Stufflebeam’s evaluation model is best known.

This comprehensive model considers evaluation to be a continuing process (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). Gredler suggests that the approach is based on two major assumptions about evaluation. These assumptions are 1) that evaluations have a vital role in stimulating and planning change and 2) that evaluation is an integral component of an institution’s regular program. (Gredler, 1996) Thus, evaluation is not a specialized activity associated with innovative projects, and the CIPP perspective is not intended to guide the conduct of an individual study (Stufflebeam, 1980).

Stufflebeam (1971) views evaluation as the process of delineating, obtaining and providing useful information for judging decision alternatives. These processes are executed for four types of administrative divisions each of which represents a type of evaluation. These evaluations may be conducted independently or in an integrated sequence (Gredler, 1996). They can be listed as follows:

Planning decisions	- Context Evaluation
Structuring decisions	- Input Evaluation
Implementing decisions;	- Process Evaluation
Recycling decisions to judge	
And react to program attainments	- Product Evaluation

Context Evaluation

Context evaluation involves studying the environment of the program. Its purpose is to define the relevant environment, portray the desired and actual conditions pertaining to that environment, focus on unmet needs and missed opportunities and diagnose the reason for unmet needs (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998). Determining what needs are to be addressed by a program helps in defining objectives for the program (Worthern, Sanders, & Fitzpatrick, 1997). “The results of a context evaluation are intended to provide a sound basis for either adjusting or establishing goals and priorities and identifying needed changes” (Stufflebeam & Shinkfeld, 1985, p. 172). One suggested use of context evaluation is a means for a school district to communicate with the public to achieve a shared understanding of the district’s strengths, weaknesses, needs, opportunities and pressing problems. Other uses are to convince a funding agency of the worth of a project, to develop objectives for staff development, to select schools for priority assistance, and to help parents or advisers focus on developmental areas requiring attention (Gredler, 1996). Context evaluation is really a situational analysis –

a reading of the reality in which the individuals find themselves and an assessment of that reality in light of what they want to do. This diagnosis stage of evaluation is not a one-time activity. It continues to furnish baseline information regarding the operations and accomplishments of the total system (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998).

Input Evaluation

The second stage of the model, input evaluation is designed to provide information and determine how to utilize resources to meet program goals. Input evaluators assess the school's capabilities to carry out the task of evaluation; they consider the strategies suggested for achieving program goals and they identify the means by which a selected strategy will be implemented. Input evaluates specific aspects of the curriculum plan or specific components of the curriculum plan. It deals with the following questions: Are the objectives stated appropriately? Are the objectives congruent with the goals of the school? Is the content congruent with the goals and objectives of the program? Are the instructional strategies appropriate? Do other strategies exist that can also help meet the objectives? What is the basis for believing that using these content and these instructional strategies will enable educators to successfully attain their objectives? (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998). An important component of this analysis is to identify any barriers or constraints in the client's environment that may influence or impede the operation of the program. In other words, the purpose of Input Evaluation is to help clients consider alternatives in terms of their particular needs and circumstances and to help develop a workable plan for them (Stufflebeam, 1980; Stufflebeam & Shinkfeld, 1985).

Process Evaluation

The focus of process evaluation is the implementation of a program or a strategy. The main purpose is to provide feedback about needed modification if the implementation is inadequate. That is, are program activities on schedule? Are they being implemented as planned? Are available resources being used efficiently? And do program participants accept and carry out their roles? (Stufflebeam, 1980; Stufflebeam & Shinkfeld, 1985). In addition, "process evaluation should provide a comparison of the actual implementation with the intended program, the costs of the implementation, and participants' judgments of the quality of the effort" (Stufflebeam & Shinkfeld, 1985. p. 175). Process evaluation includes three strategies. "The first is to detect or predict defects in the procedural design or its implementation stage, the second is to provide information for decisions and the third is to maintain a record of procedures as they occur." This stage, which includes the three strategies, occurs during the implementation stage of the curriculum development. It is a piloting process conducted to debug the program before district-wide implementation. From such evaluation, project decision makers obtain information they need to anticipate and overcome procedural difficulties and to make decisions (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1988, p. 345).

Product Evaluation

The primary function of product evaluation is “to measure, interpret, and judge the attainments of a program” (Stufflebeam & Shinkfeld, 1985, p. 176). Product evaluation, therefore, should determine the extent to which identified needs were met, as well as identify the broad effects of the program. The evaluation should document both intended and unintended effects and negative as well as positive outcomes (Gredler, 1996). The primary use of product evaluation is to determine whether a program should be continued, repeated and/or extended to other settings (Stufflebeam, 1980; Stufflebeam & Shinkfeld, 1985). However, it should also provide direction for modifying the program to better serve the needs of participants and to become more cost effective. Finally, product evaluation is an essential component of an “accountability report” (Stufflebeam & Shinkfeld, 1985, p. 178). At this stage, product evaluation helps evaluators to connect activities of the model to other stages of the whole change process (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1988).

METHOD

Participants

The target population from whom the data were collected through a questionnaire consisted of students from high-schools in Mashhad, Iran, attending high-school classes in 2014-2015 Iranian academic year. The sample composed of nearly 120 students from 7 classes belonging to second level. The participants were selected through convenience sampling based on availability. For the interview, ten instructors participated in the study. The instructors had graduated in Language Teaching with bachelor and master degrees and had at least five years teaching experience at High-school.

Data Collection Instruments

A questionnaire and an interview were used to collect data in this study.

Questionnaire

The researchers used a questionnaire developed by Tunc (2010) consisting of six parts (Appendix I). Along with gathering students demographic information, the questionnaire served for the purpose to find out the high-schools students perceived competencies in grammar, their perceptions on content, materials, teaching methods, assessment, and finally communication with instructors and administrators.

Part 1 (Demographic Information): This part of the questionnaire aimed to obtain information on the students’ age, gender, enrollment, educational background of parents and type of previous high-school graduated.

Part 2 (overall perceptions of emphasis on grammar): This part was designed in order to find out the students perception on the frequency of emphasis put on grammar at the high-school. Part two consisted of 4 items.

Part 3 (Students' perceived competencies in four skills): This part was designed in relation with the objectives of the grammar curriculum implemented at the high-school along with four skills. Part 3 consisted of 4 items.

Part 4 (Students' perceptions of materials): The purpose of this section was to obtain information about the students' perceptions of sufficiency of the materials used throughout grammar teaching-learning process. This part consisted of 4 items.

Part 5 (Students' perceptions on frequency of various teaching methods): This section was designed to investigate the students' perceptions on how often certain teaching methods are used in the class. This part consisted of 3 items.

Part 6 (Students' perceptions on assessment): This part of the questionnaire aimed to find out the students' perceptions on assessment tools and criterion. Part six consisted of 3 items.

This questionnaire had been examined by four English instructors and one expert from the department of Educational Sciences at Middle East Technical University so as to ensure its content and face validity (Tunc, 2010). The same proved validity has been proved by two experts in field for its appropriateness to be used in Iranian educational context.

Interview

A structured interview was used in order to get in-depth data about the instructors' perceptions on the current program implemented at high-schools. Note-taking technique was used during the interviews which were conducted individually. The interview schedule consisted of open-ended questions related to the program, as they provide valuable information in gathering more detailed data in the sense that they give the respondents an opportunity to express their points of view freely. During the interviews, the instructors were asked about the objectives of the grammar program and to what extent those objectives were met along with their opinions regarding the teaching methods, materials and assessment dimensions of the program.

In the development process of interview questions, one expert in Curriculum and Instruction field and two practitioner instructors at the institution were consulted. Prior to the administration of the interviews, the questions were tested on 2 instructors so as to see whether the questions were understandable and clear. Before conducting the interviews with the respondents, some adaptations related to the wording of the questions were done in the light of the pilot study. After the planning for the interview, the researchers selected a sample of the population to conduct the interviews by asking volunteer instructors. The main aim was to find out the instructors' points of view regarding the program and to help complement unclear points from the questionnaire. The interview consisted of seven open-ended questions (Appendix II).

Data Collection Procedure

Before conducting the questionnaire, permission was taken from high-school principal; afterwards the researchers explained the details of the study to the administration of the high-school so as to get necessary permission for conducting the study; afterwards the classes were determined for each level and the researchers informed the instructors of the study. After measuring the reliability and checking the validity of the Persian translation of questionnaire, it was administered to a total of 120 students who belonged to second level, emphasizing that there are not right or wrong answers, requesting sincere answers, promising confidentiality and saying thank you. There appeared no problem during the administration of the study because the validity of the question in terms format and content was confirmed by two university professors in Applied Linguistics. The students were told that there was no time limit for filling out the questionnaire. However, it took approximately 20 minutes for the students to complete it.

As for the instructors' perceptions of the program, 10 instructors were interviewed. The schedules were set up in convenience of the interviewees. After giving the respondent background information about the study, the researchers assured the interviewee of confidentiality as no authorized persons would have access to their answers. The researchers were fully aware of the importance of enabling the informant to be at ease so as to obtain a high rate of participation. As a technique to record the answers, the interviewer chose to write down the responses immediately. Each interview approximately took 20 minutes and at the end of the interview, the researchers thanked again to the respondents for their contribution in the study.

Data analysis

The data collected through the questionnaire were compiled and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 16.0) program was employed to analyze the data. The students' answers in the questionnaire were examined for abnormalities and missing data. Subsequently, the data were analyzed through both descriptive and inferential statistics.

The analysis for the interviews involved descriptive data, as well. Note-taking technique was used. All the answers of the interviewees were analyzed by categorizing the points that came out from the statements for each question. In addition, thematic analysis and grouping of the answers from different interviewees to the same or similar questions were employed for the analysis of interviews. The content analysis was carried out. Answers from different interviewees to common questions or perspectives on central issues were categorized under four sub-headings. These subheadings were formed with regard to objectives, content, methods and materials, and assessment dimensions of the program. First, the statements to the interview were grouped under each related sub-heading. The statements which presented a different point were listed one by one. The similar statements were listed below the related sub-heading and also the frequencies for the repeating ideas were obtained.

RESULTS

Research Question One

As it was stated earlier, the first research question sought to investigate in what kind of educational setting the English grammar program takes place. To gain enough information for the first research question, the researchers used the questions number One, Two, Three, and Four in the questionnaire for the students' point of view and the related data to the context of English language teaching were gathered from interviews. The answers to questions 1-4 are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. The Frequencies of the First Research Questions

		Question1	Question2	Question3	Question4
N	Valid	120	120	120	120
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.9250	3.1333	2.7750	2.2917
Median		3.0000	3.0000	3.0000	2.0000

As it was said above, the purpose of this section was to show how the context of education for grammar at schools is. The following table shows the result of statistical analysis for the first question of the questionnaire.

Table 2. The Frequency and Percentage of Question1

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	3	2.5	2.5	2.5
	1	11	9.2	9.2	11.7
	2	16	13.3	13.3	25.0
	3	52	43.3	43.3	68.3
	4	38	31.7	31.7	100.0
Total		120	100.0	100.0	

0=Never, 1=Unacceptable, 2=Need improvement, 3=Satisfactory, 4=Excellent

This first question was on how much time participants are spending on learning grammar. As the above table shows the answer "never" enjoyed a small percentage (2.5%), it indicates that few students are not spending time on grammar. On the other hand, the answers "satisfactory" (31.7%) and "excellent" (43.3%) had more percentages. Accordingly, in the case of time most participants care about grammar and spend time on it.

The next question of questionnaire was again the matter of time, but the time which has been allocated to the grammar in the school curriculum, and here the students' point of view was considered. Table 3 shows the frequencies of the answers to this question.

Table 3. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 2

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	4	3.3	3.3
	1	6	5.0	8.3
	2	14	11.7	20.0
	3	42	35.0	55.0
	4	54	45.0	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0

As the result shows the lowest percentage is allocated to “never” (3.3%) and the highest percentage to “excellent” (45%). Therefore, most of the students are satisfied with the time of grammar teaching in Iranian schools.

The third question was raised to see if the allocated time to grammar is matched to the materials which are used in classes. Table 4 shows the result of statistical analysis for this question.

Table 4. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 3

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	5	4.2	4.2
	1	8	6.7	10.8
	2	27	22.5	33.3
	3	49	40.8	74.2
	4	31	25.8	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0

As Table 4 shows, the lowest frequency is for the answer “never” (4.2%), and the highest one is the answer “satisfactory” (40.8%). It shows that the time of the curriculum and the content of the materials are to some extent matched, but it is not ideal according to the participants’ answers.

The fourth question of the questionnaire had to do with adding the time of other parts to the grammar. The answers to the fourth question and their frequencies are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 4

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	9	7.5	7.5
	1	20	16.7	24.2
	2	39	32.5	56.7
	3	31	25.8	82.5
	4	21	17.5	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0

As it has been shown in the above Table 5, the answer “never” enjoyed the least percentage (7.5%), and the answer “needs improvement” has the highest percentage (32.5%). Generally, most of the participants do not agree with adding the time of other parts to grammar.

As the result of the frequencies in these four questions shows, from high-school students’ point of view, the time of the grammar in curriculum and students’ time for learning it, is well considered, this time also is matched by the material content but it is not fully matched, and finally there is no urgent need to add the time of other parts to grammar.

Also the result of the interview with the teachers showed that, in Iranian high-school educational system, students are concerned about their score, so their first aim is to learn each skill for this purpose. And most of the teachers spends one third of their classes on teaching grammar, although, the level of difficulty of the grammar to be taught is also another factor to be considered for the time allocated to the grammar and it can be extended to half of each session. Another problem that was mentioned during the interviews was that because of grammar difficulty, some high-school students are memorizing them to learn; so, it is less practical to use grammatical points in a task or to use them in their productive skills.

Research Question Two

The second research question addressed the students’ and instructors’ perceptions about the objectives and content dimensions of the program. The questions Nine, Ten, Eleven, and Twelve were to find the learners’ perspectives on grammar and input. According to Tunc (2010), input evaluation is designed to provide information and determine how to utilize resources to meet program goals. These questions frequencies are brought in the following table.

Table 6. The Frequencies of Research Questions 9-12

		Question9	Question10	Question11	Question12
N	Valid	120	120	120	120
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.1667	3.1750	2.7333	2.7250
Median		3.0000	3.0000	3.0000	3.0000

To analyze the answers to each question, the frequencies for each question were presented in separated tables. Question Nine was that according to learners’ need how much effective the taught grammatical points are. The answers are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 9

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	3	2.5	2.5	2.5
	1	8	6.7	6.7	9.2
	2	14	11.7	11.7	20.8
	3	36	30.0	30.0	50.8
	4	59	49.2	49.2	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

As the results of the frequencies for Question Nine shows, the lowest percentage is for the answer “never” (2.5%) and the highest percentage with near half of the participants

answers, is for the answer “excellent” (49%). From these results it can be claimed that the taught grammatical points met learners’ need and they are effective enough for them. The next question was the tenth one, on appropriateness of practices in the learners’ book. The results of statistical analysis of this question brought in Table 8.

Table 8. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 10

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	4	3.3	3.3	3.3
1	6	5.0	5.0	8.3
2	12	10.0	10.0	18.3
Valid 3	41	34.2	34.2	52.5
4	57	47.5	47.5	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

According to the results which were shown in the Table 8, the lowest percentage is for the answer “never” (3.3%) and the highest percentage is for the answer “excellent” (47.5%). And this can be evidence to the learners’ satisfaction regarding the grammatical practices in the Iranian high-school books. Question Eleven was about how much teachers use books to teach grammar; the participants’ answers and the frequency of them are shown in Table 9.

Table 9. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 11

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	7	5.8	5.8	5.8
1	11	9.2	9.2	15.0
Valid 2	20	16.7	16.7	31.7
3	51	42.5	42.5	74.2
4	31	25.8	25.8	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

As it is shown in Table 9 the lowest percentage is allocated to the answer “never” (5.8%) and the highest percentage to “satisfactory” (42.5%). Therefore, it can be deduced from the results that teachers usually refer to book to teach grammatical points in the class. And there are a few cases they explain and a point just on their own and their own examples.

The twelfth question was how much helpful are the example of the book to learn grammar; and it is referring again to the book and its usefulness in learning grammatical points. The frequencies of this question are shown in the following table.

Table 10. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 12

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	8	6.7	6.7	6.7
1	12	10.0	10.0	16.7
Valid 2	18	15.0	15.0	31.7
3	49	40.8	40.8	72.5
4	33	27.5	27.5	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

The results of the above table indicate that the lowest frequency and percentage again is allocated to the answer “never” (6.7%), and the highest one to the answer satisfactory (40.8%). The finding of this table give credit to the fact that more than three fifth of Iranian learners at high-schools consider the examples of their book as useful ones in order to enhance a grammatical point.

Finally, according to the gained results, it can be concluded that in students’ point of view, content of the books are helpful for Iranian students to enhance grammatical points. In other words, the taught grammatical points are effective enough according to learners’ needs, the grammar exercises of Iranian books are appropriate to them, teachers usually refers to the books to explain a grammatical point, and finally more than three fifth of participants found the examples of the book helpful to have a better understanding for taught grammars.

Another perspective of the present research was teachers’ ideas; the results and answer of the Iranian teachers’ interview showed that nearly all teachers found examples useful to teach grammar and have a better output, half of the interviewees mentioned the fact that the method with which grammar is presented in Iranian high-school books is deductive, and the focus of the book is mainly on grammar. Teachers mostly focused on the fact that the method in which book are developed and written should be based on a new method to be more effective on learners’ productive skills.

Research Question Three

The third research question was what the students’ and instructors’ perceptions on teaching methods and assessment dimensions of the grammar program are. The questions Thirteen, Fourteen, Fifteen, Sixteen, Seventeen, and Eighteen of questionnaire are considered to find the learners’ perspectives on grammar and input. These questions frequencies are brought in the following table.

Table 11. The Frequencies of Research Questions 13-18

		Question13	Question14	Question15	Question16	Question17	Question18
N	Valid	120	120	120	120	120	120
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mean	1.5417	3.1417	3.2417	3.2917	3.1667	3.1333
	Median	1.0000	3.0000	4.0000	4.0000	3.0000	3.0000

The thirteenth question was to what extend your teacher uses new method in teaching grammar. The result of statistical analysis for this question is shown in the following table.

Table 12. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 13

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	18	15.0	15.0
	1	46	38.3	53.3
	2	37	30.8	84.2
	3	11	9.2	93.3
	4	8	6.7	100.0

As it is shown in Table 12, the most frequent answer was “unacceptable” (38.3 %), and the least is “excellent” (6.7 %). This can be the indication of the fact that teachers do not use new method enough in teaching grammar. The next table shows the results and the frequencies for the fourteenth question.

Table 13. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 14

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	3	2.5	2.5
	1	7	5.8	8.3
	2	12	10.0	18.3
	3	46	38.3	56.7
	4	52	43.3	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0

Table 13 has to do with this question that how much new methods of teaching affect their learning grammar. As it is shown here, the highest frequency is for the answer “excellent” (43%), and the lowest percentage belongs to the answer “never” (2.5%). It can be seen that the result of teachers’ new method were sufficient enough for participants to learn grammar better. The next table shows the statistical analysis for the fifteenth question.

Table 14. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 15

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	4	3.3	3.3
	1	7	5.8	9.2
	2	13	10.8	20.0
	3	28	23.3	43.3
	4	68	56.7	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0

The Question Fifteen was how much old methods affect your learning. The result of the analysis shows that more than half of the participants agree that the old methods were excellent for the (56.7%), and the least are agreed on the negative effect of them on learning grammar (3.3%). Therefore, participants are satisfied by the old methods in learning grammar. The following table shows the frequencies and results for the sixteenth question.

Table 15. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 16

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	2	1.7	1.7
	1	6	5.0	6.7
	2	9	7.5	14.2
	3	41	34.2	48.3
	4	62	51.7	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0

Question Sixteen was to what extent each exam evaluate students’ grammatical competence. The results revealed that more than half of the participants’ responses show they believe exams are evaluating their grammar the best by having the answer “excellent” (51.7%), and the least was the answer “never” (1.7%). The next table shows the results and answers for the Question Seventeen.

Table 16. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 17

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	5	4.2	4.2
	1	3	2.5	6.7
	2	13	10.8	17.5
	3	45	37.5	55.0
	4	54	45.0	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0

As the Table 16 shows, the question Seventeen which was to what extent teachers are evaluating students’ grammar in the class, responded by the choice that most of students were satisfied by it and they had 45 percent answers for “excellent” and 37.5 percent for “satisfactory.” Table 17 shows the next and last question on process and its results (Question18).

Table 17. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 18

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	2	1.7	1.7
	1	9	7.5	9.2
	2	11	9.2	18.3
	3	47	39.2	57.5
	4	51	42.5	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0

The question was how much exams and class evaluations affect their learning. Out of 81.7 percent of participants answered “excellent” (42.5%) and “satisfactory” (39.2%). This can be the result that shows these activities and exams affect students’ grammar enhancement positively.

The result and answer of the teachers to interview questions showed that they all have exams and class evaluations on their list of things to do, though their methods basically is based on traditional methods. And they believed it would be a fact to bring about the external motivation for students to study their grammar.

Research Question Four

As it was mentioned earlier in the first chapter, the fourth research question was what students’ perceived competencies in grammar are. Items Five, Six, Seven, and Eight of questionnaire dealt with this questions along with the teachers’ perspectives in the interview. The results of frequencies for these questions of the questionnaire are displayed in the following table.

Table 18. The Frequencies of Research Questions 5-8

		Question5	Question6	Question7	Question8
N	Valid	120	120	120	120
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		1.5333	1.2583	2.8000	2.7500
Median		2.0000	1.0000	3.0000	3.0000

The following table shows the result of participants' answers to Question Five.

Table 19. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 5

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	33	27.5	27.5	27.5
	1	22	18.3	18.3	45.8
	2	42	35.0	35.0	80.8
	3	14	11.7	11.7	92.5
	4	9	7.5	7.5	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Question Five was how much effective the taught grammatical points are on your listening skill. The result of the answers shows that students listening were not affected by the taught grammar. And this can be seen as the least answers are "excellent" (7.5%) and "satisfactory" (11.7%). The next table is the result of the answers for the sixth question of the questionnaire.

Table 20. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 6

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	43	35.8	35.8	35.8
	1	36	30.0	30.0	65.8
	2	18	15.0	15.0	80.8
	3	13	10.8	10.8	91.7
	4	10	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

The sixth question was how much effective the taught grammatical points are on your speaking skill. The answer of the participants revealed that taught grammar and the methods for teaching them were not effective for students to enhance the speaking skill. This can be proved as the most answers belong to "never" (35.8%), and "unacceptable" (30%). The next question's result is the seventh one which is shown in the next table.

Table 21. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 7

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	6	5.0	5.0	5.0
	1	12	10.0	10.0	15.0
	2	24	20.0	20.0	35.0
	3	36	30.0	30.0	65.0
	4	42	35.0	35.0	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

The seventh question was how much effective the taught grammatical points are on your writing skill. The result shows that the most frequent answers are those which show positive effect of teaching method of grammar on writing skill, 35 percent answered “excellent” and 30 percent “satisfactory”. The last table is showing the eighth question results.

Table 22. The Frequency and Percentage of Question 8

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	0	5	4.2	4.2
	1	14	11.7	15.8
Valid	2	30	25.0	40.8
	3	28	23.3	64.2
	4	43	35.8	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

This question was how much effective the taught grammatical points are on students’ reading skill. The results indicate that the taught grammar had a fairly positive effect on reading. The most frequent answer was “excellent” (35.8%), and the least is “never” (4.2%).

The teachers’ perspectives were also collected as for the fourth research question. The result of collected data from teachers shows that their idea about taught grammar is a lot close to majority of students; That is to say, they said the taught grammar in the classes were more useful for writing and then reading and had the least effect on listening and speaking.

DISCUSSION

Research Question One

The aim of gathering data in the context stage was to provide answer to the first research question. Data were collected from students through part one of questionnaire and were collected from teachers through question number one of interview. The results regarding the context dimension of the program indicated that the time for learning grammar in the class is well considered, but still some weak points related to the context exist.

To begin with, this time also is matched by the material content but it is not fully matched, and there is no urgent need to add the time of other parts to grammar. Also the result of the interview with the teachers showed that, in Iranian high-school educational system, students are concerned about their score, so their first aim is to learn each skill for this purpose. And most of the teachers spend less time of their classes on teaching grammar, although, the level of difficulty of the grammar to be taught is also another factor to be considered for the time allocated to the grammar and it can be extended to half of each session. Another problem that has been mentioned during the interviews was that because of grammar’s difficulty, some high-school students are memorizing them to learn and it makes it less practical to be used in a task

or to use it in their productive skills. As Brown (2001) notes the institutional context within which the language is learnt plays an important role in effective teaching. Similarly, Kramsch (1998) emphasizes the importance of taking into consideration the context in language teaching. He maintains that the success of language teaching is heavily influenced by the context within which it takes place.

Thus, it can be concluded that the teaching/learning facilities and resources at the high-school partly served for their purpose. In other words, in terms of the context dimension of the program, the high-schools need some revisions and the educational setting in which English grammar program takes place is not ideal for both students and teachers.

Research Question Two

The second research question was related to students' and instructors' perception of objectives and content dimensions of the program. The second research question is related to input of the curriculum considering the grammar of English classes at Iranian high-schools.

According to the results of gathered data through questionnaire and interview, it can be concluded that in students' point of view, content of the books are helpful for Iranian students to enhance grammatical points.

Objectives have been discussed earlier by such researchers as Wakeford and Roberts (1982) and Hunskaar and Seim (1984). It is agreed that the lack of uniform teaching and clear objectives may result in poor educational results. On the other hand some others like Ho Ping Kong et al. (1991), and Kowlowitz et al. (1990), emphasized outcomes of education.

The result and interpretation of qualitative result gathered through interview revealed that the grammar exercises of Iranian books are appropriate; teachers usually refer to the books to explain a grammatical point. Nearly all teachers found examples useful to teach grammar and have a better output.

Another aspect of input was objectives; the results and answer of the Iranian teachers to interview showed that half of the interviewees mentioned the fact that the method with which grammar is presented in Iranian high-school books is deductive, and the focus of the book is mainly on grammar. Teachers mostly focused on the fact that the method in which books are developed and written should be based on a new method to be more effective on learners' productive skills. From the students' point of view, the taught grammatical points are effective enough according to learners' needs, the grammar exercises of Iranian high-school books are appropriate to them, teachers usually refer to the books to explain a grammatical point, and finally more than three fifth of participants found the examples of the book helpful to have a better understanding for taught grammars.

Ediger (2006) acknowledges that it is vital to state each objective carefully so that teachers and learners can understand what is to be achieved. It can be inferred that stating general and specific objectives contributes greatly to the achievement.

According to the result of gathered data, it can be concluded that the content dimension of high-school grammar program was as good as what students and instructors expected, but objectives need to be more focused on oral productive skills to have a better outcome for the curriculum.

Research Question Three

The third research hypothesis was related to process as what are the students' and instructors' perceptions on teaching methods and assessment dimensions of the grammar program?

With regard to the type of teaching methods used, the results of the students' response to questionnaire and the instructors' interview showed the same perceptions. More specifically, similar to the students' perceptions, the instructors also indicated that mostly old methods are used in teaching grammar in the classes. However, new methods were sometimes used in classes. According to instructor's point of view, half of the interviewees mentioned the fact that the method with which grammar is presented in Iranian high-schools is deductive. Mostly teachers use traditional method in teaching grammar. Unfortunately most teachers did not learn new methods in teaching grammar, on the other hand, most taught grammar in the high-school text books are based on traditional methods and because of old methods and in some cases level of difficulty of grammar, students memorize grammatical rule more; accordingly, the grammar is not practical and has no effect on oral productive skills. This leads to the fact that there is little attention paid to students' performance rather than students' competence. So, teachers should be motivated to learn new methods for teaching grammar in classes in order to lead students to a better outcome in the process of learning.

As for assessment dimension, according to the questionnaire and interview results, it was found that most of the students are satisfied by evaluating their grammar by teachers. Generally students believe that each exam during the classes or evaluating students' grammar after classes affects students' grammar enhancement positively and helps them for better learning. The result of the present study is in line with Tunc (2010) who cited each exam helps students learn better.

Research Question Four

The aim of gathering data in the product stage was to investigate the fourth research question as what are the students' perceived competencies in grammar based on the current teaching grammar program?

The findings of the study showed that students' listenings were not affected by the taught grammar. But the results showed that in most of the cases teaching grammar have positive affect on writing skill. Investigating speaking skill, findings revealed that

taught grammar and the methods for teaching them were not effective for students to enhance speaking skill. Finally, investigating the reading skill, the result indicated that the taught grammar had a fairly positive effect on learning. The results of collected data from teachers' interview show that their idea about teaching grammar is a lot close to majority of students' ideas; that is to say, they said the taught grammar in the classes were more useful for writing and then for reading; and, it had the least effect on listening and speaking. These results provided parallel evidence with the study carried out by Al-Darwish (2006) who found out that the students regarded themselves much less competent in speaking and listening skills. Similarly, the study done by Yıldız (2004) showed that the students experienced more difficulties in listening and speaking. Thus, it can be concluded that the program lacked sufficient focus on listening and speaking skills. In teachers' interview most of them had mentioned the emergency need of Iranian students to a more communicative design of syllabus than what is presented in their books. These teachers as important stake holders believe that Iranian high-school books are presenting a big compile of grammar where there are no oral productive activities in parallel to the presented grammars.

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of high-school grammar program through the perspective of students and instructors. According to the results, it can be concluded that the time allocated to grammar curriculum is not fully matched by the material content. So, the educational setting in which grammar program takes place is not ideal for both students and instructors. In order to overcome this, more frequent curriculum schedule could be organized and more revisions on the content of textbooks and difficulty level of lessons are needed.

The other highlighted point were methods which are used in teaching grammar at Iranian high-school; unfortunately, privilege methods for teaching grammar in classes and high-school textbooks are deductive methods. Because of this, students memorize grammatical rules more with no practical usage, in most cases because of Iranian high-schools educational system, students are concerned about scores rather than learning grammar effectively to be used in productive skills. In order to increase the competencies in practical usage, especially in productive skills, learning new methods of teaching grammar and employing them at class by teachers could be more motivating for students.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Based on the results of the study and discussions, it was found out that the program needed some revisions to make better use of existing opportunities. The following recommendations and suggestions might contribute to the improvements and revisions in the objectives, content, teaching methods, materials and assessment dimensions of the program. This study indicated that the instructors and students expressed discontentment about the context and component of the program, more specifically,

they stated that the time of the grammar in curriculum and students' time for learning, is well considered but it is not fully matched by the material content.

About instructors' point of view, half of the interviewees mentioned the fact that the method with which grammar is presented in Iranian high-schools is deductive, and most teachers use traditional methods in teaching grammar. In some lessons weekly schedule could be lessened so that the teachers could find the opportunity to apply various teaching methods without being too dependent on the coursebook. Therefore, teachers should be motivated to learn new methods for teaching grammar in classes for students' better learning.

As students considered themselves less affected by grammar on oral skills namely, speaking and listening and teaching grammar in classes has more effect on writing and reading more audio-visual could be made use of in classroom in order to help students get higher proficiency in listening and speaking skills.

According to the results and above mentioned conclusions in, it can be a proven fact that the final conclusion is the urgent need of curriculum developers to take these finding into account, since two important stake holders namely, students and teachers' perspectives were reported in this study.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The purpose of this study was to make an evaluation of high-school grammar program based on students and instructors perspectives. Thus, the researchers gathered data only from a limited number of high-school students and instructors. The researchers did not endeavor to collect data from graduate high-school students of the program. Future studies may focus on a comparative analysis. For example, a study based on the perceptions of the graduates and their comparison with the students might be conducted.

This study made use of questionnaire and interview as the main data gathering tools. Students' skills competencies were determined through a self-reported questionnaire so the results were a measure of how students perceived their own skills. Students' perceived competencies might not be accurate when compared to actual competencies; they may underestimate or overestimate their skills. That is why another study could make use of different measures in determining skills competencies. For example, achievement tests and/or observations can be employed in order to make the evaluation more comprehensive.

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APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

Age:	Gender:	Your father’s level of education:	Your mother’s level of education:	Type of school:
<hr/>				
<hr/>				
Part 2		Never	Unacceptable	Needs improvement
				Satisfactory
				excellent
<hr/>				
1-how much time do you spend on learning grammar?				
<hr/>				
2-How much time is allocated to Grammar in your high school curriculum?				
<hr/>				
3. To what extent the allocated time to grammar and content of your book are matched?				
<hr/>				
4. How much the time of other parts in a lesson should be added to the time of grammar?				
<hr/>				
Part 3				
<hr/>				
5. How much effective are the taught grammatical points on your listening skill?				
<hr/>				
6. How much effective are the taught grammatical points on your speaking skill?				
<hr/>				
7. How much effective are the taught grammatical points on your writing skill?				
<hr/>				
8. How much effective is the taught grammatical points on your reading skill?				
<hr/>				
Part 4				
<hr/>				
9. According to your needs, How much effective are the taught grammatical points?				
<hr/>				
10. How much appropriate are				
<hr/>				

the exercises in your book to learn grammar?

11. How much your teacher use your book to teach grammar?

12. How much helpful are the examples of your book to learn grammar?

Part 5

13. To what extend does your teacher use new method in teaching grammar?

14. How much do these new methods affect your learning?

15. How much do old methods affect your learning?

Part 6

16. To what extend each exam evaluate your grammatical competence?

17. To what extend your teacher evaluate your grammar during the class?

18. How much do exams and class evaluations affect your learning grammar?

APPENDIX II: STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

1. How much are students concerned about learning grammatical points?
2. How much time do you spend on teaching grammar in classes?
3. How much do you rely on the content of the teaching material to teach grammar?
4. How much are the teaching materials and their examples useful for students to refer to?
5. Do you use a new teaching method in order to reach to a better result? How much are new methods feasible?
6. To what extent do you think the traditional method of teaching grammar can be more effective in process of learning?
7. How much is the grammar effective in 4 basic skills of English language? (Listening, speaking, reading, and writing)