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Perceived and actual knowledge about grammar upon commencing pre-service TESOL education

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Abstract

This study explores the perceived and actual knowledge about grammar (KAG) brought to TESOL education by pre-service, UK, native speakers (NS), through the contextualisation of a comparison with Turkish, non-native speakers (NNS). Participants were asked to define the word grammar and state their personal perceptions about their KAG both before and after a small KAG test. The test asked for knowledge of parts of speech, verb tense forms and functional elements to be demonstrated through; labelling with metalanguage, defining, identifying, naming and providing examples. This mixed method research builds on work initiated by Bloor (1986). The results demonstrated three points; firstly, NNS KAG was significantly higher than NS in all areas of the test, secondly, NS levels of KAG were severely low and thirdly, perceived ideas of KAG from NNS were accurate and from NS inaccurate. A discussion about NS' and NNS' KAG perceptions in terms of efficacy and motivation, which includes NS' and NNS' secondary English education as an influencing factor is given. Two suggestions are made for UK, pre-service TESOL education: firstly that it is self-sufficient and non-reliant on UK secondary education and secondly that NS need to study a KAG course before TESOL education begins.

Keywords: knowledge of grammar (KOG), knowledge about grammar (KAG), teacher language awareness (TLA)

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Introduction

Since the mid 1980s, academics have highlighted the lack of KAG that NS bring to pre-service TESOL education, together with the lack that can be demonstrated whilst in practice (Alderson and Horak 2011; Andrews 1995; Andrews 1999; Bloor 1986; Borg 2003; Chandler, Robinson et al. 1988; Myhill, Jones et al. 2013; Sangster, Anderson et al. 2013; Williamson and Hardman 1995; Wray 1993). This research explores the levels of KAG that pre-service NS (English and Welsh) bring to TESOL education, through the contextualisation of a comparison with NNS (Turkish) TESOL teachers. Differences between the groups were investigated in terms of their perceptions of grammar, their perceived and actual level of KAG and the consistency between the views and levels. The exploration was undertaken through four research questions.

RQ1: How do pre-service NS and NNS teachers define grammar?

RQ2: How do pre-service NS and NNS teachers perceive their KAG?

RQ3: What levels of KAG do pre-service NS and NNS English teachers' bring to TESOL education?

RQ4: How do pre-service NS and NNS teachers perceive their KAG to be after a KAG test?

Literature Review

KAG is conscious knowledge (Andrews 2012) and stands in complete contrast to implicit, acquired knowledge of grammar (KOG). KOG is demonstrated by grammatical competence (Chomsky 1964) whereby the rules of language are below a level of consciousness and an ability to be creative with language is understood (Stern 1983); this is something that NS speakers can demonstrate as result of acquisition. However, KAG goes beyond the basic understanding of what is correct or incorrect and leads towards a linguistic knowledge base which is 'immense' (Hudson and Walmsley 2005 p.616). Knowledge of metalanguage is required, together with an understanding of rules for forming English. The rules include: knowledge about the form and use of parts of speech, word inflection, inflection of verb forms for tense, mood, aspect and voice, and the rules of syntax, which reveal how sentences are formed from words. As a result, KAG has to be learned, it cannot be acquired. For TESOL, KAG is required for a number of reasons. This is because an understanding is required to use reference books (e.g. Swan 2005), study books (e.g. Sowton 2012), L2 grammar teaching materials (e.g. Nettle and Hopkins 2003; Scrivener 2010) and course books (e.g. Cunningham and Moor 2005; Soars, Soars and Sayer 2004). All books, which are written for L2 study and teaching, are written using grammatical metalanguage and require an understanding of Standard English and traditional grammar. There are other reasons; current debates in teaching suggest a combination of focus-on-forms (KAG) and focus-on-form (KOG) is required to ensure lessons address both planned and unplanned language (Ellis 2015). Myhill et al. (2013) tell us that KAG gives teachers confidence and leads to an ability to create L2 learning environments which encourage effective communication about grammar. Shulman (1987) tells us how KAG is required for the development of metalinguistic knowledge, which he describes as a combination of content knowledge (KOG

and KAG) and pedagogical content knowledge. KAG contributes to the development of Teacher Language Awareness (TLA) whereby, the teacher understands the difficulty learners have in understanding, using and applying the English language (Wright 2002) to enable effective teaching (Thornbury 1997). As a result, KAG is a linguistic knowledge base which can greatly enhance the ability to address learners' needs, develop teaching acumen and language awareness.

Research looking at levels of NS' KAG was initiated by Bloor (1986). The intended purpose of his SPAM (Students' Prior Awareness of Metalinguistics) questionnaire was to give students the opportunity to 'to display familiarity with linguistic grammatical terms and concepts and related linguistic issues' (Bloor 1986 p.158). 63 students at two British Universities studying linguistics or modern languages participated in the study; findings showed that students demonstrated 'fairly widespread ignorance' (Bloor 1986 p.159) especially when identifying a sentences' subject and object. Borg (2003) comprehensively summarises further research in this area up until 1999 (this includes: (Chandler, Robinson et al. 1988; Wray 1993; Andrews 1995; Williamson and Hardman 1995; Andrews 1999) he concludes that the works cause concern, as collectively they demonstrate trends of inadequate grammatical knowledge held by potential teachers entering pre-service education. Alderson, Clapham and Steel (1997) and Alderson and Horak (2011) researched the grammatical content knowledge of pre-service teachers at university level to find that grammatical knowledge, particularly grammatical terminology was limited. Alderson and Horak (2011) compared findings from a test-based survey of UK,NS undergraduates' knowledge about language with Bloor's test findings (Bloor 1986) . The results, which were contextualised through comparisons with NNS, showed a general reduction in knowledge of grammatical terminology since 1986 and that UK, NS had much weaker KAG than NNS. Therefore, studies spanning forty years result in the same conclusion; NS lack KAG, metalanguage is a particular problem, and the problem is heightened when comparisons are made with NNS.

Cajkler and Hislam (2002) talk of their lack of surprise when NS candidates enter onto teacher education with very little KAG or have no confidence in their knowledge due to the unsystematic and implicit manner in which secondary schools teach it. Borg (2009) informs us that NS have not had the opportunity to observe what grammar is or how it works. Grammar teaching in England and Wales has been controversial since its abolishment from the school curriculum in the late 1960s; as a result of complex circumstances (see: Hudson and Walmsley 2005). Its removal led to a noticeable drop in literacy standards from which reports and conversations emerged on how to teach English. 'From Birth to Seven' (Davie 1972) was the starting point, this addressed complaints about the low levels of literacy. The Bullock report (Bullock 1975) followed and contained two syllabuses about language teaching, however, it failed to mention how English should be taught (Hudson and Walmsley 2005). The Thatcher government (1979 -90) introduced the National Curriculum; it was set up in 1981 and made a government policy in their 1988 Education Act. The teaching of English with specific reference to grammar was a main talking point. The 1988 Education Act was prepared through a report called 'Curriculum Matters' (DES 1984). It introduced the idea of including knowledge about language in English education and questioned the inclusion of KAG; this questioned inclusion caused 'a great deal of disagreement'

(Giovanelli and Clayton 2016 p.31) . The Kingman Report (DES 1988) followed and supported the inclusion of teaching grammar. However, The Cox Report (DESWO 1989) pointed out that the teachers probably would not be able to teach grammar as a result of receiving no education about it themselves. Hudson and Walmsley (2005) tell us that all four of the curriculum statements produced for English since 1981 included the teaching of grammatical knowledge, however, crucially, there was never anything in any policy to make the teaching of grammar compulsory and easy to avoid because KAG was never tested. The current policy for English teaching in the UK is the 2013 version of The National Curriculum (2013). This includes the teaching of grammar and coincides with the introduction of the Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar test (SPaG test) for primary school children, which aims to ensure an early introduction to grammar. Hudson (cited in, Giovanelli and Clayton 2016) tells us that research associated with these inclusions, which claim improvements in the teaching and understanding of grammar will be achieved, must be taken as anecdotal. This is because, English teachers are reluctant to teach it and University degree programmes ignore it. As a result of this, the teaching of KAG in secondary schools is not a future certainty. So, where do NS acquire KAG for TESOL? History to date has shown that it is not acquired in secondary education.

Another question is: are NS speakers aware that they have not been taught KAG? As fluent native speakers, do NS know about the existence of the knowledge base? And, does it impact on the perceptions NS have about KAG? Sangster et al. (2013) explored the perceived and actual levels of KAG brought to a University's initial teacher education programme from secondary schools in Scotland. Findings revealed that levels of linguistic knowledge were 'generally low' (Sangster, Anderson et al. 2013 p. 293) when compared with participants' perceived positive perceptions of competence. In relation to this, what leads people to have perceived competence? Deci, Koestner et al. (2001) draw our attention to cognitive evaluation theory (CET). This proposes that underlying intrinsic motivation is an innate psychological need for competence. Considering this, are NS speakers intrinsically motivated to learn grammar, to lead to an understanding and therefore have competence in KAG? Is this possible if they have not had any exposure to the linguistic knowledge base? (Borg 2009). Deci et al., (2001) also explain that external events or motivational inputs (e.g. the ability to complete a task or positive feedback) influence a person's perception of competence. So, if NS are able to get sufficiently high enough grades to gain access to a university English degree or a postgraduate TESOL course, does this mean they perceive their KAG to be suitable? Bandura (1993) adds more information and tells us that most courses of cognitive action are initially shaped by thought, and that people's beliefs' in their efficacy are created by anticipated scenarios. Those with high self-efficacy visualise success scenarios; they believe in their own ability to achieve something (this is unlike those with low self-efficacy who visualise their weaknesses and things that can go wrong). The ability for NS to use grammar and therefore complete tasks is unquestionable, as result of KOG. However, does the ability to complete tasks act as an external motivational input which influences beliefs in efficacy and therefore distort perception?

Methodology

Context

This research expanded on contemporary work in the field (Alderson and Horak 2011; Sangster, Anderson et al. 2013) and explored perceived and actual KAG brought to University TESOL education. Data from pre-service TESOL English and Welsh NS were compared with data from Turkish NNS. It aimed to find out if declarative knowledge requires more consideration in UK TESOL education. This is because; the main focus of contemporary UK TESOL education is procedural. Approaches to lesson planning, classroom management, using materials and assessment techniques are included in courses (Richards 2008). It seems that declarative knowledge (KAG) to apply to the development of PCK and TLA is assumed as already known as it has very little focus in courses, however, as already mentioned KAG is not studied in UK secondary education. Hobbs (2013) affirms this by describing how short TESOL courses, which the most accredited courses popular are: University of Cambridge (UCLES CELT) and Trinity College London (cert. TESOL), contain only six hours of KAG instruction, and through course observations identified NS candidates, who showed both a lack of confidence in their KAG and concern about how little was taught. It has been argued that KAG is downplayed in TESOL education and that the professional status of TESOL is being undermined because the distinct, specialised knowledge required to master the profession is not being taught (Ferguson and Donno 2003).

Participants

Participants consisted of a NS and NNS cohort who shared a common goal to become L2 English teachers. Both cohorts were first year undergraduate students. Cohort one consisted of: 31 NS from 2014-2015, 5 male, 26 female, (mean age = 22.11, SD=9.64), 51% from Wales, 49% from England. All participants were studying TESOL, as non-compulsory modules embedded in their BA English or BA English and Creative Writing degrees at a UK University. The criteria for acceptance onto these degrees was three UK advanced (A) Level, school leaver's qualifications with grades B,C,C. Cohort two consisted of: 31 NNS from 2014 -2015, 4 male, 27 female, (mean age= 18.7, SD=7.35) 100% from Turkey. All Turkish participants were studying English language teaching (ELT) as a degree subject at a University in Turkey. The criteria for acceptance on this degree were the successful completion of a National Entry Test, which examined proficiency in the four skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) explicit grammar and lexis.

Ethics

Ethical approval was sought and given by both participating universities. Research followed education research guidelines as set out in the British Educational Research Association (B.E.R.A 2011). Participants gave voluntary consent following an understanding that data would be used for research. Anonymity was ensured through number rather than name identification, which therefore assisted in the responses remaining confidential (Blaxter, Hughes et al. 2010). Assurance that requests for data to be withdrawn would be acknowledged at any time. A full debrief about why the data had been collected was given on completion of the collection; this was to ensure honesty and openness between the

researcher and participants was ensured (Newby 2010 p. 52) and also because the research would have failed had the reasons for asking the questions been disclosed prior to collection. (Richards 2003)

Data Collection

Qualitative and quantitative data were collected appropriately for the four research questions in order to collect data for analysis. Data were collected at the same stage of TESOL education in both the UK and Turkey; questions were asked in succession during the first hour, on the first day of pre-service TESOL studies. All participants in both cohorts were included in every research question. On completion of each question, participants placed their responses into their personal envelope marked with a number. This was to ensure that responses could be collated to one person, that there was a system for data entry, and that anonymity and confidentiality were ensured (Blaxter, Hughes et al. 2010 p.163). On completion of collection, a full de-brief about why the research had been undertaken was given. With the NS, reassurance was given (by using myself as an example) in order to ensure NS did not feel anxious. I spoke about my lack of KAG when I entered TESOL. With NNS, the teacher told the participants that the research was being collected to make comparisons with NS because NS' KAG was being explored.

Design and Materials

RQ1: How do pre-service NS and NNS teachers define grammar? Participants were given a sheet of paper and asked to respond, by writing one or two sentences, to the open ended question: What is grammar? Qualitative thematic analysis was undertaken to assess written responses. The aim was to find pertinent and recurring themes within the data (Braun and Clarke 2006) and to explore potential differences between the cohorts.

RQ2: How do pre-service NS and NNS teachers perceive their KAG? Participants were given a task to rate their KAG as being either: good, ok or poor. Following this, they were asked to justify their reasons for their perception by writing a maximum of three sentences. Qualitative thematic analysis was undertaken to assess written responses in order to find pertinent and recurring themes (Braun and Clarke 2006).

RQ3: What levels of KAG do pre-service NS and NNS English teachers' bring to TESOL education? All participants were given a 20 minute KAG test, consisting of 25 questions worth 50 marks (see, appendix 1). Sections, although re-written, were based on Alderson et al's (1997) revision of Bloor's (1986) original test, which was also adapted for use by Andrews (1999). As a result, forms of the test had been trialled and had been shown to measure a factor of language ability independent from communicative competence (KOG). Also, construct validity in declarative knowledge had been demonstrated as the test revealed potential knowledge of metalanguage. The original test contained other dimensions e.g. error correction, grammatical rule explanation, however, these were not included as the aim of this test was to find a general picture of KAG brought to TESOL education.

Questions 1-13 asked for: 5 types of nouns, 4 types of pronouns, 1 type of adjective and 3 types of articles all shown as an underlined word/s in sentences to be **labelled** with metalanguage ('with a grammar term' was used as the instruction in the test to ensure

terminology did not distract the participants) . An example was given. Questions 14-17 asked for the subject and the object to be **identified and defined**. Questions 18-19 asked for the number of verb tense forms to be stated and **named**. Questions 20-21 asked for the active and the passive voice to be **defined**. Questions 22-25 asked for an example of a conjunction, preposition, adjective and adverb to be **given**. On completion of the test, participants marked their own work. My Turkish equivalent and I read out the answers, gave the mark value and listened to suggestions for answers before stating if the answer was mark worthy or not.

Quantitative analysis was undertaken using the statistical package for social sciences version 22 (SPSS v 22) in order to explore potential levels of significance between the cohorts by undertaking independent paired t-tests. A hypothesis (H) was formed to address this question:

H1. NNS bring more KAG to TESOL education than UK NS. This can be evidenced through comparative abilities in being able to:

- 1a. Label nouns, pronouns, articles in sentences using meta-language
- 1b. Define the subject and object of a sentence and the active and passive voice
- 1c. Identify the subject and object of a sentence
- 1d. Name the verb tense forms
- 1e. Give an example of a conjunction, preposition, adjective and adverb
- 1f. Achieve a higher overall grade in the KAG test

RQ4: How do pre-service NS and NNS teachers perceive their KAG to be after a KAG test? Following the receipt of their KAG test result, participants were asked to revisit the question used in RQ2. Once again, participants were asked to rate their KAG as being either: good, ok or poor and to justify their reason with a maximum of four sentences. Qualitative thematic analysis was undertaken to assess written responses in order to find pertinent and recurring themes (Braun and Clarke 2006)

Findings

The findings are explored through explanations of comparative abilities and differences identified between the NS and NNS speaker cohorts.

RQ1: How do pre-service NS and NNS teachers define grammar?

The first question is concerned with the definitions of grammar made by the NS and NNS. From NS, one main theme, which referred to the structure of language (written by 68%), and one secondary theme (written by 32%), which referred to punctuation, emerged when asked to define grammar. From NNS, one main theme, which referred to the rules of language (written by 65%), and one secondary theme (written by 35%), which referred to language construction, emerged. Therefore, differences in how grammar is defined emerged from the cohorts.

The Oxford English dictionary (1989) defines grammar as:

- ‘the whole system and structure of a language or languages in general usually taken as consisting of syntax and morphology’
- ‘a set of prescriptive notions about correct use of a language’

- ‘the basic elements of an area of knowledge or skill’.

The definition includes the word ‘structure’ to mean, ‘the arrangement of and relations between the parts of something complex’ (Dictionary 1989p.1423) and ‘prescriptive’ to mean ‘the imposition of a rule or method’ (Dictionary 1989 p.1131). As a result of this, majorities in both cohorts gave a suitable definition of the word grammar. However, the focus of the NS responses referring to ‘structure’ lies in contrast to the NNS focus of ‘rules’. The distinction demonstrates the difference between language acquisition and learning and therefore the distinction between having KOG and knowing KAG. The implicit, descriptive nature of UK education has not left the impression that English grammar has rules for correctness. Native speakers hear forms of non-standard English and focus on being able to understand the message rather than the correctness of it; there is a focus on fluency through the communication of meaning rather than the practice of grammatical forms (Thornbury 2006). This understanding is further enhanced by 32% of NS who referred to punctuation when defining grammar. The focus was on, ‘(the use of) special marks that you add to a text to show the divisions between phrases and sentences, and to make the meaning clearer’ (Walter 2008 p.1601). The meaning and structure of what is being produced is therefore how NS define the grammar of their native language. NS defined grammar as a result of having implicit KOG.

NNS participants saw rules as being important. Rules being, ‘an instruction that states the way things are or should be done’ (Walter 2008 p.1239). This demonstrated that English education had an explicit focus. This understanding is further enhanced by the 35% of NNS referring to the ‘formation’ demonstrated through the use of words like; order, construction, basics. Reference was made to the building blocks of language, the order of parts of speech, correct construction of sentences and NNS demonstrated the understanding that there is an order and rules in language. NNS defined grammar as a result of knowing KAG.

RQ2: How do pre-service NS and NNS teachers perceive their KAG?

The second question was concerned with how NS and NNS perceive their KAG. From NS, 26% responded ‘good’ and the theme of confidence as a result of a motivational input emerged. 74% responded ‘OK’, which saw two themes emerge: confidence as a result of a motivational input and lack of confidence as a result of uncertainty about the correct use of grammar.

The theme of confidence as a result of a motivational input emerged from ‘good’ responses as a result of success in task completion: e.g. ‘I have passed my A levels and did pretty well in my English A level.’ Or as a result of advice from a person in authority: e.g. ‘It was suggested by my lecturers on Access to HE that I follow this path (BA English with TESOL).’ Confidence was acquired through an external source. Two themes emerged from written responses to support participants who perceived their KAG to be OK. Confidence as a result of a motivational input: e.g. ‘I’ve had really strict teachers for grammar, so I had to learn.’ And, low self confidence due to an awareness of lack of knowledge about the correct use of grammar: e.g. ‘I don’t feel confident using grammar correctly.’ So whilst there was an

indication that ‘OK’ responses had been influenced by an external, motivating factor, participants also indicated awareness that they did not use grammar correctly.

From NNS, interestingly, the response ratings were the same with 26% responding ‘good’ and 74% responding ‘OK’. However, the emergent themes were different; ‘Good’ responses saw the theme confidence as a result of intrinsic motivation, emerge. ‘OK’ responses saw two themes emerge; confidence through intrinsic motivation and low self-efficacy. The theme of intrinsic motivation emerged from ‘good’ responses was as a result of the amount of personal time and energy put into learning English: e.g. ‘I have really worked hard’ and ‘I study English every day.’ The theme of intrinsic motivation emerged from ‘OK’ responses was, once again, as a result of personal engagement with learning: e.g. ‘I have read a lot of books. I love English.’ The theme amongst this group of low self-efficacy emerged as a result of participants wanting to be better: e.g. ‘My grammar is not bad but it’s not good enough.’

As a result, a clear division emerged between the cohorts in how their perceived their KAG. NS’ perceived ideas were as a result of a motivational input. The responses did not indicate any engagement with the study of KAG. NS perceived KAG was as a result of doing well in exams and receiving authoritative approval of a task or ability in the English subject area. NNS responses indicated an engagement with the process of learning English; they showed intrinsic motivation and demonstrated that their perceptions were based on an engagement with KAG.

RQ3: What levels of KAG do pre-service NS and NNS English teachers’ bring to TESOL education?

The third question is concerned with NS and NNS demonstrating their knowledge and ability of KAG. The results of the KAG test are presented.

Descriptive Statistics

SPSS v 22 was used to find the Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) result for both groups of participants. A summary of the findings can be found in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Hypothesis 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e and 1f

Hypothesis	Test	Groups			
		NS		NNS	
		M	SD	M	SD
1a	Label	10.74	14.47	74.26	23.37
1b	Define	4.83	13.56	63.70	28.75
1c	Identify	8.06	26.13	87.09	31.53
1d	Name	0.00	0.00	73.40	34.16
1e	Give an example of	29.84	26.16	82.26	27.53

1f	Achieve	11.83	9.75	69.05	18.39
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When labelling the underlined parts of speech, the basic terms of noun and article (associated with the definite article) were the only parts of speech that were marked correct on some NS papers. When defining, a minority of NS gave a basic definition the subject. NS could not define the object or the active and passive voice. When identifying, no NS could identify the subject, however, a minority could identify the object. When naming, NS had no understanding that there were twelve verb tense forms (NS responded that there were three; past, present and future). There was a little more success when giving examples and giving examples of an adjective proving to be the most successful. With adverbs, any word ending in ...ly was given; 'lovely' was a common choice, which is an adjective. The task to give an example of a preposition was achievable by a minority but no one could give an example of a conjunction. Overall, the NS results produced a bleak picture. The significance of the results, contextualised by a comparison with NNS results follows.

Inferential Statistics

Independent paired t-tests were undertaken to identify whether the mean result collected from NS and NNS differed significantly.

Hypothesis 1a: On average, NNS scored significantly higher on the ability to give a correct linguistic term to an underlined type of noun, pronoun or article in a sentence, and to the subject and object of a sentence ($M = 74.25$, $SE = 4.19$) than NS ($M = 10.74$, $SE = 2.59$) as $t(60) = -12.86$, $p < .001$, $r = .85$ (Bca 95%, CI [- 73.43,-53.60]). This significant and strong finding indicated that NNS had knowledge about different parts of speech and metalanguage; whereas NS lacked this knowledge.

Hypothesis 1b: On average, NNS scored higher on the ability to correctly define the subject and object of a sentence and the active and passive voice ($M = 63.70$, $SE = 5.16$) than NS ($M = 4.83$, $SE = 2.43$) as $t(60) = -10.31$, $p < .001$, $r = .16$ (Bca 95%, CI [- 70.38, - 47.35]). This significant and small finding indicated that NNS demonstrated this knowledge; whereas NS lacked this knowledge and ability.

Hypothesis 1c: On average NNS scored higher on the ability to identify the subject and object of a sentence ($M = 87.09$, $SE = 5.66$) than NS ($M = 8.06$, $SE = 4.69$) as $t(60) = -10.74$, $p < .001$, $r = .811$ (Bca 95%, CI [- 93.75, -64.30]). This significant and strong finding indicated that NNS were able to identify the subject and object of a sentence; whereas NS lacked this knowledge and ability.

Hypothesis 1d: On average NNS scored higher on the ability to name the twelve verb tense forms ($M = 73.38$, $SE = 6.14$) than NS ($M = 0.00$, $SE = 0.00$) as $t(60) = -11.95$, $p < .001$, $r = .84$ (Bca 95%, CI [- 85.92, -60.84]). This significant and strong finding indicated that NNS understood that there were 12 verb tense forms and could name them as: present simple, present continuous, past simple, past continuous, present perfect simple, present perfect continuous, past perfect simple, past perfect continuous, future simple –going to and will, future continuous, future perfect, future perfect continuous whereas; NS lacked this

knowledge and ability. All NS incorrectly named just three as past, present and future and therefore brought no knowledge of the verb tense forms to TESOL education.

Hypothesis 1e: On average NNS scored higher on the ability to give an example of a preposition, conjunction, adverb and adjective ($M = 82.25$, $SE = 4.94$) than NS ($M = 29.83$, $SE = 4.69$) as $t(60) = -7.68$, $p < .001$, $r = .70$ (Bca 95%, CI [- 66.06, -38.77]). This significant and strong result indicated NNS had the ability to give an example of a preposition, conjunction, adverb and adjective; whereas NS lacked this knowledge and ability.

Hypothesis 1f: On average NNS achieved a higher overall grade on the KAG test ($M = 69.04$, $SE = 3.30$) than NS ($M = 11.82$, $SE = 1.75$) as $t(60) = -15.31$, $p < .001$, $r = .89$ (Bca 95%, CI [- 64.74, -49.69]). This significant and strong result indicated that NNS had more KAG when arriving onto TESOL education than NS.

Summary of Findings

The levels of significance in the findings for H1 gave a very clear understanding about the levels of KAG that NS bring to TESOL education when put into a comparative context with NNS. They were severely low.

RQ4: How do pre-service NS and NNS teachers perceive their KAG to be after a KAG test?

The fourth question is concerned with exploring how NS and NNS perceive KAG after the KAG test and receipt of mark. The aim is to explore if perceptions have changed from original responses given for RQ2 as a result of being asked to demonstrate ability.

Following receipt of the test result, 100% of NS changed their perception of KAG to 'poor'; however, this was not the case for NNS. The majority of NNS maintained their original belief in themselves through repeated responses of 'good' or 'OK'.

The 26% of NS, who prior to the test perceived their KAG to be 'good', changed the response to 'poor' after receiving the test result. The theme of low self-efficacy emerged: e.g. 'I feel I have a lot to learn'. 'I'm sorry; I didn't know I was illiterate'. The 74% of NS who prior to the test perceived their KAG to be 'OK' changed the response to 'poor' after receiving the test result. One main theme emerged of low self-efficacy: e.g. 'I don't know the difference between a noun, verb and adjective'. 'I was convinced but I haven't got a clue' and a sub theme, associated with low-self-efficacy, asking for education emerged: e.g. 'EDUCATE ME-please, it's embarrassing', 'I need a lot of help and work with my grammar.'

The 26% of NNS who prior to the test perceived their KAG to be 'good' kept the response as 'good' after the test result. The theme of high self-efficacy emerged and example responses included: e.g. 'It is good.' 'As I said, it is good and always on my mind.' The 74% of NNS who prior to the test perceived their KAG to be 'OK' kept their response as 'OK'. Two themes emerged of high self-efficacy and low self-efficacy. Examples of high self efficacy included: e.g. 'I don't know the names but I use them when I'm talking to a foreigner and he/she understands me. And that's enough for me.' 'I am good at grammar but sometimes I forget the rules'. Examples of low self-efficacy included: e.g. 'It is not enough'. 'My

knowledge of grammar is not enough to be an English teacher. I need to study more.' Low self-efficacy emerged as a result of participants wanting to be better.

Responses from NS demonstrated that as a result of finding out that their level of KAG was severely low their perceptions of KAG changed. The responses are in complete contrast to NNS whose responses stayed the same. This demonstrated that NNS were able to: understand the question, demonstrate knowledge of and ability of KAG, demonstrate an understanding of their own capabilities and as a result give an accurate response to their perceived knowledge. NS were unable to demonstrate these abilities and subsequently changed their initial inaccurate responses.

Discussion

This small scale study has added more data about NS' KAG upon commencing TESOL education. It has built on findings initiated by Bloor (1986), and on more recent research which tells us that time has seen no improvement in NS' KAG (Alderson and Horak 2011), a drop in standards has been identified when comparisons with NNS' KAG are made (Alderson and Horak 2011) and NS' actual KAG is low when compared to their perceived KAG (Sangster, Anderson et al. 2013).

The first research question asked for grammar to be defined. NS described implicit KOG as a result of acquiring English, whereas, NNS described explicit KAG as a result of learning English. For TESOL, KAG is essential for progression in the field; to understand written materials for learning and teaching and for the development of PCK (Shulman 1987) and TLA (Thornbury 1997). Implicit knowledge alone will not facilitate this learning. The second question asked for participants' perceptions of KAG. NS gave 'good' or 'OK' responses mainly as result of confidence from a motivational input (e.g. achieving a high English exam grade) which as Deci et al., (2001) tell us is something which influences a person's perception of confidence. Response ratings from NNS were similar, however, were mainly as a result of intrinsic motivation, which Deci et al. (2001) propose acts as an innate psychological need for competence. NNS justified their responses as a result of engagement with learning. Research question three asked for KAG to be demonstrated through a KAG test. In this, NNS results were significantly higher than NS in all areas of the test. The results demonstrated that NNS intrinsic motivation led to competence and NS confidence from a motivational input (related to English but not KAG) led to severely low results. The fourth question explored the perceptions of NS and NNS after receiving their test result. All NS changed their result to 'poor' and demonstrated low self-efficacy; they visualised their weaknesses (Bandura 1993). This was probably the first time NS had had exposure of KAG. The majority of NNS maintained their original response and demonstrated high self efficacy and therefore visualised success scenarios; they believed in their own ability to achieve something (Bandura 1993) as a result of previous exposure to KAG. Overall, NNS perceptions of their KAG were accurate and NS were inaccurate.

NS arriving on to TESOL education with an understanding of KAG is not a future certainty despite changes made in the 2013 National Curriculum (Hudson cited in: Giovanelli and

Clayton, 2016). Even if this does happen, the results will take a minimum of fifteen years to filter into pre-service TESOL education.

Conclusion

As a result of these findings and previous associated finding spanning 40 years, change in how NS are educated in pre-service TESOL education is needed. UK TESOL education needs to be self-sufficient, self-contained and non-reliant on secondary education and it needs to acknowledge the fact that NS do not arrive onto TESOL courses with KAG. The importance of this knowledge base has been explained and its requirement in an L2 teachers' acumen surely cannot be argued against. NS need explicit KAG instruction before TESOL education begins and research associated with how this impacts on the pre-service TESOL education needs to be undertaken.

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APPENDIX 1

Label the underlined words in the sentences with a grammar term

	Sentence	Grammatical term - ANSWERS
Example	<u>Cardiff</u> is the capital of Wales.	Proper noun
1	The little boy likes <u>ice-cream</u>	Compound (1) noun (1)
2	<u>Yawning</u> is addictive.	Gerund (1)
3	I'd like two <u>apples</u> please.	(Plural, countable) concrete (1) noun (1)
4	<u>The</u> gentleman lived in China for two years.	Definite (1) article (1)
5	It's <u>mine</u> !	Possessive (1) pronoun (1) (1 st person singular)
6	<u>He</u> loves the new mini cooper car.	Subject (1) pronoun (1) (3 rd person singular)
7	The book belongs to <u>her</u> .	Object (1) pronoun (1) (3 rd person singular)
8	<u>Their</u> phones have been stolen!	Possessive (1) adjective (1) (3 rd person plural)
9	We are enjoying <u>ourselves</u> .	Reflexive (1) pronoun (1) (1 st person plural)
10	She'd like <u>a</u> new handbag for her birthday.	Indefinite (1) article (1)
11	<u> </u> Fruit is good for you.	Zero (1) article (1)
12	<u>Mrs Thomas</u> likes cats.	Proper (1) noun (1)
13	His <u>childhood</u> was fabulous.	Abstract (1) noun (1)

14. Define a the subject of a sentence

- *The person, thing or situation which acts on the verb, which causes the action of the verb to happen(2) (or 1 mark for a shorter correct version)*

15. Underline the subject in the sentence. (Identify)

- The man wearing the blue cardigan is tall.(1)

16. Define the object of a sentence

- *It is the place, person or thing which received the action of the verb.(2) (or 1 mark for a shorter correct version)*

17. Underline the object in following sentence. (Identify)

- He bought his girlfriend a watch for her birthday. (1)

Answer the following questions:**18. How many verb tense forms are there? 12 (1)****19. Name the verb tense forms. (12)**

- Present simple, present continuous, past simple, past continuous, present perfect simple, present perfect continuous, past perfect simple, past perfect continuous, future simple –going to and will, future continuous, future perfect, future perfect continuous

20. Define the active voice

- Active voice says what the subject does. (1)

21. Define the passive voice

- Passive voice says what happens to the subject.(1)

Give one example of the following parts of speech**22. Preposition** - for example: in /on / under (1)**23. Conjunction** – for example: and / but / however (1)**24. Adjective** – for example: quick / beautiful /good (1)**25. Adverb** – for example: quickly / beautifully / well (1)**FINAL MARK ... / 50**