



## **Examining EFL Learners' Dual Perspectives: Affective and Cognitive Aspects of Self-Regulated Grammar Learning Strategies**

**Shadab Jabbarpoor**

*English Department, Islamic Azad University, Garmsar Branch, Garmsar, Iran  
shjabbarpoor@gmail.com*

### **Abstract**

Enhancing one's proficiency in English grammar represents a foremost objective for individuals who are learning a foreign language. In EFL contexts, it is commonly observed that children tend to acquire knowledge of grammar rules incidentally, whereas adults usually require formal instruction to attain a more advanced level of proficiency. Numerous contemporary approaches have undergone substantial investigation, yet comparatively limited emphasis has been placed on the acquisition of grammar learning strategies. This article investigates the perspectives of learners with regards to the utilization of grammatical learning strategies during the duration of an English language course. This research centers on the cognitive and affective viewpoints of individuals participating in a grammar study group. The objective of the research is to investigate the utilization of specific strategies by learners for the acquisition of varied grammar structures. Novel methodologies and empirical investigations have the potential to enhance the comprehension of the educational process and self-regulation. The aforementioned holds the possibility of significant repercussions for individuals engaged in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning process, educators facilitating such learning, and professionals responsible for designing EFL curricula.

*Keywords: Affection; Cognition; Grammar Learning Strategies; Self-Regulation*

## 1. Introduction

The topic of grammar education is one of the most frequently researched areas within the discipline of language pedagogy. In the conventional pedagogical approach, instructors traditionally emphasized the presentation of consecutive grammatical regulations trailed by constrained exercises and drills intended to reinforce the rule application. In recent years, an increasing body of literature has surveyed tasks and activities that prioritize contextualization of grammar forms and provide learners with exposure to diverse learning opportunities. According to Nassaji and Fotos (2011), the enhancement of instructional effectiveness is contingent upon the integration of structured input activities that are accompanied by output, interactive tasks, and corrective feedback regarding learners' errors.

Proficiency in grammar is essential in academic writing as it involves the precise articulation of complex ideas. In academic writing, learners must develop a reasonable level of grammatical accuracy to effectively convey their thoughts. This involves the use of syntactic structures, such as clauses, to convey information concisely and avoid unnecessary repetition. Modal verbs are used to express varying degrees of certainty and logical plausibility, while reported speech allows for accurate reporting of statements from primary sources. One effective approach to teaching grammar in academic writing is through explicit, teacher-led instruction known as "focus on forms." This method involves a structured sequence in which grammatical structures are presented and explained to students. In order to enhance the acquisition of grammar forms, it is beneficial to incorporate various proposed grammar learning strategies into the course syllabus. This provides learners with a range of techniques and methods to expand their learning options and improve their understanding of grammatical structures. Research by Oxford and Nyikos (1989), as well as scholars such as Dörnyei (2005), Pintrich (2000), and Pekrun et al. (2002), highlight the significance of learners' affective attitudes, including emotions and beliefs, in self-regulated learning. These studies indicate that learners' affective and cognitive attitudes play a crucial role in shaping their engagement and efforts in EFL grammar learning strategies.

## 2. Review of the Related Literature

According to a recent literature review, beyond the perspectives of both learner and teacher and situational factors, the efficacy of acquiring desired linguistic structures depends significantly on the content and methodology employed. Ellis and Collins (2009) have postulated that the factors of input frequency, form function, salience, and form-function mapping may potentially serve as determinants of learning. Benati (2017) proposed that four pedagogical and strategic options be employed to satisfy the stated criteria. These options include processing instruction, which exposes learners to rich input, input enhancement,



which draws the learners' attention to the forms used in the input, structured output, which involves text reconstruction tasks to increase focus on form and facilitate corrective feedback, and collaborative output tasks, which promote cooperative learning.

The extant body of research on grammar learning strategies (GLSs henceforth) is predominantly reliant on scant empirical evidence. [Pawlak \(2019a\)](#) has illustrated the possibility of employing GLSs to aid in the development of both implicit and explicit knowledge of grammar. According to the author's argument, the act of analyzing diagrams and tables for the purpose of identifying a specific structure, followed by engaging in structured exercises that incorporate said form, constitutes the implementation of cognitive strategies geared towards analytical and practical aspects. Such an approach ultimately culminates in the acquisition of explicit knowledge. The attainment of implicit knowledge transpires when the learner endeavors to assimilate the coherent framework into their own production, or when they attend to it within the spoken language production of those proficient in the target language.

### *2.1 Reconceptualizing GLSs in light of Self-regulation*

According to [Oxford \(2017\)](#), L2 grammar strategies can be defined as conscious choices and actions made by learners in particular contexts to enhance their self-regulated and autonomous development of L2 grammar. These strategies are considered teachable and dynamic in nature, aimed at improving task performance and attaining long-term proficiency. This definition yields two key inferences: foremost, the awareness exhibited in learners' choice of tactics and, secondly, the significance placed on self-determined and self-regulated learning.

The concept of consciousness has been the subject of debate among scholars ([Oxford, 1990](#)) who have contended that learning strategies are frequently conscious, particularly during the initial stages of their emergence in the learner. The concept of autonomy in learners' strategies serves as a pivotal element that highlights the notion that learners are not mere passive recipients of strategies that are imposed upon them, but instead, they actively participate in the development and refinement of strategies tailored towards their specific objectives. [Larsen-Freeman's \(2003, 2012, 2014\)](#) notion of Grammaring and [Oxford's \(2017\)](#) proposal for self-regulatory practices in grammar learning have highlighted the significance of viewing grammar as a dynamic and evolving process, which enables learners to surpass the input by drawing on their personal preferences and creative abilities. The existing body of research has predominantly concentrated on approaches to strategy training that are focused on the product and oriented towards the teacher, thereby affording limited opportunities for student engagement. The notion of language learning strategy has undergone a re-conceptualization in the form of strategic self-regulation, which affords learners

the autonomy to independently select and utilize learning strategies, as opposed to being restricted to those prescribed by either the instructor or the curriculum (Oxford, 2017; Dörnyei, 2005; Tseng et al., 2006). One crucial aspect of an individual's capacity as a learner is the ability to perceive a strategy as a process, rather than a tangible output (Oxford, 2017). According to Dörnyei (2005), Oxford (2017) and Zimmerman (2013), learners engage in the process of monitoring, evaluating and adjusting their strategies in accordance with task requirements and personal variables. According to Amini's (2017) research, there exists a modest favourable association between self-regulated learning and writing proficiency when considering the impact of teacher feedback.

The incorporation of strategic self-regulation, along with its process orientation, has yielded significant benefits for studies related to GLSs. This development represents a positive change, as highlighted by Oxford (2017), who stated that “The weather for grammar learning strategies appears to be improving, the gray clouds are parting, and a few glimmers of sunshine are now visible” (p. 246). It is necessary to consider the implications of the subject matter within the context of the current discourse in order to fully comprehend its significance. Adequate analysis and critical evaluation are crucial components of understanding the complexities and nuances inherent in the topic at hand. Therefore, a thorough investigation and exploration of the relevant literature and theoretical frameworks is imperative for any academic inquiry into the subject. Different frameworks for self-regulated learning can be found in the work of Seker (2016).

With regard to the aforementioned aspects, the present study aimed to examine the self-regulated preferences of English as a foreign language (EFL) learners for GLSs in the process of acquiring three distinct grammar forms. The central inquiry examines whether English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners employ diverse GLSs when they encounter various linguistic structures. The subsequent segment provides a summary of an empirical investigation aimed at addressing the aforementioned inquiries.

Autonomy of learners, as per Oxford's (2017) conceptualization of self-regulation, is a crucial aspect in comprehending the learning strategy domain. The proficient employment of L2 learning strategies is primarily aimed at fulfilling the goal of self-regulation. The author posits that learners employ a variety of strategies to regulate their cognitive, emotional, and social faculties to enhance their proficiency in language acquisition. These strategies are frequently utilized in an adaptable and innovative manner that aligns with the learners' specific learning objectives. The decision of learners to employ certain strategies in accordance with their respective contexts affords them a level of autonomy and fosters the development of critical thinking skills, thereby stimulating their capacity for innovation within the sphere of learning. According to Scheffler



(2009), the success of foreign language pedagogy is greatly diminished if the emotional and anticipatory responses of learners towards the teaching process are disregarded.

The incoming group of students for this particular course exhibit a wide range of linguistic backgrounds, age ranges, gender identities, and learning styles. In light of these variations, it is anticipated that they will need to employ a broad range of strategic decision-making in order to succeed in the course. The present study has adopted Oxford et al.'s (2007) taxonomy of grammar learning strategies, as it aligns with the pedagogical choices recommended by Benati (2017), facilitating the implementation of strategies and enabling learners to reflect upon their effectiveness through practical experience. The classification of instructional approaches is bifurcated into three primary groupings, each of which encompasses a variety of methodological alternatives intended to afford pupils numerous avenues for acquiring knowledge through exposure, performance, communication, and application. The tripartite classification comprises of strategies that prioritize the interpretation of content whilst paying occasional attention to form. This approach encompasses a set of techniques, namely repetition, highlighting, form coding, and text reconstruction, which are complemented by explicit-inductive oriented strategies. The latter involve the discovery of rules through the use of notecards, example sentences, textual enhancement, and the solicitation of assistance from more skilled learners. Additionally, explicit-deductive oriented GLSs are employed, which necessitate the formal elucidation of rules, memorization, and the incorporation of the new rules into sentences.

Within the explicit-inductive framework, the strategies most frequently chosen for the purpose of rule discovery involve utilizing examples and utilizing textually enhanced texts. This classification pertains to methods that necessitate learners to deduce the regulations from presented input. The approach being employed is congruent with Krashen's (1982) theoretical framework, which posits that input is a pivotal determinant in the process of language acquisition, as learners must be systematically exposed to comprehensible input for successful second language acquisition (SLA) to ensue.

The present investigation yields results consistent with prior research into the influence of input processing mechanisms on various grammatical structures. According to the scholarly work of Ellis et al. (2002), instructing grammar through a discovery-oriented technique bears noteworthy advantages. This method enables learners to internalize the grammar rules they have independently discovered, as well as cultivate problem-solving and critical thinking proficiencies. Additionally, it effectively readies students to engage in self-regulated and autonomous learning, making it a highly advantageous approach. These pedagogical approaches entail the learners to consciously observe and

identify the linguistic forms presented in the input, which may potentially lead to acquisition of knowledge. In contrast to output-based strategies, which require greater time and exertion, input-based strategies are characterized by weaker learner engagement. This is evident with respect to activities such as sentence writing and text construction.

According to [Huang et al.'s](#) study in 2012, there is a positive correlation between a high involvement load and the retention of forms. [Kaivanpanah](#) and [Rafsanjaninejad](#) (2020) conducted research to examine the efficacy of the Textual Enhancement instructional technique in promoting advancements in learners' performance. The authors contend that implicit instruction is insufficient in eliciting the requisite cognitive processes essential for effective learning. According to the authors, the implementation of an output-based text editing technique may prove to be efficacious in enhancing the proficiency of learners with respect to the designated linguistic structure. Additionally, this approach may facilitate the retention of the instructional impact on subsequent assessments conducted after a significant interval of time.

The primary objective of this present study is not to quantitatively assess the level of proficiency achieved by students utilizing various grammar learning techniques. Rather, its focus is directed towards an analytical investigation of students' cognitive, social, and affective receptiveness towards leveraging such strategies. As such, the subsequent inquiry has been posited:

What are the attitudes and preferences of learners towards the utilization of grammar learning strategies for acquiring specific grammar structures?

### 3. Method

#### 3.1 Participants

The present study examined a cohort of 19 undergraduate learners of varying genders, comprising 13 females and 6 males, who were enrolled in the Basic Sciences program at the Bachelor's level at the University of Medical Sciences, IAU, Tehran, Iran and were pursuing General English. Given the variance in the grammar knowledge of students enrolled in the course due to their differing academic backgrounds and year of study, a deliberate inclusion of grammatical learning strategies has been incorporated into the course syllabus to allow for individualized, self-regulated improvement in grammar proficiency.

This study recruited a total of 24 EFL learners initially. Unfortunately, five participants did not submit all the required journals related to grammar structures and were consequently excluded from the final analysis. These excluded participants were then divided into six groups, with the main purpose of these





groups being to study grammar rules through group discussion and obtain support and guidance from fellow group members. Prior to each class session, the groups met once a week to preview a specific grammar structure, which would be the main focus of the session. All participants were clearly informed about the experimental nature of the study, which revolved around grammar learning strategies, and their participation was based on their voluntary consent. Additionally, participants were asked to provide written consent by signing a consent form.

### *3.2 Course and objectives*

The primary focus of this study concerns the subject matter of English grammar. The primary goal of this curriculum involves achieving a proficient grasp of formal academic grammar, through the application of authentic tasks, which aligns with the established conventions of the department in which this research was carried out. As an integral component of the course curriculum, it is anticipated that the students will effectively employ their acquired comprehension of English grammar in order to cultivate a discerning capacity in editing their written and oral expressions. This pertains to the identification and rectification of errors, which consequently fosters a profound comprehension of the structure of language.

The prescribed textbook for the course was *Advanced Grammar* by [Schmidt \(2015\)](#), which purports to enable students to acquire proficiency in written academic grammar through the utilization of genuine academic texts. The author asserts on the rear cover that the diverse scope of inductive and deductive exercises and productive tasks conform to current theoretical and pedagogical advancements. This encompasses a total of fifteen chapters, which exclusively focuses on the fundamental aspects of English clauses and phrases. The selection of the coursebook was based on the inclusivity of its tasks and exercises, which cater to diverse modes of grammar instruction and individual learning styles.

The most notable aspect of this particular course, which aligns with our research objectives, is its inclusion of a diverse array of inductive and deductive exercises in adherence to the latest advancements in the field of grammar pedagogy. The coursebook that has been implemented comprises exercises and tasks designed to cater to every mode of grammar instruction, alongside considering the diversity of learning styles. Each section of the academic text commences with a comprehensive enumeration of the intended learning outcomes that succinctly highlight the intricacies of the featured grammatical concepts. This is subsequently supplemented by a diverse collection of stimulating and culturally relevant scholarly materials, thereby elevating the scholastic value of the text. The analysis of the grammatical section enables pupils to observe highlighted structures, which can then be subsequently categorized and

utilized in tailored exercises to construct fresh sentences. An abundance of resources, including grammatical charts and genuine illustrative sentences, are furnished for additional practice of L2 forms.

### *3.3 procedure*

During the initial instructional meeting, credible and validated techniques for acquiring grammatical knowledge were introduced to the learners, which were accompanied by demonstrations and illustrations. In the present study, the Grammar Learning Strategies Inventory, developed by Oxford and colleagues (2007), was administered to the participants during the second session. This tool aimed to acquaint learners with the various available strategies for acquiring grammatical knowledge and encourage self-reflection on their current practices. As previously stated, the aforementioned strategies constitute methodological choices that have undergone extensive analysis and experimentation using various modalities such as textual enhancement and dictogloss.

Upon establishment of the group study, the participants were directed to concentrate on a pre-planned grammar structure and discern the most effective strategy for acquiring proficiency in said rule. Multiple GLSs may be selected from the existing strategies. In addition to the aforementioned GLSs, learners were further encouraged to deliberate upon their self-reported approaches for effectively grappling with the target grammar form, that is, to ascertain which particular strategies prove most efficacious in addressing the targeted form of grammar.

Students were presented with a choice to independently examine the configuration or seek assistance from their instructor or peers. During the experimental study group, the suitability of the strategies for a specific target form was deliberated upon. Meanwhile, the acquisition of grammar knowledge occurred in an in-campus grammar course where learners integrated the selected forms into various assignments, tasks, and activities.

At the conclusion of the aforementioned phase, participants were prompted to compose self-paced journals detailing their perspectives on grammar learning strategies. The selection of reflective journal writing was based on the presumption that it would effectively heighten active engagement and agency in the learning process, direct the learner's attention to pertinent subject matter, enhance the utilization of voice for self-expression, and contribute to personal growth and self-empowerment. Rezabeigi et al. (2021) conducted an empirical study to examine the impact of autonomy supportive behaviors exhibited by teachers on the readiness for autonomy of Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners. The findings of the study revealed that the promotion of self-regulation and autonomy among EFL learners fostered their willingness to





assume additional responsibilities, enhanced their understanding of their own learning abilities, facilitated their comprehension of the learning context, improved their proficiency in learning processes, and encouraged them to engage in autonomous learning activities. Rubin (2003, as cited in Chamot, 2005) proposes the utilization of journals and diaries as pedagogical tools to facilitate the cultivation of metacognitive acuity among students with respect to their learning methodologies and processes. Nami (2021) conducted a recent study that explored the impact of reflective journal writing on educational outcomes. The research revealed the efficacy of this approach as a means of analyzing one's own learning process.

The journals of the learners can be broadly categorized into three main sections, comprising of the reflection on their individual and collective participation, assessment and evaluation thereof, and lastly, commentary on their preferences related to GLS accompanied by supporting rationale. According to Peyton and Reed (1990), the completion of the journals was not bound by any pre-determined timeline and linguistic accuracy was not given due consideration. The scholars argue that the true worth of the journals lies in the unfettered exchange of ideas, rather than the exactness of the language employed. It has been observed that learners often encounter difficulties in reflecting on their strategy selections and learning experiences in English. Therefore, they opted to utilize their native language, Farsi, in the preparation of their journals. For the purpose of observing the verbal and non-verbal performance of the learners, audiovisual recording was employed. The oral manifestations were converted into written form while the physical and gestural manifestations were visually inspected. The researcher translated the transcriptions into the English language. The present study employed thematic analysis to code learners' responses whereby a representative subset of the collected data was scrutinized for recurring patterns and consistencies, which were subsequently codified. Related codes were collated into distinct categories on the basis of shared themes.

#### **4. Results**

The affective and cognitive journal reports of the study participants were systematically collected, meticulously codified and subsequently classified into four major themes encompassing time efficiency, demand, engagement, and awareness. The present study provides an analytical description of learners' reports and the corresponding allotted codes through commentary, with the purpose of identifying patterns in their cognitive processes. The present study's experimental design shares striking similarities with the one postulated by Clarke (2018) regarding the investigation of strategies employed for learning vocabulary, albeit with certain modifications.

#### 4.1 Time efficacy

Efficiency with respect to time is a valuable aspect in various areas of academia and the professional world. Maximizing productivity in a timely fashion is crucial in meeting deadlines and achieving desired outcomes. The ability to efficiently manage time is a necessary skill for academics and professionals alike in order to optimize productivity and achieve success.

- 1) Dictogloss is an innovative and stimulating exercise, nonetheless, it demands significant time investment.

The utility of a task, for some individuals, is predicated on the *quantity of time* allocated towards its completion.

- 2) The utilization of the side chat bar feature in Google Docs provides an effective strategy for engaging in collaborative activities, as it allows for extensive amount of time to be dedicated towards the review, comparison of answers, posing of inquiries, and provision of guidance amongst team members.

A student conducted a *comparison* between the respective strategies and subsequently ranked them according to the time duration they necessitated.

- 3) The utilization of the chat feature within the Google Docs platform was perceived as time-consuming, as it encompassed approximately ninety minutes to navigate. However, the incorporation of informative explanations highlighted in bold font facilitated a more expedient search for specific solutions, which could be accomplished within a mere thirty minutes. The most efficient approach was observed when the instructor imparted the guidelines and provided active assistance, thereby facilitating comprehensive comprehension of the rule. The elapsed time did not exceed a duration of ten minutes.

In the domain of language acquisition, input-based strategies that involve facilitating learners' identification of linguistic forms - such as input enhancement - have been found to be efficient with regards to time. Despite this advantage, studies have reported limited efficacy with respect to short-term retention (Jabbarpoor & Tajeddin, 2013).

#### 4.2 Demand

Typically, it is apparent that strategies that possess a greater time investment are characterized by increased levels of demand. One exemplar phenomenon



concerns the relative difficulty inherent in text reconstruction, which appears to pose a greater *challenge* for learners when compared to the simple task of recognizing the form of highlighted text.

- 1) The textual cues furnished to me facilitate the process of discovering rules.

There are certain learners who are obstructed from assimilating a particular strategy into their learning journey due to their lack of acquaintance with it; *unfamiliarity*.

- 2) Initially, I was unfamiliar with the concept of dictogloss, consequently leading to my decision of not selecting it. At present, I possess the ability to perform the aforementioned action. It is a commendable practice to acquire knowledge on a daily basis.

When confronted with a challenge, certain students may alternately adopt different learning strategies; *strategy shift*.

- 3) In order to learn adverb clauses, the initial strategy employed was the utilization of the first approach. I encountered considerable difficulty in comprehending the subject matter using the aforementioned approach. Consequently, I opted to employ the subsequent approach, which involved transcribing the framework onto paper and methodically scrutinizing each point. The final technique entails ascertaining the accuracy of the responses in collaboration with colleagues.

When the complexity of the task or the rigidity of the structure exceeds the students' ability to cope, they tend to resort to *avoidance strategies* instead of implementing those that require greater effort and skill, often preferring those that provide a perceived feeling of *security*.

- 4) Modal verbs are often perplexing due to their intricate grammatical structure and multifaceted meanings. As an advocate for comprehensive comprehension, I am inclined to place my trust in the elucidation provided by my instructive mentor to glean a superior grasp of the principle in question. It is my contention that the elucidation provided by my instructor surpasses that of the textbook.

Certain students adopted the tactic of seeking assistance from their more skilled peers i.e., *Peer collaboration*, a collaborative approach that yielded beneficial outcomes as reported by these students.

- 5) In an effort to ensure the accuracy of my rule interpretation, I prefer to consult with members of my group who possess a higher level of proficiency in the subject matter and engage in collaborative discussion. Collaborative ideation enables a profound verification of my comprehension.

In order to fulfil the requirements of the task, certain learners have expressed the perceived benefits of adopting a strategy that involves memorizing rules due to its advantageous aspects of *simplicity* and *efficacy*.

- 6) Personally, my preferred approach to learning involves committing to memory the rule that underlies the aforementioned structure, as I find it to be the most straightforward and efficacious method.

Several students have reported that certain strategies serve the purpose of *clarifying* information.

- 7) The utilization of a repetition strategy is capable of elucidating the intended function of adjective clauses.

The *novelty* of the approach stimulates a group of students to experiment with its efficacy and suitability for their needs.

- 8) As an individual, my preferred mode of learning is through visual and auditory means, wherein I gain a deeper understanding of concepts and information presented to me through the use of both visual aids and auditory cues. Consequently, I endeavored to explore alternative methods of acquiring knowledge that align with my preferred learning modalities. Specifically, I engaged in active listening while seeking guidance from other individuals in the cohort as they elucidated concepts. Furthermore, I employed visual aids such as graphic organizers and flashcards to document grammatical rules. An empirical approach is employed to determine the most suitable option through a process of trial and error.

Novel strategies *develop a sense of discovery* for the following learner



- 9) The process of acquiring knowledge on a specific aspect of grammar through the inclusion of a highlighted text is of utmost significance to me, as it allows for a comprehensive understanding of how the highlighted form functions within the larger framework of sentence construction and overall contextual relevance.

Input enhancement is considered by certain learners as a strategy that facilitates the *identification of cues* for more effective acquisition of linguistic rules.

- 10) The subordinating conjunctions, for example 'while' and 'whereas', were deliberately highlighted in bold to underscore the notion that clauses may be employed to convey the concept of contrast or opposition.

A student discovered that pre-evaluation, as a technique, is proficient in furnishing *feedback* to fellow learners.

- 11) In order to enhance the efficacy of the feedback that I present to my partner, I tend to review in advance the latest lesson outlined in our course book.

#### 4.3 Engagement

The utilization of various teaching strategies can give rise to *indecision* among learners.

- 1) There are multiple strategies and somehow this causes me to have difficulty in choosing the strategy that fits better. The more choices I have the more indecisive I become.

Several students are expressing their strategic inclinations; *sharing*, with the aim of devising the optimal decision.

- 2) The complexity of the rule presented a formidable challenge to myself and my fellow group members. I devised a distinctive strategy, whilst others also formulated their own. Subsequently, knowledge exchange was facilitated."

The successful incorporation of a revision strategy in task implementation has been found to enhance the *confidence* level of the student.

- 3) The implementation of this particular rule can be utilized to amend and enhance the quality of my case study paper. This strategy was found to be highly beneficial due to its facilitation of a comprehensive familiarity with the process of composing indirect speech. The event greatly enhanced our self-assurance.

It is not uncommon for students to express apprehension regarding their ability to retain and *recall* rules. The act of transcribing notes onto physical notecards has been observed to facilitate the retrieval process of pertinent information for this particular student.

- 4) I transcribe the grammatical structure on notecards as a means of facilitating visualization and enhancing memory recall.

The implementation of various techniques such as the identification of forms, documentation of essential structural components in a notebook, and the practical integration of the established guidelines in structured tasks are identified strategies that facilitate the retention and recollection of rules among learners.

#### 4.4 Awareness

Some learners exhibit *consciousness raising* when exposed to grammar learning strategies.

- 1) During a classroom interaction with a fellow student, Arman [a fellow classmate] elucidated a particular rule, an event which significantly contributed to my understanding and comprehension of the subject matter. Frequently, I experience an enhanced level of consciousness when an individual elucidates a concept to me, subsequently facilitating better comprehension on my part.

Several students have reported employing textual enhancement techniques to discern the aforementioned rule.

- 2) As an academically inclined individual, I have developed a preference for learning through the utilization of strategically placed bold and italic formatting on pertinent keywords.

*Noticing* the key words through repetition strategy was mentioned as a practical method by this student.

The employment of a repetition strategy for the identification of key words was proposed as a viable approach by the student.





- 3) A prudent approach towards comprehending noun clauses involves the observation of their repetitive usage within a text, due to the tendency of such clauses to commence with distinct words. The previously stated lexicons are not only utilized in declarative statements, but also serve as a fundamental component in the formation of inquiries, thus necessitating heightened scrutiny in their deployment.

Another student commented on the effectiveness of a strategy for specific assignments which helped him make an *association* between strategy use and real-life task accomplishment.

- 4) The topic of reported speech was of significant interest as it had close relevance to my academic task of conducting a case study involving the reportage of my peer's statements.

## 5. Discussion

The study has yielded a noteworthy outcome, namely, the pervasive contentment and efficacy of the means employed for acquiring grammar knowledge. The copious assortment of strategic alternatives accessible to the learners precluded their comprehensive utilization; Delineating, however, that the learners' cognizance was heightened regarding such strategies and it is reasonable to anticipate that they will be integrated into their future educational pursuits.

Based on the entries in their reflective journals, it was revealed that the students exhibited heightened self-awareness towards their own learning process as a result of implementing said strategies, thereby affirming their sense of autonomy.

The participants were presented with innovative approaches such as dictogloss and were afforded the autonomy to compare them with established and proven methodologies. The researchers noted that while certain study techniques, such as memorization and seeking assistance from educators, may evoke feelings of reassurance among learners, they cannot ensure sustained retention as effectively as GLSs that require active engagement in the task with an aim of recognizing patterns and deducing rules from the language input (Pawlak, 2019b). The aforementioned result is of considerable significance as it eliminates the teacher's exclusive responsibility as the source of information, and instead emphasizes the importance of self-exploration in promoting lasting learning.

One noteworthy aspect of this study pertains to the inquiry into the learners' underlying reasoning for selecting particular strategies. This facilitates learners in comprehending their own learning processes, thereby enabling them to assume

responsibility for their learning outcomes, through introspection into their unique learning styles and subsequent customization of learning strategies. The justification for abstaining from a particular approach can additionally equip the teacher with insights into the inclinations and anticipations of the learners.

Two of the primary factors that deterred certain learners from enacting certain strategies were the level of demand and the necessary amount of time involved. This notion is predicated on the widely held assumption that expediency and simplicity are desirable attributes. In many instances, educators and educational material developers opt for a pedagogical approach that satisfies the objectives of learners with minimal difficulty within a compressed timeframe. Consequently, as of the present time, deductive instruction of grammar rules coupled with rote memorization remain prevailing pedagogical approaches in both the educator and student populations. Conversely, contemporary approaches such as dictogloss, which demand a substantial investment of time and exertion, are met with diminished acceptance amongst certain participants of this investigation. Nevertheless, numerous researchers assert that this methodology has yielded promising outcomes in recent times and has gained significant traction in the realm of English as a Foreign/Second Language education. Resolving the aforementioned matter can potentially be facilitated through fostering collaborative efforts amongst students, decomposing arduous undertakings into more manageable portions, offering prompts for guidance, appropriately adjusting expectations, and ensuring that learners possess a thorough understanding of the anticipated outcomes.

The manifestation of discontentment among some learners regarding their acquisition of grammar learning strategies was noted. The genesis of exasperation was rooted in either the sensation of being inundated and tentative regarding the choice of an effective course of action or the act of entirely sidestepping the matter. Elevating the level of student interaction in order to garner peer support and guiding hesitant students to select a learning approach that aligns with their unique learning style and aptitude through personalized tutoring services can prove advantageous.

The methodology employed in this study involved peer reporting by students, which afforded the learners an invaluable opportunity to observe role models among their peers and subsequently emulate their behaviors. The potential benefits of positive peer connections for learners who experience frustration are considerable across all levels of education. Several students have managed to circumvent this issue by devising inventive strategies, such as utilizing the auxiliary chat bar on Google documents, publishing on the collective discussion board, and uncovering relevant educational materials on the video-sharing platform, YouTube. The aforementioned observation bears significant



repercussions for research pertaining to effective strategies for acquiring creative grammar skills.

## 6. Conclusion

In accordance with Robin (2003), skilled learners exercise command over their learning process and possess aptitude for modifying it in order to harmonize with their individual learning styles, language and background knowledge, as well as the task being undertaken. The present study has contributed significantly to the advancement of our comprehension of grammar learning strategies through the proposition of an alternative approach to in-class grammar instruction. The objective of this investigation did not involve the quantification of grammatical proficiency among students utilizing particular strategies. Instead, it sought to document the cognitive and affective reactions elicited by GLSs amongst the student population.

The group devoted to the study of grammar, which is concomitant with the primary curriculum, has the potential to serve as a valuable resource for educators and curriculum developers in addressing the grammatical learning requirements of students. This is because it grants them the autonomy to choose from a diverse array of strategies and techniques that have been proven effective through previous trials, possess novelty, present challenges, or require considerable time investment. Further research is required to advance comprehension regarding GLSs, through the exploration of additional tactics and their subsequent execution, in order to facilitate augmented self-directed learning in this significant area.

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## Appendix 1

**Part I:** Please write a short reflection on your participation. Use these questions for guidance:

Did I do all of the grammar textbook reading?

Did I answer all of the assigned questions?

Was I available at the scheduled time to discuss the answers to the questions with my group members?

**Part II:** Please identify which of the following grammar strategies you preferred for the grammar content this week. You may choose more than one strategy.

### **I. Strategies used by learners who are oriented to meaning but occasionally shift attention to form.**

1. I prefer to learn this grammar point when it is highlighted in the text by italics, boldface, underlining, starring, circling, color-coding, etc.
2. I notice (or remember) this structure if it is repeated often in the text.
3. I notice (or remember) the structure if it is emphasized orally, through pitch, loudness, or repetition.
4. I notice (or remember) a structure which, when I encounter it, causes me to do something, like check a box or underline the structure.
5. I prefer to work with other classmates to use this grammar item to reconstruct the input text in a dictogloss activity.

### **II. Strategies used by learners who are oriented to explicit-inductive learning**

1. Based on all possible clues that will be given to me, I try to discover the underlying rule.
2. I prefer to participate in rule-discovery discussions in my online class.
3. I prefer to write down the structure on note cards so that I think about how it works.
4. I prefer to read more example sentences for the use of this grammar point in order to discern the rule.
5. I prefer to check with others who are more proficient (either my teacher or my classmate) to make sure my rule interpretation is correct.

### **III. Strategies used by learner who are oriented to explicit-deductive learning**

1. I prefer to rely on my teacher's formal explanations to understand the rule.
2. I prefer to preview the new lesson from my course book.
3. I try to apply the rule in specific sentences that are provided for me.
4. I prefer to make up new sentences using the rule.
5. I prefer to memorize the rule underlying this structure.



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