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Do Online Grammar Learning Strategies Make Any Difference in Grammar Proficiency? A Focus on EFL Distance Learning

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ABSTRACT: This study explores the use of online grammar learning strategies among Indonesian EFL students participating in Open and Distance Learning (ODL). Using quantitative methods, the research examines the correlation between students' self-reported grammar learning strategies and their English grammar proficiency. Data were collected from students enrolled in online grammar courses at the University of Borneo Tarakan, utilizing both surveys and online grammar tests. The results reveal a complex relationship between learning strategies and grammar proficiency. Cognitive strategies demonstrate a positive correlation with proficiency, while other strategies, such as memory, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies, exhibit mixed or weak predictive capabilities. The findings highlight the multifaceted nature of grammar learning, suggesting that no single strategy guarantees improved proficiency. The study stresses the importance of tailoring language learning approaches to individual learner traits and contextual factors in ODL environments. Limitations of the study include the specific sample population, reliance on self-reported data, and the correlational nature of the research, which calls for careful interpretation. Overall, the research provides valuable insights into optimizing grammar instruction in online settings, emphasizing the need for further investigation into effective grammar learning strategies in ODL contexts.

KEYWORDS: Online Grammar Learning Strategies, Grammar Proficiency, EFL, ODL

INTRODUCTION

Grammar is crucial for learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) due to its pivotal role in communication. Effective teaching of grammar aids learners in developing their communicative skills. Debates surrounding the best methods for teaching grammar have resulted in the emergence of two main approaches: deductive and inductive. In EFL classes, deductive teaching, which involves the explicit instruction of rules through examples, is commonly practiced (Ahmadzai et al., 2019; Hidayah et al., 2022; Schurz & Coumel, 2020). Conventional grammar teaching, often constrained by limited class time and insufficient space for discussions and interactions, exhibits notable limitations. Research suggests that explicit grammar instruction might impede communicative language use, potentially influencing students' attitudes towards English learning (Al Abri et al., 2017). Consequently, an approach advocating for inductive and communicative grammar teaching is proposed to augment overall language competency. Such an approach fosters communicative competence by promoting active participation and the utilization of strategies for enhanced comprehension.

Recognizing the limitations of deductive grammar teaching, teachers can improve grammar instruction by incorporating effective learning strategies (Pudin, 2017). Teachers play a crucial role in simplifying grammar learning for students by considering their perspective and providing appropriate guidance. It's essential for teachers to not only focus on teaching strategies but also help students understand grammar principles and patterns. This enables students to take charge of their learning and choose suitable strategies (Stavre & Pashko, 2016).

Teaching grammar effectively to EFL learners is more challenging now, especially due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which has forced most educational institutions, including those in Indonesia, to switch to online learning (Moorhouse, 2020). This shift has led to the widespread adoption of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) as a flexible approach to education, offering learning opportunities anytime, anywhere (Bozkurt, 2019). ODL, though not new, has become crucial for overcoming learning challenges, requiring both teachers and students to adapt to technology for content delivery and acceptance.

Improving online grammar teaching for EFL learners requires exploring effective online grammar learning strategies. However, research in this area is lacking compared to other language aspects such as vocabulary and reading (Pawlak, 2009). More studies are needed to understand how EFL learners use strategies to learn grammar, considering factors like skill level, gender, and

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the importance of grammar. These studies can benefit both teachers and students by providing insight into effective learning strategies, making grammar learning easier online. Teachers can then train students in these strategies, and students can better monitor their progress. The current study, therefore, investigated the strategies employed by Indonesian EFL students in learning grammar within the ODL context and assessed their English grammar proficiency. Specifically, the objectives of this study are to address the following research questions:

1. What are the strategies employed by Indonesian EFL students in learning English grammar in ODL context?
2. What are the students' levels of English grammar proficiency?
3. Is there a significant correlation between the students' grammar learning strategy use and their grammar proficiency levels?
4. Is the students' grammar proficiency predicted by their grammar learning strategies?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The significance of grammar instruction in language learning has been widely debated, with various theories exploring its role in language acquisition. While traditional methods aimed at enhancing language skills, recent scholarship questions their efficacy, advocating for approaches that prioritize meaningful communication. Krashen and Terrel (1998) argue for exposure to understandable input, while Ellis (2006) suggests teaching grammar in context to improve proficiency. Others, like Hinkel and Fotos (2008) and Lightbown and Spada (2006), stress the importance of instructed grammar learning, particularly in settings with limited language exposure. Wong and Barrea-Marlys (2012) support grammar's role in error correction and effective communication, respectively. Recent studies, such as those by Saputra (2020), Srinon (2019), and Mohammadi and Yousefi (2019) emphasize integrating implicit and explicit grammar instruction, teaching within functional contexts, and considering learners' backgrounds and environments. These findings underscore the increasing importance of grammar instruction in second and foreign language classrooms, as highlighted by various researchers.

The shift towards communicative language learning has led to the prevalence of technology-based teaching methods, including computer-assisted language learning (CALL), website usage, blogs, and social media platforms, with the Covid-19 pandemic highlighting the necessity of ODL. Bikowski (2018) suggests integrating technology into grammar teaching while considering student needs alongside course objectives. Studies show positive attitudes among teachers and learners towards ODL and technology (Chick & Breidbach, 2011; Hung, 2011; Rezaei & Meshkatian, 2017). Platforms such as Schoology, Google Classroom, and Zoom are now accessible for online teaching, offering options for synchronous and asynchronous delivery to meet the demands of distance learning. Further research is warranted to identify effective grammar learning strategies, particularly for EFL learners in online environments.

Language learning strategies, according to Oxford (1990), are conscious actions aimed at improving language acquisition, with grammar learning strategies specifically targeting the ease of language learning or usage (Pawlak, 2018). Studies on grammar learning strategies highlight variations in strategy types and their correlation with grammar achievement among different student groups. Al Abri et al. (2017) noted the prevalence of metacognitive strategies among proficient students in Oman, while Zhou (2017) finds Chinese students prioritize cognitive strategies. Mujtaba et al. (2018) discover memory strategies are favored by Libyan EFL students, and Nuraini (2020) identifies compensation as common among Indonesian EFL learners. Gender variations in strategy use are noted by Zhou (2017), though Mujtaba et al. (2018) find no significant differences. Proficiency level also influences strategy use, as observed in studies by Pawlak (2009). Additionally, various studies link language learning strategies to English grammar achievement, with Oxford (2011) suggesting strategies account for up to 61% of proficiency variation and Azizmohammadi (2020) identifying a significant correlation between strategy use and EFL students' grammar test performance.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative method to systematically investigate the relationship between English grammar learning strategies and grammar proficiency among participants. Quantitative methods were chosen because they allow for the collection of numerical data that can be analyzed statistically, providing objective insights into the research questions. Data was collected through online surveys, a method that enables the efficient gathering of information from a larger sample size, increasing the generalizability of the findings. The surveys were designed to capture detailed information about the specific grammar learning strategies employed

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by participants, as well as their levels of grammar proficiency. Following the guidelines outlined by Fraenkel et al. (2012), the research involved conducting a correlational analysis to explore the strength and direction of the relationship between the use of different grammar learning strategies and participants' grammar proficiency. Correlational analysis was particularly suited to this study as it allows for the identification of patterns and associations between variables, without implying causation. This method enabled the researchers to determine whether certain strategies were consistently associated with higher or lower levels of grammar proficiency, providing valuable insights that could inform educational practices and further research in the field of language learning.

Procedures

The selection of participants for this study was focused on students enrolled in online grammar courses within the English Language Education Department at the University of Borneo Tarakan. The researcher targeted students who had previously taken these courses, extending personalized invitations to ensure a relevant sample population. To broaden participation, the researcher also engaged faculty and staff, requesting that they disseminate the survey through their social media networks. This approach not only facilitated a diverse sample but also maintained the voluntary nature of participation, ensuring that students' academic standing remained unaffected by their involvement in the study.

The study was conducted using Borneo E-Learning (BeL), the university's online learning platform, which operates on the Moodle framework. BeL is designed to support a comprehensive online educational experience, incorporating a range of features that enhance both teaching and learning processes. The platform includes tools for forums, content sharing, and assessments, all of which contribute to an interactive and engaging learning environment. Key features of BeL, such as personalized dashboards, progress tracking, and efficient file management, were integral to the study. Additionally, the platform supports peer assessment, multimedia integration, and provides interactive feedback, which are crucial for fostering an engaging and accessible online learning experience for all users (Darmayasa & Aras, 2019).

Data collection for the grammar learning strategies employed by participants was facilitated through a structured questionnaire administered via Google Forms. The questionnaire was designed to capture comprehensive data across two sections: the first section gathered demographic and background information, while the second section focused on participants' self-reported use of grammar learning strategies. Participants were asked to rate their strategies on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (never or almost never true of me) to 5 (always or almost always true of me). The survey was administered outside of regular class hours over a two-week period, allowing participants sufficient time to provide thoughtful responses. On average, participants took approximately 25 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Subsequent to the data collection phase, participants' English grammar proficiency was assessed through an online exam comprising 40 questions. This exam was scheduled two weeks after the completion of the grammar learning strategies survey to align with the research timeline. Participants were allotted 30 minutes to complete the exam, which was designed to evaluate their grammar skills comprehensively. This assessment was crucial for correlating the self-reported strategies with actual performance outcomes, thereby enabling a thorough analysis of the relationship between learning strategies and grammar proficiency.

Instruments

Two instruments were used: the Online Grammar Learning Strategy (OGLS) questionnaire and the Online Grammar Test (OGT). The study adapted Oxford's (1990) ESL/EFL Strategy Inventory for Language Learners (SILL) version 7.0 to assess grammar learning strategies. The modified questionnaire had two parts: the first gathered background information like academic year and gender, while the second had 35 statements grouped into six categories based on Oxford's model. To ensure validity and reliability, the questionnaire was translated into Indonesian and back-translated into English, and its accuracy and readability were checked. Reliability tests showed high trustworthiness, with an overall reliability coefficient of .92 and satisfactory coefficients for each strategy category. The second instruments used was an online English grammar test modelled after TOEFL ITP. It evaluated two aspects: structure (15 questions) and written expression (25 questions), all in multiple-choice format. The test covered various grammar topics such as clauses, phrases, word order, and conjunctions. Cronbach's alpha showed high internal consistency, with a reliability coefficient of .88.

Data Analysis

Data analysis started by gathering completed questionnaires and grammar tests from students via Google Form, then downloading them using Microsoft Excel. The data was checked for completeness and coded. Statistical analysis was done using SPSS version 20, which included descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviation to understand students' grammar learning

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strategies and proficiency levels. Pearson's correlation was used to see if there's a significant correlation between grammar learning strategies and proficiency. Lastly, linear regression was used to see if grammar learning strategies could predict proficiency. Before the regression analysis, a normality test was conducted to ensure the data followed a normal distribution.

RESULTS

Demographic and Academic Variables of Participants

The study encompassed a total of 210 Indonesian EFL students. Table 1 provides the demographic and academic characteristics of the participants.

Table 1. Demographic and Academic Variables of Participants

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	49	23.33
	Female	161	76.67
Academic year	First	75	35.71
	Second	64	30.48
	Third	71	33.81

Among the sampled students, 23.33% were male, and 76.67% were female. Academic distribution revealed that 35.71% of students were in the first academic year, 33.81% were in the third year, and the remaining 30.48% were in the second year.

Employment of Grammar Learning Strategies in ODL Context

Table 2 provides a descriptive analysis of the grammar learning strategies used by learners in an ODL context. Each strategy is ranked based on its mean score, standard deviation (SD), and usage level. The top-ranking strategies include actively addressing grammatical errors when corrected by others (Com 3), watching English TV shows or movies to enhance grammar knowledge (Cog 4), and seeking ways to become a better learner of English grammar (Met 5). These strategies exhibit high usage levels and indicate learners' proactive engagement in grammar learning. Other high-ranking strategies involve self-awareness of emotional states during grammar study (Aff 4), listening to feedback from teachers on structural usage (Soc 3), and self-monitoring of grammatical mistakes (Met 3). Moderately ranked strategies include practicing grammar rules with peers (Soc 1), creating mental images to remember new structures (Mem 6), and summarizing grammar rules from various sources (Cog 7).

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis of Grammar Learning Strategy Use in ODL Context

Rank	Grammar learning strategies	Mean	SD	Usage level
1	Compensation 3 (Com 3)	4.22	.924	High
2	Cognitive 4 (Cog 4)	4.16	1.016	High
3	Metacognitive 5 (Met 5)	4.07	.993	High
4	Affective 4 (Aff 4)	3.95	1.020	High
5	Social 3 (Soc 3)	3.95	1.086	High
6	Metacognitive 3 (Met 3)	3.93	1.074	High
7	Metacognitive 1 (Met 1)	3.87	.937	High
8	Metacognitive 7 (Met 7	3.80	1.111	High
9	Compensation 2 (Com 2)	3.72	1.022	High
10	Social 2 (Soc 2)	3.72	1.191	High
11	Metacognitive (Met 2)	3.71	1.088	High

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12	Affective 1 (Aff 1)	3.67	1.133	High
13	Memory 1 (Mem 1)	3.67	1.051	High
14	Memory 5 (Mem 5)	3.66	1.074	High
15	Affective 5 (Aff 5)	3.65	1.161	High
16	Cognitive 1 (Cog 1)	3.64	1.068	High
17	Cognitive 2 (Cog 2)	3.63	1.060	High
18	Affective (Aff 2)	3.61	1.021	High
19	Metacognitive 4 (Met 4)	3.58	1.147	High
20	Metacognitive 6 (Met 6)	3.58	1.052	High
21	Affective 3 (Aff 3)	3.55	1.298	High
22	Social 1 (Soc) 1	3.47	1.112	Moderate
23	Memory 6 (Mem 6)	3.44	1.102	Moderate
24	Memory 3 (Mem 3)	3.35	1.170	Moderate
25	Cognitive 5 (Cog 5)	3.35	1.132	Moderate
26	Cognitive 3 (Cog 3)	3.33	1.142	Moderate
27	Memory 7 (Mem 7)	3.33	1.068	Moderate
28	Cognitive 7 (Cog 7)	3.33	1.072	Moderate
29	Memory 2 (Mem 2)	3.30	1.058	Moderate
30	Compensation 1 (Com 1)	3.30	1.072	Moderate
31	Cognitive 8 (Cog 8)	3.29	1.079	Moderate
32	Social 4 (Soc) 4	3.24	1.159	Moderate
33	Memory 4 (Mem 4)	3.14	1.053	Moderate
34	Cognitive 6 (Cog 6)	3.10	1.075	Moderate
35	Metacognitive 8 (Met 8)	2.98	1.172	Moderate

Students' Levels of English Grammar Proficiency

Table 3 provides insights into students' levels of English grammar proficiency across different academic years and genders. Among first-year students, the mean grammar score is 17.67, falling within the lower proficiency levels of CEFR A2 (32-42) and B1 (43-52). Second-year students exhibit a higher mean score of 23.19, yet still within the lower CEFR proficiency levels. Conversely, third-year students demonstrate the highest mean score of 26.04, indicating higher proficiency levels of CEFR B2 (53-63) and C1 (64-68). Male students attain a mean score of 23.45, while female students achieve a mean score of 21.80. Both male and female students fall within the lower CEFR proficiency levels. Considering all students collectively, the mean grammar score is 22.18, reflecting lower proficiency levels of CEFR A2 (32-42) and B1 (43-52).

Table 3. Students' Levels of English Grammar Proficiency

	n	Mean	Level
First year students	75	17.67 (46)	Lower: CEFR A2 (32-42) & B1(43-52)
Second year students	64	23.19 (51)	Lower: CEFR A2 (32-42) & B1(43-52)
Third year students	71	26.04 (54)	Higher: CEFR B2 (53-63) & C1(64-68)
Male students	49	23.45 (52)	Lower: CEFR A2 (32-42) & B1(43-52)
Female students	161	21.80 (50)	Lower: CEFR A2 (32-42) & B1(43-52)

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Overall students	210	22.18 (50)	Lower: CEFR A2 (32-42) & B1(43-52)

Correlation between Grammar Learning Strategy Use and Grammar Proficiency

Table 4 illustrates the results of Pearson correlation analyses examining the connection between the use of grammar learning strategies and grammar proficiency. Memory strategies indicate a weak positive correlation of 0.09 with grammar proficiency, lacking statistical significance ($p = 0.09$). Meanwhile, cognitive strategies demonstrate a slightly stronger positive correlation of 0.15 with grammar proficiency, which is statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level. Compensation strategies show a positive correlation of 0.11 with grammar proficiency, though it is not statistically significant ($p = 0.06$). Similarly, metacognitive strategies display a positive correlation of 0.10 with grammar proficiency, but it is not statistically significant ($p = 0.07$). In contrast, affective strategies reveal a weak negative correlation of -0.02 with grammar proficiency, which lacks statistical significance ($p = 0.39$). Social strategies exhibit a weak positive correlation of 0.05 with grammar proficiency, also not statistically significant ($p = 0.24$). Moreover, overall strategies demonstrate a positive correlation of 0.11 with grammar proficiency, but it is not statistically significant ($p = 0.06$).

Table 4. Correlation between OGLS Use and Grammar Proficiency

Grammar learning strategy	Grammar proficiency		
	Pearson Correlation	p	n
Memory strategies	.09	.09	210
Cognitive strategies	.15*	.01	210
Compensation strategies	.11	.06	210
Metacognitive strategies	.10	.07	210
Affective strategies	-.02	.39	210
Social strategies	.05	.24	210
Overall strategies	.11	.06	210

*p < .05

Is Grammar Proficiency Predicted by Learning Strategy Usage?

Table 5 presents the results of regression analyses aimed at predicting grammar proficiency based on the use of various grammar learning strategies. Each row in the table represents a different grammar learning strategy, while the columns provide information such as the unstandardized coefficient (B), standard error of the coefficient (SEB), standardized coefficient (β), t-value, and associated p-value. Memory strategy exhibits a coefficient of -.17, suggesting a negligible negative effect on grammar proficiency, although it is not statistically significant ($p = .89$). Cognitive strategy, with a coefficient of 2.07, indicates a positive effect on grammar proficiency, but it fails to reach statistical significance ($p = .14$). Similarly, compensation strategy, metacognitive strategy, affective strategy, social strategy, and overall strategies show coefficients of .47, .52, -1.39, -.14, and 1.53, respectively, with none of them reaching statistical significance ($p > .05$).

Table 5. Regression Analyses of OGLS Use Predicting Grammar Proficiency

Grammar learning strategy	Grammar proficiency				
	B	SE B	β	t	p
Memory Strategy	-.17	1.25	-.01	-.14	.89
Cognitive Strategy	2.07	1.41	.17	1.47	.14
Compensation Strategy	.47	.99	.04	.47	.64
Metacognitive Strategy	.52	1.19	.05	.44	.66
Affective Strategy	-1.39	1.00	-.12	-1.39	.17

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Social Strategy	-.14	.93	-.02	-.15	.88
Overall strategies	1.53	.98	.11	1.56	.12

*p < .05

DISCUSSION

Studying grammar learning strategies in ODL context provides valuable insights into how Indonesian EFL learners approach their learning. Strategies like actively addressing grammatical errors ("Com 3") and using media consumption ("Cog 4") are found to be important in ODL. These strategies fit with the self-directed nature of ODL, encouraging learners' autonomy and active involvement in learning. Recent research shows that active engagement greatly improves learning outcomes, especially in self-directed and remote learning environments (Almomani et al., 2023; Zainuddin et al., 2019). Moreover, metacognitive strategies ("Met 5" and "Met 3") showcase learners' proactive stance and reflective processes, aligning well with the self-directed nature of ODL. These strategies promote learners' awareness of their learning process and the adoption of effective learning strategies to address the unique challenges encountered in the ODL setting. Research emphasizes the pivotal role of metacognitive skills in language learning, contributing to learners' autonomy and proficiency (Gultom et al., 2022; Phuong & Vo, 2019).

Additionally, affective strategies ("Aff 4" and "Aff 1") stress the importance of managing emotions in ODL. Learners tackling grammar challenges without direct in-person support can improve well-being with strategies addressing emotions. Research recommends integrating affective strategies in language learning, acknowledging emotions' profound impact on cognition, particularly crucial for Indonesian learners in remote settings (Rose & Sison, 2022). Social interaction activities ("Soc 3" and "Met 7") are vital for bridging the gap between distance learners and their instructors or peers, promoting communication skills and cultural understanding, which are essential for the Indonesian EFL community. Research emphasizes the crucial role of social interaction in language learning, emphasizing its positive impact on learners' overall proficiency, a consideration vital for the Indonesian EFL community (Lytle & Kuhl, 2018).

Practical application activities ("Met 1" and "Cog 3") meet the practical needs of Indonesian online learners, fostering real-world language use and reinforcing theoretical knowledge. Literature indicates that practical application bridges theoretical understanding with real-world usage, crucial for Indonesian learners aiming for practical language proficiency (Adil, 2019; Ario Setiawan & Qamariah, 2023). Diverse learning approaches ("Cog 5" and "Cog 3") accommodate varied learning preferences and backgrounds, enriching linguistic proficiency. Research emphasizes the importance of diversity in language learning materials and experiences for a comprehensive and well-rounded language education, a consideration crucial for the diverse linguistic landscape of Indonesia (Rezaei et al., 2011). Analytical and synthesizing activities ("Com 1" and "Cog 8") support grammar learning, enhancing critical thinking and understanding of linguistic structures. Research highlights their importance in language learning, crucial for the cognitive development of Indonesian EFL learners (Imaniah, 2022).

Moderately used strategies like collaborative practice ("Soc 1") and mnemonic techniques ("Mem 6") advocate for a balanced learning approach, suited to Indonesia's collaborative learning culture. Recognizing the significance of both individual and collaborative efforts, this balanced mix aligns with current literature, fostering effective learning outcomes within Indonesia's cultural context that values collaborative learning (Novita et al., 2020). Finally, less frequently used strategies like scheduling grammar revision ("Met 8") point to areas needing improvement in time management, vital for optimizing learning efficiency in ODL settings. Recognizing and addressing these areas is essential for enhancing ODL efficiency in Indonesia, in line with literature stressing the significance of time management and self-regulation in online learning. Addressing these aspects could positively influence overall learning outcomes for Indonesian EFL learners (Hartono & Diasti, 2023; Hunutlu, 2023; Krismanto & Tahmidaten, 2022).

The analysis of English grammar proficiency across genders reveals a small but noteworthy difference, with male students showing slightly higher proficiency scores than their female counterparts. However, both groups generally exhibit lower CEFR proficiency levels. Although this gender gap is minimal, it underscores the importance of considering individual learner characteristics and sociocultural factors when analyzing language learning outcomes in Indonesia. Current research on English language proficiency supports these findings, emphasizing the challenges faced by learners in their language acquisition processes (Ratnasari, 2020) and the potential impact of sociocultural factors on language learning outcomes (Novita et al., 2020; Southwood et al., 2021; Tawfiq, 2020). Additionally, studies highlight the importance of continuous language exposure, varied instructional

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methods, and targeted interventions to enhance proficiency levels, aligning with the observed improvement in the third-year cohort (Al Zoubi, 2018; Domingo, 2020; Jahrani & Listia, 2023; Samudro & Amin, 2023). The prevalence of lower proficiency levels in the data highlights the urgent need for tailored pedagogical strategies that address the specific challenges faced by Indonesian EFL learners. A more focused and strategic approach to language learning is required to improve proficiency comprehensively across different stages of academic development. This includes curriculum and policy adjustments that prioritize the development of language skills throughout students' academic years, with a particular emphasis on early-stage proficiency. Future research should also explore gender-specific differences more deeply to ensure equal and fair language learning opportunities for both male and female learners, promoting a more inclusive educational environment.

The correlation analysis between grammar learning strategy use and grammar proficiency reveals nuanced insights into their relationship. Memory strategies exhibit a weak positive correlation of .09 with a non-significant p-value of .09, suggesting a potential trend for further exploration. Existing studies suggest that memory strategies, like mnemonic devices, may positively influence language learning outcomes learning (Abbassi et al., 2018). On the other hand, cognitive strategies demonstrate a statistically significant correlation coefficient of .15, indicating a weak to moderate positive correlation with grammar proficiency. This finding aligns with prior research highlighting the beneficial impact of cognitive strategies, such as analytical thinking and problem-solving, on language learning outcomes (Kök & Duman, 2023; Sadri et al., 2019).

Similarly, compensation strategies show a weak positive relationship with grammar proficiency, with a correlation coefficient of .11 and a slightly higher p-value of .06, hinting at a potential association. Previous research has explored how compensation strategies, which involve addressing language gaps through various means, can impact language learning (Ragab, 2021). Meanwhile, metacognitive strategies demonstrate a weak positive correlation of .10 with a p-value of .07, indicating a trend that warrants further exploration. Metacognitive strategies, involving self-awareness and learning process regulation, have been linked to language learning success in prior research (Al-Jarrah et al., 2018; Rahman, 2020; Author, 2022; Riki, 2021; Talok et al., 2023).

In contrast, affective strategies display a weak negative correlation of -.02 with a non-significant p-value of .39, suggesting a minor association with grammar proficiency. The literature on affective strategies presents mixed findings, with some studies suggesting a potential impact on language learning outcomes (Ifadah et al., 2023; Rose & Sison, 2022; Zakaria et al., 2019). Social strategies also exhibit a weak positive correlation of .05 with a non-significant p-value of .24, implying a potential relationship with grammar proficiency that warrants further exploration. Social strategies involve interaction with others for language learning purposes, as indicated in previous research (Ismiatun & Suhartoyo, 2022). Concerning overall strategies, the correlation coefficient of .11 with a p-value of .06 denotes a weak positive relationship with grammar proficiency. While not statistically significant at the conventional level, this suggests that a combination of various strategies may contribute to language proficiency.

The analysis reveals intriguing insights into the relationship between grammar proficiency and the utilization of learning strategies. Memory Strategy, despite its regression coefficient of -0.17 and non-significant p-value of 0.89, does not reliably predict grammar proficiency. This finding underscores the variability of memory strategies' effectiveness in language proficiency, echoing previous literature (Abbassi et al., 2018). Similarly, Cognitive Strategy demonstrates a positive but non-significant association with grammar proficiency (B = 2.07, p = 0.14), prompting further investigation. While cognitive strategies are known to positively impact language learning outcomes, their predictive power warrants deeper exploration (Wirahyuni & Martha, 2023).

Concerning Compensation Strategy, the non-significant regression coefficient of 0.47 (p = 0.64) indicates its limited ability to predict grammar proficiency. This result underscores the nuanced nature of compensation strategies in addressing language knowledge gaps. In addition, metacognitive Strategy, reflected in a non-significant regression coefficient of 0.52 (p = 0.66), also falls short in predicting grammar proficiency. Despite their potential, further investigation into metacognitive strategies is warranted to elucidate their impact on language learning success (Talok et al., 2023). Similarly, Affective Strategy and Social Strategy, with non-significant regression coefficients of -1.39 (p = 0.17) and -0.14 (p = 0.88) respectively, do not strongly predict grammar proficiency. These results align with mixed evidence in the literature regarding the effectiveness of affective and social strategies on language learning outcomes (Ifadah et al., 2023; Rose & Sison, 2022). Overall Strategies, with a positive but non-significant regression coefficient of 1.53 (p = 0.12), may positively contribute to language proficiency. However, the lack of statistical significance underscores the need for nuanced exploration, as the comprehensive use of various strategies may necessitate context-specific considerations (Author, 2020; Sakinah et al., 2020).

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The research findings suggest implications for the link between grammar proficiency and learning strategies. Memory Strategies, though not strong predictors, highlight the need for exploring specific strategies to enhance grammar proficiency. Cognitive Strategies show a positive association, calling for deeper investigation to optimize language learning outcomes. Compensation Strategy's lack of robust prediction suggests the need for research into its effectiveness in addressing language gaps. The non-significant association of Metacognitive Strategy underscores the need for further investigation into its role. Mixed evidence for Affective Strategies emphasizes the necessity for exploring conditions contributing to grammar proficiency. Social Strategies, weakly predictive, require further research to understand their relationship. Overall Strategies, though potentially contributing, lack statistical significance, indicating the need for nuanced exploration. These findings highlight the complexity of the relationship between learning strategies and grammar proficiency, urging further research to optimize language learning outcomes.

LIMITATIONS

The research has several limitations to note. Firstly, its sample is mainly from students in online grammar courses at the University of Borneo Tarakan, potentially limiting the generalizability to the broader population of Indonesian EFL learners in ODL. Secondly, reliance on self-reported responses through the online grammar learning strategy questionnaire may introduce response bias, affecting the accuracy of reported strategy usage. Thirdly, focusing solely on one institution may restrict understanding of ODL practices in Indonesia, suggesting a need for a broader, multi-institutional approach. Additionally, while efforts were made to ensure measurement tool reliability, concerns about instrument reliability for certain strategy categories raise questions about findings' robustness. The study mainly assesses the correlation between grammar learning strategies and proficiency levels, overlooking other potential outcome measures like language fluency or writing skills. Moreover, the correlational design limits establishing causal relationships, requiring cautious interpretation. Lastly, contextual factors like learner traits and sociocultural influences are acknowledged but not fully explored, indicating a need for more comprehensive consideration.

CONCLUSION

Exploring grammar learning strategies in ODL provides valuable insights into Indonesian EFL learners' diverse approaches. Strategies like addressing errors and media use are vital in ODL, suiting its self-directed nature. Metacognitive strategies reflect learners' proactive and reflective approaches, while affective strategies highlight emotional management in remote learning. Social interaction fosters communication and cultural understanding. Various strategies, including practical application and analytical ones, enrich linguistic proficiency. Strategies less frequently used indicate areas for time management improvement crucial for ODL efficiency. Gender analysis shows a slight difference, with males scoring slightly higher in grammar proficiency, highlighting individual learner traits and sociocultural factors' significance. While cognitive strategies correlate positively with proficiency, individual strategies do not significantly predict it, suggesting the need for tailored approaches. Overall, these findings stress considering diverse strategies, learner traits, and contextual factors for effective language learning in ODL.

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