Gender Differences in Grammar Performance: An Analysis of EFL Achievement Test Results from Saudi Diploma Students

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to examine the gender differences among EFL diploma students in grammar based on an English achievement test. This study was motivated by the observed challenges Saudi students face with mastering grammar, a crucial element of English proficiency that forms the basis of all four aspects of language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Despite the same curriculum and evaluation systems in Saudi Arabia's segregated educational context, little is known about possible gender-based disparities in grammar performance. Addressing this gap is important for promoting equitable teaching practices, refining evaluation procedures and optimizing learning outcomes. The study utilized a discrete-point multiple-choice grammar test, as part of an English achievement test, designed to assess students' understanding of grammatical rules taught in their pre-intermediate English course. A total of 237 EFL diploma students (111 males and 126 females) completed the test, and the data were analyzed using an independent sample t-test to investigate differences in grammar performance between genders. The findings indicated no statistically significant differences between males and females, implying that their shared background, textbooks, and assessment standards may lead to comparable performance.

Key words: EFL, Grammar, Gender, English Achievement Test

INTRODUCTION

English is widely used as an international language across the globe. It is the language of scientific research, economy, commerce, and technology. Therefore, the government of Saudi Arabia puts emphasis on teaching and learning the English language. Saudi schools and universities teach English as a foreign language. The Saudi Vision 2030 has pushed the ministry to make studying English compulsory from year 1 to year 12 in both boys' and girls' schools. Most, if not all, Saudi Arabian companies require candidates to possess English qualifications. Saudi universities teach most scientific and business subjects in English. However, education is segregated in Saudi Arabia due to religious and cultural reasons. Despite the segregation, students typically follow the same English curriculum. Both males and females study the same curriculum, so do they have the same English learning issues? Do they use the same strategies to acquire it?

Gender plays a vital role in learning languages. Females and males differ and think differently. Studying gender differences is essential for educators to understand how both sexes think and learn and how each sex develops language skills. Therefore, investigating the gender learning process helps educators design courses and tailor teaching pedagogies to meet students' needs and interests (Banegas and Govender, 2022). The segregation of education in the Saudi context enhances its importance.

To learn the English language, a learner should master the four main English language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, grammar, aside from vocabulary and pronunciation, is not only a sub-skill but also a prerequisite for mastering the four main English language skills. Each main skill incorporates grammar. Grammar is a linguistic system (Hinkle, 2024). It is a set of principles that enables learners to form and organize sentences. Xavier and Chia (2024) point out that mastering grammar is essential in expressing ideas precisely and effectively. When English learners misuse grammar, the message could be unclear and ambiguous.

However, grammar is mainly assessed based on English achievement tests in EFL institutions. Generally, academic achievement exams are essential instruments for evaluating the quality of education by gauging students' learning success in relation to the curricular criteria. They provide a standard against which educational institutions may assess and enhance the modification of teaching practices, learning strategies, and curriculum development, therefore improving

educational results (Tian & Sun, 2018). The formulation and assessment of English proficiency tests are essential for evaluating students' language skills and informing instructional methodologies (Waluyo & Panmei, 2021). Therefore, the current paper tries to identify whether both Saudi male and female students have challenges in English grammar based on their English achievement test. If so, are there any statistically significant differences between them in grammar challenges?

Research Problem

The researcher of the current paper, who is a professor, has noticed that EFL Saudi students have issues with grammar. They make many errors in grammar when writing and/or speaking English. He has noticed that many students struggle with responding to grammar questions, such as multiple-choice questions. Consequently, they resort to speculating for the answer. Also, he has observed that they have difficulties using some grammar rules communicatively, such as verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, and prepositions. These observations are supported by research in the Saudi context. Abduh and Algouzi (2020) and Al-Seghayer (2023) assert that Saudi students can speak English but have major issues in grammar. More specifically, Alahmadi (2014), Alkhatib (2020), and Al Towity (2021) suggest that most grammatical errors occur in sentence structure, prepositions, and subject-verb agreement, and that EFL Saudi students struggle to use these correctly in various communicative contexts. Based on the experiences of the researcher of the current paper and the reviewed studies, it seems that both male and female students have challenges in English grammar. But do both sexes have the same challenges in grammar?

Education is segregated in Saudi Arabia, and little is known about the possible differences between males and females in Saudi Arabia, especially with challenges in grammar. Several studies have addressed the effect of gender on variables, such as motivation (Alghamdi et al., 2023; Almusharraf et al., 2023), language learning strategies (Alalawi, 2022; Almansour & Almaneea, 2024), and language anxiety (Alsalooli & Al-Tale', 2022). However, a few studies, such as Alharthi (2024) and Javid et al. (2013), have explored gender differences in grammar by focusing on students' perceptions. Only one study in the Saudi context, conducted by Alharbi (2022), scrutinized the gender differences based on a grammar test.

Despite the systemic nature of education in Saudi Arabia, which requires students to pass final examinations to advance to the next level, there is a dearth of research on grammar in English achievement assessments. The majority of assessments administered in Saudi educational institutions consist of multiple-choice questions (Saudi Ministry of Education, 2024). Grammar comprises a significant portion of English exams. For instance, grammar questions comprise approximately 25% of the unified final exam questions in an applied college. However, research on grammar, based on English achievement assessments, is scarce.

In most of the applied colleges in Saudi Arabia, both male and female diploma students adhere to the same curriculum and evaluation system, as well as studying the same textbook. This raises an important question: do significant differences exist in their grammar performance? Addressing this question could be achieved by analyzing their scores on the pre-intermediate English achievement test, specifically English 3, in an applied college.

Aim of the Study

This study aims to examine EFL Saudi gender disparities in grammar based on an English achievement test, thereby offering language instructors, exam creators, and administrators' meaningful understanding. This might lead to the implementation of fairer assessment procedures and improved educational achievements.

Research Question

Do male and female EFL Saudi diploma students exhibit statistically significant differences in grammar performance on their English achievement test?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mastering grammar is one of the most problematic issues in learning the English language. Many EFL learners face challenges in grammar due to a number of contributing factors, such as the different systems between L1 and L2 (Hinkle, 2024), the lack of practice (Berry, 2021), and traditional teaching methods (e.g., the Grammar Translation Method), which focus on learning the structure and encourage memorizing the grammar rules rather than communicating them functionally in different contexts (Xavier & Chia, 2024).

These common contributing factors are particularly evident in the Saudi EFL context, as several studies, including those by Nuruzzaman et al. (2018), Al-Seghayer (2023), Alahamdi (2014), Alkhatib (2020), Al Towity (2021), and Abduh and Algouzi (2020), have shown that Saudi students also face significant difficulties in mastering grammar. One such study by Nuruzzaman et al. (2018) examined 90 Saudi non-English major undergraduates' writing errors. The findings of their study revealed that Saudi EFL students commit grammatical, lexis, semantics, and mechanics problems while writing English paragraphs. Grammar is the category where the students make the most mistakes. The authors indicate that a number of factors, including poor teaching methods, errors made when transitioning from one language to another (L1), and inadequate understanding of the second language (L2), contributed to the participants' mistakes. However, do male and female students have the same challenges with English grammar?

A significant body of research indicates that female EFL learners tend to outperform their male counterparts in English grammatical proficiency. These studies, conducted across various EFL contexts, employ diverse research methodologies. Some investigations have focused on learners' perceptions, such as the work by Ali (2016), while others have analyzed students' writing samples, including studies by Kadan (2023), Furtina et al. (2016), Asra and Wiradisastra

(2022), Wucherer and Reiterer (2018), Almuhailib (2023), and Iman and Tuti (2022). In addition, several studies have utilized English achievement tests or grammar examinations to assess proficiency, including those by Rudd (2018), Laoli, Waruwu, Ndraha, and Zebua (2023), Erdiana, Bahri, and Akhmal (2019), Abdullahi and Bichi (2015), Engin and Ortaçtepe (2014), Moezzipour and Fathabadi (2023), Alharbi (2022), and Azizmohammadi and Barjesteh (2020).

Abdullahi and Bichi (2015), Engin and Ortaçtepe (2014), and Rudd (2018) believed that female students were highly motivated, and this is why they could be better at learning the English language. In addition to motivation, Alharbi (2022) attributed the superiority of females to several factors, such as differences in learning strategies and classroom participation. Alharbi examined the level of awareness among 50 Saudi EFL graduate learners in the development of grammatical forms based on a grammar test. It also evaluated Saudi EFL students' grammar acquisition proficiency. Finally, it quantitatively investigated whether there were any gendered disparities in the grammar learning of Saudi EFL graduate learners. Alharbi found that the participants showed a commendable degree of awareness in the development of grammatical forms, but they have not yet achieved mastery of English grammar. The findings indicate that Saudi EFL female learners have a higher level of grammatical competence and awareness compared to their male counterparts.

Alharbi claimed that female Saudi EFL learners frequently use more effective learning strategies, including supplementary materials and participation in collaborative learning. These strategies may improve their grammatical and general linguistic abilities. Female students seem to be more inclined to actively engage in classroom discussions and activities, affording them a greater opportunity to practice and enhance their grammatical abilities. Consistently, active engagement and interaction characterize female Saudi English learners, as noted by Almuhailib (2023). Furthermore, studies by Azizmohammadi and Barjesteh (2020), Engin and Ortaçtepe (2014), Wucherer and Reiterer (2018), and Furtina et al. (2016) claim that EFL females demonstrated an advantage in grammar, potentially due to their unique learning strategies.

However, females are not always better than males in learning the English language. Ali (2016) observed a lack of consistency among the interviewed teachers regarding which gender is more proficient in grammar. Consistently, Koç (2022) found Turkish EFL female students use more adjectives, intensifiers, and words, while males tend to use more empty adjectives and linking adverbials when writing in English. This grammar debate between EFL males and females suggests that males may be better at some linguistic issues.

Several studies indicate that males outperform females in learning the English language (Hasan & Khan, 2015; Sugianto et al., 2023; Moezzipour & Fathabadi, 2023). On a sample of 100 Indian male and female secondary school students, Hasan and Khan (2015) examined the gender differences in their English academic achievement. Results showed that English performance scores for male and female students varied significantly. Compared to their female counterparts, male students have achieved more academic success in the English test. The authors also discovered that male students may outpace female students due to their lack of motivation and low expectations. The findings of Hasan and Khan (2015) contradict those of Rudd (2018), Furtina et al. (2016), and Abdullahi and Bichi (2015), who claim that female students are more motivated to learn the English language.

In a grammar test, males excelled in error-recognition tasks, while females performed better in multiple-choice items, suggesting gender-specific strengths in different grammatical contexts (Moezzipour & Fathabadi, 2023). These authors aimed to test Daniel Kahneman's assertion that recognizing others' mistakes is easier and more enjoyable, specifically in the context of English language learning among Iranian advanced EFL learners. Moezzipour and Fathabadi found that male learners performed better on error-recognition items, while female learners outscored males on multiple-choice items.

The dominance of one gender over another is unnecessary. Several studies have shown no differences between males and females in the acquisition of the English language. The majority of these studies rely on students' perceptions of grammar, including those by Ameen et al. (2023), Javid et al. (2013), Alharthi (2024), Juhana et al. (2023), and Zafeer et al. (2022). Other research examined gender disparities in students' writing assignments, including those by Alkrisheh et al. (2019) and Almusharraf (2021). However, only one study by Faruk and Saha (2016) focused on students' English tests.

Faruk and Saha (2016) evaluated the differences in language learning among 43 female and 80 male upper secondary students in Bangladesh. All participants were of the same age, enrolled at the same academic level (Grade 11), and taught by the same educator. The pre-test assessment for grammar encompasses the use of linguistic components like articles, prepositions, phrases, sentences, verb forms, and modifiers in sentence formation. The findings indicated no statistically significant difference between males and females in the acquisition of English as a second language, especially concerning grammar. No significant disparity exists between the sexes on the grammar examination, despite females originating from more affluent, culturally enriched, and better-educated backgrounds than men and achieving superior results on the preceding Secondary School Certificate Examination. Faruk and Saha found no differences in English language learning when all students used the same curriculum. This explanation is supported by Obeidat and Alomari (2020), who discovered no significant differences between 105 male and female Jordanian undergraduate EFL students. The authors argue that similar teaching techniques used in both the experimental and control groups account for the absence of gender differences among the students. Ameen et al. (2023) consistently attributed the absence of gender disparities in attitudes towards learning English to the equal awareness of both genders regarding the significance of English in their lives, as well as the requirement to successfully complete English at all educational levels.

As far as the Saudi context is concerned, Almusharraf (2021) investigated gender disparities in EFL writing among graduate students, using both human assessment and computer-aided error analysis (CEA) on a corpus including

90,753 words from 197 participants. Almusharraf found no substantial gender-related variances; however, some mistake categories exhibited gender-based variations. The research indicates that the absence of notable disparities may result from standardized assessment methods and instructional methodologies used in the educational context, potentially resulting in comparable performance levels across genders.

In the Saudi context, Alharthi (2024) and Javid (2013) similarly discovered no significant gender disparities in EFL students' perceived difficulty in grammar. Alharthi (2024) employed a mixed-methods technique to investigate the gender disparities among EFL Saudi diploma students, specifically focusing on their perceptions of linguistic challenges, including grammar, when writing in English. A total of 288 individuals completed the questionnaire, and 4 instructors were interviewed. The data indicate no disparity between the sexes. In line with Almusharraf (2021), Alharthi (2024) suggests that the absence of gender disparities may be ascribed to students engaging with the same curriculum, including uniform assessments and delivered via comparable pedagogical approaches. These findings suggest that when both EFL genders have similar backgrounds and educational instructions, their gender may not influence the acquisition of English skills and subskills, including grammar. This indicates that students may attain comparable levels of comprehension and performance irrespective of their gender.

Most of the reviewed studies mentioned above focus on gender differences in EFL based on perceptions and writing tasks. Few studies investigate gender differences in English achievement tests. In Saudi Arabia, only one study was conducted by Alharbi (2020) that was on a small sample of 50 Saudi EFL graduate learners to investigate gender differences in grammar. However, this current study aims to provide additional perspectives on gender in Saudi Arabia, considering the segregated nature of education. This study emphasizes how gender may affect grammatical errors by examining the distinctions between male and female students. By acknowledging that male and female students may exhibit distinct mistake patterns, educators may develop more effective pedagogical strategies tailored to the individual requirements of each gender. Revealing gender-based performance inequalities on an EFL achievement exam may provide test creators with valuable insights, mitigate gender success gaps, and foster more equitable teaching methods.

METHOD

The data were collected from an English achievement test (English 3) administered to pre-intermediate students in an applied college in Saudi Arabia. The test was developed by eight professors specializing in TESOL and Applied Linguistics to evaluate students' proficiency in key language areas, including listening, vocabulary, business conversations, and grammar. It comprised 40 questions, with each section targeting a specific skill or domain. The grammar section, which is the focus of this study, is presented as a single, unified section within the test and is purposefully constructed to mirror the content and sequencing of the instructional units. The grammar section consisted of 10 multiple-choice questions. Each question aligned with one of the 10 units learned in the English course, with each unit focusing on a certain grammatical rule. For instance, Unit 1 addressed subject-verb agreement, while Unit 5 concentrated on passive voice. The grammar section's questions were meticulously designed to evaluate students' capacity to apply rules in context, rather than just memorizing definitions or isolated information.

The test is a discrete-point multiple-choice grammar test, indicating that each question assesses a single grammatical notion independently. The multiple-choice format of the test offers four alternatives (A-D) for every question, with a single right answer. The grammar component of the test is thorough, since it systematically assesses students' understanding of the grammatical rules taught in the course. For example, A question assessing subject-verb agreement asked students to complete the sentence: *"I _____ seen him today."* The options were (a) hasn't, (b) haven't, (c) don't, and (d) won't. Another question on passive voice required students to select the correct verb form in: *"The hotel _____ in the 19th century."* The options included (a) was build, (b) was built, (c) were build, and (d) were built (see Appendix A for the ten grammar questions).

The participants, who did the test, were college students enrolled in various diploma programs, including Human Resources, Information Technology, and Marketing. Their age ranges from 18 to 19 years. They mostly have a similar background, having studied English from the third year of elementary school. At the college, students undertake three English courses, ranging from beginner to pre-intermediate level. The test had four versions: A, B, C, and D. The students who did the test were 678. However, the sample of this study included 237 students' test papers, consisting of 111 males and 126 females. Due to time constraints, this study only analyzed Version A, which was the first version evaluated by the college professors. Therefore, the researcher deemed the convenience sample appropriate for this investigation, utilizing the initial available sample for analysis. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that the students were randomly assigned all test versions.

Test Validity and Reliability

Eight professors who specialize in TESOL and Applied Linguistics and teach the same course (English 3) reviewed the test to establish its content validity. For examining the reliability of the test, the internal consistency of the test was assessed using the Kuder and Richardson Formula 20 (KR-20), which is appropriate for instruments with dichotomous items (Anselmi et al., 2019). The KR-20 value obtained was 0.712, indicating acceptable reliability for the test instrument. A KR-20 value above 0.70 means that the test items are sufficiently consistent in measuring the intended construct, according to rules for interpreting reliability coefficients (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). This result suggests that the items within the test are measuring related concepts and that the instrument is generally reliable for research purposes.

Data Analysis

After the college teachers evaluated the students' papers, the researcher of this study assembled the papers for analysis. The data were processed using version 20 of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This research included descriptive statistics (frequency percentages, means, and standard deviations) and inferential statistics, including the independent-sample T-test, to examine the gender differences in grammar. The significance threshold was established at 0.05 for all statistical analyses.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Before addressing the research question, a descriptive analysis of the data is presented (see Appendix B). It demonstrates that students perceive the quantifiers rule as the easiest among the various grammatical rules, with a perceived ease percentage of 69.3%. The future "will" rule (used to indicate decisions made while speaking) and the "going to" rule follow, both exceeding 60%. The *"permission"* rule (i.e., *be allowed to*) has an ease percentage of 58.0%, while the *"will"* rule, indicating "something that will mostly happen," is rated at 52.2%. The *subject-verb (S.V.) agreement* rule exhibits an ease percentage of 49.2%, whereas the *"may"* rule, which indicates possibility, receives a rating of 45.0%. The *present perfect* rule is considered easy by 43.3% of students, whereas the *second conditional* rule has a lower ease rating of 40.3%. In contrast, the second conditional rule also

exhibits a relatively high level of difficulty, with a 59.7% difficulty rating and an acceptable discrimination score of 35.3%, placing it in ninth position overall. Finally, the ease percentage, 37.8%, rates the past passive rule as the most difficult.

This analysis suggests that the easiest grammar rules are the *quantifiers*, *will,* and *permission* rules. However, the simple past passive voice, the second conditional rule, and the present perfect rule pose the greatest challenges for EFL Saudi students in grammar. Generally, more than 60% of students struggle with most grammar rules, but are there any significant differences?

To answer the only research question in this study, Table 1 presents t-test results comparing grammatical features between EFL Saudi male and female students. None of the individual grammatical features showed statistically significant differences at the conventional $p < .05$ level. The closest items to reaching statistical significance were subject-verb agreement ($t(235) = 1.774$, $p = .077$), modal verbs for permission ($t(235) = 1.695$, $p = .091$), and future predictions with "may" ($t(235) = 1.686$, $p = .093$). The overall total comparison approached but did not reach statistical significance ($t(235) = 1.816$, $p = .071$). These findings indicate that observable gender differences exist across various grammatical features but are not statistically significant.

The findings of this study are consistent with Faruk and Saha (2016), who found no significant difference between Bangladeshi students of different genders in a grammar

Table 1. Shows the T-test statistical differences in grammar attributed to the type

Grammar Differences		*M*		*SD*	*t*-Test	*df*	*p*-value
Q1*: S.V. agreement*	Girls	0.547	Girls	0.499	1.774	235	.077
	Boys	0.432	Boys	0.497			
Q4: *Going to* "future arrangements"	Girls	0.619	Girls	0.487	0.524	235	.601
	Boys	0.585	Boys	0.494			
Q5: *Simple past passive*	Girls	0.365	Girls	0.483	-.494-	235	.622
	Boys	0.396	Boys	0.491			
Q6: *Permission* "be allowed to…)	Girls	0.587	Girls	0.494	1.695	235	.091
	Boys	0.477	Boys	0.501			
Q7: *Future Will* "to make decisions at the moment of speaking"	Girls	0.650	Girls	0.478	1.168	228.877	.244
	Boys	0.576	Boys	0.496			
Q2:*Quantifiers* "Countable and uncountable nouns"	Girls	0.714	Girls	0.453	0.643	235	.521
	Boys	0.675	Boys	0.470			
Q3: *Present perfect*	Girls	0.460	Girls	0.500	0.849	235	.397
	Boys	0.405	Boys	0.493			
Q8: *will* "to talk about something that will mostly happen"	Girls	0.563	Girls	0.497	1.183	235	.238
	Boys	0.486	Boys	0.502			
Q9: *2nd conditional*	Girls	0.412	Girls	0.494	0.254	235	.800
	Boys	0.396	Boys	0.491			
Q10: *may* "to talk about something that will possibly happen"	Girls	0.523	Girls	0.501	1.686	235	.093
	Boys	0.414	Boys	0.494			
Total	Girls	.5444	Girls	0.248	1.816	235	.071
	Boys	.4847	Boys	0.257			

test. Also, the findings of this study are in line with those who found no significant gender disparities in students' perceptions of grammar, such as Ameen et al. (2023), Javid (2013), Alharthi (2024), Juhana et al. (2023), and Zafeer and Maqbool (2022), and also consistent with other studies that found no significant gender disparities in students' writing assignments, including those by Alkrisheh et al. (2019) and Almusharraf (2021). However, the current study's findings contradict those of previous studies, such as Rudd (2018), Laoli et al. (2023), Erdiana et al. (2019), Alharbi (2022), and Azizmohammadi and Barjesteh (2020), which found no significant gender disparities in students' perceptions of grammar.

The absence of a statistically significant difference in grammar between EFL Saudi diploma students in their English achievement test may be due to their similar backgrounds, shared curriculum, unified final exam, and similar teaching methods. This suggests that the final exam and exam-based assessment may impose constraints on teachers. When teachers focus on exams, it is expected that they follow similar techniques for both genders as the unified exam for both genders. Saudi researchers like Alharthi (2024) and Almusharraf (2021) support this explanation, attributing the lack of differences in Saudi students' perceptions of their writing challenges (including grammar) to the same teaching method, curriculum, and assessment. Other researchers in different EFL contexts, such as Faruk and Saha, who found no variances in English language learning because all students receive the same curriculum, also support this explanation. Additionally, Obeidat and Alomari (2020) assert that both the experimental and control groups received instruction using similar teaching techniques, which accounts for the absence of gender differences. Ameen et al. (2023) consistently attributed the absence of gender disparities in attitudes towards learning English to the equal awareness of both genders regarding the significance of English in their lives, as well as the requirement to successfully complete English at all educational levels.

Although the current study has not investigated language learning strategies or motivation, it seems that they are not contributing factors to gender differences since this study reveals no gender disparities. So, the findings of this study don't match up with those of Abdullahi and Bichi (2015), Engin and Ortaçtepe (2014), Rudd (2018), and Alharbi (2022), who found that girls do better than boys in grammar because they are more motivated and use language learning strategies. This study contradicts Hasan and Khan (2015), who found that girls may be behind boys because they aren't motivated and don't have high expectations for themselves.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study indicate that there are not statistically significant differences between EFL Saudi students in grammar from their English achievement test. This lack of gender disparity could encourage educators to adopt a cohesive methodology for grammar teaching, focusing on effective teaching approaches that cater to all learners rather than tailoring instruction based on gender. This will cultivate a collaborative teaching atmosphere that offers equitable assistance to all students.

Also, finding no gender differences in this study means that gender is not a contributing factor to the challenges faced by EFL Saudi students in grammar. Therefore, we need to conduct further research on factors such as socio-economic status, cultural influences, and the functioning of the classroom. This could provide a more comprehensive understanding of EFL teaching, extending beyond gender, and provide a clearer picture of the grammatical issues faced by Saudi EFL students. Curriculum designers should take these factors into account when developing curricula and evaluating student performance.

This study's narrow focus on diploma students limits the generalizability of its findings. By including language learners from a range of language settings in the study, it might be possible to give a more complete picture of how people learn languages. Also, conducting longitudinal studies to observe changes in grammar performance between genders over time could offer insights into the long-term language learning differences between genders. Finally, this study employed a solely quantitative approach, utilizing a single instrument, a questionnaire. A qualitative tool, such as interviews with students and instructors, would provide a more comprehensive picture of the teaching and learning processes.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: The Grammar Questions

1. I _____ seen him today.
   a) hasn't   c) don't
   b) haven't   d) won't

2. Is there _____ information about opening hours?
   a) an   c) some
   b) a   d) any

3. I _____ for this company for ten years.
   a) work   c) have worked
   b) working   d) has worked

4. Are they going to _____ for a new apartment?
   a) looks   c) look
   b) looking   d) looked

5. The hotel _____ in the 19th century.
   a) was build   c) was built
   b) were build   d) were built

6. You _____ allowed to smoke here.
   a) aren't   c) don't
   b) isn't   d) won't

7. It _____ us a lot more if we have to create a special bus lanes.
   a) will cost   c) costs
   b) didn't cost   d) cost

8. I'm sure we _____ finish the report today.
   a) will   c) allowed to
   b) may   d) going to

9. If they _____ their prices, we would buy their products.
   a) drop   c) dropped
   b) drops   d) dropping

10. Perhaps your secretary _____ know when the meeting is.
    a) are   c) will
    b) is   d) might

Appendix B. It shows the coefficients of difficulty, ease and discrimination of the grammar rules

Grammar rules	Ease coefficient	Coefficient of difficulty	Discrimination coefficient	Direction score
Q2: *Quantifiers* (Countable and uncountable nouns)	69.3	30.7	32.8	Acceptable discrimination
Q7: *Future Will* "to make decisions at the moment of speaking"	61.3	38.7	43.7	Acceptable discrimination
Q4: *Going to* "future arrangements"	60.1	39.9	36.1	Acceptable discrimination
Q6: *Permission* "be allowed to…)	58.0	42.0	43.7	Acceptable discrimination
Q8: *will* "to talk about something that will mostly happen"	52.5	47.5	41.2	Acceptable discrimination
Q1: S.V. agreement	49.2	50.8	51.3	Good distinction
Q10: *may* "to talk about something that will possibly happen"	45.0	55.0	51.3	Good distinction
Q3: Present perfect	43.3	56.7	41.2	Acceptable discrimination
Q9: 2nd conditional	40.3	59.7	35.3	Acceptable discrimination
Q5: Simple past passive	37.8	62.2	33.6	Acceptable discrimination