



Challenges in Teaching Grammar to Secondary School English Learners in District Vehari



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Abstract: *Research demonstrates problems with secondary school English grammar instruction. The study's objectives are to (1) identify the challenges of teaching English grammar to secondary school students, (2) examine ways to improve it, and (3) prioritize solutions. This descriptive study was quantitative. All secondary public school English teachers in Vehari were studied. The researcher randomly sampled. The study used a nine-subscale questionnaire (Alam, 2005). Researchers administered a questionnaire to nearly 150 secondary school teachers during in-person visits. Percentage, mean score, and standard deviation yielded the findings. The survey found that secondary school English teachers dislike teaching grammar since they need a background. In secondary school, English grammar teachers require excellent training. The audio-lingual strategy also worked better for English teachers. Teachers think English grammar is complex. Teacher training may inspire secondary school students to study English grammar and language. This study may aid high school grammar teachers*

Key Words: Challenges, Teaching Grammar, English Learners

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Introduction

Grammar in English refers to the body of knowledge that specifies how sentences and words in English are supposed to be constructed and used. The laws of syntax control how words should be placed in a phrase, and morphology governs how words should be built and how they should change shape. Capitalization, punctuation, and spelling are all aspects of written

communication included in studying English grammar. Sentence structure (including subject-verb agreement, fragments, and run-ons), verb tenses (past, present, and future), and parts of speech are only a few essential features of English grammar. Furthermore, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, and articles are all included in the study of English grammar. Understanding English grammar rules is essential for communicating effectively since they

facilitate the production of sentences that are unambiguous, logical, and free of grammatical errors (Conrad, 2017). It takes time and effort to become proficient in English grammar, but there are many tools available to help students of the language become more fluent in the language overall.

People need constant exposure to teaching and acquiring languages to develop as thinkers. Creativity and fresh ideas emerge as a result of learning a new language. Language is the medium through which people gain new knowledge and understanding every day (Rymes, and Leone, 2014). Now he's making strides to learn as much as possible, having already explored the Moon and Mars and planning to explore others. To become an educated scholar, a child needs little more than the will to learn and the means to do so, in this case, an all-encompassing and precise command of the English language, as advocated by the Commission on National Education (1959). In truth, language is the key to unlocking the door to education and development. As the Commission on National Education (1959) testified, English is a good source of information on the most recent developments in technology and science and will continue to be the most effective means of international communication worldwide. Therefore, everyone with a college education or above should be able to communicate basic needs using English (Haidar and Fang, 2019).

In the age of science and technology, English is a vital source of information and global communication. The government is encouraging all employees of government-run entities to learn English. For the English language to be fully mastered by all educated people. A return to teaching proper English, and perfect grammar, is urgently required, as it is the foundation upon which all other forms of writing, creative or not, must rely. Students of the English language should put equal emphasis on mastering the language's

grammar basics and developing their interpersonal communication abilities. Ellis (1993) argues that students must prioritize their reading and listening capabilities to grasp what others are saying in a foreign language before they can devote time and energy to mastering the grammatical rules that will allow them to clearly communicate their ideas and thoughts clearly and precisely.

A person learning a language may place a higher value on grammatical knowledge than a natural speaker would. This is because a native speaker of a language will have an innate understanding of the grammar of that language. In contrast, a learner of a foreign language must consciously work to acquire the grammatical conventions of that language. That's why we must brush up on our English grammar skills. The task of teaching English grammar, while challenging, may be gratifying. Here are some suggestions that could come in handy:

- Get back to the fundamentals: Nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs should be the first building blocks of any language education program. Ensure pupils know what each speech element does and how it is utilized in a sentence.
- Use numerous examples to clarify the grammar rules. It can show pupils how to use the rules in the real world.
- Use games and other activities to make grammar study more fun and participatory. Grammar bingo, having students write sentences incorporating target parts of speech, and working in pairs to spot problems in model sentences are just a few fun and engaging activities.
- Give pupils numerous opportunities to practice applying grammatical principles in authentic writing and

conversation. Help them grow by giving them advice and pointing out mistakes.

- Add some context: Make grammatical instruction relevant to students' lives or interests. A news item, a song, or a film can all serve as contexts for teaching grammatical rules.
- Use modern technological resources in the classroom, such as grammar-checking applications, interactive grammar quizzes, and grammar-focused YouTube channels.
- Keep in mind that grammar instruction is only one component of ESL. The student's vocabulary, pronunciation, listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills should be prioritized.

According to Eun's (2010) use of audiovisual aids and authentic materials in the classroom, teaching grammar using original resources makes the subject less tedious and more interesting for students. Everything goes on in a classroom, from using real-world resources to delegating specific responsibilities to individual students working toward shared goals. The lessons learned from this can be life-changing. It has been shown that students improve their comfort level when speaking English during classroom activities. Activities in the language classroom that emphasize four interconnected language skills help students bring their life experiences into the classroom. The study's objectives are to (1) identify the challenges of teaching English grammar to secondary school students, (2) examine ways to improve it, and (3) prioritize solutions.

Review of Related Literature

Grammar encompasses several concepts, including the rules for constructing a

language, but not its lexicon, semantics, or phonology. A language's purposes are based on its grammar definitions, which either explain the structural and organizational elements or guarantee the particular view of language experts semantically.

"Grammar" refers to a reference manual for studying linguistic conventions. It can function as the linguistic policy of a given organization. A popular dictionary defines grammar as the principles that control how words create sentences: The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. Batstone (1994) argues that grammar encompasses a wide range of meanings. Most people consider grammar to be a collection of rules for effectively composing sentences. Brumfit and Johnson (1979) state that all languages use grammar, and grammar unlocks millions of words.

Grammar is the rules defining how a language is put together. Students get irritated whenever the word "grammar" is spoken because they despise grammar instruction. The ideas mentioned above reinforce learners' conceptions of grammar as a tiresome task. Their greatest dislike stems from grammatical concepts rarely being presented engagingly in the classroom and professors rarely trying to awaken students' dormant creative skills about grammatical concepts.

Crystal (1985) argues that grammar studies how words and their parts are combined to make meaningful sentences. As was indicated above, this definition assumes that the language learner is familiar with grammar, although superficially and insensibly. Grammar may need to be revised for learning to speak a language appropriately in a classroom setting; however, as Brumfit and Johnson (1979) point out, it does have its relevance in language.

When looking at the bigger picture of language education, it is clear that grammar classes have unique positions and

importance. It has been noted that proper acquisition of a language requires both an unconscious and explicit understanding of the grammar of that language. A foreign language teacher must do more than impart grammatical rules and regulations; she must also integrate grammar teaching into everyday conversation and familiarize her students with it. Linguists and grammar experts have no grounds for arguing over whether or not grammar is taught. The students need to learn it. A question is posed that is suitable for use in modern lecture halls: When it comes to formal education, what is the best approach to teaching grammar?

Teaching a language's tenses is a form of grammatical transmission. A proper understanding of grammar is essential for communicating effectively in any language. Radford's (2003) research lends credence to the idea that grammar is the investigation of the guidelines for making and explaining sentences. Correct sentence construction is the goal of grammar, which is the logical study of language focusing on structure. Syntax and morphology are the two main divisions of grammar that are commonly used (Crystal, 1985).

While many consider grammar abstract in the human mind, others argue it takes on a more concrete form whenever a man employs a language. When employed, grammar moves from being a theoretical construct in the LAD (Language Acquisition Device) of the mind to an experiential aspect of how language functions in everyday conversation. In addition, there is what we call "grammatical competency," an innate feel for the English language's grammar. Native speakers of the language have assumed you have some familiarity with it. On the other hand, they are fully cognizant of the linguistic processes involved in creating and describing words, sentences, and phrases in their mother tongue. However, humankind has not considered the

mental processes behind language acquisition and usage.

To rephrase, a language's grammar is a competency model for an accomplished speaker; language competence and proficiency are mirrored in formal educational institutions such as colleges and universities. Suppose Radford's (2003) research correctly determines whether a given sequence of phrases and words in a language is grammatical. In that case, it will also be correct in defining the possible interpretations of the relevant line of the sentence. Grammar is no longer considered a separate collection of rules with no practical use (Ellis, 2006) but as an integral aspect of effective and thorough communication.

Language learners have shown various attitudes and dogmas about how grammar should be taught throughout history. There was once a time when grammar was widely hailed as the most critical aspect of language study. Linguists have shared their thoughts on grammar's place in language education and the weight it should be given. However, some linguists believe that focusing just on the vocabulary and pronunciation of a language is a mistake and advocate for an "anti-grammar" approach to education that promotes natural disclosure as an effective means of teaching grammar. The anti-grammar campaign reached its zenith in 1985 when the National Council of Teachers (NCT) declared war on grammar education as a separate institution. Grammar training in isolation was deemed ineffective for second-language learners by the National Council of Teachers (NCT) (Wang, 2010).

As a result of the debate, as mentioned earlier, there needs to be more clarity among language teachers, who require a more precise grasp of grammar and the necessity of grammatical instruction. Teachers of other tongues should have the information they need to make educated decisions about how best to teach grammar.

Organized grammar instruction also leads to clarity among students. The students' outlook on grammar study could be more manageable. The vast majority of students would rather forego studying grammar altogether in favour of focusing their efforts elsewhere. However, there is only a partial demonstration of interest in mastering grammar by certain language professionals and teachers. They see it as a necessary evil for which there are no solutions.

The English language's nervous system is based on the idiosyncratic practice of adding or deleting a morpheme from verbs to change their structure. Remember that the English words for "tense" and "time" are not interchangeable. Graver (1986) argues that "tense" refers to a verb, not a particular historical point. Main English verbs specify the tense (simple, continuous, and perfect) of a previously established action or social occurrence. Most linguists agree that languages have two tenses: past and present. The present includes the future. Many linguists believe English has only three tenses: past, present, and future.

English is difficult to learn due to native or first language intervention and many distinctions. When and why native English speakers utilize a verb's simple, continuous, or perfect tenses depends on factors other than grammar. Functional language development is challenging for second language learners. According to Hall (1998), as referenced by Ilin, Kutlu, and Kutluay (2013), "In many ways, the computer is the ideal tool to help foreign language students overcome their grammar deficiencies." It was the result of computer-taught German grammar research.

Depending on the context, deductive and inductive approaches are employed to instruct pupils in English grammar. The inductive and deductive terms suggest a connection to making grammar more

Approachable, understandable, and accessible to second-language learners of English. English instructors use the logical approach, explaining the concept to their students before showing them how it works in practice in a few instances. Students are then given sentence-making assignments based on this principle. In addition, the foundation of explicit knowledge and information supports the skilful practice required to integrate and internalize the grammatical rules. A language teacher can use an inductive approach to investigate a linguistic phenomenon in the classroom. Following the strategy above, students are provided with activities and homework designed to demystify the linguistic and grammatical concepts being taught.

Research Methodology

The study relied on quantitative research techniques employed by the researchers. The researchers used a survey methodology for this investigation. According to Ezeani (1998), survey research aims to produce a large amount of factual data that adequately explains the phenomenon. It included the current processes, trends, beliefs, conditions, and practices that are taking place. The researchers could conduct quantitative or descriptive surveys to learn more about the situation. However, the specific characteristics of the problem in the study setting determine how a researcher approaches a topic (Bryman, 1984).

Hartas (2010) states that there are three prerequisites for survey research: the capability, comprehension, and willingness of respondents. The data for this article came from a survey carried out among residents of District Vehari. A survey is a research apparatus for collecting data that designates one or more features of a specific population (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2008). Secondary-level English teachers in the Vehari district were surveyed for this study.

The participants in this study were all public school instructors of English in the Vehari district's secondary schools. The study population was selected from the Vehari area. If there are about 1,500 people in the population, Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2008) suggest using a sample size of 5%. Researchers employed a simple random sampling method to choose a sample of 150 secondary school teachers from the Vehari district for this study.

Since it was a quantitative survey, information was gathered from the study's representative sample of educators using a questionnaire. Questionnaires are the most commonly used tool for gathering information in surveys, according to Hartas (2010). We modified and updated the questionnaire used in Alam's (2005) study to meet our needs. The current survey instrument is a three-point Likert scale.

Descriptive survey research lends itself well to primary and essential data collection (Mawoli, Babandako, 2011). The questionnaire given to English teachers in secondary schools was employed as a data collection tool. The questionnaire was given to the study's sample during the researcher's in-person visits. Participants in the study were given extensive instructions on completing the survey for English teachers in secondary schools.

Data Analysis

This research aimed to examine issues with secondary school English language education relating to grammar instruction. Using a questionnaire, the researcher could compile data that was subsequently tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted in the context of the study's stated objective.

Table 1
Teachers' Perceptions

Item No.	Responses	Frequency	Mean	SD
1	No	54	2.14	0.92
	To some extent	19		
	Yes	77		
2	No	33	1.99	0.67
	To some extent	87		
	Yes	28		
3	No	12	2.60	0.63
	To some extent	34		
	Yes	104		
4	No	11	2.12	0.5
	To some extent	109		
	Yes	30		
5	No	88	1.65	0.83
	To some extent	25		
	Yes	37		
6	No	29	2.48	0.79
	To some extent	19		
	Yes	102		
7	No	18	2.56	0.68
	To some extent	28		
	Yes	104		

Item No.	Responses	Frequency	Mean	SD
8	No	11	2.72	0.57
	To some extent	19		
	Yes	120		
9	No	13	2.77	0.57
	To some extent	7		
	Yes	130		
10	No	17	2.75	0.63
	To some extent	1		
	Yes	132		
11	No	33	2.43	0.81
	To some extent	19		
	Yes	98		
12	No	79	1.56	0.64
	To some extent	58		
	Yes	13		
13	No	93	1.46	0.64
	To some extent	44		
	Yes	13		
14	No	13	2.81	0.56
	To some extent	2		
	Yes	135		
15	No	91	1.42	0.56
	To some extent	53		
	Yes	6		
16	No	5	2.91	0.38
	To some extent	3		
	Yes	142		
17	No	10	2.83	0.51
	To some extent	4		
	Yes	136		
18	No	10	2.16	0.51
	To some extent	106		
	Yes	34		
19	No	23	2.37	0.72
	To some extent	47		
	Yes	80		
20	No	20	2.5	0.70
	To some extent	23		
	Yes	107		
21	No	97	1.60	0.84
	To some extent	16		
	Yes	37		
22	No	107	1.3	0.47
	To some extent	41		
	Yes	2		
23	No	112	1.34	0.63

Item No.	Responses	Frequency	Mean	SD
24	To some extent	25	2.10	0.56
	Yes	13		
	No	17		
25	To some extent	101	2.04	0.72
	Yes	32		
	No	37		
26	To some extent	68	1.65	0.76
	Yes	45		
	No	77		
	To some extent	46		
	Yes	27		

Item 1 asks if you agree with the statement, "Are you in favour of teaching English to secondary school students?" Most respondents (77) agree that English should be taught in secondary schools, with a mean score of 2.14 and a standard deviation of 0.92. However, 54 English teachers at secondary schools need to be more enthusiastic about working with teenagers who are not proficient in the language. Additionally, 19 participants favour introducing English instruction to high school students.

Item 2 is, "Are you happy with how English grammar is taught to secondary school students at your school?" When asked how satisfied they are with teaching English grammar to secondary school pupils, the vast majority (87 out of 100) reported being somewhat satisfied.

We ask if you agree with the phrase, "Do you think specialization in English is a must for an English teacher?" With a mean score of 2.6 and a standard deviation of 0.63, 104 people said they agreed with the statement above.

Item 4 asks, "Have you ever worked as an English language instructor?" As seen by the mean score of 2.12 and standard deviation of 0.5, most respondents (109) are sceptical that English teachers have the qualifications to instruct. Despite this, those who teach English as a second language consider themselves to be at least partially bilingual.

Item 5 asks if "Books on Grammar Teaching Methods" are readily available. With a mean score of 1.65 and a standard deviation of 0.83, it is clear that most respondents (88) believe that grammar instruction books are not readily available. As many as 37 secondary school English teachers believe supplementary materials for teaching grammar are readily available.

Item 6 asks, "Are these books on grammar instruction methods helpful to us right now?" There is a 0.79 standard deviation around the mean score of 2.48. Ten-hundred-and-two people who took the survey would benefit from having access to literature on grammar instruction techniques.

Item 7 asks if you know the "methodology of teaching English grammar." The vast majority (104) of English educators say they are well-versed in the finest practices for instructing pupils in English grammar, with a mean score of 2.56 and a standard deviation of 0.68.

"Do you know the grammar-translation method?" is asked in point 8. Most respondents (120) have heard of the grammar-translation approach because it is the primary method of instructing students in English. There is a 0.57 standard variation around the mean score of 2.72.

Item 9 asks, "Do you employ the grammar-translation strategy?" Most English

teachers (130) agreed that they employ the grammar-translation approach while instructing their students on the subject. The mean score was 2.77, with a standard deviation of 0.57.

Respondents are asked in Item 10 if they support the statement, "Are you in favour of the grammar-translation method of teaching English grammar to secondary school students?" When asked about the most efficient method to teach English grammar to secondary school pupils, 132 people rated the grammar-translation approach with a mean score of 2.75 (SD = 0.63) out of a possible 5.0 (5.0 = best).

Item 11 inquires, "Have you heard of the audio-linguistic method before?" According to the data, 98 out of 100 respondents agree with the statement, with a mean score of 2.43 and a standard deviation of 0.81. They have experience with the audio-lingual method of instruction.

Item 12: "Do you employ the audio-lingual approach?" Most respondents (79) said they do not employ an audio-lingual method of instruction, with a mean score of 1.56 and a standard deviation of 0.64. Most English teachers (58) admit, however, that they occasionally employ the audio-lingual approach while instructing their students in the language.

Item 13, we inquire as to whether you support the following statement: "Are you in favour of the audio-lingual method of teaching English grammar to secondary school students?" The majority of respondents (93) are against using audio-lingual methods to teach English grammar to pupils in secondary school, as indicated by a mean score of 1.46 and a standard deviation of 0.64.

The purpose of item 14 is to determine whether or not the use of visual and auditory aids in the classroom facilitates the acquisition of correct English grammar. The majority of respondents (135) believe that it is

beneficial to use both visual and aural aids (mean score: 2.81, standard deviation: 0.56) while teaching pupils English grammar.

Item 15 inquires as to whether or not English grammar is taught using audiovisual aids in secondary schools. Most respondents (91 out of 100) do not use visual aids when teaching English grammar to secondary school pupils, as indicated by the statement's mean score of 1.42 and standard deviation of 0.56. At the same time, 53 per cent of English teachers in secondary schools report using multimedia resources like videos and audio recordings while teaching pupils about English grammar.

Item 16 asks, "Are you teaching overcrowded classes?" regarding classroom sizes. With a mean score of 2.91 and a standard deviation of 0.38, 142 educators strongly agreed with the statement above.

Item 17 asked, "Do you think overcrowding affects the teaching of English grammar?" in question number 17. The majority of respondents (136) found agreement with the statement above (mean score: 2.83, standard deviation: 0.51).

Item 18 asks, "Are you happy with the grammar in the textbooks?" The statistics show that the vast majority of respondents (106) are pleased, or at least not dissatisfied, with the coverage of grammar in secondary school English textbooks (mean score 2.16, standard deviation 0.51).

As for item 19th, "Do you know the grammatical items to be taught?" Most respondents' (80 out of 100) answers about the grammar themes that should be covered in secondary school were correct (mean score 2.37, standard deviation 0.72).

Item 20 asks, "Do you know the sequence of grammatical items to be taught?" There is a consensus among secondary school English teachers (107) about the ideal sequence for introducing grammar principles to their students. A mean score of 2.58 and a standard

deviation of 0.70 support the aforesaid assertion.

Refer to "Is Grammar Easy to Teach?" for an answer to that question. With a mean score of 1.60 and a standard deviation of 0.84, most respondents (97) think that high school pupils have difficulty with grammar.

To what extent do students in your class want to learn English grammar? That's the question posed in item 22. A majority of respondents (107) believe that secondary school students are not very driven to become proficient in English grammar, as shown by a mean score of 1.3 and a standard deviation of 0.47.

Specifically, "Do you regularly teach grammar?" is the 23rd item. Most respondents (112) believe that they do not routinely teach their students the basics of grammar, with a mean score of 1.34 and a standard deviation of 0.63.

As for item 24, "Do you have full preparation before teaching English grammar?" The mean score for this item was 2.10 (SD = 0.56), indicating that most respondents (101) agree that they do their homework before teaching English grammar to secondary school students.

Concerning Grammar Assessment (item 25), is it Simple to Evaluate? With a mean score of 2.04 and a standard deviation of 0.72, the preceding statement has the support of the vast majority of respondents (68). In contrast, 46% believe grammar evaluation is straightforward.

The subject of whether or not grammar tests are easy to conduct and grade is posed in item 26. The preceding statement was given a mean score of 1.65 and a standard deviation of 0.76 from English teachers, showing that the vast majority (77) of them believe that grammar questions can be difficult to set and correct. However, 46 participants believe that grammar questions are easy to set and correct.

Findings and Conclusions

The study found several challenges associated with teaching English grammar in public secondary schools, which has led to a steady decline in the quality of English instruction in these institutions. The following inferences were made in light of the study's results: According to the results, most English educators have room to improve their pedagogy regarding grammatical concepts. That is because they still need to develop expertise in English studies or the English language itself. The survey found that secondary school English teachers require more books on grammar teaching approaches because they need to prepare to teach the subject. Therefore, public school libraries should stock literature on English pedagogy and grammar instruction for English teachers. English instructors may benefit from reading these works. Based on the results of this research, we know that English teachers are aware of and familiar with many teaching methodologies. However, they tend to favour the grammar-translation approach in the classroom. Teachers of English can achieve more significant results by employing the audio-lingual approach. It is also considered that English teachers have a more severe issue with overcrowded classrooms. As a result of class sizes being too large, English grammar instruction needs to improve.

The vast majority of educators feel that there needs to be more emphasis placed on grammar in secondary school English textbooks. It was also established that native English speakers who teach the language find English grammar difficult. The results of this research support the idea that public secondary schools should place greater emphasis on teaching English grammar. English grammar instruction in secondary schools needs improvement. There are only twenty-four hours in a day. There is consequently no consistent opportunity for them to instruct secondary school students

on English grammar. The study also concludes that English teachers in secondary schools have the attention and training to properly instruct their students in the grammar of the English language.

Recommendations

Results from the study could indicate that secondary school English teachers could benefit significantly from instruction from

expert master trainers. It has been suggested that secondary school English teachers be supplied with literature on English grammar instruction. Lessening the overcrowding in the ninth and tenth grades of secondary schools may also be proposed to educational stakeholders. English teachers at the secondary level may use encouragement to plan and practice their grammar lessons before delivering them to their pupils.

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