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A CASE STUDY OF GRAMMAR LEARNING STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY
ENGLISH FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN LIBYA

MASTER THESIS

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all materials and results that are not original to this study.

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ABSTRACT**A CASE STUDY OF GRAMMAR LEARNING STRATEGIES EMPLOYED
BY ENGLISH FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN LIBYA****Albelazi, Najah****MA Program in English Language Teaching****Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Hanife Bensen****July 2016, 74 pages**

In any learning process, learners face problems and difficulties in learning and understanding the material which is in their hands. These problems and difficulties can affect their overall performance. Learning English grammar represents a big problem for Libyan students. Therefore, students resort to use some strategies to help them understand, learn and use the correct English grammar.

The aim of this study was to investigate the most frequent strategies employed by EFL learners in learning English grammar. The study also examined the difficulties encountered by students in learning EFL grammar. This study addresses three main issues: What are the most and least frequent English grammar strategies Libyan secondary students employ while learning English? Is there a relationship between the gender of the students and the use of English grammar strategies when learning English? What kind of difficulties do Libyan secondary students face while learning English grammar? A quantitative approach was employed to effectively answer the aforementioned research questions. A questionnaire was distributed to gather data from the participants. The outcomes indicated that students employ the affective strategies the most and the compensation strategies the least frequent when learning English grammar. However, there was not a remarkable difference in using all the strategies because the averages were very close to each other. Regarding to the problems and difficulties, most Libyan students encountered difficulties when learning English grammar such as, subject and verb agreement, forming simple tenses and using countable and uncountable nouns.

With respect to gender, female participants applied learning strategies more than males when learning English grammar. This could be traced to social and psychological reasons.

Keywords: Language learning strategies, grammatical rules, foreign language and English foreign language.

ÖZET

LİBYA'DA İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRENCİLER TARAFINDAN UYGULANAN DİL BİLGİSİ ÖĞRETİM YÖNTEMLERİ HAKKINDA VAKA İNCELEMESİ

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Her öğrenme sürecinde, öğrenciler ellerindeki materyalleri anlamında ve öğrenmede sorun ve zorluklarla karşılaşır. Bu sorun ve zorluklar bütün performansı etkileyebilir. Libyalı öğrenciler için İngilizce dil bilgisini öğrenme ve doğru kullanmada yardımcı olacak yöntemlere başvurulur.

Bu çalışmanın amacı İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenenlerin, dil bilgisi öğrenirken en çok başvurdukları yöntemleri araştırmaktır. Çalışmada, ayrıca, öğrencilerin dil bilgisi öğrenirken karşılaştıkları zorlukları incelenmiştir. Çalışma üç ana konuyu ön planda üzerinde duruyor: Libyalı öğrencilerin ortaokulda İngilizce dil bilgisi öğrenirken ne tür zorluklarla karşılaşır? Libyalı öğrencilerin ortaokulda seviyesinde en çok ve en az uyguladıkları yöntemler nelerdir? İngilizce dil bilgisi öğreniminde, öğrencinin cinsiyeti ile yöntem kullanımı arasında bir bağlantı var mı? Nicel yaklaşımın bahsi geçen çalışmada sorularını etkili bir şekilde cevaplandırmaları sağlandı. Katılımcılardan bilgi edinebilmek için anket uygulandı. Sonuçlar öğrencilerin yararlı yöntemlere çok, telafi yöntemlerine ise daha az başvurduklarını göstermiştir. Ancak, ortalamaların birbirine yakınlığından dolayı yöntemlerin kullanımında dikkate değer bir fark yoktu. Sorun ve zorluklara göre, Libyalı çoğu özne-yüklem uyumu, imdiki zaman biçimlendirme ve sayılabilen-sayılamayan isimlerin kullanımı gibi İngilizce dil bilgisi konularını öğrenirken zorluklarla karşılaşır. Cinsiyet konusu ele alındığında ise, kadın katılımcıların, sosyal ve psikolojik sebeplerden ötürü, dil bilgisi öğrenme yöntemlerini erkeklere oranla daha çok uyguladıkları görülmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Dil öğrenme yöntemleri, dil bilgisi kuralları, yabancı dil olarak İngilizce.

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ABBREVIATION

GLS : Grammar learning strategies

LLS : Language learning strategies

LS : Learning strategies

EFL : English as a foreign language

SL : Second language

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This chapter covers an introduction regarding the importance of language learning strategies in general and grammar learning strategies in particular. It sets out the problem statement, the purpose of the study and its significance as well as the research questions that guided the study followed by the limitations of the study.

Background of the Study

Any foreign language necessitates using a number of strategies to learn it, and learners should use those strategies to learn its writing, speaking, listening and reading skills. Although grammar is not one of the language skills namely, listening, speaking, reading and writing, it is very important for learners in learning any language. Grammar helps learners to use the language properly and this appears in their writing and speaking. Therefore, learners should know how to understand grammatical rules of any foreign language they want to learn. To do this, learners make use of some techniques or strategies to overcome the problems they face when learning a foreign language.

There are some studies conducted by Libyan researchers concerning the problems and the difficulties encountered by Libyan students when learning grammatical rules. Elmadwi's (2015) study aimed to investigate and analyze the errors faced by some third year students of Al-Amal Secondary School at English Specialization in the city of Aljmeil, Libya, in using the passive voice in their

English writing. The results of the study showed that the students had some problems and difficulties in understanding and using grammatical rules and these difficulties were "...systematic errors such as interference of the mother tongue, over-generalization, ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete application of rules and false concept hypothesized" (Elmadwi , 2015, p. 32). The aim of the study by Sopin (2015) was to investigate the opinions of intermediate English as Second Language (ESL) students in Libya with regard to the importance of teaching grammar by interviewing students. The results revealed that "...grammar instruction was very important for a person to learn English" (p.71). It also showed that most students believed that grammar errors produced by the students should be corrected by the teacher in the class. Teachers should be aware of the techniques or strategies that their students prefer to employ in learning grammar. Shalbag and Belhaj's (2012) study aimed to shed light on the writing difficulties faced by the fourth level students at the college of education in Alkhoms. The findings of their study showed that grammar was difficult to learn for most students. About 70% of errors in students' writing belonged to grammar. The errors involved subject verb agreement, word order, fragments, tenses and incorrect use of articles (Shalbag & Belhaj, 2012).

Language learning strategies are one of the important factors that help students to learn a foreign language. Students should be encouraged to employ some learning strategies which may help them in learning the second/foreign language. Learning strategies are generally defined as "specific actions, behaviours, steps, or techniques, such as seeking out conversation partners, or giving oneself encouragement to tackle a difficult language task... used by students to enhance their own learning" (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992, p. 63). Rubin (1987), who investigated

learning strategies, defined language learning strategies as “...strategies that contribute to the development of the language system which the learner constructs and (which) affect learning directly” (p. 22).

Learning strategies are divided into two types, direct and indirect strategies according to Oxford's (1990) classification. The former involves cognitive, compensation and memorizing strategies (as cited in Hsiao & Oxford, 2002, p, 369) while the latter includes metacognitive, affective and social strategies. According to Chastain (1988), learning strategies are applied by all students and some of these strategies are successful and some are not. Rivera-Mills and Plonsky (2007) put forth that “the use of learning strategies applied by second language learners is defined by many scholars as the actions and thoughts learners applied intentionally when they are attempting to increase their learning of the second language” (p. 553).

Problem of the Study

Libyan English foreign language learners have difficulties in learning and applying the correct grammatical rules in their writing and when conversing with native speakers. These difficulties affect their performance inside and outside of the classroom. In other words, the students cannot apply what they studied in English classes in real situations. This constitutes a major problem which affects the students who do not know how to apply the appropriate learning strategies specifically when learning English grammar.

Aim of the Study

Taking into consideration the impact of strategies used by learners of EFL on their learning, mostly grammar attracts researchers' attention in their studies because it is an important aspect in learning any foreign language. This study aims to reveal the most and least frequently employed grammar learning strategies by third secondary students. Furthermore, the study considers the impact of grammar learning strategies on the overall performance of the learners and whether there is a significant relationship between the gender of the students and the use of learning strategies in learning English grammar. This study also aims to investigate the difficulties confronted by these learners when learning English grammar.

In order to reach the aim, the following research questions are posed to guide this study:

1. What are the most and least frequent English grammar strategies Libyan secondary students employ while learning English?
2. Is there a relationship between the gender of the students and the use of English grammar strategies when learning English?
3. What kind of difficulties do Libyan secondary students face while learning English grammar?

Significance of the Study

As it is known to many researchers, teaching and learning of any foreign language is not always an interesting experience and this means the process of learning and teaching EFL is not an easy task. This study is expected to contribute to explaining the main issues that Libyan learners face through their process of learning

EFL. Libyan learners have difficulties in learning and applying the correct grammatical rules in their writings and when conversing with native specialized speakers. This study is expected to detect the techniques or learning strategies employed to solve the difficulties confronted by Libyan learners when learning English grammar. In addition, this study will be an attempt to discover and explain the essential role of using appropriate strategies during learning English grammar since the use of learning strategies in the learning process has not been studied in depth in the Libyan EFL context.

Definition of Terms

Language learning strategies: Specific actions, behaviours, steps, or techniques that students (often intentionally) use to improve their progress in developing L2 skills. These strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of the new language. Strategies are tools for the self-directed involvement necessary for developing communicative ability (Oxford, 1992, p. 18).

Grammatical rules: Grammatical rules is defined as a set of structural rules which combine, arrange and change the words to show certain kinds of meaning (Swan, 2005).

Foreign language: A traditional term for the use or study of a language by people in countries where this language is generally not spoken in communication (Nordquist, 2015).

English foreign language: English as taught to people whose main language is not English and who live in a country where English is not the official or main language. (Cambridge University)

Limitations

This study is limited in the sense that it was conducted in only one state school in Alkhoms. This school is the biggest in the city. It is also the only mixed school where females and males are taught in the same classes. The third secondary students are the sample of this study. The whole numbers of participants are 200 students. In this study, a questionnaire was used in order to collect data about grammar learning strategies employed by EFL learners and the difficulties encountered by them when learning grammar by using the specified learning strategies. Therefore, this study is limited in terms of the grammar learning strategies presented in the questionnaire. Other grammar learning strategies may be prevalent.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the background of the study, problem of the study, the aim of the study, the research questions which guided the study, the significance of the study, definition of terms and the limitations of the study were presented. In the next chapter, the relevant literature will be discussed.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter will present the literature related to language learning strategies, grammar learning strategies and gender differences in using learning strategies followed by recent research.

Grammar Learning Strategies

In learning any foreign language, there are many strategies which learners use while learning the target language. Using learning strategies is very important for learners to enhance their learning (Oxford, 1990). Grammar is important for ESL students, because it helps them to express their thoughts and intentions in a correct way accepted by native speakers (Rubin & Thompson, 1994), many researchers like Oxford (1990) defined grammar learning strategies as "...actions and thoughts that learners consciously employ to make language learning and/or language easier, more effective, more efficient and more enjoyable." (p. 1170). For Griffiths (2008), grammar learning strategies are optional means which learners choose and apply to control their learning process.

Classification of Learning Strategies

A lot of researchers have classified learning strategies (O'Malley 1985, Oxford, 1990 & Rubin 1987). When learning English, learners tend to employ learning strategies to learn grammar. This study addresses the six main groups of

language learning strategies classified by Oxford (1990) because they integrate all the groups of other classifications, these strategies are explained as follows:

1. Cognitive strategies: Such strategies make the learners deal with the language content indirectly, for example, causes, analysis, taking notes, summarizing, synthesizing, realizing information (knowledge structure), and applying the language (Oxford, 2003).

2. Metacognitive strategies: They are employed to manage the learning overall process, e.g., identifying one's learning preferences, gathering and recognizing information, observing mistakes and evaluating (Oxford, 1996).

3. Memorizing strategies: These strategies help learners to connect the concepts of L2 but not with complete understanding. Memorizing strategies help the learners to learn by retrieving information by “acronyms”, or creating learning and retrieving through sounds “rhyming”, images, locations and so on. (Oxford, 1990).

4. Compensation strategies: They are also known as “a form of *communication strategies*”. Although some researchers like Cohen (1998) did not classify them as language learning strategies, Oxford (1990) argued that they are applied as learning strategies and are very helpful in language learning. Such strategies help the learners become reconciled for the missing knowledge. For example, guessing from the context.

5. Social strategies: Such strategies help the learners to understand the second language by working with others “group work”, asking questions for fulfillment, for explanation about confusing points, for cooperating in assignments, engaging in dialogues with native speakers and getting social values (Oxford, 1990).

6. Affective strategies: The affective strategies have a very important role for learners to manage the language by three factors: reducing anxiety, encouraging themselves, and by rewarding for performance (Oxford, 1996; Tilfarlio lu & Yalçın, 2005).

The Importance of Employing Learning Strategies

Learning strategies are very important and useful for learners/students in second language acquisition. The importance of using strategies while learning second language grammar includes helping students and learners when achieving their aims to acquire the target language. Many researchers clarified the importance of using different learning strategies in second language acquisition. Cohen (2014) explained that the goal of using learning strategies helped learners to develop students' knowledge and comprehension of the second language. Martinez's study (1996) showed the importance of using learning strategies to learn a foreign language. He also explained in his study the role of teachers to facilitate the learning process by developing students' autonomy. Besides this, it was suggested that textbooks and materials should be designed flexibly. A study conducted by Bade (2008) investigated students' attitude towards grammar learning. The findings showed that students' individual needs affected their attitude about grammar learning. It seemed that students had an obvious goal of the way they wanted to be taught and in what aspect they needed to improve. The study also indicated some strategies which were taught by teachers such as: knowing their mistakes, evaluating feedback from teachers and friends, being active (self-monitoring strategies) and modeling sentences, fitting rules and examples and analyzing structure and meaning (cognitive strategies). Asking students what they prefer in their learning can also

reinforce their overall achievement. Guarta (2008) stated that grammar learning strategies applied by students who believe that grammar is important more than those who think it is not important.

Zare (2012) stated that employment of language learning strategies when learning second /foreign language eases and advance language learning and helps learners. This explains the importance of applying learning strategies in language acquisition.

Gender and Learning Strategies

Most second language students use learning strategies in their learning. These strategies differ from males to females in their use of these strategies. Bacon (1992) stated that there is a relationship between gender and different types of learning strategies. Bacon's study result showed that male and female employed different strategies. Many other researchers discussed the relationship between gender and using learning strategies when learning a second language and this discussion was a part of their studies. Aslan (2009), his study aims were to discover the role of using learning strategies and gender. The outcomes indicated that gender had an important role in strategy preference. The study showed that females used the learning strategies (indirect strategies) more than males. Males and females had a changeable amount of strategy utilization and this explained an important correlation with achievement. Female students were more successful than males and were encouraged positively to keep using of learning strategies. Some individual items of the questionnaire in Aslan's (2009) study indicated that affective strategies were used less by males, especially in "...sharing their feelings". This result showed that male

students should not hide their feelings and thought during the learning process. Therefore, teachers play a significant role which is to encourage male learners to take part in group work (activities) and determine their goals to improve their use of language learning strategies (LLS). In this study, it was also found that females are more successful learners than males. Other studies showed that learning strategies were employed by females more than males (Guarta, 2009; Hong-Nam & Leavell, 2006; Özmen & Güllero lu, 2013).

On the other hand, Tercanlıo lu (2004) found that males have the superiority in applying language learning strategies than females. There are also other findings which detected that males used more strategies than females, and these results proposed that there were no significant differences between males and females on their use of learning strategies (Chang, 1990; Chou, 2002).

Recent Research

The most similar research with respect to the usage of grammar learning strategies is the one that was conducted by Guarta (2008). In Guarta's study, the aim was to investigate the GLS the Turkish students used to learn English grammar and to reveal the difference used by many variables, such as gender, proficiency level and achievement in learning strategies. The data were gathered through a questionnaire regarding grammar learning strategies. The findings from this study indicated that there was a difference in learning strategy use among different proficiency levels. There was a significant difference between males and females in terms of their strategy use. Regarding gender, Guarta (2008) found that females used grammar

learning strategies more than males. Finally, the study showed that using grammar learning strategies was influential in grammar achievement.

Tilfarlıo lu and Yalçın (2005) stated the ways in which some ESL learners face difficulty when learning English grammar rules more efficiently, which strategies they used to learn the English language, whether a particular learning strategy favoured certain strategies or not, if it did, what those strategies were and the relationships between strategy use and learner achievement in grammar learning. In their study, the researchers applied three types of strategies: cognitive, metacognitive and social. The purpose of their study was to investigate the relationship between using grammar learning strategies and students' achievements. In the research, the findings of their study indicated that there was not a high statistically significant difference between the use of grammar learning strategies and student's achievement. Successful learners were aware of the strategies they used and for what they used them. They could use these strategies for the given tasks and for their personal needs as learners while learning a second or foreign language. Some students who were less successful could also identify some of these strategies; however, they did not know how to select the appropriate strategies and how to apply them in a given task.

A more recent study carried out by Briewin, Naidu and Embi (2013) explored the needs analysis of grammar skills of English foreign language learners in a private institution. The objective of the study was to investigate EFL learners' preferences for chosen grammar strategies. The researchers applied sub-categories of strategies in their questionnaire. The learners were given a 4-point Likert scale questionnaire. The two main strategies that good language learners used in learning grammar were the

use of formula and visuals. The results indicated that both applied strategies could give the learners a better understanding and fun way of learning grammar. Thus, these strategies could be further developed into suitable learning materials to cater students' needs and enhance the mastery of their grammar skills.

The purpose of Özmen and Güllero lu's (2013) study was to discover language learning strategies (LLS) applied by students at Faculty of Educational Sciences at Ankara University and their relation with gender, achievement and high school type in English classes. Özmen and Güllero lu applied the classification of language learning strategies progressed by Oxford (1990). The findings of the study revealed that the students employed all language learning strategies at medium level. Memorizing strategies were the most frequent learning strategies used by students and females utilized language learning strategies more than males.

Another study by Hong-Nam and Leavell (2006) investigated the relationship between language learning strategy use and foreign language proficiency. The study concentrated on the varieties in using learning strategies through gender and nationality. The study showed "a curvilinear relationship" between using strategies and English proficiency, explaining that intermediate level students used learning strategies more than beginning and advanced levels. The study indicated that the students preferred to use metacognitive strategies most, whereas they showed the least use of affective and memory strategies. Females tended to use affective and social strategies more frequently than males.

In Pawlak's (2009) study, the objective was to investigate the relationship between using grammar learning strategies by ESL students and target language attainment. The number of participants was 142 English students who took many

practical English classes, with various focuses on grammar, dialogues, writing and other skills. The data were collected by a questionnaire, the grades of the final examination and a survey, which investigated students' opinions about the importance of learning grammar and their favourite ways of studying. The aim of the study was to investigate the three main strategies among the 142 students which are: implicit L2 learning that includes a focus on form, explicit inductive learning and explicit deductive learning. The findings showed that the students avoided the grammatical rules that cause problems with meaning and communication (implicit L2). In terms of explicit inductive and deductive L2 learning, the students themselves discovered new patterns and rules on the basis of the input in explicit inductive learning. For explicit deductive learning, students might preview the lesson to identify the key grammatical rules to be covered, memorizing how structures change their form it. This study failed to get a strong positive relationship between the use of grammar learning strategies and attainment. There is only one positive finding that the explicit deductive learning was linked to students' attainment.

A similar study carried out by Tilfarlıo lu (2005) tried to reveal the relationship between grammar learning strategies used by the English Preparatory School students and their language achievement. The study attempted to discover the relationship between how students selected grammar learning strategies and their achievement in the target language. Some of the findings by Tilfarlıo lu's (2005) indicated that 70.20% of students used learning strategies when learning grammar, there is no significant difference between unsuccessful and successful students in using the grammar leaning strategies. In addition, the study revealed that the use of grammar learning strategies by females is higher than male students.

Aslan's study (2009) investigated the relationship between achievement in English and the use of language learning strategies. The outcomes of his study showed that high achieving students used more language strategies than low achieving students. According to Zare (2012) "The findings have concluded that the employment of language learning strategies facilitated and improved language learning and assisted language learner in different ways" (p. 168).

A study by Hakan, Ayden and Bulent (2015) aimed to limit undergraduates' language learning strategies and correlation with gender. The participants were composed of 120 undergraduates from different departments attending English preparation classes. The independent samples analysis of a t-test was conducted to explain the language learning strategies of undergraduates regarding gender. The findings revealed that there were no significant differences between language learning strategies and gender.

Conclusion

In this chapter, GLS and their classification were presented. A review of the relevant literature was presented concerning recent research, the importance of learning strategies and gender. The chapter intended to bring light into the recent studies related to the current study. In the next chapter, the methodology chapter of the study will be presented.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this chapter, the methodological procedures of the study will be described. Information with regard to the research design, the research context, participants and sampling, instruments employed in data collection, the procedures followed by data analysis will be presented. The way the collected data analysed is discussed concerning the following research questions that guided this study:

1. What are the most and least frequent English grammar strategies Libyan secondary students employ while learning English?
2. Is there a relationship between the gender of the students and the use of grammar strategies when learning English?
3. What kind of difficulties do Libyan secondary students face while learning English grammar?

Research Design

Considering the research questions presented above, it was determined that employing a quantitative approach would effectively answer the posed questions. This study is designed as a case study employing a quantitative approach to research. Since the present study is designed as a case study research, a case study research is defined as an investigation that concentrates on description, understanding, prediction and/or control the individuals (i.e., process, animal, person, household,

organization, group, industry, culture, or nationality) (Woodside, 2010). Woodside's definition is broader than the definition by Yin (2003) who states that:

A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. (P, 13)

According to Punch (2005), a quantitative study is related to the deductive testing of theories and hypotheses. In addition to the above, Collins, Onwuegbuzie and Sutton (2006) revealed that a quantitative study is identified as an appropriate instrument to collect data. In this study, questionnaires were used to collect the data. This design was helpful to identify the most frequent grammar learning strategies applied by Libyan EFL learners. This study also helped to identify the difficulties encountered by these students.

Quantitatively, a questionnaire (see Appendix B) was administrated as a method to collect data from the participants. This design was helpful to identify the most and least frequent grammar learning strategies Libyan EFL learners employed when learning grammar rules and the difficulties encountered by those students. By utilizing a quantitative approach by adopting a questionnaire, it was also possible to reveal whether there was a significant relationship between the gender of the students and the use of learning strategies in learning English grammar.

Context

This study took place at a public secondary school in Alkhoms, Libya where there are no many secondary schools (there are two other schools). This specific school was chosen due to it being the biggest and the only mixed school in the city.

The students of this school also live in this city and all of them are Libyan. This city was also chosen because it is a small city in the north west of Libya. Usually research studies are carried out in big cities where there are more universities and schools which contain many students that make the studies more comfortable. This study was conducted in the city of Alkhoms where no many researches have been carried out.

Participants and Sampling

The participants of the present study were public secondary school students of this public secondary school in Libya. The study included 200 students, 96 of these students were males and 104 were females. Even though 207 questionnaires were distributed to 207 students, only 200 of these students responded. The students participating in this study were all chosen. They had one hour to finish the questionnaire.

Data Collection

As aforementioned, data were collected in a public secondary school in Libya. There are many methods which researchers utilize in their studies to collect data from their participants in order to carry out their studies. The main instruments for data collection are questionnaires, interviews, observation and documents (Denscombe, 2010). In this study, one instrument - a questionnaire for students was used to collect the data from the participants.

In the questionnaire, there were two parts. In the first part, there were questions regarding gender and difficulties encountered by students when learning English grammar. This study addressed such questions, especially about gender,

because there are several differences between genders in Arab countries as habits, customs, social relations and way of thinking.

In the second part, there were 40 items of strategies classified according to the six main strategies suggested by Oxford (1990) (see Appendix A). It was administered to the students' participating in this study and they were asked to respond to the items honestly.

Data collection instruments. In any research, many data collection instruments can be used to evaluate language learners' use of strategies, such as observations, interviews, questionnaire and documents. According to Dörnyei (2002) "Questionnaires are easy to construct, extremely versatile, and uniquely capable of gathering a large amount of information quickly in a form that is readily processable" (cited in Guarta, 2008, p. 33). Moreover, as he indicates, using a questionnaire supplies the researcher with factual, behavioural, and attitudinal data about the sample of the study, which formed the basis of this study. There are many studies such as the studies carried out by Aslan (2010), Ge (2003), Guarta (2008), Özmen and Güllero lu (2013), Pawlak, (2009), and Tilfarlio lu and Yalçın (2005), where questionnaires were applied to gather data from participants. Similar to previous studies, the questionnaire in this study was adopted as an instrument to collect the data from the participants in order to be able to assess the students' utilization of strategies when learning and applying grammatical structures, and to reveal the difficulties encountered by students when learning EFL grammar.

The questionnaire. The questionnaire of this study mainly consisted of two parts. The first part included background information of the participants regarding their gender and the difficulties encountered by Libyan students when learning English grammar and the sorts of these difficulties. The second part of the questionnaire included forty possible strategies that learners use when learning and using grammar structures. A 5-point Likert-scale, ranging from “never” to “always” was used for the items in the second part of the questionnaire. The items of the second part of the questionnaire were classified under the six language learning strategies namely, cognitive, metacognitive, memorizing, compensation, social and affective strategies (see Appendix A) put forth by Oxford (1990). Learning strategies related to grammar were set according to Oxford’s (1990) classification.

Pilot Study

Following the development of the instrument, a pilot study was conducted with 30 prep school students, at a private university in north Cyprus. The participants volunteered to participate in the pilot study during the spring semester of the 2014-2015 academic year. Before preparing the questionnaire for pilot study, the researcher interviewed some students in high schools in Cyprus who were nearly the same age as the participants of this study. This interview contained one question “How do you learn English grammar?”. The purpose of the question was to get more types of strategies through learning English grammar. Then, the questionnaire was written and distributed to the preparatory school students (see Appendix B). After that, the last copy of the questionnaire was prepared and distributed to the main

participants in Libya. The pilot test was a preliminary action before collecting data among secondary school students in Libya. The Cronbach's Alpha for the pilot study was .997 as shown in Table 1. Two answers were added to the questionnaire after the pilot study as extra strategies which the students used in learning grammar. For the main study, the Cronbach's Alpha was .991 as shown in Table 2.

Table 1

Reliability Statistics of the Pilot Study

Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
.997	38

Table 2

Reliability Statistics of the Main Study

Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
.991	40

Data Collection Procedures

The following steps were taken in the process of data collection in this study. In the first step, the permission was taken from the headmaster of the secondary school to employ the questionnaire. Then, the questionnaires were used in collecting data from the participants (students) who were asked to respond to the items honestly. The items were about their use of grammar learning strategies. The questionnaires were administered to the students at the secondary school during the 2015 academic year with the help of their class teachers. The questionnaire took an

average of 60 minutes and it was translated to Arabic and the participants were not asked to write down their names in order to make them respond to the items frankly without worrying about their identities.

Data Analysis

For this study, data which were collected through the questionnaire were subjected to quantitative analyses. Quantitative data provided by the questionnaire were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. Data from the questionnaire were subjected to descriptive statistics such as frequency of occurrence and percentages.

Ethical Considerations

The consent of all participants who took part in this study was taken. It was agreed that they did not have to write down or mention their names at all. The results were taken as the whole group not individually and not be shared with others outside the supervisory team according to the aims and procedures of the study. Written consent of the Head of the school was taken (see Appendix D).

Conclusion

This chapter presented the methodology of this study. Information as regards to the participants, the context of the study, data collection instruments and procedures followed by data analysis were presented. The following chapter will present the findings and discussion chapter of this thesis.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses issues that have the quantitative data collected in order to reach the aim of this study. Information regarding the results of the analysis of data collected during the investigation is presented to answer the research questions posed earlier.

Findings

Regarding the questionnaire, the number of participants who returned the questionnaire were 200 (96 male and 104 female students). The frequency counts and the percentages of the responses to the items were statistically taken. These percentages revealed the most and least Grammar learning strategies (GLS) the EFL participants of this study employed. It was noticed that most students apply learning strategies in learning English grammar. In addition, the differences between percentages were not great and that meant that the participants tried to apply many sub-strategies to understand and form the English grammatical rules.

The most and least frequent employed GLS in EFL. The percentages of responses taken both from male and female students added to a total of 200 responses showed the learning strategies most and least frequent used by students when learning English grammar. Six separated tables are designed to show the strategy items classified under the main strategies (cognitive strategies, social

strategies, metacognitive strategies, memorizing strategies, affective strategies and compensation strategies) suggested by Oxford (1990). The number of answers to each Likert-scale and its percentages are written in the Tables. Table 3 shows the overall total and mean score of the strategies used in the questionnaire:

Table 3

The Overall Mean Percentages of the GLS

All strategies	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Overall Mean %	17.86	16.14	21.76	21.86	22.50

Table 3 states that most students apply GLS. The high averages are with *always*, *usually* and *sometimes* utilized respectively. It can be seen in the Table 3 that most students try to apply learning strategy to understand English grammar and to form correct grammatical structures whatever this strategy is suitable or not. Guarta (2008) also indicated that the useful strategies do not exactly agree with the strategies used most frequently.

With respect to the overall mean for the main strategies, the findings stated that the most frequently employed learning strategies are affective strategies followed by cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies while the least frequently learning strategies employed are compensation strategies followed by memorizing strategies, then social strategies as shown in Table 4. Regarding the items, the most employed GLS was item number 30 “I take private lessons in grammar to manage the rule” with a mean score percentage 80% and standard

deviation 1.13 while the least employed GLS was item number 4”when I am corrected by a teacher, I keep the corrected version of the grammar rule in mind” rule with a mean score percentage 41.8% and standard deviation 1.33.

Table 4

The Overall Mean percentages of Each Strategy

Strategy Category	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Cognitive	17.6	11.3	20.1	21.6	29.8
Social	15.6	16.2	22.8	26.3	19
Metacognitive	20.7	12.9	15.6	24.3	26.5
Affective	11.8	11.8	24	22.2	30.0
Memorizing	20.31	22.25	21.31	17.75	18.38
Compensation	23.13	22.63	28.25	15.75	10.25

Cognitive strategies. Items number (2) “I understand the grammar rules when I use examples from real life situations”, (3) “I write my own examples and show them to my teacher to check” and (10) “I take notes for new grammar rules” which are classified under cognitive strategies have the highest percentages in the questionnaire with 53.5%, 46.5%, and 44% respectively. These averages constituted the highest averages and this means that cognitive strategies are employed a lot by the secondary Libyan students in learning grammatical rules with varying degrees as shown in Table 5. Although some cognitive strategies items have the highest averages in using learning strategies, there are some item which are never used by some students; these items are (1) “When the teacher gives me a

structure; I try to analyze it to understand” and (7) “I practice newly-learned grammar structures in speaking”. This is parallel with Martinz’s (1995) who indicated in his study that cognitive strategies were the most applied among secondary students.

Table 5

Cognitive Strategies Used by Libyan Secondary Students

Cognitive strategies	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Mean	SD
1. When the teacher gives me a structure; I try to analyze it to understand.	40.5%	6%	18%	20.5%	15%	52%	1.53
2. I understand the grammar rules when I use examples from real life situations.	11%	8.5%	9.5%	17.5%	53.5%	79.8%	1.41
3. I write my own examples and show them to my teacher to check.	7.5%	6%	25%	15%	46.5%	77%	1.27
7. I practice newly-learned grammar structures in speaking.	41%	16.5%	23%	10%	9.5%	46%	1.34
9. I classify the learned grammar structure under a similar group like verbs or tenses.	10%	8%	21.5%	32.5%	28%	72%	1.25
10. I take notes for new grammar rules.	7.5%	6%	15%	27.5%	44%	79.8%	1.18
14. I analyze the new rule in order to learn how to use it.	9%	18.5%	26.5%	23%	28%	66.8%	1.26
34. I understand English grammar rules better when I compare them with my native language grammar.	14.5%	21.5%	22.5%	27.5%	14%	61%	1.28

Social strategies. For the items (17) “If I don’t understand a rule, I ask my friend to explain it to me”, (20) “I learn the grammar rules better by studying with my friends”, (21) “I attend all the grammar classes to be good at grammar” , (22) “When I don’t understand the rule, I ask my teacher to repeat it” which are classified under social strategies, 38.5%, 35%, 32.5% and 35% of students usually use the social strategies while some social strategies with high averages,

items 6. “I focus on grammatical rules when listening to English professionals” and 19. “I understand grammar rules better by playing grammar games”) are never or seldom used by the majority students’ percentages as shown in Table 6. As it can be seen, social strategies were not employed a lot among the students and this is in line with Tilfarlıo lu and Yalçın (2005) who found an insignificant difference between the use of social strategies and performance.

Table 6

Social Strategies Used by Libyan Secondary Students

Social strategies	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Mean	SD
6. I focus on grammatical rules when listening to English professionals.	27.5%	35%	7.5%	18%	12%	50%	1.37
17. If I don't understand a rule, I ask my friend to explain it to me.	10%	16.5%	23%	38.5%	12%	65%	1.17
19. I understand grammar rules better by playing grammar games.	31.5%	27.5%	19.5%	9%	12.5%	48.8%	1.34
20. I learn the grammar rules better by studying with my friends.	5%	7.5%	26.5%	35%	26%	74%	1.09
21. I attend all the grammar classes to be good at grammar.	11%	6.5%	23%	32.5%	27%	71.6%	1.25
22. When I don't understand the rule, I ask my teacher to repeat it.	4.5%	11.5%	33%	35%	16%	69%	1.03
23. When I talk with English professionals, I ask them to correct my grammar mistakes.	16.5%	17%	22.5%	19.5%	24.5%	63.8%	1.40
27. Discussing grammar lessons in class make me understand grammar better.	22%	11%	17.5%	28%	21.5%	63%	1.45
33. I pay attention to grammar structures English professionals use when I listen to them.	10%	16%	23%	29%	22%	67%	1.26
36. I try to use the newly-learned rule in speaking with someone who is good at English.	18%	14%	32.5%	19%	16.5%	60%	1.31

Metacognitive strategies. The items (13) “When the teacher gives the grammar rule; I can use it to produce my own examples” with a percentage of 42.5% and (12) “When the rule is explained in my native language, I understand it better” and (40) “I use translation to understand grammar” with percentages of 37% and 28% are the most frequent metacognitive strategies the students always use in learning English grammar. Although there are some items which are never and seldom used by the students, students try to apply the most traditional strategies as shown in Table 7. The translating teaching method and giving their own examples are the most strategies preferred by the students as metacognitive strategies. This finding is similar to Hong-Nam and Leveal’s (2006) who found metacognitive strategies the most applied by the students.

Table 7

Metacognitive Strategies Used by Libyan Secondary Students

Metacognitive strategies	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Mean	SD
8. I use newly learned grammar structures in writing to learn grammar.	33.5%	22%	6%	31.5%	7%	51%	1.40
11. I draw charts for the tenses as I learn.	32%	12.5%	20%	17.5%	18%	55%	1.50
12. When the rule is explained in my native language, I understand it better.	12.5%	15%	9%	26.5%	37%	72%	1.42
13. When the teacher gives the grammar rule; I can use it to produce my own examples.	9%	6%	12.5%	30%	42.5%	78%	1.26
40. I use translation to understand grammar.	16.5%	9%	30.5%	16%	28%	66%	1.39

Affective strategies. With regard to the most frequent affective strategies, item (30) “I take private lessons in grammar to manage the rules”, 48% of the participants With regard to the most frequent strategies always use this affective strategy and this percentage is the highest in affective strategies items. About 31% and 31.5% of students always apply affective strategies in items (25) and (31). 33% in item (25) “When I do not understand the grammar rules, I use a grammar book which explains rules in simple English” is *sometimes* used by the participants as seen in Table 8. In affective strategies, most items received high averages with *sometimes*, *usually* and *always*. This is dissimilar to Razi’s (2012) study who stated in his study that affective strategies are employed the least.

Table 8

Affective Strategies Used by Libyan Secondary Students

Affective strategies	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Mean	SD
24. I use concordance software to learn how grammar works.	20.5%	19%	19%	21%	20.5%	60%	1.43
25. When I do not understand the grammar rules, use a grammar book which explains rules in simple English.	10%	4.5%	33%	21.5%	31%	71.8%	1.24
30. I take private lessons in grammar to manage the rules.	2%	11%	17.5%	21.5%	48%	80%	1.13
31. I force myself to use the new rule I learned even if I use it incorrectly.	7.5%	11.5%	23%	26.5%	31.5%	72.6%	1.24
39. I use the Internet to learn grammar.	19%	13%	27.5%	20.5%	20%	62%	1.37

Memorizing strategies. Items number (35) “Revisions of grammar rules by the teacher make the grammar rules fixed in my mind” and (38) “The more examples of grammar rules the teacher gives, the better I understand

them”, which have the highest percentages of memorizing strategies 35% and 32.5% respectively, are always applied by students, although there are some items with high percentages that are never or seldom tried, Items 4. “When I am corrected by a teacher; I keep the corrected version of the grammar rule in mind” and 15. “I connect a newly-learned rule with my previous knowledge” as shown in Table 9. This finding is not in parallel with Özmen and Güllero lu (2013) who found that memorizing strategies were the most applied by students in their study.

Table 9

Memorizing Strategies Used by Libyan Secondary Students

Memorizing strategies	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Mean	SD
4. When I am corrected by a teacher; I keep the corrected version of the grammar rule in mind.	45.5%	30%	5%	9.5%	10%	41.8%	1.33
15. I connect a newly-learned rule with my previous knowledge.	12.5%	33%	28%	15%	11.5%	56%	1.18
26. I revise grammar lessons at home regularly to memorize them.	18%	11%	23.5%	27.5%	20%	63.8%	1.35
28. I write down grammar rules to memorize them later.	28%	22.5%	19%	13%	17.5%	51.8%	1.36
29. When I underline new structures while reading, I memorize the rule better.	23%	26.5%	33%	16%	1.5%	49%	1.06
32. Drawing charts for the English tenses makes me understand them better.	14%	23.5%	24.5%	19%	19%	61%	1.32
35. Revisions of grammar rules by the teacher make the grammar rules fixed in my mind.	4%	15.5%	25%	20.5%	35%	73%	1.21
38. The more examples of grammar rules the teacher gives, the better I understand them.	17.5%	16%	12.5%	21.5%	32.5%	67%	1.50

Compensation strategies. Regarding compensation strategies, students did not apply them a lot in their grammar learning. The highest percentages of some items (16) “When I see a new grammar rule, I use context to understand it”,

(18) “Listening to news helps me understand grammar rules better” are sometimes or seldom utilized by students as seen in Table 10. It can be concluded that compensation strategies were the least applied among the students and this is dissimilar with Alpetkin (2007) who found that compensation strategies were the most frequently applied by the students. However, Cohen (1998) did not classify them as language learning strategies.

Table 10

Compensation Strategies Used by Libyan Secondary Students

Compensation strategies	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Mean	SD
5. I focus on grammar rules while reading.	36.5%	32.5%	14%	8.5%	8.5%	44%	1.25
16. When I see a new grammar rule, I use context to understand it.	11.5%	8%	37.5%	24%	19%	71%	1.84
18. Listening to news helps me understand grammar rules better.	23%	17.5%	37.5%	19%	3%	52%	1.12
37. When I read texts containing newly-learned grammar structures, I understand them better	21.5%	32.5%	24%	11.5%	10.5%	51%	1.24

From the previous tables, it is noticed that all students used grammar learning strategies to some extent. Although all the percentages were approximate, affective strategies were employed the most with the highest average. Although there were some items which received low average with *never* (item 30) and *seldom* (items 25). The hierarchical order of the employment of grammar learning strategies according to the main classification of learning strategies suggested by Oxford (1990) are as follows: Affective strategies, cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, social strategies, memorizing strategies followed by compensation strategies. As can be

seen, the least grammar learning strategies applied by the secondary students were compensation strategies followed by memorizing strategies. Dissimilar to this finding, Martinez (1995), Quarta (2008), and Hakan et al. (2015) revealed that students did not apply cognitive strategies more than the other strategies. This study is not in parallel with the study of Hong-Nam and Leavil (2006) who found that the students in their study preferred to apply metacognitive strategies the most and affective and memorizing strategies the least, whereas Özmen and Güllero lu (2013) stated that memorizing strategies were the most frequently used by students.

The relationship between gender and using GLS. The current study aimed to show the relationship between gender and using grammar learning strategies (GLS) through collecting and analyzing the data from female and male participants separately. The data were analysed by using SPSS (version 20). Table 8 presents the mean scores of the overall number of strategies that males and females applied when learning grammar. The mean scores are presented in Table 11. The analysis of the t-test showed that female students used GLS more than male students and this is in line with other researchers (Aslan, 2013; Guarta, 2008; Hong-Nam & Leavell, 2006; Özmen & Güllero lu, 2013) who also found that females applied learning strategies more than males. The learning process seems to differ from males to females. Wehrwien, Lujan and Dicarolo (2006) asserted in their study that there were differences between males and females in learning a foreign language. A more recent study in which the learning process differs from males to females was Hodgin's (2015) which revealed that females are inductive while males are deductive in their conceptualization. Females tend to produce more words than males. Even in group

work activities, females move around while males work silently. On the other hand, the studies conducted by Chang (1990), Chou (2002), and Tercanlio lu (2004) stated that males were superior at using learning strategies to females. They also saw that males used more strategies than females, and these results proposed that there were no significant differences between males and females on their use of learning strategies.

Table 11

Means of the Total Number of the LS Used by the Genders

	Student Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
All Q	Male	96	20.58	52.11	5.31
	Female	104	31.19	45.48	4.46

Table 12

Independent Sample Test

All Q	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means					
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	2.598	.109	-1.53	198	.126	-10.60	6.90	-24.22	3.00
Equal variances not assumed			-1.52	189.27	.128	-10.60	6.94	-24.30	3.08

The most and least frequent employed GLS in learning English by female and male students. The current study also investigated the most and least frequent employed learning strategies when learning English grammar by females and males separately (see Table 12).

Females. The results indicated that the affective strategies are the most learning strategies used by females when learning English grammar, followed by cognitive and metacognitive strategies whereas the least employed strategies are compensation strategies, then memorizing strategies followed by social strategies. This finding is parallel with Hong-Nam and Leavell (2006) who stated in their study that females applied affective strategies more than other strategies. At the same time, it is not in line with the study of Özmen and Güllero lu's (2013) who stated that the most learning strategies (LS) used by females were memorizing strategies which are the least applied by females in the current study. Guarta (2008) also supported this finding that females used metacognitive strategies and affective strategies more than the other strategies. Aslan (2009) saw that the differences of findings in terms of the preference of strategies could be traced to some factors involving the social background of the learners and educational factors such as: learning styles, beliefs and habits of the learners.

Table 13

The Most and Least Frequent LS Applied by Female Students

Strategy Category			Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always	%Percentages Yes	%Percentages No
Cognitive	Mean	17.1	9.3	19.4	22.1	32.2	82.9%	17.1%	
Social	Mean	12.8	14.2	24.4	29.2	19.4	88.2%	12.8%	
Metacognitive	Mean	19.6	9.3	18.3	26.9	25.9	80.4%	19.6%	
Affective	Mean	8.3	5.4	23.3	24.6	38.5	91.7%	8.3%	
Memorizing	Mean	16.7	21.2	22.2	17.4	22.5	83.3%	16.7%	
Compensation	Mean	17.8	22.6	31.5	15.4	12.7	82.2%	17.8%	

Males. With regard to male students, the most learning strategies utilized when learning English grammar was cognitive strategies followed by metacognitive strategies then, affective strategies whereas the least learning strategies employed were compensation strategies, memorizing strategies and social strategies respectively. Aslan (2009) supported this result that male students used social strategies less than the other strategies. The finding of Wharton's study (2000) revealed that learning strategies were employed by males more than females. Chang (1990) and Chou (2002) also found the same findings but not in detail. The following Table 14 explains the male employment of learning strategies.

Table 14

The Most and Least Frequent LS Applied by Male Students

Strategy Category		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Usually	Always	%Percentages Yes	%Percentages No
Cognitive	Mean	17.8	13.7	19.7	21.2	27.6	82.2%	17.8%
Social	Mean	18.6	18.4	21.1	23.3	18.5	81.4%	18.6%
Metacognitive	Mean	21.9	16.9	12.7	21.5	27.1	78.1%	21.9%
Affective	Mean	15.6	18.8	22.7	19.6	23.3	84.4%	15.6%
Memorizing	Mean	24.1	23.4	20.3	18.1	13.9	75.9%	24.1%
Compensation	Mean	28.9	22.7	24.7	16.2	7.6	71.1%	28.9%

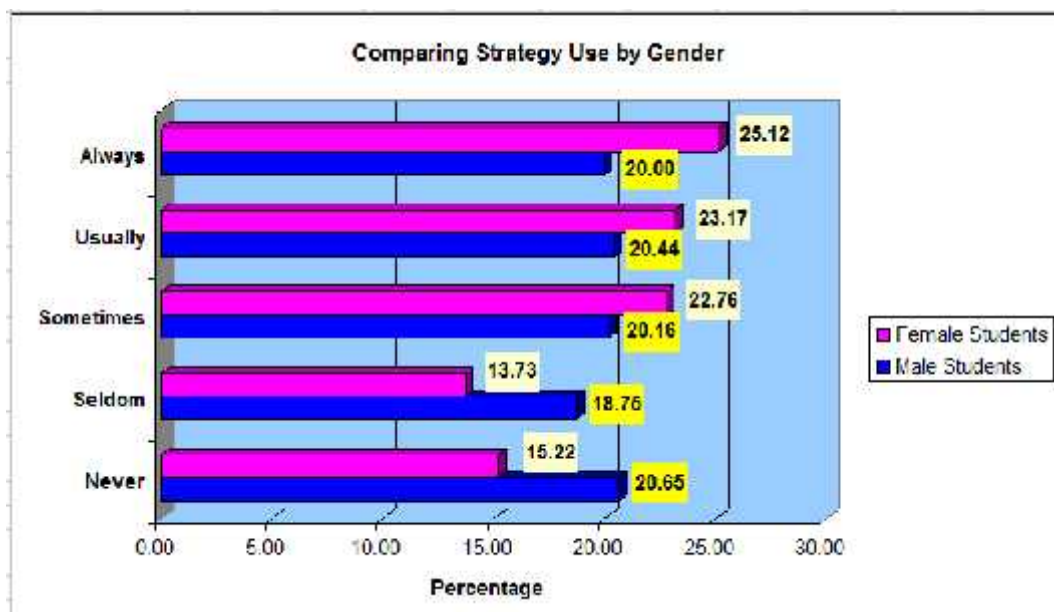


Figure 1. Comparing the Strategy Use by Gender.

Difficulties students face whilst learning English grammar. From the first part of the questionnaire, it can be seen whether students encounter difficulties and problems in learning grammatically correct sentences. For the question “Do you face difficulties or problems in using grammatical rules in your classes?”, About 173 Libyan students out of 200 students have difficulties when learning English grammar. Regarding the question “What difficulties do you encounter when learning English grammar?” Most students had difficulties when forming simple tenses such as past tense which is one of the basic rules in English grammar and they believed they make many mistakes in their writing in the examinations such as, learning of the verb to be, subject verb agreement and countable and uncountable nouns, and they also have difficulties in their speaking with native or specialized speakers. These difficulties might be traced back to first language interference and negative translation. This result is parallel with previous research (Almadwi, 2015; Shalbag & Belahaj, 2012; Sopin, 2015). As learning a foreign language aims to understand the language frankly, Heydari (2015) also stated that the objective of the language learning process is to make students able to communicate in the target language.

Conclusion

In this chapter, data obtained through the questionnaire was analysed statistically. Through the questionnaire, the most and least frequent strategies applied by the students are shown while the difficulties encountered by students were found through the first part of the questionnaire. The following chapter will present the conclusion of the data analysis, practical implications for education and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This study attempted to explore the grammar learning strategies employed by secondary EFL students. It also considered finding out the difficulties encountered by those students in learning English grammar. In this chapter, the study will be concluded by giving a summary of the findings, practical implications for education and recommendations for further research.

Conclusions

As stated earlier, this study employed the language learning strategies suggested by Oxford (1990). Oxford (1990) stated that there are six language learning strategies namely, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, memorizing strategies, metacognitive strategies, social strategies, and affective strategies.

After collecting data through the questionnaire and analysing them, the outcomes of this study revealed that the most frequent employed learning strategies when learning English grammar were affective strategies followed by cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies while the least frequent employed learning strategies when learning English grammar were compensation strategies followed by memorizing strategies, then social strategies. The study also found that the third year EFL students used different learning strategies when learning English grammar at varying degrees of frequency. The study revealed that Libyan EFL students used a variety of strategies when learning and using grammar structures. That is to say that

the students employed the most suitable methods for them which were helpful to understand and learn English grammar well. It could be seen from the questionnaire's results that the students applied some items more than others.

The findings of this study indicated that the most learning strategies employed by Libyan students when learning English grammar were affective strategies while the least learning strategies employed when learning English grammar were compensation strategies. This finding is not in line with Hong-Nam and Leavil (2006) who found that the students preferred to apply metacognitive strategies the most and, affective strategies and memorizing strategies the least while Cohen (1998) suggested that compensation strategies were not classified as learning strategies which were the least employed by secondary students.

Regarding gender differences, the current research stated that there was a difference between male and female students in using grammar learning strategies (GLS) when learning English grammar. This study revealed that females applied more learning strategies when learning English grammar than males. This was also apparent in the studies of Aslan (2010) and Quarta (2008). Although male and female students studied in the same classes with the same teachers, teaching methodology and learning environment, they used different GLS.

With respect to females, the most learning strategies when learning English grammar applied were the affective strategies while they employed compensation strategies the least. For males, the most learning strategies when learning English grammar applied were cognitive strategies while they employed compensation strategies the least.

Regarding difficulties, this study revealed that most students faced difficulties when learning English grammar. These difficulties and problems could be traced back to the first language interference (interlingual cause) and negative translation (intralingual cause) as a result of the students' surroundings.

Practical Implications for Education

Language learning strategies (LLS) “make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations” (Oxford, 1990, p. 8). Although students are not aware of their use of LLS, they apply many types of strategies subconsciously when learning a foreign language. Therefore, teachers have a major role in motivating their students to use LLS.

The results of the current study suggest many implications for the learning and teaching processes. This study indicates that using LLS has a crucial role in learning a foreign language. Students should be aware of the strategies used in the learning process because those strategies will facilitate learning and help students to manage the way of their learning and become independent learners and will foster their motivation (Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary & Robbins, 1999). The study also indicated some difficulties which Libyan students face in learning second language grammar like; forming simple tenses, learning of the verb to be, subject verb agreement and countable and uncountable nouns. In this case, teachers should help their students to overcome these problems by selecting a suitable teaching method, preparing well for each lesson, and by selecting activities of students' interests.

Being aware of the strategies is very important for students to choose what they like to apply and overcome the difficulties faced in EFL grammar learning.

It should also provide teachers with good preplans in their teaching by varying the activities used inside the classroom and giving suitable tasks which will achieve the objectives of every lesson.

The results of this study should be shared with some governmental associations who are in charge of managing learning and teaching in the country (ministry of education). This will help in improving and developing the learning and teaching curriculum.

Recommendations for Further Research

The current study gave answers related to learning strategies when learning English grammar, gender, difficulties encountered by students in learning English grammar and some activities suggested by teachers in learning English grammatical rules. However, further research is needed to understand the relationship between the use of learning strategies, proficiency levels and achievement at the state and private schools in the Libyan context.

First, this study was conducted at a state school. It researched on subjects that were at the same proficiency level. Possible research can be carried out at a private school on participants with different English proficiency levels and a comparison could be made between them.

Second, further research should include different ages of the same level and compare age groups in terms of the findings of the current study.

Moreover, there are some factors which make a difference between genders such as: individuals, motivation, social background and attitude, should be embedded in a further study.

Conclusion

The present study investigated the grammar learning strategies employed by secondary students when learning English grammar. The findings and recommendations are targeting to achieve better learning and teaching inside the EFL classrooms in Libya. It is hoped that by understanding students' interests, teachers will develop better lesson plans for better teaching and learning. This chapter presented the conclusions and recommendations of this study.

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APPENDIX A

Pilot Study Students' Questionnaire

NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE ABOUT GRAMMAR LEARNING STRATEGIES

Dear Student,

The following questionnaire is designed to collect your opinion about the learning strategies you use in learning English grammar. Please mark the appropriate option for each item sincerely. The results of this questionnaire will be used for research purposes only and will not be shared or publicized. Thank you for your participation in this research study.

Najah Albelazi

Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Hanife Bensen

MA Student

Department of ELT

E-mail:najah.abdallah84s@gmail.com

E-mail:Hanife_bensen@neu.edu.tr

Part I. Personal information

Please mark the appropriate option with (x) or complete by filling in information.

1. Gender: Male ()

Female ()

2. Your age: _____

3. How long have you been learning English? _____

4. Your school:

5- Do you face difficulties when learning English grammar?

Yes () No ()

6- What difficulties do you encounter when learning English grammar?

.....

.....

Part II. Strategies used in learning grammar

Please choose the best option and mark it with (x).	never	seldom	sometimes	usually	Always
1. When the teacher gives me a structure, I try to analyze it to understand.					
2. I understand the grammar rules when I use examples from real life situations.					
3. I write my own examples and show them to my teacher to check.					
4. When I am corrected by a teacher, I keep the corrected version of the grammar rule in mind.					
5. I focus on grammar rules while reading.					
6. I focus on grammar rules while listening to English professionals.					
7. I practice newly-learned grammar structures in speaking.					
8. I use newly-learned grammar structures in writing to learn grammar.					
9. I classify the learned grammar structure under a similar group like verbs or tenses.					
10. I take notes for new grammar rules.					

11. I draw charts for the tenses as I learn.					
12. When the rule is explained in my native language, I understand it better.					
13. When the teacher gives the grammar rule, I can use it to produce my own examples.					
14. I analyze the new rule in order to learn how to use it.					
15. I connect a newly-learned rule with my previous knowledge.					
16. When I see a new grammar rule, I use context to understand it.					
17. If I don't understand a rule, I ask my friend to explain it to me.					
18. Listening to news helps me understand grammar rules better.					
19. I understand grammar rules better by playing grammar games.					
20. I learn the grammar rules better by studying with my friends.					
21. I attend all the grammar classes to be good at grammar.					
22. When I don't understand the rule, I ask my teacher to repeat it.					
23. When I talk with English professionals, I ask them to correct my grammar mistakes.					
24. I use concordance software to learn how grammar works.					
25. When I do not understand the grammar rules, I use a grammar book which explains rules in simple English.					
26. I revise grammar lessons at home regularly to memorize them.					
27. Discussing grammar lessons in class makes me understand grammar better.					
28. I write down grammar rules to memorize them later.					
29. When I underline new structures while reading, I memorize the rule better.					
30. I take private lessons in grammar to manage the rules.					
31. I force myself to use the new rule I learned even if I use it incorrectly.					
32. Drawing charts for the English tenses makes me understand them better.					
33. I pay attention to grammar structures English professionals use when I listen to them.					

34. I understand English grammar rules better when I compare them with my native language grammar.					
35. Revisions of grammar rules by the teacher makes the grammar rules fixed in my mind.					
36. I try to use the newly-learned rule in speaking with someone who is good at English.					
37. When I read texts containing newly-learned grammar structures, I understand them better.					
38. The more examples of grammar rules the teacher gives, the better I understand them.					

Do you use any other strategy to learn grammar? Write in the box.

Thanks for participation

APPENDIX B

Thesis Questionnaire

NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

**STUDENT QUESTIONNARE ABOUT GRAMMAR LEARNING
STRATEGIES**

Dear Student,

The following questionnaire is designed to collect your opinion about the learning strategies you use in learning English grammar. Please mark the appropriate option for each item sincerely. The results of this questionnaire will be used for research purposes only and will not be shared or publicized.

Thank you for your participation in this research study.

Najah Albelazi

Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Hanife Bensen

MA Student

Department of ELT

E-mail:najah.abdallah84s@gmail.com E-mail:hanife.bensen@neu.edu.tr

Part I. Personal information

Please mark the appropriate option with (x) or complete by filling in information.

1. Gender: Male () Female ()
2. Your age: _____
3. How long have you been learning English? _____
4. Your school: _____

Part II. Strategies used in learning grammar

Please choose the best option and mark it with (x).	never	seldom	sometimes	usually	Always
1. When the teacher gives me a structure, I try to analyze it to understand.					
2. I understand the grammar rules when I use examples from real life situations.					
3. I write my own examples and show them to my teacher to check.					
4. When I am corrected by a teacher, I keep the corrected version of the grammar rule in mind.					
5. I focus on grammar rules while reading.					
6. I focus on grammar rules while listening to English professionals.					
7. I practice newly-learned grammar structures in speaking.					
8. I use newly-learned grammar structures in writing to learn grammar.					

9. I classify the learned grammar structure under a similar group like verbs or tenses.					
10. I take notes for new grammar rules.					
11. I draw charts for the tenses as I learn.					
12. When the rule is explained in my native language, I understand it better.					
13. When the teacher gives the grammar rule, I can use it to produce my own examples.					
14. I analyze the new rule in order to learn how to use it.					
15. I connect a newly-learned rule with my previous knowledge.					
16. When I see a new grammar rule, I use context to understand it.					
17. If I don't understand a rule, I ask my friend to explain it to me.					
18. Listening to news helps me understand grammar rules better.					
19. I understand grammar rules better by playing grammar games.					
20. I learn the grammar rules better by studying with my friends.					
21. I attend all the grammar classes to be good at grammar.					
22. When I don't understand the rule, I ask my teacher to repeat it.					
23. When I talk with English professionals, I ask them to correct my grammar mistakes.					
24. I use concordance software to learn how grammar works.					
25. When I do not understand the grammar rules, I use a grammar book which explains rules in simple English.					
26. I revise grammar lessons at home regularly to memorize					

them.					
27. Discussing grammar lessons in class makes me understand grammar better.					
28. I write down grammar rules to memorize them later.					
29. When I underline new structures while reading, I memorize the rule better.					
30. I take private lessons in grammar to manage the rules.					
31. I force myself to use the new rule I learned even if I use it incorrectly.					
32. Drawing charts for the English tenses makes me understand them better.					
33. I pay attention to grammar structures English professionals use when I listen to them.					
34. I understand English grammar rules better when I compare them with my native language grammar.					
35. Revisions of grammar rules by the teacher makes the grammar rules fixed in my mind.					
36. I try to use the newly-learned rule in speaking with someone who is good at English.					
37. When I read texts containing newly-learned grammar structures, I understand them better.					
38. The more examples of grammar rules the teacher gives, the better I understand them.					
39. I use the internet to learn grammar rules.					
40. I use translation to understand grammar.					

Thanks for participation

APPENDIX C
Arabic Translation of Students' Questionnaire

كلية التربية -
تدريس الإنجليزية
استراتيجيات

الانجليزية
الانجليزية

استبيان

عزيزي الاستبيان | : رأيك إستراتيجيات تستخدمها الإنجليزية .
الخيار (x) مصادقية . الإستهيان لأهداف
بحثة . الخيار
هذه البحثية
علبا
حنيفة .

شخصية :
الخيار (x) البيانات :
-1 () : () .
-2 :
-3 الانجليزية؟
-4 :
-5 هل تواجه النحوية الإنجليزية؟
-6 ماهي هذه

الإنجليزية

الإستراتيجيات:

	احيانا			الخيار (×)
				1- يعطينا , تحليلها أفهمها
				2- أفهم الحياة الحقيقية
				3- أريها يصححها.
				4- يصحلي , صححه ظهر غي .
				5-
				6- لمتخصصين الإنجليزية الجديدة
				7- الجديدة
				8- الجديدة أتعلمه
				9- متشابهة
				10- الجديدة أتعلمها
				11- أتعلمها
				12- يتم العربية , أفهمها
				13- يعطي نحوية , أستطيع كوين
				14- الجديدة كيف أستعملها
				15- الجديدة
				16- جديدة , التعبيرية لفهمها
				17- أفهم صديقي لتوضيحها
				18- يساعدني فهم
				19- أفهم التعليمية
				20-
				21-
				22- أفهم , شرحها
				23- مختصين , أسألهم يصححوا النحوية
				24- كيفية النحوية
				25- أفهم النحوية ,

					لفهمها
					-26 لأتذكرها
					-27 يجعلني أفهمها
					-28 النحوية لأتذكرها
					-29 الجديدة
					-30
					-31 الجديدة إستخدمتها
					-32 يجعلني أفهمها
					-33 أنتبه للقواعد النحوية يستخدمها المختصين إليهم
					-34 أفهم مقارنتها
					-35 النحوية ذهني
					-36 الجديدة الإنجليزية حيد
					-37 الجديدة, أفهمها
					-38 يعطي نحوية , أفهم
					-39
					-40 لفهم

المشاركة

State of Libya
Sedi Emhemmed Ben Ibrahim School

Permission to conduct research study.

Mr/Ms: *Ali Ben Omat*

Headmaster of Sedi Emhemmed Ben Ibrahim Secondary School

I am Najah Abdullah Albelazi, a master student at Near East University. I am writing to request permission to conduct a research instrument at Sedi Emhemmed Ben Ibrahim Secondary School, to examine secondary EFL students' employment of grammar learning strategies when learning grammatical rules, in order to complete my MA degree at English Language Teaching department.

The submit of the questionnaire should take no longer than 60 minutes and done on the available convenience, if approval is granted. The result of this study will remain decidedly confidential and to be used on the research purpose only.

Your approval to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you in advance for your corporation.

Researcher,

Najah Abdullah Albelazi.

Department of English Language Teaching,

Near East University.

Approved by:

Mr/Ms: *Ali Ben Omat*

Signature.....

Date: *6-6-2016*

Headmaster of Sidi Emhemmed Ben Ibrahim Secondary School.



Participant Informed Consent Form

My name is Najah Albelazi. I am an M.A. student at Near East University, English Language Teaching Department. I would like to ask for your participation in my research which focuses on grammar learning strategies employed when learning English grammar. I would like to conduct a questionnaire, which may last about 60 minutes. Names and any identifiable information will not be used when the results of this study are presented or published. You will not be subject to any judgment due to your answers. Please remember that your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You are free to participate or refuse to do so at any time. If you have any questions about the study you can contact me through this e-mail address: Najah.abdallah84s@gmail.com

I have read the information provided by the researcher and my questions have been answered satisfactorily. I agree to voluntarily take part in this study.

Participant's Name

Participant's Signature

Date _____

