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Breaking the Grammar Barriers: A Descriptive Study of Indonesian EFL Learners' Voices

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Abstract

Grammar plays a fundamental role in language learning, yet many students encounter challenges that hinder their mastery. These challenges can be categorized into cognitive, emotional, and instructional barriers, which impact learners' ability to engage with grammar effectively. This study investigates the dominant elements within these barriers and explores Indonesian university students' perceptions of grammar learning. Employing a quantitative descriptive design, this study used a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire of 28 items divided into four sections. The participants were 300 randomly selected university students majoring in English Education in Indonesia. The data were analyzed statistically using descriptive statistics, particularly mean scores, to determine trends and dominant elements. The findings revealed that in the cognitive barrier, the most dominant difficulties were applying grammar rules under pressure and needing more time to understand concepts. In the emotional barrier, the highest scores were related to anxiety when speaking and the belief that emotions affected learning. Regarding instructional barriers, students felt they needed more real-life practice and interactive, contextual lessons. Furthermore, the perception data indicated a generally positive attitude toward grammar learning, highlighting its importance and relevance. The study implies that teachers should address all dimensions to enhance grammar instruction and student success, aligning with the language and pedagogical innovation thrust and contributing to Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education).

Keywords: grammar, barrier, cognitive, emotional, instructional

Abstrak

Tata bahasa (*grammar*) memegang peran penting dalam pembelajaran bahasa, namun banyak peserta didik (mahasiswa) menghadapi berbagai tantangan yang menghambat penguasaannya. Tantangan-tantangan ini dapat dikategorikan ke dalam hambatan kognitif, emosional, dan instruksional, yang semuanya memengaruhi kemampuan mereka dalam memahami dan menggunakan *grammar* secara efektif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki elemen-elemen dominan dari ketiga hambatan tersebut serta mengeksplorasi persepsi mahasiswa Indonesia terhadap pembelajaran *grammar*. Dengan menggunakan desain penelitian deskriptif kuantitatif, penelitian ini melibatkan kuesioner berskala Likert lima poin yang terdiri dari 28 butir dan dibagi ke dalam empat bagian. Partisipan penelitian ini adalah 300 mahasiswa program studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Indonesia yang dipilih secara acak. Data dianalisis secara statistik dengan menggunakan statistik deskriptif, khususnya skor rata-rata, untuk mengidentifikasi tren dan elemen yang paling dominan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dalam hambatan kognitif, kesulitan utama terletak pada penerapan aturan *grammar* di bawah tekanan serta kebutuhan waktu lebih lama untuk memahami konsep. Dalam hambatan emosional, skor tertinggi berkaitan dengan kecemasan saat berbicara dan keyakinan bahwa kondisi emosional memengaruhi proses belajar. Sementara itu, dalam hambatan instruksional, mahasiswa merasa membutuhkan lebih banyak latihan *grammar* yang kontekstual dan interaktif. Selain itu, data persepsi

menunjukkan bahwa secara umum mahasiswa memiliki sikap positif terhadap pembelajaran *grammar*, dengan menekankan pentingnya tata bahasa dan relevansinya dalam komunikasi. Studi ini menyiratkan bahwa guru perlu memperhatikan ketiga dimensi tersebut secara seimbang untuk meningkatkan pembelajaran *grammar* dan keberhasilan siswa, hal ini sejalan dengan inovasi dalam bahasa dan pedagogi serta berkontribusi pada *Sustainable Development Goal* ke-4 (*Quality Education*).

Kata Kunci: tata bahasa, hambatan, kognitif, emosional, instruksional



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INTRODUCTION

Mastering grammar is crucial in language learning, especially for those studying English as a second language. It forms the core foundation that supports learners in expressing their thoughts accurately and clearly. Previous research highlights that learners acknowledged the significance of grammar in both learning and teaching contexts, emphasizing its essential role in English language education. In addition, a strong command of grammar is closely linked to academic achievement, especially in educational settings where English is used as the primary language of instruction in multiple subject areas (Kadwa & Alshenqeeti, 2020). Therefore, although effective grammar instruction is highly needed, it frequently encounters several challenges that obstruct optimal learning results.

Research indicated that traditional and online grammar instruction often presented significant challenges for educators. Even those with extensive teaching experience may find it difficult to clearly convey complex grammatical concepts, underscoring the pressing need for more effective teaching strategies. To optimize innovative grammar instruction, instructors must receive proper training and access to adequate technological tools (Kumayas & Lengkoan, 2023). Furthermore, many students perceive grammar as tedious and challenging, contributing to a lack of interest and motivation in learning the subject (Aniuranti et al., 2022). Numerous studies have reported similar observations, which point to difficulties such as cognitive overload and significant contrasts between learners' first language and English grammar structures (Rosmiaty et al., 2023). These issues were further intensified during the shift to online learning, where reduced interaction and limited feedback hindered student engagement and overall learning outcomes (Inayati et al., 2022).

Addressing these difficulties requires the use of creative teaching methods. Incorporating digital tools into grammar instruction, such as mobile applications and learning games, has been found to boost learners' interest and comprehension of grammar (Fithriani, 2018). For instance, interactive activities through platforms like WhatsApp or gamified grammar tasks can reduce the

sense of boredom students often associate with grammar learning (Norazlan et al., 2021). Furthermore, research has emphasized that a well-structured instructional approach, such as the implementation of mind maps can facilitate better comprehension of grammatical rules and structures (Wang, 2019). Overall, addressing the barriers to grammar learning through pedagogical innovation and technology can lead to improved educational outcomes for ESL learners.

This study aims to investigate the challenges and barriers students face in grammar learning and their perceptions of the learning process in Indonesia, with the hypothesis that emotional and cognitive barriers are dominant factors hindering learning effectiveness. Through a quantitative approach involving 300 students, this research integrates cognitive, emotional, and instructional dimensions to provide a comprehensive understanding of grammar learning challenges that have not been extensively studied in the Indonesian educational context. The uniqueness of this research lies in its emphasis on personalized learning through mobile technology and teaching strategies that reduce anxiety while building supportive learning environments. The significant expected impact includes the development of more effective and inclusive teaching methods, enhanced student motivation and engagement, and contributions to developing technology-based educational strategies relevant to the digital era, ultimately improving student autonomy and success in the practical application of grammar rules.

Cognitive Barriers

Cognitive barriers are a condition in which memory limitations interfere with understanding, storing, and applying information in a given situation (Sweller, 1988). In the context of language learning, this often refers to grammar learning, which many students find difficult because of the complex rules that do not correspond to the structure of their first language (L1). Indonesian does not have tenses like English, which makes learners of English as a second language prone to misapplying various tenses in English. Many Indonesian learners still make mistakes in the use of tenses. Schmidt (1990) emphasized that learning a second language requires conscious attention to the minimum requirements so that the brain can properly process or learn what we hear or read (input).

Several studies have highlighted cognitive barriers in language learning. A study conducted by Ajaj (2022) examined difficulties in learning grammar and found that students mainly experienced difficulties in grasping fundamental grammar concepts such as tenses, subject-verb agreement, and sentence structure because they were overwhelmed by the number of grammar rules they learned in a short period. Another study that revealed difficulties in learning grammar was conducted by Murti (2024), which investigated students' perspectives on using grammar in English communication. The results showed that they believed tenses were a barrier to communication because they considered grammar rules difficult to understand due to the large amount of information that needed to be memorized. Other local studies also reveal that Indonesian English learners often use memorization methods rather than understanding the material and its application. This causes cognitive barriers because there is too much emphasis on memorization, and they are given a lot of grammar material, so they become overwhelmed and less motivated to learn grammar.

Emotional Barriers

Emotional barriers are challenges in learning that stem from a person's psychological or affective state, which disrupts the flow of energy through the meridians in the body, such as anger, disappointment, sadness, anxiety, stress, and trauma (Idris & Idris, 2019). In language learning,

psychological barriers related to these internal complexities cause difficulties in acquiring a second language. (Ahmed, 2022). The Affective Filter Hypothesis was proposed by Krashen (1983) who stated that motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety act as emotional filters supporting or hindering language learning. Learners with high motivation tend to perform better in second language acquisition. Additionally, learners with good self-confidence find it easier to learn a second language. Lastly, individuals with low anxiety levels are more likely to support optimal language learning. Those with emotional barriers may perceive grammatical errors as a source of fear and anxiety regarding others' judgments (Murti, 2024).

Several studies have confirmed that emotional factors in grammar learning are an essential issue that must be considered. As in the study conducted by Pashchenko et al. (2024), which found that regular training in emotional intelligence significantly helps improve emotional intelligence and makes second language learning more optimistic and motivated, making it easier to achieve learning goals. Additionally, another study investigating the emotional influence on grammar learning was conducted by Palupi et al. (2022) which revealed that anxiety is a barrier to learning English, particularly in speaking ability, so teachers must encourage students to be brave and create a fun and non-intimidating learning environment. Therefore, the fear of making mistakes is the main factor causing students' anxiety when speaking English, as they fear others' judgments and the fear of appearing foolish in front of others. From these findings, it can be concluded that emotional barriers significantly influence English language learning and can hinder students' cognitive processes in learning. Therefore, it is hoped that teachers can create an enjoyable learning environment so students can be brave and not afraid of making mistakes.

Instructional Barrier

Instructional barriers are theoretical and practical obstacles that reduce the effectiveness of grammar teaching in second language acquisition (Ellis, 2006). It can also be an obstacle caused by inconsistencies in methods, approaches, media, and evaluation strategies in the teaching and learning process. In the context of language learning, instructional barriers refer to inconsistent teaching methods that result in learners being poorly guided in language acquisition. However, in reality, grammar teaching is still disorganized and imperfect. Teacher-centered learning, which is more dominant, also becomes an obstacle for students because they become individualistic and have few opportunities for open thinking and interaction (Emaliana, 2017). Therefore, teachers should provide opportunities for students to express their opinions and interact with each other through group work and other activities.

Various studies have shown that inappropriate instructional approaches can exacerbate students' difficulties in acquiring grammar in a second language; therefore, it is necessary to adopt a strategy tailored to students' needs. A study conducted by Azar (2007) revealed that the Grammar-Based Teaching (GBT) approach is practical and needed, and that this is not teaching rules but concepts, which emphasizes understanding patterns and relationships between grammar materials such as subject-predicate, tenses, and clauses without burdening students with technical terms, but must be combined pragmatically according to students' needs. Andriani et al. (2021) and Milawati (2019) found that teachers still use the traditional Grammar Translation Method with translation and drilling strategies as the main methods. As a result, students have limited interaction and contribution in real language activities. These studies once again emphasize that instructional barriers are not

only about what material is taught but also how it is taught. Therefore, teachers must choose appropriate methods or approaches to create learning that achieves its objectives.

Based on the background and theoretical review above, this study was designed to answer the following two main questions: RQ 1: What are the dominant elements in each barrier (cognitive, emotional, instructional), referring to the mean scores that make grammar learning difficult for Indonesian students? RQ 2: What are the Indonesian students' perceptions of learning grammar?

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative method with a descriptive quantitative design that did not aim to investigate causal relationships. Instead, it focused on providing an explanatory account of students' attitudes and experiences in learning grammar. The data collected were then analyzed statistically by referring to the means to identify general trends and the elements perceived as most difficult (Fraenkel & Wallen; Gay et al., 2012). A questionnaire with a Five-point Likert Scale was used to collect data. The study's participants consisted of 300 Indonesian university students enrolled in the English Education Department in Indonesia, selected randomly, primarily aged 18 to 25 (N=281). This sample size is statistically sufficient since it exceeds the minimal number required for most quantitative educational studies to obtain acceptable levels of power and generalizability (usually 200-250 for medium effect sizes with 95% confidence). Random selection was used to reduce selection bias and ensure that the sample more accurately represents the larger population of English Education students in Indonesia, increasing the external validity of the results. According to Table 1, 80 male students (26.7%) and 220 female students (73.3%) were in the group.

Table 1.
Descriptive Statistics

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Age	18-25	281	93.7	93.7
	26-35	13	4.3	4.3
	36 and above	6	2.0	2.0
	Total	300	100.0	100.0
Gender	Female	220	73.3	73.3
	Male	80	26.7	26.7
	Total	300	100.0	100.0

The researchers initiated the procedure by arranging a structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions to collect quantitative data. The questionnaire was distributed online to participants, allowing the researchers to collect statistical data that could show patterns, trends, or links in the population. This phase promoted breadth, focusing on acquiring data from a diverse population to provide generalizable results. The questionnaire was developed online using Google Forms (28 items) and divided into four sections.

Table 2.
A Questionnaire Item Classification

Sections	Classification
Perceptions of Learning Grammar	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Cognitive Barriers	8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14
Emotional Barriers	15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21
Instructional Barriers	22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28

The scale of the questionnaire represented strongly agree (5), agree (4), neutral (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1), and the results were analyzed based on Pimentel's (2010) concept (see Table 3). It used mean scores to interpret the level of adjectival rating. The data were analyzed using SPSS Version 25. The interval data were analyzed by counting the mean score (Sugiyono, 2012) that belonged to the descriptive statistics. In this case, the researcher interpreted the adjectival rating of each item using the mean scores, referring to Pimentel's (2010) Five-point Likert Scale, as seen in Table 3.

Table 3.
Adjectival Rating Interpretation

Interval	Adjectival Rating
1.00 – 1.79	Strongly Disagree
1.80 – 2.59	Disagree
2.60 – 3.39	Neutral
3.40 – 4.19	Agree
4.20 and above	Strongly Agree

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of data collection techniques consisting of two RQs: (1) What are the dominant elements in each barrier (cognitive, emotional, instructional), referring to the highest mean scores that make grammar learning difficult for Indonesian students? and (2) What are the Indonesian students' perceptions of learning grammar? Each sub-section is followed by a discussion providing a deep description.

The Dominant Elements in Each Barrier: Cognitive, Emotional, Instructional

As mentioned earlier, three barriers make learning grammar difficult. Each table shows information regarding cognitive, emotional, and instructional barriers.

Table 4.
Dominant Elements in Cognitive Barrier

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
X2.1	300	4	1	5	3.78
X2.2	300	4	1	5	3.83
X2.3	300	4	1	5	3.99
X2.4	300	4	1	5	4.00
X2.5	300	4	1	5	3.96
X2.6	300	4	1	5	3.69
X2.7	300	4	1	5	3.74

Table 4 shows that items X2.4 (mean 4.00) and X2.5 (mean 3.96) are the dominant elements in the cognitive barrier.

X2.4: I struggle to apply grammar rules under pressure (e.g., during tests or conversations).

X2.5: I need more time than others to understand new grammar concepts.

The results presented in Table 4 reveal that the most dominant cognitive barriers in learning grammar are related to performance pressure and processing time. Item X2.4, which states “I struggle to apply grammar rules under pressure (e.g., during tests or conversations),” obtained the highest mean score ($M = 4.00$), indicating that a significant number of students experience difficulty retrieving and using grammatical knowledge in real-time situations. This suggests that although learners may have a conceptual understanding of grammar rules, applying them accurately and fluently under time constraints remains a major challenge. Such struggles may be attributed to the gap between explicit knowledge and procedural use, especially in high-stakes or spontaneous communication contexts.

Closely following X2.4, item X2.5 (*“I need more time than others to understand new grammar concepts”*) recorded a high mean score of 3.96. This finding highlights that cognitive processing speed also acts as a barrier, with many students requiring extended time to internalize and make sense of new grammatical structures. This issue may stem from the abstract and rule-based nature of grammar instruction, which often demands high levels of analytical thinking and memory retention (Pawlak & Kruk, 2025; Shaukat et al., 2025; Tamam, 2024). Learners who face delays in understanding may become easily frustrated or discouraged, especially when learning is paced uniformly for all students without differentiation. Students with ample time to absorb the grammar concept and its applications, such as drills and projects, will be motivated. In line with that, Nasirova (2023) stated that motivation in learning grammar played a crucial role in the success of the learning process, especially for cognitive development.

Overall, the dominance of these two elements suggests that cognitive barriers in grammar learning are less about a lack of interest and more about mental load and time constraints. In this way, teachers should consider incorporating strategies such as scaffolded instruction, low-stress practice environments, and opportunities for repeated exposure and use, particularly in meaningful contexts. Moreover, the rapid growth of technology and the spread of so many applications make learning grammar less frustrating by integrating personalized learning. A previous study by Wang et al. (2021) revealed that using a personalized mobile-assisted system with a self-regulated learning mechanism could boost students’ motivation and engagement. Their quasi-experimental study made a highlight because the activities with mobile devices were designed to be carried out by students independently without instructor guidance. Let us call it learning grammar beyond the wall. Furthermore, recognizing the individual variability in cognitive processing can guide educators in offering more flexible support, such as extra time, peer-assisted learning, or multimodal input, to help students overcome these internal obstacles in mastering grammar.

Table 5.
Dominant Elements in Emotional Barrier

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
X3.1	300	4	1	5	4.40
X3.2	300	4	1	5	3.69
X3.3	300	4	1	5	3.02
X3.4	300	4	1	5	3.31
X3.5	300	4	1	5	3.39
X3.6	300	4	1	5	3.33
X3.7	300	4	1	5	4.21

The dominant elements in the emotional barrier, shown in Table 4, cover X3.1 (mean 4.40) and X3.7 (4.21).

X3.1: I feel anxious when I have to use grammar when speaking.

X3.7: I believe my emotional state affects how well I learn grammar.

The findings in Table 5 indicate that emotional factors play a significant role in shaping learners' experiences with grammar, with anxiety during speaking and emotional influence on learning outcomes emerging as the most dominant barriers. Item X3.1, *"I feel anxious when I have to use grammar when speaking,"* received the highest mean score of 4.40, reflecting a strong emotional response tied to the pressure of grammatical accuracy in spoken language. This suggests that many learners may possess adequate grammatical knowledge but are hindered by fear of making mistakes or being judged, particularly in real-time communicative settings. Such anxiety can reduce fluency, lower confidence, and even lead to avoidance behaviors during speaking activities (Suparlan, 2021). That is why teachers should monitor students' responses to the anxiety of producing utterances in learning grammar.

In addition, item X3.7 (*"I believe my emotional state affects how well I learn grammar"*) received a high mean score of 4.21, further emphasizing the substantial influence of emotions on grammar acquisition. Learners seem to recognize that their mood, motivation, and stress levels directly impact their ability to process and retain grammatical information (Heiberger, 2025). Emotional factors such as frustration, boredom, or low self-esteem may hinder focus and reduce the effectiveness of instruction. Conversely, positive emotional states can foster greater engagement and openness to complex language tasks. This insight reinforces the importance of considering emotional readiness in language classrooms, especially during grammar instruction that is often perceived as rigid or intimidating.

The findings highlight that emotional barriers are not secondary challenges but core components of the learning process that deserve strategic attention. Teachers should aim to create low-anxiety, supportive environments where learners feel safe to make mistakes and experiment with grammar in speaking. Encouraging risk-taking, offering consistent positive feedback, and incorporating interactive or collaborative grammar tasks can reduce emotional pressure and foster a more confident and resilient attitude (Heiberger, 2025; Liang, 2023; Phipps & Borg, 2009). By addressing these emotional dimensions, educators can help learners overcome internal obstacles and improve their overall language performance.

Table 6.
Dominant Elements in Instructional Barrier

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
X4.1	300	4	1	5	3.69
X4.2	300	4	1	5	4.41
X4.3	300	4	1	5	2.77
X4.4	300	4	1	5	2.80
X4.5	300	4	1	5	3.75
X4.6	300	4	1	5	2.74
X4.7	300	4	1	5	4.15

Table 6 shows that X4.2 (4.41) and X4.7 (4.15) are the dominant elements in the instructional barriers.

X3.1: I need more practice using grammar in real conversations.

X3.7: I would benefit from more interactive and contextual grammar lessons.

The data in Table 6 indicate that instructional barriers significantly influence students' experiences in learning grammar, with the most prominent issue being the lack of practical application opportunities. Item X4.2, *"I need more practice using grammar in real conversations,"* received the highest mean score of 4.41, suggesting that students find grammar instruction insufficiently connected to authentic communication. This highlights a gap between what is taught and how it is applied, where students may understand grammar rules in theory but struggle to implement them effectively in spoken interactions. The need for more practice in realistic contexts reflects a demand for grammar instruction that bridges the gap between controlled exercises and spontaneous usage.

The second most dominant item, X4.7 (*"I would benefit from more interactive and contextual grammar lessons"*), also received a high mean score of 4.15. This indicates that students know the current instructional methods' limitations and actively seek more engaging and meaningful grammar activities. Traditional, decontextualized grammar drills may contribute to disengagement and limited retention (Abdushukurova, 2024; Sani & Saidu, 2024). In contrast, grammar lessons integrated into authentic tasks, such as role plays, problem-solving discussions, or project-based learning, are more likely to support understanding and promote knowledge transfer. The preference for contextualized and interactive learning reflects current pedagogical trends emphasizing communicative competence over rote memorization.

These findings point to a clear instructional challenge: the need to redesign grammar teaching to be more student-centered and use-oriented. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate task-based activities, collaborative learning, and situational dialogues reflecting real-life grammar use. Additionally, integrating grammar into meaningful content, rather than isolating it as a separate component, can enhance both motivation and retention (Jean & Simard, 2011). By responding to these instructional barriers, educators can foster a more dynamic and supportive grammar learning environment that equips students for practical language use.

The Indonesian Students' Perceptions of Learning Grammar

The language learners' perceptions of learning grammar can be seen in Table 7. There are seven items in the questionnaire responded positively to be strongly agree and agree. As articulated earlier, the researchers are referring to the adjectival rating by (Pimentel, 2010).

Table 7.
Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Adjectival Rating (Pimentel, 2010)
X1.1	4.38	Strongly Agree
X1.2	4.28	Strongly Agree
X1.3	4.23	Strongly Agree
X1.4	4.31	Strongly Agree
X1.5	3.72	Agree
X1.6	4.05	Agree
X1.7	4.28	Strongly Agree

X1.1. I believe grammar is an important part of learning English.

X1.2 Learning grammar helps me communicate more clearly.

X1.3 I feel motivated to improve my grammar skills.

X1.4 I think grammar learning should be practical and relevant to real-life situations.

X1.5. I enjoy learning grammar in class.

X1.6. I feel that learning grammar is more complicated than learning other language skills.

X1.7. I think my grammar knowledge has improved over time.

The findings show that the questionnaire results indicate that students hold a generally positive attitude toward grammar as an essential component of English learning. Most respondents strongly agreed that grammar plays a significant role in enhancing communication clarity (X1.2) and is a crucial aspect of mastering the language (X1.1). This finding aligns with previous research emphasizing the foundational role of grammar in developing both spoken and written proficiency. The positive perception of grammar's importance suggests that learners are aware of its function in achieving communicative competence. The urgency of mastering grammar aligns with one of the core skills in 21st-century learning, communication, which should be presented by action in spoken and written forms.

In addition to recognizing the importance of grammar, students also expressed a sense of motivation and progress. A majority reported feeling motivated to improve their grammar skills (X1.3) and believed their grammar knowledge improved over time (X1.7). This perception of growth may be linked to consistent exposure to grammar instruction in the classroom and the application of grammar in meaningful contexts, as argued by de Oliverira & Schaleppegrell (2022). Interestingly, students also preferred grammar instruction that is practical and relevant to real-life situations (X1.4), indicating a desire for learning experiences that bridge theory and practice. The teacher may bring authentic experiences and materials for students that are close to their real-world situation (Saleh, 2022). First, it is easy to comprehend, and then they may be familiar with those situations, so the elements of grammar can be well-reached.

Despite the overall positive outlook, learners acknowledged some challenges. Although they enjoyed learning grammar (X1.5), a notable number agreed that grammar is more complicated than other language skills (X1.6). This perception suggests that while students are motivated and see value in learning grammar, they may still struggle to master complex structures or apply rules accurately. To respond to the above statements, de Oliverira & Schaleppegrell (2022) suggested that teachers design meaningful contexts in preparing students to maintain their motivation and enthusiasm, even though they still face obstacles and instructional barriers. Teachers should be aware that teaching grammar can be fun, as they teach skills to students in English as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms. On the other hand, students must realize that knowledge of grammar can benefit students in terms of other core skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, teachers might consider balancing explicit instruction with contextualized practice to maintain student motivation while reducing the perceived difficulty of grammar learning.

CONCLUSION

This descriptive quantitative study examined students' voices on grammar learning and the dominant barriers that impeded their advancement. The findings indicated that although students generally had a favourable disposition towards grammar, they encountered significant cognitive, emotional, and instructional difficulties. Cognitive barriers were especially apparent in students' challenges in applying grammar under pressure and their requirement for additional time to

comprehend new concepts. These results show that the mental challenges of learning grammar, especially when performing tasks, were still a big problem. Emotional barriers, especially anxiety related to speaking and the influence of emotional states on learning, substantially hindered students' grammatical ability. This implies that emotional preparedness and self-assurance are crucial for effective grammar acquisition. The instructional barriers were associated with a lack of interactive, meaningful grammar instruction and insufficient exercise in real-life contexts. However, the findings show that students like grammar classes that are useful and communicative. Despite these problems, students still thought grammar was necessary for learning a language and were motivated to learn it. Overall, the findings highlight the necessity for more supportive, responsive, and learner-centred grammar training that caters to cognitive demands, emotional needs, and instructional deficiencies.

RECOMMENDATION

This study is limited by its reliance on self-reported data from questionnaires, which may be influenced by students' subjective perceptions and may not fully capture their grammar performance or classroom behaviors. Additionally, the sample was drawn from a single educational context, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to broader populations. Future research should include classroom observations, interviews, or performance-based assessments to understand students' grammar learning experiences comprehensively. It is also suggested that educators design grammar instruction that integrates more contextualized, interactive, and student-centered approaches to effectively address the identified cognitive, emotional, and instructional barriers.

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