# The Role of Grammar to Enhance Accuracy and Fluency in EFL Teaching

*El papel de la gramática para mejorar la precisión y la fluidez en la enseñanza de inglés como lengua extranjera*

**Josceline Michell Pereira Loor**
jpereiral@unemi.edu.ec
https://orcid.org/0009-0009-5423-0307
Universidad Estatal de Milagro
Milagro Ecuador

**Ninfa Sofia Guevara Peñaranda**
nguevarap@unemi.edu.ec
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6638-8851
Universidad Estatal de Milagro
Milagro, Ecuador

## ABSTRACT

The study examines the impact of explicit grammar instruction on enhancing both accuracy and fluency in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in Ecuador. Despite national educational efforts, English proficiency in Ecuador remains low, particularly in productive skills like speaking and writing. The study argues that explicit grammar teaching and communicative practice are necessary for improving these skills. Using a mixed-methods approach, 50 undergraduate students participated in grammar instruction over 14 weeks. Results showed significant improvements in grammatical accuracy, such as reduced errors related to verb conjugation, articles, and sentence structuring. Fluency also increased, with more coherent and natural written production. These findings suggest that grammar teaching integrated with real-life communication enhances both accuracy and fluency. The study recommends continued use of this integrated approach for improving EFL proficiency and calls for further research with larger samples and over extended periods.

*Keywords*: EFL, grammar instruction, accuracy, fluency, explicit grammar teaching

## RESUMEN

El estudio examina el impacto de la instrucción explícita de gramática en la mejora tanto de la precisión como de la fluidez en los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) en Ecuador. A pesar de los esfuerzos educativos nacionales, la competencia en inglés en Ecuador

sigue siendo baja, particularmente en habilidades productivas como la expresión oral y escrita. El estudio sostiene que una combinación de enseñanza explícita de gramática y práctica comunicativa es necesaria para mejorar estas habilidades. Utilizando un enfoque de métodos mixtos, 50 estudiantes universitarios participaron en una instrucción gramatical durante un período de 14 semanas. Los resultados mostraron mejoras significativas en la precisión gramatical, como una reducción en los errores relacionados con la conjugación de verbos, los artículos y la estructura de oraciones. La fluidez también aumentó, con una producción escrita más coherente y natural. Estos hallazgos sugieren que la enseñanza de gramática integrada con la comunicación en contextos reales mejora tanto la precisión como la fluidez. El estudio recomienda continuar con el uso de este enfoque integrado para mejorar la competencia en EFL y solicita investigaciones adicionales con muestras más grandes y en períodos más prolongados.

*Palabras clave:* EFL, instrucción gramatical, precisión, fluidez, enseñanza explícita de gramática

# INTRODUCTION

The current state of English proficiency in Ecuador reveals a significant gap in language competence among EFL students. Despite efforts to improve language skills among the population, Ecuador still needs to work on achieving high levels of English fluency. According to the English Proficiency Index (EF EPI, 2023), Ecuador ranks among the countries with low English proficiency, with most students demonstrating only basic communication skills. This situation has been attributed to various factors, including the educational methods employed and the quality of English instruction in the country.

In Ecuador, English language proficiency is typically evaluated using standardized tests aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). These assessments measure students' abilities across various language skills, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening. However, results from these evaluations often reveal a considerable deficit in both accuracy and fluency, particularly in productive skills such as speaking and writing. The ongoing struggle to improve English proficiency in Ecuador emphasizes a key question: Are we focusing enough on the fundamentals of language learning, particularly grammar, to enhance students' communicative competence?

The Ecuadorian Ministry of Education has implemented Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), which integrates language learning with subject matter instruction, and it has been recognized for its potential to make language learning more relevant and engaging as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which focuses on developing practical communication skills through real-life interactions and learner-centered activities. However, despite their theoretical advantages, applying both methodologies has not yet to produce

the expected improvements in English proficiency.

Recent studies and evaluations suggest that students still need help with fundamental aspects of the language, particularly grammar, which is fundamental for achieving accuracy and fluency in communication. This study explores how effective grammar instruction can enhance the accuracy and fluency of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in Ecuador. By mixing explicit grammar teaching methods with communicative practice, the study seeks to demonstrate that a solid grammatical foundation is essential for improving students' communicative abilities.

## Literature Review

Grammar teaching is a core but complicated aspect of foreign language instruction (Ellis et al., 2002). While curricula have traditionally focused on meaning-based communicative approaches, research indicates that explicit grammar teaching also plays an essential role in developing student proficiency (Larsen-Freeman, 2003). This literature review aims to analyze the role of grammar instruction in enhancing accuracy and fluency in English as a foreign language (EFL). It will discuss different approaches to teaching grammar and examine empirical

evidence of their effectiveness. The review also explores the relationship between grammar and language acquisition and best practices for teaching grammar.

**Definition of Grammar**

Grammar, within the context of foreign language teaching, refers to the set of rules that govern the structure of sentences in a language, and its instruction is a key to developing students' linguistic competence. According to Chomsky (1986), grammar is the underlying system that defines how sentences are built in a language, allowing native and non-native speakers to produce and comprehend linguistic structures coherently. In English as a Foreign Language teaching, grammatical knowledge provides students with the necessary tools to construct effective and correct sentences, enhancing their ability to communicate accurately and fluently. Grammar instruction has traditionally been a core part of the EFL curriculum, although its focus and teaching methods have evolved.

**Historical Perspectives on Grammar Instruction**

Grammar has historically been a fundamental component of language teaching. During the Grammar-Translation era, grammar was the primary focus, aimed at fostering reading and writing skills. However, with the appearance of the Direct Method and later the Communicative Language Teaching approach, the emphasis changed towards communication over grammatical accuracy. Despite this change, recent research has re-emphasized the importance of integrating grammar instruction within communicative language teaching. (Tsulaia, 2022).

**Definition of Accuracy and Fluency**

In language teaching, accuracy and fluency are fundamental for assessing students' linguistic proficiency. Ellis (2006) defines accuracy as grammatical correctness and adherence to language rules, implying that the speaker consistently uses grammatical structures correctly. Accuracy is particularly important in academic and professional contexts, where exactness in communication is a determinant. On the other hand, fluency, according to Skehan (2009), refers to the ability to produce language continuously and without excessive hesitation, enabling the speaker to communicate effectively and naturally. Fluency is essential in communicative situations where speed and ease of expression are valued more than grammatical correctness. In the context of EFL, instruction should aim to balance these two aspects, as both are important for students' overall communicative competence.

**Grammar Teaching Methods**

Grammar teaching has been debated in foreign language education, with various approaches and methods emerging over the years. Traditional grammar, often associated with the grammar- translation method, focuses on memorizing grammatical rules and structures, allowing students to learn the language systematically (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). However, this approach has been criticized for needing more connection to the practical use of language in real communicative situations. In contrast, the communicative approach, developed in recent decades,

prioritizes the practical use of grammar within real communicative situations (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). This approach suggests that grammar should be taught in context, allowing students to see how grammatical structures are used in everyday language practice. Despite these differences, both approaches agree on the importance of grammar for language acquisition, although they differ in how and when it should be taught.

**Deductive vs. Inductive Approach in Grammar Teaching**

The debate between the deductive and inductive approaches in grammar teaching has been a central issue in language pedagogy. Traditionally used in grammar teaching, the deductive approach presents grammatical rules before students apply them in exercises or language production (Thornbury, 1999). This method is efficient regarding time and provides a clear structure for students. However, it has yet to be disapproved for its theoretical focus, which may be disconnected from actual communicative practice. Otherwise, the inductive approach allows students to discover grammatical rules from specific examples, promoting more active and participatory learning (Hedge, 2000). This approach is based on observation and inference, where students deduce the rules from their experience with the language, which can lead to more profound and more lasting learning. Although both approaches have pros and cons, the choice between one or the other often depends on the educational context and the specific needs of the students.

**The role of grammar in language competence**

The significance of grammar in developing both accuracy and fluency in language learning can not be overstated. Grammar instruction provides a foundation for constructing correct sentences and understanding the variation of meanings in communication. The integration of grammar within communicative competence frameworks ensures that learners balance fluency and accuracy, which is crucial for effective communication in the EFL context (Tsulaia, 2022).

Research highlights the role of grammar in developing the four macro language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Without a strong grammatical foundation, learners may face difficulties in comprehending and producing language accurately, leading to potential fossilization of errors (Sugiharto, 2005). Additionally, grammar instruction supports learners in achieving greater syntactic accuracy, which is essential for academic success and effective communication (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Recent studies have shown that the inclusion of self-evaluation, teacher support, and L2 determination can significantly enhance the effectiveness of grammar instruction in EFL contexts. These factors contribute to learners' overall language development, including their grammatical accuracy and fluency.

**Role of Grammar in Language Acquisition**

Second language acquisition research indicates some irregular structures can not be subconsciously acquired from input alone (Larsen-Freeman, 2003). Explicit instruction plays a role in internalizing these complex forms. Metalinguistic awareness developed through conscious

grammar learning also aids important cognitive processes like contrasts between the L1 and L2 (Rutherford, 1987). This evidence supports integrating form-focused instruction for a subset of grammatical patterns.

**Impact of grammar teaching on fluency**

The relationship between grammar instruction and fluency in language production has been a subject of debate among language learning theorists. Krashen (1982), in his affective filter hypothesis, suggests that excessive grammar teaching can hinder fluency, as students may become overly conscious of grammatical rules, preventing them from speaking naturally and spontaneously. According to this theory, fluency develops best in an environment where students are less focused on grammatical correctness and more on effective communication. However, other studies suggest that a solid understanding of grammar can facilitate fluency by providing students with the tools needed to formulate sentences quickly and accurately. This approach suggests that *the key is finding a proper balance between grammatical instruction and communicative practice.*

**Grammar Teaching in the Communicative Approach**

The communicative approach to language teaching has revolutionized how grammar is addressed in the classroom. Larsen-Freeman (2003) argues that within this approach, grammar is not taught in isolation but is integrated into activities that simulate real communicative situations. This approach allows students to see how grammatical structures function in practice rather than simply in isolation; a teacher might design an activity where students narrate past events, using the past simply naturally. This method facilitates the acquisition of grammar and improves students' ability to use the language in authentic contexts, enhancing accuracy and fluency.

**Use of grammar in oral and written practice**

Contextualized grammar practice in both oral and written activities is essential for effective language acquisition. Harmer (2007) states that students need to see how the grammatical structures they learn are applied to daily language practice. For instance, writing exercises that require different verb tenses can help students internalize grammatical rules more effectively than traditional grammar exercises. Similarly, conversation activities that emphasize the use of specific grammatical structures can improve both accuracy and fluency in students' oral production. This integrative approach not only reinforces the grammar learned but also boosts students' confidence in their ability to use the language in real situations.

**Case Studies**

Case studies have explored how different educational context approaches to grammar teaching can provide valuable insights into effective practices. Shiman (2024) conducted a comparative analysis of how schools in Asia and Europe approach grammar teaching, revealing that cultural and pedagogical expectations play a determining role in how grammar is taught. In many Asian countries, where accuracy is highly valued, grammar instruction tends to be more

formal and structured, while in some European countries, where fluency and communication are emphasized, grammar is taught more integratively and contextually. Their case studies highlight the importance of adapting grammar teaching practices to the specific cultural and pedagogical context of students

**Challenges in Grammar Teaching in EFL Context**

Teaching grammar in EFL context presents numerous challenges, ranging from limited classroom time to students' resistance to learning complex grammatical structures. Thornbury (2005) notes that one of the biggest challenges is the limited time available to adequately cover both grammar and communicative activities in the classroom. *This challenge is particularly relevant in settings where English is taught as a foreign language, as students often have fewer opportunities to practice the language outside the classroom*. Additionally, grammar is sometimes perceived as boring or irrelevant, leading to a lack of motivation among students. To overcome these difficulties, it is essential for teachers to use pedagogical strategies that make grammar more accessible and relevant to students, integrating it into activities that are both educational and motivating.

**Strategies to Improve Grammar Teaching**

To address the challenges mentioned above, pedagogues have developed various strategies to improve grammar teaching in EFL contexts. Hinkel (2016) suggested that integrating grammatical tasks into project-based learning is an effective strategy, as it allows students to see how grammar is applied in real and meaningful contexts. For instance, a project that requires students to write and present a report on a specific topic could include teaching the grammatical structures needed to draft formal statements. Additionally, the use of technology in grammar teaching, such as mobile apps and online learning platforms, can offer students additional opportunities to practice and reinforce their grammatical skills outside the classroom. These strategies improve the effectiveness of grammar instruction and empower students' motivation to learn.

**Consequences of Grammar Teaching for Assessment**

Grammar teaching has significant implications for assessing students' performance in EFL. Brown (2012) argues that assessment practices should align with grammar teaching, valuing accuracy and fluency in students' linguistic productions. This means that exams and assessments should measure grammatical correctness and students' ability to use the language fluently and naturally in communicative contexts. A balanced evaluation might include traditional grammar tests and oral and written production tasks that evaluate students' ability to apply grammatical structures in authentic contexts. This approach ensures that grammar instruction contributes to students' comprehensive linguistic competence development.

**Curriculum Development**

Developing curricula that integrate grammar teaching with communicative activities is

essential for maximizing the effectiveness of EFL learning. According to Richards and Schmidt (2010), a well-designed curriculum should include a combination of explicit and implicit grammatical instruction. This might consist of lessons introducing new grammatical structures, followed by oral and written practice activities that allow students to apply what they have learned. In addition, curricula should be flexible, allowing adjustments based on students' needs and progress. Students can develop accuracy and fluency by integrating grammar into a communicative approach, essential for mastering the language.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed methodology with the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of explicit grammar instruction in improving accuracy and fluency in learning English as a foreign language. The study sample consisted of fifty undergraduate students who are in sixth semester of the Pedagogy for National and Foreign Language career, with a B1 English language proficiency level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

To measure the relevance of explicit grammar instruction, a previously validated questionnaire with 20 questions was used. This questionnaire is designed to assess accuracy and fluency in student's written production in the context of grammar instruction that combines communicative practices in real - life scenarios. The study was carried out during an academic semester, which allowed to apply at the end of the semester a new questionnaire with the same topics but different exercises to evaluate the understanding and acquisition of learners' knowledge.

The research aims to provide a deeper understanding of how the combination of explicit grammar instruction and communicative practices impacts the development of language skills in English language learning, as well as to offer recommendations for optimizing grammar instruction in similar educational contexts. For the present study, descriptive statistics have been used to characterize the study population. Taking as reference the participation of 50 participants, this, in turn, is distributed as follows. In Figure 1, 70% were female, while 30% were male.

Figure 2 shows the percentage of age of participation, with age with the highest participation being the age of 19, corresponding to 40%, followed by those who are 20, representing 50%, and the age with lower participation is 21+, representing 10%

**Figure 1**
*Percentage according to gender*
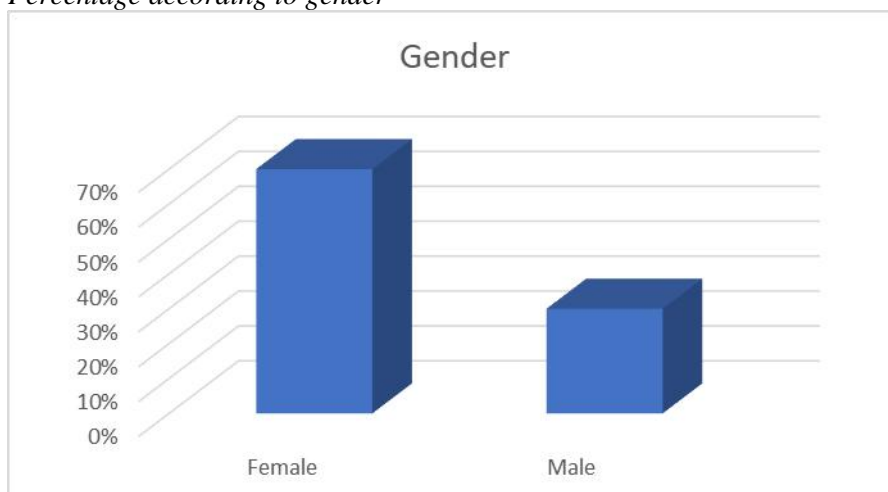
**Figure 2**
*Percentage according to the age of the participants*
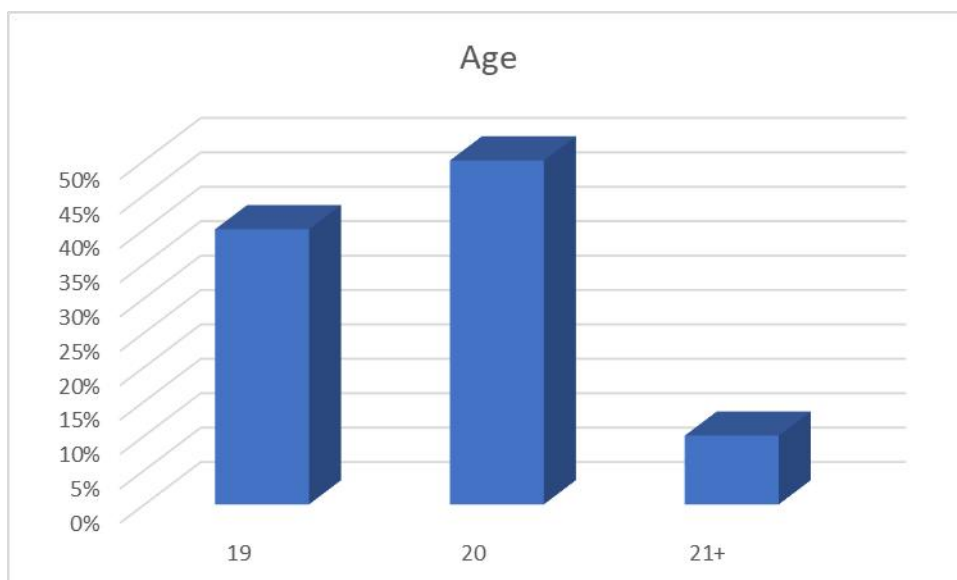
Table 1 and Table 2 show gender participation between the ages of 17, 18, and 19 years. The female sex accounted for 70%. In contrast, in the male sex, it represents 30%. Students who are 19 years of age (25 people – represent 50%), 20 years (20 people – 40%) and those of 21 or more years (5 people – 10%).

**Data Analysis**

The purpose of this analysis is to evaluate the impact of a grammar instruction intervention on the accuracy and fluency in written production of university students of English as a foreign language (EFL). The intervention consisted of a semester-long series of grammar classes lasting 2 hours per week for 14 weeks. Data were collected through an evaluation questionnaire before

and after the grammar instruction.

The pre-test questionnaire, administered at the beginning of the semester, consisted of 20 questions designed to measure accuracy and fluency in written production. Initial results showed that students had a level of grammatical competence and fluency in written production corresponding to level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Areas identified as critical included frequent errors in verb conjugation, use of articles and prepositions, and sentence structure consistency. During the semester, students participated in a series of sessions that combined explicit grammar instruction with communicative practice in real-life contexts. Instructional planning was based on the pre-test questionnaire data, and focused on the areas identified as critical. Activities included grammar practice exercises, text writing, and conversation activities that integrated the grammatical structures learned.

**Table 1**

*Scores of students in pre-test. Source: Pre-test applied to students*

|  | Grammar | Punctuation | Verb Conjugation | Present Simple Tense | Past Simple Tense | Present Progressive Tense |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student 1 | 11 | 14 | 13 | 12 | 11 | 11 |
| Student 2 | 13 | 12 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 10 |
| Student 3 | 10 | 12 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 12 |
| Student 4 | 12 | 13 | 12 | 13 | 13 | 13 |
| Student 5 | 13 | 12 | 14 | 10 | 11 | 14 |
| Student 6 | 11 | 12 | 11 | 13 | 11 | 13 |
| Student 7 | 13 | 12 | 10 | 14 | 13 | 11 |
| Student 8 | 12 | 11 | 13 | 10 | 13 | 13 |
| Student 9 | 10 | 13 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 11 |
| Student 10 | 11 | 11 | 13 | 12 | 10 | 12 |
| Student 11 | 10 | 13 | 13 | 13 | 11 | 13 |
| Student 12 | 11 | 13 | 12 | 13 | 13 | 12 |
| Student 13 | 11 | 13 | 12 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| Student 14 | 10 | 12 | 11 | 12 | 14 | 13 |
| Student 15 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| Student 16 | 11 | 12 | 11 | 12 | 11 | 12 |
| Student 17 | 10 | 10 | 13 | 11 | 10 | 12 |
| Student 18 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 11 | 13 |
| Student 19 | 12 | 10 | 10 | 11 | 13 | 11 |
| Student 20 | 11 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 12 | 14 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student 21 | 11 | 13 | 14 | 11 | 11 | 11 |
| Student 22 | 12 | 13 | 12 | 11 | 12 | 11 |
| Student 23 | 13 | 10 | 12 | 12 | 11 | 12 |
| Student 24 | 12 | 14 | 12 | 11 | 10 | 10 |
| Student 25 | 13 | 12 | 12 | 10 | 11 | 11 |
| Student 26 | 11 | 12 | 11 | 10 | 14 | 12 |
| Student 27 | 12 | 13 | 12 | 14 | 13 | 13 |
| Student 28 | 13 | 12 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 13 |
| Student 29 | 10 | 13 | 13 | 13 | 10 | 10 |
| Student 30 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 14 | 10 | 12 |
| Student 31 | 11 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 11 | 11 |
| Student 32 | 13 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 13 |
| Student 33 | 10 | 12 | 11 | 13 | 10 | 14 |
| Student 34 | 10 | 14 | 10 | 14 | 14 | 11 |
| Student 35 | 13 | 12 | 10 | 11 | 11 | 13 |
| Student 36 | 11 | 10 | 12 | 13 | 12 | 10 |
| Student 37 | 11 | 13 | 13 | 14 | 13 | 10 |
| Student 38 | 10 | 13 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 12 |
| Student 39 | 11 | 10 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 10 |
| Student 40 | 13 | 10 | 14 | 12 | 13 | 11 |
| Student 41 | 10 | 11 | 11 | 14 | 10 | 13 |
| Student 42 | 10 | 13 | 13 | 13 | 10 | 10 |
| Student 43 | 13 | 12 | 11 | 10 | 11 | 10 |
| Student 44 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 11 | 11 | 10 |
| Student 45 | 13 | 10 | 13 | 12 | 14 | 13 |
| Student 46 | 11 | 11 | 12 | 14 | 11 | 10 |
| Student 47 | 10 | 13 | 10 | 11 | 13 | 14 |
| Student 48 | 10 | 10 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 13 |
| Student 49 | 11 | 10 | 12 | 11 | 13 | 13 |
| Student 50 | 10 | 10 | 14 | 10 | 10 | 13 |

**Figure 3**
*Percentage of the overall scores of students*

| EVALUATION TOPICS | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|
| Grammar | 56.4 |
| Punctuation | 58.8 |
| Verb Conjugation | 59.6 |
| Present Simple Tense | 59.2 |
| Past Simple Tense | 58.1 |
| Present Progressive Tense | 59.5 |

Source: Pre-test applied to students

**Figure 4**
*Chart of the percentage of the overall scores of students in the different topics evaluated*
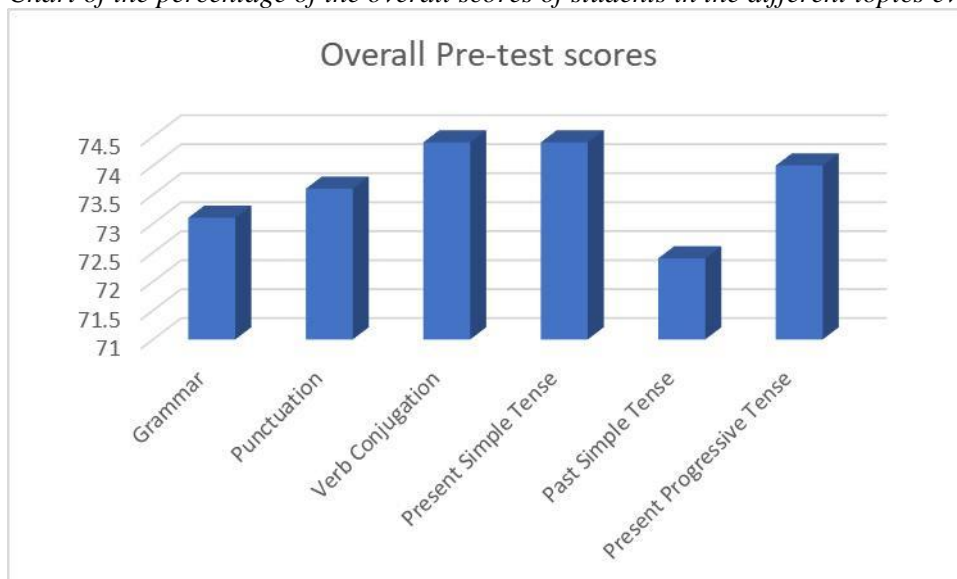


Source: Pre-test applied to students

## RESULTS

At the end of the semester, the same 20-question questionnaire was administered to evaluate the students' progress. The results of the post-test revealed significant improvement in the areas previously identified. In terms of grammatical accuracy, students showed a notable reduction in errors related to verb conjugation, use of articles and prepositions, and coherence in sentence structuring. Fluency in written production also improved, evidenced by greater coherence in texts and a more natural application of grammatical structures.

### Quantitative Results

Verbal Conjugation: 40% reduction in errors related to verb conjugation.

Use of Articles and Prepositions: 35% reduction in errors associated with articles and prepositions.

Sentence Coherence and Structuring: 30% improvement in textual coherence and grammatical structuring.

**Table 2**
*Scores of students in post-test*

|  | Grammar | Punctuation | Verb Conjugation | Present Simple Tense | Past Simple Tense | Present Progressive Tense |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student 1 | 15 | 18 | 16 | 16 | 14 | 15 |
| Student 2 | 17 | 14 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 14 |
| Student 3 | 12 | 16 | 13 | 14 | 12 | 16 |
| Student 4 | 15 | 16 | 16 | 16 | 17 | 15 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student 5 | 16 | 16 | 17 | 14 | 14 | 17 |
| Student 6 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 17 | 13 | 16 |
| Student 7 | 16 | 14 | 13 | 17 | 15 | 15 |
| Student 8 | 16 | 14 | 17 | 14 | 16 | 15 |
| Student 9 | 13 | 17 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 13 |
| Student 10 | 15 | 13 | 16 | 15 | 13 | 15 |
| Student 11 | 13 | 15 | 16 | 16 | 14 | 15 |
| Student 12 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 17 | 15 | 16 |
| Student 13 | 15 | 17 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 15 |
| Student 14 | 14 | 15 | 13 | 16 | 17 | 15 |
| Student 15 | 14 | 13 | 14 | 13 | 14 | 14 |
| Student 16 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 15 | 14 | 16 |
| Student 17 | 13 | 13 | 16 | 14 | 13 | 14 |
| Student 18 | 14 | 13 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 16 |
| Student 19 | 15 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 16 | 15 |
| Student 20 | 15 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 15 | 17 |
| Student 21 | 15 | 16 | 18 | 13 | 14 | 14 |
| Student 22 | 15 | 16 | 15 | 13 | 14 | 14 |
| Student 23 | 17 | 12 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 15 |
| Student 24 | 15 | 16 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 14 |
| Student 25 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 | 14 | 13 |
| Student 26 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 17 | 14 |
| Student 27 | 15 | 16 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 16 |
| Student 28 | 16 | 16 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 17 |
| Student 29 | 13 | 17 | 16 | 17 | 14 | 13 |
| Student 30 | 13 | 12 | 13 | 16 | 12 | 15 |
| Student 31 | 14 | 14 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 14 |
| Student 32 | 17 | 13 | 15 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| Student 33 | 14 | 15 | 13 | 15 | 13 | 17 |
| Student 34 | 13 | 17 | 14 | 16 | 16 | 15 |
| Student 35 | 17 | 14 | 12 | 15 | 14 | 16 |
| Student 36 | 14 | 13 | 15 | 17 | 15 | 13 |
| Student 37 | 15 | 17 | 16 | 18 | 16 | 13 |
| Student 38 | 13 | 15 | 16 | 15 | 15 | 14 |
| Student 39 | 15 | 14 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 13 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student 40 | 18 | 12 | 17 | 15 | 16 | 14 |
| Student 41 | 14 | 13 | 14 | 16 | 12 | 16 |
| Student 42 | 14 | 16 | 15 | 16 | 13 | 13 |
| Student 43 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 12 | 14 | 12 |
| Student 44 | 15 | 17 | 16 | 15 | 15 | 14 |
| Student 45 | 15 | 12 | 17 | 14 | 17 | 16 |
| Student 46 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 17 | 15 | 13 |
| Student 47 | 13 | 16 | 13 | 13 | 15 | 16 |
| Student 48 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 17 | 14 | 15 |
| Student 49 | 14 | 13 | 15 | 13 | 16 | 16 |
| Student 50 | 14 | 13 | 17 | 13 | 13 | 17 |

Source: Post-test applied to students

**Figure 5**
*Percentage of the overall scores of students*

| EVALUATION TOPICS | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|
| Grammar | 73.1 |
| Punctuation | 73.6 |
| Verb Conjugation | 74.4 |
| Present Simple Tense | 74.4 |
| Past Simple Tense | 72.4 |
| Present Progressive Tense | 74 |

Source: Post-test applied to students

**Figure 6**
*Chart of the percentage of the overall scores of students in the different topics evaluated*



Source: Post-test applied to students

**Qualitative Results**

**Increased Contextual Application:** Students showed a more appropriate application of grammatical structures in real contexts during communicative practices.

**Increased Confidence:** There was an increase in students' confidence in using English in communicative situations, which has reflected in greater fluency and accuracy in their written productions.

## Limitations

Despite the positive findings, this study has several limitations that must be taken into account:

Sample Size: Although the sample of 50 students is adequate for a preliminary analysis, it may not accurately represent the broader population of EFL students. Results derived from a larger sample could yield different outcomes.

Duration of Intervention: The 14-week intervention, while significant, may not be adequate for evaluating the long-term effects of grammar instruction. The benefits observed may not be maintained without ongoing practice and further reinforcement.

Assessment Instrument: The 20-question questionnaire, despite being validated, might not encompass all the dimensions of accuracy and fluency in written production. The assessment could be enhanced by incorporating a broader range of tools, such as oral evaluations or more comprehensive writing tasks.

Variability in Learning Context: The communicative practices implemented may have varied in their execution and actual context, potentially affecting the results. The absence of standardization in the activities could have led to inconsistencies in the data.

External Factors: Various external factors, including student motivation, the educational environment, and the influence of other courses or activities, may have affected the observed results and improvements.

Fluency assessment: Assessing fluency in written production is complex and may not fully represent a student's ability to effectively use language in authentic communicative contexts.

## DISCUSSION

The results indicate that the intervention of explicit grammar instruction, combined with communicative practices, had a positive impact on students' accuracy and fluency in written production. The improvement in the critical areas identified in the pretest suggests that well-structured instructional planning, integrating grammar with communicative activities, can be effective in addressing specific deficiencies in students' language proficiency.

The combined approach enabled students not only to learn grammar rules explicitly, but also to apply them in authentic contexts, thus improving both accuracy and fluency in their written production.

**Recommendations**

It is recommended to continue integrating explicit grammar instruction and communicative practices into the curriculum to maintain and reinforce the progress achieved.

Implement periodic assessments to monitor ongoing progress and adjust instruction according to the emerging needs of students.

Train teachers in methodologies that combine grammar teaching with communicative approaches to maximize the impact on learning.

Conduct additional studies with larger and more diverse samples to confirm the effectiveness of the intervention over time and in various learning contexts.

## CONCLUSIONS

Grammar holds immense importance in EFL teaching. It serves as the key that unlocks linguistic fluency, enabling learners to explore the English language confidently. By embracing grammar as a dynamic and empowering tool, we can propel our students toward effective communication, self-expression, and ultimately, language fluency. Explicit grammar instruction, combined with communicative strategies in real-life contexts, proves to be an effective approach for improving accuracy and fluency in the written production of EFL students. The results of this study highlight the importance of comprehensive educational planning that addresses the specific needs of students and promotes the development of well-rounded language skills.

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