Grammar Learning Methods and Grammar Learning Strategies: Are They Related?

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Abstract

This study responds to numerous calls for research on Grammar Learning Strategies (GLS), an area that has been neglected for years. The research sheds light on the relationship between grammar learning or instructional approaches and students' utilization of GLS assigned to develop explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar. Two sub-categories of Pawlak's (2018) Grammar Learning Strategy Inventory (GLSI) were employed to assess GLS use in these two sub-categories by students who prefer explicit grammar learning and those who prefer implicit grammar learning. A Pearson correlation coefficient test was conducted to examine this relationship. The study revealed a moderate use of GLS for developing explicit and implicit grammar knowledge. Furthermore, it found an insignificant, fragile, and negative correlation between grammar learning or instructional approaches and GLS used to develop explicit knowledge of grammar. Similarly, an insignificant, very weak, and negative correlation was reported between grammar learning or instructional approaches, and GLS used to develop implicit knowledge of grammar. The study discusses factors influencing language learning and GLS use and highlights the limitations.

Keywords: Explicit and implicit grammar learning and instruction, grammar learning strategies, language learning strategies, strategy use.

1. Introduction

Grammar is an integral component of language learning, facilitating the acquisition of correct language structures necessary for effective communication in the target language. It is pivotal in constructing coherent written and spoken texts, establishing a foundation for meaningful language use. Consequently, grammar has become a focal point in learning and teaching language.

Language learners commonly employ Language Learning Strategies (LLS) to enhance their proficiency in foreign or second language (L2) acquisition. Grammar learning is intricately connected to other language skills, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Research in this field has demonstrated that language learners utilize diverse LLS that significantly contribute to their overall language learning (Oxford, 1990, 2011, 2017; Cohen, 2011; Cohen & Griffiths, 2015; Chamot, 2004, 2005; Grenfell & Harris, 1999; Griffiths & Oxford, 2014; Griffiths, 2013; Macaro, 2001, 2006, 2009). As a result, language learners are presumed to employ specific LLS dedicated to controlling their grammar learning process.

While LLS have been extensively discussed concerning reading, writing, listening, speaking, and vocabulary, there is a notable gap in understanding Grammar Learning Strategies (GLS). Scholars in the field, including Cohen (2011), Cohen and Macaro (2007), Oxford (2011), Oxford et al. (2007), and Pawlak (2018), have highlighted this deficiency, calling for more in-depth investigations into GLS. Drawing a parallel with Vandergrift's (1997) characterization of listening strategies as the 'Cinderella of strategies' due to insufficient studies, Oxford et al. (2007) termed GLS as the 'Second Cinderella' for a similar reason.

In addition to the scarcity of studies in this area, GLS have not been adequately integrated into well-known LLS surveys, such as O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) survey, Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), or Cohen et al.'s (2002) Language Strategy Use Survey (LSUS). This remained the case until Oxford et al. (2007) addressed this gap with their groundbreaking review of GLS, presenting an initial list based on grammar learning or instruction approaches.

This initial list inspired Pawlak (2013, 2018) to classify GLS and develop the first valid and reliable Grammar Learning Strategy Inventory (GLSI). The GLSI marks a significant advancement in the field of GLS, offering a structured framework for further research and preventing the abandonment of LLS in favor of broader concepts such as self-regulation (Dörnyei, 2005).

While the context of the present study is influenced by the communicative language teaching approach, emphasizing implicit grammar instruction, some language educators still advocate for explicit grammar teaching, especially for adult learners who may benefit from understanding grammatical rules before practical application. In Saudi schools, where the communicative language teaching approach faces challenges (Althaqafi, 2018), grammar is taught explicitly in dedicated classes using specialized textbooks (Aljohani, 2012;

Almuhammadi, 2020; Al-Seghayer, 2011). This aligns with Ellis's (2002) observation that the grammar-translation method continues to be widely employed globally.

Contrary to the assertion by Oxford et al. (2007) that there is no correlation between grammar learning or instruction methods and strategy use, the present study aims to explore this argument. The researcher challenges this perspective, positing that the choice between explicit and implicit grammar learning and instruction methods may impact learners' utilization of GLS to develop explicit and implicit grammar knowledge. Therefore, this study investigates whether grammar learning or instruction approaches influence the use of GLS by students from an Arabic language and cultural background exposed to mixed grammar instruction approaches. This investigation will focus on two sub-categories of Pawlak's (2018) GLSI, and a Pearson correlation coefficient will be employed to ascertain the relationship between grammar learning or instruction methods and the use of GLS assigned to develop explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar.

The subsequent section provides definitions and reviews of GLS, explicit and implicit grammar instruction, and learning methods, including the degree of consciousness in each method. Factors influencing language learning (grammar learning in particular), classification, and inventories of GLS are also reviewed.

2. Literature Review

Although GLS were neglected or included within LLS major categories and definitions, Oxford (2017, p. 244) defined GLS as "teachable, dynamic thoughts and behaviors that learners consciously select and employ in specific contexts to improve their self-regulated, autonomous L2 grammar development for effective task performance and long-term proficiency." This definition is based on the updated version of the LLS definition, which existed after a long debate in the field of LLS on what a strategy is (See Oxford, 2017).

To better understand GLS, it is necessary to have a quick look at teaching grammar within major language teaching approaches. The grammar-translation method, in which L2 learners are provided with an equal amount of grammar and vocabulary, was one of the earliest methods for teaching grammar. It was followed by the audio-lingual method in which learners should acquire particular grammatical patterns from their everyday language (Bade, 2008). After a while, the Communicative Language Teaching approach, balancing attention to language communication and structure (Littlewood, 1992), has become the most common approach in teaching grammar.

The grammar-translation method focuses mainly on grammatical parsing, where the form and inflection of words are explained (Celce-Murcia, 1991). This approach was extensively criticized as it resulted in the inability of language learners to communicate appropriately in the target language. This approach was substituted by the communicative approach, which mainly depends on encouraging learners to communicate in the target language through role-plays and group work. The content of taught materials should be grammatical structures and include reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills (Celce-Murcia, 1991). Although this approach is now considered one of the most effective ways of teaching L2 grammar, it might have an unseen impact on using GLS. From their point of view, Oxford et al. (2007, p. 117) believe that "…most researchers who have become well-known in the L2 learner strategy area, perhaps influenced by the low profile of grammar in the communicative language teaching approach, have either ignored grammar strategies or slid them into the more general 'cognitive strategy' category, thereby unwittingly hiding these strategies from view." They summarized that grammar can be taught implicitly or explicitly, as explained below.

Under the implicit mode, there are two modes of instruction: Focus on Meaning and Focus on Form. In Focus on Meaning, the primary focus is on meaning, and grammar is avoided in the classroom. Learners are neither supplied with grammatical rules nor directed to induce them in this mode. Moreover, the target form is not enhanced or made explicit. It is not very different, but in Focus on Form, there is still a focus on meaning. In addition, learners are not supplied with grammatical rules or directed to induce them. In this mode, the target form is not made explicit but enhanced or noticeable. Under the explicit mode, there are two modes of instruction: inductive and deductive. In the inductive mode, the primary focus is on the form, although the target form is neither enhanced nor made explicit. In this mode, grammatical rules are not supplied, though learners are directed to induce them. In the deductive mode, the primary focus is on the form where the target form is noticeable, enhanced, and made explicit. In this mode, grammatical rules are supplied to learners. In an inductive activity, a student infers a grammatical rule based on examples he or she passes by; however, in a deductive activity, a student is given the grammatical rule where he or she practices it in examples (Larsen-Freeman, 2001).

Grammar learning cannot be isolated from grammar instruction. There are two modes of grammar learning, implicit and explicit, which cannot be separated (Suzuki et al., 2023). Implicit learning is "input processing without such an intention, taking place unconsciously," however, explicit learning is "input processing with the conscious intention to find out whether the input information contains regularities and, if so, to work out the concepts and rules with which these regularities can be captured" (Hulstijn, 2005, p. 131). Consciousness is an essential element in differentiating between implicit and explicit learning. Some researchers (DeKeyser, 1994; Hulstijn, 2005) believe that implicit learning occurs unconsciously, although some researchers (Ellis, 1995; Schmidt, 1995) think there is a degree of consciousness in implicit learning. On the contrary, explicit learning requires consciousness. Indeed, consciousness plays a vital role in defining LLS, as the majority of scholars in the field agree that there is a metacognitive component in any strategy where a learner consciously and intentionally attends, analyzes, plans a task, and monitors the process of learning (Cohen, 2007; Griffiths, 2013, and Oxford, 2017). Those scholars are still unsure of "…how conscious of and attentive to their language behaviors learners need to be in order for those behaviors to be considered strategies" (Cohen, 2007, p. 43). This means that language learners have a kind of consciousness while deploying strategies, but the degree of that consciousness is still unspecified. Therefore, the existence of GLS within implicit learning is very limited or even absent (Oxford et al., 2007). However, explicit learning, with its conscious nature, can be considered the proper learning mode

where GLS can be best deployed.

Since explicit learning is appropriate for deploying grammar strategies, we should examine its inductive and deductive learning modes. DeKeyser (1994, p. 188) defines inductive learning as "rules are inferred from examples presented (first)." Consequently, in this learning process, learners consciously look for regularities in the input and how these regularities work using conscious operations to understand the structure (Oxford et al., 2007). Deductive learning, conversely, means "rules are given before any examples are seen" (DeKeyser, 1994, p. 188). In this mode, grammatical rules are provided to learners and overtly illustrated where learners should first understand them and then apply them in instances—bearing in mind that many factors may influence the relationship between grammar learning or instruction methods and GLS use, such as gender, age, educational level, developmental stage, ethnic or racial background, beliefs, learning styles, values, and goals (Oxford et al., 2007) as discussed below.

Regarding factors that influence GLS use, the present study wants to examine the argument that grammar learning or instruction methods do not impact the use of GLS. The present study focuses on how grammar learning or instruction methods (explicit and implicit) may influence GLS used to develop explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar. Oxford et al. (2007) believe that instructional methods of grammar do not control L2 grammar learning. They provided some factors that play an essential role in learning grammar. One of these factors is the age at which adult learners might require explicit learning in which they will pay more attention to forms to control the given grammatical rule in a way that is different from how young learners learn grammar. Another factor is learning style preferences, where L2 learners with different learning styles will learn L2 grammar in different ways. According to them, the factors that influence learning styles (e.g., age, racial background, gender, and educational level) indirectly influence the choice of GLS. In addition to learners' beliefs, they assume that the goals and values of the institution and teacher are among the factors that might influence GLS use more than the method of instruction (Oxford et al. (2007). They summarize that "age, stage of L2 development, nature of the L2, nature of the L1, and relevant discrepancies between the L2 and L1" are among other factors that affect GLS use (p. 124).

Earlier, it was mentioned that the communicative language teaching approach had influenced the existence of GLS, as researchers in the field of LLS ignored them or categorized them under general cognitive strategies. Therefore, there was no taxonomy for GLS for a long time; however, some scholars categorized LLS in different ways. Some scholars in the field of LLS developed taxonomies based on the purpose they plan to accomplish and presented LLS in different surveys. A famous example of this kind of questionnaire is the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), designed by Rebecca Oxford in 1990. This survey included 80 items covering six categories of strategies: memory strategies, cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies. GLS were not referred to under a grammar category in this survey. Other scholars categorized LLS based on language skills. An excellent example of this taxonomy is Cohen et al. (2002), who represented this taxonomy in a survey known as the Language Strategy Use Survey (LSUS). This survey included 89 items covering listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary, and translation. A shorter version of this survey is designed for young learners. Again, GLS were not looked at in this survey, although vocabulary had its portion. Other taxonomies were interpreted into various surveys such as Anderson and Vandergrift (1996), National Capital Language Resource Center (NCLRC) (2000), O'Malley and Chamot (1990), Vandergrift et al. (2006), and others in which GLS were utterly neglected. Recently, Oxford et al. (2024) developed the Diagnostic Inventory for Self-Regulated Language Learning (DISLL) to assess the use of self-regulated learning strategies among learners of English as an additional language.

In an attempt to collect and categorize GLS, Pawlak (2013) introduced his GLSI, which includes 70 items divided into four categories as follows: 8 metacognitive strategies; 50 cognitive strategies distributed into four subcategories: A- 10 GLS used to improve grammar comprehension and production during communication; B- 24 GLS used to develop learners' explicit knowledge of grammar, which were used in the present study; C- 10 GLS used to develop learners' implicit knowledge of grammar, which were also used in the present study; D- 6 GLS used to treat learners' errors and corrective feedback during grammar production; 7 affective strategies; and 5 social strategies. This taxonomy, as the first classification of GLS, is based on previous taxonomies such as Oxford's (1990) SILL and O'Malley and Chamot's (1990), which were later supported by Cohen and Dörnyei (2002), who classified LLS into metacognitive, cognitive, social, and affective strategies. GLSI is now used in many studies to measure GLS use (Pawlak, 2024).

Earlier than Pawlak (2013), Oxford (2011) presented her Strategic Self-regulation Model in which she classified LLS into three domains: metacognitive, social, and affective. This model was updated when Oxford (2017) added one more domain, the motivational domain. In both models, GLS, in particular, were not underscored but were comprised within the four domains or categories, and due to the nature and ability of LLS to exist in more than one category, Oxford (2017) emphasized the importance of strategy fluidity and the difficulty of restricting a strategy to exist only in one category. This applies to GLS as they underlie LLS. Applying the concept of strategy fluidity by Oxford (2017), it is now straightforward to understand the definition and how LLS are categorized. Oxford (2017, p. 158) underscored the importance of strategy classifications only to communicate about LLS. However, she called for more flexibility and fluidity when it comes to strategy classification as she states, "Even though we need formal categories and labels to be able to communicate about strategies, we must recognize that strategies have a unique way of squirming outside of our most finely crafted labels and categories."

The following section illustrates the methodology used to explore the relationship between grammar learning or instruction approaches and the use of GLS assigned to develop explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar. Research questions, the data collection instrument used, and participants' descriptions are also provided.

3. Methodology

To investigate the relationship between grammar learning or instruction approaches and the utilization of GLS assigned to develop explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar, two sub-categories of Pawlak's (2018) GLSI were employed. These subcategories aimed to measure GLS used by students who prefer explicit grammar learning and those who prefer implicit grammar learning. In an online survey administered through Google Forms, participants were asked to indicate their preference for learning grammar explicitly or implicitly before completing the GLSI. This preliminary question was essential for computing the correlation between grammar learning or instruction methods and using GLS to develop explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar.

3.1 Research Questions

The study sought answers to the following research questions:

1- Is there a significant relationship between explicit and implicit grammar learning or instruction approaches and using GLS to develop explicit knowledge of grammar?

2- Is there a significant relationship between explicit and implicit grammar learning or instruction approaches and using GLS to develop implicit knowledge of grammar?

3.2 Survey

To assess students' use of GLS, an online survey using Google Forms was conducted by sending the survey link to the participants on the Blackboard platform. The survey included two sub-categories of Pawlak's (2018) GLSI, focusing on cognitive strategies employed by L2 learners to develop explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar. The first sub-category comprised 24 GLS indicating how explicit knowledge of grammar is developed, while the second sub-category included 10 GLS indicating how implicit knowledge of grammar is developed. A five-point Likert scale was applied in the survey where 1 (it does not apply to me at all) and 5 (it perfectly applies to me) consecutively indicate the low and high use of the GLS.

3.3 Participants

The participants in this study were 172 male preparatory year college students, aged between 17 and 21, enrolled at Jubail English Language and Preparatory Year Institute in Saudi Arabia. These students were undertaking an English One course aligned with A1 and A2 levels, and later, in the second semester, they were expected to progress to an English Two course (B1 and B1 Plus) following the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for languages. The language of instruction for their college studies was English. Participants attended 21 English language classes per week, including 15 language skills classes and separate classes for grammar and vocabulary. The program, considered intensive in Saudi Arabia, involved explicit grammar instruction using a designated textbook and implicit instruction through a skills textbook covering reading, writing, listening, and speaking tasks. After 15 weeks of study, participants were expected to reach the A2 proficiency level. Participants were informed about the study, given the option to participate or withdraw at any time, and assured of the confidentiality of their responses for research purposes. Their voluntary survey completion indicated their agreement to participate in the study.

4. Results

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was employed for data analysis. The descriptive statistics in Table 1 show that out of 172 participants, 62 (36%) participants preferred learning grammar explicitly, while 110 (64%) preferred learning grammar implicitly. The overall means of using GLS assigned to develop explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar (Table 2) served as dependent variables. In contrast, grammar learning or instruction approaches (explicit and implicit) were considered the independent variables. The Pearson correlation coefficient was utilized to explore the relationship between grammar learning or instruction approaches and using GLS designated to develop explicit and implicit grammar knowledge.

Table 1. Participants' grammar learning methods

Grammar learning or instruction method	**N**	**Percent**
Explicit	62	36%
Implicit	110	64%
Total	**172**	**100%**

Table 2 displays the overall means of GLS used to develop explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar, indicating medium values (M = 3.02 (explicit) and M = 3.21 (implicit)) based on Oxford's (1990) calculation, ranging between High (M = 3.50 - 5.00), Medium (M = 2.50 - 3.49), and Low (M = 1- 2.49). While further analysis of GLS use could be conducted, it is beyond the scope of the present study.

Table 2. Overall means of GLS use

	GLS for explicit knowledge	**GLS for implicit knowledge**
Overall means (M)	3.02 (Medium)	3.21 (Medium)

4.1 Research Question 1

Is there a significant relationship between explicit and implicit grammar learning or instruction approaches and using GLS to develop explicit knowledge of grammar?

A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to explore this relationship. Table 3 reveals a weak and negative correlation (r = -0.070)

between these variables. The p-value is 0.363, exceeding the standard significance level of 0.05, indicating that the correlation is not statistically significant.

Table 3. Correlation between explicit and implicit grammar learning or instruction approaches and GLS used to develop explicit knowledge of grammar

Grammar learning or instruction approaches	GLS explicit knowledge
Pearson correlation	-0.070
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.363
N	172

4.2 Research Question 2

Is there a significant relationship between explicit grammar learning or instruction approach and using GLS to develop explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar?

Similarly, the Pearson correlation coefficient was administered to explore the relationship between explicit and implicit grammar learning or instruction approaches, and GLS used to develop implicit knowledge of grammar. Figures in Table 4 show a weak and negative correlation (r = -0.033) and a statistically insignificant correlation (p = 0.670).

Table 4. Correlation between grammar learning or instruction approaches and GLS used to develop implicit knowledge of grammar

Implicit grammar learning or instruction approach	GLS implicit knowledge
Pearson correlation	-0.033
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.670
N	172

In summary, the results suggest no statistically significant relationship between explicit and implicit grammar learning or instruction approaches and the use of GLS designated to develop explicit and implicit grammar knowledge in this sample of 172 male college students.

5. Discussion

The results of this study align with the assertion made by Oxford et al. (2007) that grammar learning or instruction approaches do not significantly influence the use of GLS. In response to the first research question, the weak negative correlation (r = -0.070) between grammar learning or instruction approaches and the 24 GLS used to develop explicit knowledge of grammar was not statistically significant (p = 0.363). Similarly, for the second research question, the weak negative correlation (r = -0.033) between grammar learning or instruction approaches and the GLS used to develop implicit knowledge of grammar was also not statistically significant (p = 0.670). Therefore, grammar learning or instruction approaches (explicit or implicit) do not predict using GLS to develop explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar.

Despite the researcher's initial assumptions that explicit grammar learning might influence the use of GLS for explicit knowledge and implicit grammar learning might affect the use of GLS for implicit knowledge, the findings did not support these assumptions. The negligible correlation suggests that changes in grammar learning or instruction approaches are not strongly associated with changes in the use of GLS in this context. This reinforces Oxford et al.'s (2007: 135) assertion that "learners create and employ strategies based on their own beliefs, goals, and sociocultural factors, rather than being solely influenced by instructional methodologies."

Several factors may contribute to the present study's observed medium use of GLS. Though not measured, participants' beliefs about language learning could play a role. Previous research by Yang (1999) and Park (1995) suggests that learners' beliefs influence their strategy use, and confidence in learning English may result in more active language use. They believe that learners' beliefs determine their behavior. Therefore, teachers should consider this to boost positive beliefs that lead to more effective LLS use in general and GLS use in particular. Introducing grammar learning approaches to students might be a good idea to raise their awareness of grammar learning. Identifying approaches to grammar learning allows students to know more about their preferred ways of learning and provides them opportunities to choose and attempt other ways of grammar learning. Meanwhile, this may positively contribute to their beliefs about grammar learning and GLS use.

Teachers' beliefs and instructional methods may also impact the participants' use of GLS. Ellis (2008) highlights the importance of aligning learners' and teachers' beliefs to enhance language learning. The potential mismatch between student and teacher beliefs needs further exploration, although not investigated in this study. Therefore, teachers' positive beliefs about grammar learning and GLS use may be conveyed to students to assist their language learning. On the other hand, students may acquire these positive beliefs and effectively deploy them while learning. Teachers' beliefs about the effectiveness of GLS play a crucial role in enhancing their students' beliefs about their language learning and students' use of GLS if they have sufficient experience, intention, and will.

Students' goals in language learning might prioritize skills over grammar, impacting their use of GLS. Chamot (2004) emphasizes the influence of learners' goals on strategy choice, and in the present study, students' primary goal may be passing English courses to complete their studies. This goal can be invested appropriately in introducing students to GLS through surveys such as GLSI, SILL, or LSUS to know more about their current strategy use or through conducting strategy instruction programs that raise students' knowledge of how to increase their repertoire of LLS, which hopefully results in better and more efficient language learning. Asking students about their other minor goals of learning English can also be advantageous by encouraging them to attempt different approaches to grammar learning (if they prefer explicit learning, they might be encouraged to try implicit learning and vice versa) or deploying new LLS that might enhance their language learning.

Learning style might be another critical factor affecting participants' GLS use in the present study. Some students with concrete-sequential learning style will have a low tolerance for ambiguity. Thus, they require explicit instructions and directions or step-by-step explanations; however, intuitive-random learners tolerate ambiguity and try to discover new grammatical rules themselves (Oxford, 2017). This aligns with Richards and Rappen (2014), who underscore learners' learning styles and preferences while learning grammar. They believe some language learners feel uncomfortable if they do not understand something, while others can get along with ambiguity, trying to learn grammar implicitly. Thus, students' learning styles may influence their use of GLS to develop explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar. The medium use of GLS in the present study might indicate that participants' learning styles represented the abovementioned learning styles in a close percentage. Remember that raising students' awareness of their learning styles promotes their knowledge about themselves and their learning preferences, positively impacts their language learning, and encourages them to stretch their learning styles, if possible, to use new GLS.

The designs and goals of the participants' English institution may contribute to their GLS use, with the participants possibly following the teaching approaches emphasized in their English program. Oxford et al. (2007) stress the role of institutions in shaping students' GLS. The lack of strategy instruction in the participants' English program could have influenced participants' strategy use. Therefore, attracting language institutions to LLS instruction programs and other factors (learners' beliefs, goals, grammar learning approaches, strategies, and styles) may support them in rethinking their curriculums, goals, and plans for teaching language. They may develop new and valuable insights that will help them evaluate their language programs.

The level of L2 development is another factor that might influence GLS use in the present study. Oxford et al. (2007) emphasized the stage of L2 development as an essential factor influencing learners' use of GLS. Since participants were all at the A2 level and their GLS use was medium in both GLS used to develop explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar, it would be much more convincing if B1 or B1 Plus students took part in the present study. This is a suggestion for another comparative study to examine GLS use among students in different language levels.

The balanced approach of explicit and implicit grammar instruction in the present study, advocated by scholars like Ellis (2006) and Oxford (2017), may contribute to the observed medium use of GLS. Despite the weak negative correlation, the study indicates that using a balanced approach does not strongly impact the application of GLS. Thus, more investigation is still needed to see what GLS learners might use while learning grammar, whether consciously or unconsciously. This might be conducted using think-aloud protocols while learners execute grammar exercises or study grammar in a textbook.

In conclusion, while the initial objective of this study was to challenge Oxford et al.'s (2007) assertion that grammar learning or instructional approaches do not impact GLS, the results contradicted this challenge. Instead, they affirmed Oxford et al.'s (2007) argument, indicating that individual factors such as learners' and teachers' beliefs, learning goals, learning styles, institutional designs and goals, and level of L2 development play a more significant role in shaping the use of GLS than the chosen grammar learning or instructional approaches. Consequently, this study supports Oxford et al.'s (2007) claim. Further research that explores all these factors in the context of the present study will provide insightful and comprehensive information about the link between GLS use and these influential factors.

6. Conclusion

The study investigated the relationship between grammar learning or instruction approaches and using GLS to develop explicit and implicit knowledge of grammar. The findings supported the argument that no significant relationship exists between these approaches and using GLS. The overall means of participants' GLS use for explicit and implicit knowledge were medium.

The study introduced GLS to students through the GLSI, potentially increasing their awareness of language learning strategies. Such awareness could positively impact students' beliefs about language learning and subsequent GLS use. Teachers are responsible for continuing to raise awareness through similar surveys or strategy instruction programs.

Introducing GLS into language teaching practices requires a nuanced understanding of how these strategies intersect with implicit and explicit instructional approaches. Pawlak's (2013) GLSI, designed to measure GLS use, represents a significant step towards systematically integrating GLS into language learning research.

Frankly, addressing GLS in language curricula necessitates the development of materials and instructional methods that explicitly target LLS in general and GLS in particular. Task design and classroom activities should be aligned to foster the development of explicit and implicit grammar knowledge. Teachers play a pivotal role in guiding learners in the conscious application of GLS, fostering metacognitive awareness, and facilitating strategic choices that align with learners' cognitive styles and preferences.

However, the study had some limitations. It focused solely on male college students in one language institution, and further research involving female students or additional language institutions could provide a more comprehensive understanding. The study did not explore students' beliefs, learning goals, and learning styles, which could influence GLS use. Exploring these factors among students will assist in exploring the relationship between them and the use of GLS.

The present study is mainly quantitative, although future research incorporating qualitative data collection methods like interviews, focus groups, and diary studies is recommended to gain insights into students' beliefs about their language learning and GLS use. Triangulating methods increases the validity of the findings and provides a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between grammar learning or instruction methods and GLS use.

In essence, the study contributes to the ongoing exploration of the relationship between language learning approaches and learners' GLS choices. It emphasizes the need to precisely understand learner beliefs, teacher beliefs and practices, and institutional goals. It plans to comprehensively identify the factors influencing the use of GLS in language learning contexts.

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