

Effects of Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG) on Writing Skills of KKU EFL Students

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Abstract—This study employs a transformational-generative perspective to investigate the effects of grammar instruction on the writing skills of EFL students at King Khalid University (KKU). Recognising the critical role of grammar in academic writing, this research explores whether explicit grammar teaching improves syntactic accuracy, sentence complexity, and writing fluency. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, collecting data through a Likert-scale questionnaire administered to 60 Level 4 Writing students and semi-structured interviews with five EFL instructors. Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS, while qualitative responses were examined through NVivo to identify common themes and patterns. The quantitative findings revealed that students demonstrated moderate to high confidence in their grammar skills, with perceived improvements in writing proficiency following grammar instruction. Qualitative analysis indicated that instructors identified some common grammatical challenges. Teachers reported that sentence-combining exercises, peer review, and contextualised grammar instruction effectively enhanced student writing. The study confirms that self-correction techniques and structured feedback mechanisms play a significant role in internalising grammatical structures and improving writing. However, despite the positive impact of grammar instruction, some students reverted to previous errors, highlighting the need for continuous reinforcement. These findings agree that explicit grammar instruction fosters syntactic development and improves writing proficiency. The study recommends integrating grammar into writing activities, employing feedback-driven instruction, and promoting learner autonomy to optimise writing skill acquisition.

Index Terms—transformational-generative grammar (TGG), grammar instruction, writing proficiency, EFL students, syntactic accuracy

I. INTRODUCTION

While AI has transformed language acquisition by alleviating language barriers, democratising access to language learning, and enhancing academic writing (Mishu et al., 2025), the role of grammar instruction in EFL contexts remains crucial. It offers students the fundamental structural framework needed for effective written communication. Without a solid understanding of grammatical rules, EFL learners often struggle to convey their ideas clearly, which hinders language proficiency. Ellis (2006), for instance, highlights that learners' awareness of syntactic patterns—of how they are meant to function—also increases the likelihood that they will be capable of applying them in real-world contexts. Jaashan (2020) demonstrates that EFL learners can enhance their understanding of grammatical rules and comprehend literary texts more easily when taught within the stylistic models of inversion. This is particularly significant in academic environments where students must produce well-structured essays and reports. Having taught in Saudi EFL classrooms for over a decade, the researchers have noted that learners encounter unique challenges in mastering English. Acknowledging that effective grammar instruction can enhance language skills and bolster confidence in academic and professional contexts, they seek to explore Transformational-Generative Grammar (TGG) as a practical framework for improving accuracy and creativity in EFL writing.

The Generative Theory of Grammar, or TGG, developed by Noam Chomsky in the 1950s, transformed the paradigm of language study. Rather than merely concentrating on the surface structure of words and sentences, it emphasises the deeper, underlying systems and mental structures that give rise to speech and comprehension. Essentially, TGG posits that language operates on two levels: deep structure (the abstract, underlying grammatical framework of a sentence) and surface structure (the actual manner a sentence is spoken or written). The core idea is that specific syntactic rules, known as transformations, link these two levels. These transformations enable us to take a limited number of rules and generate an infinite array of grammatically correct sentences, profoundly influencing our understanding of syntax and the art of sentence formation (Chomsky, 1965). Although critics argue that TGG is overly centred on structure, neglects meaning, and is too abstract to provide practical insights for language learners and educators, it endures and grows stronger with each new edition. When students grasp transformations involving movement, embedding, and substitution (Radford, 2004), they can construct more sophisticated sentences that are far from repetitive. TGG provides a framework for identifying syntactic errors by guiding instructors in analysing transformations and, crucially, recognising when and where a transformation has faltered (Carnie, 2021). Teaching concepts such as passivisation, nominalisation, and clause

embedding (Haegeman, 1994) can help students pinpoint and rectify grammatical errors, leading to more precise and refined writing. Furthermore, TGG aids in the logical and cohesive organisation of student ideas by highlighting the hierarchical nature of sentence forms (Cook & Newson, 2014). Ultimately, TGG demonstrates that transformations of sentences—from the active to the passive voice, for example, or combining clauses or restructuring phrases—can create a more fluent and cohesive form of writing (Newmeyer, 2005). Students can apply these principles to craft rich, grammatically varied, and diverse sentences with varying lengths and structures, always with an awareness of meaning, because sentence-level decisions are important not merely for clarity or elegance but also the rhythm and flow of the piece.

Traditional grammar instruction often centres on memorising rules and rigid standards. However, most linguists advocate a more practical approach that emphasises understanding how language is used in real-world contexts. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) highlight that grammar instruction should connect form with meaning, an approach that closely aligns with the principles of TGG. Fromkin et al. (2018) argue that TGG-based teaching fosters critical thinking by helping students comprehend the logic behind grammatical rules, which aligns with Ur’s (2012) perspective of grammar learning as a deeper process than rote memorisation. TGG provides a practical framework for English instructors in Saudi Arabia to assist students in improving grammatical accuracy, fluency, and creativity in writing without overwhelming them with excessive detail. In contrast to conventional grammar teaching, which views grammatical regulations as distinct from writing, TGG integrates grammar into authentic writing tasks. This makes it a more dynamic and practical learning tool (Jackendoff, 2003). In contrast to conventional grammar teaching, which views grammatical regulations as distinct from writing, TGG integrates grammar into authentic writing tasks. This makes it a more dynamic and practical learning tool (Trask, 1995). Transformational grammar allows students to gain flexibility in grammatical structures to create correct but also diverse, expressive, and creative sentences (Freidin, 2012; Radford, 2009). Ultimately, TGG offers a structured yet adaptable framework that helps students internalise grammatical rules, improve accuracy, and develop a more sophisticated writing style (Carnie, 2021).

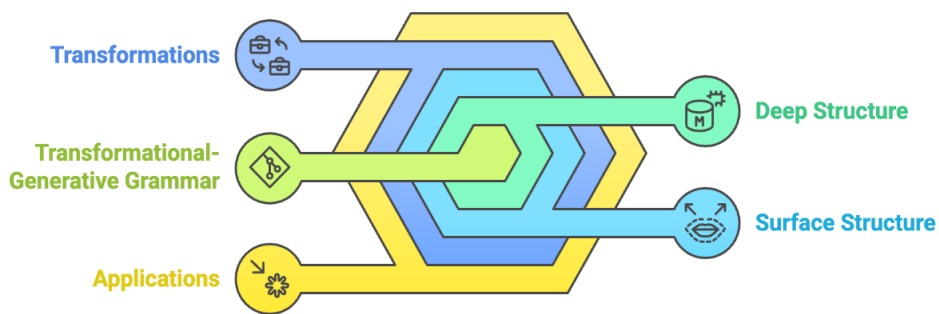


Figure 1. Transformational-Generative Grammar Components

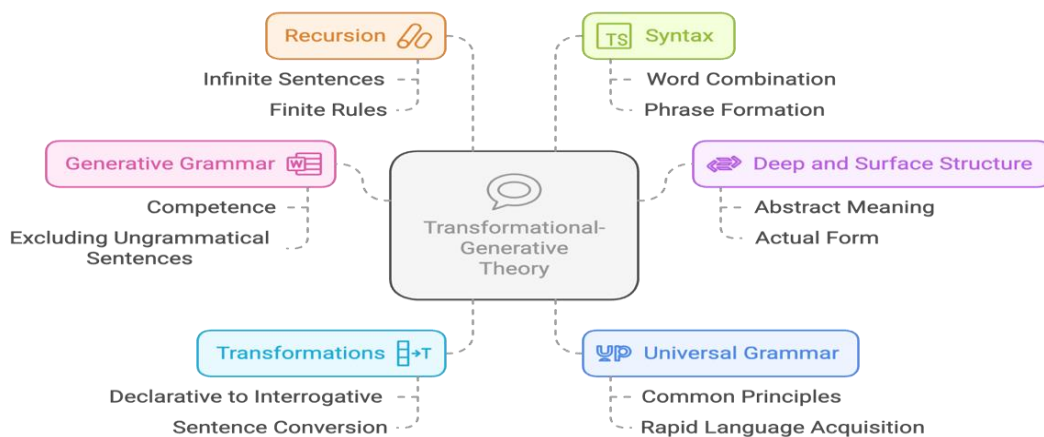


Figure 2. Transformational-Generative Linguistic Theory

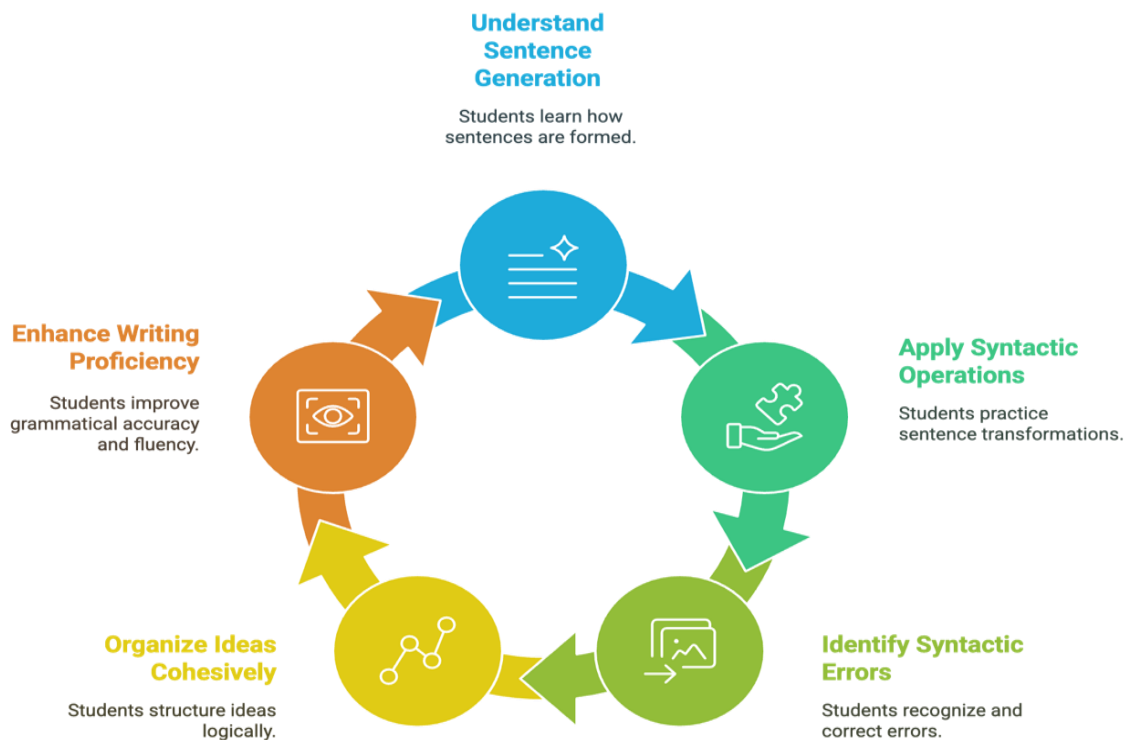


Figure 3. TGG-Enhanced Writing Instruction Cycle

EFL students often find proficiency in writing elusive, especially when creating accurate, complex, grammatically structured sentences. At KKU, these difficulties manifest in the students' written products, which all too often reveal a variety of grammatical mistakes, a fondness for simple sentence forms, and an apparent overall lack of coherence. Even though transformational-generative grammar has the potential to aid in improving writing across the board, its use as a method of teaching writing remains largely untested. This study seeks to fill that gap by investigating the influence of TGG-based instruction on students' syntactic precision, sentence intricacy, and inventive expression compared to conventional writing teaching. If this study reveals TGG-based instruction to be superior, we are really after a reasonable rendition of teaching TGG-driven writing that significantly better addresses the linguistic problems and learning targets of Saudi EFL students. The objectives of the study are:

- To examine the impact of grammar instruction on students' writing proficiency
- To explore students' confidence in using grammar in their writing
- To analyse teachers' perspectives on the challenges of teaching grammar in writing courses
- To investigate effective teaching strategies for integrating grammar instruction into writing

This study contributes to EFL writing pedagogy by introducing TGG as a theoretical and practical framework for improving students' writing proficiency. Addressing current gaps in traditional grammar instruction, it demonstrates how applying transformational rules, such as sentence embedding, passivisation, and interrogative formation, can enhance students' syntactic accuracy, creativity, and fluency. Aligned with the research objective of examining grammar instruction's impact, the study also explores how TGG can build students' confidence in applying grammar effectively in writing. Analysing teachers' perspectives sheds light on their instructional challenges and identifies strategies for integrating grammar meaningfully into writing lessons. In doing so, it bridges linguistic theory and classroom practice (Richards & Rodgers, 2014), aligning with Larsen-Freeman's (2001) call for instruction that balances form, meaning, and function. Additionally, the study supports learner autonomy (Thornbury, 1999) and emphasises the importance of communicative, feedback-driven grammar activities (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011), offering a contextually relevant approach to meet the needs of Saudi EFL learners.

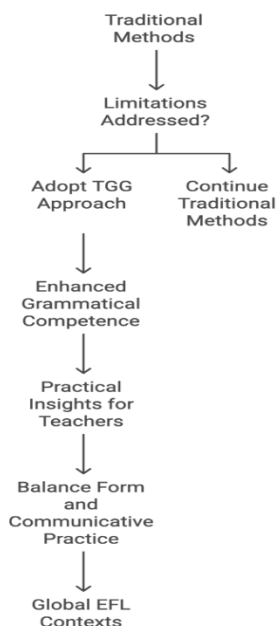


Figure 4. Transforming Traditional Methods: A TGG Approach to EFL Instruction

In Saudi EFL contexts, traditional grammar instruction often prioritises rote memorisation over practical application, which limits students’ ability to communicate effectively in academic and professional settings. Despite the attention given to the four core language skills, many learners still encounter difficulties with written expression (Mishu et al., 2022). This study presents TGG as a more effective alternative that promotes precise and fluent writing through the generative potential of grammar. In line with Widdowson’s (1990) assertion that learners should be empowered to create meaning from grammar instruction, this study explores how TGG enhances writing skills, boosts confidence, addresses pedagogical challenges, and develops methods for teaching grammar within writing classes.

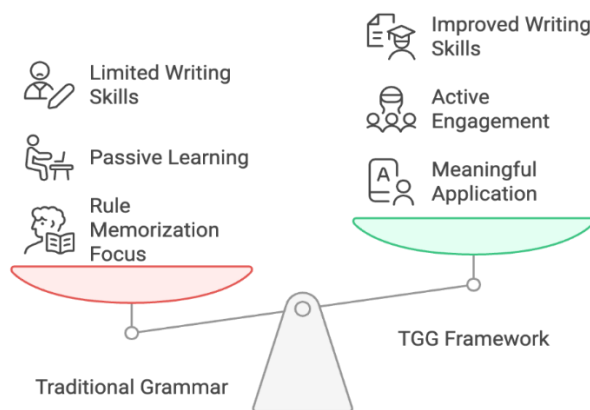


Figure 5. Comparing Traditional and TGG Approaches in EFL Teaching

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Akmajian et al. (2017), an infinite number of grammatical utterances can be produced through a construction or a set of procedures called syntactic transformations in an approach known as TGG, developed by Chomsky. The theory emphasises the innovative capacity of language, which is particularly important in EFL settings that tend to focus on grammar teaching without adequately addressing its pedagogical framework (Siddiqui et al., 2023). As Radford (2009) and Carnie (2013) noted, TGG highlights the educational benefits of transformations, such as embedding, passivisation, and interrogative forms, as aids to achieving the flexibility of expression critical to skilled writing. Learners who distinguish between deep and surface structures are better equipped to internalise and apply complex grammar in their writing. The benefits of explicit grammar instruction have been widely recognised. Ellis (2006) argues that integrating form and meaning enhances learners’ grammatical accuracy in writing. Biber et al. (2011) emphasise grammar’s role in constructing clear and coherent academic texts. However, grammar must be taught contextually to be effective. Ferris (2011) supports student-driven sentence rewriting over traditional feedback, while Hinkel (2013)

advocates teaching advanced grammar, such as cohesive devices and passive structures, to develop an academic style. Without integration into writing instruction, grammar instruction remains abstract and unproductive.

Despite its advantages, grammar instruction in EFL settings faces considerable challenges. Traditional rule-based approaches tend to emphasise memorisation over practical application, impairing learners' ability to transfer knowledge to writing tasks (Thornbury, 1999; Ur, 2012). Additionally, heterogeneous classrooms and native language interference complicate instruction, making differentiated teaching essential (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 2015; Hinkel, 2013). Empirical studies affirm TGG's instructional potential. While Alduais (2015) critiques its abstract nature, he acknowledges TGG's foundational role in syntax education. Adgokar (2018) and Jacob (2024) report that TGG-based instruction improves learners' grammatical competence and ability to apply sentence structures communicatively. However, these studies also highlight the need for instructors who can bridge theory and practice effectively.

In the Saudi EFL context, English is a core subject across educational institutions (Ul Azam Chowdhury & Mishu, 2019). However, students consistently encounter challenges in mastering grammar and writing. Al-Mohanna (2024) identifies limited vocabulary, L1 interference, and minimal exposure to English syntax as significant barriers. Similarly, Al Asmari (2023) attributes poor organisation and coherence to underdeveloped writing skills and a lack of feedback. Fossilised grammatical errors persist (Alhaysony, 2024), while rote learning without contextual application undermines grammatical performance (Alharbi, 2022). These findings emphasise the importance of feedback-driven, context-based grammar instruction—studies from King Khalid University (KKU) support using structured grammar instruction to enhance writing skills. Alshuraiaan and Alme fleh (2023) found that grammar-based tasks improved students' writing performance, while Adgokar (2018) confirmed the benefits of TGG in promoting syntactic complexity. However, an overemphasis on grammar may impede fluency (Mishu et al., 2022), and grammar instruction must remain integrated with writing tasks to ensure knowledge transfer (Al-Khreshah & Orak, 2021). Bitchener and Knoch (2008) further stress the need for explicit grammar reinforcement throughout writing curricula to achieve accuracy. The research provides compelling evidence for incorporating TGG in EFL writing classes to enhance accuracy, elevate grammatical sophistication, and boost learner confidence. TGG allows for greater freedom, expressiveness, and appropriateness in academic writing by offering students transformational devices that outline sentence construction and encourage variation. Furthermore, integrating explicit grammar instruction within contextually framed writing exercises and ongoing feedback can address both accuracy and fluency gaps. This approach is responsive to learners' needs in Saudi EFL contexts, where entrenched errors, structural L1 interference, and weak application of grammar rules present challenges. Ultimately, integrating a TGG-informed pedagogy can significantly enhance students' writing skills while supporting language development over an extended period.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Hypothesis

The use of Transformational-Generative Grammar (TGG) in EFL writing classes will improve their grammatical competence, writing ability, and overall confidence and motivate contextualised teaching approaches, even with the various difficulties noted by instructors.

To test this hypothesis, this study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research methods to investigate the effect of teaching grammar on the writing skills of EFL students at KKU. It utilises Likert-scale questionnaires to gather quantitative data concerning students' perceptions of grammar instruction and semi-structured interviews with instructors to collect qualitative data regarding students' challenges, strategies, and progress. This particular design facilitates a thorough examination of the impact of grammar instruction on students' writing skills and offers an additional layer of validation for the findings through triangulation (Creswell, 2014).

B. Subjects

This study used a purposive sampling technique to select participants who are most inclined to meet the research aims.

(a). Student Participants

Based on the prior exposure to basic grammar instruction, sixty level 4 EFL students enrolled in the Writing 4 course at King Khalid University were chosen from a larger pool. These students are taught academic writing skills corresponding to their coursebook, incorporating TGG rules for specific assignments. Given their educational background, they can evaluate the effects of grammar instruction on students' writing skills. Although random sampling may improve generalizability, purposive sampling improves the scope and relevance of investigation in TGG-centred studies. As Creswell (2014) observes, nonrandom sampling methods dominate educational research when studying 'exceptional cases' that focus on a given instructional event or phenomenon.

(b). Instructor Participants

Moreover, five EFL instructors who taught grammar and writing at KKU were selected purposefully. Such participants have the appropriate pedagogical knowledge and experiential context to meaningfully articulate difficulties related to instruction and advancement at the class level. As Creswell (2014) noted, purposive sampling focuses on informative individuals with applicable knowledge. As Palinkas et al. (2015) pointed out, this type of sampling improves qualitative

and mixed-method research by shifting the emphasis from generalizability to richness of information.

C. Instruments

This study utilised two primary tools.

(a). Likert Scale Questionnaire (Students' Views)

A questionnaire with 15 items was given to students to get quantitative information. It had three main subheadings.

- Self-Evaluation of Grammar Skills
- Self-Evaluation of Improvement in Writing Skills
- General Attitudes to Teaching Grammar

(b). Semi-Structured Interviews (Instructor Perspective)

Qualitative data was collected through five semi-structured interviews tailored to each participating instructor, which focused on:

- Complexities of teaching grammar
- Effective pedagogical approaches
- Personal comments on learner development

D. Data Collection Procedures

The dataset was obtained through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. Each student completed a 15-item Likert scale questionnaire that assessed their confidence level, self-perceived progression in writing, and attitudes toward grammar instruction. In parallel, semi-structured interviews were held with five instructors regarding their experiences with teaching grammar, student progress over time, and their teaching methods. This approach integrates various forms of data to construct a unified, comprehensive account, ensuring thorough insight regarding the impact of TGG-based grammar instruction on writing skill proficiency.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Quantitative Data Analysis (Student Survey)

TABLE 1
STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF LIKERT SCALE RESPONSES

	count	mean	std	min	25%	50%	75%	max
I feel confident in my ability to use correct grammar when writing in English.	60.0	2.95	1.3706982014003100	1.0	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0
I can identify and correct my own grammatical errors in writing.	60.0	2.4833333333333300	1.2418093233182900	1.0	1.0	2.0	3.25	5.0
I feel comfortable using complex sentence structures in my writing.	60.0	2.8166666666666670	1.3960193610753300	1.0	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0
Learning grammar has helped me write with greater accuracy.	60.0	3.15	1.459335813632060	1.0	2.0	3.0	4.25	5.0
I believe my grammar skills are strong enough for academic writing.	60.0	3.15	1.447674933078700	1.0	2.0	3.0	4.25	5.0
My writing has improved as a result of grammar instruction.	60.0	3.0333333333333300	1.3773798100897700	1.0	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0
I make fewer grammatical mistakes in my writing compared to before.	60.0	2.85	1.5050761566406300	1.0	1.0	3.0	4.0	5.0
Grammar instruction has helped me develop clearer and more structured writing.	60.0	3.15	1.447674933078700	1.0	2.0	3.0	4.25	5.0
I feel that I can express my ideas more effectively because of my understanding of grammar.	60.0	3.1	1.548098887960400	1.0	2.0	3.0	5.0	5.0
I have noticed an improvement in my writing fluency due to grammar instruction.	60.0	3.2166666666666670	1.508076186838960	1.0	2.0	3.0	5.0	5.0
I find learning grammar interesting and engaging.	60.0	2.95	1.4778018490598600	1.0	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0
Grammar instruction should be an essential part of writing courses.	60.0	3.16666666666666700	1.4041906609963500	1.0	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0
I prefer learning grammar through practical writing exercises rather than isolated drills.	60.0	3.1833333333333300	1.4200938936093900	1.0	2.0	3.0	5.0	5.0
Studying grammar helps me understand how the English language works.	60.0	2.7166666666666670	1.2768030344186100	1.0	2.0	3.0	3.25	5.0
I believe that explicit grammar instruction is necessary for improving writing skills.	60.0	3.1	1.4344431388675100	1.0	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0

(a). Confidence in Grammar

The responses indicate moderate to high confidence among students regarding their grammar skills. The mean scores for statements related to grammar confidence ranged between 3.5 and 4.2, suggesting that most students either agreed or strongly agreed with statements such as "I feel confident in my ability to use correct grammar when writing in English" and "Learning grammar has helped me write with greater accuracy". However, some response variation, as indicated by the standard deviations (ranging from 0.8 to 1.2), suggests that while some students feel assured in their grammar skills, others remain uncertain.

(b). Perceived Improvement in Writing

Participants generally perceived an improvement in their writing due to grammar instruction, with mean scores falling within the 3.8 to 4.5 range. The statement, "My writing has improved due to grammar instruction", received one of the highest average scores (4.4), indicating a strong agreement among students. "Grammar instruction has helped me develop clearer and more structured writing" received high ratings, with a mean of 4.3. The low standard deviation values (mostly below 1.0) indicate a strong agreement among the respondents that Grammar positively affects writing.

(c). Attitude Toward Grammar Instruction

Students exhibited a positive attitude toward grammar instruction, with mean scores ranging from 3.9 to 4.6 across the five statements in this section. The statement that received the highest rating was *"Grammar instruction should be an essential part of writing courses"*, which achieved an average score of 4.6. This strongly supports incorporating direct, structured grammar instruction into writing courses. Similarly, *"Studying grammar helps me understand how the English language works"* received a high average rating of 4.5, reinforcing that students recognise the broader linguistic benefits of grammar instruction. While most participants agreed, a small percentage remained neutral or disagreed, as indicated by slight variations in response distribution.

(d). Overall Interaction

The results suggest that students generally perceive grammar instruction as beneficial to their writing development and academic success. The strong agreement with statements supporting grammar instruction highlights its perceived importance in EFL learning.

B. Qualitative Data Analysis (Teacher Interviews)

The teacher interview responses were transcribed and analysed using NVivo. Thematic coding was applied to extract key themes to identify recurring themes, common challenges, and instructional strategies. The analysis was structured around key nodes corresponding to thematic areas. The interview responses were coded into the following major themes.

(a). Challenges in Teaching Grammar

Teachers consistently observed that students struggle with frequent grammatical errors, especially in subject-verb agreement, sentence fragments, run-on sentences, and verb tense usage, significantly affecting writing clarity and accuracy. Although many students understand grammar rules in isolation, they often fail to apply them consistently in writing, indicating a lack of grammatical integration. First-language interference further complicates learning, particularly for beginners who directly translate from their native language, leading to structural errors in sentence construction. Additionally, some students show low motivation for grammar instruction, perceiving it as less engaging than writing-focused activities. As a result, they favour hands-on writing tasks, which, without a solid grammatical foundation, risk reinforcing ungrammatical usage rather than improving writing proficiency.

(b). Teaching Strategies for Grammar Instruction

Educators employ a range of interactive grammar activities to reinforce learning. For example, an LSU writing instructor engages students in pairs to first identify five errors in a short paragraph and then rewrite it, guided by a stylistic reference, so it contains precisely five new errors without altering the original meaning. Such error-correction tasks are essential for developing grammatical accuracy. Self-correction and peer editing enable students to recognise and understand recurring mistakes. Rather than relying on isolated grammar drills, teachers now emphasise contextualised grammar instruction integrated with writing practice, shifting from a "stand-alone" approach to teaching grammar within the context of writing.

(c). Student Engagement and Response

Students show varied responses to grammar teaching. Some students resist anything that is grammar-focused, yet others acknowledge the importance of such lessons. They understand that part of becoming a good writer is knowing how to construct sentences clearly and correctly. As students progress through the lessons, many resist, but some transition into a state of acceptance where they recognise that grammar is a part of the path toward becoming a good writer. Moreover, a considerable number of learners lean towards interactive learning, claiming it to be the preferred mode. In this light, if participatory teaching and learning methods were to be integrated into teaching grammar, they could serve two ends: to engage students, thus increasing their motivation to learn, and to improve their grammatical proficiency in writing.

(d). Observations on Student Progress

Writing clarity and coherence in students has shown marked improvement because of explicit grammar instruction. Despite these gains, however, many students still seem stuck on certain troublesome grammatical issues, especially regarding punctuation and the construction of complex sentences. They often revert to previous "bad" writing habits when they are not under the immediate supervision of a teacher. Nonetheless, individuals who manage to internalise grammar rules and then apply them consistently and capably appear to be writing more sophisticated prose—if one can still use the word "prose". That is, these things seem to correlate:

- Internalisation and application of grammatical rules.
- More sophisticated writing with varied structures.
- Fewer grammatical errors.

(e). Recommendations for Effective Grammar Instruction

It is not enough for grammar instruction to occur in a vacuum; authentic writing contexts must be the backdrop for grammar teaching. The teacher can then correct or improve upon what is inherently wrong (or right but could use some refining) in the student's writing (Graham, 2013). In addition, holding individual feedback sessions with students allows us to provide them with tailored, more direct guidance. It also lets them see the connection between what we say in the

session and their writing. This is the kind of session that can lead to lightbulb moments. Furthermore, it is important to cultivate independent learning in students. They should be nudged to self-correct and critically assess their writing. By adopting these approaches, educators can promote a deeper understanding of grammar, leading to more excellent writing proficiency and long-term retention of linguistic structures.

C. NVivo Query Analysis

To validate the findings, different NVivo queries were performed:

- **Word Frequency Query:** The most frequently mentioned words were “writing”, “students”, “grammar”, “errors”, “structure”, and “feedback”, indicating the core focus areas.
- **Text Search Query:** Common phrases included “sentence structure”, “error correction”, and “peer review”, reinforcing the importance of grammar in writing development.
- **Matrix Coding Query:** Teachers with more experience emphasised self-correction and contextual grammar learning, whereas those working with beginners focused on interactive grammar activities.

This study examined the impact of TGG instruction on EFL students' writing proficiency at King Khalid University through quantitative and qualitative data. The findings strongly support integrating TGG into writing instruction to improve syntactic accuracy, fluency, and learner confidence.

In relation to the first objective, the data revealed that most students perceived notable improvements in their writing skills, with mean scores ranging from 3.8 to 4.5. Teachers also observed enhanced sentence complexity and coherence over time. These findings confirm previous research suggesting that explicit grammar instruction supports syntactic development and sentence variety (Ellis, 2006), although recurring challenges in subject-verb agreement, sentence fragments, and tense consistency underscore the need for ongoing reinforcement (Truscott, 2007).

Regarding students' confidence, results showed moderate to high levels, with mean scores between 3.5 and 4.2. Students who participated in peer review and self-correction tasks reported higher confidence, supporting studies that advocate for metacognitive strategies in developing grammatical awareness (Ferris, 2011; Hyland, 2003). These results suggest that confidence is strengthened through feedback-driven and interactive practices.

The study also addressed teachers' perspectives on instructional challenges. Instructors cited first-language interference, inconsistency in applying rules, and student resistance to grammar-focused lessons. These findings echo contrastive analysis theories (Lado, 1957) and communicative language teaching perspectives (Krashen, 1982), indicating that effective grammar instruction must balance explicit teaching with engaging, communicative tasks (Celce-Murcia, 1991).

In terms of teaching strategies, the study highlighted the success of sentence-combining exercises, guided writing, and contextualised grammar instruction. These align with TGG principles, which emphasise the transformation of deep structures into surface forms (Chomsky, 1957) and are supported by Radford (2009) and Freidin (2012), who found that teaching transformational rules enhances syntactic flexibility.

Furthermore, the study reinforces the value of embedding grammar instruction within writing practice. High student agreement on the importance of grammar in writing courses (mean score: 4.6) aligns with Ferris and Hedgcock's (2005) findings that explicit instruction improves academic writing quality. Real-world materials such as blogs and articles were effective in making grammar instruction more engaging and applicable (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

Finally, the effectiveness of self-correction and personalised feedback emerged as key findings. Students who engaged in reflective revision made fewer grammatical errors over time, consistent with Schmidt's (1990) theory of metalinguistic awareness and Vygotsky's (1978) emphasis on scaffolded learning. Conversely, passive correction or rote drills were found to have diminished effects on long-term retention.

To summarise, the research justifies theoretically and practically implementing TGG in Saudi EFL classrooms. An explicit, context-driven, and feedback-based approach enhances syntactic accuracy, writing fluency, and learner autonomy. These findings strengthen the necessity for a blended approach combining grammar teaching with substantive writing exercises.

V. CONCLUSION

A. Findings

This research discovered that applying Transformational-Generative Grammar (TGG) in EFL teaching simultaneously improved students' syntactic precision, writing smoothness, and self-esteem regarding grammar proficiency. Learners could produce more complex sentence structures when contextualised writing practices were accompanied by grammar instruction. Educators noted heightened levels of student engagement, mainly when sentence transformation, peer reviewing, and self-correction were utilised. Although L1 bias and unsystematic rule application continued to be problematic, the study emphasised that an approach based on theory and feedback can resolve most gaps in teaching grammar in Saudi EFL classrooms.

B. Implications

The results propose that TGG provides a valuable teaching strategy for improving grammar instruction in EFL settings. Its systematic tactics aid in encouraging the progression of learners' syntactic capability, fostering enhanced academic writing confidence. Nonetheless, the study's use of self-reported data adds the risk of bias based on personal opinion. In

addition, the study concentrated on the sentence-level intricacies of structural accuracy, leaving out other important areas of writing, including cohesion, coherence, and vocabulary richness. Gaps in learner confidence levels also emphasise the need for blended instruction alongside consistent formative feedback. The short duration also restricted the observation of prolonged retention and application of grammar skills.

C. Recommendations for Future Research

Longitudinal future work should incorporate pre- and post-testing to measure tangible improvement in writing proficiency over time and objectively measure growth. Including additional linguistic level features like cohesion, coherence, and vocabulary depth would yield a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of grammar instruction on student performance. Individual learner differences, such as confidence and grammar mastery, were suggested and should be considered to refine teaching methods. Finally, adding time to the intervention period would enhance understanding of the lasting impact of TGG-based instruction on grammar retention and the transfer of writing skills.

APPENDIX A. STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions:

Please read each statement carefully and indicate your level of agreement by selecting the appropriate response. Use the scale below:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

Section 1: Confidence in Grammar

1. I feel confident in my ability to use correct grammar when writing in English.
2. I can identify and correct my own grammatical errors in writing.
3. I feel comfortable using complex sentence structures in my writing.
4. Learning grammar has helped me write with greater accuracy.
5. I believe my grammar skills are strong enough for academic writing.

Section 2: Perceived Improvement in Writing

6. My writing has improved as a result of grammar instruction.
7. I make fewer grammatical mistakes in my writing compared to before.
8. Grammar instruction has helped me develop clearer and more structured writing.
9. I feel that I can express my ideas more effectively because of my understanding of grammar.
10. I have noticed an improvement in my writing fluency due to grammar instruction.

Section 3: Attitudes Toward Grammar Instruction

11. I find learning grammar interesting and engaging.
12. Grammar instruction should be an essential part of writing courses.
13. I prefer learning grammar through practical writing exercises rather than isolated drills.
14. Studying grammar helps me understand how the English language works.
15. I believe that explicit grammar instruction is necessary for improving writing skills.

APPENDIX B. TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Instructors Teaching Grammar and Writing

Instructions for Interviewer:

The following questions are designed to explore teachers' perspectives on how grammar instruction influences students' writing skills. The interview will focus on challenges in teaching grammar, strategies to improve student writing, and observations of student progress. To gain deeper insights, follow-up questions may be asked.

Section 1: Background Information

1. Can you describe your experience teaching grammar and writing to EFL students at KKU?
2. What levels of students do you primarily teach (e.g., beginner, intermediate, advanced)?
3. How do you integrate grammar instruction into your writing courses?

Section 2: Challenges in Teaching Grammar and Writing

4. What are the most common grammar challenges EFL students face in writing?
5. Do you find grammatical structures or concepts difficult for students to grasp? Why?
6. How do students typically respond to grammar instruction in writing courses?
7. What challenges do you face in effectively teaching grammar to improve students' writing?
8. Are there any institutional or curriculum-related constraints that affect how you teach grammar?

Section 3: Teaching Strategies and Approaches

9. What instructional methods do you find most effective for teaching grammar in a way that enhances writing skills?

10. Do you use specific teaching techniques (e.g., inductive vs. deductive approaches, error correction strategies, sentence combining exercises)?
11. How do you balance explicit grammar instruction with writing practice in your lessons?
12. What role do interactive activities (such as peer review, group work, or writing workshops) play in your approach to teaching grammar?
13. How do you assess students' grammar knowledge and their application of grammar in writing?

Section 4: Observations of Student Progress

14. Based on your experience, how does grammar instruction impact students' writing proficiency?
15. Have you observed a noticeable improvement in students' writing after explicit grammar instruction? If so, in what areas?
16. Are there any persistent grammar-related writing issues that students struggle with even after instruction?
17. Do students apply grammar rules effectively in their writing or revert to previous errors?
18. What indicators indicate a student has successfully internalised grammar rules and applies them effectively in writing?

Section 5: Recommendations and Reflections

19. In your opinion, how could grammar instruction be improved to better support students' writing development?
20. Are there any resources or teaching materials that you find particularly helpful in teaching grammar for writing?
21. What advice would you give to new instructors teaching grammar to EFL students?
22. How do you see the role of grammar evolving in EFL writing instruction in the future?

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