

EFL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON LEARNING ENGLISH GRAMMAR AT UNISMA

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Abstract: This research aims to describe EFL students' perceptions of learning English grammar and to explore the differences in perception based on gender. The study was conducted at the University of Islam Malang using a descriptive quantitative approach. The sample consisted of 20 third-semester students from the English Education Department. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings showed that most students perceive grammar as an essential yet challenging component of English learning. Furthermore, female students tended to have more positive emotional responses and engagement compared to male students. The study highlights the importance of addressing learners' individual and gender-based differences in grammar instruction.

Key Words: Perception, Grammar, EFL, Gender, Quantitative

INTRODUCTION

Grammar is a core component of English language learning and is essential for mastering the four major language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, many EFL students still perceive grammar as a difficult and abstract subject. Their perception is influenced by instructional methods, learning experiences, and gender. Research shows that understanding student perceptions can help educators develop more effective grammar teaching strategies (Williams & Burden, 1997). Several prior studies (Komara & Tiarsiwi, 2021; Mirazna & Hikmah, 2019; Pamungkas, 2021; Patria, 2022; Nurliana, 2020) have investigated perceptions toward grammar learning, but few have analyzed gender-based differences among university students. This study,

therefore, aims to fill this gap by examining the perceptions of English grammar learning among EFL students at UNISMA, with a specific focus on gender-related differences.

METHOD

This study used a descriptive quantitative method. The participants were 20 third-semester students of the English Education Department at the University of Islam Malang who had completed a grammar course. Data were collected through a 17-item questionnaire adapted from Komara & Tiarsiwi (2021), using a Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The data were analyzed using percentage formulas and presented descriptively.

FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings showed that students generally perceive grammar as important to mastering English. High percentages agreed that grammar improves their speaking and writing skills. However, many also found grammar difficult and confusing, particularly when taught without sufficient explanation or context. Regarding gender, female students showed more reflective and critical responses toward grammar learning, while male students tended to respond more neutrally or simply. This aligns with previous research (Zhang et al., 2024; Monica, 2025) which highlighted gendered approaches to language learning, including differences in strategy use and emotional involvement.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Students at UNISMA generally hold a positive perception of grammar learning, recognizing its importance in English proficiency. Nevertheless, grammar is still perceived as challenging due to complex rules and limited engaging instruction. Gender-based differences were also evident, where female students exhibited more positive and active learning behaviors than male students. Educators should consider these differences when designing grammar instruction, employing contextualized materials, interactive methods, and digital tools.

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