THE INVESTIGATION OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR LEARNING STRATEGY ON HIGH, MIDDLE, AND LOW ACHIEVERS' STUDENTS IN INDONESIA

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Abstract: This study investigates the English grammar learning strategy used by high, middle, and low achievers' students in Indonesia. The aim is to reveal which types of strategies that high, middle, and low achievers' students applied most while learning English grammar and to check whether or not there is a difference in grammar learning strategy used by high, middle, and low achievers' students. A lot of researchers have concentrated their interest on the grammar learning strategy area, including in Indonesia; however, little or no research has been conducted to examine the grammar learning strategy among high, middle, and low achievers' students. Furthermore, the grammar learning strategy instruments used by other Indonesian researchers are highly diverse. This study is focused on finding the strategies that high, middle, and low achievers' students used through Pawlak's Grammar Learning Strategy Inventory or GLSI (2018) with 100 participants (high vs middle vs low achievers' students) involved. The results showed that there are significant differences of grammar learning strategies used by low, middle and high achievers' students. Social strategies are the most commonly used grammar learning strategies by low and middle achievers' students in Indonesia, while metacognitive strategies are the most frequently used by high achievers' students.

Keywords: English Grammar, High Middle and Low Achievers, Learning Strategy, Grammar Learning Strategy (GLSI)

INTRODUCTION

On the eyes of plenty L2 or foreign language students in Indonesia, learning grammar is felt and realized as something terrifying. This statement seems exaggerated, but it is all true that can be known from several researches or journals exposing students disliked or hated learning grammar (Male, 2011; Widianingsih & Gulo, 2016; Ameliani, 2019). Some factors are discovered, for instance, the unspecific explanation by teachers, the limited grammar books examples and practices, or including the different understanding or mastery of the students themselves about grammar (Komara & Tiarsiwi, 2021). To whatsoever reasons are, learning grammar is still needed and central for students. Many experts viewed learning grammar is like taking "a medicine pill"; it tastes bitter but useful. This analogy shows that in improving skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing, the key to success lies in the importance of learning grammar. Savignon (2017) strengthened that the position of grammar is always significant; it is as an element of language and for the success of students' communication.

If we look closely to its definition, grammar is simply defined as a set structure of a language which is a combination of words and phrases that produce sentences (Richards, 2013). Others contended that grammar is defined as the language skills required to convert words into structural features that create the meanings in sentences (Humphrey et al, 2012). This term tends to be understandable; it is only about words, phrases, sentences that are combined by students and has strict orders to be presented as correct message. In fact, grammar rules are so complex within numbers of formation to carefully understood by students (Dykes, 2007), thus, to learn and master grammar is not easy; it requires strong vow mainly for L2 or foreign language students who are not the L1 or native speaker. Although there were debate among

teachers, linguists, and stakeholders about the role of grammar and its contribution to students' proficiency in English (Hagemann, 2003), learning and mastering grammar is unavoidable for students. Grammar was long time used to guide students' standardization of English as second language or foreign language nationally and internationally (Celce-Murcia & Hilles, 1990).

Within its controversy, students are believed to employ specific learning strategy to ease them mastering grammar. Learning strategies are needed to support students' success in the process of mastering grammar materials. Rubin (1975) and Rigney (1978) both stated that language learning strategy is as a series of plans, generally routines, that can assist learners in acquiring, storing and retrieving information, in this case, grammar mastery context. Other researcher argued learning strategies are conscious procedures that facilitates students' in learning (language) with some desired learning goals to achieve maximum results (Chamot, 2005). We know, the study of learning strategies is focused more in psychology area, however, it became a spotlight that is inserted to other field of study, including language learning context. One of pioneer study of language learning strategy was known by Oxford (1990) that exposed some principles and guidance how to evaluate language learning strategy through some inventory or rubric created. Then, next researchers published their works and contributed on this language learning strategy either second or foreign language, such as Macaro (2001), Hurd and Lewis (2008), and Cohen (2014). Afterwards, a lot of researchers who studied, developed, and focused their works on language learning strategy specifically to the context of vocabulary learning strategy, for example Takac (2008) or pronunciation learning strategy, for instance Szyszka (2017).

One of expert who concentrated the study on grammar learning strategy was Pawlak since 2009 to 2011, 2012, and 2018. Based on the previous inventory developed by Oxford (1990) and other researchers, Pawlak (2012) classifies grammar learning strategies into four groups which are categorized as: metacognitive, cognitive, social, and affective strategies. The process of learning grammar using metacognitive strategies is applied through the process of scheduling, coordinating, monitoring, and self-evaluating. while the implementation of learning strategies used cognitive strategies in learning grammar, applied strategies for understanding grammar, strategies for developing explicit and implicit grammatical knowledge, and strategies for dealing with corrective feedback errors. Furthermore, affective strategies that focus on emotional intelligence when they succeed or fail at grammar can be done in ways such as trying to relax when experiencing difficulties, keeping a diary while learning grammar, generating motivation to practice grammatical structures that are become a serious problem. Last, social strategies, which are related to interactions with peers or with teachers, such as asking the teacher to give or repeat an explanation that has not been fully understood, practicing with peers to understand grammatical structures, even helping each other in finding solutions when experiencing problems while practicing grammatical structures, with the aim of improving the ability to learn grammar. (See more detail on Pawlak, 2018).

We all know, it is rarely found students who saw grammar as a fun subject. They tend to perceive grammar lessons as boring, confusing, and different from their normal use of the language (Hagemann, 2003). The researchers assume grammar learning strategies for each level of language learners different. For example, in Indonesia today not all language learners are classified as smart students. Some students in Indonesia, even though they are guided and taught by the same teacher, the level of difficulty experienced in developing their skills differs according to their ability to understand, some are able to understand more quickly and easily, some are the other way around.. This is why high, middle, and low achieving students have different skill levels in grammar learning. It cannot be justified or blamed that some students require more than one strategy to achieve a learning goal. This is inextricably linked to factors

other than one's learning process and the efficacy of the strategies employed. Regardless of how big the percentage of successful use of each individual learning strategy is, the proportion of those who use different strategies will be seen in the final results.

Several early researchers conducted studies on the application of English Grammar Learning Strategies. Zhou (2017) investigated Grammar Learning Strategies for high school students in China in the first study. In his study, it was discovered that there were significant differences in the use of English Grammar Learning Strategies between male and female students. The results showed that there were substantial differences in the use of English Grammar Learning Strategies based on gender differences, which found that the quantity of using grammar learning strategies, both cognitive, affective, metacognitive, and social strategies, was higher for female students than male students, and not related to student achievement. This can be seen from the high scores obtained by male students with a low frequency of using grammar learning strategies. Research Zhou (2017) opened a great opportunity to explore more information and the latest findings related to the use of grammar learning strategies. It is believed that there will be different strategies that influence the use of grammar learning strategies between other students in different area or context. The application of grammar learning strategies used by both high, middle, and low achievers can be inserted in this study.

A similar study was also conducted by Alsied et al (2018) with the aim of investigating the use of grammar learning strategies among EFL Libyan students in terms of gender differences in using grammar learning strategies used by EFL Libyan students. The results of their study indicated that Libyan EFL learners most often applied grammar learning strategies with memory strategies (cognitive) compared to the two other types of strategies; metacognitive and socio-affective. This can be seen from the tendency of students to memorize vocabulary and structures in learning grammar, and it appeared that there was no significant difference between the use of grammar strategies and gender. This study was very limited because it only took data from first and second year Libyan students in the English language study program at Sebha University, Libya, so it cannot be generalized to all students from different countries.

Azizmohammadi and Barjesteh (2020) also conducted research on the relationship between EFL Learners' Grammar Learning Strategies and their Grammar Performance in terms of gender. The study showed that there were significant differences in grammar test performance between male and female students. More specifically, when it came to the grammar test, female students outperformed their male counterparts. In addition, the results of the study revealed that cognitive strategies were the most widely used type of strategy, while compensation learning strategies were the least used type of strategy by participants. As a result, because both have similarities in the six categories of grammar learning strategies, gender differences had no significant effect on the overall use of grammar learning by students using grammar learning strategies.

Meanwhile, in the Indonesian context, there some researchers who conducted study related to English Grammar Learning Strategies, such as Mahdin (2019), Haryani (2019), and Kadir (2020). However, the grammar learning strategy instruments used by the researchers were varied, and it was not seen much Indonesian researchers who checked on high, middle, and low achievers' students category. Research conducted by Juniar and Carissa (2020), for instance, was focused on grammar learning strategies used by non-category EFL students in Indonesia. According to the findings, social strategies are the most widely used strategies by Intermediate English Grammar students, while memory strategies are the least widely used. The implication of this research is that there is a possibility that Intermediate English Grammar class students have a tendency to study together with their friends. From their study, it can be

known that grammar learning instruments they used were based on Oxford (1990) and were modified by Kemp (2007) and Bayou (2015).

　　Next, a research conducted by Syakhrin (2021) had also explored grammar learning strategies among university students (different gender and high vs low achievers). Their research used grammar learning strategy instrument by Oxford (1990) cited from Nurliana (2020). The results showed high-achieving males use more language learning strategies to succeed in grammar learning than females. High achievers are upbeat and enthusiastic about language learning strategies. Unfortunately, this study did not focus on discussing which grammar learning strategies were used for middle level students, and the instrument was not based on Pawlak (2018). It is important to study more deeply to check high, middle, and low through Pawlak (2018) *Grammar Learning Strategy Inventory* (GLSI).

　　Due to the explanation above, the researchers put a serious attention to investigate grammar learning strategies used by high, middle, and low achievers' students in Indonesia. The researchers proposed two main questions: 1) What is the most frequent English grammar learning strategy used by high, middle, and low achievers' students in Indonesia? and 2) Is there any significant differences of English grammar learning strategies used among high, middle, and low achievers' students in Indonesia? The results of the research can show the most frequent grammar learning strategies used among different level of achievers. Therefore, it can contribute to the works of grammar learning strategies in Indonesia.

METHOD

This study attempted to answer two major questions: 1) What is the most frequent English grammar learning strategy used by high, middle, and low achievers' students in Indonesia? and 2) Is there any significant differences of English grammar learning strategy used among high, middle, and low achievers' students in Indonesia? To be able to answer the questions, the researchers applied quantitative approach, and the design was survey. Quantitative approach can be used to answer interrelated questions of variables within the research (Marvasti, 2018), in this context high, middle, and low achievers students' grammar learning strategy, and survey design is as a format to expose the grammar learning strategy used by among high, middle, and low achievers students.

　　For the participants of this study, the researchers involved 100 undergraduate students from several universities in Indonesia to respond the instrument. The demography of the undergraduate students was presented below:

Table 1: Demography of the Participants

Demography	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	15	15.0
	Female	85	85.0
	Total	100	100.0
Age	17 – 19	29	29.0
	20 – 22	63	63.0
	23 – 25	8	8.0
	Total	100	100.0
Domicile	Jakarta	32	
	Tangerang, Banten	8	
	West Java	25	
	Central Java	4	

	East Java	21	
	Aceh, West Sumatera, South Sumatera	7	
	Kalimantan	3	
	Total	100	

As formerly mentioned, the instrument used to acquire the data of this study was through close-ended questionnaire adopted from the *Grammar Learning Strategy Inventory* (GLSI) by Pawlak (2018). The questionnaire contained of 70 items with four main categories; metacognitive, cognitive, affective, and social. The scale or range of the close-ended questionnaire followed the 5-points format of Likert Standard Scale that were categorized into A, B, C, and D sections representing each type of GLSI. The close-ended questionnaire was distributed around 15 to 22 November 2021 by using Google Form (See link here: https://bit.ly/3cNxmOi), and the data was tabulated and calculated through SPSS ver. 25. To find out the students' level of high, middle, and low, the researchers categorized their level through TOEFL CEFR format that has been obtained directly from students while filling the close-ended questionnaire. Below was the categorization of students' achievers:

Table 2. Students' Level

Category	Frequency	Percent
Low Achievers	55	55.0
Middle Achievers	32	32.0
High Achievers	13	13.0
Total	100	100.0

There were 100 participants for this research; 15 were male and 85 were female. The age of participants ranges from 17 to 25 years old. However, the researcher divided the category of participants into three part; low achievers, middle achievers, and high achievers. This division was based on their TOEFL score, where low achievers from 310 – 459, mid achievers from 460 – 542, and high achievers from 543 – 626. Lastly, the steps taken by researchers in processing the data in this study were; 1) The researcher distributed questionnaires randomly to undergraduate students in English study programs at universities in Indonesia. 2) after the data was obtained, the researcher began to transfer the data to Microsoft Excel to make tabulation and demography tables. 3) Then, the researcher began to calculate, classify and recapitulate the data obtained from 100 undergraduate students as respondents of this study through SPSS ver. 25. 4) After the data is calculated, classified, and recapitulated, the researcher analyzes and interprets the results of the data gained to obtain the results of the research conducted.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Reliability Test
Before calculating data, the researchers were required to conduct the reliability analysis of close-ended questionnaire first as the standard procedure in survey research. The researchers used Cronbach's Alpha Analysis. The result was exposed below:

Table 3. Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.972	70

The reliability test of the item was counted above. On the table above, score of α was .972 from 70 items. According to Taber (2018), if the alpha score was around .93 - .94, it was categorized as excellent. Therefore, the items of this research instrument were reliable.

Table 4. Questionnaire Statistics Results

Category		Metacognitive	Cognitive	Affective	Social
Low Achievers	N	55	55	55	55
	M	3.80	3.61	3.65	3.90
	%	75.8%	73.6%	73.0%	78.1%
Mid Achievers	N	32	32	32	32
	M	3.77	3.71	3.70	3.93
	%	75.4%	74.1%	74.0%	78.6%
High Achievers	N	13	13	13	13
	M	4.25	3.90	3.87	4.0
	%	85.0%	78.0%	77.5%	80%

The table above is the most frequency strategy by each low, mid, and high achievers' students. It can be seen that, low achievers used social strategy most (78.1%), next is metacognitive (75.8%), then cognitive strategy (73.6%), and the last is affective (73.0%). Same as low achievers, Mid achievers used social strategy most (78.6%), next is metacognitive (75.4%), third is cognitive (74.1%) and affective (74.0%). For high achievers, the first most used is metacognitive strategy (85.0%), next social (80.0%), cognitive (78.0%), and the last is affective (78.0%).

Independent Sample T-Test

Table 5. Independent Sample T-Test

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances					
Equal variances assumed	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	88.941	.000	-51.848	198	.000

From table 5 above, independent sample T-Test was analyzed by using SPSS ver 25 to see the frequency used between low, mid, and high achieving scholars in using grammar learning strategies. H_o was rejected and H_a was accepted if sig. (2-tailed) < 0.05, where the result here is .000. It means that H_o was rejected and H_a was accepted, there is a significant different in the frequency used between low, middle, and high achieving scholars in using grammar learning strategies.

This study discovered that the grammar learning strategies commonly used by high, low and middle achievers' students are not the same. Students with low achievement used social strategies more frequently than the other three categories of English grammar learning strategies, such as metacognitive, cognitive, and affective. The researcher believes it can happen because low achievers' students need other people such as teachers and their peers to

build cooperation or communication in mastering, understanding and even solving problems related to learning grammar which is considered a problematic and terrifying subject. This argument is supported by Oxford (1990) which states that social strategies in language learning commonly used by EFL students are usually such as, asking questions, asking for answers from confusing structures, asking for help from others or experts in understanding language task. So that the goal for low achievers' students will be achieved in increasing both in orally or writing the structure of English grammar in communicating with others. In contrast, Kadir (2020) found that less successful student more frequently used cognitive strategy. This is because less successful students faced problems in understanding grammar, they more often practice English grammar by communicating and comparing and analyzing grammar with successful students as their challenge in developing English grammar in the learning process. According to Pawlak (2018), cognitive strategy itself serves to increase the self-motivation of grammar learners in increasing their knowledge. In learning grammar, the cognitive strategies used by EFL students beside communicating, comparing and analyzing grammar, students usually take notes, summarizing and highlighting text because those strategies are helpful for speaking or writing (Oxford, 1990).

In this study, it is the same with low achievers' students, from the data obtained it can be seen that middle achievers' students to be able to master grammar learning, use more social strategies than affective, metacognitive or cognitive strategy. The researcher argues it can happen because learning grammar, which is done by interacting with other people such as teachers and peers, will make learning more fun, provide a lot of motivation, increase self-confidence and also provide many opportunities to practice the use of grammar directly. This argument is supported by Oxford (1990) which states that social strategy brings many benefits such as; increase student and teacher satisfaction, increase language learning motivation, provide more opportunities for practicing grammar, and provide more feedback on grammatical errors.

Next, based on the data that has been analyzed, high achievers' students more frequently used metacognitive strategies. The researcher assumes it can happen because high achievers' students know what their learning needs are, such as making plans, arranging their own study schedule, and being able to evaluate themselves when they find mistakes in learning grammar. This argument was supported by Rahimi and Katal (2012) which stated that metacognitive strategies are skills that students have to organize, manage, and direct their own learning. The metacognitive strategy itself can support students monitor the learning process, analyze the effectiveness and efficiency of language learning activities, as well as correct errors in language learning, and can even help change strategies or study ways if needed (Scott Ridley et al., 1992). Thus, learning English grammar becomes easy for high achievers' students to master and understand. This is also reinforced by the statement expressed by Oxford (1990) that metacognitive strategy is a very important strategy to support the success of language learning. In the same line, Al Abri et al (2017) found that the proficient students used more frequently metacognitive strategy in learning English grammar than less proficient students. It has been observed that this occurs because proficient students are more skill in planning, organizing and self-monitoring when faced with English learning grammar.

CONCLUSION
To conclude, this study was successful in revealing which types of strategies were most frequently used by students of high, middle, and low achievers' when learning English grammar. This study discovered a significant difference in English grammar learning strategy between low, middle, and high achievers' students. The most frequently used grammar learning

strategy by low and middle achievers' students is social strategy, while the most frequently used strategy by high achievers' students is metacognitive strategy. The use of social strategies for middle and low achievers is very often used because both low and middle achievers' students can understand and improve their grammar skills by interacting with other people. Examples such as; asking question, cooperating with others or even empathizing with others. It is different with high achievers' students who use metacognitive strategies more often because in learning grammar, they can do it by arranging and planning their English grammar tasks, evaluating their English grammar learning, and monitoring their English grammar learning.

The researchers suggest that the future researchers can add more research samples because the sample in this study is very limited. In addition, the next research can examine more deeply related to how low, middle and high achievers' students improve grammar learning strategies to run more effectively and efficiently in the future. This research is believed to be able to expand knowledge and insight about English grammar learning strategies that can be used by EFL students. It is hoped that this research can provide the information needed for readers to create innovative grammar learning strategies for EFL students among low, middle and high achievers.

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