

## **The impact of strategy training on the effectiveness of EFL grammar learning for primary school students with special educational needs**

### **SUMMARY**

The increasing number of students diagnosed with special educational needs in Polish primary schools presents a significant challenge for modern foreign language education. These learners often face considerable difficulties in mastering English grammar, which is a fundamental component of communicative competence and a key element of the high-stakes eighth-grade examination. This situation underscores the need to develop and implement pedagogical practices that can effectively support this diverse group of students, moving beyond traditional instruction to foster the skills required for autonomous learning.

The primary aim of the present study was to investigate the impact of a targeted grammar strategy training programme on the English grammar learning outcomes of primary school students with SEN. The research was conducted among 72 seventh- and eighth-grade students, including both learners with and without diagnosed learning difficulties. A central objective was to determine whether explicit strategy-based instruction could enhance students' grammatical proficiency and to identify which specific strategies were associated with greater learning gains.

The dissertation consists of five chapters. The first two chapters provide the theoretical background concerning the key factors in second language acquisition, the role of grammar in language learning, and the specific challenges faced by learners with SEN. The remaining three chapters are dedicated to the empirical study, presenting its methodology, the analysis of the collected data, and a discussion of the findings.

Chapter One concentrates on the theoretical foundations of second language acquisition and individual differences. It outlines seminal linguistic theories, models of first and second language acquisition, and explores key learner variables, including cognitive and affective factors. A significant portion of the chapter is devoted to the topic of special educational needs, detailing the diagnostic process in the Polish educational system and describing the cognitive, emotional, and social profiles of students with learning difficulties.

Chapter Two elucidates the role of grammar in second language learning and teaching. It traces the place of grammar within various language teaching tools and introduces the concepts of grammar learning strategies and strategy-based instruction, presenting key

taxonomies and training models in this respect. The chapter concludes by specifying the practical context of teaching grammar to SEN learners within Polish primary schools, referencing curriculum requirements and pedagogical recommendations.

Chapter Three is aimed at describing the research project. It details the mixed-methods approach, which combined a quasi-experimental design with action research. This chapter presents the research questions and hypothesis, the research context and participants, and the data collection instruments, including the grammar learning strategy questionnaire and the pre- and post-intervention tests. Finally, it outlines the procedures for quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

Chapter Four presents the results of the empirical study. It begins with a quantitative analysis of the baseline questionnaire data to establish the learners' initial strategic profiles. Subsequently, it provides a qualitative analysis of the strategy training sessions, documenting the intervention process. The core of the chapter is the statistical analysis of pre- and post-test scores to assess learning gains, followed by a qualitative analysis of the relationship between SEN students' strategy preferences and their performance outcomes.

Chapter Five concentrates on the discussion of the research findings in relation to the guiding research questions. It interprets the effects of the intervention, comparing the outcomes for SEN and non-SEN learners, and analyses the connection between specific strategy use and grammatical development. The chapter concludes with an overview of the study limitations, its pedagogical implications for teaching grammar in inclusive classrooms, and suggestions for future research.