

The Impact of Grammar Consciousness-Raising Activities on Developing Syntactic Skills among Iraqi EFL Secondary School Learners

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Abstract

Grammar is a pivotal component of effective communication, enabling language users to construct coherent sentences and convey meaning with clarity and precision. However, Iraqi students in general are reported to face challenges not only in acquiring grammatical skills, but also in identifying grammatical structures, which negatively affects their overall language competence. To overcome these challenges, many different teaching strategies are emerged in the field of teaching (EFL), aiming to enhance students' syntactic skills, including Grammar Consciousness – Raising activities (GCR). Accordingly, this study aims to investigate the impact of GCR activities on developing syntactic skills among Iraqi EFL fifth grade secondary school learners and find out which grammatical aspects mostly reveal improvement through the strategy activities. Experimental design is used to achieve the research aims, and verify its hypotheses The sample of the

study consists of eighty (80) students from fifth-grade preparatory female in Diyala Province are randomly chosen during the (2025-2026) academic year. The experimental group (40 students) is taught syntax using GCR activities, whereas the control group (40 students) is taught according the conventional method. In addition, a pilot sample of (30) students has been selected from other schools in the same province. The researcher has selected Pre-test and post-test to be the primary instruments for the study, and all the collected data have been submitted to statistical analysis. The results reveal that there have been statistically significant differences in EFL students' syntactic skills in favor of the experimental group, demonstrating that the GCR activities have a positive affect and impact on developing students' syntactic competence. The results lead to drawing conclusions. Moreover, a considerable number of recommendations have been presented that may benefit teachers and curriculum designers. Finally, suggestions for further studies are proposed.

Key words: EFL, Grammar Consciousness –Raising Activities, Syntactic Skills, Impact

أثر أنشطة رفع الوعي بالقواعد على تنمية المهارات النحوية لدى متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية كلغة أجنبية في المدارس الثانوية العراقية

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الملخص

تعد القواعد عنصرا محوريا في التواصل الفعّال ، حيث تمكن مستخدمي اللغة من بناء جمل متماسكة وإيصال المعنى بدقة ووضوح. ومع ذلك، يذكر ان الطلاب العراقيين بشكل عام يواجهون تحديات ليس فقط في مجال إكتساب المهارات النحوية فحسب، ولكن أيضا في تمييز التراكيب النحوية، مما يؤثر سلبا على كفاءتهم اللغوية . للتغلب على هذه التحديات، ظهرت العديد من استراتيجيات التدريس في مجال تدريس اللغة الانكليزية كلغة أجنبية بهدف تحسين مهارات الطلاب النحوية، بما في ذلك أنشطة رفع الوعي بالقواعد. وبناء على ذلك، تهدف هذه الدراسة الى التحقق من تأثير أنشطة رفع الوعي النحوي على تطوير المهارات النحوية لدى طلاب الصف الخامس الاعدادي في المدارس الثانوية العراقية الذين يدرسون اللغة الانكليزية كلغة أجنبية ومعرفة الجوانب النحوية التي تظهر تحسناً ملحوظا من خلال أنشطة هذه الاستراتيجية. لتحقيق أهداف الدراسة والتحقق من فرضياتها، تم تبني التصميم التجريبي ، حيث تم اختيار عينة عشوائية من (80) طالبة من الصف الخامس الإعدادي في محافظة ديالى للعام الدراسي 2025-2026 . حيث ضمت المجموعة التجريبية (40 طالبة) تم تدريسها المهارات النحوية وفقا لأنشطة رفع الوعي النحوي ب، والمجموعة الضابطة (40 طالبة)، تم تدريسها المهارات النحوية وفقا للطريقة التقليدية. إضافة الى ذلك، تم اختيار عينة مكونة من (30) طالبة من مدارس اخرى في نفس المحافظة لتمثيل العينة الاستطلاعية. تبني الباحث الاختبار القبلي والبعدي كأدوات أساسية للبحث . وقد خضعت جميع البيانات التي تم جمعها للتحليل الاحصائي .حيث كشفت النتائج عن وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية لصالح المجموعة التجريبية ، مما يدل على ان أنشطة رفع الوعي النحوي لها تأثير إيجابي وفعّال في تطوير الكفاءة النحوية لدى الطلاب. في ضوء النتائج تم استخلاص مجموعة من الاستنتاجات. علاوة على ذلك، تم تقديم عدد من التوصيات التي يمكن ان يستفيد منها المعلمون ومصممو المناهج . ختاماً، تم طرح عدد من المقترحات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اللغة الانكليزية كلغة أجنبية، أنشطة رفع الوعي بالقواعد النحوية، المهارات النحوية، التأثير

Problem of the Study and its Significance

The communication is one of the main reasons behind teaching and learning English language. However, achieving correct and effective communication requires learners to have clear and

accurate understanding of grammatical structures and composition as mastering grammatical structure contributes to organizing and controlling meaning, and enables learners to express their ideas accurately without ambiguity (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011).

Syntactic skills, including sentence structure, word order, and grammatical agreement, are essential for helping learners in comprehending the arrangement of words to create grammatically correct structures (Batstone, 1994). Therefore, emphasizing grammar as a fundamental aspect of second language instruction is essential for developing grammatical and vocabulary knowledge, making grammatical competence a component of communicative competence (Zhang, 2009).

Accordingly, grammar instruction plays a fundamental role in developing learners' linguistic competence, particularly syntactic skills. Yet, many Iraqi EFL secondary school learners continue to demonstrate noticeable weaknesses in syntactic accuracy despite years of formal English instruction as confirmed in Fa'aq and Farhan (2022) study, whose results revealed common errors in the use of tenses, auxiliary verbs, word order, and prepositions demonstrating a clear weaknesses in syntactic skills among preparatory school students in Iraq.

Moreover, findings revealed by Al-Shujiri and Tan (2021) demonstrated that Iraqi EFL learners frequently commit grammatical errors in their writing, specifically with the usage of verb tenses, prepositions and articles. In addition, Faris et al. (2020) conducted an error analysis study and the findings showed that Iraqi EFL learners revealed numerous grammatical errors, particularly, tenses, prepositions, active and passive voice, articles, verbs and morphological errors.

Recent research in foreign language learning highlights the significance of grammar consciousness-raising (GCR from now on) activities, that shift learners' attention to grammatical forms through guided discovery, problem-solving, and noticing in meaningful contexts rather than direct rule presentation (Fotos, 1993). Therefore, the research problem addressed in this study lies in the lack of empirical evidence regarding the impact of

grammar consciousness-raising activities on developing syntactic skills among Iraqi EFL secondary school learners, underscoring the need for experimental research in this educational context.

Aims

The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Investigating the impact of grammar consciousness-raising (GCR) activities on developing syntactic skills among Iraqi EFL fifth-grade secondary school learners.
2. Finding out which grammatical aspects mostly reveal the improvement through the strategy activities.

Hypotheses

To achieve the aims of the study, the following hypotheses are formulated:

1. There is no statistically significant difference between the mean score of the pre- and post- tests of the experimental group.
2. There is no statistically significant difference in syntactic skills between the experimental group and the control group.

Limits of the Study

This study is limited to:

1. Fifth grade preparatory school female learners enrolled in governmental schools in the city of Baquba in Diyala Province during the first semester in the academic year (2025-2026).
2. Syntactic skills in the prescribed textbook English for Iraq, Student Book, and Activity Book, for the fifth preparatory grade.

Value of the Study

This study is expected to be of value to:

1. EFL learners who may benefit from improved syntactic accuracy, better writing performance, and enhanced self-monitoring of grammatical errors.
2. English language teachers who may adopt more interactive grammar teaching methods.
3. Curriculum designers who may integrate consciousness-raising tasks into secondary school English textbooks.
4. Educators and researchers who may refer to the findings of this study.

Grammar Consciousness – Raising Activities Definitions & Related Theories

Liu & Dou (2016), state that Grammar consciousness raising activities refer to "a teaching approach that aims to make learners come into notice about the formal features of the language, and be empowered through clear and deep understanding of grammatical features, that help them foster declarative knowledge of language" (p. 507). The term consciousness –raising is defined by Rutherford and Smith (1985 as cited in Tasnimi, 2018) "deliberately attempt to draw learner's attention specifically to the formal properties of the targeted language"(p.274).

Grammar Consciousness–Raising Activities is the grammar teaching method based on consciousness raising approach. It was first introduced by Rutherford and Smith (1985), and it refers to increasing learners' awareness through interactive components and opportunities to engage in meaningful interaction and to negotiate meaning with the idea that interaction is essential to language acquisition. (Tasnimi,2018;Ellis,2016).

The ultimate aim of consciousness- raising grammar teaching approach is to promote students' awareness towards accuracy. Consciousness is considered as one of the prerequisites transferring from input to intake. Students have the ability to compare the information what he or she receives with his or her interlanguage. (Liu & Dou, 2016)

One of the main principles of cognitive theory is attention ,which is viewed as an essential requirement for learning. Schmidt's (1990) Noticing Hypothesis, that has its roots in cognitive psychology posits that language learning does not occur passively through mere exposure to input; unless learners' deliberate recognition of linguistic structures within the input. The Noticing Hypothesis posits that learners' conscious awareness of linguistic forms is essential for language acquisition (Schmidt, 1990).

According to the grammar consciousness-raising approach, exercises aim to direct learners' attention to particular

grammatical structures and encourage them to independently discover rules instead of simply participating in rote practice. As a result, these exercises enhance language awareness and motivate deeper cognitive processing, which help learners learn grammatical structures more effectively (Ellis, 2002). Grammar consciousness-raising activities directly align with this principle by constructing tasks that encourage learners to focus explicitly on grammatical forms and reflect on their use.

Consciousness-Raising Activities as Guided Problem Solving

Ormond (2006, as cited in Doghonadze & Gorgiladze 2008) defines problem solving as the application of existing knowledge and skills to resolve an unanswered question or challenging situation, whereas problem -based learning is an instructional approach in which students acquire new knowledge and skills through engaging with a complex problem similar to those encountered in the real world.

Consciousness-raising activities are generally conceptualized as problem-solving exercise in which students are motivated to analyze linguistic data, formulate hypotheses, and explain grammatical rules about language form. Instead of presenting grammatical rules explicitly, consciousness raising activities encourage students to engage cognitively with materials to discover patterns and regularities (Ellis, 1991).

(Wills & Wills 2012 as cited in Tansnimi, 2018) have presented CR as guided problems solving that encourage learner to "notice particular features of the language, to draw conclusion from what they notice and organize their view of language in the light of the conclusions they have drawn" (p.2).

Syntactic Skills

Syntactic Skill refers to a learner's ability to realize and use the rules that govern word order and sentence structures in a language, enabling the formation of grammatically correct and meaningful sentences. These skills involve mastering sentence structure, arranging grammatical elements such as subject, verb, object, using tenses, conjunction and different sentence patterns. Syntactic skills are essential part in language competence,

contributing to clarity of meaning and accuracy in oral and written communication (Ellis, 2006).

Syntactic skill involves identifying and using grammatical structures in language (Chik, Ho, Yeung, Chan, Chung, Luan, Lo & Laun 2011 as cited in Soria & Borja, 2024). Moreover, syntactical skills indicate two associated constructs: syntactic awareness and syntactic knowledge. Brimo, et. al (2015),state that syntactic knowledge and syntactic awareness are two closely related but different ideas in this area. Both are very important for learning a first or second language.

Syntactic Awareness & Syntactic knowledge

According to Purnama (2025), syntactic awareness refers to the ability to observe, consider, and manipulate a language's grammatical structures without regard to the sentence's meaning. In the context of EFL, it involves the learner's metalinguistic capacity to perceive structural links between phrases and clauses, comprehend word order limitations, and identify syntactic categories in order to construct grammatically correct sentences.

Moreover, Tong et al. (2022), have revealed that syntactic awareness is a strong prediction of reading comprehension and engage in mutual interaction with vocabulary knowledge. Their results state that syntactic awareness serves not merely as an outcome of language improvement, but as a main facilitator of comprehension processes. Furthermore, Simard et al (2022), assert that students who have higher syntactic awareness are better in processing complex sentence structures via describing and analysis of structure.

According to Bochari (2026), syntactic awareness distinctly enhances L2 academic listening and reading comprehension. It enables EFL learners to address structural ambiguities and interpret intricate linguistic signals in both natural and academic discourse. Moreover, syntactic awareness functions as a bridge between learned grammatical rules and proficient language production. EFL learners with elevated syntactic awareness exhibit enhanced syntactic complexity, including the proficient

use of subordination and coordination in academic essay genres. (Khushik, 2025; AlMohaya, 2025).

In addition, syntactic awareness enables students to consciously examine and correct syntactic structures when understanding breaks down (Simard et al. 2022; Ellis, 2008).

Alduias et al.(2025), assert that contemporary psycholinguistic models progressively integrate awareness, syntactic processing and interaction as a main component of language acquisition. Syntactic knowledge enhance the ability to process sentences fluently and automatically (Simard et al. 2022; Ellis, 2008). According to Guo (2008), syntactic awareness refers to both the capacity to reflect on the syntactic structure of language and the knowledge of grammatical patterns in sentences.

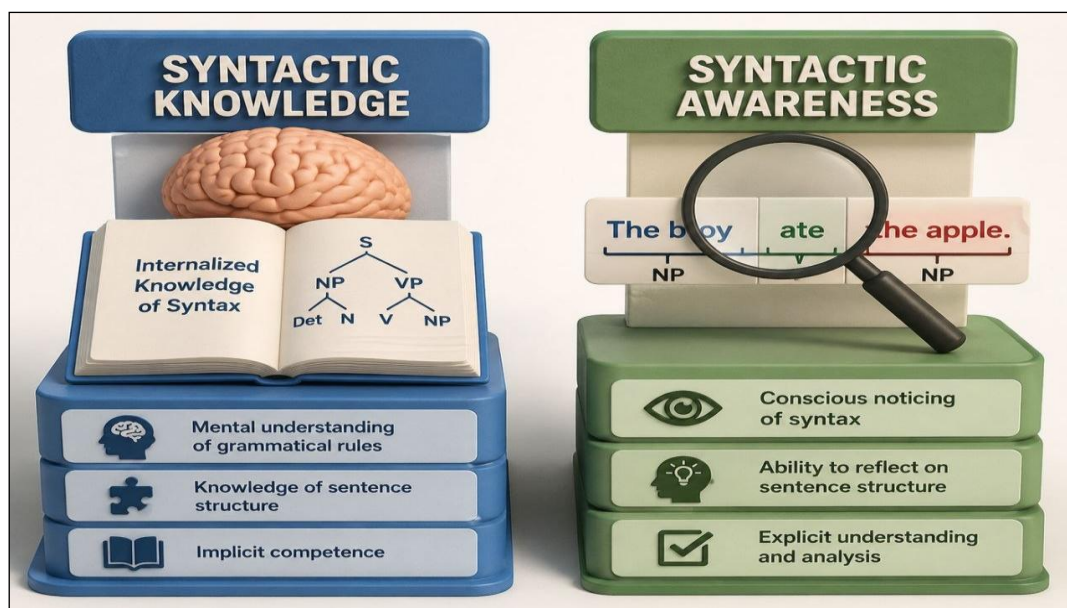
On the other hand, according to Purpura (2004), syntactic knowledge is the internalized, unconscious understanding of the structural principles that control how words are put together to produce phrases and sentences. Without necessarily being able to articulate the underlying rules, speakers may produce and comprehend an endless number of grammatical sentences due to the representational system.

The difference between syntactic knowledge and syntactic awareness fundamentally pertains to the contrast between representations and control. Syntactic knowledge refers to the structural representations retained in memory, whereas syntactic awareness denotes the metalinguistic control used to manage these structures during intricate tasks such as reading comprehension or grammatical reasoning (Mahowald, & Fedorenko, 2024).

According to Kuo & Anderson (2006), syntactic awareness is the explicit, metalinguistic ability to regard language as an object of thought, while syntactic knowledge is the implicit, underlying competence that directs daily language production and comprehension.

Figure 1

Syntactic Awareness & Syntactic knowledge



Syntactic Comprehension and Syntactic Production

Syntactic competence is a fundamental component of language proficiency, including both capacity to comprehend grammatical structures (syntactic comprehension) and the capacity to produce them (syntactic production). The two aspects are interrelated, however, cognitively and functionally distinct.

In addition, Crystal (2008), defines syntactic comprehension as the ability to understand syntactic arrangement and grammatical interaction to convey meaning. Moreover, L2 syntactic comprehension refers to the capacity to correlate linguistic information with semantic representations by using syntactic indicators, including word order, inflections, and function words (Gass & Selinker, 2008).

On the other hand, Syntactic production in second language acquisition denotes to the learner's capacity to improve syntactic frameworks and construct words into grammatically correct structures in both spoken and written forms. It signifies the systematization of grammatical knowledge (DeKeyser, 2007).

Moreover, Lightbown and Spada (2013) define syntactic production as the ability to generate accurate and meaningful utterances in the targeted language. In addition, Swain, (1985) asserts that language production motivates students to process language more deeply and notice gaps in their grammatical knowledge.

Syntactic comprehension and syntactic production play a crucial role in achieving communicative competence and language learning (Ellis, 2008). For instance, syntactic comprehension:

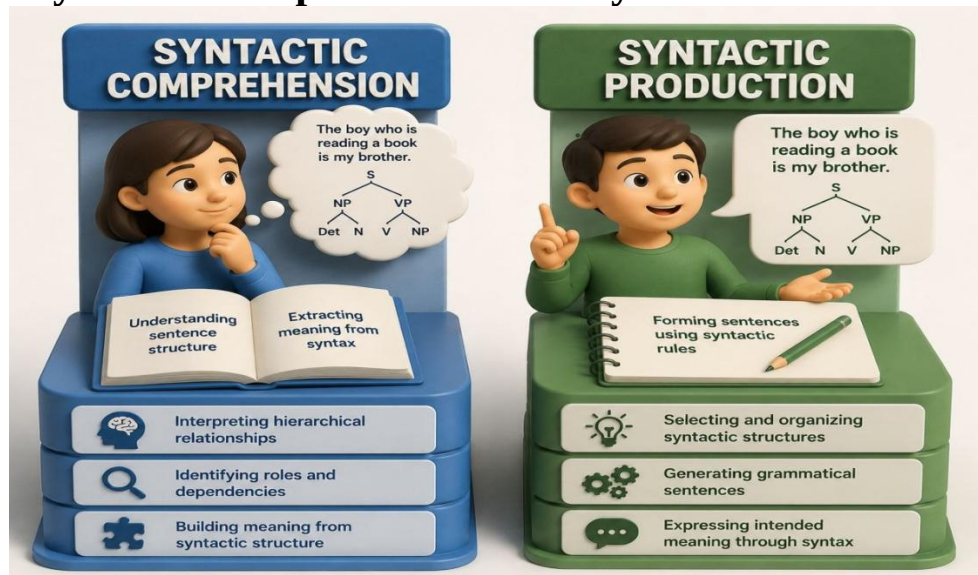
1. Simplifies reading comprehension and listening skills.
2. Help and enable students to analyze complex sentence structures.
3. Contextual understanding aids vocabulary acquisition.

On the other hand, syntactic production

1. Necessary for speaking and writing efficiency.
2. Enable students to express accurate and effective ideas.
3. Reflects and reveals students' level of grammatical mastery.

Figure 2

Syntactic Comprehension and Syntactic Production



Consciousness-Raising and Syntactic Competence

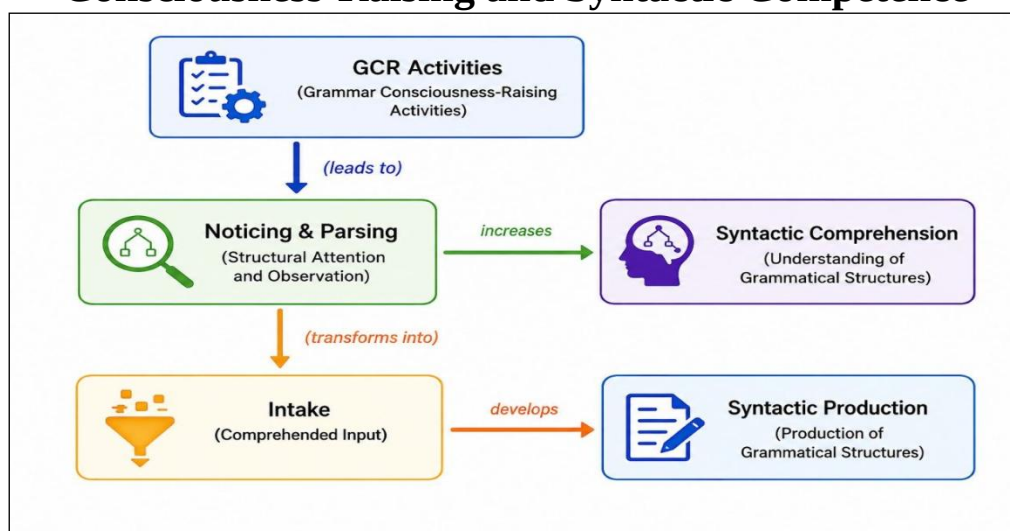
Consciousness-Raising is a pedagogical approach that aims to shift student attention to linguistic form to improve language acquisition. It is closely associated to the improvement of syntactic competence, that includes knowledge of grammatical structure and their correct use. Ellis (2015) states that "consciousness-raising tasks are designed to help learners develop explicit knowledge of grammatical features" (p.162). This emphasizes the fundamental role of consciousness in grammar learning.

Schmidt's Noticing hypothesis underscores the importance of awareness. According to Schmidt (1990), individuals learn about the things that they focus on and don't learn much about

the things they ignore. This indicates that syntactic competence cannot be improved without conscious focus on grammatical form, particularly in instructional contexts. According to Ellis (2008), syntactic competence includes the capacity to understand and generate grammatically correct phrases. This competence is necessary for both production and comprehension. In addition, studies demonstrate the significance of syntactic competence in academic skills.

Figure 3

Consciousness-Raising and Syntactic Competence



Previous Related Studies:

Amirian (2012)

The study sought to investigate several approaches to grammar teaching and to compare the traditional approaches with grammar consciousness –raising tasks.

The sample consists of sixty female Iranians students at a senior high school . (30) students represent the experimental group, whereas the other (30) students represent the control group .The experimental group was instructed through using grammatical consciousness raising , while the control group instructed through the use of pattern drill practice.

The researcher use grammar consciousness raising method for experimental group, while the control group was taught by using traditional teaching method.

The teacher applied post-test for the two groups, the results of the posttest revealed a significant superiority of experimental group over the control group.

Nosratinia & Roustayi (2014)

The study aims to investigate the impact of (GCRTs) on EFL reading comprehension and writing ability.

The study sample consisted of (60) Iranian intermediate female students. The researchers adopted a quasi-experimental design. To collect the required data, the researchers conducted pre-test and post-test procedures. The findings are revealed that grammar consciousness raising tasks led to better performance on writing more than reading comprehension.

Tilahun et al. (2022)

The study endeavors to investigate the impact of using grammar consciousness tasks in developing students' narrative tenses versus the traditional method. The sample of this study consists of (90) Ethiopian students in grade eleven in the two groups (The results revealed that grammar consciousness raising tasks more efficient than traditional method in teaching grammar, as they improve students' ability to comprehend and utilize the target grammar features.

Tashmuratova et al. (2023)

The study seeks to investigate the comparative effects of consciousness –raising tasks and dynamic assessment on morphological awareness in Afghani EFL context. Ninety eleven grade students from three intact courses are chosen to represent the sample of the study. A nonrandomized pretest-posttest design is implemented. The findings of a one-way between-groups ANOVA indicated that both the DA and CR groups considerably exceeded the control group in the post-test outcomes.

Methodology

Experimental Design

In this study, the experimental design of research is utilized. This kind of research design is regarded as one of the ways to approximate cause and effect as well as a method to control variables(See Table 1).

Table1

The Experimental Design

Group	The Test	Independent Variable	"he	The Test
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		treatment"	
EG	Pre-test	GCR	Post-test
CG	Pre-test	Prescribed method of teaching "conventional "	Post-test

Population of the Study and Its Sample

The population of the current study consists of EFL Iraqi secondary school female students enrolled in governmental schools in Baquba city in Diyala province during the first semester of the academic year (2025- 2026).

On the other hand, Thuwaybah Al Aslamiyah Preparatory School for Girls has been randomly selected to ensure unbiased representation to be the sample of the current study. A sample of (80) of 5th stage students has been selected (40) students to represent the experimental group and (40) students to represent the control group (See Table 2).

Table 2

The Sample of the Study

Group	Section	Number	Total
Experimental	B	40	80
Control	A	40	

The Teaching Material

The researcher followed English textbook for the fifth-scientific grade adopted by the Ministry of Education for the 2025-2026 academic year as the material for the current study.

Instrument of the study

As a data collection instrument for this study, the researcher selects a post-test tool that includes grammatical structures in the prescribed book with some modification according to the appropriate cognitive level for the fifth-grade preparatory students.

Results and Data Analysis

Results Related to the First Aim

To address the first aim of the study, which states that "Investigating the impact of grammar consciousness-raising (GCR) activities on developing syntactic skills among Iraqi EFL

fifth-grade secondary school learners", two null hypotheses have been postulated.

To verify the first null hypothesis, which states " There is no statistically significant difference in the mean score between the pre- and post- tests of the experimental group". T- test formula for the experimental scores' in pre and post- test has been adopted, and results have been revealed that the positive influence of the experimental group is shown by the notable increase in mean scores from the pretest, (13.43), to (22.40) as a mean value in post-test. The standard deviation 3.17 in posttest, whereas 2.76 in the pretest.

The computed t-value (18.50) is greater than the critical value (1.68) at the (0.05) significance level and 39 degrees of freedom, thus, the null hypothesis is rejected, confirming that the observed improvement is statistically significant and not attributable to chance. The results suggest that instruction using GCR activities leads to greater improvement in syntactic skills than traditional methods. (See Table 3).

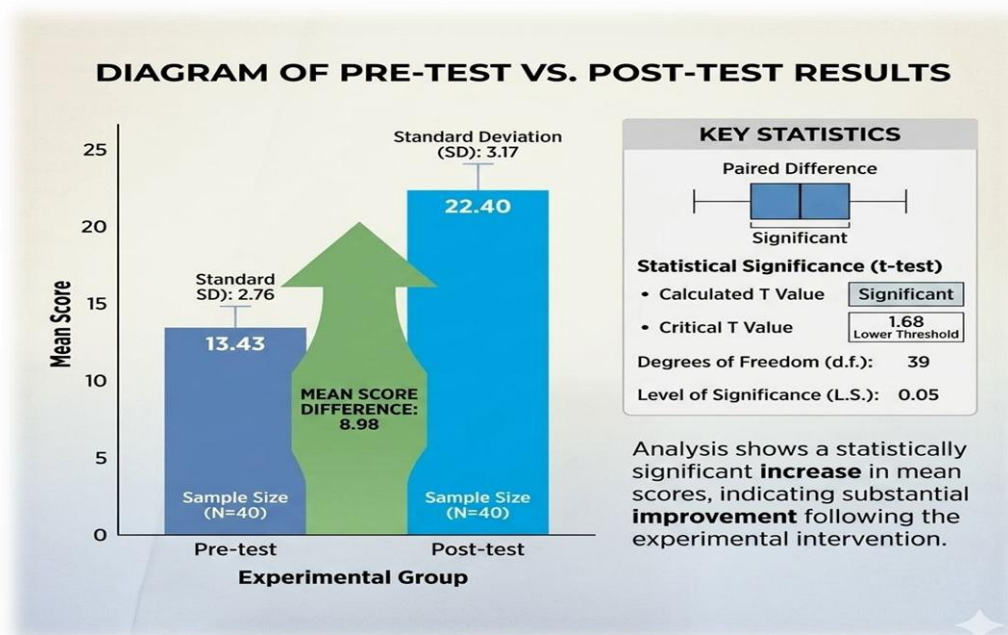
Table 3

The Mean Scores, Standard Deviation, Mean Differences, Standard Differences and T-test Value for the experimental group in Pre and posttest

Test	No.	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Differences	Standard Differences	T-test value		D.F	L.S
						C-T Value	Critical Value		
Post-test	40	22.40	3.17	8.98	3.07	18.50	1.68	39	0.05
Pre-test	40	13.43	2.76						

Figure 4

Pretest and post- test mean scores of experimental group



On the other hand, the second hypothesis of the current study which states that "There is no statistically significant difference in syntactic skills between the experimental group and the control group", has been addressed through adopting t-test.

The results illustrate that the experimental group obtained a higher mean score (22.40) and standard deviation (3.17) than the control group's mean score (18.5) and standard deviation (3.07). These differences in mean scores refer to a superior level of performance in favor of the experimental group.

In addition, the computed t-value (5.59) is higher than the critical one (1.99) at the (0.05) significance level and (39) degrees of freedom. Accordingly, the null hypothesis is rejected, confirming that the notable differences between the experimental and control group are statistically significant. Thus, the level of significant is in favor of the experimental group.

However, these results provide empirical evidence that the treatment, in other word, using grammar consciousness raising activities has a statistically significant positive impact on the improvement of students; syntactic skills in post-test, when compared with the conventional method applied to the control group (See Table 4).

Table 4
The Mean Scores, Standard Deviation, T-test Value for the experimental and control group in the posttest of syntactic skills

Group	No.	Mean	Standard Deviation	T-test value		D.F	L.S
				Computed Value	Critical Value		
EG	40	22.4	3.17	5.59	1.99	78	0.05
CG	40	18.5	3.07				

Results Related to the Second Aim

To attain the intended outcome of the second aim of the present study, which is " Finding out which grammatical aspects mostly reveal improvement through the strategy activities.", students' scores of the experimental group in the posttest of syntactic skills , have been analyzed statistically.

The findings illustrate that the experimental group achieved a higher mean score in recognition skill, where the mean value is (8.675) and standard deviation (3.308), compared to Production skill , as the mean value was (7.025) and standard deviation (3.820). The computed t-value for Recognition (2.07) is higher than the critical t- value (1.99), at the degree of freedom (78), confirming that the difference is statistically significant. This significance is in favor of the Recognition skill, indicating that the experimental treatment effectively has improved students' ability to recognize grammatical structures.(See Table 5).

Table 5

The Mean Scores, Standard Deviation, T-test Value for the experimental group in the posttest of syntactic skills

Dimension	No.	Mean	Standard Deviation	T-test value		D.F	L.S
				Computed Value	Critical Value		
Recognition	40	8.675	3.308	2.07	1.99		0.05
Production	40	7.025	3.820				

Discussion of the Results

The results of the current study demonstrate that the experimental group achieved significantly higher scores in syntactic skills than the control group. This improvement may

be attributed to the effectiveness of the implemented Grammar Consciousness–Raising activities, which actively engaged students in the learning process, through concentrating student attention on grammatical structurers. These results are in correspondence with the previous studies, discussed in chapter two, that highlight the effectiveness of GCR activities in improving language skills in general and syntactic skills in particular. The positive effect of GCR activities showed in this study supports the results of the previous studies of Amirian (2012), who states that using CR tasks in grammar teaching is significantly more effective than the traditional approach. Whereas, Nosratinia & Roustayi (2014), asserts that the improvement occurred in the reading comprehension and writing ability of the students in the experimental group related to the use of grammar consciousness raising techniques.

Furthermore, Tilahun et al (2022), reveal that grammar consciousness raising tasks more efficient than traditional method in teaching grammar, as they improve students' ability to comprehend and use the target grammar features. In addition Tashmuraatova et al (2023) who state that students who received CR instruction performed better in recognizing and understanding morphological forms.

These findings support the effectiveness of awareness-based instructional strategies in improving learners' linguistic performance and reveals that explicit attention to language forms can facilitate language development among EFL learners.

Conclusions

Based on the results of the current study, conclusions are drawn:

1. The implementation of GCR activities helps Iraqi EFL preparatory school students to improve their syntactic skills in various written and spoken contexts.
2. The students of experimental group exhibited a high degree of interest and active engagement with GCR activities, which consequently, enhanced involvement and motivation in classroom activities compared to the control group.

3. The GCR techniques, were more effective and pedagogically suitable for teaching syntactic skills to Iraqi EFL students compared to the conventional technique outlined in the teacher's guide book.

4. The impact of GCR activities on Iraqi students was both statistically significant and educationally meaningful, representing their practical value in EFL classes.

Recommendations

On the basis of the results and conclusions, which revealed a statistically significant differences in favor of the experimental group, the following recommendations are put forward:

1. EFL curriculum designers and decision makers in the Ministry of Education are invited to integrate more syntactic activities that can be taught by effective teaching strategies such as GCR, as they have a significant impact in improving students syntactic skills in all stages of learning.

2. EFL teachers are encouraged to use GCR activities in instruction, as these activities have demonstrated superior effectiveness compared to conventional techniques in developing students' syntactic skills.

3. Teacher training programs should be concentrated on equipping teachers with the essential skills and strategies to effectively implement GCR activities in the classrooms.

4. Increased emphasis should be placed on student- centered approaches that promote noticing, hypothesis formation, and grammatical structures analysis.

5. Educational institutions need to provide supportive learning environments that encourage contact, cooperation, and active engagement through GCR-based tasks.

Suggestions for Further Studies

On the basis of the results of the current study , the following suggestions for further studies are proposed:

1. Further studies are suggested to investigate the impact of applying GCR activities on other language skills, such as reading comprehension, writing, and speaking.

2. Researchers are encouraged to examine students' attitudes and perceptions toward GCR activities and their role in promoting motivation toward language learning.
3. Another research may investigate the impact of GCR in diverse learning contexts, comprising blended or online classrooms.

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