

" النحو بدون قواعد: أساليب إبداعية لتعليم القواعد لطلاب الدراسات الأولية لتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية في العراق "

الباحث

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**الكلمات المفتاحية:** اسلوب تدريس خالي من القواعد، تدريس اللغة التواصلية، التعلم القائم على الأنشطة، طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية في العراق.

**المستخلص:** يتناول هذا البحث تصورات طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية في العراق بشأن الأساليب الإبداعية والتواصلية في تعليم القواعد التي تتجاوز الإطار التقليدي القائم على القواعد. شارك 94 طالباً جامعياً في جامعة بابل – كلية التربية الأساسية- قسم اللغة الانجليزية في دراسة وصفية كمية من حيث تصوراتهم حول تدريس القواعد اللغوية القائم على الأنشطة، والقصص، والسياقات الحياتية من خلال استبيان مقياس ليكرت. تم اعتماد التحليل الإحصائي الوصفي للحصول على الاتجاهات في استجابات الطلاب في خمسة أبعاد، مثل المتعة والتحفيز، والثقة والطلاقة، والقيمة العملية والتواصلية، والمواقف تجاه التعلم بدون قواعد، وإدراك الأساليب التقليدية. تُظهر النتائج أن الاتجاه العام نحو تعليم القواعد الإبداعي إيجابي إلى حد ما، وأن متوسط الدرجات هو الأعلى في حالات المتعة والتحفيز ( $M = 4.13$ ). على الرغم من أن الغالبية العظمى من المستجيبين فضلوا التعلم القائم على التواصل والأنشطة، إلا أنهم في الوقت نفسه أدركوا أهمية التعليم النحوي الصريح في الدقة. تشير النتائج إلى أن طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في العراق مستعدون للانتقال التدريجي من الحفظ وتلاوة القواعد إلى تعليم النحو التفاعلي والموجه نحو المتعلم. ينتهي

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هذا البحث ببعض الاقتراحات التربوية حول الأساليب التي يمكن من خلالها تنفيذ استراتيجيات قواعد اللغة الإبداعية في الفصول الدراسية والحاجة إلى إجراء أبحاث إضافية حول النتائج طويلة الأمد على الطلاقة والكفاءة النحوية.

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### **Abstract**

This research examines the perceptions of Iraqi EFL undergraduates concerning creative and communicative methods of teaching grammar which go beyond the conventional rule-based framework. A total of 94 EFL students from University of Babylon, College of Basic Education, Department of English in Iraq were involved in a quantitative descriptive survey in terms of their perceptions on activity-based, story-based, and real-life contextual grammar teaching through a Likert-scale questionnaire. Descriptive statistical analysis was adopted to get the trends in the responses of students in five dimensions, such as enjoyment and motivation, confidence and fluency, practical and communicative value, attitudes toward rule-free learning and perception of traditional methods. The results show that the overall attitude to creative grammar teaching is rather positive, and the mean scores are the highest in the cases of enjoyment and motivation ( $M = 4.13$ ). Although the majority of the respondents preferred communicative and activity-based learning, they simultaneously recognized the remains of the importance of explicit grammatical instructions on accuracy. The findings indicate that Iraqi EFL students are prepared to the gradual transition

between memorization and rule recitation to interactive and learner-oriented grammar pedagogy. The paper ends with some pedagogical suggestions on the methods through which creative grammar strategies can be implemented in classrooms and the need to conduct additional research on the long-term outcomes on fluency and grammatical competence.

### **Key Words**

Teaching-Rule Free-Approach, Communicative Language Teaching, Activity-Based Learning, Iraqi EFL Undergraduates.

### **1. Introduction.**

According to Ellis (2006), traditional grammar instruction tends to result in students concentrating on the structure of the language instead of its meaning, and it does not give them the chance to exchange information in a real-life situation. Similarly, Abdualhassan et al. (2024) argued emphasize that lots of EFL learners cannot produce phrases because they lack grammar, moreover the grammar of their native language and the grammar of the foreign language are not similar. This situation is mostly explained by the fact that the traditional methods are applied to help the students master the rules required.

The initial research on naturalistic L2 learning demonstrated that learners prefer to acquire grammatical structures in a fixed and universal sequence, and they go through predictable stages of learning. According to Krashen (1981), the teaching of grammar can help in the learning process, but the real power of communicative competence is formed mostly when one learns it instead of memorizing rules. In line with this, (Alquraishy et al., 2020) highlighted that successful language acquisition involves the necessity to go beyond the knowledge of grammar to the knowledge of how language works in genuine communication, and it is observed that speakers of a foreign language must also

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acquire the knowledge of how the language is utilized in an interactive exchange by fluent speakers.

It is on the basis of these theoretical observations that one can understand why many people still criticize traditional and rule-based grammar instruction, particularly in such situation as in Iraq where it has been a staple of EFL classrooms over decades. A lot of students are still reluctant or nervous to use English in the real life. New pedagogical methods, in turn, prioritize creative and communicative teaching and put emphasis on practical application, situational learning and active participation as opposed to rule learning by heart.

It is worth mentioning that creative grammar teaching usually employ such amusing method as stories, conversations, videos, and real-life examples in order to convey the meaning in the most accurate yet easy way. Thus, grammar grows into easier and funnier thing to study. It helps students to easily remember the grammatical rules in a better way. Furthermore, it enables them to be more confident and fluent in speaking and writing.

## **1.1 Problem Statement**

Despite the fact that most nations have adopted communicative and student-centered teaching methods in grammar, the majority of the EFL classrooms in Iraq still use traditional rule-based methods of teaching grammar. Explicit explanation of rules, memorization and translation are typically used in teaching grammar but not interactive or real-life activities. This traditional model tends to lower the motivation of the students and to deepen the lack of development of the practical skills in communication.

This research is based on exploring the attitudes of Iraqi EFL undergraduates towards creative, communicative, and rule-light grammar

instructional practices. It aims to find out whether these methods can increase the confidence and motivation of the students and their practical English skills. The research hypothesis is that the student will express positive attitudes towards contextualized and interactive teaching of grammar in contrast to teaching grammar through rules. Data will be gathered by using a structured questionnaire to measure the answers of students on the basis of various categories such as enjoyment, motivation, practical value, confidence and fluency, perception of conventional methods, and attitudes towards learning without rules. This process will enable the study to establish trends and give an insight on the possible advantages of applying creative strategies in the Iraqi EFL grammar classes.

## **1.2 Research Objectives**

This research aims at discussing what Iraqi EFL undergraduate learners think about such approaches of teaching grammar as creative, communicative, and rule-free. Specifically, it will strive to establish how effective the activity-based, story-based and real-life contextual grammar teaching are in motivating, promoting fluency and grammatical competence among such learners.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

- 1.What are the perceptions of Iraqi EFL undergraduate students concerning creative and communicative grammar teaching?
- 2.How do students feel about the usefulness of rule-free or activity-based approach to their motivation, confidence building, and the ability to be fluent in the English language?
3. How much do traditional rule-based grammar practices effects on student beliefs about successful grammar learning?

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

It is expected that this study will give clues on how grammar learning can be made easier and more efficient in case it is fulfilled through activities, stories, videos, etc. It will postulate that grammar is not necessarily required to be used as memorization of rigid rules of language. To teachers, the study emphasizes on

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the importance of a balance between explanation of rules and creative and engaging activities as the possible way of improving the learning process of students. To curriculum developers, the study will possibly show that the grammar instruction may also be improved by connecting grammatical principles with the real-life application of grammar. In sum, the research will provide a basis for the comprehension of how grammar should be modernized and updated in the country of Iraq.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Theoretical Foundations**

The non-rules-based creative approach to teaching grammar examined in this paper is founded on two major educational and linguistic theories, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Constructivism. According to both paradigms, the attention which should be given to the teacher-as-authority and grammar-as-object is changed and shifted to the learner-as-active-participant and language-as-communication, which is a strong argument to explain the methods that focus on the meaning and use rather than memorization of formal rules.

As a response to approaches to teaching the English language, including the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) and the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM), that placed great emphasis on the study of isolated rules of grammar, Communicative Language Teaching arose in the 1970s. What motivated this movement was the fact that language ability was not limited to grammatical competence. CLT is a radical change in the perception of language as such. Rather than regarding language as meshing sets of rules of grammar, lexical and

phonology rules etc. linguists started seeing it as a means of expressing meaning (Rambe, 2017).

The main aim of CLT is to build communicative proficiency of the learner and less emphasis is put on grammatical proficiency. This style views language in terms of communication is inextricably linked to all the situations that are occurring in the environment coupled with the people, reasons, place and so on (Rambe, 2017). More importantly, CLT draws a line between the language usage (grammatical language) and the language use, stating that language should be taught and or used in the real-life situations as it is. This is in line with the learning theory which states that people learn best when they apply language in doing things and not by studying how language works based on rules (Rambe, 2017).

Teacher's role is shifted to that of a facilitator who is able to contribute to the establishment of the classroom environment in which the process of learning a language would be facilitated to offer students an opportunity to utilize and practice the language. This theoretical background offers practical justification to the reduction of explicit grammar directions and the maximization of meaningful and task-based implementation in the EFL classroom.

The underlying theory of learning CLT supports the constructivism learning one. This paradigm assumes that human beings do create knowledge and meaning out of their experiences. According to this, learning is not a passive process in which teachers just pass knowledge to students, it is an active process in which students play the role of constructing knowledge in their own minds (Bada, 2015).

Constructivism opposes the rote memorization nature of a traditional approach to grammar teaching by claiming that knowledge cannot be taught but must be internalized and learned. One of the main tenets is that learners develop new insights based on prior knowledge, i.e., new linguistic concepts are developed on the same basis of knowledge that learners possess. This is attained by the process of self-regulation and conceptual structures building through

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reflection and abstraction. The emphasis in constructivist classroom is supposedly to be on the students, where the teacher acts as a guide in the form of a coach, mediator, and a facilitator to have students build and evaluate their knowledge, through involving the learners into fun, practical exercises, where they have to apply grammatical structures to solve problems and convey meaning, this process turns student-centered learning into a more effective and actual communicative competence (Bada, 2015).

## **2.2 Previous Studies**

A study was conducted by Kadhim (2019) titled as “Approaches and Methods to Teaching Grammar in Textbooks Ahead of Schools in Iraq.” It is meant to explain, compare and contrast the strategies and methods of teaching grammar in Iraqi school text books. It describes how the analysis will examine two sets of textbooks which are Iraq Opportunities and English for Iraq which will take different strategies- PPP method and the task-based approach respectively. It has concluded that with the strengths and weaknesses of both textbooks, the research demonstrates the significance of enhancing grammar teaching through balancing teaching content and structure in both teaching aids.

Alquraishy et al. (2020) accomplished the paper entitled “The Effect of Teaching Genre-Based Activities on Iraqi EFL Learners’ Speaking Performance.” It seeks to explore the genre-based activity effects on the performance of EFL university students of Iraq in terms of speaking. It describes that the design of the research was experimental with 40 students who were taught by genre-based activities and were tested by using pre- and after-speaking tests. It came up with a conclusion that genre-based activities exerted a strong positive



impact on the speaking performance of learners and also gave practical information to the curriculum designers to improve the teaching of speaking.

Kannan et al. (2022) accomplished the paper entitled “Strategies for Teaching English Grammar to Students of Iraqi Universities.” It seeks to determine the strategies used by teachers in teaching grammar to Iraqi university students. It elaborates that grammar is critical to the comprehension of language and the prevention of ambiguities, but most learners find grammar a challenging concept. It has concluded that the most effective options include inductive and deductive approaches, inclusion of songs, involvement of students in grammar classes, presenting grammatical frameworks in contrast, and teaching aids as visuals.

Mohammed and Ghonsooly (2022) accomplished the paper entitled “Motivating English Grammar Learning for Iraqi High Schools.” The purpose of it is to create and test a motivation-to-learn-English-grammar scale and to determine its correlation with the grammatical competence of Iraqi high school EFL learners. It states that 100 female pupils of Wasit High School in Kut participated in the study and statistical methods, including factor analysis, Cronbach alpha, and Pearson correlation, were employed to guarantee reliability and validity of the instrument. It established that the questionnaire was valid and reliable and that student’s motivation and grammatical competence had a positive and significant relationship.

Rashk et al. (2023) conducted the paper entitled “Exploring the Use of Grammar Games to Enhance EFL Iraqi Students Performance in Grammar.” It is intended to research the impact of grammar games to enhance grammatical competence among Iraqi EFL students. It states that the common method of teaching grammar focuses on memorizing and rehearsing the rules and may lead to low levels of engagement and poor retention. It inferred that grammar games

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in EFL classrooms are applicable in promoting grammatical accuracy, motivation, and positive attitude to grammar in students.

Abdulhassan et al. (2024) accomplished the paper entitled “Grammar Learning Strategies among Iraqi EFL Learners.” The study looks into the mechanism whereby Iraqi students learn English grammar strategies. It collected data from 200 students using Pawlak’s (2018) inventory. The results show that students use grammar strategies at a moderate level. They mostly use cognitive strategies such as self-motivation, memorizing, repeating, and asking for corrections. They use metacognitive strategies less.

Hadi and Mohammed (2025) implemented the paper entitled “Investigating the Techniques Used in Teaching ‘Grammatical Areas and Functions’ of the Sixth Preparatory Textbook of English for Iraq.” It aims at examining the techniques Iraqi teachers use to teach grammar in the sixth-preparatory English for Iraq textbook and understanding the reasons behind their teaching practices. It expounds that most if teachers depend on traditional methods such as explicit grammar explanation in Arabic. Meanwhile, communicative techniques (e.g. role-playing) are rarely applied. It concluded that this imbalance is a result of exam pressure and large class sizes, among others. It also recommends the improvement of the teacher preparation so as to support the method of communicative grammar teaching.

It can be said that the earlier studies show that EFL learners like activity-based and communicative methods, especially when lessons are interactive and relevant. But little research has looked at Iraqi EFL undergraduates’ views on creative, rule-free grammar teaching. Knowing their preferences is important for

making the educational process more efficient. Therefore, the present paper investigates the Iraqi undergraduates' responses to modern, creative grammar to give ideas for higher engaging, student-centered teaching.

### **3. Methodology**

The present study employs a quantitative descriptive design as a method to scrutinize Iraqi EFL students' responses to modern creative, modern way of teaching grammar. The goal of the study is discovering what the students prefer and what they feel about when they learn grammar by means of activities, stories, and real-life situations, not traditional learning methods.

#### **3.1 Participants**

The participants composed of ninety-four (94) EFL students from University of Babylon, College of Basic Education, Department of English who are enrolling in the 2025–2026 school year.

#### **3.2 Instrument**

The data were collected from a questionnaire created for this study. The instrument consisted of 14 statements which examine the students' responses to the creative, modern method of teaching grammar, using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). In addition, the questionnaire included five main parts: enjoyment and motivation, confidence and fluency, communication, rule-free learning, and traditional grammar methods.

#### **3.3 Procedure**

The online method of distributing questionnaire was applied based on its pragmatic and methodological benefits that improved the quality and practicality of the research. Online administration made the study accessible to students in several regions and provinces in Iraq in a fast and effective way, and it did not

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face problems associated with geographical location, time constraints, and bureaucratic constraints. It also saved logistical expenses and allowed the participants to respond at their convenience boosting response rates and giving more reliable data.

Even though the majority of students have been used to learning grammar in usual, rule-based, ways, the questionnaire was created with the specific purpose to check their attitudes to creative, communicative, and rule-light grammar teaching styles. This was a desirable design because it enabled the study to capture the views of the students about innovative methods, which may have been little exposed to them at a younger age in their classes. The online nature of the study also provided a sense of anonymity where individuals felt not afraid of being judged and giving truthful answers. The online approach addressed the study purpose, namely, to gain a wide range and a representative sample of responses to various questions about traditional and modern grammar teaching among the Iraqi EFL undergraduates.

## **3.4 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument**

The questionnaire was tested in terms of validity and reliability in order to ascertain that the questionnaire properly measured the attitudes of the students towards creative and communicative grammar teaching. The content validity was defined by the review of experts: two professionals working in the fields of applied linguistics and TESOL analyzed the items of the questionnaires to ensure that they properly reflected the five dimensions of the study, which are enjoyment and motivation, confidence and fluency, communication, rule-free learning, and traditional grammar methods. Their comments aided in refining the language of

some of the statements and made them clear and consistent with the constructs of the study.

The design of the items based on the established principles of measurement of attitudes and grounding the dimensions on theoretical principles of Communicative Language Teaching, Constructivism, and the Input Hypothesis of Krashen enhanced construct validity. Assessment of reliability was done statistically following collection of data. Cronbachs alpha was used to measure internal consistency of the instrument and it was found that the coefficient of reliability is high, meaning that items measured similar underlying attitudes. The Likert-scale statements worked in a coherent manner, which showed that the respondents perceived the statements in a consistent and reliable manner. Therefore, the questionnaire may be deemed as a valid and reliable instrument to study the perceptions of the Iraqi EFL undergraduates regarding the innovative and rule-free methods of learning grammar.

### **3.5 Ethical Considerations**

The research adhered to strict ethical principles in order to protect, honor, and maintain the privacy of all the participants. Prior to the data collection, the researcher informed the participants of the purpose of the study, its voluntary character and their entitlement to withdraw at any moment with no adverse effects. They were reassured that the data would be intended to be used only in academic context and that they will be completely anonymous. No personal information, like names, university register number and contact details were gathered. Informed consent was taken electronically by the participants and followed by filling out the questionnaire. Ethical guidelines of the general approach to the educational research are followed, as professional ethics provide the right to the confidentiality of information, honesty, and respect to the autonomy of the participants. The research was done according to the institutional ethical guidelines of the research of human subjects in Iraq.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

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The data were studied using simple statistics like average scores and standard deviations to find the main trends in students' attitudes. The results were then grouped into themes that showed the main ideas of creative grammar teaching as Tables 1 and 2 illustrate. Furthermore, a chart is used to display the differences between the categories such as enjoyment, communication, and use of rules.

Besides a descriptive analysis, reliability analysis was also conducted through the use of Cronbach alpha to evaluate internal consistency of the five thematic categories that include enjoyment and motivation, confidence and fluency, communication, rule free learning and traditional grammar methods. The alpha coefficient provided the evidence that the instrument was able to measure these constructs reliably. In addition, the answers were aggregated and matched within the five categories to determine the areas that were scored with the greatest positive attitudes. The findings were systematized in Table 1 and Table 2 that provides the statistical overview of each theme and a visual chart was created that shows the relative differences between such categories as enjoyment, communication and dependence on rules. These statistical analysis measures made sure that there was a comprehensive and empirically based interpretation of perceptions of students towards modern and creative grammar teaching.

## **4. Results**

This section contains the results of the study in terms of quantitative data, which summarize the attitudes of Iraqi EFL undergraduates toward creative/communicative methods of teaching grammar. The findings are informed by descriptive statistical analysis of the responses of the participants to

the questionnaire items. The importance of presenting the results in this section is that it gives the empirical foundation to the significance of the perceptions of learners regarding the application of stories, games, and real-life situations in teaching grammar, in comparison with the conventional rule-based teaching approaches. The mean scores, the standard deviations, and the categorical interpretation of the answers of the respondents are presented in the tables and figures below, and it allows more clearly to see what points of creative grammar teaching are most positively accepted and in which areas the learners still are inclined to traditional forms of teaching.

**Table 1. Participants' Responses Toward Creative Grammar Teaching (n = 94)**

Statement (rephrased)	Mean	SD	Interpretation
I enjoy learning grammar when it is taught through practical activities.	4.21	0.77	Very positive attitude
Using songs, movies, and real-life situations makes learning grammar easier for me.	4.13	0.93	Very positive
Learning grammar through stories helps me understand the lessons more clearly.	4.05	1.00	Very positive
Creative methods of teaching grammar make the classroom atmosphere more enjoyable.	4.12	0.76	Very positive
I find grammar easier to learn when it is practiced through speaking activities.	3.95	0.98	Positive
I gain more confidence in speaking when grammar is taught through communication.	3.81	1.13	Positive

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Statement (rephrased)	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Real-life grammar exercises help me apply grammar more effectively.	3.67	1.00	Positive
A communicative approach to grammar is more effective for me than traditional, theoretical instruction.	3.64	1.07	Moderately positive
Practice-based activities enable me to understand grammar better.	3.65	1.23	Moderately positive
A creative, rule-free approach to grammar suits the needs of Iraqi EFL students.	3.45	1.04	Neutral-positive
Teachers should focus less on making students memorize grammatical rules.	3.38	1.23	Slightly positive
Learning grammar without emphasizing rules helps me improve my fluency.	3.34	1.15	Neutral
I find it difficult to learn grammar through traditional methods.	3.38	1.23	Slightly positive
I feel that I need to memorize grammatical rules in order to write correctly.	3.89	0.95	Mixed (some dependence on rules)

Table 1 shows student's individual answers, while Table 2 groups the results into main categories, namely: Enjoyment and Motivation, Confidence and Fluency, Practical and Communicative Value, Attitudes toward Rule-Free Learning, and Perception of Traditional Methods. Table 2 below illustrates the data in a ranked format, and then there is the possibility of making the results



easily read, compared, and interpreted in terms of the level of positivity for each category.

Category	Average Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Enjoyment and Motivation	4.13	Very positive	1
Practical and Communicative Value	3.75	Positive	2
Confidence and Fluency	3.58	Positive	3
Perception of Traditional Methods	3.63	Mixed	4
Attitudes toward Rule-Free Learning	3.42	Neutral	5

According to Table 2, enjoyment and motivation were in the first and second position among all categories with a very positive mean score of 4.13 meaning that the students are more engaged when grammar is presented in an enjoyable and interactive manner. The next category is practical and communicative value with an average of 3.75 and implies that learners value grammar associated with the real-life communication.

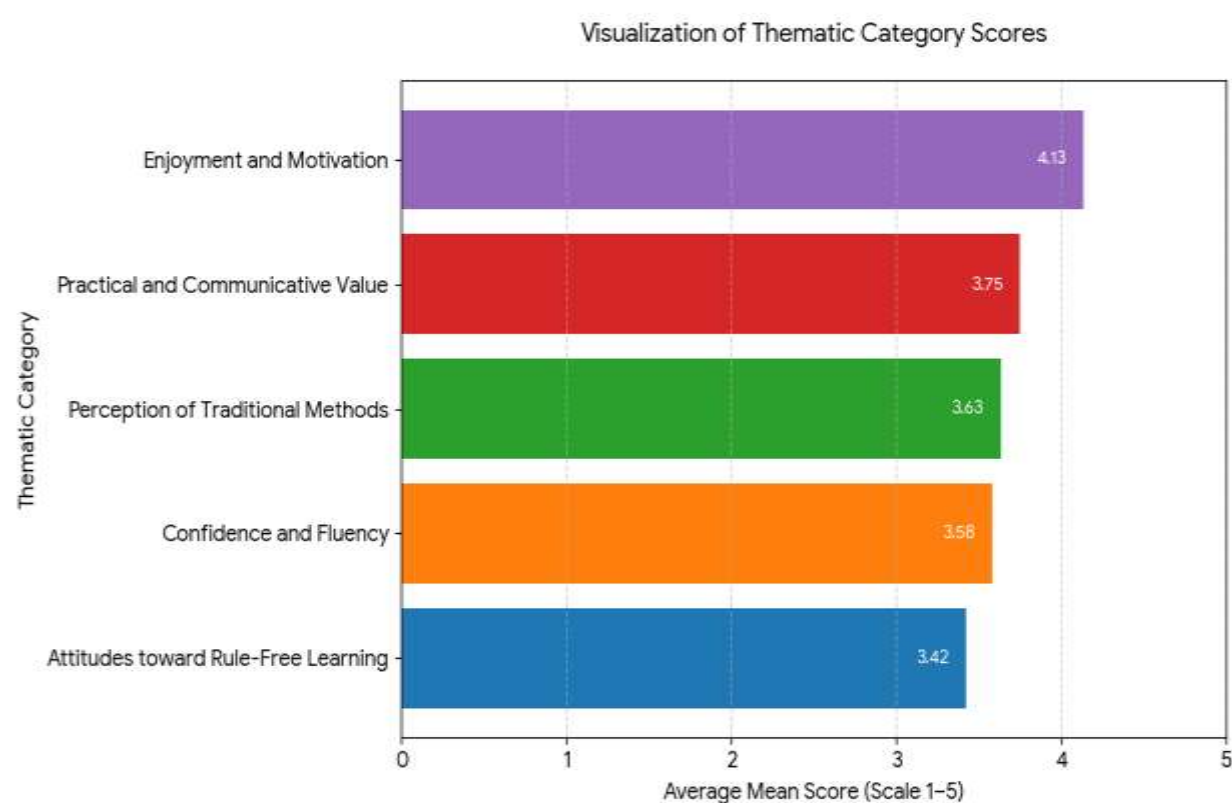
Confidence and fluency followed at 3.58 indicating that creative techniques will make students feel more at ease using English. Interestingly, the perception of traditional methods was (3.63) and indicated mixed attitude: students still may find some promise in traditional teaching but would like to have more dynamic methods. Lastly, the approach to learning without rules has the lowest mean of 3.42, which indicates that learners are receptive to the approach of creative approaches, but they are also skeptical of the idea of not following grammar rules altogether.

Figure 1 provides a visual comparison between the mean scores of the five major attitude categories. This visual overview summarizes the data into a simple

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visual hierarchy, which shows the most interesting category of teaching creative grammar to Iraqi EFL undergraduates. The statistics presented in figure 1 were translated into impression of preferences among students and the relative power of each attitude dimension.



**FIGURE 1**

As the visual comparison in Figure 1 makes very clear, the areas where the learners demonstrate the most enthusiasm are in the enjoyment and motivation sides of creative grammar teaching, and this proves that engagement and fun are the key to successful learning. In the meantime, moderate averages of rule-free learning and conventional dependence suggest that students are at the level of

pedagogical transition- creative, but still attached to grammatical correctness. This balance between innovation and structure is indicative of a more gradual and realistic shift in Iraqi EFL classrooms towards a greater degree of communicative and learner-oriented teaching practices.

## 5. Discussion

Findings on this study have revealed that the attitudes of Iraqi EFL undergraduates may change significantly towards grammar learning and a gradual shift to less rigid and more creative and communicative learning engagements may take place. The research has revealed that pleasure and motivation have rated high, which means that the students have been most active when grammar has been provided and told in the form of stories, songs, dialogues and other interactive approaches. This has indicated that learners have started to understand grammar not just as an unchanging body of rules to be learnt by heart, but as a dynamic side of communication, which can be learnt by way of meaningful application. These results have been consistent with the findings by Rashk et al. (2023) who have found that grammar games and activity-based approaches help in boosting motivation and grammatical accuracy among students. Equally, the contextual and pragmatic interaction has been a strength to the concept of Kannan et al. (2022) who believed that teaching communicative grammar is a very crucial step in nurturing the linguistic competence among the Iraqi students.

However, average scores in the sets of rule-free learning and the perception of conventional methods have presupposed the opposition between innovation and convention. Even though interaction and creativity have been apparently chosen by the participants, the fact that they perceive that they must learn the rules to write more correctly to reflect a heritage of adhering to the traditional pedagogical practices. This duality can be conceived as a level of transition in

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Iraqi EFL education, with the students adapting to less strict, less teacher-centered learning environments but keeping the use of explicit teaching of rules as a crutch to academic precision. These findings have echoed those by Hadi and Mohammed (2025) who have found out that teachers still follow traditional grammar methods as pressure by examiners, i.e., the high stakes tests and testing demands which reward strict adherence to rules, and institutionalized forces, i.e., the long-established educational norms, curriculum, and administrative expectations which support the teaching methods that are conservative. Overall, the results of this research have shown that a moderate model of teaching ought to be approved: one where the clarity of the grammatical formulations is not neglected yet creativity, communicative, and context of language learning are encouraged. This balance has a potential to introduce more confident, fluent and motivated English-speaking students in the Iraqi education system.

## **6. Conclusion and Recommendations**

The research focused on the attitude of Iraqi EFL undergraduates to creative, communicative, and rule-light methodologies of teaching grammar. The findings revealed that most students are usually receptive to the use of creative grammar instruction especially when their activities include storytelling, role-playing, songs, movies and real-life contextual activity. The approaches seem to increase the level of engagement, motivation and confidence of the learners when it comes to practicing English. Despite the fact that part of the respondents still believe that learning rules is of essence in writing accuracy, the general trend is that more and more people are shifting towards communicative and activity-based teaching, as compared to the traditional rule-oriented teaching. It showed that EFL learners in Iraq may be at a stage to be open to more innovative, context-

based methods of teaching grammar that is not only interesting but also significant to them. The results also indicated that the introduction of interactive techniques can positively affect the learning results in grammar and potentially lead to the acquisition of fluency and accuracy.

It is then proposed based on the findings that the Iraqi universities and schools should incorporate creative grammar lessons which focus on communicative and activity-based learning in addition to old fashioned learning. The grammar syllabi must be such that they relate grammatical forms to real life situations and students can make sense out of what they learn. Teacher education courses ought to offer career growth chances to use creative tools like stories, songs, games, role-playing and multimedia applications to increase the involvement and context-based learning.

Teachers are urged to create interactive learning in the classroom where students contribute towards discussions, group work and role plays which has the potential of supporting fluency and accuracy. Also, the institutions ought to facilitate the good application of digital tools, videos, interactive applications and online exercises to motivate the learners and offer a variety of grammar practice. Lastly, additional studies should be conducted to investigate the long-term outcomes of creative grammar instruction on the level of language proficiency and to determine the possible obstacles of teachers to their implementation and how to maximize their adoption in the curricula. The adoption of these suggestions can assist the Iraqi EFL classrooms to transition to a more interactive and learner-oriented way of teaching grammar which stimulates engagement, confidence and communicative competence.

# Grammar without Rules: Creative Approaches to Teaching Grammar for Iraqi EFL Undergraduates

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## **Appendix:**

### **Survey Questionnaire:**

1- I enjoy learning grammar when it is taught through practical activities.

1- Strongly Disagree.

2- Disagree.

3- Neutral.

4- Agree.

5- Strongly Agree.

2- Using songs, movies, and real-life situations makes learning grammar easier for me.

1- Strongly Disagree.

2- Disagree.

3- Neutral.

4- Agree.

5- Strongly Agree.

3- Learning grammar through stories helps me understand the lessons more clearly.

1- Strongly Disagree.

2- Disagree.

3- Neutral.

4- Agree.

5- Strongly Agree.



4- Creative methods of teaching grammar make the classroom atmosphere more enjoyable.

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

5- I find grammar easier to learn when it is practiced through speaking activities.

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

6- I gain more confidence in speaking when grammar is taught through communication.

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

7- Real-life grammar exercises help me apply grammar more effectively.

- 1- Strongly Disagree.
- 2- Disagree.

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3- Neutral.

4- Agree.

5- Strongly Agree.

8- A communicative approach to grammar is more effective for me than traditional, theoretical instruction.

1- Strongly Disagree.

2- Disagree.

3- Neutral.

4- Agree.

5- Strongly Agree.

9- Practice-based activities enable me to understand grammar better.

1- Strongly Disagree.

2- Disagree.

3- Neutral.

4- Agree.

5- Strongly Agree.

10- A creative, rule-free approach to grammar suits the needs of Iraqi EFL students.

1- Strongly Disagree.

2- Disagree.

3- Neutral.

4- Agree.

5- Strongly Agree.

11- Teachers should focus less on making students memorize grammatical rules.

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

12- Learning grammar without emphasizing rules helps me improve my fluency.

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

13- I find it difficult to learn grammar through traditional methods.

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

14- I feel that I need to memorize grammatical rules in order to write correctly.

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