

Text Copying as a Culture-Based Learning Strategy: A Case of EFL Grammar Learners in an Arabic Context

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Abstract—As a well-established strategy in the educational traditions of Islam, copying texts (imitating a model) has played a crucial role in learning the Holy Quran and the Arabic language. This study delves into the necessity of understanding how this traditional strategy influences the learning of foreign languages. Using 18 hours of strategy-based instruction, this paper examines the efficacy of text copying in learning grammar (independent variable), as evidenced by a series of grammar tests and surveys assessing learners' perceptions (dependent variables). The study draws upon data from two groups of college-level English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners, comprising a control group (n=10) and an experimental group (n=11), all categorized at the A2 proficiency level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The findings suggest that text copying enhances learners' grammatical understanding and contributes to overall satisfaction in learning a foreign language, as indicated by improved test scores and positive learner feedback.

Index Terms—text copying, grammar learning strategies, strategy instruction, repetition

I. INTRODUCTION

Developing conscious and unconscious mechanisms is a critical component of strategic learning so humans can process, remember, and acquire information and skills in various fields (Pressley & Harris, 2006). Since individuals encounter various tasks and approaches, assuming they will discover and apply all the necessary strategies is difficult. Researchers, therefore, emphasize the importance of strategy instruction for strategies to be adopted effectively (Pressley & Harris, 2006; Plonsky, 2011, 2019).

Taking Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective on learning, this study presents text copying as a strategy that enhances grammar learning and stimulates learners toward better learning through crucial, meaningful, and transformational experiences. In Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and its Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), imitation is a way of social learning that is far from the old thinking of imitation as a mere act of habit formation. "The view of imitation as mere automatic, mindless copying of others' intellectual actions is rejected in favour of a stance of imitative activity as intentional, goal-directed, transformative behaviour leading learners to new development levels" (de Guerrero & Commander, 2013, p. 2). Imitation is a profoundly social process that learners use to connect with others and learn from their actions and methods in meaningful contexts (Over, 2020). Learners will activate their mental processes through meaningful imitation to construct their understanding of language. Language imitation, including language acquisition and social interaction, is crucial in human development and learning (Damasceno, 2020).

Learners' ZPD describes the gap between their ability to perform a task independently and their potential ability to do it under guidance or collaboration. According to this concept, learning occurs in this zone (Lantolf & Poehner, 2008). The texts to be copied by the participants in this study and the class interactions during the intervention process represented the guidance and the meaningful contexts for learning. It is claimed here that copying texts after meaningful interactions will help learners grasp grammatical points in unity and totality.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Grammar Learning Strategies

The present study perceives text copying as a deliberate action that learners consciously employ to control the structures of a language better. This definition is adopted from the general definition of GLS as "deliberate thoughts and actions that students consciously employed for learning and getting better control over the use of grammar structures" (Cohen & Pinilla-Herrera, 2010, p. 64). Throughout the process of learning languages, grammar learning strategies hold considerable importance. The study of language learning strategies, in general, has been extensive, but the study of grammar learning strategies, in particular, has received relatively little attention (Pawlak, 2019).

There are, however, some recent studies attempting to address this issue. For example, Li (2022) conducted a noteworthy review study highlighting how individuals' differences, such as motivation and willingness to communicate, influence how English as a foreign language (EFL) learners utilize grammar learning strategies. In a separate study,

Cheng (2022) investigated the possibility of utilizing one's first language (L1) as a strategy for English grammar acquisition, focusing on a Chinese EFL learner. The findings suggest that using L1 as a learning strategy can facilitate the development of grammatical knowledge and enhance grammar learning. In addition, Truong (2022) examined the intricate interplay between English grammar self-efficacy levels among Vietnamese EFL students and self-regulated learning strategies used in grammar learning. A moderate relationship exists between self-regulated learning strategies in English grammar learning and English grammar self-efficacy. Similar studies have enhanced our understanding of grammar learning strategies, offering valuable insights for EFL teachers and learners.

B. Strategy Instruction

Students learning a foreign language have been taught strategies using several approaches and designs. As a starting point for studying language learning strategies, Chamot and colleagues developed CALLA in the mid-1980s (Chamot, 2009). Learning to Learn English: A Course in Learner Training was one of the first programs to use strategy-based instruction in the early days (Ellis & Sinclair, 1989). A key aspect of Cohen's work at the University of Minnesota was developing and implementing the Strategy-Based Instruction (SBI) program, which became an internationally recognized model of effective instruction. Another noteworthy program is a long-term strategy training model developed by Oxford in 1990 and updated in 2006. In 1999, Grenfell and Harris developed a six-step cycle model based on scientific justifications and well-designed programs, while Macaro (2001) developed a cyclical model based on rationales and scientific justifications. The three-step Problem-Solving Strategy Intervention (PSSI) model was developed by Gunning and Oxford (2014) to support young learners through Yin's theory of social interaction and the school-intervention logic model. Initially, the model educates students on strategies. After identifying appropriate strategies for task requirements, students work in teams to select and use strategies independently. Assessment methods include video recordings, field notes, reflections, Task-Based Strategy Questionnaires, and strategy logs. Psaltou-Joycey (2021) provides more details on how some LLSI researchers have incorporated learning strategies into their models of teaching languages.

Despite any instructional design, teaching several strategies simultaneously would be difficult because several elements are involved in strategy use and affect strategy instruction (see Figure 1). The role of the instructor in strategy-based instruction and that of the learner as a strategy user have a dynamic, recursive, and changing relationship (Gu, 2019; Plonsky, 2019; Shi, 2017). Consequently, a less-is-more approach is favoured by recent trends in strategy instruction (Plonsky, 2019). A simple approach is the key to understanding complexity, thereby explaining the current study's instruction of only one strategy.

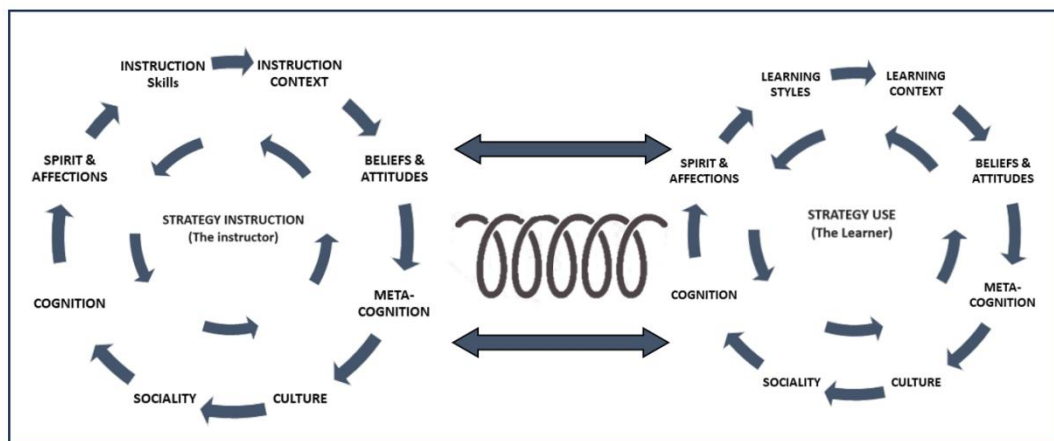


Figure 1. The Interaction Between Strategy Use and Strategy Instruction

Figure 1 above shows that learners' strategies are derived, moved, and tuned by different components (i.e., the learners' spirit, affections, cognitions, metacognitions, beliefs, attitudes, sociability, culture, and learning context). In each of those components, other subcategories might exist, making strategy use a complex process by nature. For example, in a learning context, the tasks, the learning environment, the materials used, etc., may support or hinder the effectiveness of strategy use. The situation of strategy instruction, on the other hand, is even more complex. In the instruction context, for example, subcomponents might play a significant role in strategy use (e.g., the economy, management policies, school resources, institutional factors, etc.). The learners' strategies initiate, direct, and amend strategy instruction. However, the connection process is recursive, dynamic, and iterative (Gu, 2019). The spiral line in Figure 1 above connects strategy use to strategy instruction. Still, it means that when the interactions move forward, they turn on themselves at the same time as feedback affected by past experiences, forming new experiences and new meanings to strategy use and strategy instruction.

C. Text Copying in Islamic Culture

Learning through copying texts is an ancient teaching and learning strategy rooted in Arab and Islamic history (see Shalaby, 1954). It means rewriting model texts, whether religious or literary, for purely educational purposes. Such a strategy is part of the basics of traditional education for learning the Holy Qur'an, the days of the Arabs, and their poetry, taught in traditional schools called *KUTTAB* or *KATATEEB*. In those schools, the children used to sit in a circle around the teacher, and each one had a small wooden tablet in his hand on which one or more verses from the Holy Qur'an or a specific literary text were written. The teacher would read what was written, and the students would repeat behind him collectively until they mastered reading the text well. Then, the teacher asks them to copy and write the text written in front of them, and then they erase and write from memory and repeat this process until they memorize the text and master calligraphy and writing. Students present their writing to the teacher whenever they copy the text. If the teacher approves of their handwriting and memorization of the text, they can move forward to the following text. Otherwise, they are ordered to erase and rewrite until they master both the handwriting and memorization.

Through this strategy, students learn beautiful handwriting and the basic linguistic foundations of religious and literary texts, such as spelling and grammar rules and the correct use of phrases and sentences. This strategy also helps them develop and organize ideas by learning about various writing styles such as description, narration, reasoning, persuasion, etc. This strategy also would help students learn and develop vocabulary, increase linguistic competence, enhance language aptitude, and polish language usage. The success of this strategy depends on continuous practice and feedback from the teacher.

Suppose you read Islamic linguists like Ibn al-Muqaffa, Ibn Jinni, Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani, and others. In that case, you will notice a consensus that learning a language is an art like forging and shaping metals and arranging speech in a way similar to arranging rubies and pearls in necklaces and diadems (see Ibn AbdRabbih, 1983). It is only possible for a beginner learner in gold and silversmithing and chain making to design anything by imitating skilled people and looking at their methods, then starting to formulate his Molds and jewellery. From here, we can understand the learners' interest in learning the Qur'an first, writing its verses and imitating its styles, then learning Arab poetry and speeches, with a desire to understand the underlying linguistic structures and rhetorical systems contained in the language. For example, Ibin Jinni, a distinguished Arab linguist of the 10th century, suggested in his famous book entitled "Al-Khasa'is" (The Characteristics) that a deep understanding of a language's rules and structures is crucial. This can be extrapolated to mean that mastering any language's foundational grammar and phonetics is vital (see Aldawood, 2021). This is why this study claims that text copying, as deeply rooted in Arab and Islamic culture, is essential for a deep understanding of language structure.

D. Text Copying in Language Learning

Language imitation improves pronunciation, listening, reading, and writing skills in learning English (de Guerrero & Commander, 2013; Nguyen & Delvaux, 2015). In classroom research, an imitation reading task engaged adult learners of English as a second language (de Guerrero & Commander, 2013). Students produced written retellings after reading aloud, shadowing, and summarizing a story together. Several imitation behaviours were observed, from close copies to significant transformations and immediate and deferred reproductions. Because of the shadow reading task's recursive structure, readers could mimic and internalize second language (L2) exemplars while retaining and understanding stories simultaneously. Research also found that imitating language provides ESL learners valuable strategies for learning a cognitive academic language, emphasizing interaction, and enhancing language proficiency (Damasceno, 2020). Despite its simplicity, copying text is a psychologically challenging process. Sequential visual and cognitive processes, such as visual encoding, mental representation, and writing, are involved in copying text (Laisley et al., 2014).

In addition, previous research supports the idea that text copying enhances the learning of languages, as it aids in literacy acquisition and helps in understanding and speaking foreign languages. For example, it has been found that copying ability is significantly influenced by the phonological and semantic characteristics of symbols being copied (Grabowski et al., 2010). In addition, copying skills play a crucial role in reading and spelling (Ye et al., 2021). Likewise, the experience of copying text is perceived as a sense of achievement and confidence, which is a benefit for foreign language learners (Yu, 2013).

However, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, the impact of imitation (text copying, in particular) on improving grammar learning is not investigated in EFL contexts. In this study, copying texts is conceived as a recursive process. The participants not only copy and recopy model texts but also interact in a discussion for text analysis to understand the basic grammatical structures of the sentences.

The current study aims to answer the following research questions: RQ1. What is the effect of text copying as a strategy for learning EFL grammar? RQ2. What are the learners' perceptions of text copying after the intervention? The findings of these two questions might help EFL learners in their self-directed language learning.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. The Instructional Design and Procedures

This study is an intervention study with an experimental design. It investigated the effect of strategy-based instruction (text copying as an independent variable) on learning grammar. The intervention took place in English skills

class. In this class, students have 14 contact hours per week. Three hours of class time were devoted to the intervention. The control and the experimental groups were in the same class because of the researcher's teaching load and schedule. The intervention plan is summarized in Table 1 below. The plan is straightforward to follow. The presentation of the text-copying strategy is integrated into the lesson with five steps to follow: reading as a preparation, verbal analysis to present the grammar points, general copying, focused copying, and evaluation. These five steps seem to be in conjunction with a general agreement between the model of Grenfell and Harris (1999) and Macaro's model (Macaro, 2001). The agreement between the two models suggested strategy instruction to follow five steps: (1) preparation, (2) presentation, (3) general practice, (4) focused practice, and (5) evaluation.

Eight reading texts were selected for the intervention, six from the A2 and two from the B1 levels. After reading the texts with the whole class and verbally analyzing the sentence structures, the experimental group was asked to copy the texts twice: the first was an exact reproduction of the model, and the second was a thoughtful reproduction of the model by analyzing the texts to identify some grammatical points such as the subjects, the objects the subject-verb agreement, the tenses, the adjectives, etc.

TABLE 1
THE INTERVENTION PLAN

Weeks	Hours	Content	Control Group	Experimental Group
1	1	Introduction (research purposes, research plan, seeking consent, etc.).	✓	✓
	2			
	3	Conducting the pre-tests.		
2	4	Reading two A2 texts with a general analysis of one's structures.	✓	✓
	5	Copying the texts twice and writing their analysis.	✗	✓
	6	Go to the teacher for feedback and evaluation.	✗	✓
3	7	Reading two A2 texts with a general analysis of one's structures.	✓	✓
	8	Copying the texts twice and writing their analysis.	✗	✓
	9	Go to the teacher for feedback and evaluation.	✗	✓
4	10	Reading two A2 texts with a general analysis of one's structures.	✓	✓
	11	Copying the texts twice and writing their analysis.	✗	✓
	12	Go to the teacher for feedback and evaluation.	✗	✓
5	13	Reading two B1 texts with a general analysis of one's structures.	✓	✓
	14	Copying the texts twice and writing their analysis.	✗	✓
	15	Go to the teacher for feedback and evaluation.	✗	✓
6	16	Conducting the post-tests.	✓	✓
	17	Conducting the open-ended survey questions.		
	18			

B. Data Collection and Analysis

Three grammar tests (the first dependent variable) were used to increase the validity and reliability of the grammar scores obtained per participant in the control and experimental groups. The total average percentage was calculated for all three tests. The three tests are online-based tests designed as adaptive tests and intended for intermediate to advanced learners of English as a second or foreign language who have completed basic grammar classes. Table two below summarizes the process used for conducting pre-tests and post-tests.

TABLE 2
THE PRE-AND-POST-TESTS PROCESS

Test 1 (30 minutes)	Break	Test 2 (40 minutes)	Break	Test 3 (50 minutes)
40 questions	10 minutes	50 questions	10 minutes	60 questions
Grammaring.com		Oxfordonlineenglish.com		Test-english.com

In addition, a survey (the second dependent variable) was conducted only for the experiment group to gather their perceptions and attitudes about text copying after the intervention (see the appendix). The survey items are organized into several statements regarding the benefits and outcomes of text copying, with responses categorized as "Agree," "Neutral," or "Disagree". Additionally, there was an open-ended statement for the participants to state their general perceptions about the advantages and the disadvantages of text copying. SPSS software was used to analyze descriptive statistics. In the descriptive analysis, two distinct data analysis methods were used to describe the frequency and mean of the participants' scores: frequency tables and measures of central tendency. Moreover, pre-and post-tests for control and experimental groups were conducted to measure paired and independent correlations.

C. Participants

The population of the present study was Arab male EFL college students involved in a general English program that adopts the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) in their preparatory year. The English program, with its four levels (A1, A2, B1, and B1+), is required to pursue undergraduate studies in an industrial college where English is

the medium of instruction. It is a one-year program divided into four quarters where students start at A1 and finish at B1+. There are 21 contact hours per level. Table 3 below shows the distribution of the contact hours.

TABLE 3
THE CONTACT HOURS OF THE ENGLISH PROGRAM LEVELS IN THE INSTITUTE

Code	Courses			
A1	Skills = 14hrs	Grammar = 3hrs	Vocab = 3hrs	Lab = 1hr
A2				
B1	Reading & Writing = 8hrs	Listening & Speaking = 8hrs	Grammar = 4hrs	Lab = 1hr
B1+				

In the present study, the participants were from a skill class taught by the researcher at an A2 level. It was challenging to involve another class in the research because of the researcher's teaching load and the intervention nature of the study. There were 30 students in the target class. After the pre-tests, nine students were excluded from the study: those whose average score was 60% and above and those who were absent or did not do any of the pre-tests. The rest of the students were divided into two proportionate and homogeneous groups: a control (n=10) and an experimental (n=11). None of the participants in the two groups had used text copying as a strategy for language learning before the intervention. All the participants also were asked to participate in the study voluntarily, and their consent was verbally obtained. They were informed that their information was confidential and that they could withdraw from the study if they wished to. The Participants accessed the grammar tests in class via their mobile devices. There was no reward for voluntary participation.

IV. RESULTS

A. Q1: What is the Effect of Text Copying as a Strategy for Learning EFL Grammar?

To answer this question, we had to have an intervention plan as presented in the methodology above. Table 4 below shows the actual scores of the control and experimental groups in their pre-and-post tests. The control group's pre-test scores range from 31% to 56%, averaging around 45.9%. Their post-test scores, however, range from 40% to 77%, with an average of around 56.6%. The experimental group's pre-test scores, on the other hand, range from 34% to 59%, with an average of around 46.1%. Their post-test scores range from 45% to 71%, averaging 59.1%.

The changes in scores from the pre-test to the post-test for both groups show that, on average, the control group's scores increased by about 10.7 percentage points from the pre-test to the post-test. In comparison, the experimental group's scores increased on average by about 13 percentage points from the pre-test to the post-test. In other words, the experimental group, on average, showed a more pointed improvement in scores from the pre-test to the post-test than the control group. The post-test scores of the experimental group are, on average, higher than those of the control group.

TABLE 4
PRE-TESTS AND POST-TESTS SCORES

Control Group	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Experimental Group	Pre-Test	Post-Test
1	49%	77%	1	55%	61%
2	40%	50%	2	34%	51%
3	49%	53%	3	36%	47%
4	31%	42%	4	43%	49%
5	50%	52%	5	44%	56%
6	41%	40%	6	59%	71%
7	53%	62%	7	54%	71%
8	40%	53%	8	57%	69%
9	40%	52%	9	40%	45%
10	56%	60%	10	39%	58%
			11	35%	44%

It is important to note that the analysis in Table 4 above provides a general overview of the data. Further statistical tests, such as t-tests, are necessary to determine if the differences observed between the control and experimental groups are statistically significant and not just due to random variation. Additionally, the specific context and objectives of the study should be considered when interpreting these results. Table 5 below shows the normality tests for the above results to move to the paired and independent t-test analysis afterwards.

TABLE 5
TESTS OF NORMALITY

Groups	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Control Pre-test	.204	10	.200 [*]	.931	10	.457
Control Post-test	.242	10	.101	.911	10	.291
Experimental Pre-test	.202	10	.200 [*]	.900	10	.218
Experimental Post-test	.170	10	.200 [*]	.905	10	.249
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.						
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

In Table 5 above, a high p-value ($p > .005$) in the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test generally suggests that the sample does not significantly deviate from a normal distribution. However, these p-values may be conservative estimates. The Shapiro-Wilk Test is another test for normality, often considered more powerful for small samples like this study. Similarly, a high p-value suggests that the data do not significantly deviate from normality. This means the scores in Table four could be normally distributed for both the control and the experimental groups because the tests fail to provide strong evidence against that. Tables 6 and 7 below present the results of a paired samples t-test for the control and experimental groups in a pre-post-study design.

TABLE 6
PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

Groups		M	N	SD
Pair 1	Control Post	54.10	10	10.51
	Control Pre	44.90	10	7.66
Pair 2	Experimental Post	56.54	11	10.31
	Experimental Pre	45.09	11	9.42

TABLE 7
PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

		t	df	Significance	
				One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
Pair 1	Control Post - Pre	3.59	9	.003	.006
Pair 2	Experimental Post - Pre	7.97	10	<.001	<.001

The statistics in Table 6 show that the mean score of the experimental group increased from 45.09 in the pre-test to 56.54 in the post-test. Also, the control group’s mean score increased from 44.90 in the pre-test to 54.10 in the post-test. A higher standard deviation in the post-test of the two groups suggests more significant variability in scores.

The paired samples tests in Table 7 display a statistically significant increase in the experimental group’s scores from pre-test to post-test, with a p-value (< 0.001), indicating a powerful effect of the intervention. There is also a statistically significant increase in the control group’s scores from pre-test to post-test, with a higher p-value (< 0.006), suggesting a meaningful effect. However, they did not use the text-copying strategy in the intervention. This will be explained and discussed in the next section.

While both groups showed significant improvements, the t-values suggest that the effect was more substantial in the experimental group (7.97) compared to the control group (3.59). However, to make a direct comparison between the groups, an independent samples t-test is required, as shown in Table 8 below.

TABLE 8
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST BETWEEN CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS

		Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		Significance	
		F	Sig.	t	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
Pre-Test	Equal variances assumed	.959	.340	.051	19	.480	.960
	Equal variances not assumed			.051	18.79	.480	.960
Post-Test	Equal variances assumed	.221	.643	.538	19	.299	.597
	Equal variances not assumed			.537	18.73	.299	.598

Independent Sample t-tests are used in Table 8 above to determine whether a statistically significant difference exists between the two groups by comparing their means. This table presents the pre-test and post-test results for both the control and the experimental groups. Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances is to check if the variances of the two groups are equal. A significant result (typically $p < .05$) would mean that the variances are different, and the t-test should not assume equal variances. For the pre-tests, the Levene’s test F-value is .959, and the significance value is .340. Since the significance value is greater than .05, it suggests that the variances are equal. For the post-tests, Levene’s test F-value is .221, and the significance value is .643. Again, this is greater than .05, indicating equal variances between the groups.

The essential data in this table is the t-test for Equality of Means. This test compares the means of the two groups. The pre-test t-value is .051, with 19 degrees of freedom (df), and the two-sided p-value is .960. This high p-value suggests no significant difference between the groups’ means before the treatment or intervention. The t-value for the post-tests is .538, with 19 degrees of freedom, and the two-sided p-value is .597. This indicates that there is also no significant difference between the two groups’ means after the intervention.

For the significance levels, there are two values, one-sided p and two-sided p. The first value is used when the hypothesis predicts a direction of the difference. For both the pre-test and post-test, the one-sided p-values are .480 and .299, respectively, which are insignificant. The second value is used when the hypothesis does not predict a direction. The two-sided p-values for the pre-test and post-test are above .05, indicating no significant difference between the control and experimental groups. In summary, the analysis suggests that there is no statistically significant

difference between the control and experimental groups' means before and after the test, regardless of whether equal variances are assumed.

B. What Are the Learners' Perceptions of Text Copying After the Intervention?

Table 9 below presents statistical data on the experimental group's perceptions and attitudes toward text copying after the intervention. The high agreement levels across most statements suggest that the respondents primarily perceive text copying as a beneficial educational strategy, particularly in areas like understanding grammar, sentence structure, verbs, and writing styles.

TABLE 9
STATISTICAL FINDINGS FROM THE ATTITUDE SURVEY

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	M	SD
In general, I benefited from copying the texts to understand the grammar tests.	8 73%	2 18%	1 9%	1.36	.674
Copying texts gave me some understanding of sentence structure.	8 73%	3 27%	0	1.27	.467
Copying texts gave me some understanding of verbs and how they are used.	11 100%	0	0	1.00	.000
Copying texts gave me some confidence in my ability to write.	8 73%	3 27%	0	1.27	.467
Copying texts gave me a sense of achievement.	8 73%	3 27%	0	1.27	.467
Copying texts is useful in understanding grammar in general.	10 91%	1 9%	0	1.09	.301
Copying texts gave me some sense of linguistic awareness.	8 73%	3 27%	0	1.27	.467
Copying texts gave me some understanding of different writing styles.	10 91%	0	1 9%	1.18	.603

The consistently high agreement percentages (73% – 100%) and low standard deviations in most statements in Table 9 indicate a strong consensus among the respondents regarding the positive impact of text copying on their learning and confidence in writing.

The participants in the experimental group were also asked an open-ended question in the survey to comment on the advantages and disadvantages of text copying as instructed in class. Their primary viewpoints were carefully reviewed and translated from Arabic into English (see Table 10). The original responses were also compared with the translations by a colleague to evaluate how faithful they were to the intended meaning and how faithful the translations were to the informants' language.

TABLE 10
THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP'S OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE

1	"It also helped me recognize new words and understand sentence structures. However, it is tiring."
2	"Copying text improved my handwriting, including how to write words, use relative words, and place periods and commas when using prepositions. However, it is tiring."
3	"My language and spelling are improved by copying texts. However, it is time-consuming."
4	"In addition to learning how to write, understanding the text, and structuring it, copying texts also includes learning to use adjectives. However, it takes much time."
5	"I benefit greatly from copying texts since it helps me understand and comprehend texts and language grammar. However, it takes a long time and effort."
6	"One of its advantages is that it helps you understand writing methods, grammar, and how to use them. It is also useful for handwriting."
7	"In addition to giving me a general understanding of grammar, it taught me the proper use of punctuation and writing words correctly."
8	"This course helped me understand sentence structure, including subject, verb, object, and adjectives. I learned that a sentence would not be without a subject and verb."
9	"I understand the sentence structure. I understand the grammar and how to use verbs."
10	"It improved my grammar and vocabulary by writing new things. Also, my handwriting improved."
11	"No negatives, honestly. The positives: my handwriting and understanding of the language have also improved."

Many participants noted that text copying helped them recognize new words, understand sentence structures, and improve their language and spelling. It also aided in learning how to write, understand text structure, and use grammar and punctuation correctly. Several responses highlighted that copying text improved their handwriting. This improvement was noted in terms of writing words more accurately and in a more structured way. Despite the benefits, a common disadvantage was that text copying is tiring and time-consuming. This aspect was emphasized repeatedly across different responses. Some participants felt that text copying contributed to a general understanding of grammar, sentence structure (subject, verb, and object), and the correct use of adjectives and verbs. One participant explicitly stated that there were no negatives, highlighting the improvement in handwriting and language understanding as significant positives.

In conclusion, the participants generally viewed text copying as beneficial for improving language skills, particularly grammar, vocabulary, and handwriting. However, the time-consuming nature of the task was a notable drawback for many.

V. DISCUSSION

It is concluded that a positive response from the learners to the strategy instruction had a practical significant impact; they gained an independent understanding of English grammar and developed a more vital awareness of text copying. As understood from Vygotsky's ZPD, this understanding is fundamental to the sociocultural knowledge of language learning. A fundamental principle of the ZPD is that independent knowledge is the basis for language learning. The participants gained a deeper understanding of language grammar and structures when they interacted with the authentic texts in class through reading, verbal text analysis, general copying, focused copying, and immediate feedback from the teacher. These were the five stages of strategy instruction as designed in this study. As implemented here, we may conclude that text copying can aid in grammar learning, thus contributing to linguistic growth in general. Text copying can be an effective way for language learners to gain independent knowledge of language grammar and structures. Furthermore, this study suggests immediate feedback can help the learner better understand grammar.

The strategy instruction in this study raises awareness of text copying as a strategy used to comprehend grammar. As explained above, this comprehension can be achieved through interaction with texts. This interaction is not just intended to teach students how to learn but also to teach them how to understand learning. Regarding understanding language and grammar, the participants expressed highly positive attitudes. Using better strategies leads to better learning, which explains why participants expressed higher levels of engagement with text copying. This engagement was reflected in their perceptions and improved grammar scores after the intervention.

One of the leading findings of this study was how the intervention plan offered the opportunity for learners not simply to copy the texts. Instead, learners could communicate with the text's meaning and grasp its underlying grammatical structure. The texts are read aloud in class. Next, the teacher (the researcher) verbally analyzes the text to explain difficult words and to highlight the main grammatical points, like the type of the sentences, the subject-verb agreement, the adjectives, the tenses, etc. Following that, the learners complete the first copy of the text. Then, as part of the fourth stage, the learners complete the second copy. This stage requires them to focus on specific grammatical points and be thoughtful. Investing their time in writing and trying to comprehend the text they copy deliberately could enable them to go beyond simple copying to a level of independent understanding of grammar that they could not have achieved without the task. In focused copying, they need to identify the following grammatical points:

- The type of each sentence: simple, compound, or complex.
- The main subject in each sentence and the main verb.
- The tense of each sentence.
- The adjectives and the nouns they modify.
- The adverbs and the verbs they modify.
- The pronouns and their references.
- The countable and the uncountable nouns.

At the end of this five-stage intervention process, the learners report to the instructor for feedback and evaluation. For six weeks, the process is repeated for three hours weekly. This repetition aligns with the recursive nature of imitation in language learning to enhance automation and self-regulation. From an instructional perspective, interacting with the texts through these five stages facilitated meaningful imitation and helped learners comprehend and internalize the texts' grammar.

Regarding significant correlations, three statistical measures show significant results (the descriptive statistics, the paired samples statistics, and the perception survey). In contrast, the independent samples test shows no substantial differences between the control and experimental groups before and after treatment. This absence of a significant correlation between the two groups should not discredit the practical significance of the findings of those three measures and their meaningful reflection in a real-world context.

Additionally, from the open-ended responses in the perception survey, it is evident that text copying as a learning exercise was generally viewed as beneficial for various aspects of language learning. The participants noted that advantages include improved handwriting, grammar, vocabulary, and a deeper understanding of sentence structure and text comprehension. However, the main drawbacks mentioned were the effort and time required for text copying.

On the other hand, a statistically significant increase in the control group's scores from the pre-test to the post-test suggested a meaningful effect. However, the control group did not implement the text copying strategy in the intervention and got no feedback from the researcher. The explanation for this unexpected result might be attributed to the fact that the control group was present throughout the intervention stages. This is because they were students in the same class. They might gain some helpful information by asking their colleagues in the experimental group or using some of the information discussed by the researcher. It might be a design flaw. However, as explained before, the researcher could not teach two skills classes due to his teaching load.

VI. THE LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

One of the significant drawbacks of this study is the absence of paraphrasing. The current researcher believes that if paraphrasing is taught as a strategy after text copying, the participants will benefit a lot. We could assess the degree of transformation and the tangible level of grammar understanding through paraphrasing. There is no doubt that the

participants have benefited from text copying. However, the measurable, direct impact of text copying on grammar learning requires further investigation. Future research could explore how learners can be supported to copy text without fatigue and tiredness. In addition, the sample sizes are relatively small (10 and 11), sometimes leading to less reliable results. Therefore, if the study is to be redone again, a larger sample size should be considered, and other researchers must be involved.

VII. CONCLUSION

Text copying has a historical role in Islamic traditions for learning the Holy Quran and Arabic language, and this study examines its impact on foreign language learning. Culture-based strategies must be reconsidered positively when learning foreign languages in different contexts. The study examines the outcomes of 18 hours of strategy-based instruction involving grammar tests and survey questions to gauge learners' views on the effectiveness of text copying for grammar learning. There were 21 students in two groups of college-level EFL learners, all of whom were at A2 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). According to the findings, text copying contributes to better achievements in grammar tests, a better understanding of grammar learning, and a better grasp of language structure.

It is false to say that copying texts is outdated and incompatible with the spirit of the new age and the skills of the 21st century. Copying texts likely helped learners better understand language use, contributing to their positive opinion of the strategy. In addition to encouraging and facilitating language learning grammatically and in terms of self-confidence, text copying is perceived as a valuable strategy for learning foreign languages.

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