

Cambodian Students' Challenges in Learning and Using English Grammar: A Critical Narrative Review

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Abstract

English grammar plays an essential role in both national and international examinations. In Cambodia, however, many students, particularly those in Grade 12, struggle with grammar despite their efforts to master it. Particularly, they often have poor performance in national exams. This article is designed as a critical narrative review and aims to examine the key challenges Cambodian students face in learning and using English grammar and to provide suggestions for improving their performance. Drawing on secondary data, the review identifies several key challenges, including difficulties in using tenses; problems with active and passive voices; difficulties in using prepositions; errors in using articles; and problems with other grammatical items such as subject-verb agreement, parts of speech, the use of clauses, and sentence structures. The article also provides several suggestions to enhance students' performance in English grammar, emphasising the importance of collaboration among key stakeholders in supporting students to improve their performance in English grammar. The article concludes by outlining implications for future research to explore the challenges Cambodian students face in learning English grammar and the suggestions to address these challenges more effectively.

Keywords: English grammar; challenges; strategies; Cambodian students

INTRODUCTION

Learning English has become increasingly popular worldwide because English is an international or global language (Crystal, 2003; Mirazna & Hikmah, 2019). In the process of teaching and learning English, grammar is one of the most essential elements for learners, particularly for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners (Lestari, 2023). As Ameliani (2019) emphasised, grammar plays a pivotal role in learning English since it is essential for learners to understand the language. Similarly, Lestari (2023) asserted that grammar is one of the important components that EFL students have to master if they wish to study English effectively. Students can learn English effectively and efficiently when they have a clear understanding of its grammar (Ameliani, 2019; Mirazna & Hikmah, 2019).

Mirazna and Hikmah (2019), in their study on students' perceptions of grammar in English classrooms, revealed that students were aware of the essence of grammar by stating that grammar

can influence their success in learning English. When students comprehend English grammar well, they find it easier to use English in both oral and written communication; in other words, mastering English grammar can help them utilize the English language in both spoken and written forms fluently and accurately (Mirazna & Hikmah, 2019). Likewise, Salooja and Kumar (2024) mentioned that grammar plays a fundamental role in academic writing, as it allows conveying ideas clearly and professionally. They added that "grammar is crucial for academic writing for students as it directly impacts clarity, credibility, and professionalism of their work. In academic writing, proper grammar is essential for effective and accurate communication" (p. 3).

Due to the complexity of grammar in the process of teaching and learning English, many EFL students often struggle to master it (Alhaysony & Alhaisoni, 2017; Effendi et al., 2017), ultimately resulting in poor performance in examinations. Previous research has shown a range of challenges impeding students' effective grammar learning. These include

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errors in word forms (e.g., nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, & conjunctions), mistakes in grammatical structures (e.g., use of tenses, prepositions, articles, active and passive voices, morphological usage, subject-verb agreement, and sentence fragments), and challenges related to syntactic differences between the mother tongue and English (Abushihab, 2014; Effendi et al., 2017; Li et al., 2016). In addition, learners also faced difficulties in understanding more complex structures related to adverbs, prepositional phrases, subjunctive noun clauses, and adverbial clauses (Abushihab, 2014; Effendi et al., 2017; Li et al., 2016).

In the context of Cambodia, research has shown that Cambodian students face many challenges in learning and using English grammar, including errors in parts of speech, tense usage, mechanics, passive voice, and other syntactic errors related to the use of sentence structures and word orders (Keuk, 2008; Oeun & Heng, 2025; Sor et al., 2017; Voun et al., 2017). However, empirical research on this topic remains limited, while there is a lack of comprehensive reviews that provide a synthesised account of the key challenges Cambodian students face in learning and using English grammar. Therefore, this article aims to address this knowledge gap by (a) identifying the key challenges Cambodian students face in learning and using English grammar and (b) providing suggestions to improve their performance in English grammar.

This critical review article is guided by two research questions:

- What are the key challenges Cambodian students face in learning and using English grammar?
- How can the key challenges be addressed to improve Cambodian students' performance in English grammar?

PERSPECTIVES ON GRAMMAR

Previous research has offered various definitions of grammar. Brinton (2000) explained that grammar refers to "the rules or principles by which a language works, its systems, or structure" (p. 8). According to Yule (2014), grammar is "the process of describing the structure of phrases and sentences in such a way that we account for all the grammatical sequences in a language and rule out all the ungrammatical sequences" (p. 80). There are two types of grammar: prescriptive grammar, which focuses on accuracy, and descriptive grammar, which emphasises fluency (Brinton, 2000; Yule,

2014). Newmeyer (2003) defined grammar as a set of rules or principles that can guide learners in using English both accurately and fluently. Without grammar, learners cannot produce effective English communication, whether from a prescriptive or descriptive perspective (Newmeyer, 2003; Rossiter, 2021).

English grammar encompasses many elements that contribute to meaning, such as adpositions, adjectives, adverbs, agreement, aspect, complementisers, definite markers, demonstratives, negation, passive voice, pronouns, relative clause markers, subordination markers, and tenses (Newmeyer, 2003; Yule, 2014). From another perspective, Katz and Watzinger-Tharp (2008) explained that "grammar means different things to different people depending on their perspectives and backgrounds. In other words, students, instructors, teacher trainers, and linguists all use the word 'grammar,' but they usually are referring to a range of concepts and constructs" (p. 5).

Al-Mekhlafi and Nagaratnam (2011) pointed out that there are three major perspectives of grammar: grammar as rules, grammar as forms, and grammar as resources. They defined grammar as the study of how a collection of words and their components combine to form sentences to convey meaning, enabling learners to build their knowledge and use the language properly. Similarly, Ameliani (2019) mentioned that learning English involves many aspects, including its structure and skills, with grammar being the structure we learn to continuously learn. Rossiter (2021) stated that grammar is like road signs and markings that can tell drivers where to go and how to drive in a proper way. Put another way, "grammar is considered as a framework through which the rules and principles of the English language can be explained as concisely and clearly as possible, for the benefit of ordinary learners" (Rossiter, 2021, p. 4).

METHODS

This article is designed as a critical narrative review, drawing on secondary data to answer the research questions. According to Grant and Booth (2009), a critical review tends to present, analyse, and synthesise previous research to produce a synthesis of existing findings or a new interpretation of the existing data. This type of review is significant in that it can provide "an opportunity to 'take stock' and evaluate what is of value from the previous body

of work” (Grant & Booth, 2009, p. 93). Likewise, as Denney and Tewksbury (2013) noted, a literature review can provide a comprehensive overview of prior research, “showing the reader what is known about a topic, and what is not yet known, thereby setting up the rationale or need for a new investigation, which is what the actual study to which the literature review is attached seeks to do” (p. 218). A literature review is crucial for identifying knowledge gaps and highlighting areas where research can make a meaningful contribution (Maier, 2013). In addition, a review article based on secondary data can contribute to knowledge advancement, theory development, and the production of new ideas or insights for further research in specific areas (Webster & Watson, 2002).

To obtain relevant documents for this review, we relied on Google Scholar and ScienceDirect, popular and effective platforms for accessing peer-reviewed research globally. As Oeun and Heng (2024a) noted, these databases are valuable tools for researchers to seek scholarly literature that can provide insights into a research topic in any field. In the search process, many keywords were used, including ‘challenges in learning English grammar,’ ‘problems in using English grammar,’ ‘errors in using articles,’ ‘challenges in using clauses,’ ‘difficulties in English grammar,’ ‘difficulties in using parts of speech,’ ‘problems with active and passive voices,’ ‘difficulties in using tenses,’ ‘difficulties in using prepositions,’ ‘challenges or problems in learning English grammar in Cambodia,’ and ‘challenges Cambodian students face in learning English grammar.’ We did not utilise any specific inclusion or exclusion criteria commonly applied in systematic reviews; however, we aim to include as many peer-reviewed research articles as possible to ensure the quality of this review. As a result, although a wide range of sources or documents were considered for review, such as research articles, books, book chapters, conference papers, and theses, the majority (87.17%) of the documents selected for the review were research articles (see Table 1). The findings of the review are presented and discussed in the following sections.

Table 1. Sources or documents included in the review

Types of sources or documents	Number
Journal articles	34
Books	1
Book chapters	1

Conference papers	2
Master’s theses	1
Total	39

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This critical review identified several key challenges faced by students in learning and using English grammar. These challenges include (a) misuse of parts of speech; (b) difficulties in using tenses; (c) misuse of active and passive voices; (d) problems with using clauses; (e) errors in using articles; and (f) other challenges related to the use of parts of speech, subject-verb agreement, and plurality. These categories of challenges constitute an analytical framework guiding the discussion of the key challenges Cambodian students encounter in learning and using English grammar. In what follows, we present and discuss key challenges experienced by students in various contexts, followed by the challenges Cambodian students face. After that, we discuss key suggestions for improving Cambodian students’ performance in English grammar.

Students’ Challenges in Learning and Using English Grammar: General Contexts

Misuse of parts of speech

Many students, especially EFL ones, frequently face problems with parts of speech when learning English grammar (Chawla, 2022; Li et al., 2016; Munthe et al., 2023). As Li et al. (2016) found, many Chinese university students often made mistakes in distinguishing the part of speech in writing. For instance, they tended to be confused between “success as a noun, succeed as a verb, and successful as an adjective” (p. 27). Likewise, Chawla (2022) reported that Indian university students faced common difficulties in using parts of speech, including nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections. For example, many students were unable to utilise singular and plural forms of nouns in English writing. Thus, words such as ‘like’, which can be used as a noun, an adjective, a preposition, or a conjunction, were particularly challenging to them, making them unable to use them correctly in sentences (Chawla, 2022; Munthe et al., 2023).

Difficulties in using tenses

Another common challenge for EFL students concerns the correct use of tenses. Previous research has shown that students tend to get

confused with tense usage, particularly in their writing (Ali et al., 2021; Damis et al., 2024; Faeq, 2023). As Ali et al. (2021) found, high school students in Pakistan encountered difficulties in using tenses, such as using the simple future tense for scheduled future activities, using the present continuous tense for the present simple, using the present continuous tense for the present perfect tense, using the present perfect tense with past time adverbs instead of the past tense, and using *ing* forms with stative verbs and confusion between perfect and perfect progressive tenses. Faeq (2023), similarly, found that many preparatory school students in Iraq struggled to learn English grammar because they tended to be confused between two main tenses: past simple and present perfect simple. The students reported that they usually chose the present perfect if they saw three adverbs, such as *never*, *ever*, and *yet*, while they tended to use the past simple when they saw the word *last*. This is problematic, as these words can occur in both tenses in English (Faeq, 2023).

Misuse of active and passive voices

Active and passive voice structures often confuse EFL students when learning English grammar (Abushihab, 2014; Darohim, 2020; Sari et al., 2024). Abushihab (2014), for example, found that many Turkish students could not use active and passive voices correctly. They often made mistakes by omitting the auxiliary verb *to be* in passive constructions, using the passive with intransitive verbs, and producing incorrect forms with a double auxiliary verb *to be*. Likewise, Sari et al. (2024) showed that Indonesian high school students also experienced difficulties in converting active sentences into passive ones. They particularly found it challenging to use the correct auxiliary verb *to be*, identify whether the subject was singular or plural, choose the appropriate object of the verb, and change the main verb into its past participle form required in the passive voice.

Problems with using clauses

This review also shows that EFL students often face difficulties in comprehending and applying clauses in English grammar (Hanim & Anggraini, 2023; Haryanti & Setyandari, 2028; Pratiwi et al., 2020). In Indonesia, for example, Haryanti and Setyandari (2018) found that university students struggled to distinguish between independent and dependent clauses when completing English grammar exercises. The students found it challenging to

recognise the functions of noun clauses, use relative pronouns in adjective clauses, and choose the correct tenses—whether present, past, or past perfect—in subjunctive noun clauses. Similarly, Pratiwi et al. (2020) showed that 62.82% of Indonesian university students had difficulties with adjective clauses, 42.64% with adverbial clauses, and 69.31% with noun clauses when constructing complex English sentences. Hanim and Anggraini (2023) also reported that many Indonesian students had difficulties in learning and using noun clauses, especially in determining the functions of noun clauses in sentences. In Iran, Etaat (2025) found that students seemed to have a problem with adjective clauses; they could not choose the correct relative pronoun, such as *who*, *whom*, *which*, or *that*, for the antecedent in relative clauses. Moreover, students found it difficult to distinguish between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses, resulting in punctuation errors (Etaat, 2025). Thus, when it comes to tasks involving the three types of clauses—noun clauses, adjective clauses, and adverb clauses—students in different contexts tend to perform poorly (Etaat, 2025; Pratiwi et al., 2020).

Errors in using articles

Another common challenge for EFL students is the correct use of articles (*the*, *a*, and *an*) in English writing (Abushihab, 2014; Li et al., 2016; Setyowati et al., 2020). Abushihab (2014), for instance, found that Turkish university students often made errors with articles, with 29%, the highest percentage, of them not being able to use articles correctly in their writing, largely due to first-language (L1) interference. This problem occurs because Turkish does not have an equivalent for the definite article, while English has both definite and indefinite articles (Abushihab, 2014). Similarly, Li et al. (2016) showed that many Chinese university students made mistakes with article usage, especially in clarifying the differences between *a* and *an*. Setyowati et al. (2020) also revealed that many Indonesian university students faced problems with the use of both definite and indefinite articles. For example, they incorrectly used *an impacts* instead of *an impact*. Moreover, they often omitted the necessary article *the*, such as in the sentence, “Currently, the world is shocked by the outbreak of a disease caused by a virus” (p. 360).

Other challenges

In addition to the key issues discussed above, EFL students also encounter a range of other difficulties in learning English grammar (Ameliani, 2019; Li et al., 2016; Nurjanah, 2017; Setyowati et al., 2020). These challenges are commonly related to errors in the use of nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, sentence fragments, subject-verb agreement, and plurality (Ameliani, 2019; Li et al., 2016; Setyowati et al., 2020). Li et al. (2016), for instance, noted that many students faced difficulties in distinguishing between countable, uncountable, and plural nouns, especially for nouns that can take multiple forms and functions. For example, while the word *fish* is commonly used as the plural of *fish*, the form *fishes* refers to different species of fish. This distinction often confuses students in writing (Li et al., 2016). Nurjanah (2017) found that Indonesian students still had difficulties in using correct subject-verb agreements in the simple present tense, particularly with the third person singular, such as *he*, *she*, and *it*. For example, many of them used no additions, such as -s, -es, or -ies; added -s, -es, or -ies incorrectly; and used the verb *have* incorrectly after a singular subject. For instance, they wrote, “We all know if every movie in India *use* the dance to make...,” “Many people in Indonesia *enjoys* India’s movie,” and “India also *have* a lot of temples” (Nurjanah, 2017, p. 22, emphasis added).

Students’ Challenges in Learning and Using English Grammar: The Cambodian Context

Similar to their counterparts in other contexts, Cambodian EFL students encountered a range of challenges in learning and using English grammar. Our analysis produced five categories of challenges, including (a) difficulties in using tenses, (b) problems with active and passive voices, (c) difficulties in using prepositions, (d) errors in using articles, and (e) other challenges related to subject-verb agreement and the use of parts of speech, clauses, and sentence structures. These are presented and discussed in the following subsections.

Difficulties in using tenses

Previous research has shown that many Cambodian EFL students frequently find it difficult to learn English tenses (Hum & Heng, 2024; Keuk, 2008; Sor et al., 2017). For example, they often point out that English tenses are confusing in both speaking and writing (Keuk, 2008). As Keuk (2008) found, “most

Cambodian students and speakers of English are likely to use present simple tense, rather than present continuous tense, past tense, present perfect tense” (p. 102). It was also found that students often switch tenses at will in speaking. They tend to pay little attention to the accuracy in tense usage (Keuk, 2008). Likewise, as Hum and Heng (2024) observed, since Khmer does not have different forms of verbs for tenses as English does, Cambodian students tend to produce errors in both spoken and written English. For example, a common mistake is “*Yesterday I go shopping*” instead of “*Yesterday I went shopping*” (Hum & Heng, 2024, p. 193). Sor et al. (2017) also found that Cambodian Grade 12 students face difficulties in applying English grammar in their writing, as they lack awareness of how to use present, past, and future tenses correctly in speaking and writing.

Problems with active and passive voices

Another common challenge Cambodian students encounter in learning English grammar is the misuse of active and passive voice in sentence construction (Keuk, 2008; Voun et al., 2017). Keuk (2008), for example, reported that many Cambodian students tended to use passive and active voices interchangeably. For instance, one student was reported to incorrectly use passive voice action that should be in active voice: “*The main point is the rickshaw man was hit old woman but he was not run away even the rider still sit in rickshaw*” (Keuk, 2008, p. 103). Similarly, Voun et al. (2017) found that Cambodian university students experienced difficulties in applying the passive voice. These challenges were often caused by students’ inability to remember rules of English grammar related to the use of the verb *to be*, past participle forms, and the correct identification of subjects and objects in sentences. Thus, when asked to complete exercises or tests related to the passive voice, many students could not transform active into passive sentences correctly (Voun et al., 2017).

Difficulties in using prepositions

Using prepositions correctly is another challenge Cambodian students tend to face in learning English grammar (Hum & Heng, 2024; Keuk, 2008; Vy et al., 2025). For example, Keuk (2008) observed that Cambodian students often used prepositional phrases as the subject of a sentence in both writing and speaking, as illustrated in this sentence: “*Through his activities show that he is not honest child*” (p. 103). This pattern reflects an influence

from the Khmer writing style. Likewise, Hum and Heng (2024) noted that Cambodian students often made mistakes in using prepositional phrases as sentence subjects, attesting to L1 influence on the second language (L2). For instance, students tended to produce sentences such as *“In my family have five members”* instead of *“In my family, there are five members,”* and *“In my school have a lot of students”* instead of *“In my school, there are a lot of students”* (Hum & Heng, 2024, p. 194). Research by Vy et al. (2025) showed that many Cambodian students could not utilise correct prepositions in their writing, causing them to make mistakes in terms of using a preposition followed by a noun phrase or a verb form. For instance, they wrote *“creating a serene and spiritual atmosphere in the pagodas,”* which should have been *“at the pagodas.”* Errors in verb forms were also observed, such as *“by provide content”* instead of *“by providing content”* and *“by read novels”* instead of *“by reading novels.”* Additionally, there were errors like *“better in speaking and writing,”* which should have been *“better at speaking and writing”* (Vy et al., 2025, p. 3061).

Errors in using articles

Errors in using articles in English are another common challenge faced by Cambodian EFL students in learning English grammar (Hum, 2021; Hum & Heng, 2024; Huot & Hok, 2025; Sou, 2010). Sou (2010), for instance, found that Cambodian university students could not write English essays effectively due to incorrect or missing articles. For instance, they wrote, *“When people drive car in outskirts city”* instead of *“When people drive a car in the outskirts of the city.”* (Sou, 2010, p. 38). Hum (2021) also found that Cambodian students could not write English well, as they tended to omit articles (*a*, *an*, and *the*) in their writing. Similarly, Hum and Heng (2024) stated that Cambodian students often produced ungrammatical sentences influenced by Cambodian English. They could write *“I went shopping and bought book pen and pair of shoes”* instead of *“I went shopping and bought a book, a pen, and a pair of shoes”* (p. 194). These findings suggest that many Cambodian students are uncertain about how to use English articles correctly (Huot & Hok, 2025). As a result, they tend to perform poorly in English exams. As Oeun and Heng (2024a) noted, *“Despite the increase in the number of students passing the national Grade 12 exams, many [Cambodian students] failed the English subject”* (p. 87).

Other challenges

Finally, Cambodian students face other challenges in learning grammatical rules. Such challenges are generally related to subject-verb agreement and the use of parts of speech, subordinate clauses, and sentence structures (Bounchan & Moore, 2010; Hum, 2021; Oeun & Heng, 2025; Seth et al., 2025). Bounchan and Moore (2010) categorised many challenges in learning English grammar compared to the Khmer language. Specifically, there are seven key areas causing challenges, including plural nouns, pronouns and possessive pronouns, adverbs, adjectives, subordinate clauses, and the tendency to respond “Yes” when the meaning is “No.” Likewise, Oeun and Heng (2025) stated that one of the major barriers preventing Cambodian students from writing high-quality English essays is their difficulty in using English grammar correctly. As previously discussed, common problems noted by Oeun and Heng (2025) included subject-verb agreement, the use of pronouns, singular and plural nouns, noun clauses, adjective clauses, modal auxiliary verbs, comparative adjectives, and sentence structures. These challenges collectively contribute to hindering Cambodian students’ ability to write accurately in English.

Recommendations for Improving Cambodian Students’ Performance in English Grammar

Given the limited research on this topic in the Cambodian context, the recommendations for improving Cambodian students’ performance in English grammar do not draw directly from previous research on this topic. Rather, we provide recommendations based on a range of prior research that has discussed various suggestions to help students learn and improve their English. The recommendations focus mainly on the role of key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, teachers, students, and other stakeholders such as parents, schools, and the wider community. These recommendations are discussed below.

Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) is one of the most influential actors in enhancing Cambodian students’ learning outcomes, especially in English grammar (Oeun & Heng, 2014a, 2024b, 2025). MoEYS can play a vital role by introducing English as a core examination subject, updating the English curriculum to include both grammar-focused and fluency-oriented sections in

core textbooks, and, most importantly, increasing instruction time, especially at the high school level, for English language teaching (Oeun & Heng, 2014a; Tes & Heng, 2024). These measures would enable teachers to have adequate classroom hours to help students develop English grammar knowledge and be better prepared for examination requirements, particularly the national exams. As Oeun and Heng (2024b) recommended, “MoEYS, as the supervising ministry, has a pivotal and influential role to play in supporting Cambodian students” (p. 275).

Teachers

English teachers play a pivotal role in ensuring effective instruction and encouraging students’ growth mindset toward learning the English language, including English grammar, which is essential for their academic success (Em & Nun, 2022; Heng, 2011; Oeun & Heng, 2024a, 2024b, 2025). To teach English grammar effectively and strengthen students’ grammatical competence, teachers need to assign more homework and classwork focused on grammatical exercises, especially those modelled on Grade 12 national exam papers, to support students’ preparation for the national exams. The more they practice, the better outcomes they will gain (Oeun & Heng, 2025). Ferris (2011) noted that “classroom grammar instruction is most effective when it is carefully paired with opportunities for students to apply what they have learned to their own output” (p. 40). Moreover, teachers should try their best to explore more effective and innovative teaching methods by going beyond the Grammar Translation Method to teach grammar more effectively (Em & Nun, 2022). As Khalil and Semono-Eke (2020) argued, effective teachers are those who are knowledgeable of various teaching methods, continuously seek opportunities for professional development, and have flexibility in adapting their teaching to meet students’ needs. Thus, Heng (2011) suggested that teachers should pay full attention to “creating an encouraging and secure classroom environment where a maximum amount of practice time is ensured” (p. 41).

Students

Students themselves are the most important actors in overcoming the challenges they encounter in learning English grammar (Oeun & Heng, 2024a, 2024b, 2025). To improve their English language proficiency, particularly grammar competence, they should consistently engage in grammar practice as

much as possible, ideally daily. As Oeun and Heng (2025) argued, when students practice English regularly, especially through essay writing, their overall language proficiency will improve. In addition, they can improve vocabulary knowledge, better understand grammatical rules, and enhance their writing skills. In addition, it is important for them to foster strong reading habits by doing as much reading as possible both in school and at home. Extensive reading is beneficial. It can help students develop proficiency in areas such as “vocabulary, grammar, writing style, the flow of ideas, coherence and cohesion in writing, and more particularly the application of essay writing structures and templates” (Oeun & Heng, 2025, p. 480). Thus, students need to engage in regular reading, particularly in the form of extensive reading, to enhance their English knowledge (Ashrafiany & Basalama, 2020; Renandya, 2007; Suk, 2017).

Other stakeholders

Other key stakeholders, including parents, schools, and the broader community, also have an important role in supporting students to develop their English grammar competence and performance. For parents, despite their lack of English proficiency, they can motivate and encourage their children to devote more time and effort to English, especially grammar. As Bond (2019) noted, “parent involvement in and engagement with children’s learning has been shown to strongly influence student achievement, engagement, motivation, and school completion” (p. 1294). Schools, through their principals, also hold responsibility for ensuring the quality of English teaching and learning. School principals need to be proactive in supporting grammar instruction in particular and English instruction in general. They need to ensure the provision of resources and facilities to support effective English teaching and learning (Oeun & Heng, 2024a). Their roles in supervision and monitoring are critical. As Ashrafuzzaman (2018) asserted, supervision and monitoring play an essential role in enhancing the quality of education; without them, students’ learning outcomes will be negatively affected. As for the community, the focus should be on providing meaningful support to students to help them improve their English proficiency, including English grammar competence. The community can foster collaborative learning environments, provide peer learning opportunities, and encourage peer study

groups to help students strengthen their English grammar knowledge and skills (Oeun & Heng, 2025).

CONCLUSION

This article has revealed that Cambodian students encounter many challenges in learning English grammar, necessitating all stakeholders to seek ways to support them in improving their grammar competence and performance. The challenges mainly centre around difficulties in using tenses, active and passive voices, prepositions, articles, and other grammatical aspects, such as nouns, adverbs, adjectives, pronouns, and subordinate clauses. To address the challenges, concerned stakeholders, particularly the MoEYS, schools, teachers, parents, the community, and students themselves, need to play their roles in supporting students. There is a need for collaborative efforts in providing a conducive environment for students to develop their knowledge and skills and achieve better learning outcomes. Providing necessary support to students is critical, as it not only contributes to improving their English proficiency but also fosters the development of a more skilled workforce that can meet the growing demands of Cambodian society, including the demands concerning English language skills.

IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This review highlights the key challenges Cambodian students face in learning English grammar and offers practical recommendations to support them in their language learning. The findings contribute to a better understanding of the challenges students face in learning English grammar and how to support them. In addition, this article offers valuable insights for policymakers to consider revising the English curriculum and increasing instructional time for English lessons. Moreover, the review can serve as a guiding reference for schools and teachers as well as other stakeholders to ensure adequate resources and support are provided to students so that they can develop their English proficiency and grammatical competence required to pass the national exams and succeed in their studies.

Considering the fact that this article is a review article based on secondary sources, it is important to discuss its limitations and address them. First, the review is limited to secondary data, which restricts the depth of analysis regarding students' real-life learning experiences. Second, the review

did not utilise a systematic review approach, so the findings may not be as comprehensive as those generally reported in systematic reviews. To address these limitations, future research should explore this topic and its related phenomena from an empirical standpoint. Research that aims to investigate how to support students to overcome the challenges and improve their English proficiency in an effective and efficient way is strongly recommended. Such research will provide valuable insights into the specific difficulties students face, the types of support they need, and the contextual realities in which their learning takes place. Action- or policy-oriented research aiming to identify context-specific recommendations for improving English language education in Cambodia and other developing contexts should also be conducted to offer comparative perspectives and advance knowledge in this field.

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