



**IMPROVING STUDENTS' ENGLISH GRAMMAR MASTERY BY USING
ENGLISH GRAMMAR STAR APP OF TENTH GRADE STUDENTS AT
SMK KATOLIK HENDRICUS LEVEN**

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian tindakan kelas ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan penguasaan tata bahasa Inggris—khususnya berfokus pada pronomina (*pronouns*), bentuk kepemilikan (*possessives*), kata sifat (*adjectives*), dan kata keterangan (*adverbs*) pada peserta didik kelas X di SMK Katolik Hendricus Leven melalui penerapan *English Grammar Star App*. Pada tahap diagnostik awal, peserta didik mengalami kesulitan dalam memahami struktur sintaksis, yang ditunjukkan oleh rendahnya nilai rata-rata kelas sebesar 63,28 dan tingkat ketuntasan klasikal yang hanya mencapai 53,12%. Untuk mengatasi permasalahan pedagogis lokal tersebut, desain Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK) dua siklus yang mengacu pada model Kemmis dan McTaggart (perencanaan, pelaksanaan tindakan, observasi, dan refleksi) dilakukan terhadap 32 peserta didik Kelas X Farmasi. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes hasil belajar tata bahasa berupa 40 butir soal pilihan ganda, lembar observasi terstruktur, dan catatan lapangan reflektif. Kriteria keberhasilan klasikal ditetapkan terlebih dahulu, yaitu minimal 80% peserta didik mencapai Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM) sebesar 75. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa tingkat ketuntasan klasikal meningkat secara bertahap dari data dasar prasiklus sebesar 53,12% menjadi 78,13% pada Siklus I, dan mencapai 81,25% (26 dari 32 peserta didik) pada Siklus II, disertai peningkatan nilai rata-rata kelas dari 63,28 menjadi 78,91. Secara bersamaan, data observasi terstruktur mencatat bahwa partisipasi aktif peserta didik meningkat dari 46,88% pada kondisi awal menjadi 84,38% pada siklus akhir. Dalam batasan latar penelitian tindakan pada satu kelas ini, aplikasi tersebut terbukti menjadi media perancah digital (*digital scaffolding*) yang menarik untuk latihan tata bahasa secara kontekstual.

Kata Kunci: *Penguasaan Tata Bahasa Inggris, English Grammar Star App, Penelitian Tindakan Kelas.*

ABSTRACT

This classroom action research was aimed at improving English grammar mastery specifically focusing on *pronouns*, *possessives*, *adjectives*, and *adverbs* among tenth-grade students at SMK Katolik Hendricus Leven through the implementation of the *English Grammar Star App*. In the preliminary diagnostic stage, students struggled with syntactic structures, yielding a low class average of 63.28 and a classical mastery rate of only 53.12%. To address this localized pedagogical issue, a two-cycle *Classroom Action Research (CAR)* design based on the Kemmis and McTaggart model (*planning, acting, observing, and reflecting*) was conducted with 32 students in Class X Pharmacy. Data were gathered through 40-item multiple-choice grammar achievement tests, structured observation checklists, and reflective field notes. The classical success criterion was pre-established at a minimum of 80% of students achieving the passing grade (*Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal / KKM*) of 75. The findings revealed that the classical



completion rate increased progressively from 53.12% in the *pre-cycle* baseline to 78.13% in Cycle I, and reached 81.25% (26 out of 32 students) in Cycle II, with the class mean score rising from 63.28 to 78.91. Concurrently, structured observational data demonstrated that active student participation rose from 46.88% at baseline to 84.38% in the final cycle. Within the boundaries of this single-class action research setting, the application served as an engaging digital scaffolding medium for contextualized grammar practice.

Keywords: *English Grammar Mastery, English Grammar Star App, Classroom Action Research.*

INTRODUCTION

Grammar functions as a fundamental linguistic framework that enables foreign language learners to construct coherent, accurate, and contextually appropriate utterances. In foreign language acquisition, grammar competence connects morphological patterns, sentence semantics, and communicative intent during message production (Larsen-Freeman & DeCarrico, 2019). When vocational high school students understand grammatical forms systematically, they can convey professional and technical information with greater precision. Noveria (2021) emphasizes that balanced grammar instruction supports the concurrent development of structural accuracy and communicative fluency. Consequently, secondary school English instruction must provide contextualized, interactive exposure rather than treating grammatical patterns as isolated theoretical rules (K. D. Dr. Anupam & Sangeeta, 2026; K. D. Anupam & Sangeeta, 2025; Duan & Li, 2025; Kord et al., 2025; Sabina, 2025; Xiao, 2025).

Despite its foundational role, grammar mastery remains a formidable hurdle for many vocational high school students in Indonesia. Preliminary diagnostic observations conducted in Class X Pharmacy at SMK Katolik Hendricus Leven revealed that students exhibited persistent confusion when distinguishing between subjective, objective, and possessive pronouns, as well as between modifying adjectives and adverbs. The baseline diagnostic test confirmed these difficulties, recording an unsatisfactory class average score of 63.28, with only 17 out of 32 students (53.12%) meeting the institutional passing benchmark (*Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal / KKM*) of 75. Instructional routines were predominantly characterized by passive teacher explanations and monotonous paper-based drills, which limited opportunities for student-directed practice. Under these conventional conditions, students showed low engagement, expressed apprehension during writing exercises, and struggled to identify their own structural errors.

The pedagogical challenges encountered in the classroom highlight the necessity of introducing interactive digital media to transform abstract grammatical rules into concrete learning experiences. Gamified mobile learning tools offer structured drills, animated grammatical demonstrations, and automated feedback mechanisms that enhance learner focus (Koç & Sütçü, 2023). In mobile-assisted language learning, instant corrective feedback plays an important role in enabling students to identify syntactic mistakes immediately and adjust their understanding in real time (Brown & Lee, 2025). The *English Grammar Star App* was developed to provide modular, bite-sized grammar units accompanied by interactive challenges, star-reward incentives, and automated error diagnostics. According to Ayub and Akbar (2026), the application promotes active linguistic engagement by pairing grammatical mini-lessons with gamified drills that help learners internalize complex grammatical rules. This integration of technology addresses the limitations of rote memorization by fostering a dynamic



environment where learners transition from theoretical rule-based knowledge to practical application (Kumara, 2025; Saad et al., 2023; Shafiyah et al., 2026; Ulviani, 2025; Wang & Seau, 2025; Wazeer et al., 2026).

Although research on digital learning applications in language education has expanded, notable empirical gaps remain regarding specific target groups and linguistic features. Previous studies, such as the investigation by Sari (2025), examined generic educational games for general secondary school learners without focusing on vocational high school cohorts with technical learning priorities. Furthermore, while Ayub and Akbar (2026) validated the gamification features of the *English Grammar Star App* in an English as a second language (ESL) environment, their study did not examine word-level morphological distinctions like possessives and adverbs among Indonesian vocational students. The present classroom action research addresses this gap by investigating how integrating the application into a guided classroom routine can improve grammar mastery in *pronouns*, *possessives*, *adjectives*, and *adverbs*.

Therefore, this classroom action research was conducted to evaluate how the structured implementation of the *English Grammar Star App* improves English grammar mastery and active learning participation among tenth-grade students of Class X Pharmacy at SMK Katolik Hendricus Leven. The study examined students' learning progress across four specific grammar components: personal pronouns, possessive forms, descriptive adjectives, and adverbs of manner. The findings are intended to offer practical pedagogical insights for vocational English teachers seeking to combine digital grammar tools with communicative classroom scaffolding.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed a *Classroom Action Research (CAR)* design aimed at resolving diagnosed classroom learning problems through systematic cycles of intervention and reflection. The study utilized the four-stage action research framework developed by Kemmis and McTaggart: *planning*, *acting*, *observing*, and *reflecting*. The investigation started with an initial diagnostic *pre-cycle* phase, followed by two planned instructional cycles designed to refine teaching techniques progressively. Each subsequent cycle was modified based on empirical evaluation and collaborative reflection on the preceding cycle's outcomes.

The research setting was SMK Katolik Hendricus Leven, located in Waibalun, East Flores Regency, East Nusa Tenggara, during the second semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The participants were 32 tenth-grade students enrolled in Class X Pharmacy (consisting of 9 male and 23 female students). This specific class was selected because diagnostic evaluations demonstrated pronounced difficulties in foundational grammar, and the students possessed personal smartphones capable of running digital learning applications. Conducting the research within this intact class cohort allowed for close pedagogical observation, regular feedback, and tailored instructional adjustments.

The intervention across Cycle I and Cycle II was conducted in three 90-minute pedagogical meetings and one evaluation session per cycle. In Cycle I, the *acting* stage introduced the *English Grammar Star App* through teacher modeling, where students completed individual practice modules on *pronouns* and *possessives* followed by independent quizzes. In Cycle II, instructional activities were adapted by incorporating collaborative peer-pairing drills, structured error-analysis discussions, and targeted exercises covering comparative *adjectives* and *adverbs*. During this second cycle, students completed application challenges in pairs,



analyzed automated feedback collaboratively, and formulated corrected sentence structures under the teacher's guidance.

Data were gathered using grammar achievement tests, structured observation checklists, and reflective field notes. The grammar achievement tests consisted of 40 multiple-choice items with four options per test, comprising 10 items for *pronouns*, 10 items for *possessives*, 10 items for *adjectives*, and 10 items for *adverbs*. Content validity was reviewed by two senior English language educators, while test reliability was determined using the Kuder-Richardson formula (*KR-20*), yielding a high reliability coefficient of $r = 0.83$. Concurrently, classroom learning behavior was documented by a collaborative English teacher using a four-category observation rubric measuring attentiveness, task persistence, peer interaction, and autonomous application usage.

Quantitative test results were analyzed using descriptive statistics to calculate individual scores, class averages, score ranges, and classical mastery percentages. The formula used to determine classical completeness was:

$$P = \frac{n}{N} \times 100\%$$

where P represents the percentage of classical mastery, n is the number of students achieving or surpassing the *KKM* threshold of 75, and N is the total number of students ($N = 32$). The action intervention was considered successful if at least 80% of the students achieved a score of ≥ 75 by the end of Cycle II. Qualitative data derived from observation sheets and reflective notes were examined using interactive thematic analysis to contextualize changes in classroom dynamics across the research cycles.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The research procedures were carried out across three consecutive stages: the diagnostic *pre-cycle*, Cycle I, and Cycle II. Throughout each phase, quantitative learning outcomes from grammar achievement tests and qualitative metrics from observation checklists were recorded systematically to evaluate students' mastery across the target grammar items.

1. Pre-Cycle

The *pre-cycle* diagnostic baseline was conducted to assess students' initial grammar proficiency prior to the integration of the mobile application. Instruction was delivered through conventional teacher lectures, textbook readings, and individual whiteboard drills without digital support. The collaborator's observation checklist indicated that only 15 out of 32 students (46.88%) actively participated in classroom tasks, with the majority remaining passive during grammar explanations. The diagnostic test confirmed that many learners struggled to distinguish subject pronouns from object pronouns and misplaced adverbs within simple sentences.

The baseline score distribution and the number of students fulfilling the institutional achievement standard in the *pre-cycle* are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Students' Grammar Achievement in the Pre-Cycle

No	Category / Metric	Diagnostic Value
1	Total Number of Students (N)	32
2	Highest Score (X_{max})	85.00
3	Lowest Score (X_{min})	45.00
4	Class Mean Score ($\bar{X}$)	63.28

5	Students Achieving Mastery (≥ 75)	17
6	Students Below Mastery (< 75)	15
7	Classical Mastery Percentage (P)	53.12%

Table 1 shows that only 17 out of 32 students (53.12%) achieved the required *KKM* score of 75, while 15 students (46.88%) failed to meet the standard. The lowest score recorded among the participants was 45.00, and the overall classroom average was 63.28. The highest score attained in this initial phase was 85.00. These baseline indicators confirmed that students required a more interactive instructional medium to strengthen their understanding of foundational grammatical concepts.

2. Cycle I

Cycle I was implemented across three instructional meetings and one test session using the *English Grammar Star App* to teach *pronouns* and *possessives*. During the learning process, students completed animated tutorial levels, solved gamified quizzes, and reviewed automated error corrections on their mobile devices. The collaborative observer reported an increase in student engagement, with the active participation index rising to 68.75% (22 students). Nevertheless, several students encountered technical navigation difficulties, rushed through practice questions to gain in-app stars, and struggled to explain why certain answer choices were incorrect.

The quantitative results of the grammar achievement test administered at the end of Cycle I are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Students' Grammar Achievement in Cycle I

No	Category / Metric	Cycle I Value
1	Total Number of Students (N)	32
2	Highest Score (X_{max})	90.00
3	Lowest Score (X_{min})	55.00
4	Class Mean Score ($\bar{X}$)	72.81
5	Students Achieving Mastery (≥ 75)	25
6	Students Below Mastery (< 75)	7
7	Classical Mastery Percentage (P)	78.13%

As shown in Table 2, the class average increased to 72.81, representing an improvement of 9.53 points over the diagnostic baseline. The number of students achieving mastery rose to 25 learners, which brought the classical mastery percentage to 78.13%. The lowest score increased from 45.00 to 55.00, and the highest score reached 90.00. However, because the classical mastery rate of 78.13% remained below the pre-established success threshold of 80%, the study progressed to Cycle II with modifications to the instructional approach.

3. Cycle II

Cycle II incorporated refined instructional strategies based on the reflective evaluation of Cycle I, focusing on comparative *adjectives* and *adverbs*. The teacher instituted structured peer-assisted learning dyads, required students to record error explanations in personal learning logs, and conducted short review discussions following each digital module. Observation records showed noticeable improvements in learner autonomy and peer interaction, with the classroom engagement rating reaching 84.38% (27 students). Students demonstrated improved care when analyzing sentence contexts and applied corrective feedback effectively during subsequent quiz attempts.



The summative evaluation results of students' grammar achievement in Cycle II are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Students' Grammar Achievement in Cycle II

No	Category / Metric	Cycle II Value
1	Total Number of Students (N)	32
2	Highest Score (X_{max})	95.00
3	Lowest Score (X_{min})	65.00
4	Class Mean Score ($\bar{X}$)	78.91
5	Students Achieving Mastery (≥ 75)	26
6	Students Below Mastery (< 75)	6
7	Classical Mastery Percentage (P)	81.25%

The data in Table 3 indicate that the classroom mean score advanced to 78.91 in the final evaluation. A total of 26 out of 32 students (81.25%) successfully met or exceeded the *KKM* benchmark of 75, with the highest score reaching 95.00. The lowest score improved to 65.00, with only 6 students remaining below the mastery cutoff. Because the classical mastery percentage of 81.25% exceeded the predetermined 80% success criterion, the intervention was concluded at the end of Cycle II.

To provide a clear comparative overview of student progress across all research stages, the cumulative achievement data are compiled in Table 4.

Table 4. Comparison of Students' Grammar Mastery Across Stages

Research Stage	Class Mean Score ($\bar{X}$)	Score Range (X_{min} – X_{max})	Students Achieving <i>KKM</i>	Classical Mastery (P)
<i>Pre-Cycle</i>	63.28	45.00 – 85.00	17	53.12%
Cycle I	72.81	55.00 – 90.00	25	78.13%
Cycle II	78.91	65.00 – 95.00	26	81.25%

Table 4 illustrates the steady progression across the three phases of the study. The classical mastery proportion rose by 25.01 percentage points from the *pre-cycle* to Cycle I, and gained an additional 3.12 percentage points in Cycle II, culminating in 81.25%. Over the same period, the class mean score rose by 15.63 points, moving from 63.28 to 78.91. Concurrently, the lowest recorded score increased by 20.00 points across the intervention. These complementary indicators show that the instructional intervention supported student progress across the targeted grammar concepts.

Discussion

The empirical findings across two instructional cycles show progressive gains in grammar mastery and classroom engagement among tenth-grade students of Class X Pharmacy. The proportion of students achieving the *KKM* passing standard improved from 53.12% at the *pre-cycle* baseline to 78.13% in Cycle I, and reached 81.25% in Cycle II. The class average score advanced from 63.28 to 78.91, alongside gains in observed classroom participation from 46.88% to 84.38%. These positive trends suggest that combining digital exercises with targeted teacher guidance helped students understand the target grammar concepts more clearly. Furthermore, the significant decrease in score variance by the final cycle indicates that this pedagogical approach fostered a more uniform level of linguistic competence across the cohort (Fauzi et al., 2024; Muthmainnah et al., 2023; Pratolo et al., 2025; Safitry et al., 2026).

The observed improvements align with prior research on the benefits of gamified mobile-assisted language learning. In a related action research study, Ayub and Akbar (2026) reported that the gamified challenges and immediate response cues of the *English Grammar*



Star App helped learners understand morphosyntactic structures more effectively. Similarly, Koç and Sütçü (2023) observed that reward mechanics and interactive feedback in digital language tools improve secondary school students' focus and persistence during grammar practice. In this study, the app's visual distinctions and color-coded feedback were particularly helpful in clarifying confusing word boundaries, such as the difference between possessive adjectives and possessive pronouns (*their* versus *theirs*). Additionally, the implementation of these interactive modules fostered greater inclusivity, ensuring that students remained engaged through real-time feedback mechanisms that bridge the gap between theoretical comprehension and practical application (Fadhilawati et al., 2024; Khairunnisa & Suryaningsih, 2025; Pham et al., 2024; Staggini, 2025; Sutanti et al., 2024).

However, these gains should not be attributed solely to the software itself. The structured instructional changes introduced between cycles were essential in translating app-based exercises into broader grammar competence. As Brown and Lee (2025) note, while automated feedback alerts students to surface-level errors, teacher scaffolding and peer collaboration are necessary to help learners understand the underlying syntactic reasons for those mistakes. In Cycle II, pairing students for collaborative problem-solving and having them maintain error logs helped prevent unreflective guessing. This shows that the application functioned most effectively as a supportive digital tool within a broader, teacher-guided instructional sequence.

CONCLUSION

This classroom action research demonstrated improvements in English grammar mastery and active learning participation among tenth-grade students of Class X Pharmacy at SMK Katolik Hendricus Leven following the use of the *English Grammar Star App*. The proportion of students meeting the institutional KKM standard of 75 rose from 53.12% (17 students) in the diagnostic *pre-cycle* to 78.13% (25 students) in Cycle I, and reached 81.25% (26 out of 32 students) in Cycle II, meeting the pre-established 80% success indicator. Over the course of the intervention, the class mean score increased from 63.28 to 78.91, accompanied by an increase in active classroom participation from 46.88% to 84.38%. The application provided useful practice in helping students identify and apply *pronouns*, *possessives*, *adjectives*, and *adverbs*.

Nevertheless, several methodological limitations must be considered when interpreting these findings. The study was conducted as a classroom action research project within a single class of 32 pharmacy vocational students without a separate control group; therefore, the outcomes cannot be broadly generalized to other vocational majors or secondary school populations. Additionally, the intervention focused on four specific grammar components across two cycles, meaning long-term retention was not evaluated. Future researchers are encouraged to employ quasi-experimental designs with larger, varied cohorts and explore how mobile grammar applications perform alongside other communicative language teaching approaches.

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