

The Darts Reading Method as an Influence of Students' Reading Skills

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Abstract

The primary objective of this research is to investigate the perceptions of students towards English learning and the strategies employed by teachers to foster communicative grammar instruction in the classroom. The research aims to address the existing problem where students often fail to recognize the significance of grammar and tend to rely solely on teacher-provided explanations and exercises. Many teachers predominantly focus on delivering content without actively encouraging and guiding students to develop effective learning strategies for grammar. This conventional approach to teaching grammar often leads to student boredom and reluctance in learning English, specifically grammar, as the methods employed are tedious and emphasize rote memorization rather than understanding. Consequently, students fail to realize that there are various strategies available for learning grammar, which can make the learning process enjoyable and enable them to attain the desired competencies. Many students encounter difficulties in learning grammar due to their limited awareness of its importance and their reliance on teacher-directed instruction. As a result, students do not fully grasp the fact that there are abundant sources of information and knowledge, along with diverse strategies for learning grammar, which they can choose from and engage with to enhance their learning experience. It is evident that English facilitators continue to employ traditional teaching methods, where grammar instruction predominantly involves memorization rather than comprehension. As a consequence, the implementation of the learning process falls short of achieving its intended goals. The reliance on unidirectional communication and a teacher-centered learning environment hinder the realization of optimal learning outcomes.

Keywords: *Strategies, English Grammar, Learning, Communicative*

INTRODUCTION

English serves as a means of oral and written communication, enabling individuals to understand and express information, thoughts, feelings, and contribute to the development of science, technology, and culture. Proficiency in English communication encompasses the ability to comprehend and produce texts or engage in oral exchanges, which relies on the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Derakhshan, *et al*, 2016). These skills are essential for participating in social discourse, and thus, it is important for students to develop their English language abilities to effectively communicate and

engage in discourse at a certain level of proficiency.

The purpose of learning English at the university level is twofold (Romo, *et al*, 2018). Firstly, learners aim to acquire a functional level of English that enables them to effectively communicate in everyday situations. Secondly, at the university level, learners are expected to achieve an informational level of English proficiency as they prepare to pursue further education in college. However, attaining the level of epistemic literacy, which is typically higher, is challenging for university learners since English is considered a foreign language in Indonesia.

The development of communication skills in English necessitates students' mastery of English grammar. This proficiency enables students to construct grammatically correct and meaningful sentences and utterances (Kürüm, 2016). English grammar is defined by a set of rules, such as the inclusion of a finite verb (life) in every sentence, which changes its form based on subject-verb agreement in terms of number or tense.

The focus of this research is solely on learning grammar. Grammar plays a vital role in English communication, enabling the creation of coherent sentences that can be understood within interpersonal or transactional contexts (Rao, 2019). However, the vastness of grammar can sometimes overwhelm facilitators, leading them to employ traditional teaching methods that fail to engage students actively in the learning process. In contrast, student-centered approaches are now emphasized. If students are not actively involved, they may become disinterested in the material and face difficulties in developing conversational skills, relying solely on their cognitive abilities.

While learning grammar is important, it is widely acknowledged that the presence of grammar can make it challenging and tedious for many students. Several obstacles arise when teaching grammar in the classroom (Fareed, *et al*, 2016). Firstly, many facilitators resort to conventional methods, resulting in student boredom and reluctance to learn English due to the monotonous nature of these approaches. Moreover, English grammar teaching often emphasizes memorization rather than understanding, and facilitators often focus solely on delivering content without encouraging students to develop effective grammar learning strategies. As a result, students may not realize the variety of grammar learning strategies available to them. By encouraging facilitators and students to develop grammar learning strategies, the learning process can become

enjoyable, leading to gradual attainment of expected competencies in grammar.

The quality of education is heavily dependent on the presence of qualified facilitators, as they form an essential component of a quality education system. Facilitators are expected to possess broad knowledge and deep understanding in their field (Kitson & Harvey, 2016). In addition to subject matter expertise, facilitators should employ diverse teaching methods and learning models, recognizing that no single method or model can effectively achieve the diverse learning objectives. When facilitators possess a comprehensive understanding of learning concepts, designing educational experiences becomes less burdensome and more engaging.

Numerous studies indicate that many facilitators still struggle to find conclusive learning methods that can effectively attract and motivate students to learn the presented material (Kitson & Harvey, 2016). Consequently, the learning process often falls short of achieving its objectives. This is primarily due to the prevalent use of unidirectional communication and a teacher-centered approach by facilitators, where they act as the focal point of learning, rather than fostering interactive engagement among students.

When planning and delivering effective teaching, some facilitators tend to overlook the importance of what students learn and how they learn. While good planning ensures that learning objectives are met through activities, the actual teaching approach determines whether students are truly engaged (Khan, *et al*, 2017). It is crucial for students to feel motivated and have a clear understanding of the tasks they need to perform. Insufficient instruction and explanation from the facilitator can hinder successful learning activities if students do not comprehend the requirements. By focusing on the learning process rather than solely on results, facilitators can help students

grasp the underlying principles of the assigned tasks.

Unfortunately, many English facilitators in Indonesia still rely on conventional methods, particularly the Grammar Translation Method. This approach places excessive emphasis on grammar, neglecting other aspects of language learning (Dąbrowska, 2016). The teaching style tends to be teacher-centered, with the facilitator assuming authority in the classroom and students merely following instructions. Interaction between the facilitator and students takes precedence over student-to-student interaction. This English teaching pattern, resembling the Grammar Translation Method, remains prevalent in Asian countries, including Indonesia. Meanwhile, current English language teaching theories emphasize the communicative approach, which prioritizes training learners to effectively communicate in English for daily life situations, both orally and in writing. This approach recognizes that language learning should not solely focus on a single aspect, such as grammar.

This poses a significant challenge for English facilitators in Indonesia. They need to shift away from the conventional teaching pattern and adopt contemporary learning methods. Facilitators should encourage students to actively engage in communicative activities, even if they make mistakes (Tharayil, *et al*, 2018). Additionally, students should be equipped with effective grammar learning strategies to foster a communicative learning environment in the classroom.

Currently, there is a lack of awareness among facilitators and students regarding the importance of English language learning strategies, particularly in grammar. Many facilitators employ conventional grammar teaching methods, resulting in student boredom and disinterest due to the monotonous nature of these approaches (Mokhtar, 2016). English grammar teaching often relies heavily on

memorization rather than understanding. Moreover, facilitators tend to focus solely on delivering content without actively encouraging students to develop effective grammar learning strategies. As a consequence, students often rely on explanations and exercises provided by the facilitator without realizing the abundance of grammar learning strategies available to them.

This research has certain limitations. The focus is on students at Universitas Tama Jagakarsa to ensure data validity, specificity, and in-depth analysis. The researcher examines the practices of English facilitators and collects information from informants and key informants. The research aims to describe the process of communicative English learning, including the strategies employed by facilitators to create a communicative classroom environment.

METHOD

The researcher chose to conduct qualitative research for this study because it allows for a comprehensive examination of the social realities present in the field. Qualitative research involves descriptive procedures that focus on gathering data through speech, writing, and observed behavior (Atmowardoyo, 2018). By employing qualitative research, the researcher can understand the experiences and perspectives of the subjects in their everyday lives.

This research adopts a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study strategy to thoroughly investigate the phenomena observed in the field. The realities observed in English classrooms, which may not be optimal, are captured and analyzed in a text that highlights the processes and challenges related to meaning. The data collected includes information, opinions, views, and comments/responses regarding communicative learning strategies in grammar education. The research design is open and flexible, allowing for adaptation

to the specific conditions encountered in the field. The researcher directly engages with informants in the field to gather the desired information and ensures that all data aligns with the realities on the ground. This study aims to provide a description of communicative grammar learning strategies and their impact on creating a communicative classroom environment.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this research is to provide a descriptive analysis of the research findings, focusing on students' perceptions of learning English, the sources they use to acquire knowledge of grammar learning strategies, and the strategies employed by teachers to foster communicative grammar learning in the classroom. The study uses real names for the subjects under investigation.

Perceptions of students towards learning English, especially grammar

As we have observed, there are four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Developing communication skills requires mastery of English grammar. When we hear the term "grammar," we often associate it with complex tenses, irregular verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and so on. However, grammar encompasses a much broader scope. According to Wikipedia, grammar refers to the structural rules governing the composition of clauses, phrases, and words in a natural language. It also includes the study of morphology, syntax, and phonology, sometimes complemented by phonetics, semantics, and pragmatics. Orthographical rules, spelling, and punctuation are not typically considered part of grammar by linguists, although usage books and style guides may include them.

Discussing grammar goes beyond memorizing tenses and practicing irregular verb forms. At the junior level, it involves starting with the basics of English

grammar. Teachers can utilize a basic grammar book that covers topics such as singular and plural nouns, countable and uncountable nouns, possessive nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and simple sentences. The word "grammar" is familiar to university students, who often receive various materials such as printed grammar worksheets or English language modules. Students' perspectives on grammar are generally similar. In interviews, several informants expressed the common view that learning grammar is difficult.

Upon considering the aforementioned statements, it becomes apparent that the word "grammar" is consistently linked to notions of difficulty, fear, and boredom among students at Universitas Tama Jagakarsa. Whenever they encounter the term "grammar," their immediate thoughts gravitate towards the classroom setting, perceiving it as intimidating and monotonous. However, it is crucial to recognize that learning grammar encompasses a broader realm beyond the confines of the classroom, and the materials covered are not limited to simple grammar concepts.

The association between grammar and a challenging, daunting, and uninspiring experience in English language teaching and learning is a common occurrence among students. This reaction is not surprising, as grammar, particularly in the context of our society, is widely regarded as a difficult, intimidating, and monotonous subject. Conversations with various individuals shed light on the fact that grammar is often viewed solely through the lens of arduous and uninteresting teaching and learning activities.

It is important to highlight that learning grammar can be an easy endeavor if students familiarize themselves with effective grammar learning strategies. Moreover, it is beneficial for students to dedicate their free time to acquiring knowledge about grammar outside of the school environment. This can be achieved

through engaging in English courses or actively reading articles and references related to grammar learning.

The statements provided by the informants illustrate a limited understanding of grammar among students, which stems from their association of grammar lessons with arduous and monotonous teaching and learning approaches. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that grammar encompasses a vast domain that extends beyond mere memorization and repetitive exercises. It is imperative to recognize that individuals possess diverse perceptions, including students. These perceptions are shaped by their experiences, abilities, and the power of perception they possess when approaching a given subject.

Grammar learning strategies.

The process of learning English grammar encompasses various educational elements, including schools, families, and communities. In schools, English education has been integrated into the curriculum, starting from primary education. Within the family setting, as globalization emphasizes the importance of English proficiency, parents bear the responsibility of ensuring the quality of their children's education, particularly in English. They can actively engage by assisting with homework, providing supplementary English materials, and evaluating their children's learning progress. Additionally, communities offer opportunities for grammar acquisition through practices, such as writing or speaking with peers, or by enrolling in English courses.

However, it is essential to acknowledge that students often acquire knowledge about grammar from sources beyond the school and family environments, such as the mass media. This includes print media like newspapers, magazines, and books, as well as electronic media like online learning platforms, e-books, and the internet. Due to limitations

in school and parental resources, students rely on these media outlets as a fraction of their English education.

Recognizing the constraints of time and parental understanding in providing comprehensive English language education, parents seek alternative solutions to supplement their children's learning. Enrolling their children in English courses is a suitable action as it encourages students to explore a variety of grammar learning strategies and English language materials not covered in their school environment.

Incorporating play and interactive activities within the classroom setting can foster an active and communicative learning process. By infusing games and utilizing both print and electronic media, students not only gain knowledge but also experience an engaging and lively classroom atmosphere, preventing boredom with grammar-related topics. Print and electronic media serve as valuable sources for acquiring grammar knowledge, whether in written or oral form. This becomes particularly relevant when students are not provided with comprehensive grammar lessons either at school or within the family setting.

Students often gravitate towards mass media and electronic resources as learning tools for grammar due to their accessibility. Compared to other sources such as parents or teachers, mass media offers ease of access and availability for acquiring grammar knowledge.

In contrast to traditional sources like parents and teachers, mass media, both print and electronic, have gradually assumed a significant role in English language education, surpassing their functions as primary institutions responsible for grammar instruction. As noted in the statements provided by informants, mass media has effectively replaced parents and teachers in terms of providing detailed explanations and guidance for grammar learning within the school and family environments.

What teacher strategies in create a communicative grammar learning in the classroom?

Grammar plays a crucial role in supporting all four language skills - listening, speaking, reading, and writing - in the teaching and learning of English. Based on observations in the field, some students express difficulties and perceive English as challenging. These issues highlight the importance of English teacher strategies aimed at fostering communicative grammar learning in the classroom.

Firstly, the Listening and Drilling method is employed. This approach allows students to feel more comfortable and gain a better understanding of English. It also boosts student motivation by encouraging them to overcome shyness, nervousness, and fear, and engage in conversations in English. Secondly, vocabulary development is emphasized. Students are assessed on their vocabulary regularly, dedicating 5 to 15 minutes per session. It is not necessary to memorize a large number of words; instead, practicing conversational skills with a minimum of 2 words each day is sufficient. Thirdly, students are motivated by emphasizing the importance of English in today's era and encouraging active communication in English. Fourthly, periodic outdoor classroom activities are conducted. Fifthly, students are encouraged to form questions using only one word. Sixthly, questions are given in English, and students are required to respond in English. Rewards are offered to those who can answer correctly. Seventhly, students in need of assistance are identified, and their weaknesses are noted. Lastly, English is integrated into daily life and viewed as a vital skill.

CONCLUSION

Many students at Universitas Tama Jagakarsa face numerous difficulties when it comes to learning grammar. This issue arises from the fact that most second-

grade students express dissatisfaction and hold negative perceptions about grammar lessons. Furthermore, their motivation to learn English is generally low, resulting in a lack of engagement with the presented materials and uninteresting, monotonous teaching and learning activities. Students have limited awareness of the significance of learning grammar, often relying solely on explanations and exercises provided by their teachers. Consequently, they fail to recognize the abundance of information sources and grammar learning strategies available to them, which could enhance their enjoyment of the learning process and ultimately lead to gradual improvement in their competencies. English teachers at Universitas Tama Jagakarsa, particularly in the second grade, still predominantly employ conventional teaching methods when teaching grammar. These methods tend to prioritize memorization over understanding. Consequently, the intended learning outcomes are not fully achieved, as the teaching process largely revolves around one-way communication and a teacher-centered approach.

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