

SAILING THROUGH LINGUISTICS: A COMPREHENSIVE EXPLORATION OF SYNTAX LEARNING STRATEGIES AMONG ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS

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ABSTRAK

This article delves into a comprehensive exploration of syntax learning strategies employed by English major students, aiming to investigate the utilization and effectiveness of these strategies in their language-learning pursuits. The research design adopts qualitative methods, incorporating surveys, questionnaires, and classroom observations to gather data. The outcomes are meticulously analyzed and compared with existing research, providing a nuanced perspective on the subject. Additionally, the article acknowledges the inherent limitations of the study, offering transparency in its findings. In the broader context of syntax teaching, the article concludes by proposing the exploration of active learning strategies for further investigation in this domain. The suggestion to delve into active learning opens avenues for future research, encouraging a deeper understanding of its potential impact on syntax learning within the English major student community. Overall, this research contributes to the ongoing discourse on language learning strategies and provides a foundation for continued exploration in the field of syntax education.

Kata Kunci: Syntax, Linguistics, English Major, Learning Strategies.

INTRODUCTION

Linguistics is a multidisciplinary field that delves into the intricate structures and dynamics of language (N Tasheva, 2023). In the expansive field of linguistic studies, the mastery of syntax stands as a pivotal undertaking for students majoring in English. This academic voyage is essential for cultivating a profound comprehension of language structure and expression. This article embarks on a scholarly expedition, intending to probe into the multifaceted strategies employed by English major students within the intricate realm of syntax learning.

Syntax, delving into the arrangement and structure of words in a sentence, occupies a central role in unraveling the intricacies of language. For English major students, proficiency in syntax is not just an academic pursuit; it represents a journey toward linguistic mastery and effective communication. This article ventures into the nuanced approaches, challenges, and triumphs that characterize the syntax learning experiences of English major students. According to Fawcett, R. P. (2000), this unit of syntax is not found in any other grammatical framework. Yet the fact is that there are frequently occurring units in English syntax that have the classes of units.

As we set sail on this exploration, it becomes apparent that syntax learning is a process influenced by a myriad of factors. Individual learning styles, linguistic backgrounds, and educational environments collectively contribute to the diverse array of strategies employed by students. Recognizing these strategies becomes imperative for educators and curriculum developers, guiding the design of pedagogical methods tailored to the distinctive needs of English major learners.

The metaphor of sailing is invoked to convey the sense of navigation required in the

linguistic sea, with syntax serving as the guiding compass through the intricacies of sentence structure. This metaphor mirrors the dynamic and evolving nature of language learning, where students must skillfully navigate through both theoretical currents and practical applications of syntactic principles.

The comprehensiveness of this exploration aims to shed light on the nuanced experiences of English major students as they navigate the waters of syntax learning. Our examination spans a spectrum of strategies. Through this, we endeavor to present a detailed panorama of the methods students employ to grasp the subtleties of syntax.

Furthermore, this article seeks to contribute substantially to the broader discourse on language education by providing insights into the effectiveness of syntax learning strategies. The findings aspire to serve as a valuable resource for educators, curriculum designers, and researchers keen on enhancing the syntax learning experience for English major students.

In the subsequent sections, we will traverse through the existing literature on syntax learning strategies, meticulously explore the methodologies employed in our study, and present the findings that have emerged from our comprehensive analysis. By the conclusion of this academic odyssey, we intend to illuminate innovative pathways for refining syntax instruction and cultivating a heightened appreciation for the intricacies of linguistic exploration among English major students.

METHOD

Participants

The study involves a diverse sample of English major students from one academic institution. The participants will be selected based on their willingness to engage in the research process. As the researcher took five participants as samples, the researcher finally found data related to learning syntax subjects. All of the participants are the 5th-semester students of the English Education study program. Each participant had undergone English studies for a minimum of six years during their intermediate and secondary school education. 100% of the participants indicated that English was not their native language. The five participants had just studied syntax for the first time this semester.

Instrument

The primary tool employed in this study is a survey containing two open-ended questions. The survey was meticulously crafted to enable participants to express their thoughts, opinions, and experiences freely. The questions are strategically designed to explore various facets related to the research topic, seeking to capture a comprehensive understanding of each participant's perspective.

To ensure the questionnaire's reliability and precision, it underwent a thorough review process. Researchers assessed the clarity and relevance of the questions, incorporating necessary improvements based on the valuable feedback received. Following the completion of the review process, the surveys were disseminated to selected participants using appropriate methods, such as online interviews or surveys. Participants were allotted sufficient time to complete the questionnaire, with an emphasis on encouraging detailed and well-considered responses.

Data Collection

The questionnaire was distributed to the students through Google Forms. Clear instructions were provided, emphasizing that there were no right or wrong answers to any question. Additionally, assurances were given regarding the confidentiality of their responses, explicitly stating that the gathered information would solely be used for research purposes. Participants were further informed that their involvement would have no impact on their grades.

A qualitative methods approach will be employed, incorporating this. Surveys and questionnaires will be distributed to gather insights into the prevalence of syntax learning strategies. Additionally, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions will be conducted to extract qualitative data, providing a nuanced understanding of individual experiences. Qualitative data will undergo thematic analysis, enabling the identification of recurring themes and nuanced insights.

Data Analysis

Following the collection of survey data, a comprehensive analysis was conducted using qualitative techniques such as theme or content analysis. This method allows for a meticulous examination of participant responses, aiding in the identification of recurring patterns and significant themes within the data. Systematic classification and organization of material are employed to gain a thorough understanding of participants' perspectives.

In presenting the results, direct quotations and examples are utilized to ensure transparency and enhance the credibility of the conclusions. These quotes faithfully represent participants' opinions, reinforce recurrent themes, and provide a comprehensive depiction of their viewpoints. This approach aids readers in better comprehending the essence of participants' experiences and insights by offering essential context and assisting in the interpretation of the data. The data analysis serves as the underpinning for the researchers' conclusive findings, empowering them to make informed interpretations and contribute to an enhanced overall understanding of the research topic.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the preferred learning strategy employed by syntax teachers, as perceived by their students. Following the completion of our research, we compiled the results and presented them in tabular form. The data reveals a predominant inclination towards the expository teaching strategy based on the participants' responses. In accordance with our findings, a substantial majority, accounting for 70% of the participants, favored active learning. These individuals may appreciate the hands-on and creative approach involved in developing content through personal expertise and established practices. Here, the researcher prepared two questions for each participant. the questions are:

1. While studying Syntax, what learning strategies are used by the teacher in your class, and provide several examples of the material taught.
2. Do you think the strategies used by the teacher in your class are effective in understanding syntax lessons?

From these two questions, we got almost the same answer from five participants. To be more comprehensive, researchers will discuss the findings separately based on participants' answers.

The first participant responded to the question by providing the following answer:

Table 1. Syntax Learning Strategies Used by the Teacher from Students' Perspective.

Questions	Answers
1. While studying Syntax, what learning strategies are used by the teacher in your class, and provide several examples of the material taught.	1. "The only strategy used by the teacher is to make tree diagrams (material) per individual in front of the class to ensure student understanding after the teacher and students read the theory in the book."
2. Do you think the strategies used by the teacher in your class are effective in understanding syntax lessons?	2. "In my opinion, calling individuals one by one in front of the class to make a tree diagram is quite effective but less fun."

From the first answer, the researcher can conclude that the strategy used in the participant's class only has one strategy, namely by practicing using tree diagrams on the whiteboard, which seems monotonous. According to the first participant's perspective, The strategies used by teachers in syntax classes are considered effective, because students can still learn and understand the material being taught. It's just that the strategies used are less fun and tend to be boring, so they are less likely to attract students' interest in learning. The second participant responded to the question by providing the following answer:

Table 2. Syntax Learning Strategies Used by the Teacher from Students' Perspective.

Questions	Answers
1. While studying Syntax, what learning strategies are used by the teacher in your class, and provide several examples of the material taught.	1. "The strategy the teacher used is explaining from the book by reading and then explaining the steps on the board sequentially. For example noun. Then, make a tree diagram by forming lines like roots. Then make the explanation about the word group based on the sentences."
2. Do you think the strategies used by the teacher in your class are effective in understanding syntax lessons?	2. "Actually it's effective, but the explanation is too fast and immediately moves to new material, if I don't come for a day because I'm sick, I've already missed a lot of information about the lesson."

From the answer, we can analyze if the learning strategy used is similar to the first participant's answer. Namely by studying a sentence and solving it using a tree diagram. Then, grouping them into types of words, or information about the word groups of each word in the sentence. From answer number two, the second participant has a perspective if the strategy used is effective. However, the learning process tends to be fast and sometimes skipped This makes some students not understand the material as a whole because there is a lot of material to study in a day. On the other hand, absent students miss out on a lot of the material.

The third participant responded to the question by providing the following answer:

Table 3. Syntax Learning Strategies Used by the Teacher from Students' Perspective.

Questions	Answers
1. While studying Syntax, what learning strategies are used by the teacher in your class, and provide several examples of the material taught.	1. "The Learning is carried out using the lecture method, as well as practice for students one by one in front of the class."
2. Do you think the strategies used by the teacher in your class are effective in understanding syntax lessons?	2. "In my opinion, this learning strategy is effective enough, because the teacher can monitor students' understanding of the syntax theory taught through direct practice in front of the class."

From the third participant's answer, we can conclude that the learning strategy is explained manually by the teacher or in other words the lecture method. Next, students are asked to practice one by one in the future to work on the questions on the blackboard. This is very related to the previous participant's answer. From the second answer, the third participant has a perspective that the strategies used are quite effective because they think that this kind of learning is enough to make students understand the material being studied. Besides that, This kind of strategy not only contains an explanation of the material but also includes practice by asking students to practice tree diagrams one by one in front of the class.

The fourth participant responded to the question by providing the following answer:

Table 4. Syntax Learning Strategies Used by the Teacher from Students' Perspective.

Questions	Answers
1. While studying Syntax, what learning strategies are used by the teacher in your class, and provide several examples of the material taught.	1. "Syntax learning in class is by explaining the material which is only done by the teacher. Examples of material such as syntax definitions, tree diagrams, etc."
2. Do you think the strategies used by the teacher in your class are effective in understanding syntax lessons?	2. "In my opinion, it is not effective because it seems boring and there is no detail in explaining the material. So the teaching method seems rigid."

From the fourth participant's answer, we can see that the learning carried out was explained by the teacher with material such as definitions of syntax and the material was not far from the tree diagram. In essence, the way teachers teach syntax material is still using the old-fashioned explanation method. When asked about the effectiveness of the strategies used by teachers in teaching syntax, the fourth participant thought that the strategies used were not effective because they tended to be boring and did not attract students' interest in learning. Apart from that, the fourth participant also believed that the teaching method was relatively rigid because it is not explained in detail and is only based on textbooks.

The fifth participant responded to the question by providing the following answer:

Table 5. Syntax Learning Strategies Used by the Teacher from Students' Perspective.

Questions	Answers
1. While studying Syntax, what learning strategies are used by the teacher in your class, and provide several examples of the material taught.	1. "The lecturer used an expository strategy, namely the lecture method. The material taught is like abbreviations of terms in syntax (verb becomes v in sentence root)."
2. Do you think the strategies used by the teacher in your class are effective in understanding syntax lessons?	2. "No. Class becomes boring and the teacher centers."

From the fifth participant's answer, it can be understood that syntax learning also involves learning about abbreviations of terms or words used in syntax lessons, to make things easier. writing symbols in tree diagrams. Such a noun becomes N, the verb becomes V, a noun phrase becomes NP, a verb phrase becomes VP, etc. From the second answer, the fifth participant thought that the strategies used in learning syntax were not effective because the class was boring and during the learning process, students only focus on listening to the teacher's explanation so that only the teacher is the center of attention in the classroom. This causes boredom and students' lack of interest in learning. From the answers of the five participants, it needs to be underlined that the teacher of **Linguistics and Literature Journal** the five participants is the same person. Participants come from different classes. From all the five participants' answers.

The results above show that the students agree with number one questions that the strategy used is an expository learning strategy, namely the teacher explains the material using the lecture method, and explanations are usually supported by books. In this syntax lesson, the teacher provides a handbook and discusses the book from the beginning. After studying certain material the teacher will usually ask students to practice in front of the class one by one. The exercises carried out are always the same, namely making tree diagrams based on sentences related to the material being studied, for example, present tense sentences, and passive sentences which will later be broken down per word to be analyzed into small units via a tree diagram. For the second question, regarding whether the strategy used is effective in teaching syntax, the researcher found that three participants had a view

that the strategy was classified as effective. Because they are based on students who can understand the learning explained by the teacher. However, they still think that this strategy tends to be boring and monotonous. So, students are less interested in learning.

Apart from that, some think that there is too much learning to be discussed in one day. Sometimes some are skipped. So if a student is absent, they tend to miss a lot of material. On the other hand, two students believed that this strategy was not effective, because the way of learning seemed rigid and the discussion was not discussed in detail, it only discussed general concepts based on books, so the lessons cannot be exported widely and boringly. So from here, we can conclude that the learning strategies used by teachers in syntax classes are effective. Effective enough to make students understand the material. However, because the strategy used is only continuous and there is no development, this tends to lead to students' disinterest in learning because the learning is less fun and less interesting.

Furthermore, active learning emerges as a compelling recommendation, especially in the context of advancing critical thinking through engaging activities such as discussions and problem-solving tasks. These dynamic approaches facilitate the development of higher-order thinking skills, significantly amplifying the depth of comprehension of the subject matter. Noteworthy is the collaborative essence inherent in many active learning methods, frequently involving group work, which plays a pivotal role in strengthening essential teamwork capabilities. This enhancement in collaboration and communication skills proves particularly invaluable within both academic and professional settings. Consequently, the numerous advantages of active learning underscore its merit as a highly recommended pedagogical approach, poised to enhance the quality of education and skill development, specifically in the realm of syntax learning.

Methods encouraging active learning frequently prompt students to establish connections between new information and their existing mental frameworks, thereby expanding their comprehension. Alternatively, educators might create learning tasks that prompt students to address misconceptions, aiding them in reconstructing mental models with a more accurate understanding. In both scenarios, approaches fostering active learning align with the cognitive efforts essential for learning, as outlined by constructivist learning theory.

Active learning methods also commonly incorporate the utilization of collaborative learning groups, a practice rooted in constructivism that underscores the significant role social interaction can play in the learning process (Brame, C., 2016).

CONCLUSION

This investigation is centered on exploring the application of syntax learning strategies among undergraduate English Major students. The findings reveal that teachers primarily employ the expository method, with expository strategies being the most commonly utilized syntax learning strategies. Notably, effective strategies, which involve active factors such as discussion, are infrequently employed by students based on interviews. The study underscores a supportive learning environment where active learning plays a crucial role in assisting students in mastering syntax. When faced with challenges, students openly share difficulties and seek help from friends to deepen their comprehension of syntax. However, the results suggest that the potential advantages of incorporating expository teaching methods are not fully realized by students. Furthermore, this research establishes the foundation for future investigations in various research contexts, exploring potential variations in syntax learning strategy use based on factors such as gender, individual characteristics, motivation, and social background.

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