EFFECTIVE LEARNING OF ENGLISH SYNTAX FOR FETT STUDENTS

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Abstract
This qualitative study aims to describe students’ metacognitive process in English Syntax learning and to explain effective learning of English Syntax for teacher training students. This case study focused on the existing condition of English Syntax teaching learning process in a public university in Central Java. Data was collected from students of English Department in Education of Teacher Training (ETT) Faculty. Finding shows that students understand concept of traditional grammar, transformational generative grammar, and functional grammar by doing exercises of sentence constructions. They also know how to implement those concepts in teaching-learning methodology. However, the lecturer had to provide many exercises and repeat explanation of sentence structure. Thus it looked like grammar class. Once, the researcher used a journal of a research in an English Syntax. The results show it facilitates students to understand how a theory is applied and used to analyze data. It is easier and takes shorter time than it was previously for students to understand the concept and its implementation in TEFL. It implies that research-based learning is effective for students to understand the theories of English Syntax, sentence analysis, and its implication in teaching-learning methodology of EFL.

Keywords: Students, Grammar, Research-Based Learning.

Introduction
Learning, based on current trend is student-centered that helps students to be active learners and competent. Teachers encourage students to incorporate active learning principles into their studies by assigning some tasks, however, teacher do not facilitate students to have long-term memory because they only have intensive or extensive reading on module, reference books, or text book. They just memory knowledge that the teachers have already taught. Students cannot understand and construct teaching materials comprehensively. Of course this affects the success of teaching. The teaching is assumed to be unsuccessful when they do not achieve the aims of learning.

The aim of teaching program referring to the profile of graduate in English Department, faculty of Education and Teacher Training is that the graduates become competent in teaching English as a Foreign Language or EFL teachers in Indonesia. Based on the data of tracer study (2016), most of the graduates have already been teachers in public and private schools and universities. There are several graduates of English Department, Tidar University who teach at schools, in almost all level of education in Magelang. Thus it needs to equip students with appropriate content knowledge and competencies to be successful English teachers.

However, the fact shows that there is an acute shortage of qualified teachers in Indonesia. As a result a large percentage of teachers employed at the schools are untrained and/or temporary. In 2015 based on, the data teachers’ pedagogic competence is low. The average score of teacher competency test in under the standard. The highest score (56.19) is achieved by teachers
in Yogyakarta province. This means teachers in Magelang as part of central Java got under that score. It represents that pedagogical competence of teachers that includes content mastery of the lesson is low accordingly.

The data above presents pedagogical competence of teachers that includes teachers’ mastery of content language. Content language covers linguistic elements such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and mechanic. This can be interpreted that teachers’ mastery of content knowledge of language is low. Thus teachers; knowledge of syntax that refers a competence to construct word into syntactical construction or meaningful one is unsatisfactory.

Through the secondary grades, students are involved in activities that emulate the kinds of tasks that they will need to complete in the final examination. Grammar is the only exception. Although it has come to be viewed as less crucial in recent years, grammar still remains a core focus of English lessons throughout the 12 years of schooling. Lessons revolve around teacher driven explanations of various grammar structures and isolated grammar exercises that typically consume at least an hour every week. Teaching activities are almost solely based on the textbooks supplemented with additional grammar and vocabulary exercises from additional available resources.

Based on the previous explanation making meaning in a target language is a difficult task for students of English as a foreign language. Language teachers, thus, play very important role in assisting students to improve their understanding of the language which is learnt. To manage the role, so every teacher needs a syntax knowledge as a professional reference.

The fact above is actually in line with the concept that in general man is not merely homo loquens or he is ‘man the speaking animal’. He is homo Grammaticus. It is grammar that makes language so essentially a human characteristic. For though other creatures can make meaningful sounds, the link between sound and meaning is for them of a far more primitive kind than it is for man. The link for man is grammar.

Meaning is accessible through the wording that is words and their order. Wording, then is realized or expressed through sound and letter which are built in syntactical constructions. That is why, based on structural approach, students of English need to know about rules of constructing words or grammar.

As the paradigm changes grammar teaching shifts from structural and transformational to functional approach. The last approach believes that it helps them to understand how text works. As teachers, they have to equip students with knowledge how texts work in order that communicative competence is achieved, they just be able to help students explicitly how to understand and produce text – spoken and written in various context for various purposes.

The problem arises based on researchers’ observation during teaching practice program in 2015. Some teachers who were supervisors and the teacher students who took teaching practice last year get difficulties to adapt the current curriculum. They do not understand the theoretical background and philosophy of current teaching. Since learning a second or foreign language is hard work and for most people involves a considerable commitment of time and effort, teachers have to be able to facilitate students to learn English grammar using current curriculum, the work may sometimes be enjoyable, but learners do not usually undertake such task without the expectation of a payoff.

Students of English Department as teacher students embark upon the study of English
Syntax for the intellectual satisfaction of acquaintance with grammatical matters and its implication to ELTL. It needs to show what English Syntax knowledge are for and how they are used. This paper concerns with how research-based learning is effective in English Syntax course of English teacher training class.

Methodology
The type of this research is case study that the data were analyzed qualitatively. This study aims to describe students’ metacognitive process in English Syntax learning and to explain effective learning of English Syntax for teacher training students. The focus is on the English Syntax teaching learning process using research-based learning in a public university in Central Java. Data was collected from students of English Department in Education of Teacher Training (ETT) Faculty using video-tape verbatim, observation, interview, and note-taking. To obtain information about the extent to which the English Syntax course using research-based learning is needed, the researchers used (1) in-depth interview and (2) focus group discussion (FGD). These methods were chosen to get sufficient information. The in-depth interview was conducted to students who take English Syntax course and teaching practice and lecturers who teach it in English Department, Tidar University. To obtain more information focus group discussion was conducted and participated by the lecturers who have already taught it since the course has existed. The FGD was organized in paper examination room of English Department. The procedures of data analysis covered collecting data, categorization, analysis and getting conclusion.

Finding and Discussion
Learning model of research-based learning involves theory, demonstration, practice and feedback. First is theory. It presents underlying theory of the concepts that are learnt, research, and its rationale related with teaching-learning methodology. Definition and related research are presented. Second, demonstration concerns with providing example how analysis of English Syntax is done. The lecturer models each structural approach analysis, how to apply the assumption of each approach in teaching-learning methodology, and research. Practice and feedback are third stage which provide opportunity for learners to do exercises of English Syntax and design teaching-learning activities as implementation of the concepts. In this stage, teacher students practice the technique with their peer by constructing several semantic maps for words that are included in particular selection. Under the direction of the lecturer, they discuss how they did and receive input from their peer and lecturer.

Research-based learning is student-centered learning (SCL) which integrate research inlearning process. As mentioned above, it facilitates learners to get information, build hypothesis, collect data, analyze data and constructing conclusion based on data analysis. These apply a concept of learning by doing. Research-based learning change paradigm of learning of memorizing concepts into facts based on inquiry. Accordingly the learners are able to understand and solve problems concerning with their profession.

The findings show that students understand well how to apply their knowledge of English Syntax when they practice teaching. They
know the relationship of English Syntax and teaching methodology that they have to implement. Take for example, when they have to help their student who get difficulty to understand structure of sentence or clause, they are good at choosing appropriate teaching methodology to use. Another case is about text-based teaching. Most of the students understand the concept of systemic functional grammar. They know well the concept of English Syntax that covers structural, transformational generative, and systemic functional grammar.

Students also understand a research in the field of English Syntax. This is supported by their knowledge and skill of syntactical construction analysis. Besides, the lecturer always presents a model of research and the methodology to carry out a study. This of course inspire them to carry out a research concerning with English Syntax and the publish the findings.

Concerning with the implementation of the English syntax concept towards teaching English as a foreign language methodology, students also do understand. They are able to confirm the knowledge and their teaching practice. Even they understand the underlying theory of their teaching methodology when they have to explain about grammar.

All lecturers who involved in FGD have continued to stress the relationship theories of English Syntax and its implementation in TEFL. In order to construct words into phrases, clauses and sentences, and analyze them, students need to understand theory, do exercises and discuss research about English Syntax.. This means selecting appropriate materials, and learning strategy is needed. This facts show that English Department as an institute that prepare English teacher need to equip the students with knowledge of English Syntax and its implementation in TEFL.

Dealing with the structure of English curriculum in faculty of Education and teacher training, the University of Tidar, English Syntax is a two credit course. This is held in the fifth semester after the students grammar and functional grammar in semester 1, 2, 3 and 4. This mean the course is taught 2 x 50 minutes equal with 100 minutes per week. Concerning with content that should be learned by students, the lecturers choir that a two-credit course for systemic functional grammar is not sufficient to teach. This implies they need provide assignment and project to achieve the objective of the course.

The participants of FGD argue that the materials in English Syntax are suitable with competence standard of the graduate. Since the language teaching and methodology is now research-based as proposed by the rector. This means that the students prepare to be English teacher who are good at grammar to teach English by having analysis of research.

As faculty of education and teacher training, English department aims to prepare the students to English teachers. English Syntax course helps students to be more effective teachers in the future. They find a need to be syntax analysts in their own classrooms.

Lecturers sometimes have to explain quickly due to limited time within one semester. When there are students who have not understood yet about the material, lecturers do not have time to explain in detail because of limited time. Besides, students actually need more practice to understand. Since the time is so limited there only simple and few clauses that can be analyzed. Thus, only few students especially active ones involve to do the exercises. Students who do not understand well are afraid to take part in discussion.
Conclusions
Based on the explanation of the finding, the researcher concludes that students understand concept of traditional grammar, transformational generative grammar, and functional grammar by doing exercises of sentence constructions. They also know how to implement those concepts in teaching-learning methodology. However, the lecturer had to provide many exercises and repeat explanation of sentence structure. Thus it looked like grammar class. Once, the researcher used a journal of a research in an English Syntax. The results show it facilitates students to understand how a theory is applied and used to analyze data. It is easier and takes shorter time than it was previously for students to understand the concept and its implementation in TEFL. It implies that research-based learning is needed for students to understand the theories, sentence analysis, and its implication in teaching-learning methodology of EFL.

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