

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR IN ENGLISH TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Abstract

The investigation of the teaching of English grammar in the EFL context caused critical interest to learners. Non-native English learners still thought that grammar is difficult subject because their focused just in producing correct sentences. That is the main thing that traditional grammar emphasized on the teaching of the parts of speech, or word classes; noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, ect. Parts of speech tend to be defined semantically, such as a noun is the name of a person, place or thing; a verb is an action word and so on. While in functional grammar, it was more sociological in orientation, such that they were more concerned with relating grammar to its function within society. In the field of language teaching, functional grammar has more applications to speaking and writing. The main reason is that functional grammar serves the communicative purpose of EFL students' learning the English language and provides the opportunity for EFL students to recognize the linguistic features of the language. From the explanation, it shows that the study of functional grammar is important, since grammar not only focuses on sentence structure but for meaning making.

Keywords – EFL, systemic functional grammar

Introduction

The development of semantic grammars orientation shows how people use language to make meaning in order to navigate their social on their lives (Cope 1993). The investigation of the teaching of English grammar in the EFL context caused critical interest to learners. Non-native English learners still thought that grammar is difficult subject because their focused just in producing correct sentences. That is the main thing that Traditional grammar emphasized on the teaching of the parts of speech, or word classes; noun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction, ect. Parts of speech tend to be defined semantically, such as a noun is the name of a person, place or thing; a verb is an action word and so on. (Alhamdany: 2012).

While in Systemic Functional grammar, it was more sociological in orientation, such that they were more concerned with relating grammar to its function within society. In the field of language teaching, functional linguistics has more applications to speaking and writing. The main reason is that functional linguistics serves the communicative purpose of EFL students' learning the English language and provides the opportunity for EFL students to recognize the linguistic features of the language, (Halliday et al, cited in Cope, 1993).

Based on the background, the writer formulates the problems as follow:

What are the key concepts of systemic functional linguistics?

What are the implications of systemic functional linguistics in language learning and teaching?

Methodology

This study was conducted in grammar 4 class offered at Tidar University. The class covers sixteen weeks meeting in one semester. Each meeting was done in 100 minutes. There are 4 classes that consist of 25 to 30 students for each. Since the limited time in this study, the writer only takes 25 students as the samples from. The writer carried out a qualitative study to know the students' opinion when they study functional grammar in classroom activities.

Besides, it also describes the obstacles when they participate in grammar 4 class.

The writer used questionnaire and observation to get the needed data. From the questionnaire, the writer asked some questions like students' opinion in grammar 4 class, students' obstacles in understanding materials. Besides questionnaire, observation was done to know the students' behavior when they participate in grammar 4 class. The students are also being observed to know whether they understand with meaning or not.

Finding and Discussion

This research was conducted in grammar 4 class. There are four classes, but the writer only focuses on one class. The writer observed the process of teaching and learning of grammar 4 class using observation sheet. Based on the observation guidance, the results of observation can be seen as follows: (1) The students who give attention to the lecturer's explanation reached 20 persons or 80%. It shows that the students had quite good motivation to join the teaching-learning process. (2) Students who ask about the material reached 10 persons or 40%. It means that a few of the class who had curiosity to the material explained by the lecturer. (3) Students who answer lecturer's question reached 15 persons or 60%. (4) Students who make note reached 14 persons or 56%. It was good enough because more than a half of the total students made a note.

The activity of the students while studying MOOD are: (1) The students were enthusiastic in learning process reached 12 persons or 48%. It means that more than a half of students had motivated in learning process. (2) The students who have understood about the material reached 12 persons or 48%. It means that less than a half students understood with the material.

The activity of the students while studying TRANSITIVITY are: (1) The students were enthusiastic in learning process reached 13 persons or 52%. It means that more than a half of students had motivated in learning process. (2) The students who have understood about the material reached 12 persons or 48%. It means that less than a half students understood with the material.

The activity of the students while studying three types of meaning are: (1) The students were enthusiastic in learning process reached 15 persons or 60%. It means that more than a half of students had motivated in learning process. (2) The students who have understood about the material reached 14 persons or 56%. It means that less than a half students understood with the material.

The activity of students to do the task that was given by the lecturer were: (1) The students who can do the evaluation sheet reached 12 persons or 48%. It means that the students were confused with the material, so they could not do the evaluation sheet. (2) The students who can finish the test, which have been determined reached 16 persons or 64%. It shows that

most of the students could finish the entire test on time. The result of observation sheet can be seen at this diagram.

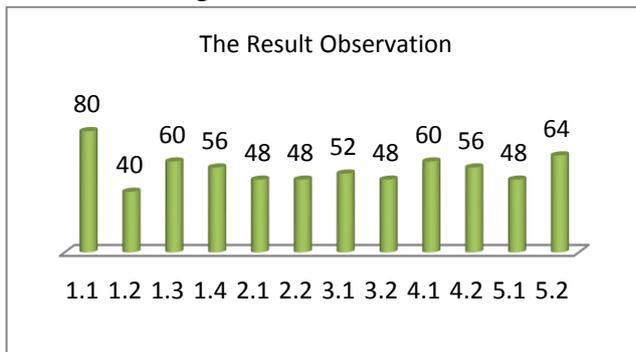


Diagram 1. The Result Observation

The writers used questionnaire sheet to acquire the students' opinion about the lecturer's teaching. The result shows that there were 19 of 25 know about functional grammar. There are 20 of 25 students stated that lecturer explain the difference between traditional grammar and functional grammar. In the next question, 16 of 25 students said that they were able to understand the lecturer's explanation well. Moreover, 20 of 25 students understand about mood elements on subject, finite, predicator and residue. While, there were 19 of 25 students stated that they understand about adjunct. Next about transitivity, 19 of 25 students understand about material process and mental process. For verbal process, there were 20 of 25 students understand about material. For behavioral and existential process, only 16 of 25 students stated that they understand with the process. For relational and meteorological process, there were 14 of 25 students understand about material. From three types of meaning, there were 15 of 25 students who understand about ideational meaning. While for textual and interpersonal, there are 18 of 25 students stated that they understand with the meaning. In the next question, 20 of 25 students stated that lecturer teaches functional grammar based on text. In the last question, 20 of 25 students answered that they understand the material by doing some exercises.

There are 3 tests done by students; Mood, Transitivity and three types of meaning. The result shows that there were 20.79% students who get very good category. There were 8 students or 39.65% were in good category and 7 students or 23.37% were in fair category. Next, 4 students or 12.45% students were in poor category and 2 students or 3.74% were very poor category. The mean of the scores of the students in Mood test is 66.16 and it belongs to fair category. The result of the Mood test can be seen in the following diagram.

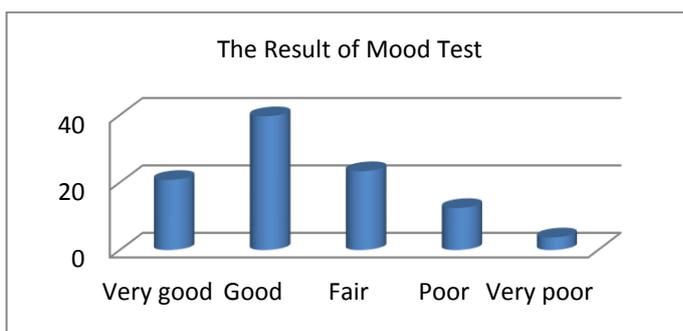


Diagram 2. The Result of Mood Test

From the result, it shows that there were 10.62% students who get very good category. There were 9 students or 41.66% were in good category and 7 students or 27.54% were in fair category. Next, 5 students or 16.43% students were in poor category and 2 students or 3.75% were very poor category. The mean of the scores of the students in Mood test is 64.04 and it belongs to fair category. The result of transitivity test can be seen in the following diagram.

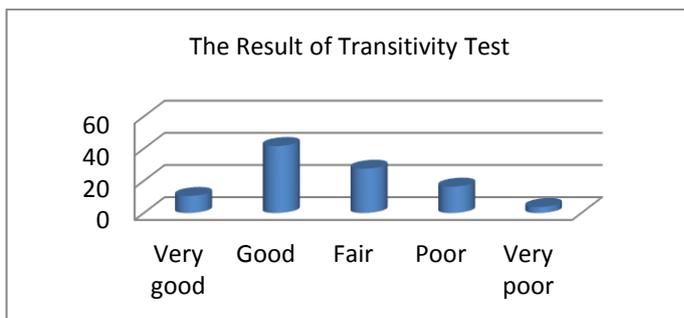


Diagram 3. The Result of Transitivity Test

From the diagram, it shows that there were 16.77% students who get very good category. There were 8 students or 40.57 were in good category and 4 students or 17.37% were in fair category. Next, 4 students or 14.13% students were in poor category and 6 students or 11.16% were very poor category. The mean of the scores of the students in three types of meaning test is 59.25 and it belongs to poor category. The result of three types of meaning test can be seen in the following diagram.

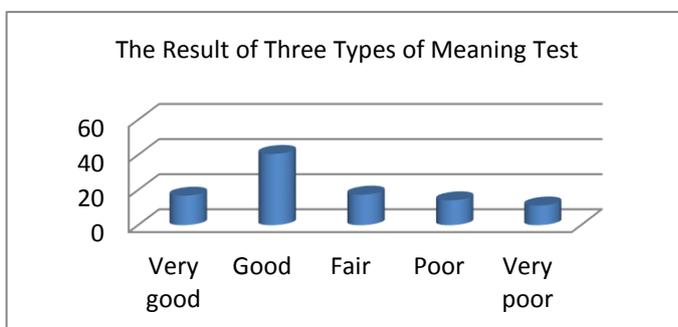


Diagram 4. The result of three types of meaning test

The data were taken through observation, questionnaire, interview and tests. The writer found that there were differences between the result in observation, interview and questionnaire and the result of the test. Even some students said that they understand with the materials but in fact, they could not do the test well. It can be seen from the average score in Mood test and Transitivity test which only in fair category. While for the three types of meaning, students only get poor average score. So, the writer concludes that the students still have difficulties in grammar 4 class.

Conclusion

Systemic Functional linguistics has an important role in world linguistics. It is necessary to have a good knowledge about functional grammar because it is part of the English language and may bring a great change to EFL teaching and learning. Pedagogically Systemic Functional linguistics has its own advantages and can facilitate EFL students to achieve success in academic registers if EFL teachers can find a good way to teach its concepts in order. It can also help EFL students to achieve success in other subject areas. Besides its significance in teaching and learning, Systemic Functional linguistics has opened a wide research field in linguistics. With functional grammar, language teaching and learning will be more interesting and meaningful.

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