



Student-led Grammar Class: A Qualitative Expbration of Implementation and Student Feedback

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Abstract. This study explored the implementation of student-led instruction in grammar classes and examined students' perspectives on this instructional approach. In addition, the current study employed a qualitative case study method, and data were collected through classroom observations and open-ended questionnaires administered to students. Observations provided real-time insights into the implementation process, while the questionnaires captured students' reflections and experiences. Preliminary findings suggest that student-led instruction fosters a collaborative learning environment, enhances student engagement, and promotes a deeper understanding of grammatical concepts. Students reported feeling more responsible for their learning and appreciated the opportunity to participate actively in the instructional process. However, the challenges, such as the need for clear guidance and support from the instructor, were also identified. The study highlights the potential benefits of student-led instruction in grammar classes, emphasizing the importance of balancing student autonomy with structured support. These findings contribute to the growing body of literature on innovative teaching methodologies in language education and provide practical implications for educators seeking to implement student-centered approaches in their classrooms

Keywords: Student-led instruction, grammar class, student perspectives

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, student-centered approaches have gained significant attention in language instruction, particularly within grammar teaching (Nováková, 2023; Pan, 2024; Rombepajung et al., 2023). Traditional grammar instruction, which often involves teacher-led lectures and passive learning, has been criticized for its inability to actively engage students and foster deep comprehension (Ellis, 2006). As a result, educators are exploring more innovative approaches to teaching grammar, with student-led instruction emerging as a promising alternative. This approach shifts the focus from teacher-

directed explanations to a more student-driven process, where learners take greater responsibility for their own learning and engage more actively in the classroom (Dada et al., 2023; Marín, 2022; Rasa et al., 2024).

Student-led instruction is grounded in constructivist learning theory, which suggests that learners build knowledge through active engagement, exploration, and interaction with the material (Vygotsky, 1978). In a student-led grammar class, students explain and discuss grammatical concepts with their peers under the teacher's facilitation. This process encourages collaborative learning and allows for deeper cognitive processing of complex grammar topics (Ariani & Valiantien, 2022; Susantiningdyah et al., 2022). The method also promotes student autonomy, helping learners develop critical thinking skills as they analyze, present, and apply grammar rules in real-world contexts.

However, despite its theoretical advantages, the practical implementation of student-led grammar instruction presents several challenges (Murtisari et al., 2020; Oranggaga, 2022; Syafryadin, 2022). Students may face difficulties in assuming leadership roles within the classroom, and the effectiveness of this approach largely depends on the level of support and guidance the teacher provides. While student-led learning has been widely studied in other areas of language education, there is still limited research on how it functions in teaching grammar, an area traditionally dominated by direct instruction.

This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the implementation of student-led instruction in a grammar class and examining students' perceptions of this approach. As for the perceptions, the researchers would uncover the benefits, challenges, and suggestions of student-led grammar instruction from the learners' perspectives. The findings will offer insights for educators looking to adopt student-led methods in their classrooms and contribute to the broader discourse on effective grammar teaching strategies

2. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study design to explore the implementation of student-led instruction in a grammar class and to gather student feedback on their experiences. The case study method allowed for an in-depth exploration of the instructional approach within a specific context, providing rich, detailed data on the process and the outcomes (Ebneyamini & Sadeghi Moghadam, 2018).

Participants

The participants in this study were 35 students enrolled in an intermediate-level English grammar course at a private university in Sidoarjo. The students had varying levels of prior knowledge and experience with grammar instruction. Participation in the study was voluntary, and all participants were provided informed consent before data collection.

Data Collection

Data were collected through two primary methods: classroom observations and open-ended questionnaires.

1. Classroom Observations

Classroom observations were conducted over six weeks during the student-led grammar lessons. The researcher observed the class interactions, student-led activities, and the teacher's role in facilitating the lessons. Detailed field notes were taken during each observation to capture the classroom dynamics, the nature of student participation, and any challenges or successes observed during the implementation of the student-led approach.

2. Open-ended Questionnaires

At the end of the six weeks, students were asked to complete an open-ended questionnaire to gather their reflections on the student-led grammar lessons. The questionnaire included questions about their perceptions of the learning process, the benefits and challenges of the student-led approach, and their suggestions based on the experience. Students were encouraged to provide detailed responses and share specific examples from their classroom experiences.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the classroom observations and the open-ended questionnaires were analyzed using thematic analysis (Lochmiller, 2021; Naeem et al., 2023; Xu & Zammit, 2020). The researchers initially familiarized themselves with the data by reading the field notes and questionnaire responses multiple times. Initial codes were generated to capture recurring themes and patterns related to the implementation process, student engagement, and student-led instruction's perceived benefits and challenges. These codes were then grouped into broader themes that reflected the study's key findings. Themes were reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately represented the data and provided meaningful insights into the research questions. This qualitative approach gave a comprehensive understanding of how student-led instruction was implemented in the grammar class and how students responded to this innovative teaching method

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Implementation of Student-led Discussion

Implementing the student-led grammar class began with the lecturer assigning specific grammar topics to groups of four to five students. Each group was responsible for developing materials, preparing a presentation with visual aids, and creating a brief quiz to engage their peers. They were also tasked with leading the class discussion and providing feedback on their peers' understanding of the material. This structure fostered a dynamic classroom environment where students were at the center of the learning

process, allowing various degrees of participation and engagement. The flow of the practice is presented in Picture 1 below.

Picture 1. The Implementation of Student-led Discussion



Figure 1. The Implementation of Student-led Discussion

Dynamics of the Classroom

The student-led format transformed the classroom into a collaborative space where students took ownership of the content delivery and peer interaction. The groups worked diligently to develop and present their materials, often demonstrating creativity in their use of visual aids. The materials provided by the groups covered topics such as phrases, clauses, and sentences. The presentations were generally well-prepared, and the students led the discussion effectively and managed the flow of the session. Their efforts to engage their peers were evident through the structured quizzes and interactive discussions, which kept the atmosphere lively and participatory. The quizzes vary, ranging from traditional methods such as multiple choice to more contemporary methods such as game-based and technology-based communicative approaches (Quizizz, Canva, EdPuzzle, and so on). The group also determined the variation of this quiz according to their interests.

However, despite the overall enthusiasm, not all students participated equally. While the presenting groups exhibited confidence and readiness, a handful of students in the audience hesitated to interact. This hesitancy was particularly noticeable during the quiz sessions, where most students answered well, but a few remained passive. These variations in participation highlighted the differing levels of confidence and preparedness within the class.

Nature of Student Participation

Student participation was generally robust, with most students contributing meaningfully to the discussions. Many students displayed confidence in their presentations and a solid grasp of the material. However, one challenge frequently emerged was the students' ability to communicate in English throughout the session. While most students began their presentations and discussions in English, several would switch to Bahasa Indonesia when they struggled to express more complex ideas. This code-switching highlighted the ongoing challenge of full English fluency in an academic setting, particularly when students were tasked with explaining intricate grammatical concepts.

Despite these linguistic challenges, the students were engaged in their roles as both presenters and listeners. The quiz component added a layer of interaction, prompting students to reflect on the material and actively engage with their peers' presentations. Although some struggled with consistent English usage, the interactive nature of the class kept the momentum going, and most students remained focused and involved.

Challenges and Successes

The most significant challenge observed during the implementation was students' difficulty in sustaining conversations entirely in English. While this presented an obstacle, it also provided a valuable learning experience, pushing students outside their comfort zones. The shift to Bahasa Indonesia when students encountered linguistic barriers was a natural response. Yet, it signaled an area for potential improvement in future implementations, such as reinforcing the use of English and providing strategies for overcoming communication blocks.

On the other hand, the student-led approach had notable successes. The structured nature of the assignments—material development, presentation, quiz, and peer feedback—created an environment where students took responsibility for their learning. The feedback process was particularly effective, allowing students to critically evaluate their peers' performances, further solidifying their understanding of the material. Additionally, the active role students played in class discussions and the quizzes demonstrated the effectiveness of this student-centered method.

The role of the lecturer, while more passive during the students' presentations, remained crucial. At the end of each session, the lecturer provided comprehensive feedback, particularly regarding the quiz discussions. This guidance ensured that any misconceptions were addressed and allowed the students to refine their understanding of both the content and the quality of the discussions.

Student Feedback

The Benefits

The research results reveal several critical advantages of student-led discussions (Picture 2).

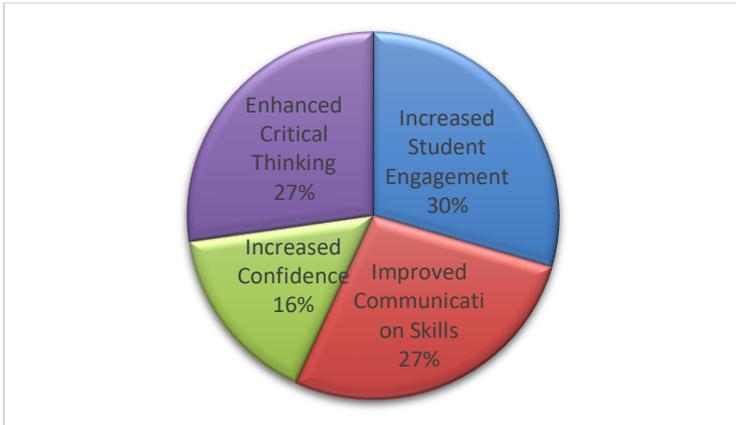


Figure 2. The Benefits of Student-led Discussion

The most frequently noted benefit is increased student engagement, with 30% of students mentioned, indicating that these discussions significantly boost active participation and involvement in learning. Following closely, both improved communication skills and enhanced critical thinking are cited by 27% of students each. This suggests that student-led discussions enhance students' ability to communicate effectively and foster their critical thinking abilities by requiring them to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information. Although less frequently mentioned, the increase in student confidence, noted by 16% of students, still represents a significant advantage, reflecting the positive impact of active participation and successful communication in these discussions. Overall, the analysis underscores the multifaceted benefits of student-led discussions, highlighting their role in creating a more engaging, communicative, and intellectually stimulating learning environment.

The Challenges

The challenges faced by students in the learning environment can be grouped into several key areas, as shown in the following Picture 3.

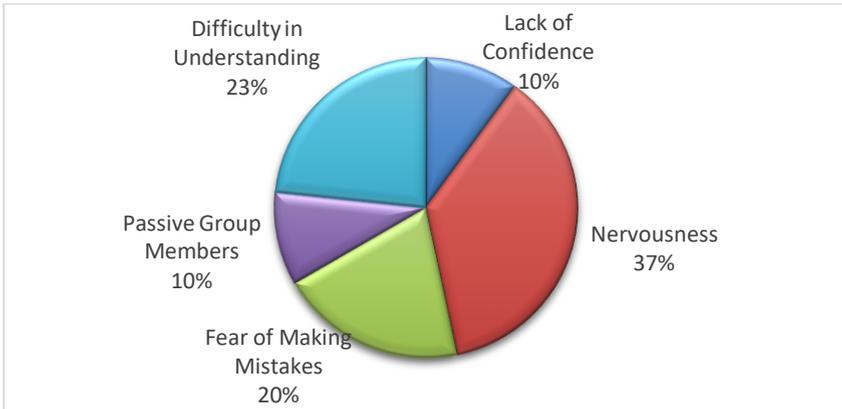


Figure 3. The Challenges of Student-led Discussion

The most frequently reported issue is nervousness, which affects 37% of students. This emotional state significantly impairs students' ability to focus and participate effectively, leading to reduced performance and engagement. Nervousness can arise from fear of judgment, inadequate preparation, or unfamiliarity with the task or setting, making it a critical area for intervention.

Another significant challenge is difficulty understanding the material, as 23% of students reported. This issue can hinder students' learning progress, as comprehension is essential for engaging with and applying new concepts. It suggests that instructional methods or materials might not adequately align with the student's current knowledge level or learning styles, indicating a need for adjustments in teaching strategies.

Fear of making mistakes is also a considerable concern, affecting 20% of students. This fear can prevent students from participating fully or taking risks in their learning, often due to concerns about performance and peer perceptions. Such apprehension can be particularly detrimental in environments that emphasize correctness or high stakes, impacting students' willingness to engage and learn effectively.

The presence of passive group members, reported by 10% of students, creates challenges in collaborative tasks. When some group members do not actively participate, it burdens those more engaged, affecting the group's overall effectiveness and cohesion. This issue reflects a need for improved group dynamics or strategies to ensure more equitable participation.

Lastly, a lack of confidence affects 10% of students. Although less frequently reported, this challenge can limit students' willingness to engage in discussions or activities. It is often linked to their self-perception and previous experiences. Addressing

this issue through confidence-building strategies is essential for enhancing students' involvement and performance.

Suggestions

The data provides several suggestions from students to improve their learning experience, which is shown in Picture 4 below.

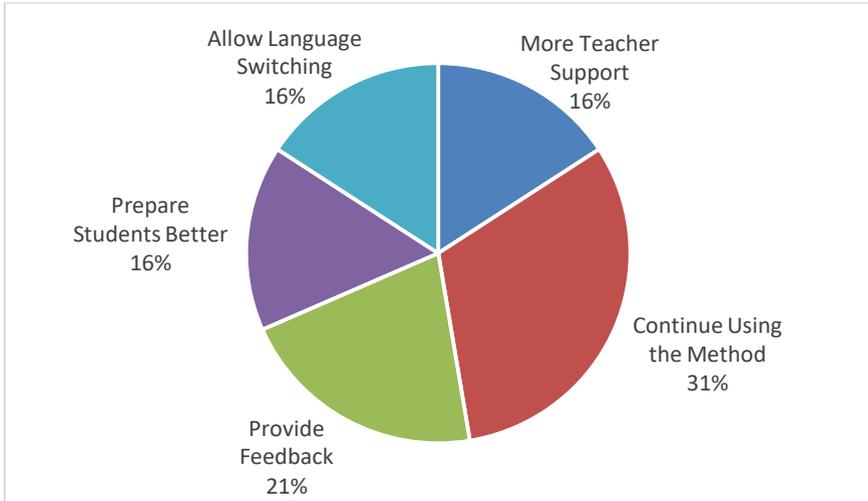


Figure 4. Student's Suggestion on Student-led Discussion

One of the most common suggestions, mentioned by 31% of students, is to continue using the current method. This indicates that despite facing challenges, many students find value in the employed method and believe its consistent use can benefit their learning. The familiarity and structure the method provides likely offer a sense of stability, which some students find helpful.

Another key suggestion by 21% of students is the importance of receiving feedback. Feedback allows students to understand better their progress and areas that need improvement. It also helps them clarify their performance, reducing uncertainty and boosting confidence. Providing timely and constructive feedback can be instrumental in guiding students toward better outcomes.

16% of students suggested the need for more teacher support. This implies that additional teacher guidance is essential in addressing individual student needs, particularly for those struggling with understanding or nervousness. More direct involvement from teachers could help clarify difficult concepts and provide emotional support, creating a more nurturing learning environment.

Additionally, 16% of students suggested that better preparation before engaging in activities would improve their learning experience. By preparing students more thoroughly, teachers can help reduce anxiety and enhance comprehension, ensuring that

they feel more confident and capable during lessons. This could involve reviewing foundational concepts, setting clearer goals, or providing practice opportunities in advance.

Another suggestion from 16% of students is to allow language switching during lessons. This could alleviate communication difficulties, especially when students struggle to express themselves in the target language. Allowing the use of their native language in certain situations may create a more comfortable learning atmosphere, enabling students to grasp challenging concepts without the added pressure of language barriers.

The findings in this research showed that the implementation of student-led discussions in the grammar class created a more interactive and student-centered learning environment (Ariani & Valiantien, 2022; Dada et al., 2023; Marin, 2022; Rasa et al., 2024; Susantiningdyah et al., 2022), where students actively participated by leading discussions, preparing materials, and engaging their peers. This approach fostered collaboration, allowing students to develop their communication and critical thinking skills. However, while many students responded positively and participated actively, challenges like nervousness and fear of making mistakes hindered some students' involvement (Murtisari et al., 2020; Oranggaga, 2022). Additionally, linguistic barriers surfaced, as students sometimes switched to their native language when struggling with English, highlighting the need for further language support. Unequal participation in group dynamics also emerged, with some students being more passive during discussions. These challenges suggest the need for adjustments to ensure that all students are equally engaged and supported in their learning process.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the student-led discussion approach in the grammar class fostered increased engagement, communication skills, and critical thinking among students. These benefits are particularly notable in a classroom that emphasizes active participation. However, challenges such as nervousness, fear of making mistakes, difficulty in understanding, and unequal participation levels indicate areas for improvement.

To address these challenges, providing more structured teacher support and feedback could help mitigate the effects of nervousness and fear. Additionally, preparing students more thoroughly before discussions and allowing some flexibility in language use, such as language switching when necessary, could enhance student confidence and comprehension. Ultimately, the findings suggest that while student-led discussions are a valuable tool for promoting active learning, careful attention must be paid to the diverse needs of students to ensure more inclusive participation and success in the classroom.

In developing a similar topic on the student-led approach, future research could explore strategies to support students' language proficiency during discussions,

such as scaffolding techniques, and investigate interventions to build student confidence and reduce anxiety. Examining group dynamics and methods to encourage balanced participation would also be valuable. Longitudinal studies could assess the long-term effects of student-led discussions on language learning outcomes, while comparative research could evaluate the effectiveness of this approach in different subjects or classroom contexts. These areas of inquiry could provide deeper insights into enhancing student-led discussions and addressing current challenges.

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