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Improving TBI Scores with Effective Morphology-Syntax Teaching Methods in LBB EDU's 2024 TBI Group Intensive Class

Dika Prestiawan*, Hadi Asrori

Universitas Airlangga, Indonesia

* dika.prestiawan-2024@fib.unair.ac.id (Primary Contact)

A B S T R A C T

This paper underscores the necessity of proper morphology and syntax knowledge, thereby improving grammar mastery in English, before undertaking the Specialist Education Program for Doctors (PPDS). 'Morphology' refers to the linguistic branch that studies the internal structures of individual words and how they are formed, whereas 'syntax' points to the structures of sentences and how they are formed as phrases, clauses, and sentences. Decent mastery of both aspects will significantly improve the scores in English grammar, thereby considerably improving PPDS participants' opportunity to obtain high scores and paving the way to better performance in their professional careers. The research involved a final sample of 20 participants, who received targeted grammar instruction over four sessions totaling eight hours. Data were collected through a 50-item grammar composition test designed to measure syntactic and structural understanding. Statistical analysis revealed an increase in the mean score from 53.8 (pretest) to 61.8 (posttest). A paired-sample t-test indicated a significant improvement in students' performance ($t = 2.582$, $df = 19$, $p < 0.05$, approximate). These results suggest that systematic syntax instruction can enhance learners' grammatical competence in English. Implications for EFL classroom practice and future pedagogical research are discussed.

Keywords
English Mastery, Morphology Teaching, TBI, Syntax Teaching, PPDS

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1. INTRODUCTION

As with any other language, mastering English requires proficiency in many fields and aspects, including grammar, which governs how words are combined into meaningful, well-understood sentences. Its mastery will enable students to convey their informed views, opinions, and arguments, not to mention showcase their capacity to engage in the increasingly digitized professional workforce. In reality, many students, be they in elementary or advanced learning levels, still experience difficulties, particularly in the area of grammar; more specifically, in the interrelated areas of morphology and syntax. Adequate

comprehension of these aspects will arguably lead to major improvements in English grammar, which is crucial before participating in the Specialist Education Program for Doctors (PPDS). As such, this paper will examine and investigate research articles primarily highlighting the importance of improving English language skills, its strategies and approaches, and practices Specifically.

Regarding the improvement of skills concerning the English language, such aspects as mindsets, level(s) of aptitude, and experiences need to be accounted for (Curle et al., 2024; Lou et al., 2025). Not to mention, numerous approaches to improve language teaching have been devised, such as the 'Content and Language-Integrated Learning' (CLIL) (Macaraeg et al., 2024; Tai et al., 2025) and self-regulated learning (Brunner et al., 2025). Ultimately, mastery of morphology and syntax could be felt most visibly in the accuracy and quality of written compositions, particularly academically. One of the ways by which this could be perceived is through an approach known as 'collaborative writing', with its distinctive benefits (Cahusac de Caux & Pretorius, 2024) and challenges (Chen & Lee, 2022).

With regards to morphology and syntax, meanwhile, several learning approaches have also been introduced, such as the project-based learning implemented specifically for EFL students in Taiwan (Ilham et al., 2024), the Progressive English Syntax Teaching (P-BEST) in the EFL context (Hu et al., 2023a) comprising four strategies to help overcome four most commonly encountered problems among EFL students, and finally, the hybrid deep learning model (Zheng, 2025) designed to facilitate vocabulary acquisition for second-language learners of English.

LBB EDU, currently the largest provider of PPDS courses in Indonesia founded by Coach Dika in 2020, has made it part of its mission to enhance participants' English morphology and syntax skills as the first step towards mastering grammar. Proficiency in this area will significantly assist PPDS test takers in achieving better scores, bolstering their professionalism as doctors across various fields, particularly linguistics. The importance of this cannot be overstated, since their practice shall inevitably involve patients from many cultural and linguistic backgrounds. With this in mind, LBB EDU has instituted various programs to help improve potential PPDS takers' grammar skills, specifically in morphology and syntax, to enable its participants to better involve and integrate themselves at the academic and professional levels. Among those programs is the Intensive PPDS/PPDGS/PPDGS Grammar Class, overseen by highly qualified and experienced tutors seeking to guide its participants to master the basics of grammar as part of the must-have English skills to qualify for the PPDS evaluation.

English mastery entails performing well in at least three study areas: vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. 'Vocabulary' refers to adequate knowledge and broad comprehension of English words and their proper meanings, while 'pronunciation' relates to how clearly and effectively spoken words can be understood by others. 'Grammar', on the other hand, comprises how words are combined to form sentences (syntax) and how words change form (morphology); mastery in grammar implies the capability to construct grammatically correct and understandable sentences. This is crucial, particularly in the academic and professional fields, as it goes a long way in highlighting the individual's proficiency in making and sharing informed views on various themes.

Having a proper mindset and motivation, both instrumental and integrative, before studying any language, or indeed any conceivable subject matter, is indispensable, as they are much more significant predictors compared to gender (Curle et al., 2024) and levels of

aptitude and experience (Lou et al., 2025). Lou et al, for instance, noted how mindsets and learner characteristics are related to multifaceted emotions (such as enjoyment, helplessness, frustration, boredom, anxiety) and end-of-semester performance for their sample of 342 university-level FL learners. They also highlighted that prior language-use experience was the most notable learner characteristic in predicting emotions. Curle et al (2024) maintained that gender likewise had no statistically significant predictive power on EMI [English Medium Instructions] achievements.

Alongside sustained motivation, proper teaching techniques should also be developed. One such is the 'Content and Language-Integrated Learning' (CLIL), first introduced in Europe in the early 1990s. As its name suggests, CLIL is an educational approach that emphasizes the simultaneous acquisition of content knowledge and language skills through the use of a foreign language (Morton, 2017; Yaguara et al., 2021 in Macaraeg, Gallego, Ferrera, & Ulla, 2024).

Macaraeg et al also posited that while English Preparation School (EPS) students generally view CLIL positively, they face significant challenges, primarily due to limited vocabulary and unfamiliarity with the teaching environment. Despite these difficulties, CLIL was found to enhance language proficiency, especially in listening skills, and foster self-confidence and cultural awareness; therefore, CLIL can be effective in improving English proficiency, but it also highlights the need for tailored support, such as vocabulary-building strategies and teacher training, to address the challenges students face.

On the other hand, Tai et al (2025) emphasized four major research areas that have developed in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) education: (1) the role of translanguaging practices in CLIL classrooms, (2) the use of technological resources to create a technology-mediated translanguaging space in CLIL classrooms, (3) CLIL teachers' awareness of the pedagogical philosophies of translanguaging, and (4) the role of translanguaging in designing CLIL assessments.

Another approach to improve language mastery, which has become prevalent after the COVID-19 pandemic, is known as 'self-regulated learning'. To this end, students require a repertoire of strategies and knowledge about how and when to use these strategies effectively. This strategy knowledge (SK) is essential for academic achievement, but it varies depending on student characteristics (Brunner et al., 2025), and involve cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, time management, management of the learning environment, self-control, and motivation regulation. The results revealed that male gender, low socio-economic status, and a fixed mindset are risk factors for poor SK. SK predicted academic achievement, SK of cognitive strategies, and time management were particularly relevant.

Numerous studies have also been conducted concerning the importance of morphological and syntactic mastery, whose immediate benefits include improved sentence construction and communication skills (Rihana et al., 2024). Syntax is an important branch of linguistics focusing on how words are organized into meaningful sentences (Pramitasari, 2020, in Raihana et al., 2024). It plays an important role in determining word order and structures, so that conveyed messages can be properly and unambiguously understood. A decent understanding of syntax, particularly for non-native speakers, will help them understand the basic rules of English, such as using subjects, predicates, objects, and adverbs.

The syntactic scope includes elements like phrases, clauses, and sentences whose structure analysis includes components like syntactic functions, categories, and roles. 'Syntactic function' refers to parts in the syntactic structure that are filled by certain categories which include subject (S), predicate (P), object (O), complement (Kom), and adverb (Ket). Syntactic category points to the type of words or phrases filling the function, such as noun (N), verb (V), adjective (A), adverbial (Adv), numeral (Num), preposition (Prep), conjunction (Konj), and pronoun (Pron). Finally, 'syntactic role' focuses on the function of the verb or the verb as the center in a clause (preposition). In brief, Raihana's work (2024) underscored the importance of syntax, especially in understanding idioms and complex sentence structures in both formal and informal contexts. Syntax mastery is crucial for effective language learning while supporting the development of comprehensive language skills.

To this end, several learning approaches have been developed in syntactic and vocabulary acquisition, such as project-based learning [in this context, implemented to EFL students in Taiwan](Ilham et al., 2024), grammar sentence pattern remedial programs, i.e., the Progressive English Syntax Teaching (P-BEST) in the EFL context (Hu et al., 2023a), whereby it significantly improved the participants' grammar scores, and through a hybrid deep learning model (Zheng, 2025)designed to facilitate vocabulary acquisition for second-language learners of English.

Ilham et al (2024) for instance, underscored significant improvements in participant vocabulary proficiency following the implementation of project-based learning strategies, as reflected in pre-test and post-test scores measuring several aspects, such as Descriptive Statistics, tests of normality, and tests of homogeneity of variances. Hu et al (2023) highlighted that the P-BEST intervention significantly improved the grammar scores of the students in the experimental group, resulting in the experimental group students significantly outscoring the control group on grammar tests after the intervention (as depicted in Figure 1 below). There are four outlined P-BEST strategies to handle the four corresponding problems. The first is to activate prior vocabulary knowledge, as vocabulary is undoubtedly regarded as the determinant for developing the four language skills. This strategy aims to manage some EFL low-achievers who have difficulties recognizing alphabet symbols, let alone memorizing them (Hu et al., 2023a). Under this strategy, four teaching tasks are administered through games to activate students' prior vocabulary knowledge.

The second strategy in the P-BEST is structure notification, to handle low-achieving EFL learners who have a deficient background knowledge for constructing a sentence pattern in the English language, since the syntactical structure of English is very different from that of their L1 (Chinese). Two types of tasks were employed in this stage: first, teachers used triple-mode presentations to enhance the input features of each sentence pattern. Each sentence pattern was presented in three modes: (1) as a complete sentence written on the blackboard, generally presented in the format of a dialogue with a question and corresponding answer, (2) using flashcards to provide learners with visual images of the given vocabulary words while doing a word-substituting activity, and (3) using intensive and repeated oral practices as audio input stimulants.

The second type of task is familiarizing the sentence pattern using games with functions similar to the above-mentioned vocabulary reactivation games. Learners are led to practice the sentence pattern orally through several games that require them to speak up.

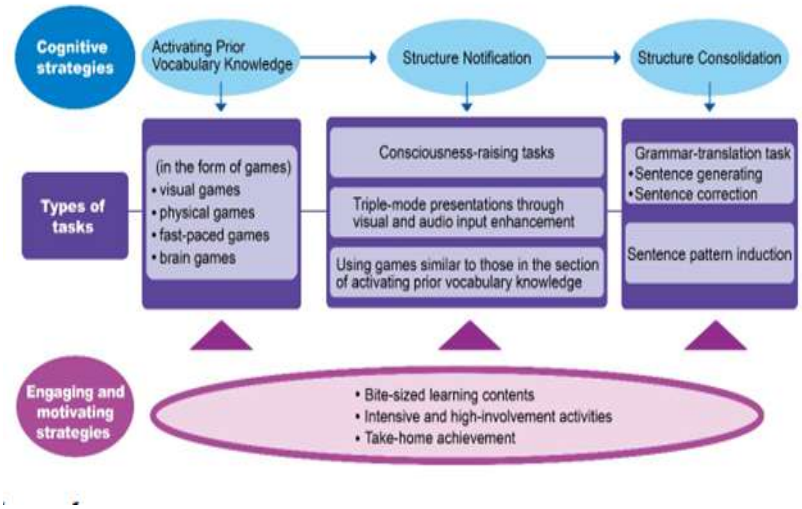

Figure 1. Framework and Procedure of the P-BEST

The third strategy is structure consolidation, i.e., to help students consolidate the syntactical structure through production tasks. Once more, two tasks were adapted: the grammar translation task and the pattern induction task. Grammar translation, despite having been criticized for several decades (Hu et al., 2023). Having completed all the previous three steps, the final strategy is to engage students through bite-sized learning contents, attention-drawing tasks, and take-home assignments.

Ultimately, mastery of morphology and syntax could be felt most visibly in the accuracy and quality of written compositions, particularly academically. Andrews et al's research (2005), for instance, underscored the effects of grammar teaching, specifically in morphology and syntax, in 5- to 16-year-old students. This could be a benchmark in understanding the effects of their mastery for those in higher education

2. METHODS

This research will draw upon the results of writing pre-tests and post-tests in one group, where TBI scores will be one of many indicators of whether there have been major differences between students' scores before and after they take TBI Intensive Group Class. The quantitative approach stresses data collection and analysis in objective numerical forms. Its variables can be identified, and their intercorrelations may be measured (Abdullah et al., 2022).

Specifically, the measurements were conducted by comparing pre-test and post-test scores concerning students' mastery of morphology and syntax. The researcher aims to monitor and determine how far the mastery of morphology and syntax, through a special program sponsored by LBB EDU, could aid in increasing participants' mastery of English grammar, thereby qualifying them for the PPDS program, which will significantly improve their academic and professional performance.

This research was performed in the Infinity LBB EDU Headquarters, with the address of Kavling Silir-Silir B-17 Dukuhtengah, Buduran, Sidoarjo (postal code 61252), where the gathered data were processed and further analyzed. This research was conducted from October 13th and November 1st 2024, during which the Intensive PPDS/PPDGS/PPDGS

Grammar Class took place for four meetings for 12 hours. Quantitative data analysis took 3 months.

The research population was the 104 participants who underwent the Intensive PPDS/PPDGS/PPDGS Grammar Class, comprising doctors, both general and specialists. Only 89 of these filled the pre-tests. Post-tests and try-outs were later conducted on October 13th and November 1st, 2024. Of 89 participants, 52 obtained 'Outstanding' grades. Of these, 22 filled out the post-test. Two turned down the final interview offer; therefore, the final sample size was 20 participants. The inclusion criteria were 20 participants who finished all pre-tests and post-tests because the writer chose the participants who completed all pre-tests and post-tests as depicted in Figure 2.

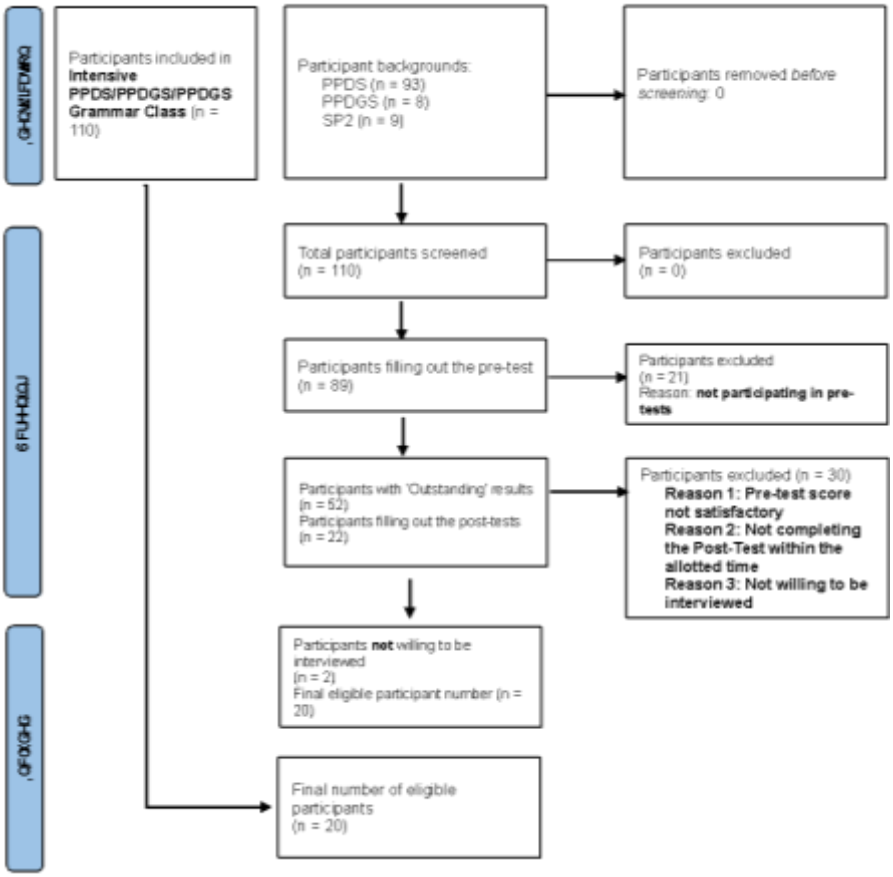

Figure 2. Inclusion criteria of research samples

In this study, writing pre- and post-test scores from an experimental design will be used to assess whether Morphology-Syntax Teaching Methods significantly improves TBI students' scores. Experimental research aims to identify a cause-and-effect relationship by intentionally controlling and altering the independent variable to observe its impact on the dependent variable (Putri, Ahman, Hilmia, Almaliyah, & Permana, 2023).

Having obtained the data, a list of assessment components was made (presented below, and the results obtained were compared against these indicators. The time frame for the pre-test and post-test was 50 minutes, with a total of 50 items. Participants were further required to click 'Submit' before the test time expired. Failure to comply will result in responses not getting recorded by LBB EDU's system.

The pre-test consists of 50 questions including 40 questions of structure and 10 questions of grammar. After that, some students followed the English course held by LBB EDU. The total of hours is 8 hours divided into 4 meetings. To be noted, several students who can't join the class will be allowed to watch the recording provided by LBB EDU. Finally, several students are required to do the post-test.

This research utilized the quantitative method to process the data of scores into Microsoft Excel, followed by a statistical test to determine whether significant increases have occurred, namely, with the Paired t-test, commonly utilized to compare average 'before' and 'after' scores within the same group, and measuring learning improvements by calculating the differences between pre-test and post-test scores which were then normalized.

The writer revealed whether there are significant changes as indicated by the tests, and whether there are measurable improvements in scores after the provision of morphology and syntax materials by using manual calculation. The data were analysed by Anisa Nurdini Sucipto Dewi, an expert in statistics.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Mean, Median, and Mode Analysis

The collected sample data that qualified for the criteria were 20 pre-test and post-test scores. The data were explained based on mean, median, and mode as follows showed in Table 1.

Table 1. Mean, median, and mode for pre-test & post-test

Data	Mean	Median	Mode
Pre-test	53,8	56	54
Post-test	61,8	63	68

From the Table 1, it could be inferred that English scores have increased following the teaching of the Morphology and Syntax method. Before-after scores increased from 53,8 to 61,8. Median scores increased from 56 to 63. Mode scores likewise increased from 54 to 68. The frequency for pre-test and post-test scores is presented in Table 2.

Pre-test score data revealed that the frequency of the score 54 amounts to 3 participants. The frequency of scores 36, 48, 60, 62, and 66 was 2 each. The frequency of scores 32, 34, 42, 58, 64, 68, and 72 was 1 each. This data revealed that only 7 of 20 participants scored higher than 60. Compared with the Post-Test score data, it was found that the frequency of scores 76, 68, 64, 62, 58, and 52 was 1 participant each. The frequency of scores 74, 72, 70, 66, 56, 54, 46, and 38 was 1 participant each. This showed that 12 of 20 participants scored higher than 60.

This data underscored a >60 score improvement for 5 participants. Additionally, the lowest Pre-Test and Post-Test scores, respectively, also increased from 32 to 38. This highlighted substantial increases in English scores after providing Morphology & Syntax materials. Hence, the conclusion that its provision resulted in better (above 60) scores for more participants. This finding is in line with previous research, such as that by Andrews et

al (2005); Curle et al (2024); Hu et al (2023); Ilham et al (2024) Raihana et al (2024), and Zheng (2025).

Table 2. Frequency of pre-test and post-test scores

Pre-test		Post-Test	
Scores	**Frequency**	**Scores**	**Frequency**
32	1	32	1
34	1	34	1
36	2	36	2
42	1	42	1
48	2	48	2
54	3	54	3
58	1	58	1
60	2	60	2
62	2	62	2
64	1	64	1
66	2	66	2
68	1	68	1
72	1	72	1
Grand Total	**20**	**Grand Total**	**20**

Further analysis indicated that the most substantial improvement occurred in the sections related to English tenses, particularly in recognizing and producing correct verb forms in both simple and complex sentences. Mastery of tense consistency and accurate verb conjugation appeared to contribute significantly to the overall rise in grammar test scores. This finding suggests that explicit instruction and focused practice on tense structures may have a disproportionately strong impact on learners' grammatical accuracy. Such progress aligns with the view that tenses form the foundation of syntactic development, serving as a core element in sentence construction and meaning-making. Therefore, the emphasis on tense-related exercises within the Morphology and Syntax intervention likely played a pivotal role in enhancing students' linguistic competence and written performance.

Ilham's work, for instance, underscored significant improvements in participant vocabulary proficiency following the implementation of project-based learning strategies, as reflected in pre-test and post-test scores measuring several aspects, such as Descriptive Statistics, tests of normality, and tests of homogeneity of variances. Much like this present research, Ilham's study (2024) sought to demonstrate that project-based learning effectively improved students' speaking abilities, particularly concerning vocabulary. The use of straightforward project-based learning, Ilham posited, allowed students active participation in their education, leading to a deeper understanding through hands-on experience and direct engagement (Sormunen et al., 2020 in Ilham, Husnu, Yusri, & Fikni, 2024). Furthermore, according to Almulla (2020), the Project-Based learning model places students at the center of the learning process, culminating in creating a product.

Having collected and analyzed the data, Ilham found that the post-test's mean score and standard deviation were higher than the pre-test. This indicated an improvement in students' motivation to learn, especially in vocabulary, after the treatment with Project-Based Learning. Utilizing clear and simple project structures helped students organize and articulate their thoughts more effectively, substantially improving their understanding of grammar and sentence construction. Additionally, project-based learning provided students and participants with practical opportunities to practice speaking in relevant contexts, reinforcing their grasp of the material (Hardika & Pratolo, 2024).

Based on normality testing, the significance level for the pre-test scores was above (p = 0.05), indicating that the data were normally distributed. Results of homogeneity testing likewise showed that the significance level was also above (p = 0.05), indicating data homogeneity. Meanwhile, the results of hypothesis testing hinted that the significance level was below 0.05, meaning that the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted and the null hypothesis (Ho) is definitively rejected. Thus, it can be concluded that the Simple Project-based Learning Syntaxes effectively increased students' vocabulary, based on observations during the treatment.

Table 3. Ilham's series of performed tests to gauge the use of Project-based Learning

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean / Std. Deviation
Pretest	25	40	70	57.60 / 8.180
Posttest	25	50	75	65.00 / 6.455
Valid N (listwise)	25			

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Statistic	df	Sig.	Shapiro-Wilk Statistic	Sig.
Pretest	.175	25	.046	.925	.065
Posttest	.180	25	.036	.937	.128

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

	Levene Statistic	**df1**	**df2**	**Sig.**
Pretest Posttest	1.276	1	48	.264

In a slightly different context (i.e., EFL students in Taiwan), Hu et al (2023) highlighted that the P-BEST intervention significantly improved the grammar scores of the students in the experimental group, resulting in the experimental group students significantly outscoring the control group on grammar tests after the intervention. Hu suggested at least four strategies to mitigate four commonly encountered problems in language acquisition, outlined as follows:

The first strategy was activating prior vocabulary knowledge to improve EFL low-achievers with difficulties recognizing alphabet symbols, let alone memorizing them (Hu & Hsu, 2020). Under this strategy, four teaching tasks are administered through games to activate students' prior vocabulary knowledge.

The second strategy in the P-BEST is structure notification, to handle low-achieving EFL learners who have a deficient background knowledge for constructing a sentence pattern in the English language, since the syntactical structure of English is very different from that of their L1 (Chinese). Two types of tasks were employed in this stage: triple-mode presentations and familiarizing the sentence pattern through games.

The third strategy is structure consolidation, i.e., to help students consolidate the syntactical structure through production tasks. Once more, two tasks were adapted: the grammar translation task and the pattern induction task. Grammar translation, despite having been criticized for several decades (Krashen, 1987; Richards & Rodgers, 2001 in (Hu, Chao, Yang, & Lien, 2023). Having completed all the previous three steps, the final strategy is to engage students through bite-sized learning contents, attention-drawing tasks, and take-home assignments.

3.2. Significance

The paired t-test is a preferred statistical method in comparing the average of paired data sets, usually originating from measurements performed on the same subject before and after a specific treatment. This test is used to determine whether there are significant differences between two different data sets. Data must be normally distributed, and each pair must originate from the same source. The data shows that Ho (conclusion) is accepted since t count is larger than t table (2,582 > 1,729, with the distribution percentage point ranging between 0,05 – 0,10. Therefore, it could be concluded that there are significant differences between pre-test and post-test scores following the provision of materials.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This research revealed substantial increases following the provision of Morphology and Syntax materials concerning Pre-test ('before') and Post-test ('after') participant scores. On average, scores before and after the provision of Morphology & Syntax materials increased from 53,8 to 61,8. Median also increased from 56 to 63. Mode likewise increased from 54 to 68. Based on the frequency data, 5 participants scored >60. Therefore, it could be concluded that the provision of Morphology & Syntax materials resulted in more participants scoring >60.

To verify data significance, the researcher utilized paired t-tests to determine whether there were substantial changes by comparing the average of two paired data sets, originating from the measurement of the same subject(s) before and after a particular treatment. Results indicated that Ho (conclusion) was accepted since t count is larger than t table (2,582 > 1,729, with the distribution percentage point ranging between 0,05 – 0,10. Therefore, it could be concluded that there are significant differences between pre-test and post-test scores following the provision of materials.

AUTHORS BIOGRAPHY

Dika Prestiawan is LBB EDU Founder, CEO, and English teacher. He is also a master's student in Linguistics at the Faculty of Humanities, Airlangga University. He is currently active in teaching specialist doctors and writing several academic journals related to LBB EDU. He is also actively involved in student organizations and currently serves as the head of the department's student association, Hima Lingua. He has participated in the International SUTERA Conference held in Phang Nga, Thailand, which discussed various disciplines in Linguistics, including Multimodality, Discourse Analysis, Corpus Linguistics, and issues related to language teaching relevant to his professional field.

Google Scholar: https://scholar.google.com/citations?hl=id&user=AHJWuUQAAAAJ

Email: dika.prestiawan-2024@fib.unair.ac.id

Hadi Asrori Hadi Asrori is a Master's student in Linguistics at the Faculty of Humanities, Airlangga University, fully funded by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia through the BIB LPDP domestic scholarship program. He is actively involved in various forms of writing, including poetry published through the *Mahir Berpuisi* platform, opinion articles on *Disway*, news writing for *Cakrawala Indonesia Bangkit*, and several other academic articles indexed in Sinta and Scopus. He has participated in the International SUTERA Conference in Phang Nga, Thailand, and the ICONITIES Conference in Surabaya, which discussed various linguistic disciplines such as Discourse Analysis, Multimodality, Pragmatics, Corpus Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, and other related fields within the framework of Linguistics.

Google Scholar: https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=5_RlzDUAAAAJ

Email: hadi.asrori-2023@fib.unair.ac.id

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