

Understanding Sentence Roles and Argument Structures: A Syntactic Study of EFL Students

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the most difficult argument structures and argument roles in sentences identified by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, as well as the factors that contribute to such difficulties. The study collected data using a descriptive quantitative method, relying on quantitative descriptive data through statistical analysis. focused on 36 fifth-semester students from Class B of the English Education Study Program at Tadulako University, who were selected through purposive sampling with statistical analysis, tests, and questionnaires. The results of the research showed some key findings: (1) the most difficult argument structure for students to identify is the sentence with two arguments, which appears with a total frequency of 60; (2) the most difficult argument role for students to identify is the experiencer; and (3) five main factors affect students' ability to identify roles and arguments in sentences, namely prior knowledge, interest and motivation, learning strategies, teaching methods, and learning environment. Future researchers can discuss thematic roles that have not been addressed in this study.

Keywords: Syntax; Argument Structure; Thematic Roles

INTRODUCTION

Writing is an activity of expressing thoughts, ideas, and information in written form. It can be done for various purposes, such as communicating, enhancing thinking abilities, or creating creative works. According to Graham and Perin (2017), writing enables us to convey information, ideas, and feelings to others in a structured and clear manner. However, writing can be challenging because it requires adherence to the rules of language, commonly known as grammar.

One of the important aspects of writing is understanding sentence structure and grammar. To construct strong sentences, we must prioritize grammar. A strong grasp of grammar allows us to recognize

phrases, to understand their roles, to construct sentences, to connect them effectively, and to organize them into coherent paragraphs. According to Burhanuddin (2020), grammar is the most crucial aspect when creating sentences. When forming well-constructed sentences, we need to understand argument structure and the role of arguments.

Thematic role and argument structure are important concepts in linguistics that help analyze the relationships between elements in a sentence. Understanding these concepts is crucial for grasping the meaning and organization of texts across various languages. In syntax, arguments are defined

as "noun phrases that have specific grammatical or semantic relationships with the verb and whose presence, either explicitly or implicitly, is necessary for the well-formedness of structures containing that verb" (Trask, 1993:20). Understanding argument structure can help produce grammatical and meaningful sentences. Argument structure refers to how verbs are connected to form a coherent meaning. To identify verbs that require one, two, or three arguments, a deep understanding of argument structure in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is required.

Verbs can describe various types of events, including actions (such as 'hit'), states (such as 'feel'), processes (such as "grow"), and achievements (such as 'reach') (Pourfallah, 2015). Each of these events involves participants, known as arguments, which take on specific roles within the event (Pourfallah, 2015). Linguists refer to these roles as thematic roles or theta roles, and these roles are assigned to arguments by the verb. Basri, Bochari, and Hastini (2021:18) explain that "only arguments receive theta roles, adjuncts are not." These theta roles determine the meaning of a sentence and have several categories. Categories based on their semantic roles include agent, actor, experiencer, theme, location, patient, and recipient/goal.

Understanding categories of semantic roles helps us analyze sentence structure, determine deeper meaning, and construct stronger arguments. Grimshaw (1990) proposes a hierarchy where the agent is always the highest argument. The next in rank is the experiencer, followed by location/patient/goal, and finally, the theme. This knowledge is beneficial in various contexts, such as text analysis, communication, and writing, to achieve better comprehension and create logical and persuasive arguments for EFL students.

In studying argument structure and thematic roles, a deep understanding of verbs and nouns is crucial. Verbs and nouns have been taught since junior high school and senior high school. Several studies have explored teaching methods at junior and senior high schools. For instance, a study by Mandarani (2020) shows that Mandarani's approach can help EFL students overcome challenges in writing English, particularly in using verbs. Additionally, Pratiwi (2020) demonstrates the effectiveness of cooperative learning techniques, specifically the 'Make a Match' method, in enhancing students' interest and learning outcomes in verb and noun instruction.

However, in reality, some EFL students still struggle with understanding the correct use of verbs in sentences, particularly regarding the number of arguments required and the classification of transitive and intransitive verbs. This leads to the creation of less coherent and meaningful sentences. For example, the sentence 'Wawa read' uses the verb 'read' with only one argument, 'Wawa', which is a common mistake. The verb 'read' is categorized as a transitive verb, which requires two arguments: a subject and an object. The correct sentence should be 'Wawa reads a newspaper', where 'a newspaper' is the object and acts as the argument. Another example is the sentence 'Wawa put the pen.' This sentence seems grammatical because it uses the transitive verb 'put' with two arguments, 'Wawa' and 'the pen.' However, the sentence is incomplete and lacks clear meaning. This is because the verb 'put' requires an adverb as a complement to complete its meaning. The adverb functions to show the position, direction, or manner of the action 'put.' The correct sentence is 'Wawa put the pen on the table.' The adverbial phrase 'on the table' acts as the argument that explains the position of the pen after it was moved by Wawa. In addition to difficulties in

determining argument structure, EFL students also often have difficulties in determining the role of arguments in a sentence.

The explanation of the argument roles in the sentence 'Wawa put the pen on the table' is as follows: 'Wawa' acts as the agent because she performs the action 'put' and 'the pen' acts as a theme, as it is affected by the action of 'put'. In addition, "the pen" is also an inanimate object. However, if an animate object is used, it acts as a patient. 'On the table' acts as the location because it indicates where 'the pen' is placed. Differentiating the roles of subjects in sentences, such as actor, agent, and experiencer, is one of the challenges faced by EFL students. This difficulty can arise because these concepts have similarities and differences that need to be carefully understood. Both actor and agent refer to a conscious entity performing an action.

However, the actor emphasizes the action itself, while the agent emphasizes the initiation or cause of the action. For example, in the sentence 'The paper is cut by the machine' the focus is on the action of cutting, so the paper acts as the actor. On the other hand, in the sentence 'The girl finishes reading the book,' the focus is on the initiation that caused the book to be finished, so the girl acts as the agent. Meanwhile, the experiencer refers to an entity that undergoes an event or state. For instance, in the sentence 'She feels sad,' the subject 'she' acts as the experiencer because she is experiencing the feeling of sadness.

EFL students still struggle to identify the roles of each argument. This can be seen from the sentence 'Wawa put the pen on the table.' While the arguments in this sentence are correctly identified as 'Wawa' (subject), 'the pen' (direct object), and 'on the table' (adverb of place), students often find it confusing to determine their roles, such as: Is 'Wawa' an actor, agent or an experiencer? Is

'the pen' a theme or a location? Is 'on the table' a theme or a location? To overcome this difficulty, EFL students need to understand the concept of role assignment better.

To gain insight into the challenges EFL students face in using argument structure and thematic roles in sentences, the researcher is eager to conduct a more in-depth study on this topic. On the other hand, various studies have been conducted on argument structure and thematic role, but none has comprehensively examined these two topics together. First, Adisiswanto, Beratha, and Sukarini (2023) investigate semantic roles in active clauses in a novel. Second, Akbarnezhad, Sadighi, Bagheri, and Lu (2019) focus solely on how Iranian learners of English understand the argument structure of English verbs and their relationship with their language proficiency. Last, Esaulova (2017) focuses on thematic roles in complex sentences. Moreover, this study will investigate the reasons EFL students persist in struggling with argument structure and thematic roles in sentences. The results are expected to help identify and understand the difficulty factors faced by the students.

Based on the problem statement above, the objectives of the research are: to find out the most difficult argument structure in sentence identified by EFL students, to find out the most difficult role of argument in sentence identified by EFL students, and to find out the difficulty factors faced by the EFL students in identifying role and argument in sentence.

This study focuses on the argument structure and roles of arguments in English sentences produced by EFL students at Tadulako University. The students are presented with sentences and asked to identify the argument structure (transitive, intransitive, or ditransitive) and the roles of the arguments (actor, experiencer, theme,

patient, goal, or location). The reason for focusing on argument structure and roles of arguments is that these are important linguistic concepts that help us understand how verbs and nouns are related in sentences.

The researcher expects that the results of this study can assist lecturers, students, and other researchers. The first is students' competence. This research can help in understanding how EFL students at the university level develop their syntactic competence, especially in the use of thematic roles and argument structures. This research can reveal common patterns, errors, and developmental stages in their language acquisition process.

The second is the pedagogical approach. The findings can guide educators in developing teaching methods that specifically address student difficulties with argument structure and roles. This can involve creating exercises, incorporating visual aids, or emphasizing specific verb categories. Students can practice constructing their arguments by paying attention to the appropriate structure and thematic roles.

The last is linguistics. The researcher hopes that the results of this study can help students, lecturers, and future researchers in the scope of linguistics. For students, understanding argument structure and thematic roles helps them grasp the correct use of syntactic constructions in their language learning journey. By knowing how different elements in a sentence relate to each other, they can construct more grammatically correct and meaningful sentences. This understanding enhances their overall language proficiency, making it easier to learn and use English effectively. For lecturers, this research provides a solid foundation for teaching and understanding the linguistic difficulties faced by EFL students. It equips them with the tools to explain complex sentence structures more clearly to their students. By applying

syntactic theory to real-world examples, lecturers can make abstract concepts more accessible and relevant, improving students' engagement and comprehension. For future researchers, this study bridges the gap between theoretical and applied linguistics. It opens up new avenues for research in natural language processing (NLP), where understanding argument structure and thematic role can improve the ability to generate and understand grammatical sentences.

Moreover, it offers insights into the relationship between syntax and semantics, which is crucial for discourse analysis and cross-linguistic studies. By comparing syntactic patterns across different languages, future researchers can uncover universal grammar principles and contribute to the broader understanding of language structures.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses descriptive research, using statistical analysis to support the findings and discussion. As a result, a non-experimental design was employed, focusing on quantitative data. According to Kothari (2007:30), "Quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. It applies to phenomena that can be expressed in terms of quantity." Additionally, according to McCombes (2019), descriptive research aims to identify the frequency or categories used in quantitative research design. Therefore, the researcher analyzes the frequency of the data to identify the most challenging argument structures and the role of argument for students in their sentences and to assess the factors affecting students' comprehension of argument structure and thematic roles based on their responses.

The researcher employs a test and a questionnaire as instruments for this research. The first instrument is a test, which took the form of an assignment asking students to identify sentences using argument

structure and thematic roles. The students completed the test following the instructions provided by the researcher. The test used to address the first and second research questions. The second instrument is a questionnaire designed using the Likert scale technique. As explained by Marsden and Wright (2010), the Likert scale is a method that presents statements to respondents and asks them to express their level of agreement or disagreement with the given statements.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the data are based on the results of data analysis. The data analysis consists of two parts, which are from the test and the questionnaire.

The Analysis of the Data Collected from the Test

To answer research questions number one and two, which ask about the most difficult argument structure and the most difficult role of argument identified by the students in sentences, the researcher takes the data from the test. For the first research question, the researcher provides a chart about the difficulties of the students in identifying argument structure.

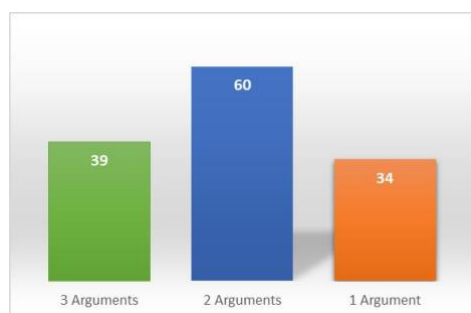


Figure 1. The Most Difficult Argument Structure in a Sentence Identified by EFL Students

The highest bar is the most difficult argument structure, while the lowest bar is the easiest argument structure for the

students to identify in sentences. As we can see, the highest bar is a sentence with two arguments, with a total of 60, and the lowest is a sentence with one argument, totaling 34. The researcher concluded that EFL students still have difficulties in identifying whether a verb in a sentence has an object or not. On average, they assume that verbs with two arguments are intransitive verbs or ditransitive verbs as we see in Figure 4.1. In fact, according to Fromkin (2014), verbs that require two arguments are transitive verbs. Therefore, EFL students need to carefully identify which verbs need an object and which do not need an object.

In addition, the results of this study show that EFL students have difficulty in determining whether a verb in a sentence has an object. This difficulty arises due to students' ignorance of the relationship between subject, verb, and object, as well as their tendency to misclassify verbs with two arguments as intransitive or ditransitive.

This finding is consistent with research conducted by Akbarnezhad et al. (2019), where transitive verbs were identified as a challenge for Iranian EFL learners due to factors such as complex argument structures and linguistic differences between Persian and English. Students found it more difficult to analyze sentences with transitive verbs as they had to be more thorough in determining whether the object was present or not, whereas ditransitive verbs were easier to recognize as they involved more elements. The link between these two studies highlights the need for more effective and targeted pedagogical approaches to help students understand the use of transitive verbs and more complex sentence structures so that they can overcome the difficulties that exist in language learning. Thus, challenges in understanding transitive verbs can be overcome through more focused and practical teaching, which will improve students' overall English proficiency.

On the other hand, to provide an answer to the second research question, which is about what role of argument is the most difficult to identify by the students in a sentence, the researcher provides a chart about the difficulties of the students in using the role of argument.

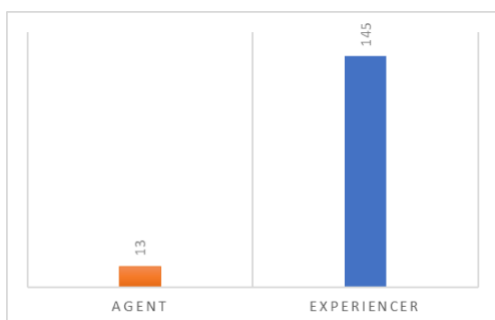


Figure 2. The Most Difficult Role of Argument Between Agent and Experiencer in Sentences Identified by EFL Students

As illustrated in Figure 2, the most difficult role of argument between agent and experiencer as a subject for the students to identify in sentences. The total frequency of experiencer is 145, while the total frequency of agent is 13. The results showed that EFL students analyzed that experiencer is the most difficult compared to agent.

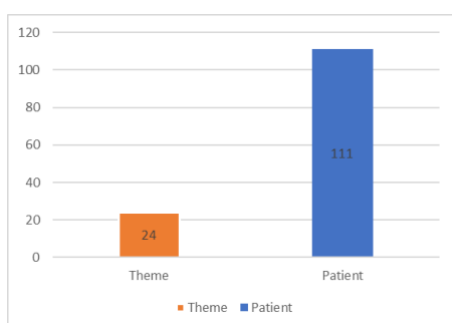


Figure 3. The Most Difficult Role of Argument Between Theme and Patient in Sentences Identified by EFL Students

The data presented in Figure 3 show that EFL students have more difficulty

identifying patients than themes as objects in a thematic roles. This is shown by the frequency of patient being 111 while theme is only 24.

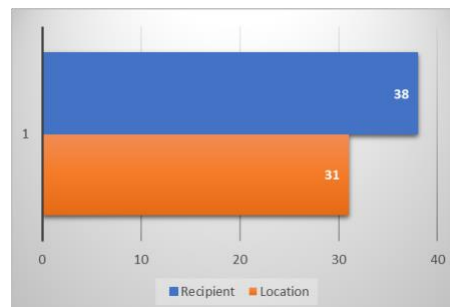


Figure 4. The Most Difficult Role of Argument Between Recipient and Location in Sentences Identified by EFL Students

Information about the most difficult role of argument between recipient and location as a complement in sentences identified by EFL students is provided in Figure 4.4. As we can see the highest bar is recipient and the lowest is location. We can conclude that the most difficult for students to identify in sentences is recipient with a total of 38. In addition, the easiest for students to identify in sentences is location with a total of 31.

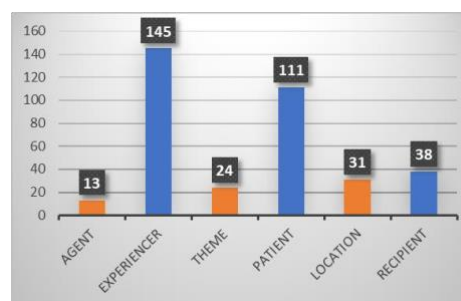


Figure 5. Recapitulation of the Most Difficult Role of Argument in Sentence Identified by EFL Students

The data shows that EFL students find it easier to identify the agent in the sentence compared to the experiencer in the

thematic role which acts as the subject. This is shown by the high number of errors in analyzing the experiencer which is 145 errors. Then for thematic roles that act as objects, namely theme, and patient, where the frequency of theme is 24 and patient is 111. This shows that of the two thematic roles, the most difficult object role to identify is patient which has a higher frequency compared to theme, while for thematic roles that play a complementary role, namely location with a total of 31 and patient with a total of 38 errors. This result shows that the recipient requires a better understanding compared to location so that when making identification can be done correctly.

Then for the whole, the most difficult thematic role to identify is experiencer which has the highest frequency of 145. Experiencer which is difficult to identify makes the researcher conclude that the data shows that EFL students still lack an understanding of how the role of verbs in determining the role of each argument in the sentence. EFL students are confused with the verbs used in each sentence. Like experiencer, they do not know that experiencer is an argument role that uses stative verbs. They often assume that the experiencer is the agent, even though we know that the agent uses dynamic verbs, that are very different from the experiencer. As said by Radford (2009), experiencer is a subject role expressed through the use of stative verbs. Experiencer is defined as an argument that experiences or feels a mental state or process, such as perception, cognition, or emotion.

According to Radford (2009), the role of experiencer is more difficult to identify for several reasons. Firstly, experiencer are often expressed through stative verbs that do not indicate an active action, but rather a condition or state, making them more difficult to recognize as subjects in sentences. Then, syntactic variation increases the

complexity of the analysis, as the structure of sentences involving experiencer can differ depending on their syntactic construction.

In addition, emotional or cognitive context, which often cannot be measured directly, makes it difficult to determine who is experiencing a feeling without a clear context. Finally, students from language backgrounds that do not clearly identify the role of the experiencer may find it difficult to recognize and understand this role in English.

The Analysis of the Data Collected from the Questionnaire

The questionnaire is used to answer research question number three which asks about difficulty factors faced by the EFL students in identifying roles and arguments in sentences.

Analyzing Validity

Table 1. The Valid Statements in the Questionnaire.

No	Variables	SA	A	D	SD
1	Cognitive abilities	30	179	237	22
		6%	38%	51%	5%
2	Prior knowledge	96	274	57	5
		22%	64%	13%	1%
3	Interest and motivation	5	18	11	2
		14%	50%	31%	5%
4	Learning strategies	23	65	368	155
		4%	11%	60%	25%
5	Teaching methods	32	27	0	13
		44%	38%	0%	18%
6	Learning environment	129	339	57	15
		24%	63%	10%	3%

Table 1 shows the valid statements in the questionnaire about difficulty factors faced by the EFL students in identifying roles and arguments in sentences. The researcher tested the validity of the questionnaire by using the SPSS program. As provided in the table, there are 6 variables comprising 60

statements out of 120. From that table, the researcher can answer the research question number three.

The first is a variable one includes thirteen negative statements aimed at assessing students' understanding of argument structure and thematic roles. According to the table, 6% of students responded with strongly agree, 38% chose agree, and 51% selected disagree, while the remaining 5% indicated strongly disagree. Consequently, the majority of students indicated that they felt cognitive ability was not a factor they faced based on their disagree or strongly disagree responses to the statement. Furthermore, this first variable did not address the challenges faced by EFL students at Tadulako University when identifying argument structure and thematic roles in sentences.

Variable two is about prior knowledge. This variable consists of twelve positive statements designed to assess students' understanding and familiarity with the subject matter. Researchers aimed to determine the extent of students' prior knowledge, as reflected in their answers to these statements. As we can see, 22% of students chose to strongly agree, 64% of students chose to agree, and 13% of students chose to disagree. It means the other 1% of students chose to strongly disagree. As a result, students have a positive perception of their prior knowledge related to the subject, which is shown by the dominance of students who chose to agree and strongly agree with these statements. Thus, prior knowledge is a factor that influences students to identify argument structures and thematic roles.

The next variable that becomes the factor faced by the EFL students in identifying roles and arguments in sentences is interest and motivation with negative statements. According to the data, there are only 31% of students who disagree and 5% of students for strongly disagree. It means

that the majority of the rest agreed with the statement, 50% of students stood for agreed, and there are 14% of students who strongly agreed. Therefore, it is essential to implement strategies that enhance student motivation and interest, particularly for those who feel discouraged by challenging content.

Next is variable four. According to Table 1, 4% of students strongly agreed with the statements, 11% agreed, while a significant 60% disagreed, and 25% strongly disagreed. This means that the majority of students do not feel positive about the effectiveness of the learning strategies presented. The high percentage of disagreement suggests that many students are struggling to find learning strategies for understanding thematic roles and argument structures.

The responses of students about variable five, which is teaching methods, are shown in the Table. The researcher provided two negative statements to assess students' perceptions of the effectiveness of the teaching methods used in their learning environment. The table shows that 44% of students dominantly chose to strongly agree, and 38% chose to agree. Moreover, there are also 0% of students selecting disagree with the statement, and 18% of them strongly disagree. As a result, the majority of students feel that the teaching methods applied may not be varied enough and tend to focus more on theory, which can lead to frustration and disappointment.

The last variable becomes the factor faced by the EFL students in identifying argument structure and thematic roles in sentences. 10% of students disagree with the statement, 3% strongly disagree, 63% choose to agree, and 24% strongly agree. This means that the learning environment variable is proven to be influential. Thus, variable six covers the factors that EFL students face in identifying argument structures and thematic roles in sentences at Tadulako University.

As a result, the researcher determined the answers of students to each indicator for each variable. The researcher scrutinizes the responses of students who selected agree and disagree with the statements given. After identifying six factors faced by the EFL students in identifying argument structure and thematic roles in sentences, it emerges there are five factors faced by the EFL students in identifying argument structure and thematic roles in sentences. Five factors faced by the EFL students in identifying argument structure and thematic roles in sentences are variables two, three, four, five, and six.

Reliability Test

Table 2. The Reliability of Questionnaire

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.913	120

The results of the questionnaire reliability test are shown in Table 2. The questionnaire is reliable because Cronbach's alpha is 0.913. It is considered that if Cronbach's alpha is higher than 0.6, then all statements in the questionnaire are considered reliable. Therefore, the researcher provides a chart and table about the variables that become the factors faced by the EFL students in identifying roles and argument in the sentence below.

Discussions

The objective of this research is to find out what the most difficult argument structure identified by the students in sentences, what the most difficult role of argument identified by the students in sentences, and what the difficulty factors faced by the EFL students at Tadulako University in identifying role and argument in a sentence. Therefore, the researcher

presents a discussion of the findings of the data analysis.

The researcher found that the most difficult argument structure identified by the students in sentences is a sentence with two arguments. The way the researcher determined the answer to research question number one was by calculating the frequency of the incorrect answers used by the students. This approach differs from the study conducted by Akbarnezhad et al. (2019), which focused on how Iranian learners perceive the English verb argument structure and its correlation with language proficiency. Overall, the study found that Iranian EFL learners struggle to grasp the argument structure of English verbs, especially transitive verbs that require direct objects. The most challenging semantic category for them was verbs indicating completion (e.g., They won the game). In conclusion, this research has novelty because the other research had different objectives and scope from this research.

Furthermore, the researcher discovered that the most difficult role of arguments identified by students is experiencer. The findings of this study can be compared with two relevant previous studies. Esaulova's (2017) study, investigated the impact of grammatical and stereotypical gender cues on the assignment of thematic roles in complex sentences in German. The results showed that participants more easily assigned the agent role to masculine noun phrases and the recipient role to nouns with stereotypical female gender, regardless of their grammatical gender. This difference with this research is due to the different theories used and the specific focus of analysis.

Additionally, another study by Adisiswanto et al. (2023), explores related themes. The study identifies various thematic roles that appear in active clauses, such as agent, patient, experiencer, theme, and

others. These thematic roles are linked to argument structure and grammatical relations within the active clauses. This analysis of grammatical relations is conducted in the context of the active clause structure in the novel. It means this research has the novelty from the other research.

Moreover, the researcher found five factors faced by the EFL students at Tadulako University in identifying roles and arguments in a sentence which are 1. prior knowledge, 2. interest and motivation, 3. learning strategies, 4. teaching methods, and 5. learning environment. The factors above can be categorized as two factors which are internal and external factor. This finding is also supported by other researchers, they are Sweller et al. (2011), Ellis (2008), and Lantolf & Thorne (2006). They found the factor faced by students in identifying roles and arguments in a sentence is caused by external and internal factors.

CONCLUSION

After conducting the research and doing the data analysis, the researcher answered that the most difficult argument structure identified by the students in sentences is a sentence with two arguments. The frequency of sentences with two arguments identified by the students is 60.

Based on these findings, the researcher concluded that EFL students still struggle to correctly identify verbs that require two arguments. Many students answered incorrectly on questions with two arguments.

On the other hand, the most difficult argument role for students to identify in sentences is experiencer because based on the analyzed data, the results show that experiencer has most number of errors which is 145. The researcher concluded that EFL students are still weak in understanding verbs. It is caused by both internal and external factors.

The difficulty factors faced by the EFL students in identifying role and argument in sentence are external factors and internal factors. From the questionnaire, the researcher noticed there are five variables affecting students' comprehension in identifying argument structure and the role of argument. They are: 1. prior knowledge, 2. interest and motivation, 3. learning strategies, 4. teaching methods, and 5. Learning environment.

The findings of this research have significant implications in the areas of pedagogical approaches and linguistic competence. In terms of pedagogy, it is important to pay attention to argument structure, especially sentences containing two arguments, which is a challenge for EFL students. Therefore, educators need to emphasize teaching argument structure explicitly, by providing exercises that illustrate various argument configurations and their functions. In addition, since the experiencer role was identified as the most difficult role, specific materials and activities for this role should be developed. Recognizing the importance of interest and motivation, teachers should also integrate interesting teaching materials and interactive activities to increase student motivation. In terms of learning strategies, encouraging the use of varied methods can help students understand the complexity of argument structures better.

In terms of linguistic competence, students need to deepen their understanding of syntactic roles, which can be facilitated through identification and application exercises of syntactic roles in diverse contexts. Given the internal and external factors that influence linguistic competence, language learning programs should be designed to create a supportive environment, with teaching methods that suit students' needs. Moreover, by utilizing the findings from previous research, educators can

integrate effective strategies into the curriculum, thus enriching the learning experience and enhancing the understanding of linguistic concepts among EFL students.

After the researcher conducted this research, there are some suggestions that the researcher proposes to English teachers, EFL students, and future researchers.

For teachers and lecturers, it is crucial to incorporate engaging materials that highlight various argument structures, particularly those with two arguments, to spark student interest and motivation. Explicit instruction on argument roles should be implemented, breaking down complex sentences into simpler components to aid comprehension. Active learning strategies, such as collaborative discussions and peer teaching, can enhance understanding while adapting teaching methods to cater to diverse learning styles will make lessons more effective. Regular feedback through formative assessments will also support student progress.

For EFL students, self-motivation is key; they should seek topics that resonate with them to deepen their interest in learning. English students need to intensify their efforts in studying and practicing to enhance their writing skills, particularly in the use of argument structures and thematic roles in sentences. They need to focus on mastering the more complex aspects of these constructs to improve their academic writing proficiency.

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