

# Integrated Story-Based Grammar Learning Model: The Effectiveness and Students' Perception on Its Implementation in a Grammar Classroom

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**Abstract**—There has been a long debate among the language practitioners on the effectiveness of an approach for teaching grammar. Some pros to the effectiveness of the deductive approach, while others believe that the inductive approach works better in enhancing students grammatical competence. This paper discusses the effectiveness of an integrated story-based grammar learning (ISGL) model on students' grammar learning achievement. This study was an experimental study involving two groups with 35 students in each of its experimental and control group at the English Education Study Program, University of Bengkulu. The data were taken by using a grammar pretest and post-test and an interview. The pretest and post-test scores were analyzed by the using t-test calculation and the interview data was analyzed through the steps of data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing. The result of the t-test calculation shows that t-count (2.775) was greater than t-table (1.995). It means the use of the ISGL model is more effective in enhancing the students' grammar learning achievement than the conventional approach which commonly used at the EESP, FKIP University of Bengkulu. In addition, the interview results also reveal that use of ISGL model makes the grammar learning more interesting and enjoyable.

**Keywords**—ISGL model, grammar, and learning achievement

## I. INTRODUCTION

Learning English grammar is still considered difficult for students in a foreign language context such as in Indonesia. Widiati and Cahyono confirm this and state that grammar is a part of English language which is still considered difficult to learn.[1]. In addition, some studies also reveal that students, particularly at the English Education Study Program (EESP) at the university level, still make mistakes in using the basic English grammar. In fact, the graduates of the study program who will work professionally as English teachers, are expected to have good grammatical competence in written and spoken. A study conducted by Widianingsih and Gulo found out that students still made a lot of mistakes in their writing in term of using the plural markers, articles or determiners, verbs, and tenses[2], and so was the study conducted by Yunita who found out that students of the EESP students still made mistakes in using nouns[3].

The teaching and learning of English grammar at university which tends to be done by using a deductive approach can be one source of the problems. A teacher-centered learning approach that can cause the students to become a passive rather than active

learners. The lesson becomes monotonous and 'dry' in terms of interaction among students (S-S) and between the students and the teacher (T-S). Such a teaching and learning process could make the lesson less attainable and boring. As the result, the students easily forget the lesson they have learned and can't communicate well in English. To overcome such problems, the teaching and learning of English grammar should be done in a student-centered [4], a dialogic process [5], and with a focus on forms and meaning[6]. A teaching and learning process that is based on a need analysis, uses current technology for learning [7], incorporates the uses of texts [8], and the students' culture artifacts (folktales) in the language classroom.

Those characteristics of a grammar classroom can be found in the integrated story-based grammar learning model which is developed based on the story-based approach by Adair-Hauck and Donato and has four phases namely presentation, attention, co-construction and extension[9]. The integrated story-based grammar learning model was also designed based on students' need analysis in learning English grammar. It is the combination of the deductive and inductive approach to grammar learning and uses Indonesian folktales as one of the materials. This means it incorporates the use of students' culture into the foreign language learning process. In addition, it was also designed in accordance to the current Higher Education Curriculum and trend in English language teaching in Indonesia, the text-based approach. This model that "does not only kill two birds with one stone"[10] but three. It helps students learning language rules, aims at enabling the students to use the language rules in communication and integrate the student's culture into the grammar classroom by using the Indonesian folktales as the materials for learning.

Several studies have been conducted either by using the four phases and stories in the process of teaching and learning English or other languages. Groeneveld conducted a study for high school students in Amsterdam in learning French and Dutch[11]. He found out that the learners see grammar in a bigger picture and no longer see it as an isolated factor of the language they learn. In addition, he also found that the stories advocate grammar

as a means to an end, a tool necessary to learn how to communicate more fluently. The method is not only effective but also enjoyable for both teachers and students. The other study was conducted by Soleimani and Khandan in 2013 for high school students in Iran. They found out that using storytelling has a positive effect on learning grammar structures but the experimental group didn't outperform the control group significantly on the measure. The two studies are conducted in high school level [12].

Another study was conducted by Georgopolou and Griva at the first year of primary classroom in Greece in learning vocabulary [13]. They reveal that there was a positive effect of using story toward the development of students' spoken skill. The students also had a positive mental state and attitude toward the given project. The use of the short story and a drama in teaching the students was successful. The students have more spirit in learning and love the way of the teaching that was being conducted. They love the opportunity to participate in the learning process, the stories and the dramatization. The last one, Martinez conducted a study for learning English in a first-grade bilingual teacher in a state school in Madrid which in the context of English as a second language [14]. Martinez discovered that the students had more motivation in learning and participated in the given exercises. In addition, Martinez also found that the students' attitude toward the use of textbooks was changed if the activities were presented in a creative way. It made the students more confident and had more motivation for doing the given exercises.

Those studies were conducted in the EFL/ESL context and proved that the use of the four phases or the stories in a language classroom increases the students' participation, motivation and confidence in learning. However, the learning achievement of the experimental group in Soleimani and Khamdan's study did not strongly outperform the control group. Those previous studies are different from the current study conducted by the author in term of the setting, the research subjects educational level. While the former studies were conducted on the primary school to high school students and the first-grade bilingual teacher classroom, the current study was conducted in an EFL context in Indonesia. The process of grammar teaching and learning used the integrated story-based grammar learning model which has been designed to meet the needs and the context of learning English in Indonesian university level.

This current study was aimed to find out whether there is a significant difference between the students' grammar learning achievement taught by using the integrated story-based grammar learning (ISGL) model compare to the conventional (deductive) learning model commonly used at the EESP, University of Bengkulu and the students' perceptions of the learning model after its implementation in their grammar classroom.

Integrated story-based grammar learning model is designed based on a need analysis and uses the students' culture artifacts (e.g. legends or local stories in form of texts or videos) to support the process of learning English grammar. The learning process is

implemented in four phases adapted from Adair-Hauck and Donato [9]. It is adapted to be suitable for the Indonesian context of learning English as a foreign language. It includes the uses of students' culture artifact in the form of local stories from various regions in Indonesia which can make them appreciate their own culture better. It can also help to develop the students' communicative competence, as well as their intercultural competence.

The idea of using students' culture artifact, stories or folktales, is in line to Sukarno who states that "...teaching English as a foreign language is about both English cultures – mostly for receptive skills and local cultures – mostly for productive skills in discussing English language elements. The end of teaching is the students' communicative competences" [15]. Similarly, Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey mention that the uses of the students' culture along with the use of the target language culture in language teaching will also develop the students' linguistic competence and intercultural competence [16]. Based on the opinions above, it can be inferred that the use of the students' culture artifact in the form of local stories in the learning of English language does not only develop the students' linguistic competence such as the grammar that is needed in speaking and writing but also develops their intercultural competence.

The word integrated is used in the model as it involves developing the four language skills in each of the learning process phases. It uses the learning media and technologies (texts, videos, projector, laptop, and laptop speakers) which are usually not being used fully in the grammar classrooms. It also provides productive activities and various tasks, for instance identifying word classes in shorts stories and writing a short story or dialogue. There are also some new additions to each phase of the initial model by Adair-Hauck and Donato [9]. The author adds it at the end of each phase and given the term 'the student's response and teacher's feedback (SR-TF)' in each of the phases as can be seen in the following figure 1.

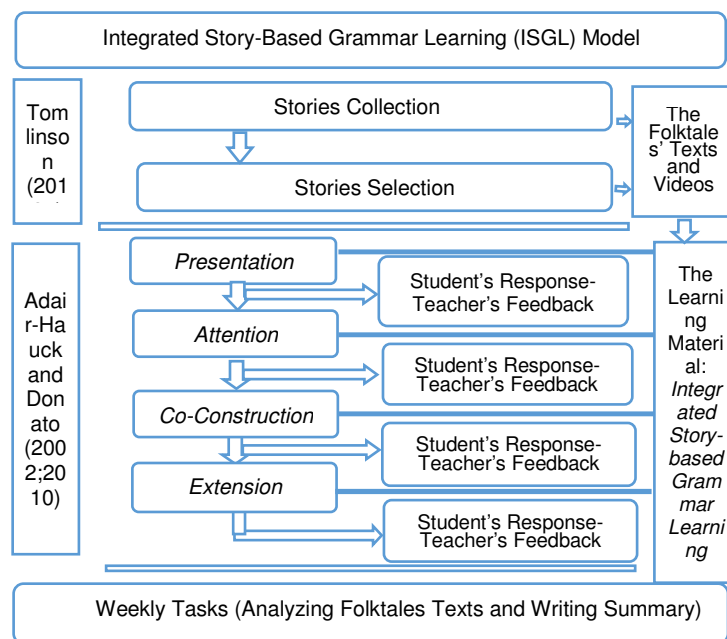


Fig. 1. Integrated Story-based Grammar Learning Model in Detail

This ISGL model also incorporates the use of Indonesian folktales from every major island of Indonesia into the learning process and was equipped with an integrated story-based grammar learning book designed based on the above four phases of the model. The four phases of the ISGL model are presentation, attention, co-construction, and extension. In this ISGL model, language is being learned inseparably between the grammatical structure, and its form and use.

These features of the ISGL model could be said in line to Cullen who mentions that in the process of learning grammar, the students need: (1) to be able to notice features of grammar in natural, realistic contexts of use, (2) the opportunities to form hypotheses of how grammar works and (3) the opportunities to practice using grammar in meaningful contexts [17]. In further, at some points this ISGL model also resembles similarities to the text-driven approach framework by Tomlinson in term of using text as a language learning material and the process of using the text in the early phase of both approach, such as the phase of representing the text to the students through reading or listening the text [18].

However, there are several differences between the two in their application. First, the text-driven approach focuses more on teaching and learning the English language in general or more on language skill not specifically for learning grammar as in the ISGL model. The ISGL is designed for the teaching and learning of English grammar which also aims at supporting the students' language skills development. Second, the text-driven approach uses many types of texts, while the ISGL mostly uses local folklore but in English in the form of texts and videos. At the first step,

the presentation, the students do not see the text, they are given the text in the second phase, the attention. Third, the text-driven approach tends to stress more on the students' feeling related to the uses of texts while the in ISGL model is not as much as in the text-driven approach. This due to the condition of classes in the foreign language context such as in Indonesian university with the big class, so there is not much time to do so as the time is also limited (100 minutes for a meeting). The focus is more on understanding the knowledge of grammar rules in the text and its forms and meaning and the ability to use them productively. Fourth, in ISGL there is also the co-construction phase, which involves the process of understanding the rules of English grammar more through group discovery discussion. In this co-construction phase, the students are given examples of rules they need to search and figure them out from the text. The students can ask the teacher if they found problems in understanding the English grammar rules that cannot be solved by other students in their group. They also need to prepare explanations for the rules to be shared with other class members guided by the teacher before going to the next step, the extension. Last, in the extension phase of ISGL, the students in the same group are given opportunities to produce English language in spoken and written. The spoken activities can be composing a conversation; while the written activities can be writing a story based on pictures provided in the workbook, to be presented to other students in the class.

In the ISGL model, there are also tasks given to students; a weekly task-looking for another short story, highlighting and identifying the assigned word classes (e.g. nouns) found in the story. The other is writing summaries of the topic

being learned (e.g. nouns) in the student's book but they need to change the examples in the book in their own sentences. These tasks are given to them in order to provide them more opportunities to understand the grammar rules on their own outside the classroom. The tasks were checked and given back to them.

## II. METHOD

This study examines the effectiveness of the integrated story-based grammar learning (ISGL) model and conventional learning model on students' grammar learning achievement and seeks for the students' perceptions on the learning model after its implementation in their grammar classroom. The participants of this study were 70 students with 35 students for each experimental and control group at the EESP of the University of Bengkulu in the 2016-2017 academic year. The participants' age range is 18-19 years.

The instrument was a grammar test consisted of 35 questions covering the materials of auxiliary verbs, adjectives, adverbs, articles and prepositions with five

alternative answers and an interview guide with four questions. The first question was to find out the students' opinion on the use of the ISGL model, the second and the third questions were to find out the effectiveness of the treatment by using the model. The last question was to get suggestions from students for the improvement of the model. The interview was conducted in order to give support to the finding that based on the grammar test. The grammar test and the interview guide were validated by two grammar lecturers and two experts in English Language Teaching from the State University of Padang and the University of Bengkulu, Indonesia. After being validated by the experts, the grammar test was tried out to 20 students of the English study program at the University of Bengkulu who were not the participants of the study. After the trial, the grammar test validity and reliability were tested statistically and resulted in 35 questions out of 40 questions were valid and reliable. The procedures of implementing the ISGL Model can be seen from the teacher' and students' activities point of view described in the table below:

TABLE 1: TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' ACTIVITIES IN ISGL MODEL

The Phases		The Activities	
		Teacher	Students
1.	Presentation	The teacher or a volunteer student reads an English short story (e.g. <i>Putri Serindang Bulan</i> ) for the students.	The students listen to the teacher or their friends reading the story while trying to catch some pronouns they hear from the story and write them down on the provided table in the student's workbook.
2.	Attention	The teacher hands out the text of <i>Putri Serindang Bulan</i> to the students and asks the students to highlight or underline the pronouns in the short story and put them in the provided table in the student's workbook.	The students try to understand the pronouns by highlighting or underlining the pronouns they found in the short story and then write down the pronouns they found in the provided table in the student's workbook.
3.	Co-construction	Students working in a group of four, with the help from the teacher who moves around from group to group, co-construct explanations on the pronouns. The students have a discussion with their group members and whenever they have problems that cannot be solved in the group, they can ask the teacher. In addition, the teacher can also use guided questions to stimulate and help students in making the explanation about the pronouns. An example of the guided question is: "Where is the position of the pronouns in a sentence?"	Students co-construct an explanation on the pronouns with their group members and are helped by the teacher by using guided questions. They can construct an explanation about the positions, the types, and forms of pronouns in English grammar.
4.	Extension	The teacher asks the students to make a dialogue or write a story based on the provided pictures, and then underline the pronouns they used. The teacher provides pictures or gives clues for writing the story.	The students create a dialogue and practice it in conversations with their friends or write a short story based on the pictures provided by the teacher. After that, they present their work in front of the class.

Modified from Yunita [19]

The data of the research were taken using the grammar test which consisted of auxiliary verbs, adjectives, adverbs, articles, and prepositions. The author with her colleagues, the teachers of each class, delivered the pretest to the students before giving treatments. The treatments were given with the duration of 100 minutes per meeting, and after 7 meetings, the post-test was administered to the students. The collected data were then analyzed by using statistical analysis (t-test) based on Phakiti [20]. To support the data from the test, 30 students were interviewed after the treatments have finished with the average duration of 8-12 minutes. The interview was semi-structured and recorded. The data were then analyzed qualitatively based on the steps

of the qualitative data analysis suggested by Miles and Huberman which consisted of data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing [21]. The interview data were functioned as the supporting data to see the students' perceptions of the use of the ISGL model.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Students' Grammar Learning Achievement Result

The result of the students' grammar test mean scores of both groups are improved. The score improvement in the experiment group is slightly higher than in the control group which means the ISGL model resulted in a better students' grammar learning achievement. The mean score of the



students in the experiment group in pretest was 62.28 and 75.75 in the post-test after the treatment by using the ISGL model. It is improved as much as 13.47 point. Meanwhile, the mean score of the students in the control group in pretest is 53.01 and 61.46 in the post-test after the treatment by

using the conventional (deductive) grammar learning model. The score in the control group was improved as much as 8.45 point. The mean scores and standard deviation were calculated for the overall score of the students of both groups as seen in the following table 2.

TABLE 2: MEAN SCORE AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF THE STUDENTS' SCORE ON THE PRETEST AND POST-TEST.

Teaching Model	N	Grammar Achievement (Pretest)		Grammar Achievement (Post-test)	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Conventional	35	53.01	14.83	61.46	14.41
ISGL	35	62.28	15.83	75.75	12.67

Next, the t-test was done to test the null hypothesis or find out whether there is a significant difference between the two data and it is named independent samples t-test. The result can be seen in the following table 3.

TABLE 3: THE RESULT OF THE T-TEST OF BOTH EXPERIMENT AND CONTROL GROUP

Group	N	S <sup>2</sup>	df (n-2)	S	t- count	t table
Pretest	35	52.73	68	57.24	2.775	1.995
Post-Test	35	61.76	68			

The table shows that t count (2.775) was greater than t table (1.995). Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of the integrated story-based grammar learning model is more effective in enhancing the students' grammar learning achievement of the experiment group compare to the use of conventional learning model of the control group.

#### B. The Students' Opinions on the Use of ISGL Model

The results of the interview on the students' opinions on the uses and the effect of the ISGL model support the findings of the grammar test. The students like the way of learning grammar by using the ISGL model. They point out that the steps of the learning are clear, support the four skills in learning a language, using local stories in the form of texts and videos. They also assert that the materials (the student's book and workbook) are simple, concise and easy to be understood.

##### 1) The steps of learning are clear and make the student enjoy the learning process.

The steps of learning in this model are presentation, attention, co-construction, and extension. These clear and graded phases made the students easy to follow the lesson and enjoy it. The excerpts below reveals the students' opinions:

*"The steps are just right, mam. So here is.. first, we read a story, in which when we read the story, the students are interested in the story. Yes, mam, interested in it and they listen, they analyze the language in the story by using the ways that make them do not feel bored. We listen to them and we analyzed directly what they told us in front of the class. And the ones who tell the story are different in every meeting, there are.... ee...maybe video, audio, from the teacher, and even me myself, so it made us not feeling bored mam. It is not only from one way of listening to the story, it is different" [Rg\_19]*

##### 2) The support system is simple, concise and easy to be understood

The students also report that they like learning grammar with the model because the support system especially its materials (the student's book and workbook) are simple, concise and easy to be understood. The following are the statements from the students:

*"Ehm...the book, the book is a very good one because there is....mam already told us that the student's book is concise and short, so we can understand it and at the end of the lesson, there is a conclusion, we made a conclusion but we got it from the book. Then, ee.. through the audio or ee..the other tools, they are also appropriate to be used, not only from the visual alone, we do not see the story from the visual only but also from listening to the story being told, we add our knowledge, and our vocabularies, yes that is it. Then ee, the book is very helpful mam, because in its text there are stories,....It was helped by the text, so we..ee...the audio and the visual is connected, mam. They are being combined, so we understand more mam, from the text, we also see the text, so we understand it [Rg\_19]*

##### 3) The model promotes students' better understanding of English grammar

The students also mention that they understand English grammar better, their English structure becomes better and they remember the grammar rules longer in their memory. They become more active learners as can be seen in the following excerpts:

*"I understand grammar more, become more active in the class and remember the grammar longer in my memory. I love grammar more" [Rs\_21]*

##### 4)The model changes students' opinion on the grammar lesson

The students' opinion on grammar lesson is also changed. At first, they think grammar lessons are very

difficult and boring but by using this model, they find the grammar lesson is more fun and interesting. This is revealed by one of the students as follows:

*"I came to a conclusion that learning the English language is not as difficult as I imagine before. It is not as complicated as I assume for a long time. In fact, it is fun, but we must practice more. I realize this after I learn English in this grammar classroom. At first, my seniors at our English study program said that English grammar lesson is difficult. It is, but by using this way of learning I can learn more. Actually, it depends on and starts with the learning intention. So when we have already felt comfortable with something and we like it, we enjoy learning it. No more grumbling. What we have learned can be accepted thoroughly and we can absorb the meaning of it [Rz\_18]"*

##### 5) The model helps the students in other courses

The students also admit that using the integrated story-based grammar learning model helps them in understanding other courses at the study program such as the Paragraph Writing, General Reading and Introduction to Literature which they took at the same semester, as stated by the following respondents:

*"We have Paragraph Writing course.....it requires us to make a paragraph. So from this Structure I class, we learned about auxiliary, preposition, and others.....because we have learned it in Structure I class with you and Sir Ildi and we know how to use the prepositions and the others correctly, so we are no longer careless in writing mam"[Rg\_19]"*

##### 6) The model helps students to be more confident with their grammar and motivate them to learn grammar.

The ISGL model makes the students more confident with their English grammar and motivates the students to learn it outside the classroom as can be seen from the following excerpt:

*"In the classroom, I understand the material. Outside the classroom, I become more confident if there is anyone asks me question about grammar [Ft\_5]"*  
*"I understand grammar more and my grammar becomes better. I have more motivation to learn English grammar at home[Y\_29]"*

The understandings bring forth the students confidence and make them ready to face any questions delivered to them about grammar rules and uses.

The finding from the results of the students' learning achievement mention previously indicates that using the ISGL model is more effective in enhancing the students' grammar learning achievement. This finding confirms Groeneveld who found out that students understandings of grammar concepts are improved in the Dutch and French

classes by using PACE model [11]. In addition, it is also confirmed Soleimani and Khandan found out that using storytelling have a good effect on students' grammar learning achievement[12].

In further, the effectiveness of this ISGL model could probably take place because of the learning process in this model involving the activity that encourages shared knowledge of understanding on the grammar being learned among the students in the co-construction phase. The phase that provides opportunities for the students to do discussion among them and to get the chance to ask the teacher about the problems they encounter and cannot be solved by the group members during the learning. A learning that according to Lin and Lee, which is more student-centered and resulted in a better classroom atmosphere and encourage students to take into account their grammar learning[22], and developing their communicative competence as mentioned by de Segovia and Hardison [23]. Moreover, in the co-construction phase, students are asked to notice and focus their attention on the grammar rules in order to make their own new understanding of English grammar system. This is in line to Schleppegrell(in Klingelhofer and Schleppegrell) who points out that new consciousness about language systems can be ignited through noticing and focusing attention on the language through interaction or sharing experience among students [5].

Besides, in this model the dialogic processes, the interactions were between S-S and T-S in learning the grammar, also take place. Klingelhofer and Schleppegrell support this idea and report that construction of knowledge goes alongside the use of language in the social process and rich understanding of concepts across the curriculum that was promoted through classroom dialogue [5]. Apart from the co-construction phases, the model also has the extension phase in which the learning process is more challenging, interesting and fun for the students. In this phase, the students working in their group, apply the knowledge they have got through writing and speaking activities such as writing a story based on pictures provided in the student's workbook or practice conversations that they have created with their group members. In this phase, creativity takes place and the student finds it challenging, interesting and fun at the same time. The integrative story-based grammar learning model with its four phases could be said meeting the grammar learning characteristics that suggested by Nunan which comprises of incorporating the integration of deductive and inductive approach, using tasks that make clear between grammatical forms and communicative function of language, focusing more on the procedural knowledge of using language rather than the descriptive one, and encouraging students to use language creatively rather than reproductively [24].

Meanwhile, the findings from interview data imply that the implementation of this model of grammar learning made the process of learning more interesting and enjoyable.

Interesting and enjoyable learning enables the students to absorb grammar knowledge better and last longer in their long-term memory. Thus, it could also be said that the students who took part in the study find the knowledge of grammar they gain through the process of learning by using this model, which advocates stories in it, helped the students in improving their language skills. This is in line to Soleimani and Khandan who points out that students' abilities in listening, speaking, reading and writing can be evolved through the uses of stories as the source of learning [12]. In further, Lo and Fai Li in Soleimani and Khandan assert that "learning English with stories provides a non-threatening atmosphere for students who usually are tense when speaking English in a formal classroom setting" [12].

This ISGL model is something new for the students at the university who are usually taught by using conventional way of teaching which focuses more only on knowing the rules but not using it in real communication. Thus, the potential of using this model is widely opened. As Cowan in Songhori states that "English teachers, as well as English learners, typically realize the benefits of knowing English grammar because, to them, it is the key to understanding language and using it to communicate" [25].

Furthermore, the model was supported by a complete support system (the syllabus, lesson plan and learning material in the form of a book) that enabling students to learn grammar in a better way and by using current technology for learning such as the using of videos, LCD Projector, laptop, windows media player and the laptop speaker. Naqvi and Al Mahrooqi argue that the use of technology in language learning provides students with more chances of learning a foreign language [26]. Similarly, Larsen-Freeman and Anderson argue that using technology in language learning provide the student a contact with the authentic language use [27]. In further, according to Syamlee it cannot be ignored that the teaching and learning process which uses modern technology is more interesting, can direct the students' attention to the lesson better and arouse the students' involvement in classroom activities [28].

Last but not least, the implementation of integrated story-based grammar learning model could change the students' opinion on grammar lessons. Formerly, they were informed by the senior students that the grammar lesson is difficult and boring. In fact, they found it fun and interesting. The effect is the students start to like grammar better and have better motivation to study it more, even outside the classroom. This could be happened due to the fact of using stories they had experienced in a classroom according to Soleimani and Khandan drives students to learn the new language better, grasp and maintain their attention on the learning process, and provide genuine texts and realistic uses of the language grammar that other modes of language instruction cannot provide [12].

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The use of ISGL model enhances the students' grammar learning achievement better than the conventional (deductive) learning model which were usually practices in the grammar classroom at the English Education Study Program at the University of Bengkulu. It is also revealed that the implementation of the model makes the process of learning more interesting and enjoyable, motivate the students to learn grammar outside the classroom more, and change the students' perceptions on grammar from a negative to a positive one. The model is suggested to be used in the grammar classroom at a university in the context of English as a foreign language, especially in the Indonesian context.

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