Analysing Indispensability of Scaffolding Strategies to Enhance the Teaching of English Syntactical Structures to Grade 10 Learners

Farisani Thomas Nephawe [a*], Munyadziwa Sylvia Nemakhavhani [b]

[ab] University of Venda, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Article Info	Abstract
	Although numerous research has been conducted on the versatility of the strategies for teaching the English language, studies on the indispensability of scaffolding strategies to enhance the teaching of English syntactical structures are limited. The present study analysed the indispensability of these strategies for improving the synthesis of English syntactical structures at a South African secondary school. A qualitative research approach was adopted to obtain an in-depth understanding of the indispensability of using scaffolding strategies in teaching synthesis of syntactical structures to Grade 10 English First Additional Language (EFAL) learners. The population of this study comprised seven teachers who had more than five years of teaching experience at the secondary school level. Five purposively sampled teachers participated in this study because the researchers did not want to have abnormal findings and discussions. The sample was a true representative of the entire population because learners taught were from the same rural communities and share similar characteristics such as limited exposure to the appropriate use of the English. language. Data were collected using classroom observations and semi-structured face-to-face interviews. Using thematic analysis, a preliminary investigation was conducted on three schoolteachers who were not part of the target respondents and were reluctant to use scaffolding strategies in the classroom. Nonetheless, after applying scaffolding strategies, the respondents performed profoundly. The implication of the present study necessitates the indispensability of scaffolding strategies. This study argues for the constant use of scaffolding strategies in synthesising English syntactical structures.

INTRODUCTION

The synthesis of English syntactical structures is a daunting exercise (Fujita, 2024), particularly for students who are beginning to learn English First Additional

Language (EFAL) in the classroom environment and do not belong to the native speakers of the language environment (Zano, 2024). Badilla and Núñez (2020) claim that learning practical written skills is even more challenging in a foreign language as students learn adequate vocabulary and internalise basic language structures (Pun et al., 2024). As syntactical structures concern the formation of sentences and the relationship of their components (Sharoh & Hagoort, 2024).), the rules about the amalgamation of English syntactical structures are scant in their first language (L1). This often interferes with understanding syntactical structures (Ong & Padilla, 2020) in English.

In South Africa, one of the aims of learning English as a Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT) is that Grade 10 EFAL students study syntactical structures (Mpofu, 2024) comprising simple sentences, compound sentences, complex sentences, and compound-complex sentences during the First Term. In this regard, students' competence in the use of the English language is enhanced by using syntactical structures (Taqwa & Santoso, 2024) appropriately. However, the challenge is that some Grade 10 EFAL students have a limited understanding of the formation of English syntactical structures (Khoza-Shangase & Kalenga, 2024). Thus, the idea behind many unusual word orders at a sentence level makes it cumbersome for students to understand the synthesis of English syntactical structures (MacKay, 2023), especially those with limited English exposure.

To enhance the formation of English syntactical structures, several strategies including using sentences related to everyday classroom experiences, introducing sentence scrambles that have just a few words and gradually expanding the number of words and complex sentence structures, giving students sentences with the words out of order for them to fix and continuous modeling in the use of proper sentence structure, both oral and written are indispensable (Fujita, 2024). Conversely, not all strategies for teaching the formation of English syntactical structures are feasible (Taqwa & Santoso, 2024). Nevertheless, scaffolding strategies are indispensable to enhance the synthesis of English syntactical structures.

Scaffolding strategies involve teaching, "where a more knowledgeable individual provides a framework that allows a less knowledgeable individual to be able to think at a higher level than they would have been able to on their own" (Spadafora & Downes 2020:1) in learning. These strategies demonstrate how the task is done, explain the overall goal, and help with the most complex parts of the task

(Spadafora & Downes 2020). Furthermore, they facilitate the students' learning of syntactical structures in a language as they move from simple to more complicated language (Spielvogel & Ehren, 2021). In this regard, they are one such paraphernalia for helping students preserve and relate new knowledge as it establishes a background for the new one before deliberately building upon it. In this regard, it is reliable and effective in the enhancement of the formation of English syntactical structures.

When applying scaffolding strategies, a teacher is not the only person who plays the role of a class expert. Students are also crucial in disseminating new knowledge (Li et al., 2024). Students work individually or in groups when discussing and exploring new topics from authentic resources to stimulate their interest in the lesson (Bodrova & Leong, 2024). New information is shared to demonstrate how a problem is solved. Yang et al. (2024) indicate that such an activity is described as "I do, We do, You do." since the teacher demonstrates how it is executed. After such a process, the class works together, and then each student practices alone., add that the teacher gives support and gradually removes it. Also, a Zone of Proximal Development assists the students in learning new English syntactical structures (Blanchette et al., 2024) using scaffolding strategies.

Scaffolding strategies are advantageous to teachers and students as their indispensability is a requirement (Huber, 2020) in education. In teaching and learning English syntactical structures, scaffolding strategies cannot be ignored because they can enhance information preservation, lay a foundation for new knowledge, invite students' participation, and stimulate their interest in the subject matter. Therefore, the teacher takes the initiative (Spadafora & Downes 2020) to demonstrate how a particular task is performed.

The types of scaffolding strategies include modelling, using prior knowledge, talking about it, using graphic organisers and technology to simplify the learning process, and indicating vocabulary relating to difficult words or phrases. For example, the teacher assigns stages to the formation of syntactical structures. In Tier One, students pick up simple sentences that may be used in everyday life, such as 'He goes to school', and 'I love soccer' (Leuckert, 2024). Tier Two consists of a grammatically appropriate sentence that might not be used daily, such as 'Dying is a painful activity'. During Tier Three, sentences are usually constructed in a particular word order that is suitable for compound, complex, and compound-complex

sentences since students can connect new ideas to form a text. A mind map can be used to scaffold prior knowledge to the new one (Meyer & Mamédio, 2024) to give practical support to the students.

As regards the literature review, several investigations were conducted by the researchers, including Karafil and İlbay (2024), Li et al. (2024), Nygren et al. (2024), and Soontornwipast (2024) regarding the indispensability of scaffolding strategies in the formation of English syntactical structures. On the other hand, few investigations have attempted to discuss the indispensability of scaffolding strategies to teach the synthesis of English syntactical structures at selected South African secondary schools.

To address this gap, the researchers mentioned supra-analysis of the indispensability of scaffolding strategies to enhance the formation of English syntactical structures. In this situation, the researchers examined the following literature reviews. Karafil and İlbay (2024) investigated the indispensability of scaffolding strategies applied by a teacher in an online English Foreign Language as regards classroom interactional competence on 11 Turkish and 1 Somalian students at a Turkish University. The study found that scaffolding strategies enhanced the restating and reformulation of ideas and students' participation.

Li et al. (2024) conducted reading interventions for English students coupled with scaffolding strategies on the English language's reading comprehension at the school level. The study revealed that scaffolding strategies were indispensable in synthesising English syntactical structures. Nygren et al. (2024) analysed intergenerational and collaborative interaction in teaching young children and their adult carers using scaffolding strategies. It was discovered that scaffolding strategies made 'enactive potentialities' in the environment more accessible for children, deepening and enriching their engagement in lessons. Also, Utthavudhikorn and Soontornwipast (2024) investigated experiences with the utilisation of scaffolding techniques on nine elementary school teachers instructing in a regular English program in Thailand. Teachers encountered challenges related to students' motivation, concentration, proficiency levels, and self-confidence; but with scaffolding strategies did not.

The present study was underpinned by the notion of scaffolding introduced by Jerome Bruner in the 1970s to characterise mothers' verbal interaction when assisting in learning content. for young children (Sepriyanti & Kustati, 2024). Mahan

(2022) claims that scaffolding entails the interactional instructional relationship between the student and the instructor. Scaffolding strategies involve the nature of the support provided to second language (L2) learners according to how much the students already know (Fujita, 2024). The teacher simplifies the language, teacher modelling, visuals, graphics, cooperative learning, and hands-on learning to enable the students to solve problems, carry out tasks, or achieve difficult goals without any assistance. They are concerned with what students can do alone, which requires the assistance of More Knowledgeable Others (MKO) to enhance the learning of new levels of understanding for the successful completion of learning tasks.

Scaffolding strategies operate from a macro level comprising curriculum planning that integrates language systematically, to a micro level involving interactional scaffolding (Mahan, 2022) in learning. These levels are in line with the three categories of scaffolding strategies, which are verbal, procedural, and learning supports (Meyer & Mamédio, 2024). However, this study focused on analysing the indispensability of scaffolding strategies to enhance the synthesis of English syntactical structures at a South African secondary school.

Numerous scaffolding strategies are applicable to teach the synthesis of English syntactical structures. These strategies include 'show and tell' enabling students to see what they are learning, 'tap into prior knowledge' for students to share their personal experiences, hunches, and ideas about the subject matter and connect it to their lives, 'give time to talk' to process new ideas and information, 'pre-teach the synthesis of English syntactical structures in context with things that they know, 'use visual aids' such as graphic organisers, pictures, and charts for students to visually represent their ideas and organise information, 'grasp concepts' such as sequencing and cause and effect; and 'pause to ask questions' (Utthavudhikorn & Soontornwipast, 2024) for establishing the students' level of their understanding.

The objectives of this study were to analyse the indispensability of scaffolding strategies to enhance the synthesis of English syntactical structures at a South African secondary school and to establish the extent of enhancements made by scaffolding strategies in the teaching of English syntactical structures. The study aimed to answer the research questions: 1) How indispensable are scaffolding strategies for teaching English syntactical structures at a South African secondary school? 2) To what extent

do scaffolding strategies enhance the teaching of English syntactical structures at a South African secondary school?

METHOD

A qualitative research approach was adopted to obtain an in-depth understanding of the indispensability of scaffolding strategies in teaching the synthesis of syntactical structures of the English language. An exploratory research design was used to investigate the research questions that have not previously been studied (Geroge, 2021) in depth. Additionally, they understood the existing research problem better, though it cannot always provide conclusive results.

Respondents

The population of this study comprised five respondents purposively selected from Dzindi Circuit Secondary Schools in Limpopo Province, South Africa, based on their experience of teaching syntactical structures to Grade 10 EFAL students. Moreover, it was aimed to scaffold prior knowledge obtained from the previous grades.

Figure 1. Demographic Profile for Teachers (n=5)

Respondents	Gender	Age	Academic Qualifications	Teaching Experience	English Competency
A	Female	45	Teaching Diploma	7 years	Fair
B	Male	33	Teaching Diploma	1 year	Good
C	female	28	Honours	4 years	Good
D	Male	31	Teaching Diploma	3 years	Good
E	Female	36	Master	3 years	Good

In Figure 1, data visualisation is represented using respondents, gender, academic qualifications, and experience in English organised into six columns with five rows. Five respondents were denoted as A-E to align with the ethical consideration standards. Of these five respondents, three were males, while the other two were males. Regarding 'gender', Respondent A was 45 years old, followed by Respondent E, 36 years old. Respondent B was aged 33, while Respondent C was 28. Respondent D was 31 years old. Concerning academic qualification, Respondents A, B, and D had a teaching diploma, while Respondent C had an Honours degree in English language Teaching. Regarding their teaching experience in English, Respondent A had 7 years, B one, C four, D and E had three concurrently.

Concerning English competence mentioned supra, Respondent A was Fair, while Respondents B, C, D, and E were Good.

Data collection

Data were collected using classroom observations and semi-structured face-to-face interviews.

The protocols for classroom observation were observed. For example, teachers were told beforehand that observing them busy teaching their learners was not a witch-hunt. Teachers and learners were informed about the purpose of the classroom observation before the commencement of the activity. Furthermore, the researchers introduced themselves to each teacher before the interview started. Respondents were informed that five similar interview questions would be asked of them and that they needed to sign a consent form upfront and give comments later at the end of the interview process to enhance the authenticity of the findings.

Teachers were observed teaching English syntactic structures in the classroom, while the same teachers were interviewed individually outside the classroom environment. The data from the classroom observation supplemented the semi-structured face-to-face interview processes to get credible, reliable, and valid findings from five selected teachers (Karimpour et al., 2024). The researchers used a tape recorder, pen, and paper to assist in collecting transcripts for analysing patterns developed from semi-structured face-to-face interviews using open-ended questions to encourage exploration of a topic as a participant could choose what to share and how much detail (Gras, 2024) provided. In this sense, a reasoned response could be given rather than a one-word answer or a short phrase. Additionally, ethical considerations were duly acknowledged. Regarding informed consent, teachers were told that their participation was voluntary and that they were at liberty to withdraw from participating in the study. Numbers were used instead of schools' and teachers' names to enhance anonymity and confidentiality. The researchers ensured that no psychological and physical harm occurred to the respondents.

Data analysis

Data collected from the respondents were analysed using Delve Thematic Analysis Software due to its new enhancements that manipulated the coding systems and found, grouped, refined, and organised themes to streamline code merging processes (Delve, 2024). In a way, the steps followed were precoding work, open code work, clustering of initial codes, clustering of selected codes, reviewing,

revising, finalising the themes, and writing the narratives. After analysing data collected from the respondents, the researchers deliberated with the study findings and discussions placed hereunder.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As the present study was aimed at answering the research questions in line with the study objectives mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, the findings and discussions were deliberated according to the items placed hereunder:

Classroom observations

The researchers preferred classroom observation because it could assist them in observing how indispensable scaffolding strategy is in enhancing English syntactical arrangements in the use of the English language. Again, the researchers would want to observe the respondents' responses regarding using scaffolding strategies to probe for the existence of prior knowledge, the challenges they encountered during the lesson presentation, and how they were resolved. The researchers structured five contact sessions with teachers and their students to observe engaging one another in the classroom environment without disturbing their daily schoolwork routine. The teachers and students were encouraged to participate actively and freely in the lesson.

All teachers engaged their students seriously in the pre-observation meeting, inviting numerous positive responses. Field notes were collected using a tape recorder, a pen, and paper to jot down the findings and compare the conclusions of each class observation. Observations were done thrice, but only one lesson was used to assess the engagement between a particular teacher and the students regarding sentence construction in the classroom environment. Classroom observations were organised into several excerpts representing student-teacher activities. In this regard, Respondent A conducted the lesson as follows:

Excerpt 1

Respondent A : Good morning, everyone; you may take your seats.
Students   : Good morning, Madam. Thank you.
Respondent A : Today's lesson deals with syntactical structures. Any idea about it?
Mutshutshu (*Actively*): I do, but I can't remember much about it.
Respondent A : Don't worry. You will understand them. However, today's lesson focuses on the formation of various sentences. Let us see who can give an example for a simple sentence.
Ambrose (*raising his hand and answering*): 'He plays football.'
Respondent A :   Wow, that's great. Any knowledge about compound sentences?

Rudzani	:	'They want to swim in the pool because it is hot, but they are not allowed.'
Respondent A	:	You nearly got it right, but this is not a compound sentence. It has more than what I expected. Where did you learn this, Rudzani?
Rudzani	:	We learnt it in Grade the previous grades.
Respondent A	:	OK, a compound sentence is joined by the coordinating conjunction including 'and,' and 'but' as in 'They wanted to swim, and they were not allowed' and 'They wanted to swim, but they were not allowed.'
Students	:	Oh, fantastic, thank you, Sir.

Respondent A started the lesson by introducing the aim of the lesson to the students, which was about Syntactical structures, and asked them if they were knowledgeable about it. Students were actively engaged from the beginning of the lesson. They indicated informed prowess in forming English syntactical structures even though they couldn't remember the types of sentences involved. The finding supports Karafil and İlbay (2024), who indicate that scaffolding strategies enhance the restating and reformulation of ideas and student participation. One student provided an appropriate example of a simple sentence. Respondent A asked if they knew anything about compound sentences, and the response revealed they did. Respondent A provided a well-formed definition of a compound sentence, emphasising the indispensability of scaffolding strategies to teach the synthesis of English syntactic structures.

Excerpt 2

Respondent B	:	Good afternoon. How are you?
Students	:	We are fine, thanks.
Respondent B	:	Tell me, have you ever heard about syntactical structures?
Students	:	Yes, Sir, we studied them in the previous grades.
Respondent B	:	Good. Which of you can form a simple sentence?
Lati (*without hesitation*):		'*She lays the table daily*.'
Respondent B	:	Excellent. Thomas, 'What is a compound sentence?'
Thomas	:	It consists of two independent clauses joined by coordinating conjunctions.
Respondent B	:	Additionally. these conjunctions are 'for', 'and', 'nor', 'but', 'or', 'yet', and 'so' (FANBOYS). However, they can be replaced by a semicolon in sentences. Can anyone form a compound sentence using the coordinating conjunction 'but'.
Ndinae	:	'Tom likes soccer but cannot play it.'
Respondent B	:	Thanks, Ndinae. Now, James, construct a sentence using the conjunction 'and'.
James	:	'I have a friend who stays at Sibasa.'
Respondent B	:	Thanks, it is correct. Right, I am giving you a short test tomorrow.
Students	:	We are ready for it, even if we can write now.
Respondent B	:	Most unfortunately, the lesson is over. Anyway, thanks for participating.

Respondent B started his lesson by probing a question requiring their familiarity with synthesising English Syntactical structures. Also, students were actively engaged

in the lesson and indicated that they had learnt about forming English syntactical structures in their previous grades. After that, students provided Respondent A with the correctly formulated answers. Respondent B supplied his students with the different types of coordinating conjunctions and required them to construct a sentence using the coordinating conjunction 'and'. James' answer impressed Respondent B because it was grammatically accurate. Thus, scaffolding strategies are indispensable to form English syntactical structures. The discovery aligns with Li et al. (2024), who suggest that scaffolding strategies are essential to forming these structures.

Excerpt 3

Respondent C	: Good day, all of you.
Students	: Good day, thanks.
Respondent C	: Today, you will learn about syntactical structures in English.
Rendani (*Raising his hand*):	Oh, I see. This is good because it sounds like a revision to us.
Respondent C	: A revision? Where did you learn this?
Rendani	: My father is a schoolteacher who taught me how to use them.
Respondent C	: So, it means you have enough background knowledge about it.
Other students	: Rendani is correct, Sir; we know them, though we might have forgotten some.
Respondent C	: That's not a problem. Ok, let us see. How do you form a simple sentence?
Linde	: It must have subject + verb + object (SVO), as in 'They write a test every day.'
Respondent C	: That's quite right. Do you have any idea about forming a compound sentence?
Wanga	: That one consists of two sentences joined by 'and' or 'but.'
Respondent C	: It is formed by two independent sentences joined by those conjunctions. Got it?
Students (*Together*):	Yes, Madam, it is understood.

Respondent C, like Respondents A and B, began a lesson by inquiring about her students' knowledge of the formation of English syntactical structures. Students demonstrated advanced competence in forming English syntactical structures by showing that the structure S+V+O is utilised when forming a simple sentence. Furthermore, students were asked to create a compound sentence, which was promptly formed. This response signals the effectiveness of scaffolding in teaching English syntactical structures. The results support Nygren et al. (2024), who estimate that scaffolding strategies make "enactive potentialities" in the environment more accessible for children, deepening and enriching their engagement in lessons.

Excerpt 4

| Respondent D | : My dear students. I am pleased to meet you again. How are you? |
| Students | : Very well, thanks. And you? |

Respondent D : Today's lesson is about syntactical structures that you studied in previous grades. Do you remember how simple and compound sentences are formed in English?

Joseph (*intervenes*): We know the simple sentence, but just a bit about the compound sentence.

Respondent D : Don't worry. The focus is on both the simple and compound sentences.

Abel : Maybe we shall understand it better this year, I believe.

Respondent D : Can anyone write a simple and compound sentence on the board?

Edzani (*He writes*): 'They usually watch games' and 'He loves cats and dogs'.

Respondent D : The first sentence is correct; the second is not. Who can tell me why it is wrong?

Other students : Edzani's second sentence is single. One of the independent sentences is scant.

Respondent D : you are right. It will only be compounded when two sentences are linked by the coordinating conjunctions, including 'and,' 'or,' and 'but.' Right?

Students : Understood, Sir.

Respondent D introduced the lesson: the synthesis of English syntactical structures. When the respondent inquired about students' experience in forming these structures, students indicated that although they understood the formation of simple sentences, they could hardly form compound sentences. In this regard, Edzani wrongly formed the sentence 'He loves cats and dogs' because it is still simple. He confused the simple sentence for the compound due to the presence of the coordination conjunction 'and'. On the other hand, while students had indicated that they could not form a compound sentence, they managed to construct it appropriately. Thus, scaffolding strategies are indispensable in the formation of English syntactical structures. The finding aligns with Utthavudhikorn and Soontornwipast's (2024) suggestion that scaffolding strategies enhance the formation of English syntactical structures.

Excerpt 5

Respondent E : Hi! Good afternoon, class.
Students : Good afternoon, thanks, Madam.
Respondent E : Today, we are studying how to form simple and compound sentences in English. Do you know that we refer to them as syntactical structures?
Students : We knew about it, Sir.
Respondent E : Wow, our lesson is, thus, a revision. Eh, how do we form a compound sentence?
Orifha : It is formed by joining two independent sentences using coordinating conjunctions.
Respondent E : What does the FANBOYS acronym stand for?
Naho : For the conjunctions 'for', 'and', 'nor', 'but', 'or' yet', and 'so.'

Students   : Yep, you are correct.
Respondent E : You must know that SVO's syntactical structure, for example, does not change.
Londo   : So, does it mean our background knowledge plays a part here?
Respondent E : Yes, it assists us in building new knowledge from the existing ones.
Students   : If we learn this way, we feel comfortable in the lesson.
Respondent E : Thank you for your participation in this lesson.

When Respondent E inquired if students knew that the simple and the compound sentences are part of the English syntactical structures, they indicated they did. In this essence, Orifha constructed the sentence accordingly. Respondent E also wanted to know if they remembered what FANBOYS stood for. Naho responded correctly. Students inquired if their background knowledge about the formation of syntactical structures is a prerequisite in studying English. Respondent E gave consent, which satisfied her students. Hence, scaffolding strategies are indispensable in the synthesis of English syntactical structures. The finding is congruent with Karafil and İlbay (2024), who claim that scaffolding strategies enhance the reformulation of ideas and student participation.

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews

Each respondent was interviewed for 15 minutes to save time and obtain comprehensive and manageable data regarding the use of scaffolding strategy to stand up for its indispensability towards synthesising English syntactical structures. The researchers transcribed, meticulously sorted, and analysed the findings to obtain teachers' perceptions concerning the effectiveness of scaffolding strategy in teaching and learning English syntactical structures. The results obtained using semi-structured face-to-face interviews were arranged according to the themes emerging from the analysis. An inductive thematic analysis approach was employed to derive meaning and create themes from data without preconceptions (Crosley, 2021).

The steps for applying thematic analysis were familiarising data, creating initial codes, collating codes with supporting data, grouping codes into themes, reviewing and revising themes, and writing the obtained findings. A "coding reliability thematic analysis necessitating multiple coders as a team was employed because it allowed the researchers to gather themes across a range of comments" (Nephawe & Lambani, 2022). The researchers coded and sorted the results using the intercoder reliability. The coders used the codes to reduce the element of subjectivity and bias. In this regard, researchers were coded as Respondent One, Two, Three, Four, and

Five to conform to the ethical considerations. The following series of interviews were held between the researcher and Grade 10 teachers in which a discussion involving themes emerged from the semi-structured face-to-face interviews:

Theme One

Students' pre-knowledge promotes the formation of English syntactical structures

Students' existing knowledge is a prerequisite in the acquisition of new knowledge. Forming English syntactical structures such as simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex is challenging to teach. However, using scaffolding strategies enhances the synthesis of these sentence structures. This is evident in a discussion between the researcher and Respondent A, in which the latter remarked that

> *"When I teach English syntactical structures, I often ask students how much they understand about it. In this sense, I can plan how to link the existing knowledge with the new knowledge. In this way, my students understand the subject matter."*

From the preceding discussion emanated from the interview between the scholar and the researchers, it is evident that without using pre-knowledge that lays a fundamental background, the formation of English syntactical structures can be complex for the students. Respondent A talks about his personal experience regarding teaching a particular grammatical aspect. Hence, scaffolding strategies are essential in the teaching of English syntactical structures. This result aligns with Nygren et al. (2024), who suggest that English syntactical structures make "enactive potentialities" in the classroom environment more accessible for children, deepening and enriching their engagement in lessons.

Theme Two

The synthesis of English syntactical structures is complex to teach

Forming simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences in English enhances meaning. Appropriate written and spoken communications are carried out using meaningful sentences. In different learning environments, interlocutors use simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences. However, teaching English syntactical structures is challenging, particularly for students studying English as FAL. Respondent B commented that

> *"English syntactic structures are challenging to teach, including simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex. When I teach students without scaffolding the new knowledge, they do not quite understand it."*

The perceptions of Respondent B regarding the complexities of teaching English syntactical structures to Grade 10 EFAL students are evident in understanding their formations. Respondent B indicated that synthesising complex and compound-complex sentences becomes hectic for EFAL students. Nevertheless, scaffolding the existing knowledge is a prerequisite for building new knowledge for teachers to avoid the difficulties experienced by learners when being taught the synthesis of English syntactical structures. This result is congruent with Li's et al. (2024) suggestion that scaffolding strategies are indispensable to forming these structures.

Theme Three

Teachers struggle to identify strategies for teaching English syntactical structures.

Several strategies are available for teaching English syntactical structures. These include Innovative teaching, games, collaborative teaching, online teaching, digital strategy, and scaffolding. Strategies. Even though several methods for teaching English syntactical structures are present, a suitable plan is not easily identifiable by many teachers because they have different perceptions. In this regard, Respondent C stated that

> *"When I teach simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences, I prefer using scaffolding to all other strategies as I can link prior knowledge as a foundation for new ones. My students are not thrilled with the lesson if I do not use suitable enhancement strategies. They usually fail the tests I give."*

Respondent C's remarks are relevant in teaching English syntactical structures because probing questions regarding what students know enable them to understand new concepts. Nonetheless, teachers find it challenging to identify a suitable strategy for teaching English syntactic structures, including simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences. Game strategies, for example, are applicable after teachers have already noticed the need to use them. Additionally, game strategies cannot function appropriately without scaffolding strategies. This result is congruent with Karafil and İlbay (2024), who estimate that scaffolding strategies enhance students' participation in forming English syntactical structures.

Theme Four

Scaffolding strategies are indispensable in teaching English syntactical structures

Scaffolding strategies are indispensable in teaching English syntactical structures, including simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex, because prior knowledge builds a foundation for new knowledge. Even though one

might speculate the indispensability of various strategies in the success of a lesson, the students the teacher teaches, the classes in which students belong, the area or environment in which the school is located, and the grade at which a particular teacher teaches are crucial. Spadafora and Downesa (2020:2) add that the environment, such as the "classroom, home, or playground, is a vital aspect" in this regard. Students "use attention, retention, repetition, and motivation to observe the surroundings, behaviours, and information" they encounter. Respondent D remarked that

"Students in my classroom perform better if I probe them with questions relating to their experience constructing English syntactical structures. It becomes much easier when I ask them to build sentences due to their prior understanding of the concepts."

In the supra comment, it is evident that asking questions that solicit students' prior knowledge enhances the construction of English syntactical structures. In this regard, Respondent D indicates that prior knowledge enhances learning new knowledge using scaffolding strategies. The discovery aligns with Li et al. (2024), who suggest scaffolding strategies are indispensable in synthesising English syntactical structures.

Theme Five

Scaffolding strategies are unstoppable in teaching English syntactical structures

In education, scaffolding is expected to continue due to its versatility in amalgamating prior knowledge and new ones. Teachers who want to succeed in the teaching and learning fraternity use scaffolding strategies to enhance the teaching and learning of English syntactical structures. Respondent E remarked:

"The way students respond to my subject, if I use scaffolding strategies, encourages me to use it continuously. While a few methods are available to teach students, scaffolding learning is the best paraphernalia."

As Respondent E argues that scaffolding strategies reign supreme in the teaching and learning of English syntactical structures, it is evident that even if teachers develop other relevant strategies, including game approaches, scaffolding can continuously be employed to link existing knowledge to new ones. Therefore, scaffolding strategies cannot be ignored in the teaching and learning of English syntactical structures. This finding aligns with Karafil and İlbay's (2024) suggestion that scaffolding strategies enhance the reformulation of ideas and student participation. In this regard, the possibility of continuous scaffolding strategies is inevitable in teaching and learning.

CONCLUSION

In the present study, an attempt has been made to analyse the indispensability of scaffolding strategies to enhance the synthesis of English syntactical structures by Grade 10 EFAL students in South African Secondary Schools in line with the research questions 'How indispensable are scaffolding strategies for the teaching of English syntactical structures at a South African secondary school?' and 'To what extent does scaffolding strategies enhance the teaching of English syntactical structures at a South African secondary school?'. Using classroom observations and semi-structured face-to-face interviews, the researchers established informed results regarding teaching English syntactical structures to these students. For example, the present study discovered that although some schoolteachers were reluctant to use scaffolding strategies as they did not consider it suitable to enhance the synthesis of English syntactical structures, the actual study findings indicated a strong willingness by the majority of schoolteachers to utilise scaffolding strategies in the synthesis of English syntactical structures. Therefore, in these activities, it was evident that scaffolding strategies are more indispensable in teaching English syntactical structures than any other strategy.

The insights from classroom observations and semi-structured face-to-face interviews are opportune for teaching these syntactical structures worldwide. Moreover, the findings from the semi-structured face-to-face interviews endorsed the need to apply scaffolding strategies in teaching English syntactical structures. The present study's implications indicate that teachers are expected to apply scaffolding strategies to enhance the teaching of English syntactical structures. However, the limitation of the present study was time constraints, as both the classroom observations and the semi-structured face-to-face interviews could not go beyond the stipulated time to manage the full realisation of their activities. Also, a small sample size was a challenge because the population of this study comprised seven EFAL teachers, and only five of them participated in this study.

Regarding different stakeholders in teaching and learning, students feel comfortable when their teachers use scaffolding strategies because interest in the subject matter is provoked. Teachers gain more insights into using scaffolding strategies to enhance the teaching of English syntactical structures. Additionally. future researchers can further research the indispensability of scaffolding strategies in

improving the formation of English syntactical structures. The present study sanctions the use of scaffolding strategies to enhance the teaching of English syntactical structures to Grade 10 EFAL students and most English L2 users worldwide. In this sense, we do not hesitate to recommend using scaffolding strategies to enhance the synthesis of English syntactical structures.

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