

## Exploring Deep Learning in English Grammar Instruction Through the Two Stay Two Stray Model

Shofa Abidah<sup>1\*</sup>, Donna Sita Andriyani<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> MAN 2 Kota Malang

shofaabidah12@gmail.com\*

### Abstract

*Deep Learning is a learning model that encourages students not only to comprehend the material but also to apply it in real-world contexts. Deep learning models are closely connected to the implementation of English-language learning, as English is widely understood as a medium for communication with people globally. This study investigates how the Two Stay Two Stray (TSTS) learning model can support deep learning in English grammar instruction, particularly in students' use of modal verbs. A descriptive qualitative design was employed, with classroom observations and analysis of students' reflective worksheets used to capture their experiences and perceptions. The findings indicated that TSTS provided opportunities for students to apply grammatical concepts in authentic communicative tasks and to engage meaningfully with cultural content, and that students generally perceived the model as enjoyable and beneficial for their learning. The study suggests that careful teacher guidance is essential for maximizing the potential of TSTS within a deep learning framework and recommends further research with larger and more diverse samples to substantiate these results.*

**Keywords:** deep learning, grammar, two stay two strays, English.

### INTRODUCTION

The shift in current educational goals toward incorporating 21st-century competencies requires transforming conventional education systems into ones focused on enhancing students' capabilities and readiness for global competitiveness. The competencies targeted for this century include critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and digital literacy. As part of the endeavour to achieve these competencies, the Indonesian Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education introduced Deep Learning as an approach to be implemented in learning activities. Deep learning is an instructional approach created to guide students not only to comprehend the material being instructed but also to apply it in their daily lives (Putri, 2024; Prihantoro et al., 2025). It refers to an approach that enables students to construct meaningful understanding, connect new knowledge with their experiences, and reflectively implement what they have learned in their everyday lives (Mystakidis et al., 2021; Mutmainah et al., 2025). This approach fosters learning experiences that are mindful, meaningful, and enjoyable, and not only enhances academic understanding but also promotes students' emotional, character, and skill development (Astono et al., 2026). Consequently, deep learning can serve as a framework for teachers to improve the quality of classroom instruction and enhance students' academic and socio-emotional capabilities across all subjects.

English language instruction is closely interconnected with the concept of deep learning, as it enables students to apply English in their everyday lives to communicate with people

globally. Hence, the essential aim of language teaching and learning, particularly English, was that it should establish a meaningful conversation among the people for a number of diverse cultures (Rohmani & Andriyanti, 2022). In addition, deep learning aligns with constructivist theory, which emphasizes that students can learn through experience and social interaction (Bruner, 1966; Vygotsky, 1978). The deep learning approach comprises three key elements: mindful learning, meaningful learning, and joyful learning (Putria et al., 2022). Mindful learning is an approach that applies the principle of full awareness to the learning process, focusing intently on the subject matter with an open and calm attitude (Diputera & Zulpan, 2024; Irfanudin et al., 2025). Meaningful learning is the process by which students connect new information with their current knowledge (Sari & Arta, 2025). Joyful learning is an approach grounded in enjoyment that engages students emotionally and provides meaningful learning experiences, aiming to foster learning with enthusiasm, curiosity, and happiness rather than merely to meet academic requirements (Tayeh et al., 2024). These three core components of deep learning can be implemented to foster a positive, enjoyable, and meaningful learning experience for students.

In line with the implementation of English instruction, grammar is one of the skill components that can guide students in practicing proper communication. The structural basis of grammar establishes word categories, word groups, and guidelines for creating coherent sentences (Pham, 2023). It serves as the foundation for effective communication, allowing individuals to organize words to convey messages clearly and meaningfully (Abdulrahman & Kara, 2023; Şahinkaya, 2023). Literature suggests teaching grammar communicatively by engaging students to actively use it for communication and to create an enjoyable learning atmosphere. Teachers should consider teaching grammar communicatively to improve their students' grammar knowledge and help them communicate in a proper and precise manner (Enesi et al., 2023). It is also suggested to incorporate language skills with cultural competence to prepare students in communicating with other people around the world. Communicative competence in a foreign language cannot be achieved without understanding the cultural context in which the language is used to (Griffith & Lim, 2024; Fauzi et al., 2025). To overcome students' lack of enthusiasm during lessons, ESL teachers of grammar should use an appropriate strategy (Zuhriyah & Laili, 2022). Consequently, a learning model that can engage students to participate actively during the class and include cultural content are extremely needed in teaching grammar.

The Two Stay Two Stray (TSTS) learning model is one method used to enhance students' language skills. TSTS has been found effective in improving students' speaking abilities, specifically fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary (Zahro et al., 2024). In TSTS, group roles are divided into two categories: hosts, who present discussion results to other groups, and guests, who receive them (Isnain et al., 2023). Over the past five years, various studies have examined the implementation of the TSTS method across different academic disciplines and educational levels. Research at the primary school level indicated that TSTS can encourage student engagement, independence, and motivation in subjects such as Social Studies, Natural Sciences, and Civics Education (Putri & Susanto, 2023; Astuti et al., 2022; Sari, 2024; Indriasari & Fasha, 2022). Studies conducted at the junior high school level revealed that the TSTS model can improve student learning outcomes in mathematics and English (Sulistiawati et al., 2025; Hajeniati & Kaharuddin, 2022; Fadliansyah, 2023). The TSTS method

is also associated with increased student participation in Civics and English (Afriliani et al., 2022; Mariska et al., 2025).

However, studies on implementing TSTS in English instruction, particularly regarding how it enhances students' grammatical proficiency and its connection to deep learning, still require further exploration. Therefore, this study aims to provide a detailed description of the application of TSTS in English learning, its relationship with deep learning components, and students' perspectives on its implementation. By exploring the use of TSTS to improve students' grammar skills, this study contributes to pedagogical innovation and the application of the deep learning approach in English education. Specifically, this study is expected to depict the application of the learning model through students' lenses, as the primary subject, to broaden insight into applying the TSTS learning model.

## **METHOD**

This study implemented a descriptive qualitative approach to analyse the data. The choice of a qualitative approach aims to capture comprehensive information about the experience and articulate it through a holistic explanation. Additionally, it allows in-depth analysis through intensive and extended description and investigation of the topic under study (O'Leary, 2004; Yin, 2003). The participants consisted of 36 tenth-grade students from an Islamic secondary school in Malang. Data were collected through classroom observations and students' reflective worksheets. The worksheets consisted of open-ended questions asking students to describe what they learned from the activity, how they perceived their teamwork and grammar practice, and what cultural insights they gained. These written reflections were treated as documents and analyzed thematically. Data analysis followed Miles and Huberman's (1994) framework, involving iterative steps of data reduction (identifying and coding recurring themes), data display (organizing themes in tables and narrative descriptions), and conclusion drawing or verification (interpreting how the themes related to deep learning components and the implementation of TSTS). In addition, initials were used in reporting students' reflective worksheet to ensure their anonymity and confidentiality.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Implementation of Two Stay Two Stray and Deep Learning Components**

The implementation of the TSTS model followed this sequence: in the first week, the teacher explained the material on modal verbs and distributed worksheets to enhance students' understanding. Afterward, the teacher divided the students into groups of four and assigned each group a specific country, such as the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, Egypt, France, South Korea, China, Japan, and Singapore. Each group was given one week to compose 5–8 sentences using modal verbs, including topics such as culture, etiquette, traditional food, and potential universities in their assigned country. Students were permitted to gather information from various online sources, including Google, YouTube, and other applications. Students were also instructed to manually arrange their sentences into an engaging infographic poster. On the day of the presentation, two students acted as tour guides, explaining their prepared infographic posters, while the other two group members acted as visitors, listening to the presentation and completing the worksheets provided by the teacher. The worksheet consisted of interesting tips they found and modal verbs used by the group in the infographic poster. There was also a column on the strengths and weaknesses of the group presentation,

where students should conduct peer assessments of their friends' presentations and infographic posters. The teacher allocated approximately 7 minutes to each group to listen to the explanation and finish the worksheet before moving on to the next group or another country. Finally, after completing the worksheets, the students returned to their respective groups to work collaboratively on answering reflective questions.

According to classroom observations, several activities within the Two Stay Two Stray (TSTS) method were identified that correlate to deep learning components. During the observation, mindful learning was evident in an activity in which students were stimulated to practice using modal verbs while creating infographics, which were subsequently shared in presentations. For instance, students used modal verbs such as can, must, must not, could, and should. The following are examples of modal verbs used primarily during the presentation showed in Table 1.

Table 1. Modal Verbs Commonly Used in Presentations

| Group                       | Modal Verb | Sentence Example                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Group 1<br>(South Korea)    | Must not   | You must not wear shoes inside Korean homes or traditional places.                                                   |
|                             | Can        | You can try traditional foods like kimchi, <i>bibimbap</i> , and <i>tteokbokki</i> , which are popular across Korea. |
| Group 2<br>(Japan)          | May        | You may study at Kyoto University if you are interested in high-level research and life sciences.                    |
|                             | Must       | You must lower your body (bow) to show appreciation or to say thank you politely.                                    |
| Group 3<br>(France)         | Can        | On Bastille Day, you can enjoy parades, fireworks, and public celebrations.                                          |
|                             | May        | When meeting someone formally, you may shake hands as a common greeting.                                             |
| Group 4<br>(United States)  | Must       | You must learn about 'tipping culture' in the United States.                                                         |
|                             | Should     | When talking with others, you should keep a distance of at least four feet to respect personal space.                |
| Group 5<br>(United Kingdom) | Could      | You could try Haggis, a traditional food, if you visit Scotland.                                                     |
|                             | Should     | If you are interested in becoming an engineer, you should study at Imperial College London.                          |
| Group 6<br>(Singapore)      | Must       | In Singapore, you must not chew gum because it is illegal.                                                           |
|                             | Should     | Tourists should try Hainanese chicken rice, which is considered Singapore's national dish.                           |
| Group 7<br>(Australia)      | May        | You may greet people casually and use first names because it is allowed in Australia.                                |
|                             | Can        | You can greet people you meet by saying 'Gday', which means hello.                                                   |
| Group 8<br>(China)          | Must       | You must not stick your chopsticks upright in rice as it means a funeral ritual in China.                            |
|                             | Could      | Students who are passionate about aerospace could consider studying at Beihang University.                           |

|                    |          |                                                                      |
|--------------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Group 9<br>(Egypt) | Must not | You must not use your left hand when giving or receiving something.  |
|                    | Should   | You should dress modestly when visiting mosques or religious states. |

From the table, it can be concluded that students practiced using the modal verbs they learned by informing about the specific culture of their assigned country. The finding indicated mindful learning because students connected the lesson with their prior knowledge and real-life contexts. In this case, students learned not only to memorize sentence structures involving modal verbs, but also to apply them in real-world practice and explain them verbally. From this activity, they can differentiate when to use specific modals for specific situations, for example when they have to use *must* or *should*. They furthermore learned to respond to questions posed by peers acting as visitors, and the visitors assessed their performance, a process that fosters their critical thinking. Moreover, empathy in mindful learning was evident when students were instructed to listen attentively to their peers' explanations and to respond politely to their questions. All of the above results in line with the objective of mindful learning, which is to build self-awareness, metacognition, and empathy. Moreover, the results above resonated with Astono et al.'s (2026) framework of deep and meaningful learning, as students not only engaged cognitively with the material but also developed emotionally and in character.

In addition, the second component of deep learning, meaningful learning, was found during the presentation. Through the TSTS method, students were encouraged to explore the culture of a specific country by engaging with both the infographics they had prepared themselves and those presented by other groups. This aligns with a core objective of English language instruction, which expects students not merely to practice listening, writing, and reading skills in English but also to obtain insight into the diverse cultures of other nations. Similarly, these activities helped foster tolerance toward other countries' cultures. For instance, they used simple materials that represented the country and acted as tour guides, greeting every visitor politely. They also used several specific terms from the country, such as greeting phrases like *Anyeonghaseyo* and *Ohayou*, which mean "hello" in South Korea and Japan, respectively, or "*Bonjour*" when the visitors visited the France group. This is in line with the objective of mindful learning, which is to develop material appropriate for students. The information presented in the infographics offers more than just linguistic value. From this activity, the students could also develop their intercultural abilities as they shared the cultures of specific countries. As noted by Fauzi et al. (2025), cultural engagement with diverse perspectives allows learners to develop empathy, tolerance, and intercultural sensitivity, qualities that are increasingly important in global citizenship. This can help them in order to survive and communicate with people with diverse backgrounds. Moreover, this shared information activity also allowed students to learn about prestigious universities in the provided countries. As they are high school students, this activity can give them insight into how to navigate cultural content, especially if they want to study abroad.

Furthermore, the third component of deep learning is joyful learning, evident during the activity, in which these activities are designed to encourage students to enjoy the learning process in a fun atmosphere and to foster their motivation to learn. In this TSTS method, students were instructed to manually create an engaging infographic poster within their

respective groups. It allowed them to collaborate and freely express their creativity in designing their work. This fostered a positive attitude toward learning, as students collaborated effectively to create an engaging infographic. Students were also encouraged to deepen their understanding of other countries' cultures by moving around the room and completing the provided worksheets. In this activity, students demonstrated willingness and motivation to participate in the presentation. For instance, the students who acted as visitors asked questions in English to obtain specific information from the group. In this case, they practiced using English to ask and comment about their friends' presentation in an enjoyable manner and were not afraid to make mistakes. Consequently, the lesson shifts away from a passive process of merely listening to the teacher's explanations, instead offering students full opportunities to learn from one another and put what they have learned into real practice. It was found that students perceived this activity positively because they engaged well in presenting and completing the worksheet. This finding is in line with a study by Mariska et al. (2025), which found that the TSTS model can increase students' enthusiasm for learning activities by encouraging active participation, building confidence, and fostering peer interaction.

### **Students' Perspectives on the Implementation of Two Stay Two Stray in Learning Activity**

After students completed their group worksheet, they were asked reflective questions about interesting tips they gained from other groups, elements that caught their attention, what they would improve about their own infographics and presentations if they could revise them, and their opinions on the TSTS activity. A document analysis was conducted in order to comprehend their perspectives on the learning activity using TSTS model. The following were the students' views on the implementation of TSTS in the learning process.

**Group 1:** *From this activity, our group learned the importance of teamwork, creativity, and clear communication using proper grammar. We also learned how to share ideas with others, which can help us see new perspectives and try to improve our work.*

**Group 2:** *We learned a lot about the culture of the countries around the world. Since we had to do an in-depth project, we learned a lot of new information from this activity and by practicing English.*

**Group 7:** *This activity makes us realize that effective presentation material requires strong teamwork. That's why we tried to prepare well*

From the excerpt, it can be concluded that Group 1, Group 2, Group 7 considered TSTS activity as an opportunity to gain their teamwork and tried to prepare their project well. They stated that during the group activity, they learned to be creative in presenting the material and tried to do in-depth research before presenting on the cultures of the countries they had. This is because before the presentation day, the teacher had already asked them to research the information from reliable sources rather than just take it without double-checking. Furthermore, the students stated that this activity broaden their knowledge dealing with cultures from other countries. It can be seen in the activity, where they can exchange ideas with their friend and gain new information about the culture, etiquette, traditional food, and potential universities in the country. Another perspective found that they perceived this activity can assist them to

practice the grammar material that they learned before. In this case, they tried to practice presenting the modal verbs correctly.

In addition, other opinions were stated by groups such as Group 3, Group 4, and Group 6. They stated that this activity helped them to construct the modal verb well during the activity. The following are their perspectives.

**Group 3:** *This activity helps us to work together and to present the information clearly in English. Then, we also learn to construct modal verbs correctly in our sentences.*

**Group 4:** *We learned to speak more confidently, as we prepared before the presentation. We also learned to present using good grammar concepts, especially for the modal verbs.*

**Group 6:** *We can practice to speak English well by practicing our grammar. We learn many new cultures from other groups too.*

From the excerpt, it was found that Groups 3 valued TSTS activity as a way to practice their grammar skills. They needed to present the cultural information using the modal verb. It provided them the chance to practice in a real-life context, not only to memorize it in writing. Meanwhile, Groups 4 and 6 stated that they learned to practice speaking using grammar and became more confident in using English. This TSTS activity provides a chance not only for the guide to present the material, but also for the visitors to ask further about the cultural information from the group they visited. Therefore, they can exchange ideas and gain new information through this activity.

However, a specific challenge was found from the students' perspectives in this case: they were concerned about the overlapping information presented by the group with the modal verb in the infographic.

**Group 2:** *This activity can help us understand other cultures well and practice speaking English well. However, after seeing other groups' work, we think that later we need to add more detail dealing with the modal verb, not too much focus on giving specific information about the countries.*

**Group 9:** *We learned about many cultures across different countries from our friends' presentations; however, we think we need to add more suggestions using the modal verbs in our infographic.*

This indicated that the teacher's role in supervising this activity is highly needed. It is essential for the teacher to ensure that students understand that the cultural content supports rather than overshadows the targeted language learning. Moreover, the teacher can monitor students' progress and redirect their attention to the use and functions of modal verbs during the presentation. This activity can ensure that students can focus on presenting the material without going beyond the learning objective. This is in line with the study by Rohmani & Andriyanti (2022), which stated that in the classroom, teachers play a role in assisting their students to interact and communicate the target language appropriately and successfully. Therefore, the teacher must ensure that they can act as a facilitator and supervisor during this TSTS activity.

In conclusion, students perceived TSTS as a meaningful and engaging experience that supported both their academic and personal development. This activity enabled them to strengthen their teamwork and communication skills through collaborative learning, broaden their cultural awareness, and apply grammatical concepts in authentic contexts. Moreover, it enhanced students' confidence in speaking, presenting, and expressing ideas in English. Overall, the findings indicate that TSTS effectively promoted students' grammar competence while fostering essential collaborative and communicative skills. These findings are consistent with previous studies that reported the effectiveness of TSTS in enhancing language-related skills. Zahro et al. (2024), to illustrate, found that TSTS improved students' speaking fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. In the present study, students similarly highlighted the role of TSTS in supporting their spoken grammar practice, particularly in using modal verbs in authentic presentations.

## **CONCLUSION**

According to the findings, the TSTS learning model helped students practice the grammar they had learned; in this case, the use of modal verbs to give tips about a specific culture in a country. This activity helped them implement the language in their daily lives. The implementation of TSTS is also closely linked to key components of deep learning: meaningful, mindful, and joyful learning. The integration of cultural materials also developed their cultural understanding. Furthermore, students responded positively to the implementation of TSTS. They perceived that TSTS could give them a chance to improve their grammar skills, build strong teamwork, and become more confident in speaking. In addition, they stated that the TSTS learning model gives them a chance to broaden their understanding of other countries' cultures. However, specific teacher guidance in supervising the presentation is highly needed, as it can help students achieve a better understanding of the material. This study recommends that teachers should implement the TSTS model in their learning activities, as it can help create a delightful learning atmosphere and develop students' skills.

## **SUGGESTION**

As this study examines students' perspectives from a limited number of participants, a larger sample size is highly recommended to gain a broader perspective on the implementation of the TSTS model. Given that the study was conducted in a single Islamic secondary school with a relatively small number of participants, and that the evidence of grammatical improvement relies primarily on students' self-reports and qualitative observations, future research should incorporate more systematic measures of grammar performance, such as pre- and post-tests or rubric-based assessments of spoken and written output. Including multiple schools and different grade levels would also help to provide a more comprehensive picture of how TSTS supports deep learning in English grammar instruction.

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