

# AN ANALYSIS OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS' ABILITY IN WRITING COMPLEX SENTENCE HAVING ADJECTIVE CLAUSE AFTER ONLINE LEARNING AT THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF BUNG HATTA UNIVERSITY

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## INTRODUCTION

Writing as one of the four basic skills is very important in learning English. Writing is a very complex process involving the ability to communicate in a foreign language (English) and the ability to construct a text that expresses the writer's ideas effectively [1].

There are four kinds of sentences that students learn: simple sentence, compound sentence, complex sentence, and compound-complex sentence [2]. A simple sentence is a sentence containing only one clause with a subject and a predicate and it is also called an independent clause. A compound sentence is a sentence that has at least two independent clauses joined by a comma, semicolon, or conjunction. A complex sentence is a sentence that contains an independent clause and one dependent clause. Compound-complex sentence comprises at least two independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses.

A complex sentence consists of one independent clause and one dependent clause. An independent clause (main clause) is a clause that can stand alone and have a complete meaning, and a dependent clause (subordinate clause) is a clause that depends on the independent clause. An independent clause is a complete sentence. It contains the main subject and verb of a sentence so it can stand alone [3]. On the other hand, a dependent clause (subordinate clause) can never stand alone as a complete sentence [4].

There are several previous studies that examined the students' ability to write complex sentences. Ernis (2019) found that the students' ability in writing a complex sentence using an adjective clause was very good [5]. Another

study was done by Hamidah (2016) who found that students' understanding of a complex sentence using an adjective clause is enough [6]. Although these two previous studies concluded that the students' ability in writing complex sentences was quite good, there must be problems faced by students in writing complex sentences. In a previous study by Asral (2020), it was found that some students could not express correct meaning when writing complex sentences [7]. All of these studies were done before Covid-19 when the learning process was usually done face-to-face.

Some other studies discuss the difficulties faced by teachers and students in learning with the online system. Eviliana (2020) found that online learning gets a positive perception from some motivated students because it is flexible and effective; however, some others are lazy in doing it and choose to procrastinate the assignments [8]. Another study by Efriana (2021) found that the problems faced by teachers include weak mastery of IT and limited access to supervision towards students. The problems of students were in the form of inactivity in following learning, limited supporting facilities, and insufficient internet network access. The problem of parents was in the form of limited time in accompanying their children during online learning [9]. A research carried out by Nashruddin, Alam, and Tanasy (2020) found that some students live in remote rural areas that were not covered by the internet. Furthermore, their cellular network was sometimes unstable, due to the geographical location which was quite far from the signal coverage. This was also a problem faced by many students who take online learning, so the implementation was less effective [10].

## METHOD

The research belongs to descriptive research, and it is designed to describe the current situations or status of the research subject. The sample of this research was all the second year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University consisting of 37 students. Writing test was used as the instrument and to maintain the test validity it was made in accordance the syllabus, curriculum, and teaching material given to the second year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University. Test reliability was found by applying the inter-rater method and the correlation of the test was 0.98 (very high correlation) which means the test was reliable.

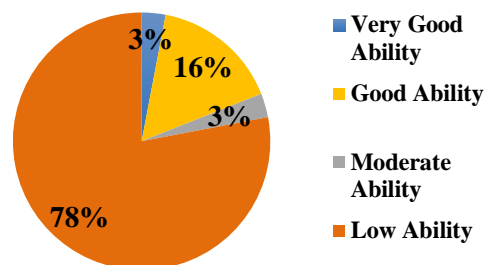
To collect the data, the researcher administered the test by using a google form application in 45 minutes. The researcher asked the students to combine pair of simple sentences into complex sentences having adjective clauses using relative pronouns (who, whom, which, whose, and that). Next, the researcher counted the raw score of each student. Then, the researcher categorized the students who had very high, high, moderate, and low ability according to the criteria used at Bung Hatta University. Finally, the researcher calculated the percentage of the students in each ability level.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The researcher found that only 1 (3%) student had very good ability, 6 (16%) students had good ability, 1 (3%) student had moderate ability, and 29 (78%) students had low ability in writing complex sentence having adjective clause using relative pronouns (who, whom, which, that, and whose) as shown in Diagram 1.

Diagram 1

### Students' Ability in Writing Complex Sentence Having Adjective Clause after Online Learning



In contrast, Ernís (2019) found that the second year students' ability in writing complex sentence by using adjective clause at the English Education Department of Bung Hatta University was very good. It was proved by the percentage of students who had very good ability in writing complex sentence by using adjective clause was 61%. Additional information, students in Ernís' research carried out the learning process with face to face system. More specific findings as the answers to research questions are presented below.

1. The Second Year Students' Ability in Writing Complex Sentence Having Adjective Clause Modifying Subject Using Relative Pronoun (who, whom, whose, and that)

After the researcher analyzed the students' answers, the researcher found that many students had low ability in using relative pronouns *who*, *which*, *that*, and *whose* in complex sentences having adjective clause modifying subject. The low ability of students to use relative pronouns *who*, *which*, *that*, and *whose* affected students' ability to write complex sentences having adjective clause modifying subject. This statement is proven based on the data as shown in Table 1.

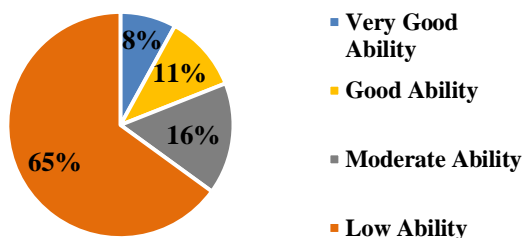
**Table 1**  
**Students' Ability in Writing Complex Sentence Having Adjective Clause Modifying Subject Using Relative Pronoun (*Who, Which, That, and Whose*)**

Relative Pronoun	Students' Ability in Writing Complex Sentence Having Adjective Clause Modifying Subject			
	Very good	Good	Moderate	Low
Who/ That	6 (16%) students	3 (8%) students	8 (22%) students	20 (54%) students
Which/ That	4 (11%) students	8 (22%) students	6 (16%) students	19 (51%) students
Whose	2 (5%) students	2 (5%) students	3 (8%) students	30 (81%) students

The researcher found that 3 (8%) students had very good ability, 4 (11%) students had good ability, 6 (16%) students had moderate ability, and 24 (65%) students had low ability in writing complex sentence having adjective clause modifying subject as presented in Diagram 2.

**Diagram 2**

**Students' Ability in Writing Complex Sentence Having Adjective Clause Modifying Subject**



Ernis (2019) found that 61% students had very good ability in writing complex sentence by using relative pronouns as subject [5].

The most mistakes students made in writing complex sentences having adjective clauses were the number of sentences that did not express the correct meaning. It happened

because many students' used incorrect grammar and incorrect mechanics. For examples:

- a) A student wrote: The woman **whom** taking some time off from work **her baby is sick**

Correct answer: The woman **whose baby is sick** is taking some time off from work.

- b) A student wrote: Hawaii consists of **right** principal islands **ia** a favorite vacation spot.

Correct answer: Hawaii, **which consists of eight principal islands**, is a favorite vacation spot.

Based on the first example, the researcher found that the student used the wrong relative pronoun '**whom**' where it should be '**whose**' to show possession. Another grammar mistake is the student wrote the dependent clause incorrectly where '**her baby is sick**' should be '**whose baby is sick**'. This wrong grammar makes the sentence expresses incorrect meaning. The last mistake is the student used incorrect mechanic for the punctuation where there is not a period after the sentence.

In terms of the second example, the researcher found that the student used incorrect grammar where there should be '**which**' as the relative pronoun to connect the dependent clause with the independent clause but there was not. Another mistake was the sentence did not express the correct meaning. And the last mistake was the mechanic for punctuation where there should be commas to separate the dependent clause with the independent clause in a nonrestrictive clause. In addition, the student also wrote incorrect spelling for the words '**right**' and '**ia**' where they should be '**eight**' and '**is**'.

- 2. The Second Year Students' Ability in Writing Complex Sentence Having Adjective Clause Modifying Object Using Relative Pronoun (who, whom, whose, and that)

The researcher found the fact that most of the students had low ability to use relative pronouns *who(m), which, that,* and *whose* in complex sentences having adjective clause modifying

object because students' mistakes in using relative pronouns made the sentences written by students meaningless. In more detail, the students' ability to use relative pronouns can be seen in Table 2.

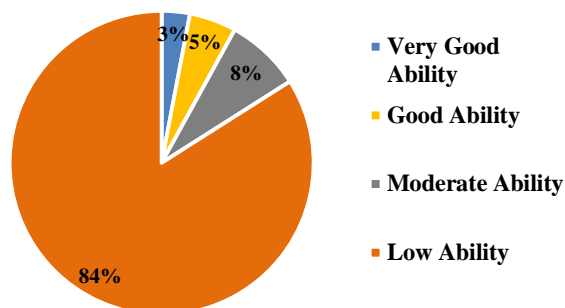
**Table 2**  
**Students' Ability in Writing Complex Sentence Having Adjective Clause Modifying Object Using Relative Pronoun (*Who, Which, That, and Whose*)**

Relative Pronoun	Students' Ability in Writing Complex Sentence Having Adjective Clause Modifying Object			
	Very good	Good	Moderate	Low
Who/ That	2 (5%) students	3 (8%) students	2 (5%) students	30 (81%) students
Which/ That	3 (8%) students	8 (22%) students	6 (16%) students	20 (54%) students
Whose	2 (5%) students	0 (0%) student	1 (3%) student	34 (94%) students

The researcher found that 1 (3%) student had very good ability, 2 (5%) students had good ability, 3 (8%) students had moderate ability, and 31 (84%) students had low ability in writing complex sentence having adjective clause modifying object as shown in Diagram 3.

**Diagram 3**

**Students' Ability in Writing Complex Sentence Having Adjective Clause Modifying Object**



In contrast, Ernis (2019) found that 73.9% students had very good ability in writing complex sentence by using relative pronouns as object [5].

The students' mistakes in using grammar and mechanics led to the most mistakes of students in writing complex sentences having adjective clauses, namely the number of sentences that did not express the correct meaning. For examples:

- c) A student wrote: The child **whom** you stepped on is fine.

Correct answer: The child **whose foot you stepped on** is fine.

- d) A student wrote: Ms. Rivera had collapsed from heat exhaustion **that** found her in the **door way**.

Correct answer: Ms. Rivera, **whom I found in the doorway**, had collapsed from heat exhaustion.

Based on the third example in (c), the researcher found that the student used wrong grammar for the relative pronoun where '**whom**' should be '**whose**'. Another grammar mistake was the student wrote an incorrect dependent clause where '**whom you stepped on**' should be '**whose foot you stepped on**'. And the last mistake was the sentence did not express the correct meaning.

In terms of the fourth example in (d), the researcher found some grammatical mistakes. First, the student used incorrect relative pronoun where **‘that’** should be **‘whom/who’** because in a nonrestrictive clause, the relative pronoun **“that”** cannot replace **“who(m) and which”**. Second, the student wrote the dependent clause incorrectly where **‘that found her in the door way’** should be **‘whom I found in the doorway’** and put the dependent clause after the subject **‘Ms. Rivera’**. These mistakes made the sentence expresses incorrect meaning. Last, there were some mistakes in applying mechanics. First, there were no commas to separate the dependent clause from the independent clause. Second, there was a space between the word **‘door way’** where it should be **‘doorway’**.

#### CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings, the second year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University were said to have low ability in writing complex sentence having adjective clause after online learning. If this research is compared with research by Ernis (2019), we can conclude that the face-to-face system seems to be more effective than the online learning system for students in carrying out the learning process. Related to the study, the writer would like to give several suggestions. The researcher suggests the lecturer to review the material about the complex sentence. To the students, they are suggested to join the writing class seriously and pay attention to the lecturer’s explanation. Besides that, the students should do more exercises to write complex sentence having adjective clause. The researcher suggests the future researcher to find out more about the reasons for the differences in the findings of this study with the previous study. The researcher suggests to the campus parties that the face-to-face system can be implemented immediately because this system was likely more effective to use for the learning process and produces better students’ ability.

**Keywords:** Writing, Ability, Writing, Complex Sentence, Adjective Clause, Online Learning.

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