

**A STUDY OF THE THIRD YEAR STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN WRITING
COMPLEX SENTENCES IN SIMPLE PAST TENSE
AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF BUNG HATTA UNIVERSITY**

Zulfikar¹, Dra. Lisa Tavriayanti, M.Pd², Dr. Lely Refnita, M.Pd²

¹The Student of English Department, the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Bung Hatta University

E-mail : zulfikar595@yahoo.com

²The Lecturers of English Department, the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Bung Hatta University

Abstract

The purpose of this research was to find the difficulties by the third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in writing complex sentence in simple past tense. The design of this research was descriptive. The population of this research was the third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University in academic year 2013/2014. The population was 96 students; they were separated into three classes; class A, class B and class C. The researcher used cluster random sampling technique to get the representative sample. Class B was the sample and the total number of sample members was 40 students. The instrument used to get the data was a writing test. The researcher tried out the test to the population out of the sample before giving it to the sample. The purpose of tried out was to make sure whether the allocation of the time was enough or not and instruction of the test was understood by the students. The researcher found the reliability of the test by using inter-rater technique. It was found that the coefficient correlation was very high (0.97). By having known the difficulties found by students in writing complex sentence in simple past tense. Dealing with this conclusion, the writer suggests English lecturers should give more explanation and exercises in writing complex sentence in simple past tense. For the students, the researcher suggests that they should pay attention when the lecturer explains the lesson and the students should also do more exercises.

Key words: Writing, Complex Sentence, Adjective Clause, Simple Past Tense

A. Introduction

English is very important and has many interrelationship with various aspects of life owned by human being. In Indonesia, English is considered as the first foreign language and is taught formally from junior high school up the university level. In English, there are four language skills that should be mastered,

they are: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The reading skill becomes very important in the education field, students need excercises in order to have a good reading skill.

Writing is one of the English skills that has a very important role in many contexts of life especially in school. Because every day the students will write ideas to

complete their tasks. If we talk about writing, grammar is a very important thing because we cannot write well if we do not master a good grammar. According to Thornbury (1999:1), grammar is a description of the rules that govern how a language's sentences are formed. It means a grammar attempts to explain why the sentences are acceptable.

One topic in studying grammar is complex sentence. Pardiyono (2007:22) classifies sentences based on the complexity of elements into four types: simple sentence, compound sentence, complex sentence and compound-complex sentence. A complex sentence is made up of one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses which begin with subordinating words such as while, when, as soon as, if, that, who, which, although, because, etc.

In semester VI, English department students were studying complex sentences. While studying complex sentences and writing class, there were some students who complained about it. They found difficulties how to write complex sentences. This fact should be proved scientifically.

Complex sentence is one of the types of sentences that has an independent clause and at least one dependent clause.

There are three kinds of complex sentences. They are noun clause, adverbial clause and adjective clause. Noun clause is a clause acting as a noun. Adverb clause acts as an adverbial and indicates the times, manner, or degree of an action. Adjectives clause is a clause that modifies a noun.

B. Research Method

The design of this research was descriptive research. Gay (1987:189) says that descriptive research involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. Descriptive research was aimed at describing an accurate, factual, and systematic nature of a certain condition. In this research, the researcher described and analyzed the third year students' difficulties in writing complex sentences in simple past tense at English Department of Bung Hatta University. The population was the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which she or he would like the result of the study to be generalizable (Gay, 1987:102). Population of this research was the third year students at English Department of Bung Hatta University. Total number of them was 96 students who are group into three classes. They were class A,B and C.

The instrument used to collect the data in this research was writing test. The researcher took the test items from English book and from internet that discussed about complex sentence. The test consisted of 25 items. Five items are writing complex sentences having relative pronoun as replacement of subjects, five items are writing complex sentences having relative pronoun as replacement of objects, five items are writing complex sentences having relative pronoun as replacement of possessive, five items are writing complex sentences having relative pronoun as modifier of places, and five items are writing complex sentences having relative pronoun as modifier of times. The researcher gave about 40 minutes to do the test. Before giving the test, the researcher tried out the test to the students to make sure whether the allocation of the time was enough and instruction of the test was understood by the students.

Reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures (Gay, 1987:135). To get reliability of the test in this research, the researcher used inter-rater method To calculate the coefficient correlation between the score of the two groups, the researcher used Pearson Product Moment formula as follows (Arikunto 2012:87).

$$r_{xy} = \frac{n \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{\{n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2\} \{n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2\}}}$$

Where:

r_{xy} = the coefficient of correlation between variable x and y

x = the total number of difficulties found by first assessor

y = the total number of difficulties found by second assessor

$\sum x$ = the sum of x

$\sum y$ = the sum of y

n = the total number of the students who followed the test

$\sum xy$ = the total cross product of xy

According to Arikunto (2012:89), the interpretation of the correlation coefficient as follows:

1. .81-1.00 = very high
2. .61- .80 = high
3. .41 - .60 = enough
4. .21- .40 = low
5. 0 - .20 = very low

After conducting the test, the researcher found out that the degree of the coefficient correlation of the test was 0.97. It means that the reliability of the test was accepted and very high correlation

C. Findings and Discussion

Findings

Based on the indicator stated in the previous part, the students were said to have difficulties when they had not got mastery 55% from the totally score. Generally, the students had no difficulties in writing complex sentence in simple past tense. It was supported by the fact that 31 students (79%) had no difficulties and 9 students had difficulties 9 students (21 %) found difficulties in writing complex sentence in simple past tense.

The students had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence having relative pronoun as replacement of subject. It was supported by the fact that 33 students (82.5%) had no difficulties and 7 students (17.5%) found difficulties.

The students had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence having relative pronoun as replacement of object. It was supported by the fact that 30 students (75%) had no difficulties and 10 students (25%) found difficulties.

The students had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence having relative pronoun as replacement of possessive. It was supported by the fact

that 29 students (72.5%) had no difficulties and 11 students (27.5%) found difficulties.

The students had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence having relative pronoun as modifier of place. It was supported by the fact that 30 students (75%) had no difficulties and 10 students (25%) found difficulties.

The students had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence having relative pronoun as modifier of time. It was supported by the fact that 34 students (85%) had no difficulties and 6 students (15%) found difficulties.

Discussion

In general, the writer found that the students' difficulties had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence in simple past tense such as: in replacement of subject, replacement of object, replacement of possessive, modifier of place, modifier of time.

1. The writer found that the students had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence having relative pronoun as replacement of subject, but they still made small mistake in using appropriate relative pronoun. In writing test, the researcher found that a few students were not able in using appropriate relative pronoun.

2. The writer found that the students had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence having relative pronoun as replacement of object, but they still made small mistakes in using appropriate relative pronoun. Based on the scoring criteria in chapter III, the student will be said to have difficulties in writing complex sentence if the students do not correctly written the main clause, they adjective clause is not correctly written and the relative pronoun is correctly chosen. In writing test, the reseacher found that a few students were not able in using appropriate relative pronoun.

3. The writer found that the students had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence having relative pronoun as replacement of possessive, but they still made small mistakes in using appropriate relative pronoun. Based on the scoring criteria in chapter III, the student will be said to have difficulties in writing complex sentence if the students do not correctly written the main clause, they adjective clause is not correctly written and the relative pronoun is correctly chosen. In writing test, the reseacher found that a few students were not able in using appropriate relative pronoun.

4. The writer found that the students had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence having relative pronoun as modifier of place, but they still made small mistakes in using appropriate relative pronoun. Based on the scoring criteria in chapter III, the student will be said to have difficulties in writing complex sentence if the students do not correctly written the main clause, they adjective clause is not correctly written and the relative pronoun is correctly chosen. In writing test, the reseacher found that a few students were not able in using appropriate relative pronoun.

5. The writer found that the students had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence having relative pronoun as replacement of time, but they still made small mistakes in using appropriate relative pronoun. Based on the scoring criteria in chapter III, the student will be said to have difficulties in writing complex sentence if the students do not correctly written the main clause, they adjective clause is not correctly written and the relative pronoun is correctly chosen. In writing test, the reseacher found that a few students were not able in using appropriate relative pronoun.

D. Conclusions and Suggestions

Conclusions

After interpreting the result of data analysis, it can be concluded as follows:

1. Generally, the students had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence in simple past tense. It was supported by the fact that 31 (79%) students had no difficulties and 9 students (21 %) found difficulties in writing complex sentence in simple past tense
2. The students had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence having relative pronoun as replacement of subject. It is supported by the fact that 33 students (82.5%) had no difficulties and 7 students (17.5%) found difficulties.
3. The students had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence having relative pronoun as replacement of object. It is supported by the fact that 30 students (75%) had no difficulties and 10 students (25%) found difficulties.
4. The students had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence having relative pronoun as replacement of possessive. It is supported by the fact

that 29 students (72.5%) had no difficulties and 11 students (27.5%) found difficulties.

5. The students had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence having relative pronoun as modifier of place. It is supported by the fact on that 30 students (75%) had no difficulties and 10 students (25%) found difficulties.

6. The students had no serious difficulties in writing complex sentence having relative pronoun as modifier of time. It is supported by the fact only 34 students (85%) had no difficulties and 6 students (15%) found difficulties.

Suggestions

Based on the conclusions above, the writer would like to give several suggestions to the lecturers and students.

For the Lecturers

1. Since the students had no serious difficulties in replacement of object, replacement of object, replacement of possessive, modifier of place, and modifier of time, the lecturers should give more exercises to the students, so the students can understand about lesson well.
2. Since the students had no difficulties seriously in writing complex sentence in simple past tense, the

teacher should minimize students' difficulties.

For the students

1. For the students who had difficulties in writing complex sentence in simple past tense, they should pay more attention when the lecturer explains about the lesson and do more exercises.
2. For the students who had no difficulties in writing complex sentence, they should improve their ability and it will be good if the students increase their ability in writing especially in using complex sentence with adjective clause.

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