



STUDENTS' GRAMMATICAL ACHIEVEMENTS IN CONSTRUCTING RESTRICTIVE AND NON-RESTRICTIVE ADJECTIVE CLAUSE AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG

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Abstract

Adjective clause is a clause that modifies noun or noun phrase. It is important to be mastered because it is known for its usefulness, complex structures and grammatical importance. Unfortunately, many students found it difficult to construct correct adjective clauses. Students did not know the concept, function of relative pronoun and the use of adjective clause. Furthermore, students also ignored in the use of comma as giving additional information to the meaning of the sentence. This study is aimed to describe and analyze second year students' grammatical achievements in constructing restrictive and non-restrictive adjective clause. There were 30 students from K1, K2, K3, K4, NK1, NK2 as the research samples. Proportionate stratified random sampling was used as the sampling technique to collect the data. This descriptive study used grammar test as the research instrument; 9 items were for restrictive and 9 items were for non-restrictive. The findings were students' grammatical achievement in constructing restrictive were poor (47,02%) and students' grammatical achievement in constructing non-restrictive were very poor (39,25%).

Key words: English students, ability, restrictive, non-restrictive, adjective clauses

A. INTRODUCTION

Grammar is one of language components essential to be mastered since it consists of a range of rules which are useful in establishing good communication. Although it is not the most vital factor for a clear communication, understanding it can significantly help people convey messages more clearly by making logically accepted and easily understood sentences. The ultimate success of communication can only be achieved by grammar comprehension. Hence, grammar plays a significant role in effective, successful communication.

At English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang (henceforth UNP), students starts learning grammar in the first semester in 'Grammar I' subject. Students are exposed to this subject early in order that they understand the basic

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rules of English. If students have already known the basic, then they are more likely to use the language accurately and more effectively. Passing grammar subject is one of the mandatory requirements to be satisfied in order to be eligible for graduation as explained in the syllabus of English Department of UNP. After passing 'Grammar 1', students are introduced to further Grammar courses as a series: Grammar II (the second semester), Grammar III (the third semester), Grammar IV (the fourth semester) and Functional Grammar (the fifth semester).

One of the sub-topics in Grammar course is adjective clause. The topic itself is learned in the third semester and is one of complex lessons in the course. Abdolmanafi (2012:3) suggests that adjective clause is considered as a universal linguistic phenomenon which has been a very important issue of linguistic studies for its unique syntactic structure, frequent usefulness, and grammatical importance. The unique construction and recurrent usage of this structure generally means that students are demanded to comprehend this material for comprehensive English mastery.

Adjective clause is a dependent clause modifying a noun. Folse (2010:194) states that adjective clause is a clause that describes or modifies a noun or pronoun. This implies that the clause explains the noun or pronoun in a more detailed way. He adds that adjective clause commonly begins with *who*, *that*, *which*, *when*, *where*, *whom*, or *whose*, called relative pronouns.

However, students generally find it difficult to construct adjective clause sentence. This finding is evident from the preliminary research done by the researcher to the second year students of English Department, UNP. Students were asked to construct sentences using adjective clause. One of the common problems found in the research was that students frequently omitted comma after independent clauses which is an essential punctuation for signifying an adjective clause. One student, for example, wrote "*This was my first class in French a language which I really like to study*". The statement was incorrect as the student removed a comma which is supposed to be put after the word *French*.

In addition, the students did not know about what appropriate relative pronouns to use as well as their function. For instance, a multitude of students could not differentiate the usage of *who* and *whom*. A student, for example, wrote "*In my twelve years of school I have had many teachers who I have admired greatly but Mrs. Thompson whom was my French teacher in the tenth grade is the teacher to who I love the most*". The sentence was grammatically inaccurate because it should be *who*, instead of *whom*, used after *Mrs. Thompson*. This indicates that students are confused about when to use *who* and *whom*.

Another difficulty that students face is taking no notice of the existence of comma. It is obviously known that comma in a sentence containing adjective clause is something which distinguishes restrictive adjective clause from non-restrictive adjective clause. One student was found to write "*Mrs. Ani the woman that we talked about yesterday was died*". The problem with this sentence is that the student did not set a comma after *Ani*. The preliminary research, therefore, suggests that most students do not understand enough the concept of adjective clause.

The importance of mastering adjective clause and the mistakes of the students in constructing it in the preliminary research are the reasons for the researcher to conduct this study. This study specifically investigated the achievement of the second year English Department students of UNP in constructing restrictive and non-restrictive adjective clause.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study was descriptive with quantitative method. The samples of this study were the 2nd year students of English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang who was registered in 2016. They were 30 students who were from K1,K2,K3,K4,NK1,NK2. They were selected by using proportionate stratified random sampling where the researcher took 20% of each class members. The researcher used lottery system to get the research samples.

These students have all taken grammar III subject in which they learned about adjective clause. The instrument used was grammar test which has been validated by English department lecturers. The tests were written in simple form. The students were asked to construct restrictive and non-restrictive adjective clause from a bibliography. The test consisted of 18 items in which 9 items were for restrictive adjective clause (replacing subject, object, object of preposition, possessive, time and place) and the other 9 items were for non-restrictive adjective clause (replacing subject, object, object of preposition, possessive, time and place). The students were given 60 minutes to finish the test.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Research Finding

There are several findings acquired after analyzing all of the data. Table 5 shows the percentage of correct answers in each category of adjective clause.

Table 2. The percentage of correct answers in each category of adjective clause

No	Adj.clause replacing	Restrictive		Total	Percentage	Non restrictive		Total	Percentage
		Items with correct answers				Items with correct answers			
		1	2			1	2		
1	Subject	15	22	37	61,6%	21	2	23	38%
2	Object	6	10	16	26,6%	8	11	19	31,6%
3	Preposition	9	11	20	33%	6	12	18	30%
4	Possessive	17		17	56%	9		9	30%
5	Time/place	14	25	39	65%	18	19	37	61,6%
				129	47,8%			106	39,25%

Based on the table above, students’ grammatical achievement in constructing restrictive and non-restrictive adjective clause are both under 50%.

Students' achievement in constructing restrictive is 47,8%. Meanwhile, students' grammatical achievement in constructing non-restrictive adjective clause is 39,25%.

From the table above, it is shown that the type of adjective clause which students mostly had problems with were adjective clauses used as replacement of object, preposition and possessive. In contrast, adjective clause replacing subject and time and place were two categories of English adjective clause types which students comprehended well.

It was known from the students adjective clause constructions that most of the mistakes that students committed to were caused by their lack understanding in the use, the concept and the structure of adjective clause. These influenced their achievements in constructing both restrictive and non-restrictive adjective clause types become low.

Students did not also have well comprehension related to the information given by the clause. They could not really distinguish which information was really needed and which information was just complementary to the meaning of the sentence. Thus, they tend to put comma in clauses that added essential information to the meaning of the sentence and they did not put comma in clauses that shared unnecessary information to the meaning of the sentence.

Besides of misusing comma, students were also lack of understanding in using the appropriate relative pronoun. Whom and whose were typically two common errors created by the students. Some students did not even know some indicators to choose the appropriate relative pronoun, such as then for relative pronoun when and there for relative pronoun where. Due to their lack knowledge about these, they created adjective clause with wrong relative pronoun.

In addition, students still wrote the possessive pronoun when they constructed adjective clause replacing possessive. It is known that the possessive his, her, its and whose were basically similar, in which they function to show possession. Thus, when a noun or noun phrase has been modified by whose, the possessive pronoun should be omitted.

Last but not the least, students still put personal object pronoun when they constructed sentences into restrictive adjective clause replacing object of preposition. Students should remove the personal object pronoun since it has been modified by the relative pronoun whom.

2. Discussion

Based on the findings, students' grammatical achievements in constructing restrictive adjective clause is better than their achievements in constructing non-restrictive adjective clause. As can be seen from the data that students' achievements in constructing restrictive adjective clause is 47,02%. In contrast, students' achievements in constructing non-restrictive adjective clause is way lower, which is 39,25%. This means that more than half of students do not have well mastery in grammar, especially in constructing adjective clause.

These findings indicate that students do not really understand how to construct complex sentence using adjective clause. Adjective clause seems difficult for students that more than half of whom could not construct correct

adjective clause sentence. This finding is supported by Abdolmanafi and Rahmani (2012:29) that state, adjective clause is a kind of complex structures in human language. They are difficult for learners to produce, comprehend and imitate. Although adjective clause is difficult to understand, students need to master this material because it is one of essential grammatical components in English known for its complex structures, usefulness and importance in English learning.

From the data above, it was known that students performed better in constructing restrictive than non-restrictive adjective clause. One of reasons that supports this finding is because constructing restrictive adjective clause is way simpler and easier than constructing the non-restrictive one. Students do not have to deal with the use of comma when constructing restrictive adjective clause.

There are several factors that affect students' grammatical achievements in constructing adjective clause sentence. One of which was due to their ignorance toward the purpose of adjective clause. Kimball et al (2010:194) explains that adjective clauses are used for two different purposes; to point out a particular person, place and things and to bring in a new thought about something which is worth-telling, but not necessarily needed to the meaning of sentences. If students do not know the purpose of adjective clause, they would not be able to construct correct adjective clause.

Another factor that affects students' grammatical achievement become low is due their inability to discriminate information according to its importance. Farmer (1985:330) states that restrictive adjective clause contains information that is necessary to the meaning of a sentence. Meanwhile, the problem is that students could not really differentiate which information is necessary and which is not. Thus, they tend to treat the same restrictive and non-restrictive adjective clause, which in fact these both types of adjective clauses are genuinely different.

In addition, students' English adjective clause constructions become low was due to their ignorance toward the placement of relative pronoun. Students do not know the placement of relative pronoun that they put the adjective clause after the sentence has been one complex sentence. Werner (2002:303) states that adjective clause usually comes after the word(s) it modifies. In some cases, a pronoun or prepositional phrase may come between the (pro)noun and the clause. The position of adjective clause is always following the noun or pronoun being modified.

Based on the types of English adjective clause, whether it is restrictive and non-restrictive, it was found that there are three types of adjective clause in which the percentage of students' understanding are the lowest, they are; adjective clause replacing object, preposition and possessive. These three aspects are difficult for students to construct.

In constructing adjective clause replacing preposition, most problem found is students still put personal object pronoun like *her/him* when constructed sentences into restrictive adjective clause replacing object of preposition. The student should remove the personal object pronoun since it has been modified by the relative pronoun *whom*.

In constructing adjective clause replacing possessive, students still put possessive pronoun after the relative pronoun *whose*. It is known that *whose* is

basically similar to possessive pronoun, that is to show possession. It has the same meaning like other kind of possessive pronoun; *his, her, its*. When *whose* is used to modify any possession, the possessive pronoun should be removed.

Her bag → *whose bag*

His jacket → *whose jacket*

In short, it is clearly found that it is more complicated for the students to construct non-restrictive adjective clauses than restrictive clauses. Of both the restrictive and non-restrictive adjective clauses, there are three aspects that are difficult for students; adjective clause replacing object, preposition and possessive. These are because they are not familiar with the aspects and rarely use it in daily academic speaking and writing.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusion

The study was conducted to second year students of English Department Universitas Negeri Padang. Based on the data, it was concluded that students' grammatical achievements in constructing restrictive adjective clause is higher than their achievements in constructing non-restrictive adjective clause. Of these two types of English adjective clause, it was found that adjective clause replacing object, preposition and possessive are the most difficult aspects which most students deal with. This was because students rarely use those type of English adjective clause in their academic speaking and writing.

In addition, *whom* and *whose* are typically two most difficult English relative pronoun. They tend to use *that, which, when* and *where* when speaking or writing. Therefore, in order to be able to construct English adjective clause, students should comprehend the functions of each relative clause. Furthermore, they need to understand the formula, the concept and the purpose of each type of adjective clauses.

B. Suggestion

Based on the findings of the research, some suggestions are proposed to the lecturers and teachers in order to get better understanding and outcome in teaching adjective clause. The lecturers and the teachers should provide some drills in grammar exercise in stimulating students' grammatical competence. In addition, in order to get better comprehension and understanding in adjective clause, the lecturers and the teachers should also explain more about adjective clause. The lecturers and the teachers should also pay more attention to the students. Some students may learn and perceive information in a long time. Thus, the lecturers and teachers should help them learn by giving them more time to understand the lesson. Last but not the least, the lecturers and the teachers should also apply more attractive ways of teaching. As students get attracted to the lesson being taught to, the lesson will be easier to be perceived and understood.

The lack of performance of the students are caused by the lack of reading. Students have to read and learn more about the adjective clause in order to get better understanding. Students need to be able to differentiate which information is necessarily needed and which one is not needed. By knowing this, they would

be able to differentiate which clause is restrictive and which one is non-restrictive. Automatically, they will also be able to place comma in correct clause. Students also have to know the use of relative pronoun in order to be able to construct adjective clause with appropriate relative pronoun. Students need to pay more attention and get involved once the lecturers or the teachers explain the lesson.

For the next researcher, due to the limited time that the researcher have, so this research cannot explore any broader aspects of adjective clause. The next researcher can focus on type of errors of the students in constructing adjective clause.

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