

AN ANALYSIS OF COMPOUND SENTENCES IN STUDENTS' WRITING

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Abstract

Grammar is one of the language components that are taught at English Department. Grammar is taught in order to produce good sentences and understand the meaning of sentence. In grammar class, students are expected to be able to write a good sentence especially in compound sentence. This study is aimed to describe the English Department students' ability in writing compound sentence. The type of this research was a descriptive research. The population of this research was fourth semester English Department. The total number of sample was 18 students from education program. Random sampling was used to collect the sample. The data were collected by giving writing test and the test was done in 60 minutes. They were asked to write argumentative essay at least 5 paragraph. Based on the findings research, it was found that the students' ability in writing compound sentences was moderate level.

Keywords: Grammar, Error, Compound Sentences

Introduction

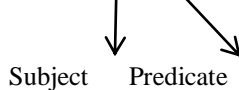
In mastery English, grammar is needed. Therefore, grammar is one of the language components that are taught at English department. Students should master the grammar to produce good sentences. Without the correct grammar, students will make meaningless sentence in English. Furthermore, without mastering grammar, it is difficult for the students to understand the meaning in sentences. That is why grammar is really important. In every language always find what is called sentences, whether in spoken or written. Sentence is bigger than word, phrase and clause. The concept of sentence has been proposed by some experts. According to Hogue (1995: 8) a sentence is a group of word that contains a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought. In addition, Hornby (2000) states the sentence is a set of work expressing a statement, a question or an order, usually containing a subject and a verb. Furthermore, according to Andersen (2014: 1) a sentence is a complete set of words that conveys meaning. So, it can be concluded that sentence is a group of word which consists of a subject and a verb. It can be stated a complete thought, a question or a command. It always begins with a capital letter and ends in a full stop, exclamation or question mark.

According to Frank (1972:220) a sentence generally classified in two types. It can be divided by its function and its structural. The first is its functional. These functional are divided into four categories, they are declarative sentence, interrogative sentence, imperative sentence and exclamatory sentence.

He says that the first categories is declarative sentence is a sentence that states a fact and ends with a period or full stop (.). In other word, it makes a statement. For example, *The third essay is due Friday*. It is using full stop in the end of sentence and show about a fact. The second one is interrogative sentence. It asks a question and ends with a question mark (?). For example, *When is the third essay due?* This sentence is asking about a question and it is ended by question mark (?). The third one is imperative sentence. It is a command or a polite request. It ends with a period (.) unless the writer intends to show strength or strong emotion, then the sentence should be ended with an exclamation mark (!). For example, *The essay must be finished tonight!* The last one is exclamatory sentence. It shows excitement or expresses strong feeling. It should be ended with an exclamation point (!). For example, *What a terrific essay you wrote!*

The second one is its structure. It also support by Murphy (2003: 224). According to him, sentence structural is divided into four categories, they are simple sentence, compound sentence, complex sentence and compound complex sentence. The first one is simple sentence. It is a sentence which has only subject and predicate.

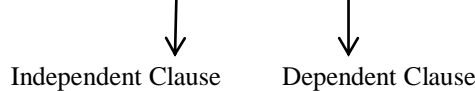
For example, they do not go to school every weekend.



In this example, it has only one subject that is *they* and one predicate that is *do not go*.

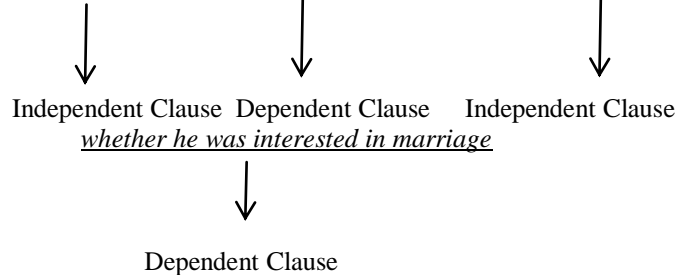
The second one is compound sentence. It is a sentence which consists of two or more independent clause. These clause are connected by coordinate conjunction such as *and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so*, etc. For example, she is smart but arrogant. This sentence consist of two clauses which is connected by coordinate conjunction that is *but*. The third one is complex sentence. It is a sentence which consists of one main clause and one or more subordinate clause namely adjective clause, noun clause, and adverbial clause. The independent clause is connected the main clause by a subordination conjunction. Subordination involves two ideas, one of which is more important than the other. The more important idea is placed in the independent or main clause. These sentences can be joined by using adverb clause such as *when, while, because, although, if, so* and *that*, adjective clause such as *who, whom, which, whose*, and *that* and noun clause such as *that, whether* or *if*.

For example, I saw a girl who is very beautiful



The last one is compound complex sentence. It is a sentence which consists of two or more independent clause and one or more independent clause.

For example, I know that John had loved me but I didn't have any idea



In grammar class, students are expected to be able to write a good sentence especially in compound sentences. Werner et al. (2002: 254) state that compound sentence may also be formed by joining two sentences with semicolon. It means that compound sentence has two or more independent clauses and it will be connected by a coordinating conjunction. Common coordinating conjunctions which are used in connecting sentences in compound sentences are *and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so*. The function of coordinating *and* here is to add a similar and equal idea, *but* is to add an opposite idea, *or* is to add an alternative possibility, *nor* is to add a negative equal idea, *for* is to add a reason, *yet* is to add an unexpected or surprising continuation, and *so* is to add an expected result.

In addition, Oshima and Hogue (2006:165) say that a compound sentence is two or more independent clauses joined together. He also says that there are three ways to join the clauses; they are compound sentences with coordinators, compound sentences with conjunctive adverbs and compound sentences with semicolons. In first way, a compound sentence can be formed by joining two independent clauses with coordinator. The second way can be formed by joining two independent clauses with using conjunctive adverb. The third way can be formed by connecting the two independent clauses with a semicolon alone.

In addition, Teschner and Evans (2007: 220) said that a compound sentence is a sentence consisting of at least two clauses, each of which can be separated off into its own independent clause and independent sentence. Furthermore, according to Cahyono et.al (2016: 24) compound sentence is a sentence containing two or more independent clause. For example, *They are singing, and we are dancing*. Both *they are singing* and *we are dancing* are independent clauses as each of them can stand alone as a sentence and there is no cause-effect relationship. These independent clauses are linked by coordinating conjunction, such as *and, but, or, nor, so, for*, and *yet* (Azar, 2000: 87).

The difficulties in writing compound sentences are also experienced by English education students. They still got difficulty in choosing correct conjunction in this sentence. Besides, they got confuse about the

position where should put the conjunction. English department students should minimize these problems since they already got several subjects related to grammar lesson.

Grammar is one of important components in learning English. There are several definitions of grammar. Thornbury (1999: 1) says that grammar is partly the study of what forms (or structures) are possible in a language. He also says that grammar is a description of the rules that govern how a language's sentences are formed. Grammar attempts to explain why the following sentences are acceptable:

We are not at home right now.

That is because it has the correct words order and fulfills rules in grammar. In this sentence, it has correct arrangement in good sentence. In the beginning of a good sentence is started by *subject* and followed by *to be* and ended by compliment which is consist of adverbial of place or adverbial of time or both of them. But this one is not acceptable:

Not we at right home now are.

This is because it does not fulfill syntax rules. Syntax is the system of rules that covers the order of words in a sentence. This sentence does not have correct word order. This sentence is begun by *not* instead of *subject* and followed by incorrect compliment. It makes the sentence meaningless. Nor this one:

We is not at home right now.

This is because it does not fulfill morphology rules. Morphology is the system of rules that cover the formation of words. This sentence has correct word order already, but it does not use the correct *to be*. This sentence is using subject *we* and using *to be "is"* instead of *"are"*. That is why this sentence is meaningless and not acceptable in grammar. In addition, Klammer et al. (2000: 3) define grammar as the rules grouping the words of that language into meaningful patterns. He also says that grammar is a word with a number of distinct meanings. Grammar can also mean a description of the language system. According to them, grammar can refer to an ideal set of rules or grammar may refer to the prescriptive rules.

Furthermore, Alderson and Bachman (2004: 22) say that grammar provides information about how language is organized and offer relatively accessible ways of describing complex. Moreover, Nunan (2005: 3) says that grammar is how words are formed (morphology) and how words are combined (syntax).

Likewise, Dixon (2005: 5) states that grammar itself has two parts: (1) Morphology: deals with the structure of words, e.g. the fact that *un-friend-liness* consists of four parts (called 'morphemes'), each of which has a meaning. (2) Syntax: deals with the way in which words are combined together, e.g. we can *get the old lion*. In English an adjective must come before a noun and an article before the adjective. Hammer (in Nunan, 2005: 2) defines grammar is the way in which word change themselves and group together to make sentences. Similarly, Ur (in Nunan, 2005: 2) sees grammar as the way language manipulates and combines words (or bits of words) in order to form longer units meaning.

In addition, Richard et.al (in Nunan, 2005: 2) define grammar is a description of the structure of a language and the way in which units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in the language. It means that grammar has to be related with the ways in unit of language combine together to form sentences.

The grammar of language is what happens to words when they become plural or negative, or what order is used when make questions or join two clauses to make one sentences. For example:

Harry lived under the stairs. Harry's uncle forced him to live there.

might be combined into:

Harry's uncle forced him to live under the stairs. (Weaver 2008: 34)

Meanwhile, students of English Department at Universitas Negeri Padang had problems not only in complex sentences, but also in compound sentences. It had different problems as found by Rayawari (2013). They still got difficulty in choosing correct conjunction in this sentence. Besides, they got confuse about the position where should put the conjunction. For example in sentence *She asked will I go to the party* instead of *She asked me whether I will go to the party*. It can be seen in first sentence. They forgot to put correct conjunction there. So, it is be conclude that it is difficult for students to comprehend it. Moreover, it was found that student had problem in compound sentence. For example, the student wrote, *"Anna is beautiful*

and arrogant” instead of “*Anna is beautiful but arrogant.*” This shows that the student did not know how to use correct conjunction. They did not know that conjunction *and* is used to add a similar or equal idea while *but* is used to add an opposite idea. That is why *but* is the correct conjunction in the sentence above. It means that English Department students had error in writing compound sentence. According to Brown (2007: 257), an English as Second Language (ESL) or English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners’ deviations are possibly mistakes and some others are possibly errors. In addition, Isyam (2007: 20) says that an English Second Language (ESL) or English Foreign Language (EFL) learner commits grammatical deviations when he breaks the language rules in speaking or oral communication and writing or written communication. He also says that a grammatical deviation is a mistake or an error is not certain yet. It means that grammatical deviations may be a mistake or an error.

Making a mistake or an error is acceptable in learning process. They are unavoidable part of learning. It is supported by Dulay et al. (1982: 138) who says that teachers and even mothers have realized that making errors is an inevitable part of learning. He also says that people cannot learn a language without first systematically errors. The first mistake or error of learning helps students decrease little by little the deviations as they learn from making those mistakes or errors itself. In addition, Brown (2007: 257) says that students will make mistakes or errors in the process of acquisition and the process will be blocked if they do not commit errors. This process will give benefit for the learners themselves.

According to Brown (2007: 257), it is crucial to make a differentiation between mistakes and errors. He says that error is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker reflects the competence of the learner. Moreover, Ellis (2003: 139 & 141) defines a mistake as a deviation in usage that reflects the learners’ ability to use what he actually knows of the target language, and an error as a deviation in usage which results from a gap in a learners’ knowledge of the target language. In fact, he says that mistakes reflect occasional lapses in performances and they occur because the learner is unable to perform what he actually knows. While errors reflect gaps in the learners’ knowledge and they occur because the learner does not know what the correct ones are.

In addition, Chomsky in Scovel (2001:49) claims that a mistake reveals nothing about the underlying competence a language user has about language structure. Moreover, Brown (2007: 257) states that a mistake refers to a performance error that is either a random guess or a “slip”, it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly. He also says that mistake can be made by all people, in both native and second language situation.

Isyam (2007: 20) says that grammatical deviations which are committed by English Foreign Language (EFL) learners found in their written sentences, assignment, compositions, paper, etc cannot be said as errors before it is certain that they are really errors because not all of grammatical deviations are errors. According to James (1998: 78), if the learner is tended and able to correct a fault in his or her output, it shall say that the fault is a mistake. Moreover, Brown (2007: 257) states mistake can be self-corrected when attention is called. It means that when the learners make mistakes and other people warn them about their mistake, they will realize it by themselves and they know how to correct the mistakes.

On the contrary, James (1998: 79) says if the learner is unable to make the correction, it can be assumed that the form that the learner used was the one intended, and it is an error. He also says that errors are wrong from that the pupil could not correct even if their wrongness were to be pointed out. Likewise, Brown (2007: 258) states an error cannot be self-corrected although when attention is called. This means that the learners do not know how to correct the errors and where their errors although they are reminded by others about their wrongness.

There are several types of errors. Dulay et al. (1982: 154) categorize errors into four main categories. They are omission, addition, misformation and misordering. He says that omission errors are characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance. Some types of morpheme are potential candidate for omission, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Besides that, omission also occur in grammatical morphemes, such as noun and verb inflections (the *-s* in *birds*, the *-s* in *Mother’s*, the *-ed* in *looked*, the *-ing* in *laughing*, etc); articles (*a*, *the*, etc.); verb auxiliaries (*is*, *will*, *can*, etc.); and preposition (*in*, *on*, *under*, etc.). The example for omission error is “*Susan read* a novel* instead of *Susan read a novel*”.

According to Dulay, addition error is the opposite of omission. It is marked by the presence of an item which must not appear in a well-formed utterance. In this case, the learners not only forget to put elements but also add unnecessary element in the sentences. Addition errors usually occur when the learner has already acquired some target language rules, for example “*Mark didn’t went* anywhere yesterday* instead of *Mark didn’t go anywhere yesterday*”.

While the third category is misformation. It is an error is caused by the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure. In this error, the learner supplies something, although it is incorrect, for example “*My family fly* to Batam last week* instead of *My family flew to Batam last week*”. The fourth category is misordering. This error is indicated by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an

utterance. Misordering errors occur systematically in constructions that have already been acquired, especially simple (direct) and embedded (indirect) questions, for example “*He is all the time* late* instead of *He is late all the time*”.

Therefore, it is important to study students’ ability in writing compound sentences. By having good competence in writing compound sentence, they are good in writing correct sentences. In addition, the students may write the complicated sentences in correct grammatical.

A study was done by Rayawati (2013) on error analysis on complex sentences made by the second year students of STAIN Tulungagung in writing class. The result of her research showed that students had error in writing class. It revealed that the students had problems in writing complex sentences. Thus, the present research was to describe English Department students’ ability in writing compound sentences at Universitas Negeri Padang and what types of error that found in their writing.

Method

The data in this research was descriptive research. The population in this research was English Department students who registered in semester 4th at academic writing class. Random sampling was used in this research. The writing test was used to collect students’ grammar ability, especially in using compound sentences. The students were asked to write a text of topic given. The students had to write an argumentative essay at least 5 paragraph by using compound sentences in 60 minutes. Then, it analyzed to find out their quality in compound sentences and the error identified. It analyzed into each category based on theory proposed by Dulay (1982: 154), they were omission, addition, misformation and misordering. To get the quality of each type of students’ ability, the result was classified into the following interval as in Panduan Akademil UNP that was adapted for this research as in table 4.

Table 1. The classification of score level of students.

No.	Score in number	Score percentage	Classification
1.	81 – 100	81 – 100 %	Very Poor
2.	66 – 80	66 – 80 %	Poor
3.	56 – 65	56 - 65 %	Moderate
4.	41 – 55	41 – 55 %	Good
5.	0 – 40	0 - 40 %	Excellent

After getting the result of frequency and percentage of errors, the result were tabulated as follow:

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Types of Errors.

No	Error Categories	Frequency	% of Total Errors
1.	Omission		
2.	Addition		
3.	Misformation		
4.	Misordering		
Total Error			

Results and Discussion

There are two research questions which are answered in findings. They are the quality of English Department students in compound sentences and students’ problems in writing compound sentences. To answer these questions, the researcher develop the writing test. The data gotten are described and analyzed as follow:

1. The quality of English Department Students in Writing Compound.

The data collected in this part deals with students’ quality in writing compound and complex sentences. The average score of the error of compound and complex sentences are used as the base to judge their ability. There is an essay of each student to see their ability in writing compound sentences. It associates with the grading system used by Depdiknas (2006) as following table:

Table 3. Students' percentage in writing compound sentences

Sample	Percentage	Classification
1	50	Moderate
2	31.8	Excellent
3	9.09	Excellent
4	18.1	Excellent
5	4.5	Excellent
6	31.8	Excellent
7	18.1	Excellent
8	45.4	Good
9	31.8	Excellent
10	9.09	Excellent
11	9.09	Excellent
12	9.09	Excellent
13	18.1	Excellent
14	45.4	Good
15	4.5	Excellent
16	4.5	Excellent
17	100	Very poor
18	45.4	Good

Table 3 shows the percentage of total errors as well as the quality of English Department students' in writing compound sentences given by rater and co rater. It can be considered that most of students, 13 of 18 students (sample 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, and 16), were able to write compound sentences. It means that they can write compound sentences in excellent level. From the finding, most of them did errors in omission (OM). It found 28 times errors in it. It also found that they did 6 times errors in addition (ADD), 7 times errors in misformation (MF), and 3 times errors in misordering (MO)

Moreover, it is found 3 of 18 students (sample 8, 14, and 18) are considered good in writing compound sentences. They did 19 times errors in omission (OM), 6 times errors in misformation (MF), and 5 times errors in misordering (MO).

From the finding, it is also found that there 1 student (sample 1) considered moderate. She / he did 9 times errors in omission (OM), once error in addition (ADD), and once error in misformation (MF). Then, there are 1 student (sample 17) considered very poor. She / He did 19 times errors in omission (OM), 2 times errors in misformation (MF), and once error in misordering (MO). In short, researcher concludes that the average students' ability in writing compound sentences is excellent.

2. Students' Problems in Writing Compound Sentences.

In identifying students' problems, it is found that students had problems in writing compound sentences. The most common problems faced by students are related to the grammar/structure and the connector that used in combining two sentences into compound sentences. Details information of students' problems in writing compound sentences can be seen in the following discussion.

Table 4. Students' problems in writing compound sentences

No	Error Categories	Frequency	% of Total Errors	Classification
1.	Omission	75	70.1	Poor
2.	Addition	7	6.5	Excellent
3.	Misformation	16	15	Excellent
4.	Misordering	9	8.4	Excellent
Total Error		107	100	

Table 4 shows the quality of English Department students' in writing compound sentences given by rater and co rater. It can be consider that the most of the students were commonly made omission (OM) in their writing. They did 75 times of errors in omission. It means that 16 of 18 students wrote compound sentences in poor level. It can be clearly seen in detail on appendix 7.

From the findings, most of the students omitted comma and subject. For example, *People can bring the homework home and do it at home* instead of *People can bring the homework home, and they do it at home* (sample 1). This student made incomplete compound sentence. She / He did not pay attention to comma before conjunction *and*, and she / he did not put subject after the conjunction *and*. So, she / he just put conjunction between the clauses.

Moreover, it was found that students did 16 times of errors in misformation (MF). It means that 10 of 18 students wrote compound sentences in excellent level. They did incorrect verb in compound sentences. For example, *It is more appropriate that costing education are paid by government so promote the quality of people* instead of *It is more appropriate that costing education is paid by government, so the government promotes the quality of people* (sample 8). This student used wrong *to be* and verb. She / he did not pay attention to the subject in the first clause. First subject is singular, so it should using *to be is*. In the second clause, if the subject is singular, it should add *s / es* after the verb. In short, she / he still confused about rule in using singular subject and its verb.

Another finding was found that students did 9 times of errors in misordering (MO). It means that 7 of 18 students wrote compound sentences in excellent level. They did incorrect placement of a morpheme or a group of morphemes in sentence. For example, *Education level is related to the national quality and so essential it is to us to persue the popularity of the high level of education* instead of *Education level is related to the national quality, and it is so essential for us to persue the popularity of the high level of education*. This student made wrong placement of subject, to be, and noun. In a correct order of sentence, it should begin with a subject followed by its *to be* and noun, but she / he put the noun first and then followed by subject and *to be*. It can be concluded that she / he still confusing in making correct order of sentence, especially compound sentence.

The last type of error that found is addition (ADD). It was found that students did 7 times of error in it. It means that 5 of 18 students wrote compound sentences in excellent level. Most of the students added comma and conjunction in their sentences. For example, *Education requires a substantial amount of money, yet, one must one make it exclusive* instead of *Education requires a substantial amount of money, yet one must not make it exclusive*. This student added comma after the conjunction *yet*. It should be no comma after that conjunction. So, it can be seen that student did not know the correct rules in compound sentence. In short, researcher concludes that the average students' ability in writing compound sentences is poor.

Besides, rater (researcher) finds the same findings with co rater. Big portion of percentage is 70.1% of students did omission in writing compound sentences. To sum up, the quality of the students in writing compound sentences according to expert judgment and researcher are still in the level of poor. It shows that they have problems in writing compound sentences.

Conclusions

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that second year of English Department students have shown that they have average level in writing compound sentences. It shows that the students have problems in writing compound sentences. It also found that students' problems in writing compound sentences are omission and misformation. The problem indicates the students are weak in using punctuation, tend to use incorrect connector, and used incorrect grammat, so they do not know how to connect the independent clause correctly. Besides, the highest error committed by the students in writing compound sentences is omission. Looking closely into the pattern of error produced by the student, it can be further concluded that students tend to make an omission error when it comes to combining 2 independent clauses.

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