

THE EVALUATION OF CLAUSE CONNECTORS ACQUISITION OF STMIK PRIMAKARA STUDENTS IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2019/2020

Eka Grana Aristyana Dewi

STMIK Primakara, Indonesia

aris@primakara.ac.id

Received: Juli 11, 2020

Revised: August 25, 2020

Accepted: September 3, 2020

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is on evaluating the ability of students of STMIK Primakara in the academic year 2019/2020 in mastering clause connectors. The norm-referenced measures of five standard values were used to analyze the data. The students were 187 students who have heterogeneous characteristics as the population. In taking the sample, quota random sampling technique was used. There were 30 students determined as the sample of the study by using quota random sampling technique. The data analysis result showed that: (1) 6.67% had excellent ability; (2) 30.00% had good ability; (3) 13.33% had sufficient ability; (4) 46.67% s had insufficient ability, (5) 3.33% had poor ability in mastering clause connectors. If the outcome of the study were applied as the basis for the sample's degrees, then there was 50.00% who failed in learning and acquiring clause connectors, and the rest 50.00% was good enough in learning and acquiring clause connectors. It meant that the acquisition of clause connectors by the students was sufficient. The data of the study conducted was considered to have fairly amount of validity and reliability, as there were many factors that could interfere the conclusions. The result of the study conducted can help to improve planning for teaching specifically in understanding clause connectors.

Keywords: *Evaluation, Acquisition, Clause Connector*

INTRODUCTION

People from different nationalities speak many different languages, but there are only some languages regarded as international languages. One of those international languages that is widely spoken is English. Based on a survey showed that English is the most spoken languages worldwide in 2019 (Duffin, 2020). In some countries, English is utilized as a second language, and in some other countries English is utilized as a foreign language. Many people for many reasons learn English, such as for economy or business purposes, education, cultures, and many other purposes. As a result of how English rapidly grows in many countries. There are numerous skills that people should learn in English in order to be able to use it correctly. Grammar is undeniably one of the skills that is essential to be learnt. In Indonesia specifically, huge number of students are very poor at speaking or writing due to the ungrammatical English, they have; therefore, in this case the learners have not been successful yet. The students are struggling in learning English for years, especially in learning grammar. According to some researchers, mastering the grammar is very important in learning languages (Debata, 2013;

Saaristo, 2015; Wang, 2010). Thus, the learners should develop their grammar ability in order to be able to communicate English correctly.

There are many things in grammar that should be learnt if the learners want to make grammatical and logical English sentences and one of them is conjunction (Green, 2014; Huang, 2015). By learning conjunction, they can combine words, phrases, clauses, and sentences correctly; besides, it can avoid the monotonous or ineffective sentences used in communication.

Conjunction, which is also known as clause connector, is a word that is applied to connect clauses to make sentences grammatically and logically correct. Clause connectors are classified into three groups; they are subordinator, coordinator, and sentence connector. The function of subordinator is to signal dependent clauses. The function of coordinator and sentence connector are to connect independent clauses. Thus, mastering clause connector is an important part of being able to master grammar and English.

Many researches that were conducted before, suggest that universities students, especially in Bali, are considered to have low ability in grammar. In addition, according to the teaching experiences of the researcher, the same fact was also found. The grammar mastery of the first semester students' of STMIK Primakara in the academic year 2019/2020 was unsatisfying; therefore, this requires serious concern.

Based on the data that was gathered before, the researcher is encouraged to measure the students' ability in grammar, in this paper, the researcher's focus is on clause connectors. The researcher also expects that this research will provide essential information for English teaching and learning.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Materials

1. Conception of English Grammar

In English, there are the operational grammar and analytic grammar (Dyson, 2010; Namaziandost, 2019). The operational grammar is the ability to recognize such distinctions is evidence that in some sense, even if we have never studied any grammar, we know the rules of it since get a working knowledge of our native language simply from early childhood: nobody taught us, for example,

where to position much. However, analytic grammar derives from a study of language that analyzes the grammar of a language, especially when studying foreign language.

Besides, there are also descriptive and prescriptive approaches to grammar. There is an important distinction to be drawn between two kinds of English grammar. The first is describing the system that controls how people speak and write. The other is telling people the proper way of speaking and writing in order to be able to advise them of the correct language use (Straaijer, 2016; Virén, 2016).

In addition to what is mentioned before, Straaijer (2016) said that people usually use more effortless grammar when they speak than when they write. Since the choice of words and structures mistakes tend to be spotted easier in writing, people need to understand grammar fully.

2. Clause

The clause is complete in form and meaning or a clause is a group of words which form a grammatical unit and has a subject and a predicate (Dykes, 2007). There are two kinds of clauses: independent clause and dependent (subordinate) clause. Independent clause (main clause) is a clause that can stand alone and does not need to be attached to another clause (Haque, 2017; Huang, 2015). Dependent clauses cannot stand by themselves as they need the independent clauses to be meaningful. Dependent clauses are divided into three: adjectival, adverbial and noun (Dykes, 2007). An adjective clause is introduced by one of the relative pronouns, an adverb clause is introduced by subordinating conjunction, and a noun clause is a clause that functions as a noun (Haque, 2017).

3. Clause Connector

Clause connector joins words, phrases, and clauses together so that the sentence forms can be grammatically and logically acceptable (Kusumawardhani, 2017). Conjunctions not only join clauses together; they also show how the meaning of the two clauses are related (Huang, 2015). Two clause connector groups that will be described here are subordinator (subordinating conjunction) and coordinator (coordinating conjunction).

4. Coordinator

In compound sentence, coordinator is utilized to connect independent clauses; it is to understand the relation between the clauses (Huddleston & Pullum, 2007). Huddleston & Pullum (2007) also write the central members of the coordinator category are and, or, but, yet, nor, for, and so. There is usually a comma (,) before the coordinating conjunction, but in some cases, it is possible to make the second clause “elliptical”—that is, omit a portion of the clause that is understood. This can occur if the subjects of the two clauses are identical (Swick, 2009).

5. Subordinator

Subordinators join sentences that do not have same value. There is a main sentence and subordinator to connect it with the subpart (Altenberg & Vago, 2010). There are subordinators that are used to tell the time, to give a reason, to tell where, and to make a contrast. Subordinating words for adjective clauses are called relative pronouns (who, whom, and that (informal) – to refer to people; which and that – to refer to animals or things; when – to refer to a time). Adverb clauses can usually go either first or last in a sentence (depending on what is to be emphasized – the most important information usually comes last) (Holschuh & Swan, 1998).

6. Sentence Structure

According to Verspoor and Sauter (2000), sentence structure is ‘an utterance that expresses a feeling or opinion.’. They also state that a complete sentence has subject and predicate and expresses a minimum of one complete event.

7. Sentence Types

There are four types of sentences; they are simple sentence, compound sentence, complex sentence and compound-complex sentence (Verspoor & Sauter, 2000). All of them are essential as the various sentence types would create more interesting discourse (Jackson, 2005). Simple sentence is a sentence that has only one independent clause, compound sentence, according to Nelson (2002), is a mixture of two independent clauses or more, complex sentence has minimum one dependent clause and one independent clause, compound-

complex sentence has at least one dependent clause and two or more independent clauses.

8. Assessment of Clause Connectors

A test, in simple terms, is a method of measuring a person's ability, knowledge, or performance in a given domain (Brown, 2004). The assessment in this research purposes to measure the student's performance in clause connector. The test that will be used here is objective test, this means the scoring is completed by matching the answer key and the students' answers. (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Razavieh, 2010).

According to Brown (2004), sentence completion is answered by reading part of a sentence and then completing it by writing a word or a phrase. There is also another similar statement by Gronlund (2003), he states that sentence completion requires the examinee to supply appropriate words, numbers, or symbols to answer a question or complete a statement.

If we want to make sentence completion, there are some rules that we have to know (1) state the item so that only a single, brief answer is possible; (2) it is best to leave only one blank and it should relate to the main point of the statement; (3) Avoid extraneous clues to the answer (Gronlund, 2003).

Method

1. Design of the Research

The present study that dealt with the acquisition of clause connectors of the first semester students of STMIK Primakara in the academic year 2019/2020 used an ex post facto research design. The ex post facto research design was used in this study since the grammar ability, especially in clause connectors, as the research variable, has already taken place before the undertaking of this study. Obviously, the students have learned grammar through attending different quality and quantity of both formal and informal exposures in the target language.

2. Population and Sample

The students of STMIK Primakara in the first semester in the academic year 2019/2020 were the population of this study. Due to the big number of the students which consisted of 9 classes around 187 students, the researcher limited

his population by only taking the morning shift students which consisted of 5 classes with around 100 total students. Thus, the lottery system of random sampling was used in taking the sample which has the basic characteristic of the sampling technique that all of the population had an independent and equal chance to be counted into the random sample. By using this technique, 30 students were taken as the sample of this study as the representative of the whole population.

3. Research Instrument

Dependable measuring instrument is very important to be developed for the aim of quantifying the attributes and behaviors to be considered. Therefore, an items test was conducted to get the data required which concerning in the students' ability in clause connectors especially coordinator and subordinator. In this case the researcher constructed her own test items based on the teaching learning material to meet the purpose of the present investigation. The items that were used in this research are 60 items.

As a research instrument, the test has to be reliable and valid in order to get reliable and valid data, therefore, the test have to be tried out. The try-out instrument was conducted on the evening shift of the first semester students of STMIK Primakara in the academic year of 2019/2020 on 4th November 2019. There were 60 test items was tested for the 30 students by using dichotomous score that means zero score for incorrect answer and one score for the correct answer.

DISCUSSION

Validity and Reliability Tests

The validity and reliability tests were conducted on this research to measure the instrument that was used. Ary et al., (2010) state that validity focused on the scale of the attitude construct of interest is really measured. Construct validity according to Ary et al., (2010) is the validity of the inferences about psychological constructs involved in the subjects, settings, treatments, and observations used in the experiment. Another opinion about construct validity from Cohen, Manion, & Morrison (2005) state that construct validity is 'operationalized' which means the validity construct is important in clarifying what we mean.

In addition, face validity points out if a test seems to be acceptable and able to assess the knowledge/abilities that is intended to be assessed, based on the examinees' subjective judgment and the administrative group who decide on its application (Mousavi in Brown, 2004).

Cohen et al. (2005) also write on their book that to demonstrate about content validity the instrument must show that it fairly and comprehensively covers the domain or items that it purports to cover.

Table 1. Table of Content Validity Specification Test

No	Kind of Clause Connectors	Testing Objectives	Item	Total
1	Subordinator (Subordinating conjunction)	Students are able to understand and use the subordinator	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.	30
2	Coordinator (Coordinating conjunction)	Students are able to understand and use the coordinator	31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60.	30
	TOTAL			60

The table showed that the validity of the instrument was valid based on the validity requirements.

Moreover, reliability means replica-ability and consistency over instruments, time, and groups of respondents (Cohen et al., 2005). It is focused on accuracy and precision. The degree to which a test is reliable can be estimated with a reliability coefficient. The reliability of a good research instrument should ideally have a coefficient of reliability ranging from 0.50 to 1.00. Thus, the coefficient of reliability is a statistical figure ranging from 0.50 to 1.00, which shows the consistency of scores or the number of deviation errors associated with scores obtained by a particular group of students. In order to acquire the reliability

coefficient of the grammar test, Formula KR20, which was proposed by G.F. Kuder and M.W. Richardson, was used in this study.

$$K-R 20 = \frac{k}{k-1} \left[1 - \frac{\sum p.q}{S^2_t} \right]$$

Where:

k = number of test items

pq = the proportion of student answering the test correctly and incorrectly

S^2_t = the set of the students total test scores variance

In order to compute the reliability coefficient using KR20, then (pq) and (S^2_t) should first be figured out. (S^2_t) can be computed using this formula:

$$S^2_t = \frac{N (\sum X^2) - (\sum X)^2}{N^2}$$

Where:

X = the amount of correct answer which were made by the students

N = the number of students who take the test

The computation of the reliability coefficient of the test utilizing KR20 formula runs as followed:

$$\begin{aligned} S^2_t &= \frac{N (\sum X^2) - (\sum X)^2}{N^2} \\ S^2_t &= \frac{30 (51247) - (1195)^2}{30^2} \\ &= \frac{1537410 - 1428025}{900} \\ &= \frac{109385}{900} \\ &= 121.54 \end{aligned}$$

$$K-R 20 = \frac{k}{k-1} \left(1 - \frac{\sum p.q}{S^2t} \right)$$

$$K-R 20 = \frac{60}{59} \left(1 - \frac{5.67}{121.54} \right)$$

$$= 1.02 (1 - 0.05)$$

$$= 1.02 \times 0.95$$

$$= 0.97$$

Based on the above counting, the reliability coefficient of the study was 0.97.

DISCUSSION

1. Item Analysis

The researcher did an item analysis to identify the best functioning items (Ary et al., 2010). Good test items should have facility value (FV) and discrimination value (DV). The index of facility value could show whether a particular item in the test easy or difficult. A good test should have facility value between 0.30-0.70, and it is computed as the following formula:

$$FV = \frac{\text{Correct U} + \text{Correct L}}{N}$$

$$DV = \frac{\text{Correct U} - \text{Correct L}}{\frac{1}{2} N}$$

Where:

- FV = Facility Value
- DV = Discrimination Value
- CU = The upper half group's correct answers
- CL = The lower half group's correct answers
- N = The number of students

The data obtained of the present study that is in the raw scores form shows the students ability in clause connector was analyzed by the measurement of the norm reference with five categories standard value, but standard deviation (s.d) and mean (M) was computed as follow:

$$M = \frac{\sum fx}{N}$$

Where:

- M = Mean
 fx = The sums of the score obtained by the subject
 N = The number of all students

$$s.d = \sqrt{\frac{\sum d^2}{N}}$$

Where:

- s.d = Standard deviation
 $\sum d^2$ = Total all the result square deviation
 N = The number of all subject taking the test

Table 2. Table of Category, Criteria and Quality of the Scores

Category	Criteria	Quality
A	$\geq M + 1.5 \text{ s.d}$	Excellent
B	$M + 0.5 \text{ s.d}$	Good
C	$M - 0.5 \text{ s.d}$	Sufficient
D	$M - 1.5 \text{ s.d}$	Insufficient
E	$< M - 1.5 \text{ s.d}$	Poor

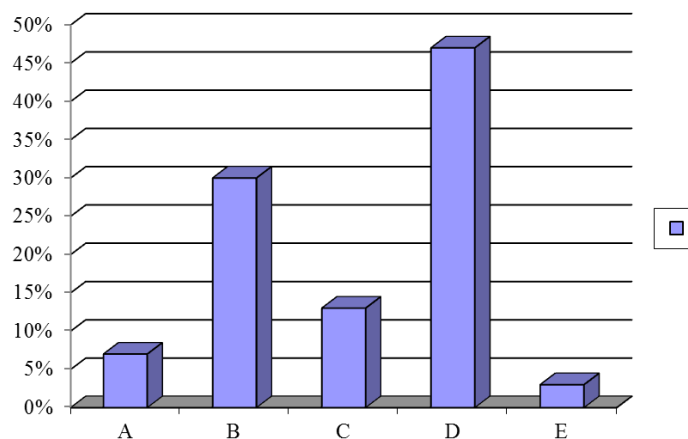
The item discrimination index shows the extent to which each item discriminates among the respondents in the same way as the total score discriminates (Ary et al., 2010). If the good students do well on an item and the poor students do poorly on the same time means the items test is accepted. From the data analysis of this study that was found that: (1) 2 samples (6.67%) were in excellent ability; (2) 9 samples (30.00%) were in good ability; (3) 4 samples (13.33%) were in sufficient ability. (4) 14 samples (46.67%) were in

insufficient ability. (5) 1 sample (3.33%) was in poor ability. The above findings can now be summarized as the following figure.

Table 3. Table of the Summary of the Percentage of the Ability in Using Clause Connectors

Number	Degree	Frequency	Percentage
1	A (Excellent)	2	6.67
2	B (Good)	9	30.00
3	C (Sufficient)	4	13.33
4	D (Insufficient)	14	46.67
5	E (Poor)	1	3.33
TOTAL		30 Samples	100.00

The finding of the study can be illustrated by using block graph as follow:



Graphic 1. The Percentages of the Ability in Using Clause Connectors

If the study result was used as the bases to grade to the students under study, then it showed 15 students (50.00%) from 30 samples who were failed in learning and acquiring clause connectors, and the rest of 15 samples (50.00%) were good enough in learning and acquiring clause connectors. It meant that the acquisition of clause connectors by the first semester students of STMIK Primakara in the academic year 2019/2020 was sufficient.

Based on the findings of the present study, it clearly showed that the hypothesis of this study which was the acquisition of clause connectors by the first semester students of STMIK Primakara in the academic year 2019/2020 was rejected.

CONCLUSION

Finally, the evaluation of the acquisition of clause connectors in this study was concluded as followed:

1. The data analysis result of using five standard values of norm-reference measure toward ability in using clause connectors obviously showed that (1) 2 students (6.67%) out of 30 samples were in excellent ability, (2) 9 students (30.00%) out of 30 samples were in good ability, (3) 4 students (13.33%) out of 30 samples were in sufficient ability, (4) 14 students (46.67%) out of 30 samples were in insufficient ability, (5) 1 student (3.33%) out of 30 samples were in poor ability. If this study result of was applied as the bases to assign grade to the students understudy, then there were 15 students (50.00%) out of 30 samples who were failed in learning and acquiring clause connectors, and the rest of 15 samples (50.00%) were good enough in learning and acquiring clause connectors. It meant that the acquisition of clause connectors by the first semester students of STMIK Primakara in the academic year 2019/2020 was sufficient.
2. Motivation of students in learning English, ability students in learning English, linguistic environment of students, and the competence & qualification of lecturers or teachers are some factors that influenced the ability of students in mastering grammar and those were beyond the control of the this study.
3. The finding of this study could be considered when planning a better communicative language teaching, especially in grammar teaching at STMIK Primakara. The lecturers can plan the next lessons in two ways: (1) by doing remedial for the poor and insufficient students; and (2) by improving the students who were in excellent, good, and sufficient level.

REFERENCES

- Altenberg, E. P., & Vago, R. M. (2010). *English Grammar Understanding the Basics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., Sorensen, C., & Razavieh, A. (2010). *Introduction to Research in Education* (8th ed.). Canada: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.
- Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language Assessment*. New York: Pearson Education Inc.
- Cohen, L., Manion, & Morrison. (2005). *Research Methods in Education*. United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis e-Library.
- Debata, P. K. (2013). The Importance of Grammar in English Language Teaching: A Reassessment. *Language in India*, 13(5). Retrieved from www.languageinindia.com
- Duffin, E. (2020). *The Most Spoken Languages Worldwiden 2019-Erin Duffin*. Retrieved from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/266808/the-most-spoken-languages-worldwide/>
- Dykes, B. (2007). *Grammar for Everyone-Practical Tools for Learning and Teaching Grammar* (ACER Press). Australia.
- Dyson, B. (2010). Learner language analytic methods and pedagogical implications. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, 33(3). <https://doi.org/10.2104/ara1030>
- Green, C. (2014). On the Relationship between Clause Combination, Grammatical Hierarchy and Discourse-Pragmatic Coherence. *Functions of Language*, 21(3), 297–332. <https://doi.org/10.1075/fol.21.3.02gre>
- Greenbaum, S., & Nelson, G. (2002). *An Introduction to English Grammar* (2nd ed.). United Kingdom: Pearson Education Limited.
- Gronlund, N. E. (2003). *Assessment of Student Achievement*. USA: Pearson Education Inc.
- Haque, M. M. (2017). Clause and Sentence : Correlation and Correspondence. *International Journal of Innovation and Research in Educational Sciences*, 4(2), 123–129.
- Holschuh, L. W., & Swan, M. (1998). Practical English Usage. In *The Modern Language Journal* (Vol. 82). <https://doi.org/10.2307/329223>
- Huang, D. (2015). *Graduate Writing Center Yale Center for Teaching and Learning Linking Words (Conjunctions and Connectors)*. (May). Retrieved from https://ctl.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/GWC_LinkingWords-1.pdf
- Huddleston, R., & Pullum, G. K. (2007). *A Student's Introduction to English Grammar* (3rd ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Jackson, H. (2005). *Good Grammar for Students*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Kusumawardhani, P. (2017). *The Analysis Of Conjunctions In Writing An English Narrative Composition : A Syntax Perspective The Analysis Of Conjunctions In Writing An English Narrative Composition : A Syntax Perspective*. (October).

- Namaziandost, E. (2019). The Assessment of Oral Proficiency through Holistic and Analytic Techniques of Scoring: A Comparative Study. *Applied Linguistics Research Journal*, (May). <https://doi.org/10.14744/alrj.2019.83792>
- Nelson, G. (2002). *English An Essential Grammar*. New York: Taylor & Francis e-Library.
- Saaristo, P. (2015). Grammar is The Heart of Language: Grammar and Its Role in Language Learning Among Finnish University Students. *Voices of Pedagogical Development – Expanding, Enhancing and Exploring Higher Education Language Learning*, 279–318. <https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2015.000296>
- Straaijer, R. (2016). Attitudes to prescriptivism: an introduction. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 37(3), 233–242. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2015.1068782>
- Swick, E. (2009). *English Sentence Builder*. <https://doi.org/978-0-07-159961-0>
- Verspoor, M., & Sauter, K. (2000). *English Sentence Analysis*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Virén, L. (2016). *Prescriptive Practices In An English-Speaking Language-Oriented Online Community: A case study of Your Grammar Sucks videos*. (June).
- Wang, F. (2010). Necessity of Grammar Teaching. *International Education Studies*, 3(2), 78–81. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v2n2p184>

How to Cite (APA style):

Dewi, Eka Grana Aristyana. (2020, November). The Evaluation of Clause Connectors acquisition of STMIK Primakarsa Students In Academic Year 2019/2020. *Exposure: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris*, 9(2), 173-186. Retrieved from <https://journal.unismuh.ac.id/index.php/exposure/article/view/3856>