

STUDENTS' PROBLEMS IN WRITING COMPOUND SENTENCES

Silviana Fadhilah
SMA NEGERI 1 Serasan Timur Kepulauan Natuna
e-mail : silvianafadhilah96@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to describe the third year students' problems in writing compound sentences expressing contrast, reason, and additional idea at English Department of Bung Hatta University. Descriptive method was used as the design of this research. The number of population members was 53 students. The writer used totalsampling technique to select the sample. Writing test was the instrument to get the data. The students were asked to write 21 compound sentences : 7 sentences expressing contrast, 7 sentences expressing reason, and 7 sentences expressing additional idea. The test was reliable because the reliability of the test was high (0.98).The result of this research showed that generally the third year students at English Department of Bung Hatta University had problems in writing compound sentences. They had problems in writing compound sentences expressing contrast, reason, and additional idea. Among those problems, the most problem the students face was writing compound sentences expressing reason (39.49%). In writing compound sentences expressing reason, the most problem the students face was in mechanics (41.06%), especially in punctuation (25.13%).Dealing with the conclusion, the writer suggested to the lecturers to use matching picture as the media to teach compound sentence to the students. The students are suggested to do more exercises in writing compound sentences expressing reason by using matching pictures. The next writers are expected to find out students' problems in writing compound sentences in other conjunction such as compound sentences with semicolon, correlative conjunction, and conjunctive adverbs.

Key Words : Writing, Problems, Compound Sentence

INTRODUCTION

English is one of the international languages which is used by many people in the world and in many areas of everydaylife. The current status of English as an international or global language is underpinned by its wide use in a range of fields such as politics, diplomacy, international trade and indusry, education, the media, and information technology (Crystal, Huda, Jenkins in Lauder, 2008:12). In Indonesia, English is taught at schools from Junior level until University level. Of course the students have to master the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Writing becomes one of the difficult subjects for students. According to Cahyo (2013:2), writing is one of the most difficult productive skills that require special skills. Therefore, it can be understood that errors usually occur in writing. In studying writing, the students should master how to write sentences, paragraphs and essays. Sentence is a group of words which can express people's thought. When the students study sentence structure, they should know kinds of sentences. They are simple sentences, compound sentences, complex sentences, and compound-complex

sentences.

Compound sentence consists of two or more independent clauses with no dependent clauses. The compound sentence has some ways to join the independent clauses. They are compound sentences with semi-colon, correlative conjunctions, conjunctive adverbs, and coordinating conjunction. The coordinating conjunctions are for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so. In writing compound sentences, the students have to pay attention to the use of punctuation. According to Brandon & Brandon (2011:427), in writing compound sentences, we have to insert a comma before the coordinating conjunctions. When the students write a compound sentence, they have to know how to construct the compound sentences. The important part in writing compound sentences is tenses. Of course, the students have to master all of tenses in order to write compound sentences correctly.

In addition based on the result of interview and students' writing done by the researcher to the third year students of English Department on March 20, 2017, they also have still problems in writing compound sentences. They have problems to combine two ideas correctly. Then they have problems to use coordinating conjunctions such as and, nor, for, but, yet. For example, many students wrote simple sentence. They did not write the second independent clause. Then most of them did not put comma before the coordinating conjunction.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in doing a research to prove third year students' problems in writing compound sentences expressing contrast, reason, and additional idea at English Department of Bung Hatta University scientifically.

METHOD

The design of this research was descriptive research. According to Gay et.al (2009:275), descriptive research is a research which determines and describes the way things are. They also states that the descriptive research is useful for investigating a variety of educational problems and issues. In this case, the researcher used descriptive research because she wanted to know the problems which faced by the third year students at English Department of Bung Hatta University in writing compound sentences expressing contrast, reason, and additional idea.

According to McMillan (1996:85), population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events that conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the result of the research. The population of this research was the third year students at English Department of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Bung Hatta University Padang in

academic year 2016/2017. The total number of population was 53 students that were distributed into two classes; class A and class B. The distribution of the third year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
The Distribution of Population Members

No	Class	Number
1.	A	28 students
2.	B	25 students
Total		53 students

The researcher chose them as the subject in this research because they had studied compound sentences in Writing Sentence and Intermediate Grammar subject.

Sample is part of population. According to Gay et.al (2009:124), sample is a group of individuals, items, or events, that represents the characteristics of the larger group from which the sample is drawn. The researcher used total sampling technique to select the sample of this study because the population number was less than 100. According to Usman & Akbar (2011:181), total sampling technique is a research which is used all of the population. When the researcher collected data, 10 students were absent. So the total sample was 43 students.

The instrument used to collect the data in this research was writing test in the form of writing compound sentences. The researcher asked the third year students at English Department of Bung Hatta University to write twenty one compound sentences by using coordinating conjunction expressing contrast, reason, and additional idea. The students were given 60 minutes to do the test.

A good test should be valid and reliable. Validity means the test will measure what is supposed to be measured. To see the validity of the test, the researcher used content validity. According to Gay et.al (2009:155), content validity is the degree to which a test measures an intended content area. To fulfill the valid test, the researcher constructed the test based on the syllabus and teaching materials that were taught by the lecturers of the third year students at English Department of Bung Hatta University.

Reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it is measuring (Gay et.al, 2009:158). To see the reliability of the test, the researcher used inter-rater technique by using two assessors (assessor 1 and assessor 2). The first assessor was the researcher, and the second

assessor was Rani Fadila. The researcher chose her because she got A or good qualification in Writing and Grammarsubject.

To find out the reliability index of writing test, the researcher used Pearson Product Moment formula. To know the degree of reliability, the researcher used degree of coefficient correlation based on Usman & Akbar's idea (2011:201) :

.01 - .20	: Very low
.21 - .40	: Low
.41 - .60	: Moderate
.61 - .80	: Enough
.81 - .99	: High
1.00	: Very High

According to Sudijono (2015:193), the test is reliable if the coefficient correlation is from .20-1.00. After calculating it, the researcher found out the degree of the coefficient of the test was 0.98. It means the test was reliable. The researcher collected the data by using writing test through some procedures as follows :

1. The researcher administered the writing test.
2. The researcher gave the direction to the students.
3. The researcher gave the students 60minutes to do the test.
4. The researcher collected the students' answer sheet.
5. The researcher copied the answer sheets to avoid subjectivity between the researcher and the second assessor. The original answer sheet was for the researcher, and the other one was for the second assessor.
6. The researcher identified the problems as the as following procedures :
7. The researcher prepared the table of check list to identify problems.
8. The researcher checked the students' answer sheet to check student's problems based on the following criteria.

It will be a problem if the students write grammar (subject, verb, object agreement) in the first and second independent clause incorrectly in writing compound sentence by using coordinating conjunction 'but'. It will be a problem if the students write grammar (subject, verb, object agreement) in the first and second independent clause incorrectly in writing compound sentence by using coordinating conjunction 'yet'. It will be a problem if the students write grammar (subject,

verb, object agreement) in the first and second independent clause incorrectly in writing compound sentence by using coordinating conjunction 'for'. It will be a problem if the students write grammar (subject, verb, object agreement) in the first and second independent clause incorrectly in writing compound sentence by using coordinating conjunction 'and'. It will be a problem if the meaning is not logic in writing compound sentences by using coordinating conjunction 'but', 'yet', 'for', 'and'. It will be a problem if the students write simple sentence or complex sentence. It will be a problem if the students did not write anything. It will be a problem if the students use incorrect coordinating conjunction. It will be a problem if the students have wrong spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

The researcher counted the average number of problem based on the following formula.

$$\frac{\text{Problems identified by A1} + \text{Problems identified by A2}}{2}$$

The researcher interpreted the result.

In analyzing the data, the researcher did the following procedures :

The researcher counted the total number of problems.

The researcher counted the percentage of each students' problem by using the following formula :

$$P = \frac{f}{n} \times 100\%$$

Where :

P= the percentage of each problem
f= frequency of each problem

n= the total number of problems

The researcher interpreted the result.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

The purpose of this research was to describe the third year students' problems in writing compound sentences in expressing contrast, reason, and additional idea. Based on the purposes above, the researcher presents and discusses the findings as follows.

Based on the result of data analysis, it was found that there were three problems faced by the third year students in writing compound sentences. They were 28.86% problems in writing compound sentences expressing contrast, 39.49% students' problems in writing compound sentences expressing reason, and 31.65% students' problems in writing compound sentences

expressing additional idea.

Based on the result of data analysis, the students had problems in writing compound sentences expressing contrast. The problems faced by students were problem in grammar (subject, verb, object agreement) (43.94%), problem in coordinating conjunction (3.96%), problem in meaning/idea (13.75%), and problem in mechanics. In mechanics, students had problems in spelling (6.53%), capitalization (10.02%), and punctuation (21.80%).

Based on the result of data analysis, the students had problems in writing compound sentences expressing reason. The problems faced by students were problem in grammar (subject, verb, object agreement) (40.89%), problem in coordinating conjunction (6.47%), problem in meaning/idea (11.58%). In mechanics, the students had problems in spelling (7.75%), capitalization (8.18%), and punctuation (25.13%).

Based on the result of data analysis, the students had problems in writing compound sentences expressing additional idea. The problems faced by students were problem in grammar (subject, verb, object agreement) (36.13%), problem in coordinating conjunction 2.44%, problem in meaning/idea (10.63%), and problem in mechanics. In mechanics the students had problems in spelling (6.16%), capitalization (11.16%), and punctuation (33.48%).

Discussions

Based on the finding, it was found that the most problem faced by the students in writing compound sentences was writing expressing reason (39.49%). Some of students wrote simple sentences. The most problem faced by students was in mechanics (41.06%). Most of students had problem in punctuation (25.13%). They did not put comma before coordinating conjunction “for” and period in the end of sentences. Here are some examples of students’ sentences.

Student’s Writing

(Student A)

She sits in front of the teacher for ask the teacher some question.

We go to school for we study to get high score.

From the first sentence, it can be seen that it is not compound sentence because there is no second independent clause. It should be : She sits in front of the teacher, for she wants to ask the teacher some questions. From the second sentence, the student did not put comma before the coordinating conjunction. It should be : We go to school, for we study to get high score.

(Student B)

I study hard for make my parents be proud.

I buy the clothes for wear in Microteaching class.

From the first and second sentence, it can be seen that the students wrote simple sentence because there is no second independent clause. The student wrote “for”, but its function did not show a reason in his sentence. For the first sentence, it should be: I study hard, for I want to make my parents proud of me. Then, for the second sentence, it should be : I buy the clothes, for I want to wear them in Microteaching class.

(Student L)

For a lot of reason, everyone hates her.

I was so thirsty for I ran 2 miles away.

From the examples above, it can be seen that students wrote compound sentences incorrectly. From the first sentence, the student wrote the coordinating conjunction in the first independent clause. Then, that is not compound sentence because there is no subject and verb in the first independent clause. It should be : *Everyone hates her, for she has a lot of mistakes.* From the second sentence, the student did not put comma before the coordinating conjunction. It should be : *I was so thirsty, for I ran 2 miles away.*

Based on the result of data analysis, the finding of this research showed that the students had problems in writing compound sentences expressing contrast. The most problem faced by students was mechanics (38.35%). It means that the students still did not understand how to apply mechanic well in writing compound sentences. Besides students’ problem in mechanic, it was also found that the students had problem in grammar (43.94%). Here are some examples of students’ problem in writing compound sentences expressing contrast.

Student’s Writing

(Student S)

She wants go to the party but she have to do her homework.

He hate to drink milk yet my brother love it.

From the examples above, the student did not put comma before the coordinating conjunction. Then the students had problem in subject, verb agreement. From the first sentence, it should be : *She wants to go to the party, but she has to do her homework.* Then from the second sentence, it should be : *He hates to drink milk, yet my brother loves it.*

(Student AN)

I went go to the beach, but tomorrow I will mid test.

I went buy new phone, yet my phonestill good.

From the examples above, the student had problems in tenses. From the first sentence, the student wrote : *I went go to the beach*. Then from the second sentence, the student wrote: *I went buy new phone*.

These sentences are wrong because the student wrote verb 2 and then verb 1 in the first independent clause. Then the student did not write verb in the first and second independent clause. For the first sentence, it should be : *I want to go to the beach, but tomorrow I will have mid test*. Then for the second sentence, it should be : *I want to buy new phone, yet my phone is still good*.

Based on the result of data analysis, the finding of the research indicated that the students had problem in writing compound sentences expressing reason. The most problem the students face was mechanics (41.06%). Besides students' problem in mechanic, it was also found that the students had problem in grammar (40.89%).

Student's Writing

(Student C)

I didn't come to class yesterday for I was sick.

My Father call the "911" for He needs a help.

From the examples above, the student did not put comma before the coordinating conjunction. Then from the second sentence, the student used capital letter for words "Father" and "He". The student also had problem in grammar in the second sentence. For the first sentence, it should be : *I didn't come to class yesterday, for I was sick*. Then for the second sentence, it should be : *My father calls the "911", for he needs a help*.

(Student E)

She did not come yesterday for she was oversleep.

She always teaches me for she wants me be better than before.

From the examples above, the student had some problems. First, the student did not put comma before the coordinating conjunctions in the first and second sentence. Then in the first sentence, the student wrote second independent clause incorrectly. The student did not have to write verb be before verb "oversleep". It should be : *She did not come yesterday, for she overslept*. In the second sentence, the student did not write "to" before "be". It should be : *She always teaches me, for she wants me to be better than before*.

Based on the result of data analysis, the finding of the research indicated that the students had problem in writing compound sentences expressing additional idea. The researcher found that

the most problem for students in writing compound sentences expressing additional idea was mechanics (50.80%). Besides students' problem inmechanic, it was also found that the studentshad problem in grammar (36.13%).

Student's Writing

(Student B)

I am hungry and I have to eat

They are thirsty and they have to drink

From the examples above, the student did not put comma before the coordinating conjunction and period at the end of the sentence. For the first sentence, it should be:*I am hungry, and I have to eat.* Then for the second sentence, it should be : *They are thirsty, and they have to drink.*

(Student J)

Reading a book is good activity and increase our knowledge.

Bukittinggi is famaous city and there are many tourism places there.

From the first sentence, it can be seen that it is not compound sentence because there is no second independent clause. It should be : *Reading a book is a good activity, and it will increase our knowledge.* Then from the second sentence, the student did not put comma before the coordinating conjunction, and there is wrong spelling in word "famaous". It should be : *Bukittinggi is famous city, and there are many tourism places there.*

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

Based on the result of data analyzing, the researcher concluded :

1. Generally, the students had problems in writing compound sentences expressing contrast, reason, and additional idea. The most problems faced by the students was writing compound sentences expressing reason. The percentage of this problem was 39.49%.
2. In writing compound sentences expressing reason, the most problem the students face was in mechanics (41.06%). Most of students had problem in using punctuation (25.13%). It means that the students still do not understand how to apply mechanic well in writing compound sentences expressing reason.

Based on the conclusion above, the researcher would like to give several suggestions to the students, lecturers, and next researchers. For the Lecturers, in general, since the students have problems in writing compound sentences expressing reason, the researcher suggests to the lecturers to explain more the lesson and give more exercises to the students so that the students will

understand how to write compound sentences expressing reason. The lecturers also can use media such as matching picture. For example, the lecturers give two different pictures, and then the students have to write compound sentence based on the pictures given.

For the Students who have problems in writing compound sentences, they should pay more attention when the lecturers explain about the lessons. They have to understand how to write compound sentences. The more important thing is they have to do more exercise about writing compound sentences, especially in writing compound sentences expressing reason.

For the Next Researcher, it is suggested to find out students' problems in writing compound sentences in other conjunction such as compound sentences with correlative conjunction, compound sentences with semicolon, and compound sentences with conjunctive adverbs.

REFERENCES

Brandon, Lee & Kelly Brandon. (2011). *Paragraph and Essays with Integrated Readings* (11thed). Boston : Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Cahyo, Fuad Nur. (2013). *Using The Mind Mapping Technique To Improve The English Writing Skill of The Tenth Grade at MAN Yogyakarta III in The Academic Year 2012/2013. (S1 Degree)*. Online Publish Thesis. Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta.

Gay, L.R, Geoffrey E. Mills, & Peter Airasian. (2009). *Educational Research : Competencies for Analysis and Application*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey : Pearson Education, Inc.

Lauder, Allan. (2008). *The Status and Function of English in Indonesia : A Review of Key Factors*. Makara, Sosial Humaniora., 12(1), 1-12.

McMillan, James. H. (1996). *Educational Research : Fundamentals for the Consumer*. (2nded). New York : HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.

Sudijono, Anas. (2015). *Pengantar Statistik Pendidikan*. Jakarta : Rajawali Pers.

Usman, Husaini & Purnomo Setiady Akbar. (2011). *Pengantar Statistika*. Jakarta : Bumi Aksara.