

**THE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN USING CONJUNCTIONS  
(A DESCRIPTIVE QUANTITATIVE STUDY OF THE SIXTH SEMESTER STUDENTS  
OF ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM BENGKULU UNIVERSITY)**

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**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this research was to describe the ability of the students in 6th semester of English study program in using English conjunctions. The design of this research used descriptive quantitative study. The population of this research was 78 students in English study program Bengkulu University and the samples were 65 students. In collecting the data, the researcher used multiple choices conjunctions test. Based on the finding of the research, the ability of the students in using coordinate conjunctions was in enough category with the mean scores 61. The ability of the students in using correlative conjunction was good with the mean scores 79. The ability of the students in using relative conjunction was good with the mean score 78. The ability of the students in using subordinate conjunction was good with mean score 78, the same as the ability in using relative conjunction. According to the result in every type of conjunctions, the researcher concluded that the ability of the students in using conjunctions was in enough category with the mean score 74.

**Keywords: *student, ability, conjunction***

**ABSTRAK**

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menggambarkan kemampuan siswa semester enam jurusan bahasa Inggris dalam menggunakan konjungsi atau kata penghubung. Design penelitian ini menggunakan studi deskriptive quantitative. Populasi penelitian ini adalah 78 siswa semester enam jurusan bahasa Inggris Universitas Bengkulu dan sampel penelitian sebanyak 65 siswa. Dalam pengumpulan data, peneliti menggunakan tes pilihan ganda tentang konjungsi atau kata penghubung. Berdasarkan penemuan yang ada, kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan konjungsi koordinat menunjukkan ke kategori cukup dengan nilai rata-rata 61. Kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan konjungsi korelatif adalah baik dengan nilai rata-rata 79. Kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan konjungsi relatif adalah baik dengan nilai rata-rata 78. Kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan konjungsi subordinat adalah baik dengan nilai rata-rata 78 sama dengan nilai konjungsi relatif. Berdasarkan hasil dari masing-masing tipe konjungsi maka dapat disimpulkan bahwa kemampuan siswa dalam menggunakan konjungsi secara keseluruhan adalah cukup dengan nilai rata-rata 74.

**Kata Kunci: *mahasiswa, kemampuan, konjungsi***

## INTRODUCTION

In mastering English, there are 4 main skills to assess whether learners acquire the language or not. Those are writing, listening, reading and speaking. Listening and reading are known as 'receptive' skills while speaking and writing are known as 'productive' skills. Among 4 skills describe above, there is grammar as one element which has strong influence in mastering language. Grammar may not be included in 4 basic skills of acquiring the language, but grammar unites the 4 basic skills.

There are many aspects that we usually learn in grammar, one of them is conjunction. When you speak in your language and need to connect 2 ideas in one sentence you may have a kind of word to connect the idea. In English the connector called as conjunctions. Conjunctions are words that used to connect the word by word, clause by clause, or sentence by sentence (Chaer, 1998:140). According to Dykes (2007:73), conjunction comes from Latin *con* meaning 'together' and *jungere* meaning 'to join'. So, conjunction joins two or more parts of speech of a similar kind or two or more parts of a sentence.

Bernard (1993:90) states that conjunctions are words, which join other words or group of words. It is divided into 4 types: those are coordinate conjunction, correlative conjunction, relative conjunction, and subordinate conjunction. Bernard (1993:90) states that coordinate conjunction is a single word used to connect part of the sentence. Coordinate conjunction can combine word with word, phrase with phrase and clauses. The words used as coordinate conjunction are: but, and, or, for, and nor. Bernard (1993:93) also states that the tasks of subordinate conjunctions are to join a clause to another clause on which it depends for its full meaning. The word is

used as subordinate conjunctions are: after, although, because, before, if, since, than, through, unless, until, when, whenever, where and while.

According to Chalker (1984:237) correlative conjunction is a conjunction that split around an adjective or adverb. There are several connective words refer to correlative conjunction; either...or, not only...but (also), neither...nor, both...and, just as...so, the...the, no sooner...than, rather...than. The last type of conjunctions is relative conjunction. Relative conjunction has special functions. Relative conjunction is used when combining relative clause. There are several conjunctions that used to introduce relative clause; who, whom, which, and whose.

In English study program, grammar element such conjunction have already learned starting from structure 1, 2, and 3. In English study program's syllabus there is no special place to learn conjunction, but it is included in another material such as noun clause, adverb clause, adjective clause, conditional sentence, and connecting ideas. Coordinate and correlative conjunctions are included in connecting idea in 2nd semester. This material also little bit discusses about subordinate conjunction. In 5th semester, subordinate conjunction is discussed in some material such as adverb clause and conditional sentences. Relative conjunction appears when the students learn adjective clause in 2nd and 4th semester. As a result, students in 6th semester hopefully have good ability in using conjunction although they are not learning conjunction in specific material. It is included in some materials in structure 1, 2, and 3.

Grammar is one of the important roles in learning language. So, the students in English study program in all universities

should learn grammar in Structure 1, 2, and 3. In Bengkulu University, the students of English study program has learned grammar in structure 1, 2, and 3 in order to get better understanding in grammar field. As a result, they ought to be familiar and gradually mastering grammar material such as conjunctions. But the fact shows that several students in English course are still lack in grammar. It is shown by the thesis of the students still have many corrections from the lecturer in which they have mistake in using grammar element, for example conjunctions. As conjunctions is very important because it is one of the element to make the composition of the topic become coherent not only in written but also in spoken form.

By the explanation about conjunction above, the writer feel curious to make a research about students' ability in using conjunction. How far the ability of the students in using English conjunction. Conjunction becomes one of the necessities for the English study program students to master. If the students have good ability in using conjunction, they will not have any difficulties in combining and connecting sentences. Here the writer want to conduct the research entitle "*The Students' Ability in Using Conjunctions (a Descriptive Quantitative Study of 6th Semester Students English Study Program Bengkulu University)*".

## **METHOD**

The design of this research was descriptive research. Based on the research questions, the researcher tried to describe how far the students' ability in using conjunctions. The descriptive research is designed to describe the present condition of the research subjects (Gay, 1990). Quantitative method used to emphasize the analysis on numerical data

(numbers) are processed with statistical methods (Azwar, 1999)

Based on the title of the research, the population of this research was the students of English Study Program at Bengkulu University in 6th semester. Cresswell (2012:142) stated that population is a group of individuals who have the same characteristic. Since the students in 6th semester had already learned about conjunction although conjunction didn't become the main topic in grammar materials.

In this research, the researcher used the total sampling technique. It means that the researcher investigated all members of the population. It is also supported by the statement from Arikunto (2002) that if the population of the research less than 100 participant, it is better to take all the population becomes the sample. The number of students in 6th semester English Study Program Bengkulu University was 78 students. Actually the number of sample should be 78 students. However, on the process of collecting the data, there are 65 of 78 students who presented on actual process.

The instrument of this research was a set of grammar test about conjunctions (multiple choices). Since this research wanted to find the ability of the student, so test instrument was very suitable to answer the research question. Arikunto (2002:127) argued that test is a series of questions or exercises or other tools used to measure the skills, knowledge, intelligence, ability or aptitude of the individual or group. The test was divided into 4 parts, coordinate conjunction, correlative conjunction, relative conjunction and subordinate conjunction. The researcher took the conjunction test by using several sources in internet and grammar book. The numbers of questions were 81 questions. It was consisted of 21 questions about coordinate conjunction,

21 questions about correlative conjunction, 12 questions about relative conjunction and 27 questions about subordinate conjunction.

Before the researcher did the real test in the classroom, the researcher had to validate the test. It was used to know whether the test that the researcher make is valid or not. Validity of the instrument is used to measure the content of the test whether it can measure what the researcher want to measure or not. The researcher asked the 2 experts to help in validating the instrument and to decide the reliability of the test. To find out the percentage of the data, the writer will use this formula:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

P= Percentage

F= the frequency of students' answer

N= Total number of sample

(Arikunto, 2002)

After getting the percentage, the data was classified as follow to answer the research question. (Based on Academic Guidance (2015) released by Bengkulu University)

**Table1. The categories of Students' Ability Level**

Range of score	Qualification
<b>80-100</b>	Excellent(A)
<b>75-80</b>	Good (B)
<b>60-74</b>	Enough (C)
<b>00-59</b>	Low (D)
<b>Less than 45</b>	Fail (E)

The table 1 shows the five categories of the students' ability. The total score of every student classified into these 5

categories so that the researcher could interpret students' comprehension into Excellent, Good, Enough, Low, and Fail. The mean score reflect the average students' comprehension of English conjunctions.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Table 2. The Category of Students' Score

Categories	Number of Students
<b>Excellent</b>	17
<b>Good</b>	16
<b>Enough</b>	32
<b>Low</b>	1
<b>Fail</b>	0

The table 2 presents the category of the students' ability in using conjunctions. As we can see in the table, from 65 students there are no students categorized on fail category in mastering conjunctions. The result shows that one person or 2% of 65 students get Low categories. 17 students are classified in excellent categories. In Good categories there are 16 students. While for the students in enough categories are 32 students.

**Table 3. The Students' Ability in Using Conjunctions**

No	Types of conjunction	Mean	Category
<b>1</b>	Coordinate conjunction	61	Enough
<b>2</b>	Correlative conjunction	79	Good
<b>3</b>	Relative conjunction	78	Good
<b>4</b>	Subordinate conjunction	78	Good
<b>Total mean (the ability of the students in using conjunctions)</b>		74	Good

According to the data above, there are 3 types of conjunction which categorize in

good ability. Those are correlative, relative, and subordinate conjunctions. Whereas the ability of the students in using coordinate conjunction is included in enough category. From the result of the mean score by sum up the whole mean and dividing with the number of conjunctions' type, so the researcher concludes that the ability of students in using conjunction in every types of conjunction included to enough category. It is shown by the mean of the scores of all students about 74%.

The result of the test showed that the ability of the sixth semester students in using conjunctions was enough. Actually, conjunction is not include in the main material of particular course especially grammar course in English study program. But, conjunctions merge to other materials for examples, noun clause, adjective clause, adverb clause and conditional sentences. However, the ability of the student in using conjunctions should be excellent. Yet, there are several items of conjunction that the students fail to master. It is described below in every type of conjunctions.

The result of the students' ability in using coordinate conjunction was included to enough categories. Coordinate conjunctions became the one which the students difficult to master. It was caused by 3 item of coordinate conjunction which has many incorrect answers, **for**, **nor**, and **yet**. Apparently, the students in sixth semester of English study program have learned coordinate conjunction not only in 2nd semester with the topic material about "connecting ideas" but also in several semester later. But students ability in using coordinate conjunction still on enough category. the researcher concluded that it was caused by the lack of students in practising this material especially those 3 items, **nor**, **yet**, and **for**. It also could be caused by the difference

in using mother tongue and the rules of the using the conjunctions are not the same.

The result of the students' ability in using correlative conjunction was included to good category. In fact, the percentage of the result is 79%. It had one minus point to become high category. The students' ability in using correlative conjunction was better than the students' ability in using coordinate conjunction. The researcher assumes that it is caused by the frequencies of the students in using this type of conjunction in their daily life. It is supported by Chalker (1984) that correlative conjunctions also one of the type of conjunction which is often used by people to communicate both spoken and written. However, there were 2 items of correlative conjunctions which had some incorrect answers. Those were **no sooner-than** and **just as so**. Those items had the same problem with 3 items in coordinate conjunctions **for**, **nor**, and **yet**. The students failed to master those items because the students had less knowledge in using of **no sooner-than** and **just as-so**.

The result of the research in using relative conjunction based on the average of the students with the percentage 78% was included to good category. Relative conjunction is the types of conjunction which has few items of conjunction. Relative conjunction consists of 4 items. Those are **who**, **whom**, **whose**, and **which**. The incorrect answers mostly in the using of **whose**. From the investigation, most of the students could not differentiate the using of **whose** and **which**. The question which has answered **whose**, they changed to **which**. It made the students have incorrect answer in this part.

The result of students' ability in using subordinate conjunction was included to good category. The students have already familiar with the using of those 9 items for

the students unconsciously learned it in another course not only at grammar course such as structure, but also in writing course and translation course. But, not all the students got good ability in using subordinate conjunction. There were 2 conjunctions which has high incorrect response. Those are subordinate conjunction of place “**wherever**” and contrast “**although**”. In those 2 conjunctions several student had difficulties to master it. From the investigation the researcher concluded that they were misunderstood in the logical sentences of the test. The students failed to understand the purpose of the questions so that made the students choose the wrong answers. It also could be caused by answer’s choises. There might be double possible answer in the questions.

### CONCLUSSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the result of the test, the researcher concluded that:

1. The ability of the students in using conjunctions was included to enough category with percentage 74% according to the academic guidance in 2015 Bengkulu University.
2. The students’ ability in using coordinate conjunctions was included to Enough category. It was shown by the percentage of the students’ score 61%. The lowest ability of he students in using conjunctions is coordinate conjunction.
3. The students’ ability in using correlative conjunctions included to good category with percentage 79%. The highest ability of students in using conjunctions was correlative conjunction.
4. The students’ ability in using relative conjunctions was included to good category with percentage 78%.

5. The students’ ability in using subordinate conjunctions was included to good category with percentage 78%. The ability of the students in using subordinate conjunction was similar with the ability of the students in using relative conjunction.

The ability of the students in using conjunctions included to enough category. The highest ability in using conjunctions is correlative conjunction. The correlative conjunction become the type of conjunctions which the students easy to understand. It is because the items in correlative conjunctions often used and read by the students.

The lowest ability of the students in using conjunction is coordinate conjunction. the researcher assumes that it is caused by not only the lack of practice in using conjunctions especially for the kinds of conjunction which has less scores but also the rules of using conjunctions in english with mother tongue might be different.

According to the fact finding of the research, the researcher would like to propose suggestions for:

1. The lecture in English Study Program have an important role to enhance the output of English Study Program. After the lectures knew the weakness of the students in using conjunction, the writer hope that they can give more exposure in using unfamiliar conjunctions in each type of conjunctions. So that they can limit the weakness of the students in using conjunctions. They can give more explanations and exercises to the students.
2. The further researchers are suggested to find out any aspect of conjunctions or the relationship of conjunctions with any linguistics field. For instance, they can focus on the ability of the

students in using conjunction in explanation text or others.

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