

An Analysis of Students' Mastery of Comparison Degrees

Shalehoddin¹, Junawati Samosir²

English Department

University of Riau Kepulauan, Batam, Indonesia

zhibond501@gmail.com, junawatisamosir@yahoo.com

Abstract

Based on syllabus, junior high school students learned about degrees of comparison. The purpose of this study is to know how far the eighth grade students of SMP Clarissa Batam in mastering of degrees of comparison. the research type of this study is qualitative research, the population in this research was twenty two students. The research focused in SMP Clarissa Batam and was held on may until June 2017. The data was collected from students by giving test. Then, the writer analyzed the data to know how the students master in degrees of comparison. After that, the writer interviewed some students to know their difficulties in mastering degrees of comparison. the result showed that from 22 students of eighth grade students of SMP Clarissa Batam, only 6 (27.3%) students were able in mastering of degrees of comparison of adjective and there were 16 (72.7%) students are fail in it. it means most of eighth grade students of SMP Clarissa Batam did not master degrees of comparison well

Key words: *Analysis, students' mastering, and Degrees of comparison*

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a very important role in human life. It cannot be separated from the people. Language is spoken to communicate or express ideas, feeling, desires, and to convey the message to each other in spoken and written. As we know, language is a tool to deliver our thoughts, for interaction to other people, and a tool to receive the product of the other culture. Language is one thing that cannot separate from the people. Language is a system of conventional vocal sign by means of which human beings communicate. From the definition above, the writer concludes that language is the ability of human beings to communicate with others. English is one of languages in this world. However, English is an international language, which is spoken by almost people from many countries in the world.

In this globalization era, English is important thing that give an influence to someone's carrier. Especially for them that want to look for a job. Most of companies will require someone that

have ability in English orally and written. It means in job competition need someone fluently in English. In business relation and getting information sometimes also need people that have ability in English.

English is a foreign language in Indonesia, which is learned from elementary school or even kindergarten up to the university level. It is learned as a local content subject in primary school, as a core subject at Junior and Senior high school, and also as a complementary compulsory subject at university. In learning English, there are four basic language skills that should be mastered by students namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They are related to each other. It means students have to learn those skills if they want to master English well. In learning English, sometimes students find some problems. The first is Grammar problem. Grammar is also very much closed in spoken and writing. Everyone will be led to have a specific regulation to use language in grammar. We have to memorize many kinds of rules to make clearly in spoken and written. The second is pronunciation problem. In making conversation in English we have to pronounce word by word correctly but some of English learner do not have ability to pronounce them well. The third is vocabulary problem.

Vocabulary is also important in learning English, having many vocabularies is going to guarantee our English in speaking and writing. In daily conversation students have to use many words, therefore student have learned many years about English, they are difficult to make conversation because of lack of vocabulary.

Therefore, many problems that face by students in learning English, the writer will not discuss all of them. In composing this thesis, the writer only focuses on grammar. Grammar is very important for people who want to be able to master the English language because grammar would lead us to write words and sentences correctly. To increase the ability in grammar, students should do many practices in it. Students must learn about grammar when they are studying English in order to be able to make sentences, paragraph, and also kinds of essay corrected grammatically. Ur (2009: 83) states that the aim of grammar practice is to get students to learn the structure so thoroughly that they will be able to produce them correctly on their own.

When the writer did teaching practice, the writer practiced at SMP Clarissa Batam that located at Bumi Sarana Indah blok B1 No. 77 Batu Aji Batam. The writer did teaching practice for five months at the school. At the school, the writer found that many students had low mastery in

learning grammar especially in mastering the comparison degree. Some of students didn't know how to differentiate the form of comparative degree and the form of superlative degree.

Below were examples of errors done by eighth grade students in learning Comparison Degrees:

- Rina is beautifuller than Mona
- Anto is more tall than Andi
- Novi is the most clever students in her class.

In order to get more information, the writer asked English teacher at SMP Clarissa Batam about the students' mastery in comparison degree. English teacher at SMP Clarissa Batam informed to the writer that previous students of SMP Clarissa Batam faced the same problem with the students in academic year 2016 / 2017.

Based on the problem above, the writer interested to analyze the students' mastery of comparison degrees, because the writer assumes that comparison degrees is part of grammar that important to be learned by students. Without mastering grammar, the students cannot write, speak, and listen well. Mastering grammar is also very useful for students to increase the students' ability in learning English. That's why the writer chose a research entitled: "An analysis of students' mastery of comparison degrees at eighth grade students of SMP Clarissa Batam in academic year 2016 /2017.

Definition of Adjective and Comparison Degrees

According to Seaton (2007: 52) an adjective is a describing word. It tells you more about a noun. An adjective usually appears before the noun it describes .According to Eastwood (2002:251) states that adjective are words like short, old, cheap, happy, nice, electric.

Most of adjectives express quality; they tell us what something is like. According to Harmer (2001:43) states that adjective can be use before and after noun. They can have many forms. From the definitions above, the writer conclude that adjective is a word that describes or clarifies a noun by giving some information about an object's size, shape, age, color, origin or material.

According to Kardimin (2011:143) there are 3 kinds of Comparison Degrees. They are Positive, Comparative, and Superlative.

1. Positive degrees

Positive degree is used to compare two things or person that has same shape, same character, etc.

e.g :

- This book is as good as that book
- Susan is as beautiful as Jane
- Jhon is as clever as Peter

2. Comparative degree

Comparative degree is used to compare two things or persons are different.

e.g :

- Merry is cleverer than Jane
- John is Kinder than Rossi
- I am older than you

3. Superlative degree

Superlative degree is used to compare three things or more.

e.g :

- Merry is the cleverest girl in the class
- This is the oldest cinema in Bandng
- It was the most beautiful house that I have ever seen

METHODOLOGY

The research is qualitative research. There are 2 kinds of technique that used in this research. The first is by giving test to the students and the second is by interviewed some of the students. Before the test given to the eighth grade students of SMP Clarissa Batam, the test was given to the ninth grade students the aim is feasibility of the test by measuring the validity and reliability of the test.

Validity

According to Maolani and Cahyana (2015: 132) state that validity is a quality that indicates the suitability between a measuring device with a measured goal or what should be measured. to measure the validity test, the writer used Microsoft Excel application and used the theory by Sundayana (2014: 60) as follow:

$$r_{XY} = \frac{n \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{(n \sum X^2) - (\sum X)^2} \cdot (n \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2)}$$

Where:

R_{xy} = Correlation coefficient

N = Item score test

Y = Number of score /question

N = Number of respondent

Reliability

After doing the validity test, the writer did the reliability test for the test that given to the eight grade students of SMP Clarissa Batam. According to Maolani and Cahyana (2015: 132) reliability is a quality that demonstrates the stability of a measurement performed. For testing instrument reliability, the writer used Split half technique, the formula as follows:

$$r_{11} = \frac{2 \cdot r_{11}}{1 + r_{11}}$$

Where:

r_{11} = Internal reliability of all instruments

$r_{\frac{11}{22}}$ = The product moment correlation between the first and the second halves.

RESULT

After analyzed the test that gave to the eighth students, the result can be seen in the table below.

Table 1. Score percentage

No	Number of students	Percentage of score	%	Level
1	0	90 – 99 %	0 %	Excellent
2	2	80 – 89 %	9.1 %	Good
3	4	70 – 79 %	18.1 %	Enough
4	5	60 - 69 %	22.7 %	Bad

5	11	< 60 %	50 %	Fail
Total	22 students		100 %	

From the table above, it showed that 0 students got score percentage 90-99% (0%) with level excellent, 2 students got score percentage 80-89% (9.1%) with level good, 4 students got score percentage 70-79% (18.1%) with level enough, 5 students got score percentage 60-69% (22.7%) with level bad, and 11 students got score percentage <60% (50%) with level fail. after the writer interviewed some of the students, the result can be seen on the table below.

Table 2. Students' Answer in Interview

No	Level of difficulties	Number of students
1.	Rather difficult	2
2.	Quite difficult	3

As we see from the table above, 2 students said that learning comparison degrees was rather difficult for them, and 3 students said that learning comparison degrees was quite difficult for them. Some of the students also said that they were difficult to *distinguish* the usage of *more* and *most* and the usage of *er* and *est* in sentences. They also confused with the usage of the syllables in mastering comparison degrees.

DISCUSSION

Actually the students knew the adjective should be added by suffixes or prefixes adjective degrees of comparison but, most of the students did not master in the form and the usage of adjective degrees of comparison, that's way some of them said this material was difficult to understand. based on the result of interview, the writer concluded that most of students still found difficulties in mastering degrees of comparison especially for the forms, the syllables and the usage of each. It can be concluded that most of eighth grade students of SMP Clarissa Batam still found difficulties in mastering comparison degrees.

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