

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ERRORS IN USING ELLIPTICAL CONSTRUCTIONS

Ratna Dewi^{1*}, Erwin Udding²

¹Muhammadiyah University of Makassar

²Muhammadiyah University of Makassar

*ratnadewi@unismuh.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The objective of the study was to find out kinds and sources of errors made by the fourth semester students of English Department in Makassar Muhammadiyah University. Error analysis was done for the sake of providing information to the lecturers related to the students' difficulties in implementing elliptical construction and to find out the sources of errors in order to find appropriate ways in providing feedbacks to the students in learning elliptical construction. An elliptical construction test was given to the students in order to identify the students' errors in using elliptical constructions. The researchers chose the fourth semester students which consisted of ten classes as the population and implemented true random sampling technique in choosing the samples. The number of samples were 50 students, taken 5 students from each class. The total number of errors were 1424 errors. The most dominant errors were the errors of omission which appeared 693 times or 48.66% of the total number of errors caused by the incomplete application of rule. Misformation appeared 428 times or 30.06% of the total number of errors caused by overgeneralization. Error of addition appeared 255 times or 17.91% of the total number of errors caused by the ignorance of rule restriction and misordering appeared 48 times or 3.37% from the total number of errors caused by the false concept hypothesized. The results inform to the lecturers and students that the students need a comprehensive knowledge in implementing elliptical construction in sentence.

Keywords: *Kinds of errors, Sources of Errors, Elliptical Construction*

INTRODUCTION

Error is a natural and an unavoidable part in the process of learning English. However, an error should not be tolerated because it may become a habit that is why an error must be avoided. Analyzing Error is a way to examine all possible sources of errors in order to find the solution. It is a type of grammatical analysis that focuses on the errors made by learners.

Knowing grammar of a language including using elliptical construction is important for learners in delivering their thought, emotion and feelings. As Ur (2007) stated that grammar is needed in defining, manipulating and combining words (or bits of words) in order to form longer units of meaning". In speaking and writing, people generally try to provide only as much information as is necessary to convey of what they want to express and

this involves the omission of some words and phrases. The abridgement done through omission of words unnecessary is called ellipsis (Frank: 1972; Parrott: 2000).

Many recent studies have focused on the students' grammatical errors in forming their sentences (Rahmawati, 2012; Wiratna, 2013; Pradhoto, 2013; Astuti, 2014). Most of the studies focused on the students' grammatical errors of tenses. None of the research except for Wiratna who describes the students' errors in forming elliptical construction. Wiratna stated that there were three kinds of errors made by the students such as errors of auxiliary, error of elliptical connector and error of omission. This shows that the students still easily to commit some errors in forming elliptical construction. Meanwhile, the researchers intended to extend these previous researches by

analyzing the students errors in forming elliptical construction and to find out the sources of errors in order to find the reasons for the appearance of the students' errors.

The purpose of this study was to analyze the students' grammatical errors and the sources of errors in forming elliptical construction in sentences and hopes that the result will be taken into consideration of English teaching and learning. The research aimed to find out kinds of students' errors in using elliptical construction in their sentences and sources of errors made by the fourth semester students of English Department at Muhammadiyah University of Makassar. The students' grammatical errors of elliptical constructions were analyzed based on surface strategy taxonomy (Dulay, Burt, and Krashen, 1998) which consists of errors of omission, errors of addition, errors of misformation and errors of misordering. The sources of errors analyzed were intralingual errors made by the students due to the language being learned, that is the language used based on the intention of the learners to construct concepts and hypotheses about the target language from their finite experience. The sources of errors analyzed were referred to Ellis (1994) intralingual errors which are often divided into overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, Incomplete application of rule, and false concepts hypothesized.

RESEARCH METHOD

The researchers employed a descriptive quantitative method by analyzing and identifying the students' errors in using elliptical sentences. Then the errors were categorized based on their sources in order to identify the reasons for the appearance of the students' errors.

Population and Sample

The researchers chose the fourth semester students of English Department at

Muhammadiyah University of Makassar as the population of this research since they have been categorized of having enough experience in learning and implementing grammar. The students comprised ten classes; they were BG IV A, BG IV B, BG IV C, BG IV D, BG IV E, BG IV F, BG IV G, BG IV H, BG. IV I and BG IV J. Each class consisted of forty students. So, the total number of population were 400 students.

A true random sampling was employed in which from each class, five students were taken randomly as the representation of the whole classes (Arikunto, 2006). The names of five students from each classes were called randomly based on their attendant list number. The total number of samples were 50 students.

Research Instrument

A test was employed as the instrument of the research (Arikunto, 2006). An error analysis test was given to be answered by the students. The test consisted of completion sentence and combining sentence tests. The number of sentence tests were 15 questions for completion test and 15 questions for combining sentence test. The students were given 60 minutes to do the test. The test was given in order the researchers would be able to identify the errors made by the students in composing elliptical constructions.

Data Collection and Analysis

In collecting data, the researchers came to each class. The students were given 60 minutes to do the test. Next, the researchers examined the students answer sheets. Then the researchers identified and classified the students' errors. The students' errors of the analysis the researchers analyzed the sources of errors in order to give information about the reasons for the appearance of the students' errors.

In analyzing the data, the researchers employed error analysis method suggested by Gass and Selinker (2008). The steps to conduct the analysis were to identify, to classify, to quantify, then to analyze the errors. Classification of errors were categorised based on surface strategy taxonomy (Dulay, Burt, and Krashen, 1998), they are error of omission, error of addition, error of misformation, and error of misordering.

In analyzing the sources of errors, the researchers began to analyze the sources which influence the errors made by students. The researchers focused in analyzing intralingual errors which were arising due to the language learning (Gass and Selinker 2008: 103). The analysis was divided into overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rule, and false concepts hypothesize (Ellis, 1994).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

Kinds of Errors in Forming Elliptical Construction

After collecting and analyzing the data, the researchers found that there were a lot of grammatical errors which committed by the students. One thousand four hundreds and twenty four (1424) grammatical errors of sentences on the use of elliptical construction were found. The errors are classified as follows.

Table 1. Students' Errors in Using Elliptical Constructions

No.	Kinds of Error	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Omission	693	48.66 %
2.	Addition	255	17.91 %
3.	Misformation	428	30.06 %
4.	Misordering	48	3.37 %
Total		1424	100 %

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the total number of errors are 1424 where omission is the most dominant error with 693 times of appearances or 48.66% from the total number of errors. Furthermore, misformation occupied the second place of the most dominant error with 428 times of appearances or 30.06% from the total number of errors. Addition and misordering took the third and the fourth place of the most dominant appearances. Addition appears 255 times or 17.91% from the total number of errors and misordering appears 48 times or 3.37% from the total number of errors.

The data explains that the students are mostly unable to complete elliptical constructions in sentences correctly which were characterized by the absence of some items that must appear. The students are also still easily to commit misformation error. They are characterized by the uses of wrong form of the morpheme.

Addition Error with 255 times of appearances shows that the students do not fully understand the form of elliptical construction in sentences in which the sentences must be abbreviated. This type of error is characterized by the presence of an (some) item which must not appear in a well-formed construction. Meanwhile, the misordering error is less than the other types of errors with 48 times of appearances. These show that the students did not make many errors on this part. This type of error is characterized by the incorrect placement of elliptical constructions in sentences.

Sources of Errors in Forming Elliptical Construction

The second objective of this study is to know the sources of errors made by the fourth semester students of English Department at Muhammadiyah University of Makassar in forming elliptical constructions in sentences. The omission errors are caused by incomplete application of rule, addition errors are caused by the ignorance of rule restriction, misformation errors caused by the

overgeneralization and misordering errors caused by false concept of hypothesized.

Table 2. Students’ Sources of Errors in Using Elliptical Constructions

No.	Kinds of Error	Sources of Error	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Omission	Incomplete application of rule	693	48.66 %
2.	Addition	Ignorance of rule restriction	255	17.91 %
3.	Misformation	Overgeneralization	428	30.06 %
4.	Misordering	False concepts hypothesized	48	3.37 %
Total			1424	100 %

Table 2 states that the total number of the sources of errors are 1424 where Incomplete application of rule is the most dominant sources of error with 693 times of appearances or 48.66% from the total number of sources of errors. Furthermore, overgeneralization occupied the second place of the most dominant sources of error with 428 times of appearances or 30.06% from the total number of sources of errors. Ignorance of rule restriction and false concepts hypothesized took the third and the fourth place of the most dominant appearances. Addition error appears 255 times or 17.91% of the total number of sources of errors and misordering appears 48 times or 3.37% of the total number of sources of errors.

Table 2 shows that there are similarities of the frequency and percentage between the kind of errors and sources of errors. It happens because each kinds of errors are caused by the overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete application of rule, false concept hypothesized.

Omission

The omission error is characterized by the absence of an (some) item that must appear in a well-form elliptical construction. This kind of error is simply

caused by the incomplete application of rule. Students are failed to fully develop a structure and to make an incomplete sentence. For instance:

Mahfud has a pair of shoes and so..... Shasya. (1l)

In the example above, the student are unable to complete the sentence as they failed to fully develop a structure by omitting the auxiliary “has”.

Addition

This kind of error is characterized by the presence of an (some) item which must not appear in a well-formed elliptical constructions. It might be caused by Ignorance of rule restriction. For instance:

The mangoes she bought were spoiled and so does the apples she. (3g)

In the example above, the students failed to restrict the use of subject in elliptical sentences where the subject must follow the first sentence. Meanwhile, they added another subject “she” where the subject “the apple” is already exist.

Misformation

Misformation error is characterized by the wrong form of elliptical construction implemented. the morpheme or structure. It might be caused by the overgeneralization. The students commonly generalize the use of auxiliary/verb, subject modals and connectors. As an instance;

Mahfud has a pair of shoes and so is Shasya. (1j)

In the (1j) sentence, the students generalize the use of auxiliary by using “is” in the elliptical sentence that was supposed to be “has” because the elliptical sentence must follow the first sentence. So, the most appropriate auxiliary is “has” instead of “is”.

Misordering

This kind of error is characterized by the incorrect of elliptical construction. It is caused by the false concepts hypothesized.

The students usually fail to identify and comprehend the use of auxiliary, subjects and connectors in the correct position which made them to place some items in the incorrect position. As an instance:

Mahfud has a pair of shoes and so Shasya has. (1k)

In sentence (1k), the students fail to place auxiliary "has" in correct position. It supposes to be before subject "has Shasya" not after the subject "Shasya has". It can be caused by their failure to comprehend that there is an exchange position on the use of subject and auxiliary when "so" is used, as a connector in the elliptical sentence. It is supposed to be *so + auxiliary + subject*, not the opposite of it.

DISCUSSIONS

The result of the study mentioned above has collected some important information from the student's sentences. The study reveals errors that the students made in their paper assignments. Also, the grammatical errors that occurred in this study belong to four types; omission, addition, misformation and misordering. Additionally, it can be known the sources that influence the grammatical errors made by the students. Those are overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete application of rule and false concepts hypothesized.

According to the analysis result, it can be seen that there are 50 students from 10 different classes as the subjects of the research that had made the four types of errors. The total number of grammatical errors in elliptical sentences are 1424 errors. It indicates that 100% subjects had made a lot of errors on the use of elliptical construction. Meanwhile, the omission error that indeed become the most frequent error with 693 times of appearances or 48.66% from the total errors. Some errors and the sources of errors are presented below based on the analysis result.

Error of Omission and Its Source

A sentence with elliptical construction is divided into two; main sentence and elliptical sentence. The elliptical sentence must follow the main sentence in order to choose the most appropriate connector, auxiliary or verb and subject. Meanwhile, the students commonly arrange an incomplete elliptical sentences when they omitted some parts of the sentence such as; the subject, auxiliary/verb connector and even conjunction. Some errors that the students did are as follows.

Mahfud has a pair of shoes and so* Shasya. (Sentence 1.1.)

Correct sentence: *Mahfud has a pair of shoes and so has Shasya.*

The mangoes she bought were spoilt*so **does she.** (Sentence 3.c.)

Correct sentence: *The mangoes she bought were spoilt and so were the apples.*

Anisa will not come to your house at six o'clock and neither* Safri. (Sentence 4.g.)

Correct sentence: *Anisa will not come to your house at six o'clock and neither will Safri.*

I will give you some money but they* not. (Sentence 22.c.)

Correct sentence: *I will give you some money but they will not.*

Errors on the four sentences are caused by incomplete application of rule as the students arrange those sentences by omitting some particular parts of the sentences. On the sentence (11), the student omits the verb "has" that should appear in the main sentence. It is similar with sentence (4g and 22c), the students omit the modal "will". Meanwhile, on the sentence (3c), the students omit the conjunction "and" which become a part of compound sentence.

Error of Addition and Its Source

As the previous explanation in Findings, this error is characterized by the presence of an (some) item which should not be appeared. In forming elliptical sentences, the students add unnecessary

words or phrases that make them commit addition error. Some errors that the students made are as follows:

The mangoes she bought were spoilt and so does the apples she.* (Sentence 3.g.)

Correct Sentence: *The mangoes she bought were spoilt and so does the apples.*

I will never believe that you are bad. They will never **believe that you are bad*** either. (Sentence 8.i.)

Correct Sentence: *I will never believe that you are bad. They will never either.*

I am thinking about this problem now and you are **being*** too. (Sentence 9.g.)

Correct Sentence: *I am thinking about this problem now and you are too.*

I will give you some money but they **are*** will not. (Sentence 22.d.)

Correct Sentence: *I will give you some money but they will not*

We are diligent students but they aren't **too***. (Sentence 26.f.)

Correct Sentence: *We are diligent students but they aren't.*

Errors on the four sentences are caused by the ignorance of rule as the students use some words or phrases that are supposed not to appear on the elliptical sentences. On sentence (3g), the students add subject "*she*" that is supposed not to appear as the subject "the apple" is already exist. On the sentence (8i), the phrase "believe that you are bad" is not supposed to be appeared in elliptical sentence. Some phrases from the main sentence should be missed out to avoid unnecessary repetition.

The sentence (9g) shows that the student adds the word "being" that is supposed not to appear. In elliptical sentences, we only need to consider the first auxiliary/verb of the main sentence in order to arrange the elliptical sentence. The sentences (9g) is using "am" as an auxiliary, so we only need to put auxiliary "are" on the elliptical sentence. It is unnecessary to add "being" after all. It is also occur on the sentence (22d) in which the student adds auxiliary "*are*" after the subject that is supposed not to appear as the modal "will" has already been there.

The last sentence (26f) indicates that the student adds the connector "too" which is supposed not to appear on the

contradictory form of elliptical sentences. The connector "too" is only used for positif elliptical construction.

Error of Misformation and Its Source

This error is characterized by the use of wrong form in forming elliptical sentences. The students usually use some words or phrases which are not matched with the main sentences. Some errors that the students make are presented as follows. The old man hardly walks on the street and **so*** does the old woman. (Sentence 2.h.)

Correct Sentence: *The old man hardly walks on the street and neither does the old woman.*

She goes to school every day and so **are*** they. (Sentence 5.h.)

Correct Sentence: *She goes to school every day and so do they*

My brother never asks me to play football together while my friends **will***. (Sentence 27.h.)

Correct Sentence: *My brother never asks me to play football together while my friends do.*

Errors on the three sentences above are caused by overgeneralization. The students commonly generalize the use of auxiliary/verb, modals and connectors in forming elliptical sentence which are not suitable with the main sentence. On the sentence (2h), the students use a wrong connector "so" which is supposed to be "neither" as the main sentence indicates a negatif sentence. Sentence (5h) shows that the student uses incorrect auxiliary "are" which supposed to be "do" as the main sentence using "goes" as a verb. On the last sentence (27h), the students use a wrong modals "will" which supposed to be an auxiliary "do" as the main sentence uses "ask" as a verb.

Error of Misordering and Its Source

This error occurs when the students place a word or phrases in a wrong position of elliptical sentences. The students usually exchange the position of word which is supposed not to be done in forming elliptical sentences. Some errors that the students made as follows:

Mahfud has a pair of shoes and **Shasya*** so has. (Sentence 1.f.)

Correct sentence: *Mahfud has a pair of shoes and so has Shasya.*

Mahfud has a pair of shoes and so **Shasya* has***. (Sentence 1.k.)

Correct sentence: *Mahfud has a pair of shoes and so has Shasya.*

I am thinking about this problem now and **too*** you.... (Sentence 9.j.)

Correct sentence: *I am thinking about this problem now and you are too.*

Errors on the three sentences above are caused by the false concept hypothesized. The students usually fail to identify subjects, auxiliary/verbs, modals and connectors in the correct position of elliptical sentences. As in the sentence (1f), the students placed the subject "*Shasya*" in the wrong position before the connector which is supposed to be after the auxiliary "*so has Shasya*". It is similar with the sentence (1k) in which the students is supposed to place the subject "*Shasya*" after the auxiliary "*has*". On the last sentence (9j), the students fail to put the connector "*too*" on the right position which is supposed to be at the end of the elliptical sentence "*you are too*", not at the beginning of sentence or after conjunction.

However, the most dominant error made by the students in forming elliptical construction was the omission which is caused by the incomplete application of rule. It means that it becomes the factor which influences many students in committing the grammatical errors. Thereby, it is expected for the lecturers to give more attention on the dominant factors that influence students in making errors. So, it is possible for the lecturers to be able to find the appropriate solution to overcome the problem.

CONCLUSION

The paper shows that there are several kinds of errors and sources of errors on the use of elliptical construction. The students made a total of 1424 errors where omission is the most dominant error with 693 times of appearances or 48.66% from the total number of errors.

Furthermore, misinformation occupied the second place of the most dominant error with 428 times of appearances or 30.06% from the total number of errors. Addition and misordering took the third and the fourth place of the most dominant appearances. Addition appears 255 times or 17.91% from the total number of errors and misordering appears 48 times or 3.37% from the total number of errors.

After analyzing the sources of error from each kinds of error, the researchers found that the omission is caused by the incomplete application of rule with 693 times of appearances or 48.66% from the total number of errors. Misinformation is caused by the overgeneralization with 428 times of appearances or 30.06% from the total number of errors. Addition is caused by the ignorance of rule restriction with 255 times of appearances or 17.91% from the total number of errors. Misordering is caused by the false concept hypothesized with 48 times of appearances or 3.37% from the total number of errors. Considering to the result of the research, the students should pay more attention on their knowledge of grammar in constructing elliptical sentences in which the students usually omit some parts of the elliptical constructions, especially in in the way of completing the part of sentence as it becomes an aspect of most dominant error (omission) they have committed. The teacher are suggested to give more exercises in using elliptical constructions not only by just giving explanation of how elliptical construction to be implemented. The results show that the students seem not understand much how to differentiate the use of either auxiliary or elliptical connector in using elliptical constructions.

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