

## Analysis of Students' Errors in Using Correlative Conjunction in Their Writing

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### Abstract

*This research is titled Analysis of Students Errors' in Using Correlative Conjunction in Their Writing. It is intended to find out common errors made by students when using correlative conjunction in their writing. Correlative conjunction is one of conjunctions in English. Analyzing students' errors in using the conjunction becomes important because communication in English involves and cannot be separated from the use of its. Since correlative conjunction is taught at junior high schools, the subjects of this research were junior high school students at the second year. The research was conducted at SMP Karya Bakti Gadingrejo and the population of the subject was 30 persons. The data of the research were collected by giving the students a question sheet which consisted of 20 items requiring them to join two sentences into one through correlative conjunction. The students' errors in joining the sentences were analyzed based on Surface Strategy and Communicative Effect Taxonomy by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982: 151). The result of the research shows that Omission errors place the first position with 42.83% of overall errors made by the students. The second position is placed by Misordering error with 22.33%. Addition errors place the third position with 6.33% and Misformation errors place the last position with 2.16%. Based on communicative effect taxonomy, Global Error is 17, 50% and Local Error is 56, 16% local. The percentage of overall error is 73, 66% and the percentage of correct answer is 26, 33%. The result implies that the students have problems in using correlative conjunction mostly in pairing the conjunction.*

**Key Words:** *correlative conjunction, error, writing*

### Introduction

Conjunctions are words function to relate words, phrases, or sentences that can be classified into coordinating conjunctions, correlative conjunctions, and subordinating conjunctions. Parulis (2000) defines coordinating conjunctions as (1) conjunctions that relate two or more words which have the same syntactic form, (2) correlative conjunctions are conjunctions in pair which harmonize two items, and (3) subordinating conjunctions are conjunctions that introduce a sentence.

In KTSP syllabus, conjunctions are taught to students of junior high school. It means that the students are expected to master conjunctions after being taught which include coordinating conjunctions such as: *and, nor, but, or, yet, so.*, correlative conjunctions such as: *both .... and, either .... or, neither .... nor.*, and subordinating conjunctions such as: *after, before, when, while, as soon as, until, since, because, now that, even though, although, if, unless, only if, whether or not, even if,* etc.

Based on the experience when teaching in private course in Gadingrejo, it was found that many junior high school students had problems in using correlative conjunctions. The problems appeared in errors they made such as:

a. Missing item

1. *I have met his father and mother.*
2. *I not only cooked rice but cleaned windows.*
3. *His cat is black or gray.*
4. *She wants to go to mountain nor to beach.*

b. Adding unnecessary item

1. *She is both and smart and beautiful.*
2. *They have neither nor a car nor a motorcycle.*
3. *We bought both sugar and also tea.*
4. *I am not only tall but also I am fat.*

c. Misplacing item

1. *I cooked rice not only but also swept floor.*

2. *She is both and smart beautiful.*
3. *They either will buy tea or coffee.*
4. *We cut this paper neither by using a knife nor a scissor.*

d. Using incorrect item

1. *They have neither a car or a motorcycle.*
2. *I can either stay at home nor go out.*
3. *This animal is not only wild and also dangerous.*
4. *She has both beautiful eyes but also cute smiles.*

These evidences show that correlative conjunction may be the most difficult conjunction to master among the others since errors in coordinating conjunction and subordinating conjunction were rarely found by the writer. It might be the case that correlative conjunction is not only about putting conjunction in pair but also harmonizing form which means the same grammatical form should follow each of word of the pair, for example:

1. *Both this house is painted red and this house is painted blue are good.*
2. *I not only swept the floor but also cleaned the windows.*
3. *You may choose either you apologize to me for the fault or I will never talk with you again.*
4. *Neither staying at home nor going out are good.*

In order to be able to apply correlative conjunction in such examples, the students of course need comprehension towards grammar.

Since some of the students who had problem in using correlative conjunction were from SMP Karya Bakti Gadingrejo, it might also be the case for students there. These facts motivate the writer to analyze the students' errors. It is said that through analyzing students' errors, teachers and prospective teachers can find out which parts of learning materials the students are weak in. Teachers and prospective teachers can also evaluate the way they teach and determine which way that is the best for their students.

Referring to background above, it is then, important to analyze students' errors in the process of learning English. The research which is entitled *Analysis of Students' Errors in Using Correlative Conjunctions at the Third Year Students of SMP Karya Bakti Gadingrejo Based on Surface Strategy and Communicative Effect Taxonomies* is then accordingly conducted. By conducting this research, hopefully it can be a contribution for the future of error analysis and an information source of type of error that the third year students of SMP Karya Bakti Gadingrejo made in using correlative conjunction based on Surface Strategy and Communicative Effect taxonomies.

## Method

This research was conducted qualitatively. It focuses on the students' errors in using correlative conjunction in their sentences. In sampling method, the researcher used homogeneous sample and the selection of the sample was done through probability sample. The homogeneous sample derived from the third year students of SMP Karya Bakti Gadingrejo and the probably sample was in form of lottery by a coin. In data collecting method, the researcher used documentation in form of grammar elicitation task. The grammar elicitation task consisted of 20 items which measured the students' ability in using correlative conjunction. The researcher came directly to the school and collected the data. In data analyzing method, the researcher used Surface Strategy Taxonomy, Communicative Effect Taxonomy Error classification by Dulay et. al (1982: 151) and percentage. Only errors in correlative conjunctions were selected, analyzed through Surface Strategy and Communicative Effect Taxonomy and put in the percentage.

### 2.1 Identify Subsections

The participants had been experienced in English. The subject had been taught to the students since they were at elementary school and correlative conjunction is taught to them at junior high school. In conducting this research, the researcher followed some procedures: a) constructing data collecting media, b) collecting data, c) selecting data, and d) analyzing data. Since the research was focused on students' errors in using correlative conjunction, the data collecting media were constructed to measure students' ability in using correlative conjunction. After the data collecting instruments had been constructed, the researcher came to the school to collect the data. When the data had been collected, the data were selected and only errors in correlative conjunctions were taken. Finally, the data were analyzed based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy and Communicative Effect Taxonomy error classification by Dulay et. al (1982: 151) and put in percentage.

## 2.2 Participant (Subject) Characteristics

The eligible participants were third year students of SMP Karya Bakti Gadingrejo. Students with lower years were exclusion criteria. There were no restrictions on demographic characteristics. Therefore, the participants varied in age, marital status, or the number of birth.

## 2.3 Sampling Procedures

The sampling method which was used in this research was probability sampling. A systematic plan was not used. The sampling was organized through simple random sampling. The percentage of the sample approached was 100% and there were no participants who selected themselves into the sample. The participants were chosen randomly by using a coin. Therefore, each of them had the same chance to be chosen or selected. The location where the data are collected was SMP Karya Bakti Gadingrejo. The research was agreed by the school. There were no payments made to the participants and it was monitored directly by the researcher.

### 2.3.1 Sample Size, Power, and Precision

The intended size of the sample was 30 students and there were no separate conditions used in this research. The target population of the sample was completely achieved.

### 2.3.2 Measures and Covariates

The method used to collect data was documentation in form of a written grammar elicitation task. It consisted of 20 items which measured the students' ability in combining two sentences into one by using correlative conjunction. The use of correlative conjunction tested to the students involved: a) both ... and, b) not only ... but also, c) either ... or, and d) neither ... nor. Only errors in correlative conjunction that were taken and analyzed through Surface Strategy Taxonomy and Communicative Effect Taxonomy error classification by Dulay et. al (1982: 151) and put in percentage. The students were given directions before doing the task and they had an hour to finish it.

### 2.3.3 Research Design

The subjects were not put into conditions that were manipulated. They fully realized that they were being observed. The researcher met the subjects directly. They were gathered in a class and told what the researcher was going to do. The task was also given directly by the researcher to the subjects. The researcher gave the subjects directions and then asked them to do the task. There were no multiple conditions. The subjects were assigned to do the same task and had the same time limit to finish it.

### 2.3.4 Experimental Manipulations or Interventions

This research was intended to find out the students' errors in using correlative conjunction in their writing. Therefore, there were no interventions or manipulations used in this research. There were also no control groups and experimental groups.

## Discussion

In this research, it was found that based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy, Omission errors achieve higher quantity than other error categories. It can be caused by some factors, such as:

1) The students are used to using coordinating conjunction. In using coordinating conjunction, it is not required to make conjunctions in pair, for example:

1. *Arthur and Ricardo are not in class today.*

2. *According to the news report, it will snow or rain tonight.*

Different from coordinating conjunction, correlative conjunctions are conjunctions in pair which mean there is no a single conjunction that stands alone; conjunction *both* is paired with conjunction *and*, conjunction *not only* is paired with conjunction *but also*, conjunction *either* is paired with conjunction *or*, and conjunction *neither* is paired with conjunction *nor*. Therefore, the sentences above must be written this way in using correlative conjunction:

a) *Both Arthur and Ricardo are not in class today.*

b) *According to the news report, it will either snow or rain tonight.*

2) The students are still influenced by Indonesian style in using conjunction. Similar to using coordinating conjunction in English, using conjunction in Indonesian does not require the students to pair conjunctions, for example:

1. *Saya ingin membeli buah-buahan **dan** sayur-sayuran.*
2. *Anda boleh memilih tinggal di rumah **atau** pergi jalan-jalan bersama kami.*

In English, those sentences will be written this way in using coordinating conjunctions:

- a) *I want to buy fruits **and** vegetables.*
- b) *You may choose staying at home **or** going out with us.*

In contrast with coordinating conjunction and Indonesian style in using conjunctions, correlative conjunctions relate two words, phrases, or sentences by using paired conjunctions. Therefore, in using correlative conjunctions, the sentences above will be written this way:

- a) *I want to buy **both** fruits **and** vegetables.*
- b) *I want to buy **not only** fruits **but also** vegetables.*
- c) *You may choose **either** staying at home **or** going out with us.*

Omission errors are errors which often occur in early stages of foreign or second language mastery. Dulay et. al. (1982:155) states omission errors are found in greater abundance and across a greater variety of morpheme during the early stages of foreign or second language acquisition.

Furthermore, it was also found that misformation error is the least error occurs in the students' errors in using correlative conjunction. From the researcher's point of view, this condition is caused by the existence of each word that is needed on the grammar elicitation task. The students need only to rearrange two sentences into one sentence by using correlative conjunctions. Therefore, misformation error is rarely found.

Based on Communicative Effect Taxonomy, it is found that local errors achieve higher quantity than global errors. The following examples are the examples of the students' errors in using correlative conjunction which contain local error.

1. a. Arthur is not in class today.  
b. Ricardo is not in class today.  
The combination of the two sentences will be:  
The students' incorrect answers:  
*1. Arthur and Ricardo is not in class today.*
2. a. I am bringing an umbrella.  
b. I am also bringing a rain coat.  
The combination of the two sentences will be:  
The students' incorrect answers:  
*1. I am bringing an umbrella but also a rain coat.*
3. a. According to the news report, it will snow tonight,  
b. or it will rain tonight.  
The combination of the two sentences will be:  
The students' incorrect answers:  
*1. According to the news report, it will snow or rain tonight.*

On example 1, the students omitted conjunction *both*. Even though the conjunction is missing, the intended message of the question is not changed. It is that both Arthur and Ricardo are absent. On example 2, the students omitted conjunction *not only*. Even though the conjunction is missing, the intended message of the question is not changed. It is that not only an umbrella but also a rain coat are brought by me. On example 3, the students omitted conjunction *either*. Even though the conjunction is missing, the intended message of the question is not changed. It is that either rain or snow will occur tonight.

Local errors place higher position than global errors due to the most common errors that the students made in using correlative conjunctions are omission errors. Error which affects single constituent or element of language does not usually hinder successful communication. Dulay et. al. (1982: 155) states little words, such as grammatical morphemes play a minor role in conveying the meaning of a sentence.

## Conclusion

After analyzing the data, the writer concludes that:

1. The third year students of SMP Karya Bakti Gadingrejo made errors in using correlative conjunction.
2. The students' errors in using correlative conjunction based on surface strategy taxonomy vary from omission, addition, misformation, to misordering and based on communicative effect taxonomy fall into global and local errors.

3. The percentage of the students' errors in using correlative conjunction based surface strategy taxonomy is 42, 83% omission error, 6, 33% addition error, 2, 16% misformation error, and 22, 33% misordering error and based on communicative effect taxonomy is 17, 50% global error and 56, 16% local error. The percentage of overall error is 73, 66% and the percentage of correct answer is 26, 33%.

The writer would like to give the following suggestions:

1. When teaching correlative conjunction, the English teachers should make sure that their students understand it. It can be done through routinely giving task, home work, and test.
2. After teaching correlative conjunction, the English teachers should encourage the students to practice correlative conjunction not only inside school but also outside school. Therefore, correlative conjunction that has been taught sticks steadily on the students' minds.
3. The teacher should consider remedial teaching of correlative conjunction for the third year students of SMP Karya Bakti Gadingrejo.
4. The students should be confident in using correlative conjunction because making errors in using correlative conjunction normally happen in the process of studying.
5. The students should practice using correlative conjunction not only at school but also outside school in order what they have got sticks steadily in their minds.

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