

STUDENTS' ABILITY AND DIFFICULTIES IN CONSTRUCTING CONDITIONAL SENTENCE TYPE II AT SMAN 10 KERINCI JAMBI

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Abstrak

Kalimat bersyarat tipe II adalah bagian penting dari komunikasi, terutama dalam mengungkapkan situasi hipotesis. Ini dapat membantu siswa memahami cara berkomunikasi dengan lebih efektif, serta keterampilan ini penting dalam kemahiran berbahasa dan dapat membantu mengidentifikasi aspek-aspek yang memerlukan perbaikan, yang mengarah pada pengembangan kemampuan bahasa yang lebih baik. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi kesulitan siswa dalam memahami dan memproduksi kalimat kondisional tipe II dengan menggunakan metode tes tertulis dan wawancara. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kemampuan siswa dalam menyusun kalimat kondisional tipe 2 dan permasalahan yang dihadapi siswa. Desain penelitian adalah deskriptif. Populasinya adalah seluruh siswa kelas II SMAN 10 Kerinci Provinsi Jambi dan sampelnya adalah siswa kelas XI MIPA I. Instrumen penelitian yang digunakan adalah tes Grammar dan wawancara. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan rata-rata kemampuan siswa dalam mengkonstruksi kalimat Kondisional adalah rendah, dengan nilai 62 (dikategorikan C). Kesulitan yang dihadapi siswa adalah kebingungan dalam penggunaan verb-2 dan to be untuk past tense, ketidaktahuan siswa terhadap kata kerja tidak beraturan, kebingungan dalam menentukan bagian kalimat sebab-akibat dalam kalimat kondisional. Terakhir, kalimat kondisional tipe 2 sulit, namun dapat dipelajari dengan baik jika siswa lebih banyak berlatih dalam menyusun kalimat.

Kata Kunci: Grammar, Kalimat Bersyarat, Tipe II, Kemampuan Siswa, Kesulitan Siswa

Abstract

Conditional sentences Type II are an important part of communication, especially in expressing hypothetical situations. This can help students understand how to communicate more effectively, and is an important skill in language proficiency and can help identify areas that need improvement, leading to the development of better language skills. This study identifies students' difficulties in understanding and reproducing the type II conditional sentence by using grammar test and interviews. This study aims to determine students' abilities in constructing type 2 conditional sentences and the problems faced by students. The research design is descriptive. The population is all grade II students of SMAN 10 Kerinci Jambi Province and the sample is students of class XI MIPA I. The research instruments used were grammar tests and interviews. The results showed that the average ability of students to construct conditional sentences was low, with an average score of 62 (categorized C). The difficulties faced by students were confusion in the use of verb-2 and to be for the past tense, students' ignorance of irregular verbs, confusion in determining causal sentence parts in conditional sentences. Finally, sentence conditioning type 2 is difficult, but it can be learned if students practice more in constructing sentences.

Keywords: Grammar, Conditional Sentence, Type II, Students' Ability, Students' Difficulties

Introduction

Grammar is an important subject in English. It is crucial for people who want to use English orally or in a written form. This happens because grammar will help them to form the sentence they want to create based on its rule, so they can produce the sentences correctly and meaningful. If a person cannot create a sentence with grammatically correct, it will be difficult for the reader or listener to understand what the speaker means. Therefore, the communication will fail to reach the goal. The high school students need to have a firm grasp on conditional sentences as it is an integral part of the English course. Since education, culture, and technology have advanced rapidly, it is crucial to communicate effectively in English in order to build strong and competitive global citizens (Ningsih, PEA. Sari, 2021). Therefore, mastering conditional sentences becomes essential for students to succeed in the communication world.

SMAN 10 Kerinci is a high school located in Lolo Gedang village, Bukit Kerman District, Kerinci Regency, Jambi Province. There are 9 classes available (three classes for the first grade, three classes for the second grade, and three classes for the third grade. One class may consist of 25-30 students. In 2023, there are 256 students for all grades. Especially for the second grade of the students, they learn about Conditional sentences at the early semester. Based on the observations, many students did not understand the materials well since many of them did not know how to differentiate the type I, II and III of the conditional sentence. Moreover, when the researcher asked the English teacher who teacher the second grade of the students, the teacher said that Conditional sentence is one of the materials that are difficult to comprehend. Many students got scores that lower than the KKM (criteria of minimal completeness) in English subject. This may cause serious problems to the students when they have to deal with questions about Conditional Sentence. The inability to compose conditional sentences can cause serious problems for students when dealing with questions about them because conditional sentences require a specific structure and understanding of grammar rules. If a student is unable to construct a conditional sentence correctly, they may misunderstand the question or provide an incorrect response. This can lead to a lower score on exams, difficulty in communication with native speakers, and challenges in understanding complex concepts that use conditional sentences. Additionally, conditional sentences are used frequently in academic writing, so students who struggle with them may struggle in tasks such as writing essays or reports.

Some experts also have conducted the research in this field that this shows the importance of concerning to this field (Saadilah, 2020), (Rizki Lestari, Nurma Dinda, 2014), (Lena, 2018). However, the low scores that appeared at the class shows the lack of understanding by the students toward the English materials, especially the Conditional Sentence type II. This might happen because the students do not master the rules of creating the sentence, the past form of certain verbs, and many other reasons. It is important to conduct the research in this field for some reasons: 1). Educational purposes: The research will provide educators and curriculum developers with useful information on how to improve language teaching and learning, which will lead to better educational outcomes; 2). Identifying students' strengths and weaknesses: The research will help teachers identify areas where students excel and areas that need improvement. This will allow teachers to tailor their instruction to best meet the needs of their students; 3). Developing effective teaching strategies: Based on the findings of the research, teachers can develop effective teaching strategies for teaching conditional sentence type II, which will enhance students' comprehension and mastery of the language.; 4). Improving language proficiency: Conducting research in this area will ultimately lead to the improvement of students' overall language proficiency, which is crucial for their academic success and future career opportunities; and 5). Contributing to the field of linguistics: Conducting research on conditional sentence type II can contribute to the advancement of the field of linguistics, particularly in the area of second language acquisition.

Method

The research design used in this study was descriptive in nature and utilized the QUAN-Qual model. The aim of the researcher was to assess the students' ability to create conditional sentence type

II and to analyze the errors and challenges they encounter. According to (L R Gay, Geoffrey E. Mill, 2012), this design employs both quantitative and qualitative data, with the former being used to describe the students' ability using formulas and numbers, while the latter is used to explain the challenges students face. This design is referred to as an explanatory mixed method design, where more emphasis is placed on collecting quantitative data, and qualitative data is used to support the research findings.

The sample of this research was one class of the second grade from total students in second grade students in SMAN 10 Kerinci by applying cluster sampling. (L R Gay, Geoffrey E. Mill, 2012) say that in cluster sampling, the researcher chose the group, not individuals, that is randomly selected. The total of second grade students is 102 students. Therefore, cluster sampling was used to take one class of the second grade. (L R Gay, Geoffrey E. Mill, 2012) also explains that cluster sampling is a method of choosing sample of a research where intact groups, not individuals which have similar characteristics, are randomly selected. In cluster sampling, after the population is identified, determining the sample is needed. Cluster sampling is chosen because it is cost-Effective: cluster sampling is cost-effective as it requires less time and resources to select the sample size. It is often more economical than other sampling methods like simple random sampling where individual selection requires more time and resources. Also, it is time-Saving: cluster sampling is less time-consuming than other sampling methods. It allows researchers to collect data from multiple participants at the same time, which saves time and reduces the need for repeated fieldwork.

Further, according to Gay (L R Gay, Geoffrey E. Mill, 2012), normally the sample size is 10% until 20%. This means for about 20 students were the sample of the research which is chosen one class (XI IPA 1) by doing lottery. First, the name of all second-grade class was written on a small piece of paper, and then the papers were rolled on, and were put in an empty bottle. The bottle was rubbed, and one piece of paper was taken from the bottle. The chosen paper with the class's name was the sample of the research.

For the quantitative data, a test was used in form of gap filling. (Brown, 2008) states that the gap filling task is used to create sentence completion where a word or phrase is missing. This task will allow the test-takers to write a word or phrase on the given space of the question. Therefore, for the present research, the students will have a gap filling test as they were asked to fill the blank space of the sentence, and answer the questions based on the word given in the bracket. The test was conducted around the topic of creating the conditional sentences type 2 with 25 questions. For the present research, there was a pre-test (Try Out test) conducted in a different class from the sample class, in order to validate the questions. For those questions that are too easy or too difficult were eliminated for the sample test. First, the level of difficulty of each item of questions was figured out by applying the level difficulty formula by Arikunto (Arikunto, 2010).

For the qualitative data, an open-ended interview was conducted in order to get clearer explanations by the students toward their ability in creating conditional sentences type 2. Interview is an instrument to get the informants' opinions and information toward certain questions that the researcher is seeking for (L R Gay, Geoffrey E. Mill, 2012). In this interview, some guideline questions were proposed to the students and the questions might be improved based on students' response on certain questions. Therefore, the questions may be improved based on the students' responses on the questions given to them to get details and deep responses. To select the participants of the interview, it was consulted with the English teacher in order to figure out the students with representative capability in English.

The steps of collecting and analyzing the data for the present research are done by the following steps:

- 1) Test

- a. Constructing the test

In constructing the test item, the researcher firstly created the specification of the test to help the researcher to build the questions about conditional sentence type II. After that,

the researcher decided the form of the test (gap filling test) and numbers of questions (25 questions items).

- b. Testing for validity and reliability of the items of the test

Validity of the test was done through content validity by applying the Pearson product Moment by using the following formula:

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

Note:

r_{xy} = the correlation score of Pearson Product moment

N = total sample

X = item's score

Y = total score

Source: (Arikunto, 2010)

Next, to measure the reliability of the present research, the alpha formula was used as seen as follow:

$$r_{ii} = \left[\frac{k}{k-1} \right] \left[1 - \frac{\sum \sigma_b^2}{\sigma_t^2} \right]$$

Note:

r_{ii} = the reliability of the instrument

k = the amount of the questions' items

$\sum \sigma_b^2$ = the amount of question's variant

σ_t^2 = the amount of total variant

N = total of all students

Source: (Arikunto, 2010)

- c. Testing the sample of the research

The chosen sample of the class filled in the test. The researcher came to the school after getting permission from the authority of the school, and conducted the test for about 60 minutes.

- d. Scoring the test

The next step was scoring the test by counting the right answer done by the students by using the following formula:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum x}{n}$$

Note:

\bar{x} = mean score (average grade)

$\sum x$ = the total of graders grade

n = number of graders

- e. Counting the percentage of score

The raw score from the formula above was noted down based on the student's name. The list therefore was made. After that, the students were listed based on the highest score to the lowest score. So that it was clear how well the students' ability on the grammar test about conditional sentence type II.

- f. Classifying students' ability

After having a list of students' scores on the test of conditional sentence type II, the criteria of rating quality of each student were classified based on the score they have on the test. The criteria were classified as follow:

Table 1. The Classification of Students' ability into Description

Criteria	Score
81-100 %	A
66-80 %	B
56-65 %	C
41-55 %	D
0-40 %	E

- g. Drawing conclusions
Finally, after getting the classification of students' ability in constructing the Conditional Sentence type II, the conclusion could be drawn.

2) Interview

- a. Constructing the interview items
- b. Validation of the items of the interview
- c. Interviewing some sample class of the students
- d. Creating the transcription of the interview
- e. Drawing conclusions

Result and Discussion

The data for this research were gathered from a test that was conducted on the topic of Conditional sentence type II. There were 20 valid questions given to the students of class XI MIPA I with 20 students in form of gap filling test. The students did the test for 60 minutes. Before conducting the test, the students learnt the lesson with the English teacher at the school about Conditional Sentence on January 2023. Therefore, it is known that they already knew the rule on constructing conditional sentence, especially the type II.

After conducting the test, interview was also conducted in order to see students' difficulties in constructing conditional sentence type II. Six students were randomly chosen based on the information of the English teacher, because the informants of the research should represent three levels of the students, the low-level students, the middle level, and the high level of the students. The open-ended interview was done in order to see students' opinions and experiences on English class when they studied conditional sentence type II. The data were gathered by recording the interview session with nine general questions used to ask the information from the students, and the transcripts were noted down.

The result of the test about the Conditional sentence type II can be seen from the following table:

Table 2. Students' Score on Conditional Sentence type II

NO	NAME CODE	TRUE	FALSE	SCORE	CRITERIA
1	A	14	6	70	B
2	B	13	7	65	C
3	C	15	5	75	B
4	D	13	7	65	C
5	E	15	5	75	B
6	F	11	9	55	D
7	G	11	9	55	D

8	H	14	6	70	B
9	I	10	10	50	D
10	J	13	7	65	C
11	K	13	7	65	C
12	L	9	11	45	D
13	M	13	7	65	C
14	N	15	5	75	B
15	O	14	6	70	B
16	P	9	11	45	D
17	Q	15	5	75	B
18	R	10	10	50	D
19	S	10	10	50	D
20	T	11	9	55	D
TOTAL				1240	
AVERAGE				62	C

Source: Analyzed, 2023

From the table, it can be seen that there are four students who achieved the highest score. They are students with code C, E, N and Q with score 75. After that, the score was followed by students with code A, H, and O with score 70. Next, there are students with name code B, D, J, K, and M who got score 65. And then, there are 3 students who got score 55, they are students with name code F, G and T. 3 students got score 50, they are R and S. The lowest score was 45, and the students who got that score are students with name code L and P. Therefore, it can be sum up that the average score of the students was 62 with criteria C.

From the interview, it is found that some students felt difficult to construct conditional sentence type II. For the question of interview number 1, the question was about what topic that the test they just did. Still some students did not know the exact topic of the test they just had taken. As student 3, student 4, student 5 and student 6 did not mention the topic of the test. They just answered grammar or material that using –if. Only two students knew exactly the topic by answering “conditional sentence”. Next, for the question interview number 2, the question was about the verb used for creating conditional sentence. Most of the students knew that verb-2 (past form) should be used to construct conditional sentence, while one student did not know what type of verb should be used to create conditional sentence.

For question interview number 3, the question was about the ability of the students to differentiate “if clause” for simple present, simple past, and perfect tense. Only two students answered “maybe”, and the rest answered they did not know and confused. For question interview number 4, the question was about their experiences on answering the test given by the researcher. Overall, they explained that they had learnt the material about conditional sentence. They were given time for about 60 minutes to finish the test. Gap Filling questions were not so difficult for them since the answers were available. So, they just had to change the form of the verb or adding modality “would”.

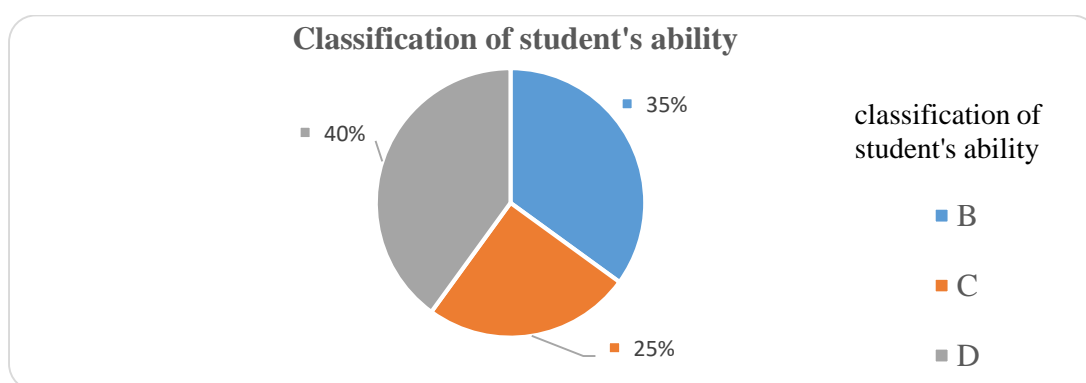
Next, for question interview number 5, the question was about the way the English teacher explained the conditional sentence topic to the students in the teaching and learning process. Mostly they answered that the teacher used conventional method by writing the topic on the white board, explained about the definition, functions, and examples of the sentence. For question interview number 6, the question was about the media used by the English teacher. All of the students said that the teacher did not use any media to teach. She just used the course book and the whiteboard to explain the lesson materials.

Moreover, for question interview number 7, the question was about their understanding and comprehension on the conditional sentence. 3 students answered that they pretty understand with the materials, while other 3 students said that they did not really understand the topic of Conditional Sentence type II. For question interview number 8, the question was about their difficulties in constructing the conditional sentence type II. Almost all of them said that they were confused on choosing the appropriate tense on creating the sentence. Even some students felt difficult to translate the sentence that gave impact to their understanding the sentence. Last, for question interview number 9, the question was about their suggestions on the learning the conditional sentence. Most of them said that the English teacher should use an interactive media to deliver the lesson on the classroom. Also, they wanted more examples and exercises if they learn the materials about composing sentences with interesting materials.

Research Result

To see the percentages of students' score or comprehension on constructing the conditional sentence type II, it can be seen from the following chart:

Chart 1. Classification of student's ability in constructing conditional sentence type II



Source: Analyzed, 2023

From the chart, it is known that 35% of the students achieved score B, 25% of the students achieved score C, and the rest (40%) achieved score D. therefore, it can be concluded the average score of the students are C. this implies that many students got low score on constructing the conditional sentence type II in English subject.

In order to see students' difficulties on constructing the conditional sentence especially type II, the real data of incorrect answers of the students on the test can be seen in the following table:

Table 3. Students' Answers on Conditional Sentence type II

NO OF QUESTIONS	TRUE ANSWER		WRONG ANSWER	
	Q	%	Q	%
1	17	85	3	15
2	16	80	4	20
3	17	85	3	15
4	4	20	16	80
5	16	80	4	20
6	15	75	5	25

7	15	75	5	25
8	17	85	3	15
9	3	15	17	85
10	12	60	8	40
11	13	65	7	35
12	4	20	16	80
13	3	15	17	85
14	12	60	8	40
15	16	80	4	20
16	15	75	5	25
17	14	70	6	30
18	15	75	5	25
19	17	85	3	15
20	18	90	2	10

Source: Analyzed, 2023

The data in the above table indicates that students made the most errors on questions 9 and 13, with an error rate of 85%, and also on questions 4 and 12, with an error rate of 80%. Questions 6 and 16 had a lower error rate of 40%. In contrast, the majority of students answered the remaining questions correctly. Based on this, it can be inferred that there were 6 questions that posed difficulty for students to answer correctly.

The most difficult questions that many students answered them wrong on the test are:

- (4). If they (**tell**) their father, he (**be**)very angry.
- (6). My brother (**buy**) a sports car if he (**have**)the money.
- (9). My parents (**be**) grateful if all of us (**study**) well for the final semester test.
- (12). If he (**check**) The engine of his car first, he (**not late**) to come to the office.
- (13). If you (**not bother**) The dog, it (**not bark**)..... at you.
- (16). If I (**be**) rich, my life (**change**) completely.

First, for the question number 4, many students answered “was” instead of “would be”. Second, for the question number 6, many students answered “bought” or “bought” instead of “would buy”. Third, for the question number 9, many students answered for the “to be” of ‘parents’ with “was” or “were”, instead of “would be”. Fourth, for the question number 12, many students answered “was not late” instead of “would not be late”. Fifth, for the question number 13, many students answered “not bothered” instead of “did not bother”. And the last, for the question number 9 many students answered “changed” instead of “would change”.

This shows that many students were confused on the using of verb-2 and to be for past tense (was and were). Also, some students did not know that English has many irregular verbs for the past form, such as word “bought” as the V-2 of buy, and so on. Additionally, numerous students were unsure of which section of the sentence required the modal “would” follow by verb-1 and which part necessitated the formation of a verb-2 past tense clause.

If it is compared to the students’ responses on the interview, these findings are relevant to their opinions and experiences. Most of the students knew that verb-2 (past form) should be used to construct conditional sentence, while one student did not know what type of verb should be used to create conditional sentence. Based on the interview, almost all of the students said that they were confused on choosing the appropriate tense on creating the sentence. Even some students felt difficult to translate the sentence that gave impact to their understanding the sentence.

Discussion

As Perry (Perry, 2014) states that the meaning of conditional sentence is crucial and important to recognize. Therefore, gaining the meaning of the conditional sentence will be useful to understand the implied meaning of the sentence itself. Therefore, it is important to understand this sentence in order to be able to use the sentence in any use of English.

It was previously mentioned that students' ability to construct conditional sentences is classified as C. Lestari (Lestari, 2014) conducted a related study on this subject, focusing on second-grade students' proficiency in conditional sentences during the academic year of 2013-2014 at SMP Muhammadiyah 9 Watu Kebo. In her research, she found that the result of the conditional sentence mastery test for type 2, the average score of the students was 51.79. This means that these results are classified into fair category. Similarly, Haza' Al Rdaat & Gardner (Haza' Al Rdaat & Gardner, 2017) explored the same topic with their research titled "An Analysis of Use of Conditional Sentences by Arab Students of English," which revealed that students face challenges in comprehending and utilizing type three conditionals and modality. This suggests that constructing conditional sentences is indeed a difficult task.

Moreover, many students are commonly difficult to decide the correct tense to be used when they create the conditional sentence. One cause of this problem may be that some students have difficulty in creating the sentence due to the lack of interpreting the context of the sentence (Cowan, 2008). As a result, it influences the choice of the tenses used for the sentence. Therefore, composing the conditional sentence is considered difficult for some students in some contexts. Along with that statement, it also found in this research where there were many students felt confused on the using of verb-2 and to be for past tense (was and were), since they did not comprehend well about verbal and nominal sentence. Some students even used present tense as it should be applied for Conditional sentence type I.

According to Cowan's study from 2008, some students were unaware of the numerous irregular past tense verbs in English which resulted in them using the incorrect form (Cowan, 2008). The lack of vocabulary was cited as a contributing factor, and during interviews, students mentioned how they knew verb-2 should be used to create conditional sentences, but they struggled to differentiate between regular and irregular verbs. Additionally, it was noted that many students were unclear on when to use the modal "would" follow by verb-1 versus when to use the past form of the verb (verb-2). As (Azar, 2013) said that the conditional sentence describes situations that occur or do not occur because of certain conditions. The conditional sentence stands for two clauses the "if clauses" and the "main clauses". This means the conditional sentence is a complicated sentence with two ideas are explained. The two ideas have connection each other. The complexity of the "if clauses" and the "main clauses" made the students confused and wonder which clause should be added verb-2 and which clause should be added by modal "would".

Furthermore, since it was found that the students' scores were not so good, it is better for the teacher to improve the teaching method and media. It is because on the interview many students answered that they pretty understand with the materials, while some other students said that they did not really understand the topic of Conditional Sentence type II. They believed that the teacher used conventional method by writing the topic on the white board, explained about the definition, functions, and examples of the sentence. Also, all of the students on the interview said that the teacher did not use any media to teach. She just used the course book and the whiteboard to explain the lesson materials.

At the end, for the future topic of the lesson, the students suggest that the English teacher should use an interactive media to deliver the lesson on the classroom. Also, they wanted more examples and exercises if they learn the materials about composing sentences with interesting materials.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the research findings suggest that a significant number of students struggle with constructing conditional sentence type II in English subject, with most of them achieving low

scores. The difficulties faced by the students range from confusion on the use of verb-2 and to be for past tense, lack of knowledge on irregular verbs for the past form, and uncertainty on which parts of the sentence require modal "would" and verb-1 or verb-2. Despite knowing the grammar rules, students still face challenges in applying them correctly in practical use. These findings are consistent with the students' perceptions in the interview, indicating a need for interventions to improve their understanding and proficiency in constructing conditional sentence type II. Finally, the study also highlights the importance of teaching methods in promoting effective learning and a need for teachers to adopt innovative and engaging strategies to aid students in their learning.

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