



THE FUNCTIONS OF NOUN CLAUSES IN LET'S LEARN ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the functions of noun clauses in *Let's Learn English* textbooks from the first grade until the third grade. The data are examined by using distributional method proposed by Sudaryanto (1988). The data are classified based on their functions as proposed by *Quirk et al* (1985). Noun clauses have nine functions, they are subject, direct object, subject complement, object complement, prepositional complement, adjectival complementation, extraposed subject, appositive, and adverbial. The result of the analysis shows that the frequencies of noun clauses in the first grade until the third grade textbooks are not stable. This will make students can not fully understand about the functions of noun clauses. Therefore, *Let's Learn English* as a teaching material is inadequate in providing lesson about types and functions of noun clauses.

Keywords: nouns, clauses, functions.

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The background of the study

A noun clause is a subordinate clause which does the work of a noun. Quirk *et al.*(1985:1045) said that a noun clause is the same as the nominal clause. He also divided nominal clauses into six major categories, they are that-clauses, subordinate interrogative clauses, subordinate exclamative clauses, nominal relative clauses, to-infinitive clauses, and -ing clauses. Furthermore, Quirk *et al* (1985:1048) introduce nine functions of nominal clauses, they are subject, extraposed subject, direct object, subject complement, object complement, prepositional complement, adjectival complementation, appositive, and adverbial. One of the types and functions of nominal clauses can be seen in the followings.

- (1) We are glad *that you are able to join us on our wedding anniversary.*
- (2) *How the book will be sold* depends on the reviewers.

In sentence (1) the subordinate clause *that you are able to join us on our wedding anniversary* is a *that*-clause functioning as

adjectival complementation of the adjective *glad*. While in sentence (2) the subordinate clause *How the book will be sold* is an interrogative clause functioning as a subject.

This study examines the types and functions of noun clauses in *Let's Learn English* textbooks especially from the reading texts. The understanding about types and functions of noun clauses is very important for students in order to be able to understand the texts using noun clauses. This is the reason for the writers to choose types and functions of noun clauses the topic of this study.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

In relation to the background of the study in the previous page, the problems of the study are formulated as follows :

What functions of noun clauses are used in *Let's Learn English* textbooks ?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

Based on the problem of the study above, the objective of the study is : To find out the functions of noun clauses in *Let's Learn English* text books.

1.4 The Method of the Study



The data were taken from the sentences that contain noun clauses in the reading texts in *Let's Learn English* textbooks from first grade until third grade. These books were written by Sofyan Fanani and Aisyah Anwar and were published by P.T Bumi Aksara in 2016. There are 92 data. These data are classified based on their functions by using the method proposed by Sudaryanto (1988) and the theory proposed by Quirk *et al* (1985).

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A clause is a group of words containing a subject and a predicate (Pratt 1993: 109; Verspoor and Sauter 2000:151). There are two major types of clause, they are independent clauses and dependent clauses. An independent clause is a clause that makes sense by itself, hence can stand by itself as a complete sentence. Meanwhile, a dependent clause is a clause that cannot stand by itself and cannot make a good sense (Wren and Martin, 1986: 274). For examples : (3) John was sick. (4) I know that John was sick. Sentence (3) in the previous page *John was sick* is an independent clause because it makes sense by itself and can stand by itself. Meanwhile, the clause *that John was sick* in sentence (4) in the previous page is a dependent clause because it cannot stand by itself and does not make a good sense.

Quirk *et al.*(1985 : 987) say that there two kinds of clauses, they are subordinate clauses and superordinate clauses. They also explain a clause that is not subordinate to another clause is called a superordinate clause and a subordinate clause is a part of its superordinate clause, functioning as one of its elements.

2.1 The Definition of Noun Clauses

Noun clauses are clauses which Svartvik, 1994:311-314; Azar 1989:263; Haryanti and Setyandari, 2018:44). For example :function like noun (Leech and (5) *Whatever you want* is fine with me. In sentence (5) the noun clause *Whatever you*

want functions, like a noun, as the subject of the sentence.

2.2 The Types of Noun Clauses

Quirk *et al*(1985:1048) say that noun clauses is the same as nominal clauses and fall into six categories, they are that-clauses, subordinate interrogative clauses, subordinate exclamative clauses, nominal relative clauses, *to*-infinitive clauses, and *-ing* clauses.

According to Burton-Roberts (1986 : 169) that-clauses are clauses which can take *that* as their complementiser. Subordinate interrogative clauses are dependent clauses which are not used to ask questions. These clauses begin with *wh-* words. Subordinate exclamative clauses are clauses which are introduced by complementisers *what* and *how*. Nominal relative clauses are subordinate clauses introduced by *wh-* elements. *To*-infinitive clauses are clauses introduced by *to*-infinitive. *-ing* clauses are clauses containing non-finite verbs. For examples : (1) *That the world is round* is a fact. (2) She asked me *who would look after the baby*.(3) I told her *how late she was*. (4) *Whoever did that* should admit it frankly.(6) I am very eager *to meet her*. (7) They are busy *preparing a birthday party*.

In sentence (6) the clause *That the world is round* is a *that*-clause. The clause *who would look after the baby* is a subordinate interrogative clause in sentence (7). The clause *how late she was* is a subordinate exclamative clause in sentence (8). The clause *Whoever did that* in sentence (9) is a nominal relative clause. The clause *to meet her* in sentence (10) is a *to*-infinitive clause, and the clause *preparing a birthday party* in sentence (11) is an *-ing* clause.

2.3 The Functions of Noun Clauses

According to Quirk *et al.* (1985 : 1047) noun clauses have nine functions, they are subject, direct object, subject complement, object complement, prepositional complement, adjectival complementation, extraposed subject, appositive, and adverbial.



Subject is a thing or person that is being discussed (Hornby, 2010:1488). Direct object is a noun phrase complementing a monotransitive verb (Burton-Roberts, 1986 : 74). Subject complement is a constituent following an intensive verb group (Burton-Roberts, 1986 : 74). Object complement the complement of a complex transitive verb group. Prepositional complement is the constituent that complement a prepositional verb group (Burton-Roberts, 1986: 75 – 82). Adjectival complementation is the constituent complementing an adjective. Appositive is the constituent which refers to the same person or thing (Leech and Svartvik, 1975 :235). Extraposed subject is a transformation in which a clause that acts as a subject is moved to end of the sentence (Quirk *et al.*,1985: 1054). Adverbial is an optional constituent in a sentence construction (Burton-Robert, 1986 : 86). For examples :

- (12) Whoever breaks this law deserves a fine.
- (13) Martha asked why he wore the red dress.
- (14) April is when the lilacs bloom.
- (15) The boss will fire the staff whoever breaks this rule.
- (16) It depends on whether they will support us.
- (17) I am not sure which she prefers.
- (18) Your ambition, to become a famous actress, requires a high confidence.
- (19) It is not clear to me if she likes the present.
- (20) When he heard of his mother's illness, Ken wept.

The noun clause *Whoever breaks this law* in sentence (12) functions as subject in the sentence. The noun clause *why he wore the red dress* in sentence (13) functions as the direct object of the monotransitive verb *asked*. The noun clause *when the lilacs bloom* in sentence (14) functions as subject complement to the intensive verb *is*. The noun clause *whoever breaks this law* in sentence (15) functions as object

complement of the complex transitive verb *will fire*. The noun clause *whether they will support us* in sentence (16) functions as *prepositional complement of the prepositional verb depends on..* The noun clause *which she prefers* in sentence (17) functions as adjectival complementation of the adjective *sure*. The noun clause *to* functions as appositive because it repeats the noun phrase *your ambition*. The noun clause *if she likes the present* in sentence (19) functions as extraposed subject. Since it cannot introduce the subject clause, it has to be moved or extraposed to the end of the sentence. The noun clause *When he heard of his mother's illness* in sentence (20) functions as adverbial. It is optional since the verb *wept* is an intransitive verb and does not need other constituents to complement it.

III . ANALYSIS

There are only two types of noun clause found in Let's Learn English textbooks from first grade until third grade, they are 1. that-clauses functioning as direct object, subject complement, adjectival complementation and 2. nominal relative clauses functioning direct object, adverbial, appositive, and prepositional complement.

3.1 That-clauses

3.1.1 Direct Object

There are 35 that-clauses functioning as direct object found in the source of data. But only 3 data are analyzed in this study (1 datum from first grade, 1 datum from second grade, and 1 datum from third grade). The rest rest can be seen in the annex.

- (1) However, she said *that everything was all right* and I felt better (first grade).
- (2) I personally think *that reading is a very important activity in our life* (second grade).
- (3) I promise *that I will carry out my duties to the best of my ability* (third grade).

The that- clauses *that everything was alright* in datum (1), *that reading is very important*



activity in our life in datum (2), and *that I will carry out my duties to the best of my ability* in datum (3) function as direct object because each of them follows a monotransitive verb. The verbs are *said* in datum (1), *think* in datum (2), and *promise* in datum (3).

3.1.2 Subject Complement

There are only 3 data functioning as subject complement and they are found in second grade. But only two data are analyzed in this study. The rest is put in the annex.

- (4) Another reason is *that reading can give us pleasure too*.
- (5) My problem is *that I'm too cowardly to tell her anything*.

The *that*-clauses *that reading can give us pleasure too* in datum (4) and *that I'm too cowardly to tell her anything* in datum (5) function as subject complement since each of them follows intensive verbs, they are *is* in data (4) and (5).

3.1.3 Adjectival Complementation

There are 8 *that*-clauses found in second grade textbook functioning as adjectival complementation, but only 3 of them are analyzed here and the rest can be seen in the annex.

- (6) It was clear *that all of us are favourite students*.
- (7) He was sure *that the students would wear them proudly*.
- (8) The cat was so angry *that she killed and ate the cat*.

The *that*-clauses in sentences (6),(7), and (8) above function as adjectival complementation because each of them complements the adjective preceding it. The adjectives are *clear* in datum (6), *sure* in datum (7), and *angry* in datum (8).

3.2 Nominal Relative Clause

There are 46 nominal relative clauses in the source of data. 9 data function as direct object, 20 data function as adverbial,

11 data function appositive, 6 data function as prepositional complement.

3.2.1 Direct Object

As stated before there are 6 data functioning as direct object. 1 datum is found in first grade textbook, 2 data are found in second grade textbook, and 6 data are found in third grade textbook. But only 3 data are analyzed in this study and the rest can be seen in the annex.

- (9) No one really knows *where the custom started*.
- (10) They don't know *what will happen in the future*.
- (11) I still could not believe *when they called my name as the first winner*.

The italicised nominal relative clauses in data (9), (10), and (11) function as direct object because each of them complements the monotransitive verb preceding it. The verbs are *knows* in data (9), *know* in data (10), and *believe* in data (11).

3.2.2 Adverbial

There are 20 nominal relative clauses found in the source of data functioning as adverbial. But only 2 of the data are analyzed in this study and the rest can be seen in the annex.

- (12) His father died *when he was a child*.
- (13) *When he was sailing his trading journey*, his ship landed on a beach near a small village.

The italicized nominal relative clauses in data (12) and (13) function as adverbial because each of them follows an intransitive verb, they are the verb *died* in datum (12) and the verb *landed* in datum (13). These two nominal relative clauses are optional in the two sentence because in their absence, the two sentences have complete meanings.

3.2.3 Appositive

There are 11 nominal relative clauses found in the source of data functioning as appositive, but only 3 data are analyzed in this study. The rest can be seen in the annex.



- (14) Lake Toba, *which is situated in the centre of Bukit Barisan mountain range*, is an interesting mountain resort with Samosir Island in the centre of the lake.
- (15) During his reign, he ordered Sedah and Panuluh, *who were teachers and writers in the kingdom*, to write his stories.
- (16) The woman, *who was also the hotel owner*, said “You have made a wise decision, sir”.

The italicised nominal relative clauses in data (14), (15), and (16) function as appositive because each of them gives additional information to the noun phrase preceding it. The noun phrases are *Lake Toba* in datum (14), *Sedah and Panuluh* in datum (15), and *The woman* in datum (16).

3.2.4 Prepositional Complement

There are 6 nominal relative clauses found in the source of data functioning as prepositional complement. But only 3 of them are analysed in this study and the rest can be seen in the annex.

- (17) They worry about *who is the speaker of the Last Extraordinary General Meeting*.
- (18) Scientists were surprised by *what he had written*.
- (19) He heard of *how the African people had lived in relative peace until until the coming of the whitepeople*.

The italicised nominal relative clauses in data (17), (18), and (19) function as prepositional complement. The prepositions complemented are *about* in data (17), *by* in data (18), and *of* in data (19).

IV. CONCLUSION

After analyzing the noun clauses used in *Learn Let's English* textbooks from first grade until third grade, it can be said that the textbooks can not be used as handbooks for students in studying noun clauses. They do not cover all types and functions of noun clauses in the reading materials available in

the three grades of the textbook. In order to be qualified handbooks for students in studying noun clauses, they have to be revised by covering all types and functions of noun clauses in the reading materials presented in the textbooks.

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