ASPECTS OF DIFFICULTY OF CONDITIONAL SENTENCES IN BUSINESS NEGOTIATION

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ABSTRACT

For speakers of English as a second language, language barriers cause problems in reaching successful negotiation. One of the most difficult sentence construction to comprehend is conditional sentences. The conditional sentence is a complex sentence that consists of a main clause and a subordinate clause; the latter typically begins with the adverbial subordinator *if*. Some grammarians divide conditional sentences into three structures: *Future conditional, Present conditional,* and *Past conditional.* These three structures are also known as *type 1, type 2,* and *type 3* conditional sentences respectively.

An experiment was conducted to find out which aspects of conditional sentences cause problems and which do not cause problems for Indonesian learners of English. This experiment employed three kinds of tests: comprehension, production, and discourse testing, in order to analyze two skills: receptive and productive skill. Five aspects were analyzed to find out which one(s) Indonesian learners of English tend to struggle with. The first aspect was the conditional types: type 1, type 2, and type 3. The result showed that there was no fixed hierarchical order of difficulty among conditional sentences under investigation. Moreover, the result showed that the learners did not have any problem comprehending all the three types, but they had problems in producing grammatically correct conditional sentences. The second aspect analyzed was the positive and negative conditional sentences. The analysis showed that the negative conditional sentences caused significantly more problems to the learners (i.e. affected both their receptive and productive skill) than the positive ones. The third aspect under investigation was the involvement of the first and/or the second person. The result showed that the presence of the first and/or the second person in the conditional sentences could significantly promote learners' receptive and productive skill. The fourth aspect was the position of the *if* clause, be it in the initial or the final position. The result showed that the position of the *if* clause did not significantly affect learners' receptive and productive skill. The last aspect under study was the location of the information, be it in the main clause or in the *if* clause. The result showed that the conditional sentence was significantly easier to comprehend when information was located in the main clause than when it was in the *if* clause.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Everybody is a negotiator. According to Fisher and Ury (2011), negotiation is an act of reaching an agreement peacefully. Negotiation happens every day for various reasons, from personal reasons like negotiating what to eat for dinner with the family members or negotiating how to divide the daily chores with the whole family, until business negotiation like negotiating a business proposal with a prospective client, or negotiating a raise in salary with the boss. Successful negotiation is a crucial aspect in business encounters. Unfortunately, many business deals do not reach satisfactory results due to language barriers. These barriers in language are common in English as a foreign language contexts. Speakers of English as a second language find it difficult to comprehend some

sentence constructions. One of the most complicated English constructions is the conditional sentences.

The conditional sentence is a complex sentence that consists of a main clause and a subordinate clause; the latter typically begins with the adverbial subordinator *if*. The conditional sentence is considered to be one of the most serious problems encountered by students who learn English (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999). The fact that it is one of the most difficult constructions is not surprising since conditional sentences are syntactically more complex compared to other structures. Moreover, conditional sentences are semantically harder to understand even for native speakers (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999). Some textbooks and reference grammars divide conditional sentences into three structures:

(1.1) *Future conditional*: If I have the money, I will pay my debts.
(1.2) *Present conditional*: If I had the money, I would pay my debts.
(1.3) *Past conditional*: If I had had the money, I would have paid my debts.

These three structures are also known as *type 1, type 2,* and *type 3* conditional sentences respectively.

Like other students from non-English background, Indonesian students who learn English encounter the same problems in learning conditional sentences. They may understand the syntactic changes of each type, but they may have difficulties in understanding the semantics of all types. Type 1 may be easier to understand since it has the same meaning in Indonesian, but both type 2 and type 3 may cause problems since according to the students these types do not exist in Indonesian language. Indonesian students of English do not realize that unlike conditional sentences type 1, both conditional sentences type 2 and type 3 cannot be translated as *jika*, but as *seandainya*, as in *If I had wings I would fly to the moon* which should be translated as *seandainya* (not *jika*) *saya punya sayap, saya akan terbang ke bulan*. Students' unawareness of the differences in the meaning of the three conditionals can be seen through the way they translate the conditional sentences. Sentence (1.1) *If I have money, I will pay my debts* is translated in Indonesian as *Jika saya mempunyai uang, saya akan membayar hutang-hutang saya.* The problem may arise in translating both sentences (1.2) and (1.3) because Indonesians tend to translate these sentences the same as they translate sentence (1.1). In other words, Indonesian students of English would regard all these three types of conditional sentences as having the same meaning.

Another problem of Indonesian learners of English is in understanding the meaning and the form of conditional sentences. Students' mistake related to form is exemplified in (1.4) below.

(1.4) If I have one million rupiah, *I buy a cellular phone*.

The result clause of this sentence should be in future tense: will + present verb because it is considered as future conditional (type 1). Thus, the correct form should be *If I have one million rupiah, I will buy a cellular phone*.

Other mistakes are related to the meaning of the conditionals. Upon given the situation *I didn't write a good business proposal, so that I lost the contract*, the students would come up with conditional sentences like (1.5) to (1.7) below.

(1.5) I will not lose my contract if I write a good business proposal.
(1.6) I would lose my contract if I wrote a good business proposal.
(1.7) I would not lose my contact if I had written a good business proposal.

It seems that students have problems in understanding the meaning of the conditionals, and relating the meaning to the appropriate form. Moreover, students seem to have problems in deciding whether to use negative or positive conditionals, or whether to use simple, future, or past tense.

The complexity of the conditional structures arouses the writer's interest to find out whether Indonesian learners of English are able to comprehend, construct and use these structures: type 1, type 2, and type 3 appropriately. Thus, the writer conducts a research titled Thus, the writer conducts a research titled, **"ASPECTS OF DIFFICULTY OF CONDITIONAL SENTENCES IN BUSINESS NEGOTIATION",** which is a case study on speakers of Indonesian language who are studying English at an English course in South Jakarta.

Formulation of the Problems

This study aims to investigate whether aspects of conditional sentences affect students' receptive and productive skill. Five aspects of conditional sentences are analyzed to find out which one(s) Indonesian learners tend to struggle with. Thus, this research aims to answer the following questions:
1. What is the order of difficulty of comprehending and producing the three types of conditional sentences?
2. Does the position of the *if* clause, be it in the initial or final position, affect the speakers' comprehension and/or production?
3. Does the positive and negative conditional sentences affect the speakers' comprehension and/or production?
4. Does the involvement of the first and /or the second person in the conditional sentences affect the speakers' comprehension and/or production?
5. Does the location of information, be it in the main clause or in the *if* clause affect the speakers' comprehension?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
Complexity of Conditional Construction

The conditional sentence is considered to be one of the most serious problems encountered by students who learn English (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999). Hwang (1979) says that even if the ESL/EFL learners are successful in identifying the form of conditional sentences in a multiple-choice test, most of them still confuse hypothetical and counterfactual conditionals (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999).

A conditional sentence is regarded as difficult for EFL/ESL learners because it is syntactically and semantically complex. Syntactically, conditional constructions have various types. The *if* clause in the conditional construction may occupy either initial or final position. Moreover, conditional constructions contain aspects of tenses, modal auxiliaries, pronoun, negation, and interrogative, each of these needs a period of time to cope with. Its complexity in semantics can be seen from the fact that the verb-tense marker in conditional sentences is different from that of other constructions.

Complexity in Syntax

Several factors make a conditional sentence syntactically complex. These are the various types of conditional constructions, the position of the *if* clause: be it in the initial or in the final position, the aspects of modal auxiliaries, tenses, pronoun, negation, and interrogative.

Conditional Types

Conditional sentence belongs to a class of complex sentences. As a complex sentence, it has a main clause and a subordinate clause, the latter usually begins with adverbial subordinator *if* (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999). Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) talk about the relationship of a dependent clause with the independent clause in conditional sentences. The dependent clause (i.e. the *if* clause) sets the condition, and the independent clause (i.e. the main clause) shows the result. They also say that there are various types of conditional sentences; as a result, there are also various syntactic details. Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999), and Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) say that among the various types of conditional sentences, there are three most common conditional types discussed in grammar textbooks:

(2.1) If I have time, I will study the agreement.
(2.2) If I had time, I would study the agreement.
(2.3) If I had had time, I would have studied the agreement.

The labels given to these three types vary, but they are usually labeled as conditional sentences type 1, type 2, and type 3 respectively.

Modal Auxiliaries and Tenses

The next two aspects of conditional sentences which need careful study are modal auxiliaries and the use of tenses. If we look at the main clause of the conditional sentences, type 1 employs modals expressing future time (*will* or *be going to*), while type 2 and 3 use *would*. The *if* clause of the conditional sentences, on the other hand, employs different tenses. The *if* clause of conditional construction type 1 is in simple present tense, type 2 is in simple past tense, and type 3 is in past perfect tense. These three tenses should be understood well in order to be able to use conditional sentences. The summary of the modal auxiliary and the tenses used in conditional construction can be seen in figure 2.1 below.

Type 1:	If I have the money, I will go to Europe. If + simple present tense, modal expressing future conditions e.g. *will, be going to, may, should*.
Type 2:	If I had the money, I would go to Europe. If + simple past tense, modal *would*.
Type 3:	If I had had the money, I would have gone to Europe. If + past perfect tense, modal *would have* + past participle.

Figure 2.1. Modal Auxiliaries and Tenses in Conditional Sentences

Position of the *If* Clause

The syntactic complexity of the conditional sentences can be seen using the phrase structure rules. In conditional construction, the *if* clause may occupy two different positions: in the initial or in the final position. *If* clause in the initial position is exemplified in (2.4), while the final position *if* clause can be seen in (2.5) below.

(2.4) If you send your order by e-mail, we will send the goods immediately.
(2.5) We will send the goods immediately if you send your order by e-mail.

The fact that the *if* clause in the conditional sentences has two different positions makes it interesting to know which position of the *if* clause occurs more in language discourse. Ford and Thompson (1986) conducted research on the occurrence of the conditional discourse in written and oral discourse. Their study on the written discourse showed that only 23 percent of the *if* clauses were in the final position, while the rest (i.e. 77 percent) were in the initial position. Their finding on the oral discourse revealed less percentage of the *if* clauses in the final position (i.e. 18 percent), while 82 percent of the *if* clauses were in the initial position (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman 1999:559).

Negation

The next aspect which tends to cause problem in comprehending conditional sentences is the negation. Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999:183-184) say that in general, English negation is problematic to ESL/EFL students. They state four reasons why English negation causes problem for learners. First, the place of the negative particle is different from one language to another. Second, many languages allow multiple negation which was accounted as acceptable in English at the old days, but regarded as nonstandard today. The next, some languages do not have the equivalent meaning for the English *not* and *no*. The last reason is the fact that English usually uses a contracted form of its negative particle (something which is seldom done in other languages) makes it more difficult to understand for learners.

From the point of view of the learners' progress in producing grammatically correct sentences, learners' progress goes through stages, from stage 1 which is the lowest stage of language acquisition to stage 6 which is the highest (Djiwandono, 2005). Out of the six stages identified, Djiwandono says that *do* as auxiliary in negative e.g. *He does not go* falls into stage 5.

The discussion on English negation shows that even in simple sentences English negation is troublesome for learners, let alone in complex sentences. It is then understandable why the negative conditional sentences are relatively more difficult for learners to cope with than the positive ones.

Pronoun

The next aspect which may cause problem to learners of some native languages is the use of pronoun. The discussion of the use of personal pronoun has gone through a long way.

The involvement of the 1st and/or 2nd person in a sentence is believed to be able to help learners gain more understanding because these personal pronouns enable the learners to imagine the situation or to relate the situation with their own condition.

When *if* clause is used in discourse contexts, the use of pronoun in conditional construction would many times be troublesome for learners since the pronoun used in the situation or dialog and the pronoun used in the conditional sentence are not always the same. This happens because of the written situations and the expected conditional sentences most commonly belong to different speech, i.e. when the situation is in the indirect speech, the expected answer is in the direct speech. Therefore, besides understanding the conditional sentences, the students also need to understand the direct and the indirect speech in order to be able to make appropriate shift in personal pronouns. The shift in the personal pronouns is exemplified in example (2.6) below. Example (2.6) is in a form of indirect speech. In this example, the personal pronoun used in both situation and instruction is the 3rd person singular, while the personal pronoun in the expected conditional sentence should be in the 1st person singular.

(2.6) Situation:
Tracy forgot that yesterday was Bill's birthday. Using if construction, what should she say to him?

Expected conditional construction:
If I had remembered it was your birthday yesterday, I would have bought you a nice present.

Student's answer:
? If Tracy had not forgotten that yesterday was Bill's birthday, she should have said happy birthday.

This shift of pronoun is not easy for learners to understand. Students' difficulty in understanding the shift of personal pronoun can be seen in (2.6) above. Instead of shifting the personal pronoun, the students kept on using the same personal pronoun (i.e. the 3rd person singular) in the expected answer. The fact that makes the answer turn out to be inappropriate.

Complexity in Semantics
To understand the semantics of each conditional type (i.e. type 1, 2, and 3) is not an easy task for the learners because in conditional sentences, the tenses used do not reflect the meaning. Conditional sentences type 1 express future plans or possible events as in (2.7).
(2.7) If I have time, I will attend the seminar.
In conditional sentences type 1, the use of strong or weak modals differentiates the meaning of the sentences. The strong modals (e.g. *will* or *be going to*) are used to express strong conditions or results, as in (2.7) above. Sometimes, the main clause intends to express a result/condition which is not so strong. In this case, modals such as *may* or *should* are used to express weaker results or conditions as in (2.8) below.
(2.8) If I have time, I may attend the seminar.
Conditional sentences type 2 are used to express counterfactual condition, as in (2.9) below.
(2.9)   If I were you, I would appoint Joe as the manager.
Both the conditional and the result clause of (2.9) show contrary-to-the-fact condition: I am not you; I do not appoint Joe as the manager.
Like conditional sentences type 2, conditional sentences type 3 are also used to express counterfactual condition. The difference is in the time they refer to. Type 2 refers to the present time whereas type 3 to the past. Conditional sentence type 3 is exemplified in (2.10).
(2.10) If I had been here yesterday, I would have been very angry.
Sentence (2.10) expresses an impossible event which occurred in the past: I was not here yesterday; I was not angry.
The previous discussion shows that the semantics of conditional sentences type 2 and type 3 are problematic to ESL/EFL learners since past tense refers to present condition and past perfect tense refers to past condition. Besides, because these two types show counterfactual condition, the positive conditionals have negative meaning and the negative ones have positive meanings, the fact that increases its semantic complexity (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999).

Structural vs Communicative Approach

The history shows that language teaching approaches come and go. An approach which was once admired was then replaced by another approach which was thought as more fascinated. Structural Approach and Communicative Approach have the same fate. The switch in the view towards language teaching gives significant effects on the testing instruments used to measure learners' mastery in using the language. In regards to conditional sentences, Berrent (1985) says that learners' mastery in conditional sentences can only be measured if the measurement analysis includes both comprehension and production aspects. In other words, two kinds of tests are needed to measure students' capabilities dealing with conditional sentences: comprehension and production test. This section discusses the theories underlying these two well-known approaches, and the language testing manifested by the underlying theories.

Structural Approach

Richards and Rodgers (1986) state that structural linguistics, a view proposed by American linguistics in the 1950s, viewed language as a system of structurally related elements to encode meaning. These elements were seen as language blocks with phonemes at the lowest part followed consecutively by morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, and sentences.

In regard to the test type used, the structuralists believe that the multiple-choice test is very much suitable to measure learners' mastery on separated language elements. Among its criticism that such test does not measure students' ability to use language, multiple-choice test is still proven to be beneficial in measuring students' ability to "recognize correct grammatical forms, etc. and to make important discriminations in the target language. In doing this, multiple-choice test items can help both students and teachers to identify areas of difficulty" (Heaton, 1988:27).

Communicative Approach

Around 1970s, teachers, learners, and course designers began to complain that the result gained through structural approach was far from the expectation. Many people complained that students were unable to transfer the knowledge gained through structural repetition in class into the outside-classroom real communication. They also complained that learning through structural approach was a boring experience (Richards and Rodgers, 1986). Therefore, people started to look for another approach to replace the previously admired one. The Communicative approach springs from the dissatisfaction towards the structuralism approach. This approach switches the emphasis from structural forms to meaning. Widdowson (1978) says that acquiring a language does not only mean learning the forms of composing sentences (i.e. language usage), but also learning how to use these sentences in real communication (i.e. language use).

The fact that the attention was given more to functional aspects does not mean that Communicative approach leaves out structural aspects of language. Littlewood (1981:1) says that "the structural view of language has not been in any way superseded by the functional view".

The development in linguistics forces some scholars to study the relationship between language and contexts (McCarthy, 1991). James (1980) states that sentences in a text must be informative and at the same time relevant. Informative means that the sentence gives the reader new information, while relevant means relating the new information with the information that the readers have already known (old information). Rutherford (1987) says that to make discourse flows smoothly or to enhance understanding, information in the

language should be arranged in the sequential order, from the information that the hearer/reader is familiar with (the old or given information) to the new information. Therefore, the formerly new information would become the given information in the successive sentence, or the given information in a sentence is the new information in the preceding sentence.

(2.11) … You will see three <u>doors</u>. If you go through the <u>first door</u>, you'll see a great <u>chest</u> in front of you. On top of the <u>chest</u> there is a <u>dog</u> with eyes the size of teacups…

<div align="right">(H.C. Andersen: The Tinderbox)</div>

In (2.11), the new information of the first sentence is *doors*. In the second sentence, *doors* or *door* becomes the given information, while the new information in this sentence is *chest*. *Chest* then becomes the given information in the third sentence, while the new information is *dog*. If given information is represented by *g* and new information by *n*, the link of given and new information in example (2.11) would be as figure 2.2 below.

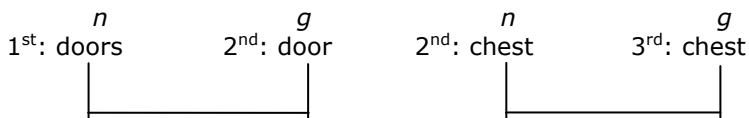|			
n	*g*	*n*	*g*
1st: doors	2nd: door	2nd: chest	3rd: chest

Figure 2.2. Link of Given and New Information

The link of given and new information in figure 2.2 shows that the information flows from something new to something else which is familiar. In other words, it could be stated that the information in (2.11) flows smoothly. This smooth link between new and old information makes it easy for the readers to comprehend the information.

In relation to how to measure students' progress, in line to its concern on how language is used in communication, Communicative test is primarily concerned with creating tasks which reflect, as closely as possible, the students' real life (Heaton, 1988). Therefore, instead of using sentences divorced from context as used by the structuralists, the Communicative testing relies on contextual tasks.

This research on conditional sentences adopted these two approaches in formulating the testing instruments. This study used two kinds of testing instruments. The first testing instrument was in a form of structuralist test. This test consisted of sentences divorced from context formulated in the multiple-choice testing. This kind of test was believed to be able to reveal students' receptive skill, and also their area of difficulty dealing with conditional sentences. Besides using the structuralist test (i.e. multiple-choice test), this study also employed the communicative test. There were two kinds of communicative test used in this study. The first one was in a form of contextual situations which reflected students' real life. The second one was in a form of written discourse. To accommodate the discourse concept, the discourse in this test contained aspects of given and new information.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research employs both quantitative and qualitative method. Quantitative method is used to measure the percentage of true and false answers in regards to each aspect of conditional sentences under study. On the other

hand, this research also employ the qualitative method because it tries to answer how learners comprehend and produce conditional sentences.

Data and Technique of Collecting Data

The data for this study were in the form of students' written answers resulted from the test administered. The test covered both receptive and productive aspects.

Subjects

The study was conducted as a case study. The test was administered to 48 speakers of Indonesian language who were studying at an English course in Jakarta, in the year 2017. This study focused on students who were in upper Intermediate and advanced level because students at these levels had been taught all the three types of conditional sentences.

Testing Instruments

In order to assess learners' receptive and productive skill, three kinds of tests were devised: comprehension, production, and discourse test.

Comprehension Test

The comprehension test required subjects to make correct judgement about the meaning of conditional sentences. It was in a form of multiple-choice test, with four options: *a, b, c*, and *d*. The first three options (*a*, *b*, and *c*) were provided, while the last option (option *d*) was left blank and thus intended for the subjects' own answer if they did not agree with the provided answers (options *a*, *b*, *c*). This test could reveal both subjects' receptive and productive skill on conditional sentences. Options *a*, *b*, and *c* could measure subjects' comprehension or receptive skill, while option *d* was able to measure both skills, i.e. receptive and productive skill. The existence of option *d* forced the subjects to use their receptive skills, or in other words, it could reduce the subjects' tendency of guessing the correct answers. This test consisted of thirty questions. Each type of conditional sentence was represented by ten questions. The examples of comprehension test can be seen in (3.1) and (3.2) below. The answer of (3.1) is one of options *a, b*, and *c*. The answer of (3.2) is option *d*, in which the students should write down the answer.

(3.1) If she had refused to lend him a dollar, he would have been very upset.
   a. She refuses to lend him a dollar.
   b. She did not refuse to lend him a dollar.
   c. Maybe he was very upset.
   d. _____.

(3.2) Carol will not send you an e-mail if her computer is not fixed this afternoon.
   a. Her computer will be fixed.
   b. Her computer is not fixed.
   c. Carol sent you an e-mail.
   d. _____

   Expected answers:
   1. Maybe Carol will not send you an e-mail.
   2. Maybe her computer will not be fixed this afternoon.

Production Test

The production test used in this research was in a form of open-ended questions. This test was in a form of situations which were followed by instructions that requested the students to respond using conditional construction. This open-ended testing consisted of nine situations. Each conditional type was represented by three situations. This test could measure both receptive and productive skill. An example of production test can be seen in (3.3) below.

(3.3) Situation:
Your friend borrowed one hundred dollars from you and told you he would repay it in a couple of days. It has been one month. You think he has forgotten about it. Using *if* construction, provide a statement to respond to your friend the first time you meet him.

Expected answer:
I will be angry if you don't give my money back.

Discourse Test

The discourse test was in a form of multiple-choice test. It was designed in a form of short written dialogues or passages. Each dialogue or passage was followed by two options: *a* and *b*. These two options contained the same information but with different *if* clause position; one was in the initial, the other was in the final position. The test was intended to measure subjects' receptive skill, i.e. students' familiarity with the discourse concept that the old information was supposed to be put in the initial position while the new information was in the final position. Therefore, the clause that contained the old information should precede the one that contained the new information. An example of discourse test can be seen in (3.4) below.

(3.4)   It can take less than ten years to destroy a rain forest. Unless there is a change, there will be no rain forest left by the year 2050.
Journeys Reading
a. If this happens, thousands of animals and plants will disappear forever.
b. Thousands of animals and plants will disappear forever if this happens.

Technique of Data Analysis

The three test types were analyzed separately. In order to gain better understanding on students' receptive and productive skills, different ways of analysis were applied on these tests.

Comprehension Test

Subjects' answers were analyzed based on their understanding on the meanings of the conditional sentences. Since the comprehension test included *d* option (subjects' own answers), the analysis was carried out in two ways.

Comprehension Test:
If the weather had been nice, we would not have cancelled the barbeque party.
   a. We did not cancel the barbeque party.
   b. We will cancel the barbeque party.
   c. Maybe the weather is nice.
   d. _____.

Students' answers:
Group 1: False Comprehension, e.g.
- We will cancel the barbeque party.
- The weather is not nice.

Group 2: True Comprehension, False Production, e.g.
- The weather <u>hadn't been</u> nice.
- The weather <u>didn't</u> nice.

Group 3: True Comprehension, False Production, e.g.
- We cancelled the barbeque party.
- The weather wasn't nice.

Figure 3.1. Method of Data Analysis on Comprehension Test

For questions whose correct answers were *a*, *b*, or *c*, the score was either correct or incorrect, but for questions whose answers were *d*, the students' answers were put into three groups (see figure 3.1). Group 1 was for answers whose comprehension was false, group 2 was for those whose comprehension was true but comprehension was still grammatically inappropriate, and group 3 was for answers whose both comprehension and production were true. For this *d* option, the answers which were regarded as true were those belong to group 2 and group 3. The number of correct answers was compared to see which aspect affected students' receptive skill.

For the purpose of statistical analysis in which it was important to find out students' scores, the scores were differentiated based on the groups they belonged to. Answers which fell into group 1 were awarded zero, answers which belonged to group 2 were awarded one point, and answers which belonged to group 3 were awarded two points.

For questions whose correct answers were supposed to be *a*, *b*, or *c*, but the students wrote their own answer on *d*, the analysis was like analyzing the *d* option.

Production Test
Like analyzing the *d* option in the comprehension test, in the production test subjects' answers were also put into three groups. Group 1 was for answers whose comprehension was false, group 2 was for those whose comprehension was true but production was still grammatically wrong, and group 3 was for answers whose both comprehension and production were true. The answers which were regarded as true were only those which fell into group 3 (see figure 3.2). The number of correct answers was compared to see which aspect affected students' productive skill.

Production Test:
Situation:
You are walking down the street at night alone. Suddenly a man with a gun appears in front of you. He says, "Give me you money!" What in an appropriate *if* construction to response to the attacker?

Students' answers:
Group 1: False Comprehension, e.g.
- If you will not give your money, I will shoot you.

Group 2: True Comprehension, False Production, e.g.
- I would give you all my money if I <u>have</u> some.

Group 3: True Comprehension, False Production, e.g.
- If I were a millionaire, I would give you a lot of money.

Figure 3.2. Method of Data Analysis on Production Test

Like in the comprehension test, for the purpose of statistical analysis students' answers were scored based on the groups these answers belonged to. Answers which fell into group 1 were awarded zero, answers which belonged to group 2 were awarded one point, and answers which belonged to group 3 were awarded two points.

Discourse Test

This test was intended to measure subjects' familiarity with the discourse concept that the old information was supposed to be put in the initial position in the *if* construction while the new information was put in the final position. Each answer in this type of test was regarded as correct or incorrect. The number of correct answers was compared to see which aspects affected students' receptive skill. For the purpose of statistical analysis, incorrect answers were awarded 0, while correct answers were awarded 1.

RESULTS

Results from Comprehension Test

This test was intended to measure five aspects of conditional sentences: the conditional types, the positive and negative conditionals, the involvement of the 1st and/or 2nd person, the *if* clause position, and the location of information.

Conditional Types

Subjects' comprehension dealing with all the three types of conditional sentences could be seen in table 4.1. Among the three conditional types, subjects were better at comprehending the unreal conditional sentences than they were at real conditional sentences. The result is contrary to what is stated by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999). They say that the unreal conditional sentences are more problematic to EFL/ESL learners than the real conditional sentences. The data shows that subjects were successful in comprehending 82.1 percent conditional sentences type 3, 67.3 percent and 61.0 percent conditional sentences type 2 and type 1 respectively.

Table 4.1
Comprehension Test: Types of Conditional Sentences

Type	True	%	False	%	Total Answers
Type 1	293	61.0%	187	39.0%	480
Type 2	323	67.3%	157	32.7%	480
Type 3	394	82.1%	86	17.9%	480

Subject = 48 students
Items = 30 multiple-choice questions, each type was represented by 10 questions
Total data = 1440 students' answers

_If_ Clause Position

The position of the _if_ clause didn't show significant effect as to support learners' receptive skill. Table 4.2 shows the relationship between the position of the _if_ clause and students' receptive skill. _If_ clause in the initial position resulted 70.7 percent correct answers while in the final position 69.6 percent correct answers. For type 2, conditional sentences whose _if_ clauses were in the initial position were easier to comprehend than those whose _if_ clauses were in the final position. On the contrary, for the other two conditional types (type 1 and type 3), conditional clauses whose _if_ clauses were in the final position were slightly easier to comprehend than those whose _if_ clauses were in the initial position.

Table 4.2
Comprehension Test: _If_ Clause Position

Type	True	%	False	%	Total
Type 1					
Initial	145	60.4%	95	39.6%	240
Final	148	61.7%	92	38.3%	240
Type 2					
Initial	170	70.8%	70	29.2%	240
Final	153	63.8%	87	36.3%	240
Type 3					
Initial	194	80.8%	46	19.2%	240
Final	200	83.3%	40	16.7%	240
Total					
Initial	509	70.7%	211	29.3%	720
Final	501	69.6%	219	30.4%	720

Subject = 48 students
Items = 30 multiple-choice questions
_If_ clause in initial position = 15 items
_If_ clause in final position = 15 items
Total data = 1440 students' answers

Positive or Negative *If* Construction

Table 4.3 shows subjects' comprehension coping with positive and negative conditionals. The result showed that the positive conditional sentences were easier to comprehend than the negative ones. The result supports the theory that says that the negative conditionals are more difficult than the positive ones (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999). Subjects comprehended positive conditional sentences better (72.1 percent correct answers) than they did on negative ones (67.2 percent correct answers). This condition occurred on all the three types of the *if* constructions.

Table 4.3
Comprehension Test: Positive and Negative Conditional Sentences

Type	True	%	False	%	Total
Type 1					
Positive	179	62.2%	109	37.8%	288
Negative	114	59.4%	78	40.6%	192
Type 2					
Positive	202	70.1%	86	29.9%	288
Negative	121	63.0%	71	37.0%	192
Type 3					
Positive	242	84.0%	46	16.0%	288
Negative	152	79.2%	40	20.8%	192
Total					
Positive	623	72.1%	241	27.9%	864
Negative	387	67.2%	189	32.8%	576

Subject = 48 students
Items = 30 multiple-choice questions
Positive conditionals = 18 items
Negative conditionals = 12 items
Total data = 1440 students' answers

1st and/or 2nd Person Involvement

The involvement of the 1st and/or 2nd person in the conditional construction is hypothesized to be able to promote learners' understanding because learners are able to relate the situation to their own condition. The data gained from the research supported this hypothesis.

Table 4.4 shows the relationship between the presence of the 1st and/or 2nd person in the conditional sentences with subjects' receptive skill. The presence of the 1st and/or 2nd person significantly raised subjects' comprehension (72.8 percent correct answer), while the absence of it reduced the comprehension to 67.5 percent correct answers. This condition occurred on conditional sentences type 1 and type 2, but not on type 3 in which the absence of the 1st and/or 2nd person made it slightly easier for the students to comprehend the *if* construction than the presence of them.

Table 4.4
Comprehension Test: The 1st and/or 2nd Person Involvement

Type	True	%	False	%	Total
Type 1					
Presence	153	63.8%	87	36.3%	240
Absence	140	58.3%	100	41.7%	240
Type 2					
Presence	176	73.3%	64	26.7%	240
Absence	147	61.3%	93	38.8%	240
Type 3					
Presence	195	81.3%	45	18.8%	240
Absence	199	82.9%	41	17.1%	240
Total					
Presence	524	72.8%	196	27.2%	720
Absence	486	67.5%	234	32.5%	720

Subject = 48 students
Items = 30 multiple-choice questions
Presence of the 1st and/or 2nd person = 15 items
Absence of the 1st and/or 2nd person = 15 items
Total data = 1440 students' answers

Location of Information

The result shows that in general, information located in the main clause was significantly easier to comprehend that those located in the *if* clause. Table 4.5 shows that 83.1 percent answers were correct when information was located in the main clause. When information was located in the *if* clause, the number of correct answers were 79.2 percent. The slight difference in the percentage of correct answers shows that the location of information did not have significant effect as to support students' comprehension.

Further analysis into the three conditional sentences revealed some interesting facts. For conditional sentences type 1, information located in the main clause was easy to comprehend (82.6 percent correct answers) than information located in the *if* clause which was only 61.1 percent correct answers. On the other hand, the location of information did not have any significant effect as to support students' comprehension dealing with conditional sentences type 2. Both location of information resulted in the same percentage of correct answers (81.3 percent). Regarding conditional sentences type 3, it was information located in the *if* clause that could enhance students' receptive skill (95.1 percent correct answers). When information was located in the main clause, the percentage of correct answers was reduced to 85.4 percent.

Table 4.5
Comprehension Test: Location of Information (In the Main Clause or the *If* Clause)

Type	True	%	False	%	Total
Type 1					
In Main Clause	119	82.6%	25	17.4%	144
In If Clause	88	61.1%	56	38.9%	144
Type 2					
In Main Clause	117	81.3%	27	18.8%	144
In If Clause	117	81.3%	27	18.8%	144
Type 3					
In Main Clause	123	85.4%	21	14.6%	144
In If Clause	137	95.1%	7	4.9%	144
Total					
In Main Clause	359	83.1%	73	16.9%	432
In If Clause	342	79.2%	90	20.8%	432

Subject = 48 students
Items = 18 multiple-choice questions
Information in main clause = 9 items
Information in *if* clause = 9 items
Total data = 864 students' answers

Results from Production Test

This test was intended to measure four aspects of conditional sentences: the conditional types, the positive and negative conditionals, the involvement of the 1st and/or 2nd person, and the *if* clause position.

Conditional Types

The order or difficulty gained from this test was different from that of comprehension test. The subjects performed best on conditional sentences type 2, followed by type 1, and type 3 respectively.

Table 4.6
Production Test: Types of Conditional Sentences

Type	Group			% of Group 3
	1	2	3	
Type 1	32	67	45	37.5%
	22.2%	46.5%	31.3%	
Type 2	30	54	60	50.0%
	20.8%	37.5%	41.7%	
Type 3	64	65	15	12.5%
	44.4%	45.1%	10.4%	

Subject = 48 students
Items = 9 open-ended questions, each type was represented by 3 questions
Total data = 432 students' answers

Table 4.6 shows that of all the correct answers (group 3), type 2 was the easiest to produce (50 percent correct answers), type 1 was 37.5 percent correct answers, and type 3 was only 12.5 percent correct answers. The difference in the order of difficulty might be because of the absence of the model (stem) in the contextual testing, a condition which did not give rooms for students' copying strategy.

If Clause Position

Subjects significantly preferred to produce conditional sentences whose *if* clause was in the initial position (table 4.7). The result shows that of all the three conditional types, 84.7 percent answers contained *if* clause in the initial position and only 15.3 percent had it in the final position. Detailed analysis on each conditional type shows the same strong preference.

Table 4.7
Production Test: Subjects' Preference on *If* Clause Position

Type	*If* Clause Position	
	Initial	Final
Type 1	118	26
	81.9%	18.1%
Type 2	135	9
	93.8%	6.3%
Type 3	113	31
	78.5%	21.5%
Total	366	66
	84.7%	15.3%

Subject = 48 students
Total data = 432 students' answers

Positive or Negative *If* Construction

The result shows that subjects preferred to produce positive *if* constructions than negative ones. Table 4.8 shows that 53.9 percent answers were in positive conditionals, 44.9 percent were in negative, and 1.2 percent were in interrogative. The occurrence of the interrogative conditional construction was actually unexpected. Detailed analysis on each type shows that for conditional sentences type 1, slightly more subjects preferred to construct the positive conditionals than the negative ones. The same preference occurred on conditional sentences type 2. The result shows subjects' strong preference in producing the positive conditionals than the negative one. On the contrary, in regards to the conditional sentences type 3, the negative conditionals were significantly more preferred than the positive ones. Furthermore, the interrogative conditional sentence, which was the least preferred construction, occurred only in conditional sentences type 1.

Table 4.8
Production Test: Subjects' Preference on Positive, Negative, and
Interrogative Conditional Sentences

Type	Positive/Negative/Interrogative		
	Positive	Negative	Interrogative
Type 1	79	60	5
	54.9%	41.7%	3.5%
Type 2	121	23	0
	84.0%	16.0%	0.0%
Type 3	33	111	0
	22.9%	77.1%	0.0%
Total	233	194	5
	53.9%	44.9%	1.2%

Subject = 48 students
Total data = 432 students' answers

1st and/or 2nd Person Involvement

The result shows subjects' strong preferences in involving the 1st and/or 2nd person in their conditional constructions (i.e. all the three types of conditionals). Table 4.9 shows that 93.3 percent conditional constructions involved 1st and/or 2nd person, and only 6.7 percent conditionals employed other than 1st and/or 2nd person. Further analysis on each conditional type shows that the 1st and/or 2nd person were involved in 92.4 percent conditional construction type 1, 95.1 percent type 2, and 92.4 percent type 3.

Table 4.9
Production Test: Subjects' Preference on the 1st and/or 2nd Person
Involvement

Type	1st and/or 2nd person Involvement	
	Presence	Absence
Type 1	133	11
	92.4%	7.6%
Type 2	137	7
	95.1%	4.9%
Type 3	133	11
	92.4%	7.6%
Total	403	29
	93.3%	6.7%

Subject = 48 students
Total data = 432 students' answers

Results from Discourse Test

This test was intended to measure four aspects of conditional sentences: the conditional types, the positive and negative conditionals, the involvement of the 1st and/or 2nd person, and the *if* clause position.

Conditional Types

The order of difficulty found from this test was different from those gained from both comprehension adn production test. Table 4.10 shows that the order of difficulty from the easiest to the most difficult was type 1 (74.5 percent correct answers), type 3 (52.6 percent correct answers), and type 2 (50.0 percent correct answers) respectively.

Table 4.10
Discourse Test: Types of Conditional Sentences

Type	True	%	False	%	Total
Type 1	143	74.5%	49	25.5%	192
Type 2	96	50.0%	96	50.0%	192
Type 3	101	52.6%	91	47.4%	192

Subject = 48 students
Items = 12 multiple-choice questions, each type was represented by 4 questions
Total data = 576 students' answers

The percentage of correct answers on type 1 was significantly different from both type 2 and 3. Conversely, the difference in the percentage of correct answers of both type 2 and 3 was not significant.

If Clause Position

Table 4.11 shows no significant difference of correct answers gained from the two position of if clause. The result shows that subjects performed slightly better dealing with the *if* clause in the initial position (59.7 percent correct answers) than with the *if* clause in the final position (58.3 percent correct answers). Further analysis on each conditional type shows that subjects performed better dealing with the *if* clause in the initial position on both conditional sentences type 1 (81.3 percent correct answers) and type 3 (57.3 percent). On the other hand, for conditional clause type 2, subjects performed slightly better when handling the *if* clause in the final position (59.4 percent correct answers).

Table 4.11
Discourse Test: *If* Clause Position

Type	True	%	False	%	Total
Type 1					
Initial	78	81.3%	18	18.8%	96
Final	65	67.7%	31	32.3%	96
Type 2					
Initial	39	40.6%	57	59.4%	96
Final	57	59.4%	39	40.6%	96

Type 3					
Initial	55	57.3%	41	42.7%	96
Final	46	47.9%	50	52.1%	96
Total					
Initial	172	59.7%	116	40.3%	288
Final	168	58.3%	120	41.7%	288

Subject = 48 students
Items = 12 multiple-choice questions
If clause in initial position = 6 items
If clause in final position = 6 items
Total data = 576 students' answers

4.3.3 Positive or Negative *If* Construction

It was unexpected that subjects performed better on negative conditional sentences (61.8 percent correct answers) than on positive ones (56.3 percent correct answers) even though the difference was not significant (table 4.12). The result shows that subjects gained more correct answers dealing with negative conditional sentences than with positive ones on conditional sentences type 2 (59.4 percent correct answers) and type 3 (54.2 percent correct answers). Different result occurred on conditional sentences type 1 in which positive conditional sentences enabled subjects to perform better (77.1 percent correct answers).

Table 4.12
Discourse Test: Positive and Negative Conditional Sentences

Type	True	%	False	%	Total
Type 1					
Positive	74	77.1%	22	22.9%	96
Negative	69	71.9%	27	28.1%	96
Type 2					
Positive	39	40.6%	57	59.4%	96
Negative	57	59.4%	39	40.6%	96
Type 3					
Positive	49	51.0%	47	49.0%	96
Negative	52	54.2%	44	45.8%	96
Total					
Positive	162	56.3%	126	43.8%	288
Negative	178	61.8%	110	38.2%	288

Subject = 48 students
Items = 12 multiple-choice questions
Positive conditionals = 6 items
Negative conditionals = 6 items
Total data = 576 students' answers

1st and/or 2nd Person Involvement

The presence or the absence of the 1st and/or 2nd person in the text or dialog did not affect subjects' performance significantly (table 4.13). Unlike in the two previous tests, the absence of the 1st and/or 2nd person slightly raised the number of correct answers (59.7 percent correct answers) compared to the presence of them (58.3 percent).   A more detailed analysis on subjects' performance on each type reveals that for conditional sentences type 1 and type 3, subjects performed better when the 1st and/or 2nd person were absent in the text or dialog (81.3 percent and 57.3 percent correct answers). On the contrary, when dealing with conditional sentences type 2, subjects performed better when the 1st and/or 2nd person were present in the constructions (59.4 percent correct answers).

Table 4.13
Discourse Test: The 1st and/or 2nd Person Involvement

Type	True	%	False	%	Total
Type 1					
Presence	65	67.7%	31	32.3%	96
Absence	78	81.3%	18	18.8%	96
Type 2					
Presence	57	59.4%	39	40.6%	96
Absence	39	40.6%	57	59.4%	96
Type 3					
Presence	46	47.9%	50	52.1%	96
Absence	55	57.3%	41	42.7%	96
Total					
Presence	168	58.3%	120	41.7%	288
Absence	172	59.7%	116	40.3%	288

Subject = 48 students
Items = 12 multiple-choice questions
Presence of 1st and/or 2nd person = 6 items
Absence of 1st and/or 2nd person = 6 items
Total data = 576 students' answers

Other Findings

The analysis on students' answers shows the occurrence of students' three strategies to comprehend and produce conditional sentences.

Contrary-to-the-Fact Condition for All Conditional Types

The result of the comprehension test shows subjects' misconception on conditional sentences. Subjects misconceived all types of conditional sentences as having contrary-to-the-fact condition. As a result, they activated a strategy of associating the positive conditional sentences with the negative meanings and the negative ones with positive meanings. Unfortunately, their strategy worked out satisfactorily on conditional sentences type 2 and type 3, but not for type 1. This strategy is exemplified in (4.2) to (4.3) below.

No.	Type	Conditional Sentences	Subjects' Answer
(4.1)	2	**If houses were not so expensive**, my brother would buy a house.	Houses are expensive.
(4.2)	3	If the weather had been nice, **we would not have cancelled the barbeque party.**	We cancelled the barbeque party.
(4.3)	1	If Eric does not hurry, **he will not arrive on time.**	(?) He will arrive on time.

Referring to the percentage of false answers dealing with the conditional sentences type 1 (see table 4.1), of the 39.0 percent false answers, 22.5 percent were because students transferred the positive stem into negative meaning and vice versa.

Conversely, the data from both production and discourse test do not show the occurrence of this strategy. It might be because of the nonexistence of the conditional sentences in the stem which did not enable the students to conduct false association between the conditional construction and its meaning.

Copying Strategy

The analysis on the answers gained from comprehension test reveals subjects' tendency to copy a certain clause. This strategy had different results when applied to the main clause and to the *if* clause. Furthermore, the types of conditional sentences also affected the success of this strategy because this strategy could not be successfully applied on all types of conditionals.

This strategy could be successfully applied if it was the main clause of the conditional sentences type 1 which was copied because the main clause in the stem and the appropriate option were paraphrasing each other. As the result, the subjects did not need to think harder in selecting the right answer. This interpretation was supported by the results of analysis of the location of information (see table 4.5). Table 4.4 shows that students were more successful dealing with conditional sentences type 1 if information was placed in the main clause (82.6 percent correct answers). The copying strategy is exemplified in (4.4) below.

No.	Type	Conditional Sentence	Subjects' Answer
(4.4)	1	If the product is successful in China, **we will introduce it to other Asian markets**.	Maybe we will introduce it to other Asian markets.

Conversely, this copying strategy would not lead to a correct answer if it was intended to copy the main clause of conditional sentences other than type 1, as in (4.5) and (4.6) below.

No.	Type	Conditional Sentences	Subjects' Answer
(4.5)	2	If we had more employees, **we would work more efficiently**.	(?) We would work more efficiently.
(4.6)	3	If you had informed the client of the delay in time, **he wouldn't have cancelled the order.**	(?) He **would have cancelled the order.**

Moreover, the copying strategy would not gain a satisfactory result if it was the *if* clause which was copied because the *if* clause in the stem and the correct option were of different words and structure, a condition which forced subjects to use their analytic guess in choosing the right answer. This fact applied to all the three conditional types, as exemplified in (4.7) to (4.9).

No.	Type	Conditional Sentences	Subjects' Answer
(4.7)	1	I will buy a ticket to the rock concert **if my mother gives me some extra money.**	(?) My mother gives me some extra money.
(4.8)	2	Brian and I would visit our friend in the hospital **if we did not go to class today.**	(?) We did not go to class today.
(4.9)	3	**If I had known that your plane arrived this morning,** I would have picked you up at the airport.	(?) I had known that your plane arrived this morning.

The copying strategy could also be seen in the production test. The data show subjects' tendency on cutting and pasting the subjects, predicates/verbs, and objects found in the given situations and then arranging them into conditional sentences. This cut-and-paste strategy is exemplified in (4.10) below.

No.	Situation	Subjects' Answer
(4.10)	**The weather is bad this morning**. Maybe **it will be good in the afternoon** so that **I can go for a five-mile walk**. Respond using *if* construction.	(?) If the weather is bad this morning, I will go for a five-mile walk. (?) If the weather is bad this morning, it will be good in the afternoon.

Students' answers in (4.10) show that they cut and pasted some of the words from the given situation without making sufficient changes to the word forms; therefore, resulting the ungrammatical conditional construction and inappropriate constructions (both answers in 4.10).

Form Strategy

Another evidence was the use of form strategy. The result shows that subjects memorized the forms of all the conditional sentence types: type 1 is in future tense, type 2 is in present tense, and type 3 is in past tense. By memorizing the forms, without fully understanding the context, they were successful in producing grammatically correct sentences. The data from the comprehension test show that besides memorizing the syntactic changes of the conditionals, the students were confused whether to refer to the main clause or to the *if* clause when identifying the meaning of the conditionals.

No.	Type	Conditional Sentences	Subjects' Answer
(4.11)	1	If Brenda gets a good night sleep, **her headache will disappear.**	(?) Maybe her headache **disappears**.
(4.12)	1	**If Tommy goes to Canada**, he will save some coins to collect.	(?) Tommy **did not go** to Canada.

In (4.11), students referred to the main clause and then applied the form strategy by changing the future tense into simple present tense. On the other hand, in (4.12) the students referred to the *if* clause which is in simple present tense and changed it into simple past tense. In (4.12), besides transferring the tenses, the students also changed the previously positive clause into the negative meaning, i.e. the application of contrary-to-the-fact condition (see point 4.4.1). The data on conditional sentences type 1 show that of the 39.0 percent false answers (see table 4.1), 17.92 percent was because of the application of the form strategy either with or without the combination of contrary-to-the-fact condition.

Students' application of form strategy in the production test was different from the application in the comprehension test. In production test, because of the nonexistence of the stem, there is no room for transferring the clause's tenses like what happened in the comprehension test. The data from the production test reveal the fact that some students seemed to memorize the syntactic format of the three types of conditional sentences without fully understanding the context. As a result, they produced grammatically correct conditional constructions which were not related to the context given. The form strategy is exemplified in (4.13) below.

No.	Situation	Subjects' Answer
(4.13)	Linda and Bill are on their way to the seminar. Bill wants Linda to introduce him to some of the men when they get there. Linda is not sure whether they will meet someone she knows. Using *if* construction, help Linda to provide appropriate response to Bill's request.	(?) If Linda knew someone at the seminar, she would introduce Bill to him. (?) If you ask me to introduce myself, I won't go to the seminar.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

The results from comprehension, production, and discourse test showed that there was no fixed hierarchical order of difficulty among conditional sentences under investigation. The result gained from comprehension test showed that it was type 3 which was the easiest to comprehend, followed by type 2, and type 1. Different results were showed on production test in which the easiest was type 2, followed by type 1, and type 3. While from discourse test, the order of difficulty from the easiest to the most difficult was type 1, type 3 and type 2.

In regards to the position of the *if* clause, all the three tests showed the same results in which the *if* clause in the initial position was easier for the subjects to comprehend and to produce than if it was in the final position.

Regarding the positive or negative conditionals, the results gained from comprehension and production test showed that positive conditionals were easier to comprehend than the negative ones. However, the discourse test showed that it was the negative conditionals which were slightly easier to comprehend than positive ones.

In the case of the involvement of the 1st and/or 2nd person, the result from the comprehension and production test revealed that the presence of the 1st and/or the 2nd person in the situation and in the conditional construction made a conditional sentence easier to comprehend and to produce. Conversely, the discourse test showed that the absence of the 1st and/or 2nd person made the

conditional sentences slightly easier to comprehend than the presence of these personal pronouns.

Moreover, the result from the comprehension test showed that conditional sentence was easier to comprehend if information was located in the main clause than if it is in the *if* clause.

This research also discovered three strategies. The first was *Contrary-to-the-Fact Condition for All Conditional Types.* The result from the sentential test revealed that subjects tended to regard all types of conditional sentences as contrary-to-the-fact condition so that they judged the positive conditionals as having the negative meaning, and negative conditionals as having the positive meaning.

The second strategy was the *Copying Strategy.* The analysis of the data from the comprehension test revealed subjects' tendency to copy a certain clause. The copying strategy could also be seen in the production test in which subjects cut and pasted the subjects, predicates/verbs, and objects found in the given situations and then arranged them to form conditional constructions. Unfortunately, subjects cut and pasted some of the words from the given situation without making sufficient changes to the word forms.

The third strategy was the *Form Strategy*. The data from the comprehension adnproduction test showed that subjects memorized the syntactic forms of the conditional sentences so that they were successful in producing grammatically correct conditional constructions without fully understanding the context. Subjects tended to change future tense (be it in a stem or in a situation) into present tense, present tense into past tense, and past tense into past perfect tense.

Suggestions

Language teachers should be aware of the existence of learners' strategies. The research showed that students still had false understanding about the meaning of the conditional sentences. They thought that all the three types of conditional sentences under study had contrary-to-the-fact meaning. Therefore, they considered the positive conditional as having the negative meaning and the negative conditional as having the positive meaning. Reminding the students that not all conditional sentences refer to contrary-to-the fact condition would be very much needed.

The other two strategies revealed were the copying strategy and the form strategy. The research showed that the strategy of copying the main clause of conditional sentences type 1 was successful enough in emerging correct answers. Unfortunately, the goal of teaching is not merely gaining correct answers out of understanding, but to lead the learners to gain comprehension, from which they are able to produce correct sentences. The other strategy, the form strategy, does not always have a positive relationship with the language proficiency. Memorizing language structures in a test-taking situation has a significant negative relationship to learners' test performance in grammar and vocabulary (Oxford, 2003). Therefore, in order to prevent students from relying too much on language forms, it would be an advantage to provide more contexts which force the students to use meaning strategy rather than copying or form strategy.

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