

Identifying Functional Grammar Competence: A Study of Students' Email Writing at English for Correspondence Class

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Abstract

The purpose of this research to identify the lexicogrammatical complexification level of the subjects' spoken and written narratives (low, moderate, or high?); and to find out whether there is any difference as for the level of lexicogrammatical complexification between the subjects' spoken and written narratives. The sample of the research is for Portuguese EFL-students who were taking up the Letras undergraduate program at Universidade Estadual do Ceará – UECE and Universidade Federal do Ceará - UFC. The research is done in descriptive one. The result of the research shows that both students' competence in functional grammar is viewed very high, in which 87.61% for the spoken medium and 94.14% for the written one, and together – 90.72% of all ranking clauses. Basically, the previous research is focused on the same object with this research that is analyzing students' competence. Unlike the previous one, this research focuses on the students' competence in functional grammar in analyzing clauses.

Keywords

functional grammar; email writing; correspondence class



I. Introduction

Learning language means learning components and skills. Language maintenance is compulsory responsibility of the users of the language (Ramlan, 2018). The components include grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, whereas, the skills are listening, speaking, reading and writing. The two elements above are very important to be learned by students. Each of the part of the previous elements are hooked each other, for instance students are not able to master the four skills precisely if they do not master grammar. Hence, students should master these elements in order to be successful in learning language.

As grammar becomes one of the compulsory components in learning language, English for Correspondence at Food and Beverage Management in Batam Tourism Polytechnic has proposed grammar to fulfill the needs of students in their mastery of writing correspondence in English. This grammar mastery is taught for 4th semester students as the compulsory skill when writing the correspondence in English. Thus, student needs to have the functional grammar competence to have the mastery of mood, theme, transitivity, and clause-complex while writing English correspondence for specific communication in administrative matters at hospitality industry. Hence, students are taught for one semester with selected syllabus, material, and teaching technique. In order to identify the students' functional grammar competence in writing correspondence, pre-test in a form of writing Email was held to

measure students' ability in comprehending the competences above. However, the result of the test showed from 38 students, shows only three students get score 70. It is assumed that this result is below the expectation. It means, in average, students have low competence in functional grammar when writing particular correspondence. Therefore, it shows they have problems in mastery the functional grammar competence.

The condition above causes a big question why this problem happens. To answer this question, there are many relevant research can be done to solve the problem, such as the material, the needs of students about the course, the motivation of students in taking the course and the competence of students after taking the course. From three identification above, this research only focuses on the competence of students which relates to their performance in writing particular correspondence which analyzed by theory of functional grammar. By studying the students' competence, it is expected that students' comprehension is measured. The analysis is focused on the competence of students in transitivity, mood, theme and clause-complex in their correspondence writing production. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to see how far the competence of students in mastering the functional grammar competence. In this case, this study is going to identify to what extent the competence of students in mastering functional grammar competence in writing correspondence in English.

There are several definitions of competence, but the competence in this research deals with learning language. Competence is the best performance of students to accomplish tasks requiring skill and effort (Newby, 2011; Wimmers, 2016) Then, competence also can be defined as the student's knowledge or proficiency in certain skills (Newby, 2011; Richards, 2010; Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Next, competence is the results of what students can do in, or with a language (Campbell-Larsen, 2015; Hayati, 2020; Hughes et al., 2019). This means the competence is the result of the students' overall ability in making use of language for several purposes in their daily life. To reach the competence, particular courses are designed to develop the students' skill. Thus, it can be assumed that students' competence is students' performance after mastering particular course. Hence, the students' competence correlates with the development of cognitive skills. Several researchers have already proposed the sequence of these cognitive skills. Their theory can be viewed below.

First, it is coming from taxonomy Bloom. This taxonomy represents the cognitive skill into six levels of elements. They are knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Marzano & Kendall, 2007). In terms of learning process, these elements show that students are able to achieve each level after passing the previous level, for instance students can analyze a particular task if they have already gained the previous level; knowledge, comprehension and application. While, Anderson also divides taxonomy into two main dimensions called knowledge and cognitive processes domain (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Knowledge domain involves four types of knowledge: factual, conceptual, procedural, and metacognitive. The definition of this knowledge can be seen as follow.

The factual knowledge involves the basic elements that students should know to solve problems. The conceptual knowledge involves the interrelationships of the basic elements that can be function together. The procedural knowledge involves the ways to do something, the criteria for using skills, algorithms, techniques, and method. Next, the metacognitive knowledge involves the knowledge of cognition that relates with the awareness and knowledge of someone cognition (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Marzano & Kendall, 2007). These knowledge domains are dealing with the knowledge which students should obtain during teaching and learning process, in the classroom. This means each of this knowledge should represent the students' competence in order to gain

their cognitive skill. The second dimension is referred to the cognitive process domain. It involves six types of thinking. These are described below remembering is the process retrieving the relevant knowledge from long-term memory. Understanding is the process constructing oral, written, and graphic communication. Applying is the process using a procedure in a particular situation. Analyzing is the process breaking material into constituent parts. Evaluating is the process of making judgments based on criteria and standards. Creating is the process of placing the elements together to form coherent or functional whole (Marzano & Kendall, 2007).

Each of these cognitive processes has relevancy with particular types of knowledge domain. It means that a particular cognitive process interacts with particular types of knowledge. In the correlation with teaching and learning process, it is not obligation that every course should reach the creating level. This depends on the objective of the study and the students' competence. In short, it can be perceived that students' competence is the students' performance in doing tasks or works related to the test of a particular course. It can be done through developing the cognitive skills of students during learning the course. In improving the competence of students, every element in cognitive skills is expanded in order to increase the student's comprehension and mastery.

Functional grammar is a way of looking grammar in the basis of how grammar is used (Halliday & Matthiesses, 2004; Schinke-Llano & Lock, 1997; Thompson, 2014) Here, functional grammar is viewed as the theory of grammar which addresses the function of grammar on the use of on the language. Unlike the previous definition, functional grammar is also defined as particular grammar theory which views language as a resource for making meaning (Evelien Keizer, 2015; Jones & Lock, 2011; Li, 2007). This definition means functional grammar is a grammar theory that does an analysis toward language to observe the meaning of the language (Culicover, 2013). From the three definitions above, functional grammar can be defined as a theory of grammar which views language both spoken and written for identifying the meaning and based its framework on the used, meaning and element of the language. In short, the functional grammar is the grammar theory which views language as a source for making meaning.

The aim of functional grammar is to analyze text included phrase, and clauses, either spoken or written, in order to know the functions and the purpose of the text. The aim has been to construct a grammar for purposes of text analysis: one that would make it possible to say sensible and useful things about any text, spoken or written in modern English ((Eggins, 2004))

Thus, the tools to analyze the topics of functional grammar are divided into several elements. First, it is divided into four elements consisting of mood, theme, transitivity, and clause complex analysis (Evelien Keizer, 2015). These elements of are used in this research to analyze students' competence in functional grammar while writing English Correspondence.

Transitivity also defines as the overall grammatical resource for construing that is going on (Halliday & Matthiesses, 2004). Briefly, transitivity talks about experiential metafunction or the clause as representation. Transitivity divides the clause into three categories. The three categories are the selection of a process, the selection of participants and the selection of circumstances (Eggins, 2004). There are several definitions of the mood. First, mood is the meaning of the clause functioning as an exchange (Halliday & Matthiesses, 2004). While, the second idea proposes the definition of mood is quite different from the previous one. Mood is defines as the interpersonal metafunction of the language (Halliday & Matthiesses, 2004). Interpersonal metafunction means the meaning in which social relations are produced. Briefly, mood can be defined as the interpersonal metafunction of a clause in a particular language. The element of mood is divided into two kinds. It consists of finite, and subjects.

A sentence is divided into theme and rheme. Theme can be defined into several definitions. First, theme is local context or point of departure. Theme is also defined as what the clause is about. Then, theme is the first element that comes first in a clause (Eggins, 2004). In short, theme is the core of the clause which comes first, whereas the rest of the message of the clause is called rheme. Clause complex is the other elements of functional grammar. This term is used to show the grammatical and semantic unit formed when two or more clauses are linked together in certain systematic and meaningful ways (Eggins, 2004). There are two kinds of clause complex systems: taxis and logico-semantic type.

The previous research about analyzing students' competence in functional grammar in analyzing clauses has not been found yet. However, the research which relates to students' competence in functional grammar has been encountered. The study is done by Pedro Henrique Lima and Praxedes Filho (Lima & Filho, 2008). The title of the research is Systemic Functional Grammar: a Tool to Investigate the Lexicogrammatical Complexification of Advanced Portuguese-EFL Interlanguage.

The purpose of this research to identify the lexicogrammatical complexification level of the subjects' spoken and written narratives (low, moderate, or high?); and to find out whether there is any difference as for the level of lexicogrammatical complexification between the subjects' spoken and written narratives. The sample of the research is for Portuguese EFL-students who were taking up the Letras undergraduate program at Universidade Estadual do Ceará – UECE and Universidade Federal do Ceará - UFC. The research is done in descriptive one. The result of the research shows that both students' competence in functional grammar is viewed very high, in which 87.61% for the spoken medium and 94.14% for the written one, and together – 90.72% of all ranking clauses. Basically, the previous research is focused on the same object with this research that is analyzing students' competence. Unlike the previous one, this research focuses on the students' competence in functional grammar in analyzing clauses.

II. Research Method

The research was conducted in the descriptive one since its purpose to answer questions about a current status of the study. Descriptive research involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject (Gay et al., 2012). Based on the previous explanation, descriptive research was used here to answer question how far the ability of students in using mood, theme, transitivity and clause complex in analyzing text. The population of this research was all students in the fourth semester who had taken English for Correspondence Class in Food and Beverage Management at Batam Tourism Polytechnic. The sample was taken through random clustering. Random clustering is sampling which groups, not individuals which have similar characteristics, are randomly selected (Gay et al., 2012). The way to do the random clustering in this research is as follow. First, each name of the functional grammar classes was written on a separate slip of paper, placed all the slips in the other container, shakes the container, and selected slips from the container until the desired number of the samples were selected with total sample of 50 students in two classes. The instrument of this research was a test. The test is chosen to establish how successful the students to master the theory of functional grammar after studying the subject in one semester. Brown says that “test is a method of measuring person's ability, knowledge, or performance in a given domain” (Brown, 1996). In short, the test was chosen to analyze the student's ability and to see whether the course objectives have met the knowledge which is acquired for students.

The test was in a form of essay. There are two phases of the test in this research. The first test is the formative test which was held during the teaching and learning process. Then,

the second one is the summative test which was held at the end of the semester. For formative test, the test was made through guidance of lecturer. This is used to defend the construct and content validity of the test. The summative test was made by the lecturer and the researcher. This means the summative test was held under the scope of face validity. Therefore, because of the secrecy of final examination, try out is not done for summative test. Then, students were asked to analyze the mood, transitivity, theme, and clause complex of the text. Next, the tests were distributed to the students. After scoring the tests, the results were consulted to the lecturers.

Before giving the tests to the students, they were also consulted to the lecturer, and then try out was done to see the reliability and validity of the test. This way is taken in order to defend the content validity. To see the reliability of the test, the coefficient alpha was identified by using the formula below (Sugiyono, 2016).

$$r = \left[\frac{k}{(k-1)} \right] \left[1 - \frac{\sum \sigma_b^2}{\sigma_t^2} \right]$$

Where:

- r = cronbach alpha
- k = the amount of test item
- $\sum \sigma_b^2$ = item variant total
- σ_t^2 = total variant

After the calculation was done, the alpha coefficient was converted in a range 0-1. The data can be seen in Appendix 1 about the reliability analysis. If the reliability is high, the alpha coefficient should be on the range ≤ 0.5 to 1. However, if the reliability is low, the alpha coefficient was on the range 0 to >0.5 . It can be seen from the coefficient line below.

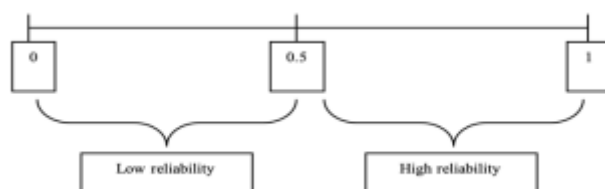


Figure 1. Reliability Analysis Coefficient Line

Moreover, to examine whether the items of the test were easy or difficult, the following formula is used as follow (Sugiyono, 2019).

$$P = \frac{B}{JS}$$

Where,

- P = items difficulties
- B = sum of the students who answer correctly
- JS = sum of all students who follow the test

The item difficulties of the test range from 0.00-1.00 and it is symbolized as “P”. The classification of item difficulties can be seen on the table 1 below.

Table 1. Classification of Item Difficulties

No	Item Difficulties	Classification
1	Less than 0.25	Difficult
2	0.25-0.75	Moderate
3	More than 0.75	Easy

Based on the previous criteria, the items that were taken to be tested were the items with moderate difficulties

III. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

The data about the students' competence in functional grammar at English for Correspondence Class was gathered through tests of writing email of request, apology and complain. The tests were given to 50 samples in two phases; formative and summative test. The elements to be analyzed from the texts are transitivity, mood, theme, and clause complex analysis. Each of the tests was given after students finished study the topic. Moreover, the summative test was given at the end of semester together with final semester test. In this test, students are asked to write the similar emails with different context of situation.

Referring to the following data finding, it can be seen that students' competence in mastering transitivity when writing email is very low. It is supported by the data of formative and summative test that shows the students' competence is on scale 0-40. The score has the rating quality E (very poor). The figure of students' competence can be seen in this diagram.

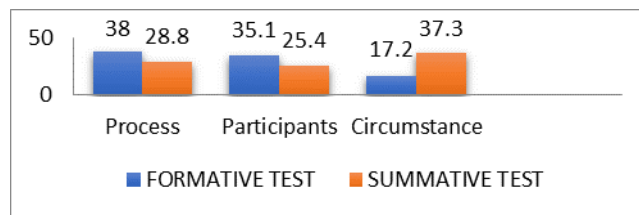


Figure 2. Students' Competence in Transitivity of Writing Email

From the previous diagram, it can be seen that the competence of students in each section is varied both in summative and formative test. It is clear that the competence of students about "identifying process" is higher in the formative rather than the summative. This proved from the diagram that the average score of students in the formative is 38, while in the summative test is 28.8. Thus, students' competence in formative is better than in summative. However, the rating quality of both of the tests are same, in which the two score lays on the range 0-40 where the rating quality is E which means very poor. Hence, it can be assumed the students' competence in this section is very low.

On the second section, the finding is still the same as the first section. It is clear that students' competence in identifying participant is better in formative rather than in summative. It can be seen from the scores that the summative test's score is diminished 9.7 to the score of formative test. Although the competence of students is better in formative rather than summative, the rating quality of both of the scores is same in which lays on the range 0-40 where the rating quality E takes place. "E" means very poor, hence, it can be assumed that the students' competence in this section is very low too.

Then, in the third section about identifying circumstance, the level of students' competence is different with the previous sections. Here, in this section, the competence of students is better in summative than formative. The score is rising significantly from 17.2 to

37.3. The level of students' competence possibly rises because the number of sub topics which are included in formative is more than in summative. Both of these scores still stays on the range 0-40, which means the rating quality of this section is E (very poor). Therefore, the students' competence in this section is also very low.

Next, the students' competence is setting mood at their writing is on scale 0-40. This implies the rating quality of students' competence is E, which means very poor. The figure of students' competence can be seen in this diagram.

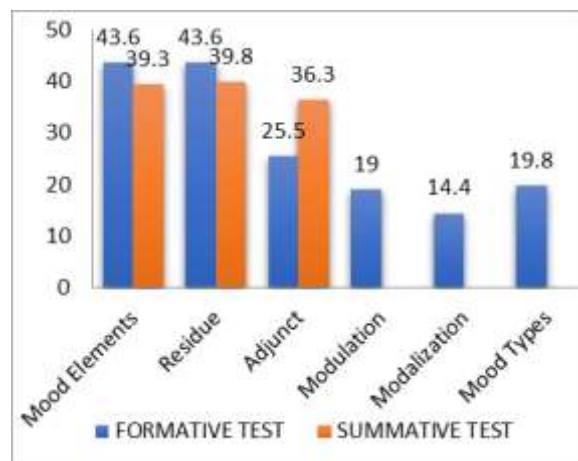


Figure 3. Students' Competence in Topics of Mood

From the previous diagram, it can be seen that the number of topics in the formative test is different with the summative test. There are only three topics which are same both in the summative and formative test. The topics are identifying mood elements, identifying residue and identifying adjunct. Therefore, it can be perceived that the number of topics in the formative test is more than in summative test.

Comparing the score of the topics about identifying mood elements, identifying residue and identifying adjunct, it is clear that the competence of students in the first topic is higher in the formative rather than the summative test. This proved from the diagram that the average score of students in the first section is 43.8 for formative test, while in summative test is 39.3. Thus, students' competence in formative is better than in summative. However, the rating quality of both of the test is same, in which the scores lay on the range 0-40 where the rating quality is E which means very poor. Hence, it can be assumed the students' competence in these sections is very low.

However, in the third section about "identifying adjunct", the score of the summative test is higher than the formative test, in which the score of formative test is diminished 0.8 to summative test. The level of students' competence possibly rises because the types of email which are included in formative are different with the summative test (see table 5 and 6 in data description and analysis). Although the score is rising, these scores still range in scale 0-40 where the rating quality E (very poor) takes place. Therefore, the students' competence in this section is also very low.

Pointing to the next analysis about students' competence in mastering theme is very low too. It is supported by the data of formative and summative test that shows the students' competence is on scale 0-40. This implies the rating quality of students' competence is E, which means very poor. The figure of students' competence can be seen in this diagram

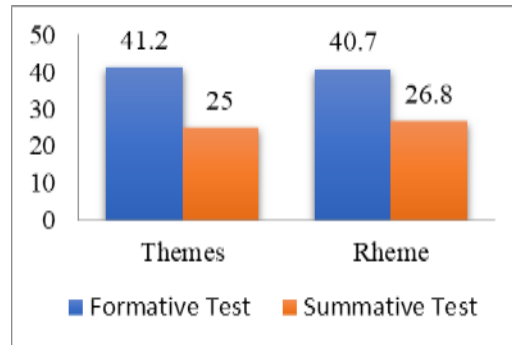


Figure 4. Students' Competence in Topics of Theme

From figure 4, it is clearly seen that the competence of students in each section is varied both in summative and formative test. It is clear that the competence of theme on students' writing is higher in the formative rather than the summative. This proved from the diagram that the average score of students in formative is 41.2, while in summative test is 25. Thus, students' competence in formative is better than in summative. However, the rating quality of both of the test is same. The two score lay on the range 0-40. The rating quality in this range is E which means very poor. Thus, it can be assumed the students' competence in this section is very low.

On the second section, it is found that the competence of rheme on students' writing is better in formative rather than in summative. It can be seen from the scores that the formative test's score is 40.7 and the summative score is 26.8. Although the competence of students is better in formative rather than summative, the rating quality of both of the scores is same in which lays on the range 0-40 where the rating quality E takes place. "E" means very poor, hence, it can be assumed that the students' competence in this section is very low too.

Moreover, it is found that the competence of students in inserting clause complex system on their writing is very low. The figure of students' competence in this element can be seen on the diagram below

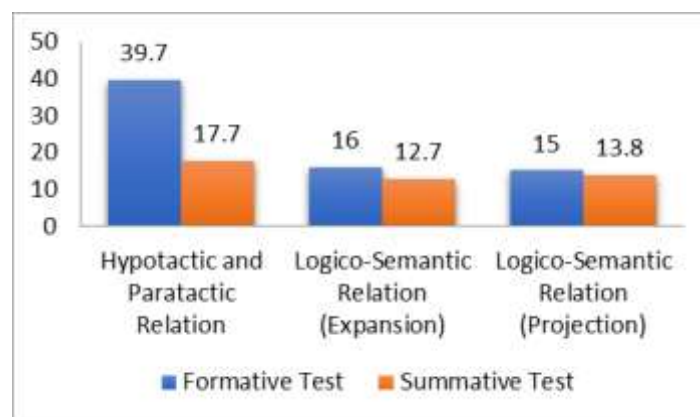


Figure 5. Students' Competence in Mastering Topics of Clause Complex

From figure 5, it is clearly seen that the competence of students in each section is varied both in summative and formative test. It is clear that the competence of students about "hypotactic and paratactic relation" is the highest score in the formative and the summative. This proved from the diagram that the average score of students in formative is 39.7, while in summative test is 17.7. However, the rating quality of each of the sub-topics is same. The scores lay on the range 0-40. The rating quality in this range is E which means very poor.

Thus, it can be assumed the students' competence both in formative and summative test is very low.

Referring to the data about the analysis of students' competence of the four elements in functional grammar on their email writing, it can be concluded that the students' competence is very low. The data show that the total average score of students' competence in mastering functional grammar is 28.4. This number stays on the range 0-40, with rating quality E (very low). The figure of students' competence can be seen on the diagram below

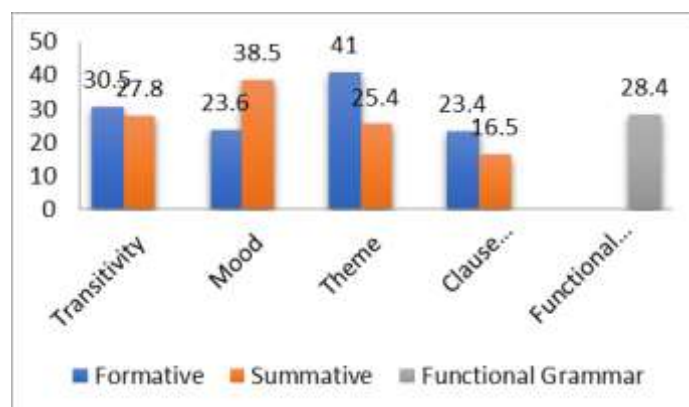


Figure 6. Students' Competence in Mastering Elements of Functional Grammar

It can be analyzed from the previous diagram that the students' competence in transitivity is decreased from 30.5 in formative test to 27.8 in summative test. The decreasing of score also happens in theme and clause complex elements. In theme elements, the score is decreased from 41 to 25.4, while in clause complex element; the score is diminished 6.9 from formative to summative. Especially for mood element, the score is raising from 23.6 to 38.5.

3.2 Discussion

From the finding above, it is clear that there is a problem in functional grammar aspect of students' writing as evidenced by the total average score is 28.4 on a 0-100 scale. It can be discussed that students still have difficulties in generating the knowledge of transitivity element on their writing. One of the interesting facts from the previous result is although the number of email topics/ context in summative test is less than the formative one; students still got low score in this summative test. This gap may be caused by the high level of stress which is felt by the students. As in the formative test, students do not feel much nervousness as in the summative test. It is proved from the previous data that even the number of sub topics in the formative test is more complete than in the summative test, the average score of students in the formative test is higher than the summative test. Thus, students do the test much better in formative rather than in summative one.

In addition, it is perceived that there was a problem faced by students. Mostly students did not include transitivity aspect on their writing. This is proved by the data in findings above that the range of the score of students is only laid on scale 0-70. Moreover, in this scale, there is one email topic about apology which no students include transitivity aspect in the analysis. It is about identifying the "circumstance extent". Moreover, the present research also relates with students' competence in mastering transitivity element. It is done by Pedro (Lima & Filho, 2008) They analyzed the competence of Portuguese students in comprehending the notion of lexicogrammar (includes transitivity) in analyzing spoken and written narrative. The title of the research is *Systemic Functional Grammar: a Tool to Investigate the Lexicogrammatical Complexification of Advanced Portuguese-EFL Interlanguage*. In this research, Pedro (Lima & Filho, 2008) found the competence of

Portuguese students in comprehending the notions pragmatics is very satisfactory. This implies that the competence of students in mastering functional grammar was very high. If it is compared with the previous research, it is clear that the different finding is identified. In short, the competence of students in mastering transitivity is very low. Hence, it is important for the students to review what they have learnt.

In the mood system, it is analyzed from the findings above that the students' competence in mood is better than in transitivity. This proved by the findings that there is a 1.9 difference from the total average score of transitivity. However, both of the mood and the transitivity still have low rating quality. This means the competence of students' writing in mood is very low. Comparing the formative and the summative test, the score of the writing on the mood analysis in the formative test is higher than the summative one. This implies that students' competence in writing email correspondence is better in formative rather than summative. However, the score of topic about "identifying adjunct" remains the difference fact. The score of the summative test is higher than the formative one.

Although there is an increasing score at one topic in the mood system, the problem still exists. This relates with the low level of rating quality in the students' score. It means that students still do not understand the theory of the mood system. Furthermore, the result of the present research is also contrast with the previous result of Pedro (Lima & Filho, 2008) in which the competence of students in comprehending the notions of mood is very high. The score is ranged on scale 0-100 with rating quality A; excellent. Briefly, the competence of mood on students' writing is very low. It is proved by the previous data that the average score of students' competence is 31.1 where the rating quality is E (very poor). Hence, it is important for the students to do a self-assessment toward the extent their competence in mastering mood. In addition, as in transitivity, it is suggested to add more duration of time to learn the topic.

Theme, as well as Mood also presents an interesting fact related with the average score in its formative and summative test. Although the writing from both of the tests are same, the average score of formative test is higher than the summative test. The reason why this happens is possibly because of the students' inter-rater reliability effect, like nervous, or unprepared for the test. This supports by the data that from 50 samples, there are two samples that did not do the analysis of theme, and 21 samples that only did a quarter analysis of theme, while none of the students who can finish three quarters analysis of theme. This means that students are not confident in doing the test.

Unlike transitivity and mood, the result of students' score in theme is also contrast with the previous result of Pedro (Lima & Filho, 2008) in which the result competence of theme in students' email writing is lower than the score of students in Pedro's research. Thus, it can be identified that the competence of students in mastering theme is very low. It is proved by the previous data that the average score of students' competence is 33.2 with the rating quality is E (very poor). As the rating quality is still E (very poor), there should be an effective encouragement and motivation are given to students to improve their readiness in learning.

Pointing at the previous data analysis, it can be seen that the competence of students' in mastering clause complex is very low. This supports by the data in finding that the average score of clause complex is the lowest score from four basic elements in functional grammar. This means that mostly students do not comprehend this element well. In summative test, from 50 samples that follow the test, there are 17 samples that did not do include clause complex terms in their writing, while the rest of the samples only can analyze the quarter part of clause complex analysis. This phenomenon proves that students still need more time to learn clause complex material. Thus, it is important to improve the eagerness of students to learn this element. In short, it can be identified that the competence of students in mastering clause complex is very low. It is proved by the previous data that the student's competence

lays on the range 0-40 where the rating quality is E (very poor). Hence, it is important for the students to review what they have learnt.

Referring to the data about the students' competence in mastering the four elements of functional grammar, it can be concluded that the students' competence is very low. This happens because the low studying habit of students and they have low motivation and readiness to learn. Thus, they are lazy to review the material at home. Therefore, they found difficulties in doing the exam of functional grammar. Moreover, students do not comprehend the factual knowledge, conceptual, and procedural knowledge of functional grammar well. It is proved from the previous total average of functional grammar score, which implies that students do not know why they have to learn functional grammar. Thus, they cannot show their competence maximally in the tests.

Comparing with the present research which is done by Pedro (2004), the difference of students' average score in mastering functional grammar is very significant. The disparity is 62.32 from the total average score of students in this research. It is clear that the quality of students' competence in this research is lower than the Pedro's research. The previous problems are caused by several reasons. First, students are not ready to do the test as they are not prepared by studying at home. Next, it is found that the students do not understand what for they study functional grammar. Hence, they are not serious in doing the exam, for instance they do not manage the time effectively while doing the tests.

Furthermore, the low-level competence of students is also caused by the number of sub topics that should be mastered during the teaching learning process. It seems the sub-topics are too many. Hence, it is suggested to add more credits to learn functional grammar from 2 credits to 3 credits in one semester. In addition, at semester 1 to 4; it is recommended that the theory of functional grammar should be introduced to students gradually. In other word, this means more time is needed. Besides the previous idea, it is also important to give more exercises about analyzing clauses. Thus, besides making the resume of the theory, they are also accustomed to do the analysis of clauses by using the elements of functional grammar; transitivity, mood, theme, and clause complex. As seen, it can be summarized that the students' competence in functional grammar is very low. This is caused by the reason that students got difficulties in learning the subject. They had problems in comprehending some sub topics in each topic. The problems were about students' lack of basic knowledge about several topics, the number of topics to be learned, the low motivation and readiness to learn and the need of more time to learn the topics.

V. Conclusion

Based on findings and discussions, it is found that the competence of students' writing in functional grammar is 28.4 with rating quality E. It means the competence of functional grammar in students' email writing is very low. This score is taken from the total average of scores of students' competences in transitivity (29.2), mood (31.1), theme (31.1) and clause complex (33.2), which are also very low too.

These phenomena are caused by the students' inter-rater reliability during the test (nervousness, and stress), the students' low studying habit, the limitation of time in learning functional grammar and the lack of knowledge about the purpose to learn functional grammar. The suggestions in this research are recommended to do further and deep research toward the competence of students in functional grammar.

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