COMPETENCE IN USING 'POST-PREDICATOR' SENTENCE STRUCTURES OF TEACHERS TEACHING IN PROFESSIONAL COLLEGES

Dr. Sunita J. Velhal
Associate Professor & Head, Department of English,
Dattajirao Kadam Arts, Science & Commerce College, Ichalkaranji.
Corresponding Author- **Dr. Sunita J. Velhal**
Email- velhalsj@gmail.com

Abstract:

There have been many studies conducted on teacher talk and classroom situations. Research in Teacher Talk is particularly concerned with language teaching. These works are concerned with English language teaching in second language classrooms, teaching methods, and students' feedback. They were involved in teacher classroom behaviour and pupil classroom behaviour. The ungrammatical modification should not occur in the teacher's language because teacher talk should be the model for students to imitate. There have been various studies carried out in the field of linguistic on isolated elements of sentences. These studies were especially intended to find out the characteristics of Indian English. They were based on either corpus or written texts of Indian English. The use of proper sentence structure or syntax is one of the indicators that shows the competence of the person in using the language. It has been assumed that the teachers teaching in professional colleges have problems in using the post-predicator sentence structure elements. This paper brings forth some problems of the content subject teachers in using the English language as the language of instruction by analysing the recorded data.

Keywords: *English Communication, Competence, Teachers teaching in English at professional Colleges and their use of sentence structures, the problems.*

Introduction:

In today's world, competence in English language is essential. An appropriate use of language can make a positive change in the attitude of the listener. So, it is vital to know what problems hinder English language proficiency. The speakers who don't have this understanding produce problem sentences. The part of the sentence which becomes problematic is the post predicator structure that may be a word, a phrase or a dependent clause, only technical and job-related skills are not enough to reach the higher positions. It is the language involved in the linguistic globalization. Syntax and vocabulary are essential to be able to communicate and interact successfully. The professional communication needs proper grammar. English skills have become a basic requirement for almost any professional dealing with the globalized business world. In fact, English in business is increasingly being used as a shared language among speakers of different mother tongues, a so-called *lingua franca*. A lack of language skills becomes an important barrier to the expansion of global markets. The growing trend of the recruiters in engineering today is to look for skilled/global engineers who possess excellent English communication and presentation skills.

English Communication and Competence

The syntax is the study of the rules and patterns used to form a number of new sentences. The focus of the present paper is related to the problems in using syntactic structures. The study of sentence structures especially sentence structures used by teachers in their lectures while they are teaching in English. English skills have become a basic requirement for almost any professional dealing with the globalized business world. In fact, English in business is increasingly being used as a shared language among speakers of different mother tongues, a so-called *lingua franca*. A lack of language skills becomes an important barrier to the expansion of global markets. The growing trend of the recruiters today is to look for skilled/global employee who possess excellent English communication and presentation skills.

Chomsky's concept of 'competence' is concerned with the grammaticality and the concept of 'performance' is concerned with the use of competence in actual situation i.e.

'language use'. Communicative competence is defined by Wikipedia as "a language user's grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology, phonology and the like, as well as social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately." The concept of communicative competence has been developed by Dell Hymns (1972). He defined communicative competence not only as an inherent grammatical competence but also as the ability to use grammatical competence in a variety of communicative situations and thus brought socio-linguistic perspective.

Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) define communicative competence as a synthesis of an underlying system of knowledge and skill needed for communication. According to them, communicative competence can be classified into four types: Grammatical Competence, Sociolinguistic competence, Discourse competence and Strategic competence. They explain Grammatical competence as the acquisition of phonological rules, morphological rules, syntactic rules, semantic rules and lexical items. Today, it is usually called linguistic competence. (Yano n.d.) Many theorists like Savignon (1972), Taylor (1988), and Bachman (1990) have tried to replace communicative competence with proficiency.

English used by the faculty in the professional colleges is as important as the subject content in the process of education. There has been much more debate among the scholars that whether grammar rules are necessary or not necessary to make the practical use of language. Most of the teachers teaching other subjects in English at professional colleges seems to be reluctant about grammar or prescribed rules of language. It may be assumed by them that it is enough for them to comprehend the content of the subject instead of using correct grammatical sentence structures. It seems that the relation between the teaching of technical English and teaching of technical subjects in English haven't been taken as an important component. It's not only English language teaching but also teaching other content subjects in English should be considered for the enhancement of proficiency in English communication skills. Even if there may be a little communication failure due to non-standard constructions while teaching; it indirectly creates the wrong impression on the student's mind and promotes incorrect use of English.

The function classes which come after the predicator are regarded as 'Post-predicator'

Dr. Sunita J. Velhal

elements by the researcher. These post-predicator elements can be O (Object), C (Complement) or A (Adverbial). Such function elements can be a phrase or a clause; finite or non-finite. The complexity of clauses is marked on the basis of subordination clauses used at PPSSEs (Post-Predicator Sentence Structure Elements). After this, the accuracy in the PPSSEs is tested with error analysis of phrases and clauses. For this purpose, the method of grammatical analysis introduced in *'English Grammar for Today: A New Introduction'* by Leech et al. (1982) is used.

The 'Predicator' here is only a verb or verb phrase. The term 'Element' is used for function classes such as S (subject), P (predicator), O (object), C (Complement), and A (Adverbial). These function classes which come after the predicator are regarded as 'Post-predicator' elements by the researcher. These post-predicator elements can be O (Object), C (Complement) or A (Adverbial). Such function elements can be a phrase or a clause; finite or non-finite. There are eight major clause patterns given by Leech et al. (1982, Table 5.3: 85). These patterns are used for analyzing the data. The elements which are the focus points of this study. The focus of the study was the language used by the teachers teaching the subjects other than English. The selected sample teachers were working in different rural and urban institutes. The data was obtained from the selected professional colleges which include mainly Engineering, Architecture, Pharmacy, Law, Management, and Medicine for the purpose of research. The audio files were processed into transcripts to make them suitable for the analysis of syntax. An attempt is made to analyze the data collected with the purpose to explore the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the language used by them. The purpose of the error analysis is to decide an accuracy standard of English used by the samples.

**Complexity of Structures Used as PPSSEs**

The analysis will throw light on the level of complexity of language used by the teachers teaching in the professional colleges. The samples selected are from six different urban and rural professional college faculties mainly Engineering, Architecture, Pharmacy, Law, Management and Medicine. For this purpose, 1822 sentences have been analyzed and total 2274 post-predicator structures have been studied.

The total phrases among these structures used as PPSSEs are 1908 whereas the subordinate clauses used as PPSSEs are 366. So,

the ratio of these phrases and clauses is **0.83: 0.16.** It shows the number of phrases used is higher than the clauses. Again, the phrases without subordination are 1312 i.e., 68 %. The total phrases with direct subordination are 384 i.e., 20 % and phrases with indirect subordination are 212 i.e. only 11 %. The above data shows that the teachers have better proficiency in using phrases as PPSSEs but show less proficiency in using clauses as PPSSE. The average ratio shows that the ratio of phrases used by all faculties as PPSSEs is higher than the ratio of clauses used as PPSSEs. There is little difference in the ratio of the use of total PPSSEs by all the faculties.

The ratio of the phrases with the structure **({M}H{M})** i.e. phrases without subordination is higher than the ratio of phrases with direct subordination (H(M)) and indirect subordination (H[M]). The percentage of phrases with direct subordination is more than the percentage of the phrases with indirect subordination. It shows that the competence in using PPSSEs structures by these samples seems to be similar on basis of the construct of complexity. The diagram below shows that these teachers have the competence in using the simple structures than the complex structures.

Table-1
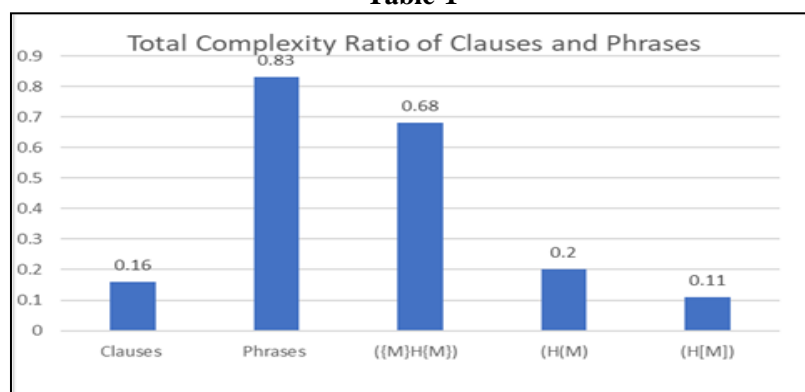
Error Analysis of the Samples

The post-predicator structures used by them exhibit the problems of lack or improper use of articles, improper preposition phrases, improper pronouns, the problems of lexical collocations as well as errors in clauses which include errors in word order, in clauses/ Questions/Tag Questions, errors in Subordination, and improper Structures. Here are some examples of errors found in the data collected. (Own data 2019)

1. These are the trusses and they are stronger on their one direction and they very bigger on the other direction.(18) Use of improper PP)
2. This is an instance of wrong collocation of preposition 'on' with noun 'direction' that requires 'in' as well as there is no use of predicator after 'they'.
3. . ..if we are knowing the strength of this material..(186) (requires 'If we know…')

4. It is an example of the use of progressive participle for the verb of perception.
5. ..these observations is regarding the debates..(are related to)(42) (are)
6. They were having good background. (had) (44)
7. Errors in Subordination:
8. who are agreeing mutually (agree)
9. It will move the muscular process nearly, nearly means it will come near you, isn't it? (162) (means to say 'closure' but has used the word 'nearly' and incorrect tag question 'isn't,it? instead of 'won't it?)
10. There is either incorrect use of articles or lack of them in noun phrases before nouns or
11. enumerators e.g.
12. a (an) allopathic,
13. on (the) fifth chromosome, (the) second molecule (82)

Dr. Sunita J. Velhal

Table-2
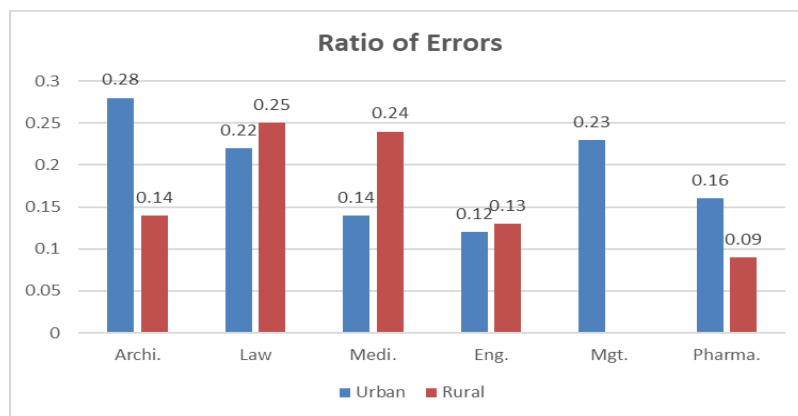
The diagram above shows that the ratio of errors of Engineering and pharmacy faculty is less than other faculty samples. The error ratio of law and medical samples is considerable. There is little difference in the error ratio of management and medical faculty. The error ratio of architecture faculty is highest.

Conclusions:

The analysis shows that there are problems in the area of post-predicator sentence structure elements used by these teachers teaching in the professional colleges. Engineering and pharmacy faculty have better competence in using English language. The paper is based on the detailed study made by the researcher in this area.

References:

1. Bachman, L. F. (1990) *Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing.* Oxford, OUP
2. Canale, M. (1983). From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy. In Richards, J.C., & Schmidt, R.W.(Eds.), Language and Communication, 2-27. London: Longman.
3. Canale, M & Swain. L. 1980. *Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing." Applied linguistics. Linguistics 1: 1-47.*
4. Geoffrey Leech, Margaret Deuchar and Robert Hoogenraad. (1982). *English Grammar for Today: A New Introduction.*
5. Holt, R, D. & Hymes, D. (1972). Models of the Interaction of Language and Social Life Gumperz, J. J. and Hymes, (Eds). in *Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication.*
6. Velhal, S.J. (2019). *Structure of Post-Predicator Sentence Elements in English of Teachers Teaching in Selected Professional Colleges in Kolhapur, Sangli and Satara Districts* Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Kolhapur: Shivaji University.
7. http://web.uri.edu/iaics/files/07-Yasukata-Yano.pdf

Dr. Sunita J. Velhal