

ABSTRACT

English remains one of the difficult subjects for most Indonesian students. One of the difficult grammatical aspects is the English premodifier. A premodifier is hardly found in English noun-phrases. Students cannot learn English by ignoring the the premodifier since they will frequently find it in English reading passages and writing exercises. Indonesian students will continually fail to grasp the meaning of noun-phrases if they do not know the meanings of premodifier. Based on this situation, here I focused on difficulty levels of the meanings of four premodifiers as preceived by SMA students.

Based on the topic above, I formulated five objectives of this research. The first objective was to find out the comparative levels of difficulty of the meanings of premodifiers. Here I focused my concern on finding out which premodifiers had the highest level of difficulty, which premodifier had the second high level of difficulty, and so forth. The second objective was to find out whether a noun as premodifier had the same level of difficulty in its meanings or not. The third one was similar to the second objective but here I focused on genitive as premodifier. The fourth concerned the adjective as premodifier. The fifth objective was concerned with the verbal as premodifier whether it had the same level of difficulty in its meanings or not.

Based on the problem formulation and the research objectives, I then formulated these five hypotheses :

(1) the Genitive and Adjective have a higher difficulty level than the Noun and Verbal, (2) The Noun does not have the same difficulty level in its meanings, (3) The Genitive does not have the same difficulty level in its meanings, (4) The Adjective does not have the same difficulty level in its meanings, (5) The Verbal does not have the same difficulty in its meanings.

In order to achieve the objectives I first did library research. This provided me with theoretical data on the grammatical aspects of Premodifiers and on methods of teaching. It also helped in the discussion of students' errors. Secondly, I tried to find out whether the theories were really in line with students' perception or not. I assigned two types of multiple-choice tests to the third year, the sixth semester, of students of SMA Bhakti Awam of the A1, A2, and A3 programs. I chose this SMA because it had got "disamakan" status, that is the highest status for the SMA accreditation.

Based on the statistical tests, a conclusion would be drawn that all the five hypotheses were verified. The Friedman Test showed us that the four premodifiers as well as the meanings of each premodifier did not have the same difficulty levels in their meanings. Moreover, the Wilcoxon test showed that the Genitive had the highest difficulty level of the four premodifiers.

Since all the hypotheses were verified, a further conclusion could be drawn that the students in SMA Bhakti Awam still had a high difficulty level in perceiving the meanings of premodifiers. Therefore, in this research I considered that the meanings of premodifiers must be included in the teaching of English especially in the teaching of Noun-Phrases.