
Analysis of Adjective Clauses in John Steinbeck's Novel "Of Mice and Men"

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Abstract

The study's main purpose is to describe the types of adjective clauses. The method of this study was a descriptive qualitative method that focused on describing the types of adjective clauses. The method of data collection is by using the documentation method. The technique is collecting complex sentences that are found in the novel. There were some steps to do this analysis such as reading several textbooks and articles about English grammar, and seeking and learning information about adjective clauses, definitions, the types of adjective clauses, and then identifying and classifying the data of English adjective clauses in John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men*. Next, the data based on the types of adjective clauses were analyzed and then showed the frequency of types from each act of data in the novel, and finally drawing verification conclusions after finishing the analysis. King and Stanley (1996) describe that types of adjective clauses can be divided into four, they are full adjective clause, reduced adjective clause, marked adjective clause, and unmarked adjective clause. The result shows there were only two types of adjective clauses in the novel, 48 full adjective clauses equal to 98 percent, and 1 reduced adjective clause clauses equal to 2 percent. It is concluded that almost all types of adjective clauses are full adjective clauses in John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men*. It means that the way the writer delivers conversation and narration on the text with full adjective clauses is to make it easier for readers to understand them.

Keywords: adjective clause, analysis, complex sentence, descriptive qualitative, John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* novel

1. INTRODUCTION

Nelson and Greenbaum (2016) note that grammar is a set of rules that allow us to combine words in English into larger units. Grammar makes every speaker and writer have good sentences because it consists of a pattern of arrangement of parts of words into words. In making a good sentence, the learner should know what a sentence is and its elements. A sentence is a combination of words expressing a complete idea. The largest unit of grammar is sentence. A sentence is composed of smaller units, it starts with a word, phrase, and clause.

Sometimes a simple sentence is named a clause (Finegan, 2015). A clause is a structure that has a subject and a verb (Azar & Hagen, 2009). Azar & Hagen (2009) state there are two kinds of clauses: independent and dependent. An independent clause is a main clause and can stand alone as a sentence. A dependent clause cannot stand alone as a sentence; it must be connected to an independent clause, **like a dependent town cannot stand alone without a main city**, such as Deli Tua Town with Medan City, Indonesia.

There are three kinds of sentences: simple, compound, and complex (Quirk, 1985). King & Stanley (2004) say that a complex sentence contains at least two clauses: a main clause and a subordinate clause. A subordinate clause, dependent on the main clause for its meaning, may function in a complex sentence as an adjective, a noun, or an adverb (King & Stanley, 2004).

An adjective clause (a relative clause) usually begins with a relative pronoun or a relative adverb. In the same line, Griffiths & Cummins (2017) says that the word “that” is one of the **markers** made available by English grammar to mark a clause as embedded. The **eight markers** for adjective clauses are who, whom, whose, which, where, when, why, and that (Sharpe, 2015). An adjective clause always follows ‘noun’. If it is not found, a noun can be replaced by a pronoun. In other words, only ‘noun’ is complemented by an adjective clause.

In addition, (Cunningham et al., 2005) add that relative clauses give us information about things, people, possessions, places, and times using a relative pronoun. Sometimes the relative clause is necessary to tell us which thing/person we are talking about. In this case, there are no commas. Sometimes the relative clause gives us extra information. It is not necessary to tell us which thing/person we are talking about. In this case, there are commas before and after the clause.

The article analyses the clause of adjective clauses in John Steinbeck’s novel *Of Mice and Men* as the object of analysis since a lot of clauses employed as characters are described by using adjective clauses. For example, Lennie, who had been watching, imitated George exactly. In this sentence, the subordinate clause who had been watching is the adjective clause modifying subject Lennie. This subject is the antecedent of the adjective clause and one of the characters in the novel.

John Steinbeck’s novel *Of Mice and Men* is the object of analysis because to comprehend adjective clauses 'should be practiced'. Practice makes perfect. Even native speakers make mistakes and slip in grammar (Sharpe, 2015). Therefore, learning adjective clauses should be deeply implemented to achieve comprehension of grammatical awareness (Purnamasari, 2020). In writing, the appropriate use of adjective clauses can be particularly vital to successfully move beyond simple sentences (Demirezen, 2013). The structures of simple sentences are understandable by the students without structural confusion

(Demirezen, 2013). In complex sentences, the adjective clause is a part of the topics programmed at least an Intermediate Level.

The fact that the highest frequency is **misordering** made students confused in constructing the structure of adjective clauses (Manurung, 2022; Saputra et al., 2020). In other words, students, who participated in those studies, at least made errors in using the **introductory word** as seen in the study conducted by (Gustira et al., 2020). How can **learners deliver specific and informative messages** if they do not master this sentence structure? To help answer that question, the researchers will first need to answer the following: (1) How to identify and classify the adjective clauses found in John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men*? (2) How to construct the structure of an adjective clause based on its types found in the novel? (3) How many percentages of the adjective clauses are based on the types found in the novel?

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study is conducted by descriptive-qualitative research approach because this uses words as the unit of analysis (Denscombe, 2021) which identifies and analyses adjective clauses in John Steinbeck's Novel "*Of Mice and Men*". The method of data collection is by using the documentation method. The technique is collecting adjective clauses that are found in the novel. The researcher was reading the novel in English version to have a full understanding of what is being told about and to find out data in the novel. Descriptive-qualitative is used to collect data by following a systematic process of collecting, categorizing, estimating, and analysing the data (Creswell, 2014). The total sample showed the frequency of types from each act of data in the novel. Descriptive analysis would allow learners to see the types of adjective clauses in frequency in the novel. The data of this analysis used simple statistical analysis in percentages.

There were some steps to do this analysis such as reading several textbooks and articles about English grammar to **seek and learn information** (Horwitz, 1999 as cited in Truong, 2022) **to avoid conflicting information about adjective clauses**, definitions, and the types of adjective clauses, and subsequently, identifying and classifying the data of English adjective clauses in John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men*. Next, the data based on the types of adjective clauses were analysed. Then they showed the frequency of types from each act of data in the novel, and finally, they drew verification conclusions after finishing the analysis. When researchers go out into the field, in this case in the novel, to obtain data, their findings are more likely to be trustworthy if they are supported by valid and consistent evidence (Mubshirah et al., 2023).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In analysing the adjective clause in John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men*, the theory was applied to analyse the adjective clauses in **complex sentences** by collecting the adjective clauses and then their types were described. Having read and analysed John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men*, just two types of adjective clauses from 4 types of adjective clauses as mentioned before. The types are full adjective clauses and reduced adjective clauses.

Consider how John Steinbeck put the two examples from 49 adjective clauses in this novel
to deliver conversation and narration

1. ... with the split-edge tracks of deer **that come to drink in the dark.**
2. ... by tramps **who come wearily down from**
3. ... by men **who have sat on it.**
4. Lennie, **who had been watching,**
5. ... with the light of the sun **that had gone from the valley.**
6. ... under a little wind **that died immediately.**
7. ... like a terrier **who doesn't want to bring a ball to its master,**
8. ... another mouse **that's fresh**
9. Guys like us, **that work on ranches,**
10. ... somebody to talk to **that gives a damn about us.**
11. ... his blankets down on the burlap sack of straw **that was a mattress.**
12. ... "last guy **that had this bed**
13. ... the kind of guy **that would put that stuff around**
14. George, **sitting on the bunk beside Lennie,**
15. ... a cotton house dress and red mules, on the insteps **of which were little bouquets of red ostrich feathers.**
16. ... the new fellas **that just come,**
17. ... at the doorway **where she had been.**
18. ... the solitaire hand **that was upside down to him.**
19. ... pair of punks on my team **that don't know a barley bag from a blue ball.**
20. Lennie, **who had been following the conversation back and forth with his eyes,**
21. ... the guys **that go around on the ranches alone.**
22. ... know nothing **that stinks as bad as an old dog.**
23. ... a guy in Weed **that had an Airedale could herd sheep.**

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24. ... be you **that does it.**"
 25. ... one of them books **that just come.**
 26. Guy **that wants to look over a ranch**
 27. ... at old Candy, **who still faced the wall.**
 28. ... our own place **where we belonged and not sleep in no bunkhouse.**"
 29. ... threatening the future cats **which might dare to disturb the future rabbits.**
 30. The ol' people **that owns it**
 31. ... to them old people **that owns the place**
 32. ... in terror the flopping little man **whom he held.**
 33. "Right this morning **when Curley first lit intil your fren'**,
 34. ... a long box filled with straw, **on which his blankets were flung.**
 35. ... there were pegs **on which hung broken harness in process of being mended;**
 36. ... pain – tightened lips **which were lighter than his face.**
 37. Through the open door **that led into the barn**
 38. ... in a place **where you're not wanted.**"
 39. ... a time **when was scared of gettin' canned,**
 40. ... his eyes averted, everything **that might be hurt drawn in.**
 41. ... in the end of the barn **that had not been filled with hay**
 42. ... a little dead puppy **that lay in front of him.**
 43. ... stay no place **where I couldn't get nowhere**
 44. ... came to the legs of a motionless heron **that stood in the shallows.**
 45. ... remember nothing **that happens,** ...
 46. ... nobody in the worl' **that gives a hoot in hell about'em——"**
 47. We got each other, that's what, **that gives a hoot in hell about us,"**
 48. ... his right hand **that had thrown the gun away.**
 49. ... at his right hand **that had held the gun.**

The bold clauses in those 49 complex sentences are adjective clauses which are introduced by six **introductory words** or six **markers**. They are *who*, *which*, *that*, *whom*, *where*, and *when*—using *who* and *that* in adjective clauses to describe people. *Which* and *that* refer to things. As the literal meaning of “introductory word”, the position of it is **in front of them** (the rest of an adjective clause).

In addition, the bold clauses describe a noun because adjective clauses which are subordinate clauses function as adjectives in complex sentences. It is positioned directly after the noun that it describes.

The analysis of full adjective clause (1):

The structure of the sentences is as follows:

Subject + Verb + Object + Adjective Clause

Subject + Verb + Object + Marker + Subject + Verb + Object/Complement

Let the writer notice the sentence structure above in the complex sentence (1) in the Table 1 below:

Table 1. Complex Sentence (1)

Rabbits come out of the brush to sit on the sand in the evening, and the damp flats are covered with the night tracks of 'coons, and with the spread pads of dogs from the ranches, and with the split-wedge tracks of deer that come to drink in the dark.	
Rabbits come out of the brush to sit on the sand in the evening, ..., and with the split-wedge tracks of deer	= an independent clause
that come to drink in the dark	= a full adjective clause

Clause (1) uses the marker *that*. The marker in clause 1 refers to non-human because it describes the object *deer*. The adjective clause is restrictive and does not use a comma because it simply gives additional information. The sentence structure is used to identify an adjective clause modifying an object.

Consider the only one example of a reduced adjective clause found:

(14). George, **sitting on the bunk beside Lennie**, frowned as he thought.

The bold clause in the sentence is a reduced adjective clause, **not an appositive phrase**. The adjective clause can be reduced to an adjective phrase and has the same meaning. An adjective phrase is a reduction of an adjective clause. It modifies a noun. It does contain a marker, a subject, and a verb *to be*.

The analysis of reduced clause (14):

The structure of the sentences above is as follows:

Subject, Adjective Clause, Verb + Object/Complement

Subject, Marker + Subject + Verb + Object/Complement, Verb + Object/Complement,

or

Subject, Marker + *Verb + Object/Complement, Verb + Object/Complement

*There is no subject. It happens if markers exhibit or exist in double function. Markers, which exhibit **double function**, are *who*, *which*, and *that*.

Let the writer notice the sentence structure above in the complex sentence (14) in the Table 2 below:

Table 2. Complex Sentence (14)

George, sitting on the bunk beside Lennie, frowned as he thought.	
George, frowned	= an independent clause
sitting on the bunk beside Lennie	= a reduced adjective clause

Clause (14) the marker *who* and verb *to be* (was) is reduced. The marker “*who*” in the clause refers to humans because it describes subject *George*. The adjective clause is non-restrictive and uses two commas because it is necessary to modify the subject. The full adjective clause *George, who was sitting on the bunk beside Lennie, frowned as he thought.*

4. CONCLUSION

Based on all the descriptions of the topic and the analysis of the data, the essential points as the result of this scientific article are: (1). English has a variety of clauses that give many possibilities to analyse and to classify, they are in term of a dependent and independent clause. (2). There are 4 classifications of adjective clauses based on their types, they are full adjective clause, reduced adjective clause, marked adjective clause, and unmarked adjective clause. (3). There are 2 classifications of adjective clauses based on their types in John Steinbeck’s novel *Of Mice and Men*. They consist of a. 48 full adjective clauses and b. 1 reduced adjective clauses. From the data, the percentage of adjective clauses based on their types in the novel is 98 percent for full adjective clauses, 2 percent for reduced adjective clauses, 0 percent for marked adjective clauses, and 0 percent for unmarked adjective clauses. The use of full adjective clauses is almost mentioned in all adjective clauses in the novel. John Steinbeck strongly emphasized how he delivered **conversation and narration** in the text with full adjective clauses to make it easier for readers to understand them.

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