



Sudan University of Science and Technology

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**Investigating Teachers' Views and Perceptions about Relative Clauses
Difficulties amongst EFL Sudanese Secondary School Students**

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Abstract:

This study aimed to investigate the difficulties of using relative clauses experienced by EFL students at Sudanese secondary schools. The study has adopted the descriptive analytical method, the researcher collected data by using a questionnaire for (30) EFL Sudanese secondary school teachers. To analyze the data the researcher used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings of the study revealed that EFL Sudanese secondary school students encounter some difficulties in using relative clauses. In the light of the findings of the study, the researcher recommended that students should be aware of the importance of English syntactic structure in the process of EFL learning. Furthermore, teachers should teach English structure systematically and comprehensively and allow sufficient practice time, teachers should also focus on the overall structure of English relative clauses as a way of facilitating holistic development of English skills, in addition, understanding of the errors is helpful in the teaching and learning process since it enables both the teacher and students to identify the causes of the errors and find appropriate solutions towards improving the students' learning process.

Key words: Foreign language learning, English relative clauses, using relative clauses' difficulties.

المستخلص:

هدفت هذه الدراسة لتقصي صعوبات استخدام الجمل الموصولة لدى طلاب المدارس الثانوية السودانية في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية لغة اجنبية. استخدمت الباحثة طريقة الوصف التحليلي وجمعت البيانات بواسطة الإستبانة التي اجريت لعدد (30) معلماً ومعلمة للغة الإنجليزية لغة اجنبية بالمدارس الثانوية السودانية. استخدمت الباحثة برنامج الحزم الإحصائية للعلوم الاجتماعية لتحليل البيانات. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن هنالك بعض الصعوبات التي تواجه طلاب المدارس الثانوية السودانية في استخدام الجمل الموصولة. بناء على تلك النتائج فإن الباحثة اوصت بأنه ينبغي على الطلاب ادراك أهمية البنية النحوية للغة الإنجليزية في عملية تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية كـ لغة أجنبية. علاوة على ذلك, ينبغي على المعلمين تدريس البنية النحوية بشكل منهجي وشامل وإتاحة الوقت الكافي للممارسة و يجب على المعلمين أيضاً التركيز على البنية العامة للجمل الموصولة كطريقة لتسهيل التطوير الشامل لمهارات اللغة الإنجليزية. بالإضافة الى ان ادراك الأخطاء مفيد في عملية التعليم والتعلم لأنه يمكن كل من المعلم والطلاب من تحديد أسباب الأخطاء وإيجاد الحلول المناسبة لتحسين عملية تعلم الطلاب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: , تعلم اللغة الأجنبية, الجمل الموصولة الإنجليزية, صعوبات استخدام الجمل الموصولة

1. Introduction

For EFL learners to learn and master the language , it is important to understand certain aspects of language , relativisation is one of these important aspects that learners need to understand . According to Aruya (2005) relativisation is a process through which a sentence is embedded in another sentence when the two sentences refer to the same noun or noun phrase, this embedded sentence is called a relative clause and it is introduced by a relative pronouns such as who, whose, which, where..etc depending on the semantic properties of the noun phrase being relativised.

Relative clauses are very useful in the process of EFL learning as they help the language learner to be more specific and make expressions more interesting, however , they can be very confusing to many EFL learners and they are often used incorrectly, for example some learners of English think that relative pronouns are generally used to join sentences together to form relative clauses in the manner conjunctions are used without paying attention to certain exceptions in the usage . For example, an EFL learner may produce a sentence like “ *the boy which you sent me to him” as the most common difficulty occurs in grasping the intended meaning, choosing the correct pronoun(person), using the correct punctuation, using a preposition with an appropriate relative pronoun and maintaining subject-verb agreement.

Relative clauses have always been an important issue to the EFL researchers because of their complex syntactic structure and therefore constitute learning problem to the language learner (Selinker, 2001). According to Aruya (2005) in EFL contexts relative clauses are very often considered as rather simple language construction, yet some space for their acquisition is left to the very end of students' language learning process. One of the possible reasons may be the fact that the necessity for their correct usage is much stressed in the written rather than in spoken language as the fact that at earlier stages the possibility of writing is normally at a higher level, and errors that commonly occur mainly concern this written part where their possible incorrect usage is more visible and can affect the meaning of the whole sentence significantly hence they are marked by

intonation in speaking (p.87) .In this paper the researcher investigates the causes of relative clauses difficulties among EFL Sudanese secondary school students and proposes some suitable solutions to overcome them.

2 . Statement of the problem

During her experience in teaching EFL for several years, the researcher has noticed that many EFL learners face some difficulties in using relative clauses ;to form relative clauses they do not put relative pronouns in the most appropriate place within the sentence, when joining sentences together using relative words to form relative clauses, students join them in the manner conjunctions are used without paying attention to certain exceptions in the usage of relative clauses hence they find it difficult to write the necessary information and drop the unnecessary ones ,in addition, students are unaware of using commas in restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses which sometimes lead to misunderstanding, moreover,EFL learners tend to overproduce the subject relative and under produce direct object relative as a result of limited exposure through textbook contexts which emphasize on subject relative and makes it difficult for them to make logically and grammatically correct sentences, so the purpose of this study is to identify the causes of relative clauses problems among EFL Sudanese secondary school students and suggest some solutions to overcome these relative clauses difficulties.

3. Objectives of the Study

1. To highlight the causes of relative clauses problems that face EFL Sudanese secondary school students .
2. To suggest some suitable solutions to overcome these relative clauses problems.

4. Questions of the Study

1. What are the causes of relative clauses difficulties that face EFL Sudanese secondary school students?
2. How can teachers help students to overcome these relative clauses problems?

5. Hypotheses of the Study

1. Relative clauses difficulties are attributed to many factors.
2. Teachers can help students to overcome relative clauses difficulties by using proper methods and teaching materials that maximize students' benefits from the entire teaching process and raising their awareness about the importance of English language structure and using relative clauses for learning in general.

6. Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it contributes to the existing literature in the field of teaching English language structure; teachers will have a better understanding of their students difficulties and examine their own teaching techniques and materials. In addition, learners can identify their problems and be aware of the factors that contribute to their difficulties and apply the right strategies and techniques of English language structure. The study shall also form a point of departure for syllabus designers and material writers to make further improvement in their teaching materials . Furthermore, researchers who are interested in EFL research to use the findings of the study as a basis for further studies in the area as the current study paves the way for other researchers to conduct further studies on developing EFL students' English language structure .

7. Limits of the Study

This study is limited to EFL Sudanese secondary school teachers during the academic year (2022-2023) in order to investigate their perceptions and views regarding the causes of relative clauses difficulties and propose some suitable solutions to overcome them.

8. Methodology of the Study

In this study data has been collected through using a questionnaire which was administered to (30) professional Sudanese secondary school teachers who have long experience in teaching English and doing research in English. Then the data has been analyzed statistically by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences(SPSS).

9. Relative Clauses

Smith(1974)defined the relative clause as the subordinate clause containing an element that is interpreted by an antecedent upon which the subordinate clause is dependent grammatically.

Relative clauses are the non-essential part of a sentence that add meaning to it but if removed, the sentence still remains it's grammatical function.

Fall(2017) described a relative clause as a group of words that modify a noun, noun phrase, pronoun or a sentence, the modified elements is called "antecedent" as it is the subordinated clause and can be used to provide more information about the person or thing that appears in the main clause.

According to Ellis (1997) the acquisition of relative clauses presents learners with two tasks. First, EFL learners must first learn that relative clauses can modify noun phrases that occur both before the verb (i.e. as subject of the main clause) and after the verb (i.e. as object or in a prepositional phrase).

For example:

The man **who** won the Nobel Prize works very hard.(as a subject).

We visited the man **who** has contributed so much to the protection of the wildlife.(as an object)

Second, they must learn the various functions that the relative pronoun can serve.

For example:

The woman **who** committed the crime (subject)

The woman **whom** I visited.....(direct object)

The woman **to whom** I present a medal (indirect object)

The man about **whom** we talked(object of preposition)...

The woman **whose** husband is a president (genitive) ...

The man **that** I am richer than...(object of comparative)

10. Common Mistakes of Relative Clauses among EFL Learners

Smith (1974) stated that when using relative clauses, some EFL learners make the following mistakes :

1. Commas are not required in writing in restrictive relative clauses.

For example: Mary is a manager of the corporation which produces a wide range of products on international level.

*Mary is a manager of the corporation, which produces a wide range of products on international level.

The most important rule here is that commas are not used to separate a restrictive clause from the rest of the sentence since its meaning is essential to its correct understanding.

2. The incorrect use of commas may lead to incorrect meaning. The students who have regularly attended the lectures can take the written exam. (restrictive)

The students, who have regularly attended the lectures, can take the written exam. (non-restrictive).

The restrictive relative clause tells us that only those students who have regularly attended the lectures can take the written exam. The sentence implies that there were also other students who haven't regularly attended the lectures and that they cannot take the exam. The non-restrictive relative clause tells us that all the students (mentioned earlier in the context) can take the written exam since they all have regularly attended the lessons. That is the message understood by the non-restrictive clause, which by its definition gives extra information to the sentence because even if it is omitted, the meaning remains the same.

3. After a relative subject (personal pronoun or noun clause) the subject is not mentioned again.

For example:

The man **who** was sitting next to me he had a blue jacket.

*The man **who** was sitting next to me had a blue jacket.

4. A relative clause can have only one direct object, when a relative pronoun is the object of the relative clause, the object in the relative clause is not mentioned again.

For example:

He lent me his book, **which** I found very interesting.

*He lent me his book, **which** I found it very interesting.

5. When a relative pronoun is the object of the relative clause, **I** or **we** as a subject (pronoun or noun) is needed in the relative clause.

For example:

You handed me the book **that** I was looking for yesterday.

*You handed me the book **that** was looking for yesterday.

6. **That** cannot be used in a non-restrictive relative clause, just the relative pronoun *who* can refer to a person in the subject position, while *which* can refer to a thing in the subject position.

For example:

A student, who was awarded a scholarship, will receive \$10000.

*A student, that was awarded a scholarship, will receive \$10000.

7. Only the relative pronouns **which** and **that** can refer to subject in the restrictive relative clauses (in this case these relative pronouns can also be omitted).

The car what I bought was...

The car that I bought...

The car which I bought...

The car I bought was...

A relative sentence must always follow the noun to which it refers.

For example:

My office, which I share with my colleague, is about hundred meters from the centre.

*My office is about hundred meters from the centre, which I share with my colleague.

11. Factors Affecting Relative Clauses Difficulties among EFL Learners

EFL communication is primarily influenced by sentences' structure thus making it pertinent to pay attention to aspects of sentence construction as relative clauses are responsible for the logic soundness of the sentence .

Lightbown (1997) attributed EFL learners' difficulties to numerous factors, he argued that hence learning a foreign language is one of the most complicated and tedious processes. The complication and the tedious nature is a result of various factors such as language structure , mother tongue and similarities and differences between the first and foreign language.

Rod (1999) stated three primary focus factors that affect EFL learning difficulties, the primary feature is the nature of the language learner, the errors the learners are likely to make and the implications of the errors on the overall learning processes as the complicated nature of learning English as a foreign language is attributed to syntactic structure differences between languages.

Ortega(2005) remarked that English second or foreign language learners' sentence structure arrangements is primarily affected by mother tongue and first language sentence structure as a majority of EFL learners start by acquiring knowledge on relative clauses but requiring a significant amount of effort and practice to correctly use them in modifying other sentence roles; the need for the effort and practice is due to the fact that most EFL learners construct sentences with relative clauses in the direct object position hence making the use of relative clauses unnecessary(p.54).

The following are some of the factors that contribute to EFL relative clauses difficulties among EFL learners:

a. Inter-language

Constructive differences between English and other languages internal structure is a main reason for the commonality of errors by EFL learners; when learning a new or foreign language, students tend to develop a personal language system that is a mix of the first and foreign language system (Ortega,2005).

Selinker(2001) maintained that inter-language is an intermediate language between the learners' first language and the target language , inter-language

enables the new language's tutor to better understand the source of the learners' problems and provide effective solutions.

Freeman(1998) stated that since relative clause word order reflects the sentence's logical option , it is the primary cause of errors for EFL learners. Therefore, EFL learners' transfer of parametric values such as relative clauses from their first language is another reason for difficulties in correctly acquiring English as a target language .

b. Structural Incompatibility Between English and other Languages

Lourdes(1996) argued that among the factors that affects EFL difficulties in learning are due to the structural incompatibility between English and other languages since EFL learners often try to transfer parametric values from their first language to English, the parametric transfer affects significant elements of a sentence such as relative clauses thus affecting the sentences' grammatical correctness. EFL learners often interchange relative pronouns and nouns with relative clauses thus compromising the quality of sentences structures .In addition, Ortega(2005) argued that in the process of sentence construction , EFL students are likely to use wrong resumptive pronouns in the construction of relative clauses , this is usually followed by object relatives , indirect object relatives or oblique object relatives .

c. Lack of exposure

EFL learners' limited exposure to English relative clauses is a major reason for interchanging pronouns and putting them in place of relative clauses. However, frequent exposure increases the students' ability and confidence in English language thus enabling him/her to make grammatically correct sentence structure.

d. Fossilization

Richard(1985) defined fossilization as a linguistic phenomenon whereby the speakers of a specific native language maintain the linguistic items, subsystems and rules in their inter-language. This is in relation to a particular target language irrespective of the learner's age and amount of explanation from the target language.

For example:

*Vehicles have provided us with a lot of convenience that we require it very much.

Vehicles have provided us with a lot of convenience that we require very much.

In the above example, in the first sentence, the EFL learner adds the pronoun (it) as a result of fossilization.

e. The Transfer of Training

This normally takes place when EFL learners apply rules learned on textbooks or their teachers in the learning process. However, if the instructions or textbooks put emphasis on specific grammar point structures at the expenses of others, learners tend to develop their language acquisition skills on one side. Odlin (1990) stated that in the case that either the book or the teacher's instructions are incorrect, learners will also be inclined to make wrong set of the taught structures. Based on this, EFL learners are likely to overproduce the subject relative and under produce other English relative constructions such as the direct object relative. This is attributed to the consequences of their exposure through textbook contexts which emphasizes on subject relative. Hence using the textbooks, EFL learners follow the same trend from textbooks by emphasizing on subject relative and advocating for low frequency on the direct object relative.

f. Overgeneralization

Richard(1985) defined overgeneralization as a process through which the learner extrapolates the use of a grammatical rule of linguistic item past its acceptable uses in a foreign language. This phenomenon takes place when learners formulate a linguistic rule based on the exposed language data or instructions with no consideration for exceptions.

With regard to English language relative clauses , EFL learners tend to be unaware of the existing differences between restrictive relative clauses and non-restrictive relative clauses (Richard ,1985).

The following are examples that illustrate the problem associated with overgeneralization:

My uncle, **who** works in New Zealand is rich.

*My uncle **who** works in New Zealand is rich.

g. Avoidance

Avoidance plays a key role in the acquisition of relative clauses in the foreign language. According to Ellis(1993) learners tend to avoid using difficult linguistic structures as a result of differences between their native language and the target language. EFL learners' native language causes them to produce numerous errors in English language.

Avoidance technique makes EFL learners omit some aspects of the English language construction features they are unsure of through the use of fewer relative clauses in sentence construction , EFL learners unlikely to make a high number of errors. Gass(1996) pointed out that English language structure avoidance by EFL learners is related to the relative clause level of frequency. In this sense, most frequent relative clauses have a higher likelihood of being avoided.

For example:

The daughter to the man **who** I know is currently studying in London.

*The daughter to the man I know is currently studying in London.

In the above example the learner has been to effectively use avoidance without having to compromise the grammar or logic of the sentence.

h. Native language transfer:

Lado(1999) stated that foreign language learners rely on mother tongue knowledge when faced with specific problems in the process of communication process. EFL learners are able to transfer the form and meanings from the native language to the production and comprehension of English language.

The following are some examples that illustrate the problem associated with native language transfer.

The man who I loaned my guitar to is my friend.

*The man who I loaned my guitar to him is my friend.

i. Motivation

Motivation is another factor that can contribute to EFL relative clauses difficulties, it plays a crucial role in the learning process and should be put into consideration when teaching English language structure. Lack of motivation from the side of the teacher leads to poor achievements in the language learning process.

Being aware of the above mentioned factors enables both the teacher to effectively identify learners' weakness and think of appropriate ways of overcoming these weaknesses towards holistic development of the learners' skills.

12. Previous Related Studies

Chang(2010) made a study entitled "Second Language Relative Clauses Acquisition: An Examination of Cross-Linguistic Influences" with the aim to analyze and describe the difficulties that EFL learners encounter in acquiring relative clauses. A total of 237 English-major freshmen participated in the study. One written composition from each participant was collected. In addition, a 44-item-multiple-choice test on relative clauses was administered. Data were analyzed in terms of:

- 1) The total number of relative clauses in each pattern.
- 2) The number of errors produced in each pattern of relative clauses.

The findings of the study suggested that the main causes of English difficulties of relative clauses for EFL students were limited knowledge of grammar, inadequate vocabulary and poor awareness of the features of English syntactic structure.

Mohammed (2016) studied "Problems Encountered by University Students In Using Relative Clauses " with the aim to direct the students' to master the utilization of relative clauses and to show EFL learners how to utilize relative pronouns correctly and how to use commas in relative clauses. In addition, the study intended to guide the students to the best means which can lead them to overcome relative clauses errors. The results of the study revealed that EFL students face some serious problems in using relative pronouns and clauses; students do not know how to use commas within relative clauses; in addition, the students are not aware of reducing relative clauses. The researcher recommended that students should extend their

knowledge in grammar field; and they shouldn't just restrict their study on academic curricula hence they should read books which contain relative clauses.

Gao (2014) studied "An Exploration of Using Relative Clauses Problems and Their Causes" with the aim to identify relative clauses problems experienced by EFL university students at intermediate level through multiple perspectives, a mixed method approach was used; integrated questionnaire surveys, participants' self reflections, the Aural-Lex tests and dictation transcriptions conducted both at the beginning and at the end of the semester. The findings of the study suggested that the main causes of relative clauses difficulties were limited knowledge of English grammar, inadequate vocabulary and poor awareness of the features of connected sentences.

13. Data Analysis and Discussion

The questionnaire consists of two parts, part one contains ten statements which investigate the causes of the difficulties that EFL learners face in using relative clauses, the second part consists of ten statements to elicit some of the solutions of relative clauses problems from the teachers' point of view. The questionnaire was given to 30 respondents who represent the teachers' community at Sudanese secondary schools.

Table (1) the mean and standard deviation and chi-square values for the study Hypothesis:

1. Relative clauses difficulties are attributed to many factors.

No.	Statements	mean	SD	Chi square	p-value
1	The complicated nature of learning English is attributed to syntactic structure differences between EFL learners' native language and English .	3.6	.80	29	0.023
2	Language structure, mother tongue interference , differences and similarities between the first and the foreign language lead to EFL learners' difficulties.	2.4	.50	28	0.010

3	EFL learners construct sentences with relative clauses in the direct object hence making the use of relative clauses unnecessary	3.3	.70	23	0.006
4	Constructive differences in English and other languages internal structure is one of the reasons for the commonality of errors by EFL learners	2.5	3.8	15	0.046
5	EFL learners tend to develop a personal system which is a mix of first and foreign language system	3.4	2.5	22	0.000
6	EFL learners transfer parametric values from their first language to English which affects significant elements of a sentence such as relative clauses thus affecting the sentence's grammatical correctness	2.8	1.7	12	0.000
7	Avoidance plays a key role in the acquisition of relative clauses in EFL learning as learners tend to avoid using difficult linguistic features; they tend to omit structure they are unsure of	2.9	4.8	34	0.000
8	EFL learners tend to formulate a linguistic rule based on the exposed language data or instructions with no consideration for exceptions as a result of overgeneralization	2.7	.50	22	0.000
9	Limited textbooks contents or teachers' instructions results in overuse or no use of relative clauses not taught	2.9	.70	32	0.023
10	Teaching relative clauses is neglected in the curriculum at many schools and universities because teachers and students are more interested in other English skills and do not consider it an important part of their courses.	2.6	.50	22	0.036

It is clear from the above table that the calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the (10) statements are greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents. According to the above findings, we can say that EFL Sudanese secondary students face some problems in using relative clauses because of the above factors, so the first hypotheses of the study is verified.

Table No.(2) Chi-Square Test Results for Respondents' Answers of the Questions of the study Hypothesis No. (2)

2. Teachers can help students to overcome relative clauses difficulties by using proper methods and teaching materials that maximize students' benefits from the entire teaching process and raising their awareness about the importance of English language structure and using relative clauses for learning in general.

No.	Statements	mean	SD	Chi square	p-value
1	Frequent exposure of relative clauses increases the students' ability and confidence in English thus enabling them to make grammatically correct sentence structure as the accuracy of relative clauses tend to improve with time as a result of exposure	2.4	1.9	12	0.00
2	A focus on the mistakes and problems of EFL learners alongside the teaching of relative clauses enables better effective learning	2.5	2.6	17	0.00
3	The teacher should be effectively able to identify proper methods and teaching materials that maximize students' benefits from the entire teaching process	2.4	2.4	13	0.00
4	Teachers should adopt the strategy of generated relative and null pronouns in teaching relative	3	.80	25	0.03

	clauses as a way of increasing students participation and confidence				
5	Teachers should focus on the overall structure of English relative clauses as a way of facilitating holistic development of English skills	2.9	1.6	20	0.00
6	Teachers should try to raise the students' awareness about the importance of relative clauses	2.4	1.9	12	0.00
7	EFL teaching in small classes can be rewarding for both teachers and students	2.5	1.4	17	0.00
8	Students should be aware of different structure aspects such as content, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, and spelling as they contributed to the students' difficulties in using relative clauses	2.7	2.6	15	0.00
9	Students should be aware of the importance of English syntactic structure in the process of EFL learning	3.6	.80	29	0.023
10	Teachers should teach English stucture systematically and comprehensively and allow sufficient practice time	2.4	.50	28	0.010

Source: The researcher from applied study, SPSS 24

From the above table, it is obvious that the calculated value of chi-square for the significance of the differences for the respondents' answers in the (10) statements is greater than the tabulated value of chi-square at the degree of freedom (4) and the significant value level (5%) which indicates that, there are statistically significant differences at the level (5%) among the answers of the respondents, so the second hypothesis of the study is confirmed.

14. Conclusion and Recommendations

According to the findings of the questionnaire which conveys the views of teachers about the problem of the study, EFL Sudanese secondary school

students face serious problems in using relative clauses due to many causes such as the following:

- Limited exposure of English relative clauses is a major reason for interchanging pronouns and putting them in the place of relative clauses.
- Effects of L1 transfer , lack of practice , motivation and self-confidence.
- Teachers do not use suitable learning materials and tasks that suit the level and the needs of the students.
- Language structure, mother tongue interference, differences and similarities between the first and the foreign language lead to EFL learners' learning difficulties in the acquisition of relative clauses.
- EFL learners construct sentences with relative clauses in the direct object position hence making the use of relative clauses unnecessary.
- Constructive differences in English and other languages internal structure is one of the reasons for the commonality of errors by EFL learners.
- Weakness of students in lexis, semantics and syntax lead to some relative clauses difficulties.
- Students' lack of awareness of different aspects such as content, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, and spelling contribute to their relative clauses difficulties .
- Learners develop a tendency of transferring old language habits to the process of learning English thus making it difficult to learn the new language.

According to the responses of the teachers to the questionnaire, the following are some suggestions to overcome relative clauses difficulties:

- Frequent exposure of relative clauses increases the students' ability and confidence in English thus enabling them to make grammatically correct sentence structure as the accuracy of relative clauses tend to improve with time as a result of exposure .
- The teacher should be effectively able to identify proper methods and teaching materials that maximize students' benefits from the entire teaching process.

- In order to improve their English skills, students need to practice as without sufficient practice students can never develop their language skills.
- Syllabus designers should focus on the best selected books which motivate the learner and promote good conditions for learning English language structure.
- Teachers should adopt the strategy of generated relative and null pronouns in the teaching of English relative clauses as a way of increasing students' participation and resulting confidence.
- Teachers should focus on the overall structure of English relative clauses as a way of facilitating holistic development of English skills.
- Teachers should try to raise the students' awareness about the importance of relative clauses ,motivate and encourage their students.
- Inter- language enables the EFL teacher to better understand the source of the learners' problems and provide effective solution.
- Understanding of errors is helpful in the teaching and learning process of EFL learners since it enables both the teacher and students to identify the causes of the errors and find appropriate solutions towards improving the students' learning process.

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following points :

- Teachers should raise the students' awareness about the importance of the use of relative clauses in foreign language learning.
- Teachers should provide students with the necessary structure and vocabulary that students are likely to encounter during their tasks.
- Teachers should provide students with immediate feedback to correct errors and promote self-confidence.
- The teacher should allow students to brainstorm vocabulary and grammatical structures they are likely to use, by doing so he/she encourages them to use them effectively.
- Teachers should use authentic materials that suit the level of the students, needs, interest and background knowledge.

- Teachers should be well-trained and experienced; having good English language skills help students to be good language users and applying teaching techniques helps to improve students' English learning abilities.
- EFL students should practice collaborative learning strategies as curriculum designers must take into their account the importance of using collaborative learning strategies in the syllables of different stages.
- Students should practice the grammatical structures they are taught.
- Students should be aware of the importance of relative clauses in the process of foreign language learning .



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