

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

In daily usage of language, people sometimes like using short sentences rather than long sentences to express their idea. They mostly like using simple, clear, and efficient sentences. To simplify sentences, we must sometimes omit some elements of the sentences with the same purpose, but instead, in the whole meaning. This activity is called ellipsis. Ellipsis is omission of the words to avoid repetition, but their meaning is still understandable by the hearer or the reader. For example:

‘Fergus became a lawyer and Vladimir a journalist’ (Veit, 1986:232)

The sentence above is a kind of elliptical construction. There is an element omitted, that is, the word *became*. It is omitted to avoid the repetition because it has the same purpose as the previous clause. The real sentence is ‘Fergus became a lawyer and Vladimir *became* a journalist’

In addition, Veit states that the elimination of a deep structure element from the surface sentence by transformation is called ellipsis (1986:231). It means that an element which is present in the deep structure is not spoken in the surface structure. It is done to avoid unnecessary repetition. Furthermore, there are two kinds of elliptical processes in English. They are ellipsis with substitution and ellipsis without substitution. Ellipsis with substitution is ellipsis of which eliminated element is replaced by some words such as *do* when it replaces verb, *so*

when it replaces a phrase following a linking verb or an entire clause, *then* when it describes time, *there* when it describes place, *one* when it describes singular countable noun and so forth. While, ellipsis without substitution is ellipsis of which eliminated element is not substituted by any word.

The following elliptical constructions exemplify the discussion above:

- (1) The children should have been preparing for bedtime and the adults for a long night of work. (Veit, 1986:232)
- (2) She disliked men from Rhode Island, and she didn't want to meet *them*. (Veit, 1986:242)
- (3) I doubt Bartleby will be our new boss, but, if *so*, we will make the most of it. (Veit, 1986:242)

The sentence numbered (1) undergoes elliptical process without substitution. It is proved that no substitute replaces the eliminated element. It belongs to verbal group ellipsis because there is a verbal group element omitted. It is *should have been preparing*. The complete sentence is 'The children should have been preparing for bedtime and the adults *should have been preparing* for a long night of work'.

Next, the sentence numbered (2) is a kind of elliptical construction with substitution because the eliminated elements are replaced by another element. The substitute *them* presupposes some noun, which has function in a nominal group. So, it is included in nominal ellipsis. In this case, *them* replaces *men from Rhode*

Island. The complete sentence is 'She disliked men from Rhode Island, and she didn't want to meet *men from Rhode Island*'.

Elliptical construction of the sentence numbered (3) is one with substitution. The word *so* substitutes for an entire clause. It replaces the clause *Bartleby will be our new boss*. The deep structure of that sentence is 'I doubt Bartleby will be our new boss, but, if *Bartleby will be our new boss*; we will make the most of it'.

The phenomenon above makes the researcher challenged to investigate the use of elliptical constructions in Graham Greene's *The Living Room*.

1.2 The Reason of Choosing the Topic

The study on the use of English elliptical constructions in Graham Greene's *The Living Room* is chosen as the topic of the discussion in this research because the topic bears great problems in indicating the eliminated element for learners of English to comprehend. That is why the researcher is quite interested in doing a research on these problems. Besides, the problems intended are frequently encountered by the users of the language, especially in spoken language. Consequently, this study may enhance their ability on the use of practical English. Furthermore, the researcher chooses the literary work, which is play because ellipsis usually found in such kind of conversation; a Graham Greene's *The Living Room* is chosen as the source of the data because there are a lot of English elliptical constructions there. Therefore, the research on the topic is considered relevant in order to get the alternative solution on these problems.

1.3 The Statement of the Problem

In relation to the use of English elliptical constructions in Graham Greene's *The Living Room*, two problems are formulated as follows:

1. What kinds of English elliptical constructions are found in Graham Greene's *The Living Room*?
2. What are the real sentences of those English elliptical constructions?

1.4 The Objectives of the Study

In line with the statement of the problems, this research tries to answer the two questions as stated above, namely:

1. To determine the kinds of English elliptical constructions found in Graham Greene's *The Living Room*.
2. To reveal the real sentences of those English elliptical constructions.

1.5 The Scope of the Study

In fact, there are many aspects that can be discussed in syntax, especially cohesive relations such as reference, ellipsis, substitution, conjunction and lexical organization, but in this research the researcher discusses elliptical constructions only. Since ellipsis relates to substitution, the researcher focuses the discussion on ellipsis with substitution and ellipsis without substitution.

The elliptical constructions here are discussed in terms of their kinds and the real sentences from which they are derived.

1.6 The Significance of the Study

Generally, the researcher hopes that this research will give valuable information to the readers and to the researcher herself about the use of elliptical constructions, especially for the students of the English Department of Widya Mandala University. Theoretically, this research can help the readers to develop or increase their abilities on linguistics, that is, syntax and specifically about ellipsis. Practically, the result of this research can stimulate other researchers to do further researches on the same topic.

1.7 The Meaning of Key Terms

To make the discussion in this study more comprehensively understandable, some key terms together with their meanings are presented below:

1. **Ellipsis** is the omission of elements which are precisely recoverable from the linguistic or situational context. (Biber, 1999:156)

Ellipsis: A clause, or a part of clause, or a part (usually including the lexical element) of a verbal or nominal group, may be presupposed at a subsequent place in the text by the device of positive omission—that is by saying nothing, where something is required to make up the sense. (Halliday, 1985:288)

2. **Substitution** is a presupposition at the level of words and structures. When a substitute is used, it signals that the actual item required, the particular word or group or clause, is recoverable from the environment; and the substitute preserves the class of the presupposed item, which may therefore be replaced in the 'slot' created by it. (Halliday and Hasan, 1976:145)
3. **Construction** is arrangement and relationship of words in a sentence. (Hornby, 1974:183)
4. **The Living Room** is a play written by Graham Greene.