

# Breaking the Waves of Language: Unraveling Students' Challenges with English Clauses in Coastal Environmental Discourse through a Grammar Teaching Technique

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**Abstract.** The purpose of this research is to investigate the challenges that students encounter when learning English clauses in Coastal Environmental Discourse through the 'Stepping the 5 Stairs D' Technique. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method to complete and in-depth describe the conditions as they are, without giving treatment to or manipulating the variables studied. In collecting the data, researchers used questionnaire. The questionnaire Were 17 multiple choices questions about English clauses. And the subjects of this study were 31 English Language Education students from class K1 and K2 of 2021. From this study it was concluded that most of the 4th semester English education students were able to determine correct and incorrect sentences in sentences and it was also found that students' ability to use 'stepping the 5 stairs D' in identifying main clauses and sub clauses was quite good.

## 1 Introduction

English clause is one of the things that must be mastered for students who study English. In English sentences, there are simple sentences consisting of one clause and compound sentences consisting of more than one clause. Clauses are divided into two, they can stand alone as a sentence called the main clause and clauses that cannot stand alone is called sub clauses. According to Bossone (1977), the main clause and sub clause have the same pattern because both have a subject and predicate. However, each of them has different characteristics and functions. To make correct English sentences, students must understand the concept of a clause, be it a main clause or a sub clause.

Students encounter a variety of difficulties during learning, including the task of constructing English clauses in a sentence so that they make sense in the context of the sentence. According to a study titled "Students' Ability to Identify Main Clause and Sub Clause on Reported Speech by Fifth Semester at Muhammadiyah University of Makassar," students still struggle to tell main clauses from subclauses in sentences because they are not master the grammatical of clauses. This scenario may also arise in a coastal educational setting when we are aware that the teaching techniques employed by the teacher are insufficient for promoting pupils' comprehension of grammar, particularly English clauses.

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The teaching technique employed by the teacher is one of the main determinants of how well students comprehend the course material. The learning objectives will not be met, and the results will be less than optimum. This is because the technique utilized tends to make it harder for students to comprehend the information. As a result, efficient teaching techniques are required to help students comprehend the importance of accurately identifying and constructing English clauses in sentences.

‘Stepping the 5 Stairs D’ Technique, a teaching technique for precisely, quickly, and amusingly building English clauses, is one technique that can be applied. The technique looks for further stairs where clauses can be created in noun phrase 1 (Stair 1), noun phrase 2 (Stair 2), and complements (Stair 3).

Based on all of that, the researcher adopted the title "Breaking the Waves of Language: Unravelling Students' Challenges with English Clauses in Coastal Environmental Discourse through the ‘Stepping the 5 Stairs D’ Technique" to investigate the challenges that students encounter when learning English clauses. The researcher used a qualitative descriptive method to complete and in-depth describe the conditions as they are, without giving treatment to or manipulating the variables studied

## **1.1 Literature Review**

Grammar is the single most important component in learning English; it is used in this process for students to learn the language by analyzing its structure. This process, however, has the unintended consequence of demythologizing grammar as it requires students to use a grammar system that corresponds to the structure of the grammar; if this is not done, students will struggle to learn the language.

Tenses, prepositions, punctuation, models, parts of speech, and clause types are some of the grammar components taught in English grammar classes[1]. According to if a clause can be said to be independent or dependent, it is called a main clause or independent clause. If a clause cannot be said to be independent or dependent, it is called a dependent clause or subclause. According to the sentence pattern, Main Clauses are clauses that have a comprehensive structure and function as the main clause, while Sub Clauses are dependent clauses and do not have a comprehensive structure[2].

The form of Main Clauses is a group of words consisting of predicates and subjects, predicates consisting of verbs with no additions of adverbs, nouns, adjectives and others. Meanwhile, the Subs clause which has the function of being a noun, adjective, or relationship word is called a noun clause which can be located as a subject, object, verb or preposition[3], in addition to functioning as a complete sentence in a given paragraph, following any noun clauses and adjective clauses used to describe the noun, explain the meaning of the noun, or describe the form of the noun, following Subclauses that explain the meaning of the noun, describe the meaning of the noun, explain the meaning of the noun, and describe the whole paragraph.[4].

Main Clauses and Sub Clauses are referred to as the types of clauses that must be learnt in English. The most important language skill to learn is writing, which is not just the activity of writing letters, words, or sentences; rather, it is a fundamental aspect of learning any language, including English. Main clauses and supporting clauses are quite effective when writing. According to [5], to identify Main Clauses and Sub Clauses in a sentence, a deeper knowledge of grammar is required when learning English. It can be seen that there is a challenge in understanding clauses with data showing that the difficulty is identifying the function of noun clauses, confusing using conjunctions, not understanding how to combine two sentences into a cohesive, erroneous verb selection and determining the right time of activity [1].

## 2 Research Method

The Research is used a Qualitative Data Methods to test the ability of English language students to analyze and create English clauses using the stepping the 5 stairs “D” techniques. Qualitative methods are methods based on philosophies used to research on scientific conditions (experiments) where researchers are instruments, data collection techniques and qualitative analysis emphasize more on meaning. Qualitative research is also more concerned with the process aspect than the results obtained.

The Research was conducted on thirty-one Students 4th semester who are studying at the English department of Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji. The Participants consisted of two class who are 15 participants from K1 and 16 participants from K2.

The instruments of this study is used questionnaire to collect the data. The questionnaire Were 17 multiple choices questions about English clauses in coastal environmental discourse. The multiple choices in the questionnaire is Correct and Incorrect, so based on the students answered the researcher will analyze where the challenges are often found by students in English clauses even after they have learned English clauses using the ‘stepping the 5 stairs D’ techniques.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1 Results

In this study, 4th semester students of English education were the research subjects. A total of 31 students filled out the questionnaire made through Google form. The following is a data table of students who filled out the questionnaire

**Table 1.** Participants

<b>Class</b>	<b>Total Students</b>	<b>Percentages (%)</b>
<b>K1</b>	15	48,4
<b>K2</b>	16	51,6
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100</b>

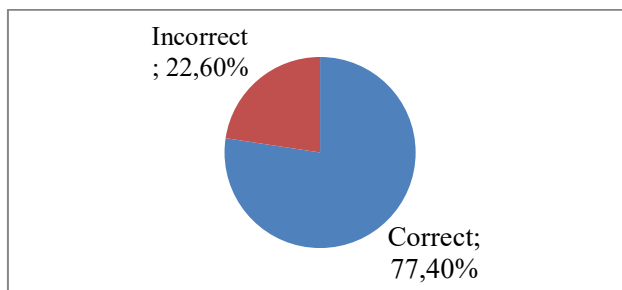
Based on table above, the participants consisted of two classes, K1 class with 15 students and K2 class with 16 students. The results of this study were divided into four parts, where students were asked to answer questions related to Stepping 5 Stairs "D".

**Table 2.** Students determine whether the sentence correct or incorrect

No	Questions	Correct	Incorrect
1.	The picture which was taken from a sea shell had been uploaded on Instagram	77,4%	22,6%
2.	Erika went fishing for catfish who was her favorite food yesterday.	64,5%	35,5%
3.	They looked for a cat which is lost on the beach yesterday.	12,9%	87,1%
4.	Joy always goes on vacation to the coastal areas in Natuna which has become her favorite tourist spot lately.	61,3%	38,7%
5.	Sarah which is a famous surfer enjoys riding the waves on the beach.	67,7%	32,3%%
6.	Mangroves are seashore plants which protect the beach from abrasion and erosion.	77,4%	22,6%
7.	Puput will play jet sky which is her hobby at Trikora Beach.	64,5%	35,5%

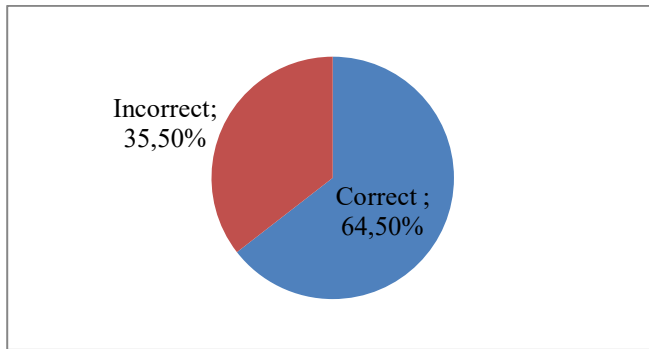
Table 2 shows the students' answers in determining whether the sentence Stepping 5 stairs "D" is true or false. The data is obtained based on the results of students filling out a questionnaire containing 7 true or false questions.

**Question 1:** The picture which was taken from a sea shell had been uploaded on Instagram.



*Image 1.* Pie chart of answers to question 1 according to participants. From the diagram, it can be concluded that out of 31 students, 77.40% students can answer questions correctly, and 22.60% students are wrong in answering questions, namely in determining correct and incorrect on stepping stair "D".

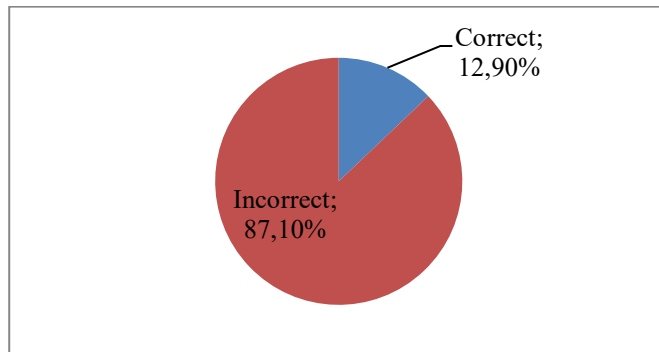
**Question 2:** Erika went fishing for catfish which was her favorite food yesterday.



*Image 2.* Pie chart of answers to question 2 according to participants.

From the diagram, it can be concluded that out of 31 students, 64.50% students can answer the question correctly and 35.50% students are wrong in answering the question, namely in determining correct and incorrect on the stepping stair "D".

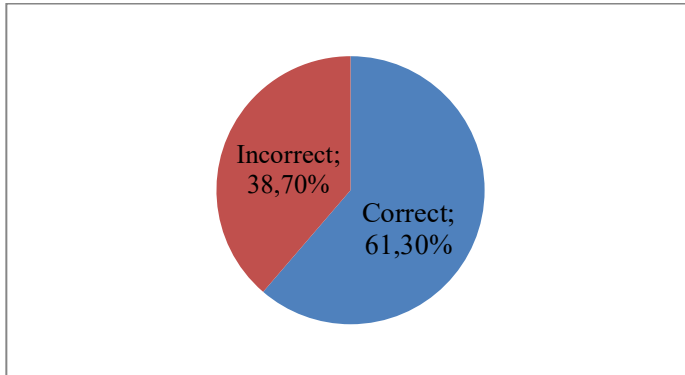
**Question 3:** They looked for a cat which is lost on the beach yesterday.



*Image 3.* Pie chart of answers to question 3 according to participants.

From these questions, only 12.90% of students can answer the questions correctly and 87.10% of students are wrong in answering finding correct and incorrect. It can be concluded that students do not focus on reading the questions given.

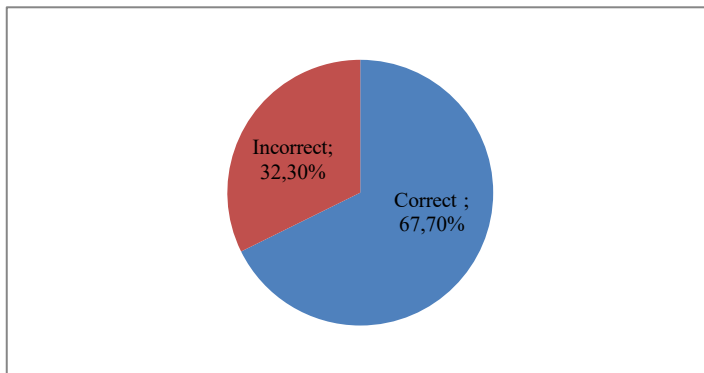
**Question 4:** Joy always goes on vacation to the coastal areas in Natuna which have become her favorite tourist spot lately.



*Image 4.* Pie chart of answers to question 4 according to participants.

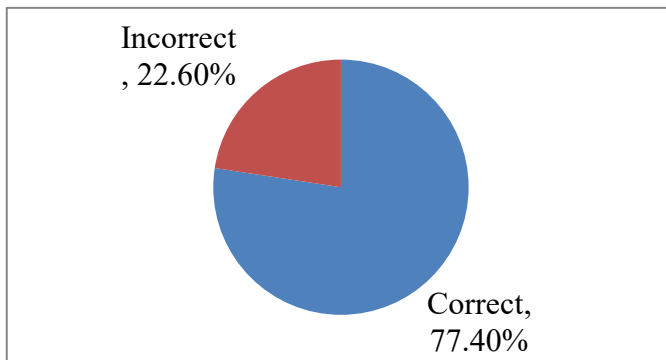
From the diagram above, it can be seen that 61.30% of students can answer the question and 38.70% of students are wrong in determining the correct and incorrect choices.

**Question 5:** Sarah which is a famous surfer enjoys riding the waves on the beach.



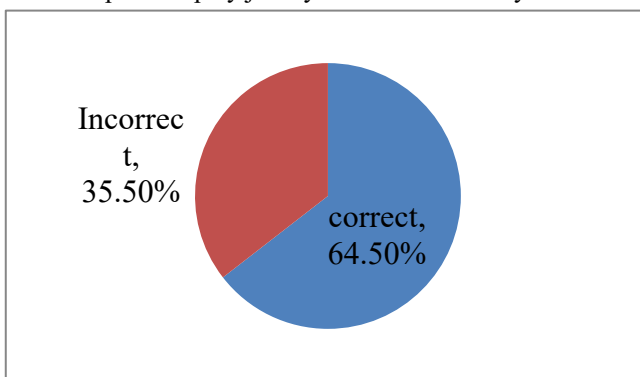
From the diagram above, it can be seen that 67.7% students can answer the question and 32.3% students are wrong in determining the correct and incorrect choices.

**Question 6:** Mangroves are seashore plants which protect the beach from abrasion and erosion.



From the diagram above, it can be seen that students can answer 77.4% of the questions and 23.6% of students are wrong in determining the correct and incorrect choices.

**Question 7:** Puput will play jet sky which is her hobby at Trikora Beach.



The result of the graph above is that only 35.19% of the students were wrong in answering the questions and 64.50% of the students were correct in determining the correct and incorrect questions in the table.

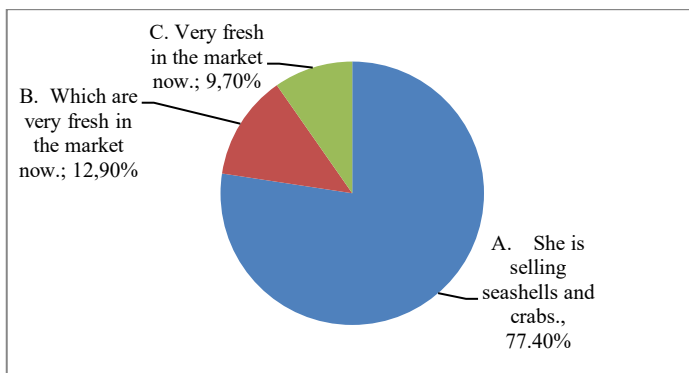
**Table 3: Students determine the Main Clause in the sentence**

No	Questions	Option			Answer
		A	B	C	
1.	She is selling seashells and crabs which are very fresh in the market now.	77,4%	12,9%	9,7%	A
2.	My brother who drives a car has visited the beach recently.	19,4%	6,4%	74,2%	C
3.	We have to keep sustainable coral reefs which are the source of marine life.	74,2%	9,7%	16,1%	A
4.	Jack who seats on the boat is waving his hand to me.	19,4%	58,1%	22,6%	B

<b>5.</b>	A boat which follows the wind has been moved with waves.	22,6%	71%	6,5%	<b>B</b>
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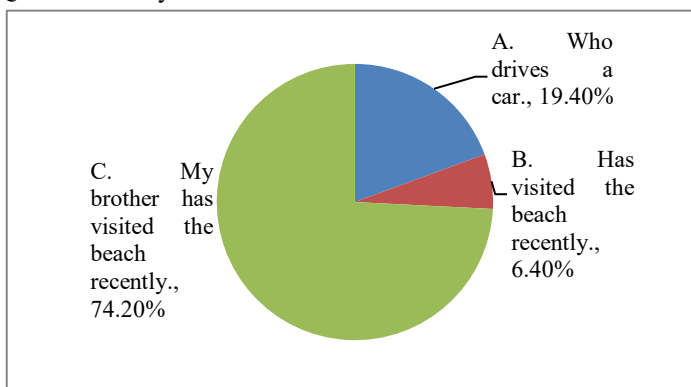
The table above is the result of students' answers in determining the Main Clause in the sentence. The questions given are 5 questions with three options. Furthermore, it is explained in more detail about student answers based on the diagrams below.

**Question 1: She is selling seashells and crabs which are very fresh in the market now.**



The diagram above shows that only 22.60% of students answered the question incorrectly and 77.40% were correct in determining the main clause in the sentence above.

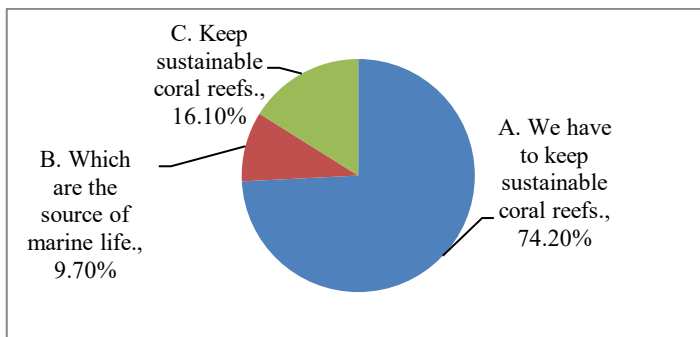
**Question 2: My brother who drives a car has visited the beach recently.**



The findings of the results from the table diagram above show 74.20% of students who are able to answer questions, while students who are wrong in answering questions are only 25.80% students, in determining the main clause in the sentence question.

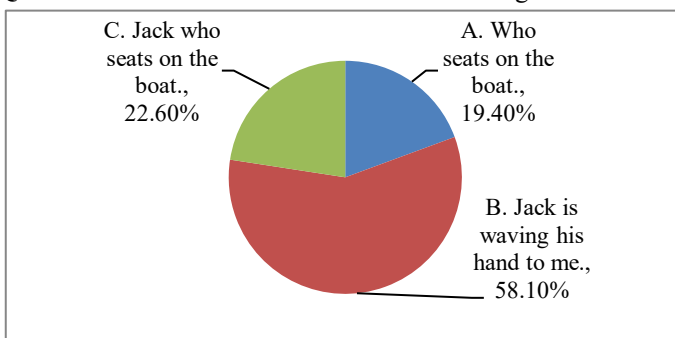


**Question 3:** We have to keep sustainable coral reefs which are the source of marine life.



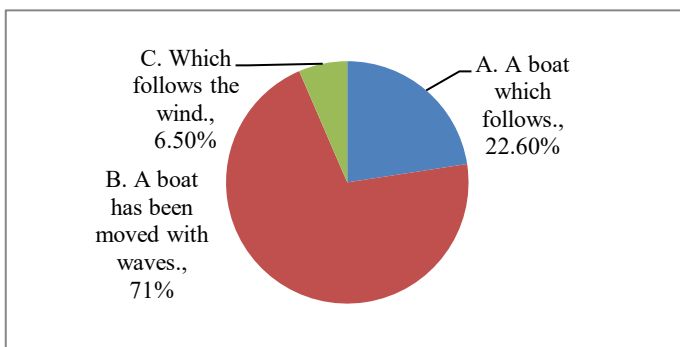
From the exposure to the results of the diagram above, many students are correct in answering which is 74.20% while those who are wrong in answering questions are only 25.80% students.

**Question 4:** Jack who seats on the boat is waving his hand to me.



Based on the results of the diagram above, students who answered the question correctly were 58.10% students and 41.85% were wrong in answering the main clause question.

**Question 5:** A boat which follows the wind has been moved with waves.



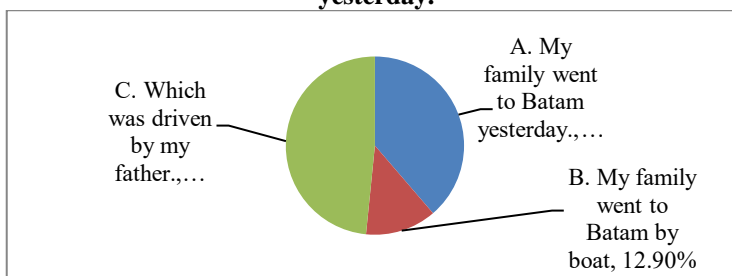
From the diagram, it can be concluded that out of 31 students, 71.00% students can answer questions correctly and 29.00% students are wrong in answering questions about the main clause.

**Table 4: Students determine the sub clause in the sentence**

No	Questions	Option			Answer
		A	B	C	
1.	My family went to Batam by boat which was driven by my father yesterday.	38,7%	12,9%	48,4%	C
2.	A girl who always swims in the sea can't get a swim champion.	16,1%	38,7%	45,2%	C
3.	A fisherman who always sails Benggol fish every night becomes a famous fish trader.	54,8%	29%	16,1%	A
4.	A rope which is tied by a fisherman has been removed from the anchor.	22,6%	54,8%	22,6%	B
5.	A canoe which is followed by wind has been moved with the wave.	32,3%	22,6%	45,2%	C

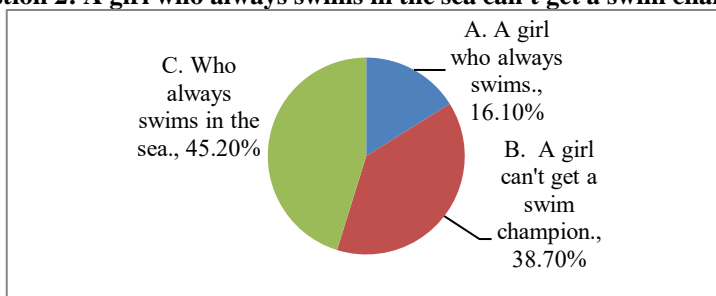
The table above is a problem given to students, where students are asked to determine the subclause in the sentence. The questions given consist of 5 questions with 3 answer choices. The results of student answers can be seen from the following diagrams.

**Question 1: My family went to Batam by boat which was driven by my father yesterday.**



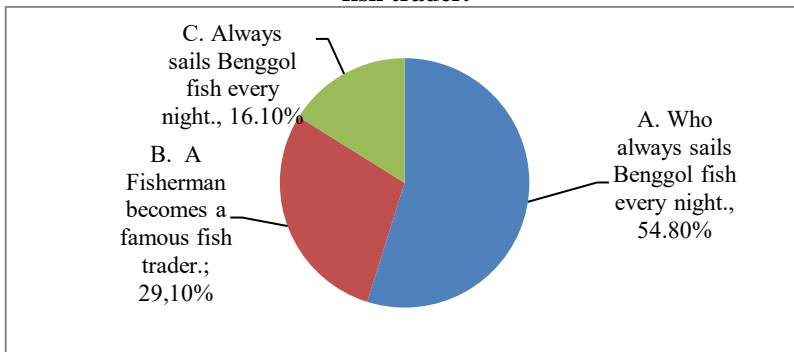
Based on the results of students' responses in answering questions in the table above, it shows that students who are correct in answering only 48.40% of students, while students who are wrong in answering questions are more, namely 51.60% of students.

**Question 2: A girl who always swims in the sea can't get a swim champion.**



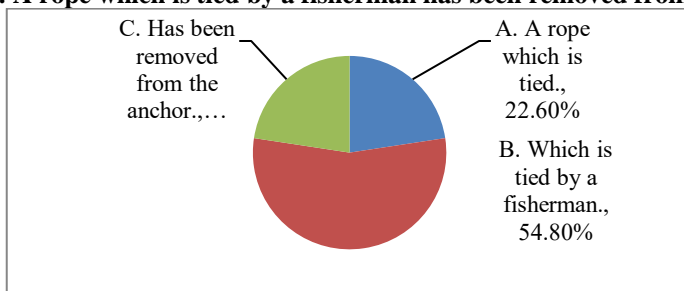
Based on the results of the diagram above, students who answered the question correctly were 45.20% students and 54.80% were wrong in answering sub-clause questions.

**Question 3: A fisherman who always sails Benggol fish every night becomes a famous fish trader.**



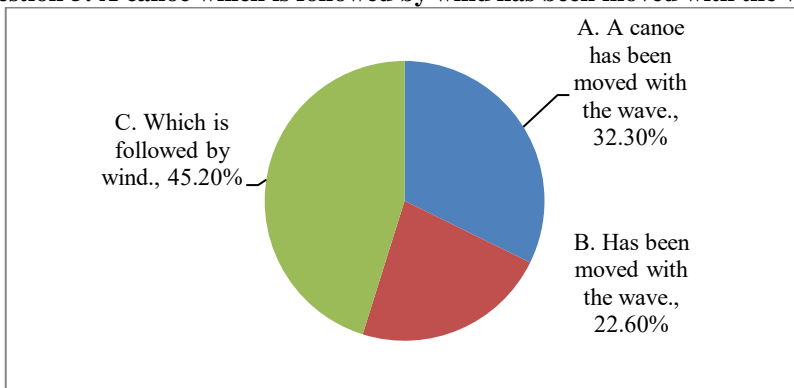
From the diagram above, it can be seen that students who answered the question correctly were only 54.80%, while the rest could not answer correctly at 45.20%. So we can conclude that more students can determine the subclause correctly.

**Question 4: A rope which is tied by a fisherman has been removed from the anchor.**



Based on the results of the diagram above shows, students who answered the question incorrectly were 45.20% students and 54.80% correct in answering sub-clause questions. Table 5: Students are asked to determine the SBD in the sentence.

**Question 5: A canoe which is followed by wind has been moved with the wave.**



Based on the results of the diagram above, students who answered the question correctly were 45.20% of students and 54.80% were wrong in answering sub-clause questions.

### 3.2 Discussion

Based on the results of the study, the data shows that most of the 4th semester English education students have been able to determine the correct and incorrect sentences in the

sentence. Students were given a test of 7 questions to identify whether the sentences given were correct or not. The questions given are related to coastal deah. The results obtained were more than 50% of students answered correctly. Furthermore, students are asked to determine the main clause and sub clause. From the results of research conducted by [6], which states that students still find it difficult to distinguish main clause and subclause, this is due to their lack of understanding of the concept of clauses and the grammatical structure of clauses.

Based on the results of the data conducted by the researcher, it was found that the ability of K1 and K2 students in identifying main clause and sub clause was quite good. By using the stepping 5 stairs "D" technique, students are able to answer the test to determine the main clause and sub clause quite well. This can be seen from the students' answers attached to the data. However, there are still some students who are still lacking in identifying main clause and sub clause properly and correctly. This can be seen from the wrong answers in each student test. Therefore, students are advised to be concrete and pay attention to each sentence seriously.

## 4 Conclusion

English clause is one of the things that must be mastered for students who study English. Students encounter a variety of difficulties during learning, including the task of constructing English clauses in a sentence so that they make sense in the context of the sentence. The Research is used a Qualitative Data Methods to test the ability of English language students to analyze and create English clauses using the stepping the 5 stairs "D" techniques.

Based on the results of the study, the data shows that most of the 4th semester English education students have been able to determine the correct and incorrect sentences in the sentence. However, there are still some students who are still lacking in identifying main clause and sub clause properly and correctly. This can be seen from the wrong answers in each student test. Therefore, students are advised to be concrete and pay attention to each sentence seriously.

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