

Grammatical Relations and Semantic Roles of English Active Clauses in Reference to Crazy Rich Asian Novel

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui dan menganalisis relasi gramatikal dan peran semantis pada klausa aktif berbahasa Inggris di novel Crazy Rich Asian. Penelitian ini termasuk jenis penelitian pustaka dengan sumber data diambil dari novel yang terbit pada tahun 2013. Data pada penelitian ini dikumpulkan melalui metode dokumentasi dan teknik catat untuk mencari klausa aktif di novel. Dalam menganalisis data, penelitian ini mengaplikasikan metode deskriptif-kualitatif dengan dasar teori dari Kroeger tentang struktur argumen, relasi gramatikal, dan peran semantis. Analisis pada penelitian ini disajikan dengan metode informal dalam bentuk deskripsi. Hasil studi menunjukkan bahwa relasi gramatikal yang ada pada klausa aktif di novel terdiri atas subjek, objek primer, objek sekunder, dan oblik. Relasi gramatikal ini memiliki peran semantisnya yang terdiri atas agen, benefaktif, tema, pasien, stimulus, dan lokatif.

Kata kunci: Hubungan Gramatikal, Peran Semantik, Klausa Aktif

Abstract

This study is aimed to determine and analyze the grammatical relations and semantic roles of English active clauses in the novel entitled Crazy Rich Asian. This study was a library research in which the data source was a novel published in 2013. The data were collected through documentation method with note-taking technique in order to find the active clauses in the novel. In analyzing the data, this study applied descriptive-qualitative method based on Kroeger's theory of argument structures, grammatical relations, and semantic roles. The analysis was presented in informal method through description. The result of the study shows that the grammatical relations of active clauses in Crazy Rich Asian novel are distributed into subject, primary object, secondary object, and oblique. These grammatical relations act according to their semantic roles in the clauses, such as agent, beneficiary, theme, patient, stimulus, and location.

Keywords : *Grammatical Relations, Semantic Roles, Active Clause*

INTRODUCTION

A verb in English requires at least a subject to operate a grammatical sentence. In other words, a participant must be involved within a clause. Therefore, Kroeger (2005, p. 53) defined that the individuals (or participants) of whom the property or relationship is claimed to be true are called arguments. The participants previously implied are regarded as arguments. Moreover, a verb may take more participants to involve in a clause it operates. In other words, different verb possibly takes different number of arguments. When a predicate is asserted to be true of the right number of arguments, the result is a well-formed proposition.

Syntactic structure or grammatical structure may motivate form of arguments that a verb assigns. When a clause consists of pronouns, the form of the pronoun depends on its

case, either nominative or accusative case form. In English, pronoun is distinguished based on its case, nominative and accusative case form. The first person singular pronoun stands as 'I' when it acts as a subject, which belongs to nominative. On the other hand, it turns to 'me' when its case is accusative and acts as an object. In addition, the order or position of the argument also denotes its case. Argument does not always stands with a pronoun form; it probably takes the form of nominal types. Therefore, it is necessary to deal with grammatical relation of arguments since it describes the structure of arguments that a verb can assign.

Grammatical relation provides mapping of form and position of an argument. However, in order to convey a message, it is necessary to deal with meaning, in this case the semantic structure. The grammatical structure or the surface structure provides information about what form and where the argument stands. Whereas, the semantic function will provide the relation of arguments and the verb. It is necessary, for instance, to recognize whether an argument plays a role of agent or experiencer. Verbs involved in mental states and emotions tend to assign an experiencer. On the other hand, an action verb tends to associate with agent.

Agent which is based on semantic function or role of an argument is frequently found confusing. The term agent has been frequently associated with and assumed as syntactic function of subject, mostly in passive sentence. This traditional understanding of grammar will lead to misinformation; therefore, this study attempts to examine how grammatical relations and semantic roles are associated within active clauses.

METHOD

The discussion within this study were about grammatical relations and semantic roles of arguments within active clauses and sentences in the novel of *Crazy Rich Asian*. This novel was published in 2013. The author of this novel is Kevin Kwan. This novel is chosen as the data source of this study since it shows how language actually works within written text and some dialogues as well. Documentation method was applied in collecting the data (Bungin, 2007). Note-taking technique was also applied. The first step of data collection was reading the novel and finding clauses and sentences classified to active voice. Huddleston and Pullum (2005, p. 26) stated that active voice is a way to present information in sentences. The active clauses and sentences were sorted based on their structure to know which clause or sentence that has subject only, subject-object, or subject-object-oblique. By recognizing the structure, the grammatical relations and semantic roles of the data were known.

Descriptive-qualitative method was applied in analyzing the data (Zaim, 2014). The data were analyzed based on how the linguistic properties operate. They operate on the relation within the language units or linguistic properties. Based on the grammatical relation and semantic structure of the argument, it was mapped to its syntactic and semantic roles. The analysis was conducted by recognizing the structure of the clause to determine which argument acted as subject, object, or oblique. This process was mainly determined by the verb of the clause/sentence. Based on the verb and the arguments it had, the grammatical relations of the clause/sentence were determined. Analyzing the semantic roles was done afterward. The analyzing process of this study was based on Kroeger's theory (2005) about argument structures, grammatical relations, and semantic roles.

Van Valin (2004, p. 33) states that, there are strong tendencies for certain phenomena to involve a particular relation and examples of the most likely constructions to pick out subjects, direct objects or indirect objects will be presented. Based on this understanding, the syntactic relations between a verb and the noun phrases in a clause are indicated by grammatical relations. Subject, direct object, and indirect object are all common grammatical relations. Oblique noun phrases are those that are not part of the main argument.

According to Kroeger (2005, p. 62) arguments must be assigned a grammatical relation within the clause. The grammatical relation of an argument, which is determined on the basis of morphological and syntactic properties, is not the same as its semantic role, which is determined by the meaning of the verb. It should be determined based on its grammatical properties and order. Based on Kroeger's theory, there are five grammatical relations, namely

subject, primary object, secondary object, adjunct, and oblique. In this analysis, the subject, primary object, and secondary object are called as terms (2005, p. 57).

In relation to the argument, which is defined as participant of an event, Kroger stated (2005, p. 54) that it is helpful to classify arguments into broad semantic categories according to the kind of role they play in the situations described by their predicates, and the same idea he proposed (Kroeger, 2004, p. 9) was that the approach which will be adopted is to assign participants to broad semantic or conceptual categories according to the role they play in the described event or situation. In other word, the semantic role of an argument will keep the proposition of a sentence or messages conveyed in a sentence. Valin (2004, p. 23) states that each verb or other predicate has a certain number of arguments, each of which bears a distinct semantic role; this will be referred to as a verb's argument structure. Within this understanding, the argument structure of a verb is the number of arguments it contains, each of which has a specific semantic role. Kroeger (2005) proposes several semantic roles as the following.

1. Agent: causer or initiator of events.
2. Experiencer: animate entity which perceives a stimulus or registers a particular mental or emotional process or state.
3. Recipient: animate entity which receives or acquires something.
4. Beneficiary: entity (usually animate) for whose benefit an action is performed.
5. Instrument: inanimate entity used by an agent to perform some action.
6. Theme: entity which undergoes a change of location or possession, or whose location is being specified.
7. Patient: entity which is acted upon, affected, or created; or of which a state or change of state is predicated.
8. Stimulus: object of perception, cognition, or emotion; entity which is seen, heard, known, remembered, loved, hated, etc.
9. Location: spatial reference point of the event (the source, goal, and path roles are often considered to be sub-types of location).
 - a. Source: the origin or beginning point of a motion.
 - b. Goal: the destination or end-point of a motion.
 - c. Path: the trajectory or pathway of a motion.
10. Accompaniment (or comitative): entity which accompanies or is associated with the performance of an action.

The data analysis was presented in informal method. The analysis was provided in the form of description. The structure of the analysis was displayed in a sequence of data, grammatical relation, semantic roles, and analysis respectively.

There are past studies concerning grammatical relations and semantic roles. These past studies were reviewed to prevent plagiarism; thus, current study could provide a new information about grammatical relations and semantic roles.

The first relevant research reviewed is a study from Arta (2020). This study discussed the argument structure brought by verbs in declarative sentences. The result indicate that there are different types of verb that influence the number of arguments in a sentence. There are transitive, intransitive, and ditransitive verbs.

The second study reviewed was from Yuniartati (2017) entitled Syntactic Functions of Deverbal Nouns Found in Huffington Post Website: Morphosyntactic Approach. This study analyzed the suffixes that change a category of word into noun and its syntactic function on a sentence. This study showed that the deverbal nouns act as a subject and object in a sentence.

Yani (2018) also stated her findings in her study entitled Transitivity Construction of Verbal Clause in Ciacia Language in relation to the grammatical relation discussed in this study. It is found that verbal clause construction of Ciacia language is always filled by subject and aspect markers (S/AM) that are affixed to PRED verb.

Udayana (2016) discussed that argument is not only motivated by the lexico-semantics of a verb but it can be also the interface of syntax and discourse. In the study entitled Argument Structure at Syntax-Discourse Interface, the finding showed that there are three constructions

which have the notion of information structure phenomena – dummy it, passive, and anti-passive. In a study entitled *The Argument Structure of Passive Clauses Found in English Novels* by Sari (2021), it is known that in passive clauses, agent can or cannot be expressed. The study showed that there are subject, object, oblique, and adjunct grammatical relations present in passive sentences.

Dwipayana (2023) discovered how grammatical relation and semantic roles of argument in English verb of transfer “Convey” is operated. The study focused on grammatical relation and semantic roles of argument within a specific argument structure. Other past studies concerning grammatical relations and semantic roles (Arta et al., 2022; Cahyadi, 2013; Marhaendra D, 2017; Priyastini et al., 2016; Adiguna, 2014; Dewi, 2018; Dina Pratiwi et al., 2018; Giri Ratih et al., 2018) have discussed the same topic but not in a specific area of active clauses like current study.

There are also past studies in which the object of study was different languages compared to current study, such as from Dwi Antari (2014) Sri Maharani et al. (2019), and Supini & Savitri (2017). Current study differs from past studies mentioned above as current study comprehensively discussed active clauses and provided new discussion with different data source.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis is based on Kroeger’s theory of argument structure, grammatical relations, and semantic roles. According to the novel, the findings of this study show that the grammatical relations in active clauses take positions as subject, primary object, secondary object, and oblique. These relations possess their own semantic roles. The discussion of the data can be seen below.

Data 1

Three Chinese women stood nearby
Noun-Subject Verb Adv-Adjunct

The data above has a verb stood which is the past form of stand. Because the verb belongs to intransitive verb; therefore, the argument it brings is only subject as the core argument. According to the data above, the only argument assigned by the verb is the noun phrase of three Chinese women. Based on its order, it is clear that the term stands as the subject. The argument comes at the beginning of the clause, or precisely before the verb. This argument does not perform any pronoun form, neither subject or object pronoun. Referring to the agreement, past tense with the second form of verb does not show any agreement. However, the second form of verbs is agreed with any subject, without having any circumstances with what subject it takes. The only wh-question word could replace the subject is who without changing any order or form of the clause. Therefore, it is clear that this argument stands as the subject of the clause.

However, an adverb is left from the argument structure since it is not considered as term or oblique. Although nearby shows where the action is performed, this unit does not have close relation to the verb as it is not required by the verb. In other word, nearby is regarded as adjunct. The semantic role that is assigned to the only term is agent due to initiator of the action of standing.

Data 2

Eleanor nodded in agreement
Noun-SUBJ Verb. Adv-Adjunct

The verb nodded in the data above is a past form of nod and it belongs to intransitive verb because it does not require any object to follow it. Therefore, it only brings one argument, namely subject. The subject is Eleanor, since it comes before the verb which is performed in past tense. Based on its word order, it is acceptable to consider this argument as the subject.

Although it does not appear in the pronoun form or does not perform a question tag, providing content question is also possible, who nodded in agreement? Therefore, Eleanor is considered as subject. The subject as the only term or direct argument takes the role of agent that goes an action of nodding. Regarding to the rest of the sentence, it does not account for an argument, term, or semantic role, since the prepositional phrase in agreement is semantically independent and it cannot sub-classify the predicate. In addition, the phrase can substitute another constituent. Although the phrase is performed with preposition, it does not guarantee that it belongs to argument as it is not closely related or required by the verb. Therefore, it is considered as an adjunct. The semantic role that is assigned to the only term is agent due to initiator of the action of nodding.

Data 3

He recognized the name.
N-SUBJ Verb N-OBJ

The verb in this sentence is 'recognized', which is a past form of a verb. This verb assigns two arguments, two terms, he and the name; the verb recognized is therefore a transitive verb. The first argument in word order is regarded as subject since it appears before the verb, and the argument that appears after the verb is regarded as object. The first term is performed with subject pronoun he, third person singular form of subject. Moreover, their positions have grammatically described their function and relation. In addition, content questions can also describe each argument grammatical relation; they are who recognized the name? and what did he recognize. In the first content question, the question word replaces the term he and the rest of the sentence remains the same. On the other hand, there is a slight change within the second content question. An auxiliary did appear before the subject. Moreover, the following argument is regarded as object, in this case primary object, as the object is the only object and it comes directly after the verb. It does not have following object, and the clause does not have a secondary object. Thus, he and the name are considered as subject and object in sequence.

Semantically, the verb 'recognized' requires someone who recognized and something which is recognized. The first argument he plays the role of experiencer due to the cognitive process within the verb. While, the following term the name stimulates the cognitive process of recognizing; it is therefore considered as stimulus.

Data 4

You booked the Lancaster Suite.
N-SUBJ Verb N-OBJ

The verb within this data is also considered as transitive verb as it takes two arguments, 'you' and 'the Lancaster Suite'. The verb booked is performed in past form which derives from book. These arguments are regarded as subject and object respectively. The first argument can be considered as subject as its position has shown that it comes before the verb. Moreover, it is performed with subject pronoun he, third person singular form of subject. On the other hand, the following argument stands after the verb. Although no pronoun form is performed within the object, the position has proved its function. Moreover, when tested with content question, it shows the same evidence, who booked the Lancaster Suite? and what did you book? First question word replaces the subject without interfering the rest of the clause; on the other hand, the second content question has a slight change by the auxiliary verb did and different order. Moreover, the following argument is regarded as object, in this case primary object, as the object is the only object and it comes directly after the verb. It does not have following object, and the clause does not have a secondary object.

As presented within the data, the semantic role of the subject is agent; this argument is regarded as agent since it represents a human being who initiates an action of booking. The object of the clause is regarded as patient as it is affected by the action of booking.

Data 5

Their butler always serves us caviar with
N-SUBJ Verb OBJ1 OBJ2
little triangles of toasted bread.

The verb within this data is considered as ditransitive verb as it takes three arguments, namely 'their butler', 'us', and 'caviar with little triangles of toasted bread'. The verb 'serves' is performed in present form for third singular pronoun which derives from serve. These arguments are regarded as subject, primary object, and secondary object respectively. The first argument can be considered as subject as its position has shown that it comes before the verb. On the other hand, the following argument stands after the verb. Pronoun form is performed within the object, objective form of we, us; the position has proved its function. Moreover, when tested with content question, it shows the same evidence, who always serves us caviar with little triangles of toasted bread? The question word replaces the subject without interfering the rest of the clause. Moreover, the following argument is regarded as object, in this case primary object, and it comes directly after the verb. After the primary object, a noun phrase comes as the secondary object. The object of preposition is not regarded as an oblique as it is modifying the prepositional phrase which modifies the preceding noun.

As presented within the data, the semantic role of the subject is agent; this argument is regarded as agent since it represents a human being who initiates an action of serving. The object of the clause is regarded as beneficiary as the entity 'us' benefits from the action of serving; moreover, the third argument, which is the secondary object, is regarded as theme as it moves from the butler to us.

Data 6

I -m getting myself a drink
N-SUBJ Verb OBJ1 OBJ2

The verb within this data is also considered as ditransitive verb as it takes three arguments, namely 'I', 'myself', and 'a drink'. The verb getting is performed in present form for which derives from get and it is also preceded by to be am. These arguments are regarded as subject, primary object, and secondary object respectively. The first argument can be considered as subject as its position has shown that it comes before the verb. On the other hand, the following argument stands after the verb. Pronoun form is performed within the subject; the position has proved its function. Moreover, when tested with content question, it shows the same evidence. The question word replaces the subject without interfering the rest of the clause. Moreover, the following argument is regarded as object, in this case primary object, and it comes directly after the verb. After the primary object, a noun phrase comes as the secondary object.

As presented within the data, the semantic role of the subject is agent; this argument is regarded as agent since it represents a human being who initiates an action of getting. The object of the clause is regarded as beneficiary as the entity 'myself' benefits from the action of getting; moreover, this argument is the same entity depicted by the subject. The third argument, which is the secondary object, is regarded as theme as it moves from a particular place to the entity.

Data 7

Eddie walked over to his younger cousins.
N-SUBJ Verb OBL

This sentence has an intransitive verb. Therefore, it only has one core argument, which is Eddie that stands as a subject. Based on its position, it comes before verb; it indicates that

this argument stands for subject although it is not performed with pronoun form. In addition, content question may support that Eddie is a subject – who walked over to his younger cousins. An inexistence of a subject has proved that the content question stands for a subject.

Looking at the data, it consists of an indirect argument or oblique. It is shown by the prepositional phrase 'to his younger cousins' and it can be sub-classified as the location of the predicate.

Semantically, the subject takes the role of theme, entity that goes a movement of walking, from a starting point to an ending point, and at the same time it can be also regarded as an agent as this entity is the initiator of the action of walking. In relation, the oblique his younger cousin represents the role of location, especially goal as the end point of the movement. Although the starting point is not specified in the sentence, it is clear that the predicate assigns the role of theme to the subject.

Data 8

Felicity went back to where her younger
N-SUBJ Verb OBL
sister Alexandra Cheng stood guarding the luggage.

This data is similar to data 7. It has only one term, which is a direct argument of subject shown by Felicity. Based on its position, it comes before verb; it indicates that this argument stands for subject although it is not performed with pronoun form. In addition, content question may support that Felicity is a subject – who went back to where her younger sister Alexandra Cheng stood guarding the luggage. An inexistence of a subject has proved that the content question stands for a subject. This clause does not have object as no argument comes directly after the verb.

Besides the subject, this sentence consists of an indirect argument or oblique shown by prepositional phrase 'to where her younger sister Alexandra Cheng stood guarding the luggage'. However, oblique within this data is filled with a clause which is shown by a subject and a verb within the clause. Moreover, this clause could represent argument required by the verb. It comes after a preposition to and it can be sub-classified as the location of the predicate.

Semantically, the subject takes the role of theme, entity that goes a movement of going, from a starting point to an ending point, and at the same time it can be also regarded as an agent as this entity is the initiator of the action of going. In relation, the oblique 'to where her younger sister Alexandra Cheng stood guarding the luggage', represents the role of location, especially goal as the end point of the movement. Although the starting point is not specified in the sentence, it is clear that the predicate assigns the role of theme to the subject.

SIMPULAN

Based on the foregoing analysis, it can be concluded that the active clauses in the novel entitled Crazy Rich Asian have varied grammatical relations and a variety of semantic roles. The following points can be drawn as conclusions.

The grammatical relations of arguments in active clauses involve subject, primary object, secondary object, and oblique. These grammatical relations are influenced by the verbs within active clauses in English, which can be classified as intransitive, transitive, and ditransitive. Subject is a must for all types of verb. Subject and primary object are required for transitive verb. Subject, primary object, and secondary object are required for ditransitive verbs. Oblique may or may not present in active clauses, but it is found in prepositional phrase.

According to the grammatical relations possessed by the arguments, there are a variety of semantic roles found. The roles are agent, beneficiary, theme, patient, stimulus, and location.

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