French *Où*-relatives and *Que*-relatives Expressing Time Produced by Indonesian Students Learning French at B1 Level

Tri Indri Hardini and Dudung Gumilar

Departement of French Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Jl. Dr. Setiabudhi No. 229, Bandung, Indonesia
dudunggumilar@upi.edu

Abstract: This paper aims to analyse French interlanguage occurrence of 63 French language students at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. The purpose of this research especially to describe the interlanguage phenomenon that occurs in the acquisition process of French *où*-relative and que-relative expressing time. The method used in this study is qualitative descriptive method. The data collected through a test which consists of productive and receptive questions. The results showed that the interlanguage occurrence can be explained, and most students ability in forming *ou*-relative and que-relative for expressing time were high and close to native speakers'.

1 INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses interlanguage in French. The topic discussed here is the acquisition of French relative clauses focussing on investigating the competence of the formation of relative clauses owned by French learners who are at level B1 at a state university in West Java Indonesia. The data in this study were (1) où-relative where *où* means *yang* in Indonesian and *when* in English, and (2) que-relative where *que* also means *yang* in Indonesian but *that* in English. Both clauses above state the time. An example of que-relative is (1) *Un jour que je sortais*. 'One day when I was going out' and an *où*-relative example is *l'hiver où vous détestez*. The winter that you hate.

The main difference between (1) and (2) above, according to Hawkins and Towell (2007) using Grammar Usage approach, is that *où*-relative is formed when the head is a definite element (eg the head *le moment* 'the time') whereas que-relative is made when the head is indefinite (eg. the head *un jour*). But unfortunately, Hawkins and Towell (2007) do not provide underlying structure that can distinguish the position of où 'when' and que 'that' in the constructions. Therefore, this paper adopts the structure of French *où*-relative and *que*-relative form, in particular (Prevost, 2009; Chomsky, 1995; Jones, 1996; Benţea, 2010; Prentza, 2012;

Huhmarniemi and Brattico, 2013; Fiorentino, 2007; Koenig and Lambrecht, 1999; Gallego, 2005).

1. L' hiveri oùi vous destetezj tj ti
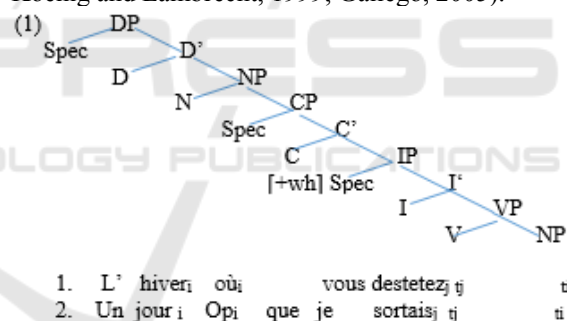2. Un jour i Opi que je sortaisj tj ti

Figure 1: The structure of French *où*-relative and *que*-relative form.

According to Figure 1, the position of *où*-relative occupied by the question word *où* is SpecCP whereas in *que*-relative, the position taken by *que* is under the C(omplementizer). Based on Prevost's proposal, learners who have competencies to form *où*-relative and *que*-relative formation are those who have mastered some assumptions of relative clause formations. *First*, French relative clause behaves like embedded wh-questions. *Second*, relative clauses involve C element that has a strong [+ wh] feature not interpretable by semantics; (b) feature [+wh] of C must be removed by involving wh-movement word question *où* (also has [+ wh]) and Operator movement (also has features [+ wh]) for que-relative. *Thirdly*, in *où*-relative, the question

word *où* moves from IP to SpecCP to remove the feature of [+ wh] belonging to C marked by co-indexed between *l'hiver* 'winter' (definite DP) with the question word *où* and finally formed *où*-relative where DP *l'hiver* 'winter' has a predicate *où voùs detestez* 'that you hate'. *Fourthly*, in *que*-relative, Operator moves from IP t (indefinite DP) and OP and finally forms que-relative where DP *un jour* 'one day' has predicate *que je sortais* 'that I left'. Finally, in the IP structures, the subject DP of *Je* 'I' and *Vous* 'you' occupy the SpecIP to obtain Nominative Case and all verbs under I to have agreement between subject and verbs for example Tense [± Past] and Agreement [+ Number, + Gender, + Person]. The structure in (1) will be used as French representation of the *où*-relative and que-relative that the students must master. In the context of interlanguage, this paper aims at describing the students level of interlanguage in mastering French relative clauses, in particular *où*-relative and que-relative relative.

2 METHODS

This study used qualitative approach. The subjects are 63 students learning French at B1 level. The object of this paper is the grammatical competence owned by those students. The data used to explain the grammatical competence is *où*-relative and que-relative. This study used theoretical syntax of the Minimalist Program of Generative Grammar to gain the underlying structure and grammatical competence needed to form *où*-relative and que-relative. The instrument to collect data is test which consists of productive and receptive tests. Students are declared to be successful if they reach 75% of each test. The data analysis is to compare between the results of the tests against the assumptions imposed to form *où*-relative and *que*-relative.

3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the productive test in table 1 and receptive test in table 2 show that the majority of learners have had the competency to form *où*-relative and *que*-relative. They have reached the level of near native speakers of French. The students who make mistakes are caused by their inability to compose *où*-relative and *que*-relative. In table 1 it can be seen that the item test consists of 6 items of *où*-relative and 4 items of *que*-relative.

Table 1: Productive Test.

No.	Relative Clauses	Right
1	regardais, / au / me / le /moment / dos / **où-que** / je / vous / vous /tourniez Le moment$_i$ [CP où$_i$ [IP je vous regardais vous me tourniez le dos $_{ti}$]] The moment when I watched you, you turned your back	84,13 %
2	viendra / attend / on / **où-que** / le / la / pluie / jour On attend le jour$_i$ [CP où$_i$ [IP la pluie viendra $_{ti}$]] We are waiting for the day when the rain will come	85,71
3	**où-que** / me souviens / rencontré / jour / du / je / je / l'ai Je me souviens du jour$_i$ [CP où$_i$ [IP je l'ai rencontré $_{ti}$]] I remember the day when I met him	96,83
4	le / hier / plus / c'était / j'aimais / **où-que** C'était hier$_i$ [CP Op$_i$ que [IP j'aimais le plus $_{ti}$]] It was yesterday that I loved the most.	90,48
5	détestent / **où-que** / lundi / certaines / le / est / jour /personnes Lundi est le jour$_i$ [CP où$_i$ [IP certaines personnes détestent$_{ti}$]]. Monday is the day that some people hate.	88,89
6	beaucoup / **où-que** / j'aime / hivers / les / neige / il J'aime les jours de l'hiver$_i$ [CP où$_i$ [IP il neige beaucoup $_{ti}$]] I like days of winter when it snowed a lot	87,3
7	jamais / jours / toi / avec / je / pourrais / ne / passé / France / **où-que** / oublier / des / en / j'ai Je ne pourrais jamais oublier des jours$_i$ [CP Op$_i$ que [IP j'ai passé avec toi en France$_{ti}$]]. I could never forget the days that I spent with you in France	87,3
8	aimé / **où-que** / moment / jardin / des / ton / passé / j'ai / avons / bien / nous / dans J'ai bien aimé des moments$_i$ [CP Op$_i$ que [nous avons passé dans ton jardin$_{ti}$]]. I enjoyed the moment that we spent in your garden	79,4
9	**où-que** / temps / sérieusement / commences / il / tu / serait / travailler / à Il serait temps$_i$ [CP Op$_i$ que [tu commences à travailler sérieusement $_{ti}$]] It is time that you start working seriously.	82,5
10	Détestez / j'attends / vous / l'hiver / **où-que** J'attends le moment [CP où [IP Je peux vous parler$_{ti}$]] I'm waiting for the moment when I can speak to you	81

Based on data from table 1, the majority of learners demonstrate their ownership of grammar competence to form *où*-relative and *que* relative. This is supported by the awareness of learner to treats relative clauses as (1) embedded wh-questions, (2) each relative clause invertigated has a C element that hat features [+ wh], (3) to form *où*-relative, the learner feels the necessity to replace the [+wh] feature of C with the [+ wh] feature of the question word *où* through wh-movement and put it in SpecCP, (4) wh-movement creates the co-index between the DP head with the *où* question and (5) to form que-relative, the learner has an intuition to remove the [+ wh] feature of C with the [+ wh]

feature of Operator through the Operator movement and put the Operator in SpecCP, 6) all learners know that all IPs as the predicates of the head Determiner Phrase.

The result of receptive test supports the success achieved by learners. The majority of students are able to distinguish between *où*-relative and *que*-relative.

Table 2: Productive Test.

No.	Relative Clauses	Right	Wrong[1]
1	2010 est l'année$_i$ [CP où$_i$ [IPJérôme a obtenu son diplôme$_{ti}$]]. 2010 is the year that Jerome graduated.	90,48	
2	Le printemps, c'est la saison$_i$ [CP où$_i$ [IP tout recommence$_{ti}$]]. Spring is the season when everything starts again.	90	
3	La naissance de mon fils, c'est *le grand moment$_i$ [CP où$_i$ [IP j'attendais$_{ti}$]].* The birth of my son is the big moment that I was waiting for.	83	
4	Il est parti le jour [CP qu[IP 'il s'est mis à faire du soleil$_{ti}$]]. He left the day that he started to sunbathe.		82,54
5	Lundi prochain, c'est le jour [CP que [IP j'attends impatiemment parce que mon ami français va v enir chez moi $_{ti}$]]. Next Monday is the day that I look forward to because my French friend is coming to my place.		84.13
6	Dimache, c'est le jour [CP que [IP j'adore car toute la famille se réunit chez moi $_{ti}$]]. Sunday is the day that I love because the whole family meets at my place.		87,3
7	1999 c'est l'année [CP où [IP j'etais heureux $_{ti}$]] 1999 is the year when I was happy.	85,71	
8	Octobre, c'est le mois [CP que [IP les feuilles tombent $_{ti}$]]. October is the month that leaves fall.		85,71
9	Je me souviens toujours les jours [CP où [IP mes parents sont passés à Bali sans moi $_{ti}$]]. I always remember the days when my parents went to Bali without me.	82,54	
10	Dimanche, c'est le jour [CP qu'[on attend ensemble $_{ti}$]]. Sunday is the day that we wait together.		87,78

[1]According to French grammar taught in the teaching of grammar although Hawkins and Towell claimed that it is acceptable by French native speakers.

Based on data from Table 2, the grammatical competence to form *où* relative and *que*-relative is generally acquired by the majority of learners because students know that, (1) the clause structure is relatively similar to embedded wh-questions, (2) the C element in the structure contains [+ wh]

feature, (3) *où*-relative formation involves overt wh-movement because the [+ wh] feature of C must be deleted by the feature [+ wh] belonging to the question word *où* and places it in SpecCP, (4) the coindex determines the relationship between the head DP forming the head and predicate relationship and (5) in *que*-relative, the learner must remove the [+ wh] feature C with the feature of [+ wh] of Operator through the Operator movement and place the Op in SpecCP so that the co-index between the head DP and the element que is established and (6) all relative clauses are acceptable because each consists of head DPs and its predicates.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The approaches of Grammar Usage and the Minimalist Program provide description of semantic and structural differences between *où*-relative and que-relative. Both relative clauses are successfully acquired by average more than 80% of subjects who have near native level of French interlanguage.

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