



## **An Analysis of Sentence Fragments and Run-On Sentences Found in The Writings Made by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Students of English Department Students of Universitas Negeri Padang**

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### **Abstract**

This study discusses the sentence fragments and run-on sentences that are made by the students in writing essays. The research design was descriptive. The sample in this study was 31 students of English Department Academic year 2018/2019 of Universitas Negeri Padang. The instrument used was the final exam sheet of essay writing. Based on this research, students made 29 fragments and 38 run-on sentences. This study also showed that most students made comma splices that reach to 37 numbers.

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### **Keywords:**

sentence fragments , run-on sentences , sentence problems, essay writing, english department students

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Writing is one of the productive skills that enable the language users to express their ideas and opinions to the readers. Caswell and Mahler (2004:3) define that writing is an important communication skill for all aspects of life. As a result, writing is the subject that has to be learned by students majoring in the language most of the semesters, like in English Department students of Universitas Negeri Padang.

Likewise, students are learning English as a foreign language which means they need to express their ideas with different construction of sentences. The students start to write by creating sentences which are able to express a complete thought consisting of at least one subject and one verb. Yet, it is not possible to write essays only with simple sentences. Thus, they learn how to engage the readers by writing more complex sentences to avoid monotonous writing.

However, Mykellbust (1973) emphasizes that a complex sentence increases the possibility to have the errors which cause the readers get difficulties to understand the writings. Hence, this is the reason why students also take grammar class while learning writings to make the learning is applicable. Still, as Valientien, et.al (2014) expresses that students with multilingual society are often making errors due to the influence of their first language. According to Langan (2010:180), there are four types of sentence fragments (missing subject fragments, '-ing' and 'to-' fragments, added detail fragments and dependent word fragments), and two types of run-on sentences (fused sentences and comma splices).

Nonetheless, making error is normal in the process of learning because the students are expressing their ideas and thoughts in foreign language. Yet, only a few studies done in Indonesia addressed the subject of sentence problem in writings. For example, Krismanti (2014) mentioned in her journal that 51.3% of English education students in STKIP Banjarmasin made mistake in forming the sentences. Rahmalia (2016) concluded that most English Students in STKIP Abdi Pendidikan Payakumbuh make run-on sentences in their writing. Rahmi, et.al., (2016) believes that both sentence problems and run-on sentences are found in all parts of the essay. Besides, Suti'ah (2012) researched the University of Muara Kudus found 93 fragments in academic writing.

Nevertheless, the studies above are inadequate to facilitate EFL students, teachers, or writers to examine the type of sentence problems found in essay writings. Thus, this study has a similar topic as Krismanti (2014), but with different samples as sentence problems are taught in advance grammar while learning essay writings. So, the students are expected to be able to apply their grammar skill in their essay writings while Krismanti researched students' thesis in STKIP Banjarmasin in the students' last level of writings subject. In addition, this study aims to examine what types of sentence problems most frequently made by the students.

## **METHOD**

This research used descriptive because this research is simply used to describe sentence fragments and run-on sentences made by the second year of English Education Program students in writing. Gay (2012:7) agrees that it involves gathering data that describe events and then organizes, and also describes the data by collecting, classifying, and analyzing the data. The population of this research is the second year of the English Education Program of Universitas Negeri Padang registered in the academic year 2018/2019 that learned Sentence Problems in Advanced Grammar while taking Essay Writing which consist 145 students. Considering the population is more than 100, to take 10%-15% or 20%-25% of them as the sample (Arikunto 2010, p.112). The writer used one class to be the sample of this research. To choose the sample, the writer used five small papers and wrote the names of each class on them, and then put them into a box. After shaking it, the writer took one piece of paper with eyes closed. The selected class turns to be K3-18.

In this research, the writer used writing documents of students as the research instrument. The students' essays were collected from the lecturers who conduct the last examination of Essay Writing. Furthermore, the writer analysed sentence fragments and run-on sentence made by the students based on the indicators provided by Langan (2010:162-188). Then, the writer underlined the sentence fragments and run-on sentences in the essay. To make it clear, the writer will mark 'F' as sentence fragments and 'R' as run-on sentences. After the data collected, the writer classified the sentence fragments and run-on sentences in the essays that have been underlined by re-writing them in the column. To make sure the classification is right, the lecturer of English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang, Yati Aisyah Rani S.Pd., M.Pd. was asked to validate the sentences that had been classified through discussion.

After that, to see which of them is mostly made by the students, both sentence fragments (dependent word- fragments, "-ing" and "to" fragment,

added-detail fragment, and missing-subject fragment) and run-on sentences (fused sentence and comma splice) were calculated by using the formula and put them in the tables.

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

P = percentage

F = the total of each type of sentence fragments/run-on sentences

N = number of sentence fragments/run-on sentences

100 = constant numeral

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *Research Finding (tentative)*

This research reveals that students make 67 sentence fragments and run-on sentences in total. The frequency and percentage are shown through the tables below.

**Table 1.** Number of Sentence Fragments

No	Types of Sentence Fragments	Number of Sentence Fragments
1.	Dependent Word Fragments	22
2.	“-ing” and “to” fragments	1
3.	Added-Detail Fragments	4
4.	Missing Subject Fragments	1
Total		29

**Table 2.** Number of Run-On Sentences

No	Types of Run-On Sentences	Number of Run-On Sentences
1.	Fused Sentence	1
2.	Comma Splices	37
<b>Total</b>		38

**Table 3.** Number of Run-On Sentences

No.	Types of sentence structure error	Frequency
1	Sentence Fragments	28
2	Run-On Sentences	39
<b>Total</b>		67

Based on the finding in this research, the students of English Department students registered in academic year 2018/2019 made total 67 sentence fragments and run-on sentences in their final examination writing. Each type of errors has

different frequency of occurrence. The students commonly make dependent word fragments. Moreover, the students made comma splices more than fused sentences for run-on sentences types. It is proven by seeing that they made 37 comma splices in total.

In addition, it is found that the students make 67 sentence problems which consist of 29 (43%) sentence fragments and 38 run on sentences (57%). From the sentence fragments, it is found that 22 numbers of dependent word fragments (76%), 1 number of “-ing” and “to” fragment (3.5%), 5 numbers of added-detail fragments (17%), and 1 numbers of missing subject fragments (3.5%). Moreover, there found 1 (3%) fused sentence and 37 (97%) comma splices.

The research that is conducted by Rahmalia (2016), at STKIP Abdi Pendidikan Payakumbuh, shows similar results that the student mostly made run on sentences which reach 24 (60%) sentences out of 40 sentence problems. In addition, the research that was done by Krismanti (2014) found that the student made 73 sentence fragments (52%) out of 138 sentences which means it is more than run-on sentences. However, the gap is not that big to the run-on sentences created by her students that is 65 (48%) run-on sentences.

According to the findings of this research, students are still confused when constructing well-formed sentences. They use too many conjunctions "because, so" and comma to combine two or more independent clauses. In fact, it is good to use connectives to combine multiple clauses into one sentence because if the essay contained so many simple sentences, it will be lack academically. However, excessive used of comma may cause readers to forget the beginning before reaching the end of the sentence.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research collected some important information from the students of English department of UNP registered in academic year 2018/2019 in terms of making sentence fragments and run-on sentences. Based on the finding and the discussion above, it could be concluded that:

The students contributed the four types of sentence fragments and run-on sentences in their final examination of essay writing; they are dependent word-fragments, “-ing” and “to” fragment, added-detail fragment, and missing-subject fragment. The students made all types of sentence fragments. There are 28 fragments in total, the details are as follows; 22 numbers of dependent word fragments (76%), 1 number of “-ing” and “to” fragment (3.5%), 5 numbers of added-detail fragments (17%), and 1 numbers of missing subject fragments (3.5%).

Furthermore, the most frequent source of errors made by the students is comma splices. There were 37 errors that occurred in percentage 97% in whereas the second type of run-on sentences is fused sentence that only makes up 3%.

Based on the study that was carried out, the writer would like to deliver some suggestions in order to prevent the occurrence of the same error. In fact, in teaching writing subject, the teacher must teach many aspects. One of them involves the use of sentence structure. Based on the findings of this study, the writer discovered that many mistakes are made by the students of English department of UNP registered in academic year 2018/2019. English teachers should pay attention to the sentence

structure errors that students often make when writing. After understanding the students' mistakes, teachers should provide students with explanations and feedback about the mistakes. For the students, when writing, students must understand the importance of sentence structure in writing. Many students have sentence errors when writing. They still have trouble writing well-formed sentences.

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