



A STUDY OF SENTENCE TYPES ON THE WRITING OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2014

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Abstract

In general, the students of English Department have the ability to write English well. However, there are still some aspects that must be considered in writing. Therefore, this study aimed to look at the extent to which students use the sentence types in writing an essay. Another aim was to analyze the problems occurred in using the sentence types. This research was a descriptive study with research subjects were 22 essays of Education 2 Class students in year 2014/2015. Data were collected by analyzing sentences in the essay which were the result of semester exam of a writing class. Based on the research, there were four sentence types in the students' writing: simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences. Based on the results of the study, it was found that simple sentence was the most sentence types commonly written by the students in writing, by contrast, compound-complex sentence was the least sentence types written by the student. In addition, there were two problems that occurred to write the sentence types, ie run-on and fragment. Both of these problems were found in all parts of the essay: introduction, main body and conclusion. By doing so, it is expected to the lecturers to pay more attention to the use of different sentence types in students' writing.

Key words: sentence types, essay.

A. INTRODUCTION

Grammar has an essential role in constructing an essay because grammar and writing cannot be separated each other. It is possible because the purpose of the communication is to convey a message. If the writing itself is not grammatically correct, it may cause a misunderstanding for the reader, so that the purpose of communication cannot be achieved. As Harmer (2006: 1) says about the study of grammar consists, in part, of looking at the way sentences are arranged and patterned. Grammar is a part of the study of what forms (or structures) are possible in a language. Traditionally, grammar has been concerned almost only

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with analysis at the level of sentence. Therefore, a grammar description is a description of rules that manage how a language's sentences are formed. Grammar tries to explain why a sentence is appropriate.

In order to compose a great writing, the students should pay attention about the sentence used. The sentence should have a complete thought and the correct use of grammar and structure. Basically, in acquiring a perfect writing, paying extra attention to the sentence is one of the most important things before concerning to the other aspects beyond the text itself such as content, cohesion, and organization. Especially as college students, extra attention also should be put on the sentence types in writing.

As Long (2007: 215) states that in college writing, the using of simple sentence is not an effective way to deliver the ideas. This is because the college students should write academically which means they have to concern many aspects in writing, included how to vary the sentence types. The proper use of good sentence type variation in writing would attract the readers to keep reading on the students' writing. Consequently, the students were required not to write a monotonous writing, they had to be able to use different types of sentence instead.

Based on their structure, there are four types of sentences: simple sentence, compound sentence, complex sentence, and compound-complex sentence. According to Byrd and Benson (2001: 37-53) a simple sentence is a sentence that must have at least a subject and a verb with complete thought. *She is a beautiful woman* is an example of a simple sentence. A compound sentence is made up of two (or more) simple sentences joined by a comma (,) and a coordinating word (and, for, but, or, nor, so, yet) or by a semicolon (;). For this compound sentence, a transition word also can be written with the semicolon to make clearer the meaning relationship between the two sentences, for example, *She is a beautiful woman, but she never realizes that.*

A complex sentence adds a subordinate clause to a simple sentence. This subordinate clause is called a dependent clause while the simple sentence is called the independent clause. The dependent clause cannot stand alone. It cannot be written as a separate sentence. On the other hand, the independent clause is the same thing as a sentence. A complex sentence is made up of a simple sentence plus one (or more) subordinate clause(s) by adding the subordinating words. These subordinating words are divided into three: adverbial clauses (after, although, as, because, before, etc), relative clauses (that, when, where, whom, whose, which, and who), and noun clauses (that).

A compound-complex sentence is made up of two (or more) simple sentences and one (or more) dependent or subordinate clause(s). This compound-complex sentence can be made up from a complex sentence or from a compound sentence. A complex sentence becomes a compound-complex sentence when a simple sentence is added to it, while a compound sentence is added by a subordinate clause, this sentence will become a compound-complex sentence.

Those four sentence types—simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex—are crucial to be written in writing. The combination of those types will produce a good and interesting writing. Especially if the sentence combining written is appropriate, it will allow the students to better combine ideas and thus

better show the relationship between ideas. The using of different sentence types will also benefits the reader, who can become easily bored with multiple sentences of the same length and the same basic pattern. There were some researchers which had been conducted related to the analysis of written discourse. One of them was Hilmi, Rozimela, and Tiarina (2013) which was conducted the research related to the analysis of passive voice in students analytical exposition text.

Based on the preliminary research done by the writer by reading the final test of 24 students of English Department of *Universitas Negeri Padang*, it was found that they wrote their essay at the same pattern and length of sentences, for example, *She is a beautiful woman, she is tall and she has good body. She has black eyes, she has pointed nose and she has chubby cheeks.* These sentences can be written not only in the simple sentence pattern. They can be more attractive and comfortable to be read if they are written in different sentence types.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted by using a descriptive research. As Gay and Airasian (1987) states that the descriptive method determines and reports the way things are. The data of this research were sentences which were written in the essays by the students of English Department of *Universitas Negeri Padang* in academic year 2014. The data itself was a secondary data. Secondary data are the data which are obtained indirectly from the subject research, or it can be said as the data that has existed (Marmai, 1999: 23). The data were derived from secondary document of English Department.

The instrument of this research was semester exam of English Department; exactly it was the second semester exam of students in academic year 2014. Through the instrument, the data which was in essay form were collected. Since the instrument was derived directly from the semester exam of English Department which had been marked by a competent lecturer, the validity of the instrument was not measured by the researcher. However, in order to measure the reliability of the instrument, the researcher used inter-rater reliability. Inter-rater reliability is a measure to test the agreement between raters on the assignment of the categories (Gay: 2009). The raters for this research were the researcher and the researcher's advisor.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

From the result of analysis, it was found that the four sentence types were found in the students' essays. There were 22 essays which were analyzed. From 22 essays, it was found that there were 604 sentences. Among those 604 sentences, there were 133 sentences in introduction, 394 sentences in main body, and 77 sentences in conclusion. More information can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. Sentence Types Written

ESSAYS	INTRODUCTION				MAIN BODY				CONCLUSION				Total of Sentences
	T1	T2	T3	T4	T1	T2	T3	T4	T1	T2	T3	T4	
1	0	0	2	0	7	3	4	0	0	1	2	0	19
2	2	1	2	0	8	1	5	2	1	1	1	0	24
3	7	1	2	0	8	1	12	0	1	0	2	0	34
4	3	1	1	0	9	4	4	2	0	0	0	0	24
5	0	0	5	0	6	2	4	2	0	0	1	1	21
6	5	0	3	0	10	4	5	1	4	2	1	0	35
7	8	0	3	0	9	1	7	1	2	1	2	0	34
8	1	0	4	0	0	1	8	0	0	0	2	0	16
9	1	0	5	0	8	1	9	0	0	0	2	0	26
10	3	0	1	0	18	4	6	0	2	1	0	0	35
11	2	0	2	0	7	1	5	1	1	1	0	1	21
12	3	2	4	0	4	0	4	2	3	0	1	0	23
13	4	0	3	0	15	0	5	0	3	0	1	1	32
14	4	1	0	0	17	0	2	0	4	0	0	0	28
15	2	1	2	1	8	2	11	6	0	1	1	1	36
16	5	0	1	0	10	3	8	0	3	0	1	0	31
17	3	0	3	1	12	1	4	1	1	0	2	1	29
18	1	0	4	0	9	3	10	0	1	0	4	0	32
19	2	0	4	0	10	6	8	0	0	0	2	1	33
20	6	0	1	0	3	3	5	0	2	0	1	2	23
21	4	0	2	0	11	3	3	2	5	0	0	0	30
22	3	0	1	0	4	1	7	0	0	0	2	0	18
TOTAL	69	7	55	2	193	45	136	20	33	8	28	8	604
	133				394				77				

Notes: T1 (Type 1): simple sentence

T2 (Type 2): compound sentence

T3 (Type 3): complex sentence

T4 (Type 4): compound-complex sentence

Based on the data in the table above, it is noticed that simple sentence was the most sentence type written (48.84%) and compound-complex was the least written (4.97%). Simple sentence was followed by complex sentence (36.26%) and compound sentence (9.93%). Wariner, Whitten, and Griffith (1973) say that too many simple sentence can make your style just monotonous as too many subject-first sentences. As the most sentence type found in the students' essays was simple sentence, it proved that some of the students' essays were monotonous and less interesting to read. Moreover, this fact shows that the students had not been really capable yet to combine the four sentences in writing, whereas they had

already been taught about sentence types in grammar class and about writing essay in writing class. As they had been taught with several classes, the students expected to be able to combine the four sentence types, so that they could produce a better and interesting essay. The existence of least found sentence type which was compound-complex sentence (4.97%) also reinforced that their sentence type' variation needed to be improved.

Moreover, it was also found that there were two problems occurred in writing sentence types: run-on sentences and fragment. Run-on sentences found related to the mistakes in punctuation, while fragments found because of incomplete thought of the sentences which missed subject or verb. Run on sentences were found 76 sentences among 604 sentences or about 12.58%. Fragments were found in 60 sentences among 604 sentences or about 9.93%. These problems occurred in the three parts of essays. These problems were found in every part of students' essays, which are introduction, main body, and conclusion. However, the most problems were found in the main body of the essays.

Actually, the students who have already been taught about sentence in Grammar class should not have mistakes anymore in writing sentence. When the sentence problems related to the punctuation (run-on), perhaps it can be ignored since the sentences still have complete thought. On the other hand, if the problem was fragment which means that the sentences have no complete thought, it cannot be ignored. When the sentences had no complete thought, the reader cannot understand the writing well.

The reason why there were problems in writing sentence types because of students' understanding about grammar. Although the students have been taught about grammar in the Grammar class, seems their understanding need to be upgraded. The lecturers need to pay attention more about students' grammar especially in writing. Furthermore, it is needed to emphasize that the students have to apply their grammar understanding in writing, not only in grammar class. This is possible when the students only pay attention about grammar while they were in the grammar class and when they were in others classes, they ignored about grammar; they did not apply their grammar understanding in every class.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

1. Conclusion

This study was conducted to the second year of the English Department students of *Universitas Negeri Padang*, who were in academic year 2014/2015. As stated in the first chapter that the purposes of this study were to find out the sentence types written in the essays and the problems to write sentence types in the essays. The essay of final exam was the instrument to get the data.

Based on the results of the study, the four sentence types which were simple sentence, compound sentence, complex sentence, and compound-complex sentence were written by the students. The four sentence types were found exactly in every part of the essays, which were introduction, main body, and conclusion. Simple sentence was the mostly sentence types written by the students with

percentage 48.84% among sentences in their essay, while the least sentence type written by the students was compound-complex sentence with percentage 4.97%.

Moreover, after discovering the sentence types written in the students' writing, the problems in writing sentence types were directly identified through analyzing the students' sentences. It was found that there were 2 problems in writing sentence types. They were run-on and fragment. Run-on was found in every part of essay. Different with run-on, fragments were found only in several essays with the lesser number than run-on.

2. Suggestion

Using different sentence types is important in writing an essay. This is essential in order to produce a good and more interesting writing. Since the English Department students are required to produce a good academic writing, so that they are necessitated to produce a writing which has good variation in sentence types using. Regarding to the sentence types using in the students' writing, some suggestions in order to improve students' writing quality will be addressed to the English Department students, the lecturers, and the next researchers.

First, it is expected to the students of English Department of *Universitas Negeri Padang* to improve their writing quality by applying their knowledge about sentence type toward their writing. Even though the students have already learned and understood about sentence types, it will be not worth if they did not apply it in their writing. *Second*, it is expected to the lecturer of English Department of *Universitas Negeri Padang* to pay attention more to the students' sentence types in their writing. It is essential to find out how well the students use different sentences in order to write an academic writing, so that the writing which they produce is more interesting and not monotonous.

It is available for the next researcher to use the result of this study as a basis for further related research. It is also expected to the next researcher to widen the research analysis and discussion in order to find more problems occurred in writing sentence types, and to find more studies related to the sentence types in the students' writing.

Note: This article was written based on writer's thesis that is supervised by Drs. Saunir Saun, M.Pd. and Aryuliva Adnan M.Pd.

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