

AN INVESTIGATION OF STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE IN USING COMPOUND-COMPLEX SENTENCES IN WRITING AT EFL CLASSROOM

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Abstract

This study investigates the challenges faced by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in using compound-complex sentences in their writing. The research aims to shed light on the difficulties encountered by EFL students when combining independent and dependent clauses with coordinating conjunctions to form compound-complex sentences. The study also explores the impact of mastering compound-complex sentences on EFL students' comprehension of literature texts. Through a mixed-method approach, including tests and interviews, the research analyzes the performance of EFL students in organizing complex and compound sentences and their ability to convert compound sentences into compound-complex ones. The findings reveal the obstacles EFL students encounter in structuring sentences and developing ideas in paragraphs, particularly when attempting to use compound-complex sentences. The study underscores the importance of sentence structure in effective writing and its influence on text clarity, coherence, and overall impact. The implications of this research extend to teaching and learning strategies in EFL classrooms, aiming to enhance students' writing capabilities and comprehension of literature texts.

Keywords: compound-complex sentences, EFL students, performance, sentence, writing

INTRODUCTION

One of the main prerequisites in educational institutions is creating and enhancing student capability in foreign languages, especially in writing (Mustafoeva & Krimpas, 2022). In English for foreign language circumstances, the student's effort to master writing capability is due to increasing the comprehension of literature text. EFL students have obstacles including structuring the sentence and confusion in developing the idea in a paragraph. Writing level in university requires EFL students to deliver the idea with various sentence structures including simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex sentences. Mostly EFL makes it easy to deliver their idea using simple, compound, or complex. However, when they try to use compound-complex in writing, the error in the sentence starts appearing. According to Hendrawaty (2018), the most difficult sentence pattern that frequently causes errors made by students is compound-complex sentences. The difficulty comes when EFL students combine independent and dependent clauses with coordinating conjunctions. According to Kurniasih (2022), many students have difficulty making compound-complex sentences because they combine two different sentences. Sentence structure is an important component of effective writing, as it determines the text's clarity, coherence, and overall impact. The way sentences are structured influences how ideas are presented and how readers engage with the content. Compound complexes play an important role in the written communication between discourse structures. It explains how the appropriate use of sentence structures improves the clarity and coherence of a text. Compound-complex sentence structures allow writers to express complex ideas and relationships in a single sentence. It is especially useful when presenting complex concepts, profound explanations, or explaining cause-and-effect relationships. By combining multiple parts, these sentences allow writers to delve deeper into a topic, making them a valuable tool for expressing creative ideas Promotes flow and cohesion. Effective use of strong compound sentences helps the writing flow smoothly and coherently. By including independent and

dependent clauses, it keeps the thoughts flowing naturally and logically. This prevents accidental transitions between sentences and keeps readers engaged by seamlessly linking relevant concepts.

The research aims of to investigate the EFL students' comprehension of students in compound-complex sentences. The result of the research would give more information about the error analysis sentence structure and analysis idea density in EFL students. Therefore, they will know their ability and after that, they will learn more about sentence types, especially in identifying compound-complex sentences to improve their writing skill.

Literature Review

The Concept of Sentence

A sentence is a group of words that contains meaning, a sentence also consists of one or more clauses. A clause consists of a subject and predicate (Andersen, 2014). sentence divided into four structures including simple sentences, compound sentences, complex sentences, and compound-complex (Leki & Azar, 1982). A simple sentence is a sentence that contains one independent clause and expresses a complete thought. It has a subject and predicate and it does not contain subordinate clauses or conjunctions. For example "she is amazing". The compound sentence consists of two or more independent clauses connected with coordinate conjunctions such as and, but, or, nor, for, yet, and so (Sari et al., 2019). For example "although she was tired, she kept working". A complex sentence is a sentence that contains one independent clause and at least one dependent clause. A dependent clause is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb but does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone as a sentence (Subekti, 2018). The dependent clause is usually introduced by a subordinating conjunction, such as "because," "although," or "when." The independent clause, on the other hand, is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb and expresses a complete thought. It can stand alone as a sentence. The dependent clause provides additional information to the independent clause and helps to create a more complex and nuanced sentence. An example of a complex sentence is "Although it was raining, I went for a walk". The compound-complex A compound-complex sentence is a sentence that contains two or more independent clauses and at least one dependent clause (Rahma & Rosa, 2021). It combines the features of both compound and complex sentences. The independent clauses are connected by a coordinating conjunction, such as "and," "but," or "or." In contrast, the dependent clause is introduced by a subordinating conjunction, such as "although," "since," or "when." An example of a compound-complex sentence is "Although I like to go camping, I haven't had the time to go this year, and I'm not sure if I'll be able to go next year either." In this sentence, "Although I like to go camping" is the dependent clause, "I haven't had the time to go this year" is the first independent clause, and "I'm not sure if I'll be able to go next year either" is the second independent clause.

The concept of clause

A clause is a group of words consisting of a subject and a verb that have a relationship. A clause is a fairly complete group of words containing a subject and a predicate. Each clause functions as part of a sentence, and a clause can stand alone as a complete sentence. Clauses can have three different functions: they can act as adverbs, adjectives, or nouns. There are two types of clauses: independent clauses and dependent clauses. An independent clause is a group of words containing a subject and a predicate that can stand alone as a sentence and express a complete thought (Helwig et al., n.d.). It can be a simple sentence or combined with other independent clauses to create a compound sentence. A dependent clause is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb but cannot stand alone as a sentence (Indrayadi, 2018). It must be combined with an independent clause to form a complete sentence. Dependent clauses can act as adjectives, adverbs, or nouns and there are three types of dependent clauses: noun clauses, adjective clauses, and adverb clauses.

The concept of conjunction

Conjunctions are words that connect words, phrases, or clauses in a sentence. They are used to show the relationship between the connected elements. There are three types of conjunctions: coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions, and correlative conjunctions. Coordinating conjunctions connect two or more elements of equal importance in a sentence. Examples of coordinating conjunctions are "and," "but," "or," "nor," "for," "yet," and "so." For example, "I like to read books, and I also enjoy watching movies. Subordinating conjunctions connect a dependent clause to an independent clause, making the dependent clause less important. Examples of subordinating conjunctions are "although," "because," "since," "while," "if," and "when." For example, "Although it was raining, I went for a walk." Correlative conjunctions are pairs of conjunctions that work together to connect elements in a sentence. Examples of correlative conjunctions are "either...or," "neither...nor," "both...and," and "not only...but also." For example, "I will either go to the beach or stay home and read a book."

METHODOLOGY

This research used mixed-method research. The purpose of this research is to analyze student performances to organize complex and compound sentences and covert compound-complex. This research was conducted at the English Department of Education at Khairun University. The sample for this research comprised 20 students from the fifth semester of Class A. The instrument of this research is a test that consists of 20 questions where each question has three sentences including complex and compound sentence structure and the participants have to organize based on the instruction for 30 minutes. Then, this study chose 9 out of 20 for interviews. After that, this study will investigate the social factors of EFL students based on their scores. (Šula, 2018). Qualitative data from the test will be analyzed and calculated to determine the presentation. Then the quantitative data will be described by qualitative data.

Table 1. The classification of the score level of students

No	Score in Test	Score Percentage	Classification
1.	81 – 100	81-100%	High
2.	66 – 80	66 – 80%	Middle
3.	0 – 65	56 – 65 %	Low

Formula:

$$P = \frac{Fo}{N} \times 100$$

Note :

P = Percentage (%)

Fo = Total respondents who answer questions.

N = Total respondents

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The researcher had conducted the research at English Education Department at the fifth semester students. The data of this research shows in the Figure 1.

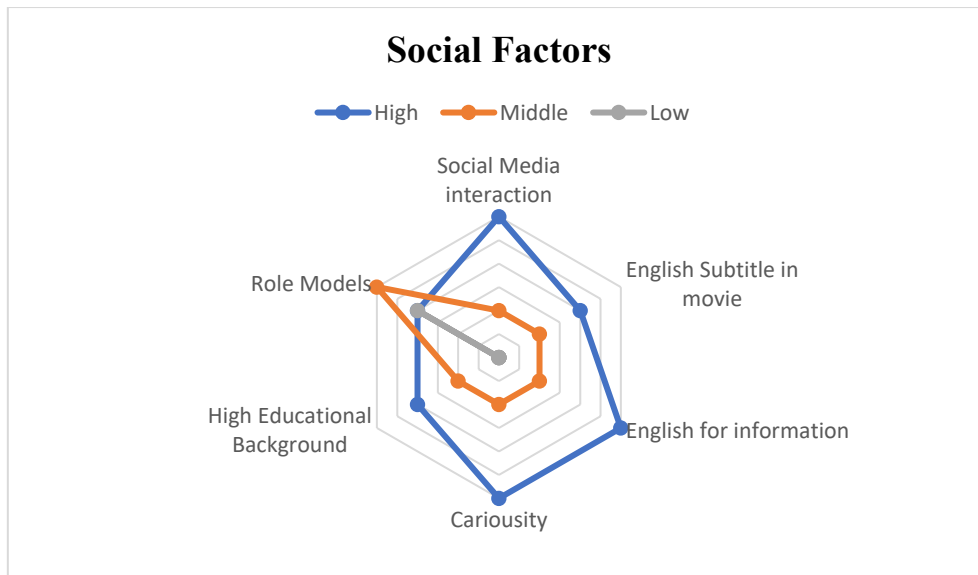


Figure 1. Social Factors

Based on the data, 60% of students are categorized as high achievers. Students identified with a strong grasp of compound-complex sentences demonstrate an exceptional understanding of grammar. Their proficiency extends to the realm of social media, where platforms such as TikTok, X, YouTube, and Instagram serve as channels for English-language interactions. The predominant use of English in their online engagements underscores their mastery of the language. These students typically spend 2-4 hours daily exploring social media content, predominantly consisting of English material. Moreover, their routines include watching movies with English subtitles, enhancing their linguistic skills. Notably, their inclination to seek information goes beyond regular social media use. Whether following their idols or searching for scholarships, they prefer using English sources. The influence of role models, especially through parasocial relationships, plays a significant role in shaping their aspirations. It's important to note that students excelling in textual comprehension exhibit an insatiable curiosity for new vocabulary and information. This inclination is often nurtured in families with a strong educational background. Essentially, students in this category not only excel in grammar but also show holistic enthusiasm for language acquisition and knowledge exploration.

The data reveals that 20% of students categorized as moderate exhibit a strong understanding of grammar when explained by lectures. Notably, social media interactions, particularly on platforms like TikTok and Instagram, are predominantly in English, featuring English education content. Interestingly, the use of English subtitles while watching movies is minimal, as students at this level prefer the convenience of Indonesian subtitles. When it comes to discovering information, students predominantly rely on Indonesian, showing a reluctance towards engaging with English literary materials. Additionally, students tend to look up to their classmates as role models, fostering a parasocial relationship that enhances motivation for learning English. The low curiosity levels in this group manifest in a limited interest in exploring new vocabulary. It's noteworthy that many moderate students hail from a low educational background, significantly influencing their mindset development.

Approximately 20% of students with minimal grammar comprehension face challenges understanding teacher explanations, often resorting to dominant social media platforms in Indonesia like X, Instagram, and TikTok. Their feeds predominantly feature dancing and lack educational content. These students prefer movies with Indonesian subtitles, believing it aids in following the plot. English is seldom used for information retrieval, and role models in their class are perceived as making minimal contributions to English learning. Additionally, there is a lack of curiosity in discovering new

vocabulary, and their educational background fails to provide motivation or facilitation for productive English learning.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study highlights the challenges faced by EFL students in using compound-complex sentences in their writing. The research findings reveal that EFL students encounter difficulties in structuring sentences and developing ideas in paragraphs, particularly when attempting to use compound-complex sentences. The study underscores the importance of sentence structure in effective writing and its influence on text clarity, coherence, and overall impact. The mastery of compound-complex sentences is crucial for EFL students to enhance their writing capabilities and comprehension of literature texts. The implications of this research extend to teaching and learning strategies in EFL classrooms, emphasizing the need to provide students with adequate training and practice in using compound-complex sentences. By doing so, EFL students can improve their writing skills and achieve better academic performances.

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