

## Syntactic Study of Essays by Grade VII Junior High School Students Undiksha Singaraja Laboratory

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Input : Agustus 25, 2024  
Accepted: September 25, 2024

Revised : September 22, 2024  
Published : September 27, 2024

### ABSTRACT

The study of seventh grade students' essays at Undiksha Singaraja Laboratory School is important to understand the use of sentence types, sentence unity, and sentence structure. This study aims to describe (1) sentence types, (2) sentence unity, and (3) sentence structure in students' essays. The data collection method used document recording and was analyzed qualitatively. The results showed that students used 107 single sentences and 99 compound sentences, reflecting a balance between the two. Sentence unity is shown by 186 sentences that have clear subject-predicate relationships, while there are 11 sentences without subjects and predicates, 8 sentences only contain predicates, and 1 sentence only has a subject. The varied sentence structures show the students' ability to construct sentences well. This research not only improves the understanding of students' writing ability, but also contributes to the field of syntax with insights into sentence formation and coherence among junior high school students

**Kata Kunci:** Clause , essay, structure, syntax, unity

### INTRODUCTION

A primary objective of learning Indonesian in secondary school is to enable pupils to communicate effectively and efficiently in both written and spoken forms (Kemdikbudristek, 2022). Language proficiency is the communication competence being discussed here. One of the four components of this language competence is writing proficiency. When students write or compose, they utilize word strings to convey their thoughts. Some of these word strands, meanwhile, lack a full meaning. The absence of a Subject or Predicate demonstrates this insufficient comprehension (Collin, C. & Stabler, E., 2016; Robert-Burton, 2021). Sentence components are not understood by students as a means of expressing their thoughts. Students also lack exercises that teach them how to identify the sentence's components. Using

The ability to communicate effectively and efficiently in both written and spoken forms is one of the main goals of learning Indonesian in secondary school (Kemdikbudristek, 2022). The communicative competency under discussion is language proficiency. Writing ability is one of the four elements of this language competency. Students use word strings to express their ideas when they write or compose. On the other hand, some of these word strands are incomplete. This inadequate understanding is demonstrated by the lack of a Subject or Predicate (Collin, C. & Stabler, E., 2016; Robert-Burton, 2021). Students do not understand sentence components as a way to communicate their ideas. Additionally, there are no exercises that educate students to recognize the sentence's constituent parts.

Based on the opinions that have been presented, syntax can be concluded as the study of the relationship between words and the way these words are arranged to form sentence structures. Syntax studies the interaction between sentence elements, such as nouns, verbs,



adjectives, and adverbs, and the grammatical rules that govern them. The placement of subjects and predicates, for example, can significantly change the meaning of a sentence. Syntax also covers different types of sentences, such as simple, compound and complex sentences, each of which has a different communicative purpose. Understanding syntax is essential for effective communication, as it allows speakers and writers to organize thoughts clearly and coherently. In a broader context, syntax is also related to semantics (the study of meaning) and pragmatics (the study of context), which show how sentence structure affects their interpretation and use in real situations. A deep understanding of syntax not only improves language skills, but also critical thinking and comprehension.

Some studies that discuss syntax, such as those conducted by Maimunah (2017) and Baryadi (2014), have not examined in depth the types of sentences, sentence unity, and sentence structure as a whole. Maimunah's research (2014) only focuses on clauses in terms of their function, category, and role in the translation of Surah Al-Qari'ah, without exploring in depth the types of sentences in the translation. On the other hand, Baryadi's (2014) research focuses more on the order of clauses in Indonesian multilevel compound sentences from a syntactic perspective, but does not discuss variations in sentence structure and how sentence unity forms a complete meaning. Therefore, although these two studies provide important insights into syntax, further research is still needed to dig deeper into these aspects, in order to gain a more thorough understanding of syntax in text studies, especially in the context of translation and sentence structure analysis.

Research on syntax, especially related to sentence types, sentence unity, and sentence structure, is needed to understand and improve the language skills of seventh grade students at Undiksha Singaraja Laboratory Junior High School (SMP). This study aims to analyze the types of sentences, sentence unity, and sentence structure found in students' essays. By examining aspects such as the use of declarative, interrogative, and complex sentences, as well as the harmony between sentence elements, this research is expected to provide insight into students' ability to convey ideas clearly and effectively. The results of this study will be the basis for further linguistic research and can be applied practically in an educational context, providing guidance to improve students' writing and communication skills, so that the sentences used are not only grammatically correct, but also coherent and varied in structure.

The urgency of this research lies in its significant contribution in enriching theories and knowledge about grammar, especially syntax related to sentence types, sentence unity, and sentence structure. This research focuses on important aspects of sentence usage that play a crucial role in written and oral communication. An in-depth understanding of this can increase insight into how sentences are organized to convey meaning clearly and how sentences are used effectively in various contexts. From a practical perspective, the results of this study can serve as a guide in conveying ideas, especially in the context of academic writing and verbal communication. Mastery of sentence types - declarative, interrogative, and imperative sentences - as well as the ability to maintain sentence unity and proper structure, can result in more coherent and meaningful communication. This research aims to provide theoretical insights useful in the field of language education as well as in practical communication strategies, which will ultimately improve the clarity and precision of expression in various forms of discourse. Research into these concepts not only deepens linguistic understanding, but also provides practical applications for improving language skills in various professional and educational contexts.

## **METHODS**

The research method applied in this study is descriptive qualitative method to answer the problems that have been formulated. The subject of this research is the written works (essays) produced by seventh grade students at Undiksha Singaraja Laboratory Junior High School (SMP). Meanwhile, the object of this research includes three aspects, namely (1) sentence

types, (2) sentence unity, and (3) sentence structure contained in the essays. Data collection was done by document recording method, in which the collected student essays were analyzed based on the predetermined object of study. After the data was collected, the analysis was done inductively to identify patterns and themes that emerged (Sugiyono, 2016). The data found were grouped and summarized to facilitate understanding (Bogdan, R.C. & Biklen, S.K., 2017; Israfil, 2023). In addition, the data collected is not intended to test hypotheses that have been proposed before the research, but rather to facilitate the description and understanding of existing data (Lindlof, T. R., 2017; Amruddin, et.al., 2023). This qualitative descriptive method aims to provide an in-depth and comprehensive description of the use of sentence types, sentence unity, and sentence structure in students' writing, so as to provide clearer insights into the linguistic aspects used in their essays.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

### Types of Sentences Contained in the Essays of Grade VII Students of Junior High School Undiksha Singaraja Laboratory

In this section, the results of the research are presented in accordance with the problem studied, namely the type of sentence based on the number of clauses contained in the essay of grade VII students of Undiksha Singaraja Laboratory Junior High School. The data studied was sourced from the essays of grade VII students of Junior High School Undiksha Singaraja Laboratory. The total number of essays is 25, each of which consists of 3 paragraphs. The total number of sentences is 206. This whole sentence is studied from the aspect of the number of clauses, as seen in the description below. Based on the data analysis carried out, it was found that the types of sentences contained in the essays of grade VII students of Undiksha Singaraja Laboratory Junior High School as shown in Table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1: Types of Sentences Contained in the Essays of Grade VII Students of Junior High School Undiksha Singaraja Laboratory**

No.	Sentence Type Based on Number of Clauses	Frequensy	Sum
1.	Single Sentence	107	206
2.	Compound Sentence	99	

Based on the data in Table 3.1, grade VII students at Undiksha Singaraja Laboratory Junior High School tend to use compound sentences more than single sentences. With a total of 99 compound sentences and 107 single sentences, it can be seen that students more often string ideas into more complex sentences. This suggests that they tend to speak and write in a manner similar to everyday conversation, where ideas are conveyed in long sentences that combine multiple ideas. Unfortunately, these sentences often do not adhere to the correct rules of writing, such as the use of capital letters at the beginning of sentences and proper punctuation at the end of sentences. As a result, these sentences become less clear and difficult to understand, because they lose the unity of ideas and good structure.

Long sentences that incorporate some of these ideas tend not to be separated by adequate punctuation. For example, a sentence like "On the first day of school, I was warmly welcomed by the student council members, and when I walked into the classroom, my friends immediately greeted me with a friendly welcome, creating a comfortable atmosphere" contained a lot of information in a single sentence. This can

make it difficult for readers to follow the flow of thought conveyed because there is no clear separation between different ideas. Sentences like "When I get acquainted with the new student council, I am very happy because the student council is very friendly and open with younger classmates so I can easily interact with the student council" also indicates the incorporation of several subjects and predicates that can confuse the reader if not arranged correctly.

This tendency reflects the development of students' language and cognitive skills. According to Winch et al. (2006), there is a close relationship between language development and thinking ability. The more developed a person's language skills, the more complex their mindset becomes. This is also supported by the research of Batterink and Neville (2013), which shows that adults tend to produce more complex sentences, both in the form of compound sentences and complex sentences. In order for these complex sentences to be used effectively in written communication, students need to pay attention to the correct rules of writing, such as the use of punctuation and the clear separation of ideas. By doing so, they can convey ideas in a more structured and easy-to-understand manner, which will ultimately improve their overall communication skills.

### **3.2 Sentence Unity Contained in the Essay of Grade VII Students of Junior High School Undiksha Singaraja Laboratory**

Based on the data analysis carried out, it was found that the unity of sentences contained in the essays of grade VII students of SMP Undiksha Singaraja Laboratory as shown in Table 3.2 below.

**Table 3.2: Sentence Unity Contained in the Essay of Grade VII Students of Junior High School Undiksha Singaraja Laboratory**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Sentence Unity</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Sum</b>
<b>1</b>	The Existence of S and P	<b>186</b>	<b>186</b>
<b>2</b>	Without S and P	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>3</b>	Without S (contains only P)	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4</b>	Without P (contains only S)	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Sum</b>			<b>206</b>

Table 3.2 above shows that almost all data (186 sentences) meet the elements of sentence unity, namely the elements of Subject and Predicate. There are 11 sentences that do not meet the unity element, namely do not contain S and P, 8 sentences without S or only contain P, and 1 sentence without P or only contain S.

The results of the sentence unity analysis show that students have a good understanding in conveying their ideas, so that the message they want to convey can be clearly understood by the reader. This skill is essential for achieving effective communication, as it allows students to organize their thoughts well and convey them in the form of structured sentences. The ability to structure logical and easy-to-follow sentences is very influential so that the ideas conveyed can not only be understood, but can also have a strong impact. Well-structured sentences help maintain the flow of information, making it easier for readers to process and understand the message conveyed more easily. These skills are essential for academic success as well as good communication in various fields.

The existence of subjects and predicates in sentences is a very important element to create a good sentence unity. These two elements form the basis of any complete sentence and provide a clear and well-defined meaning. Without a subject or predicate, sentences can become fragmented or ambiguous, leading to confusion for the reader. As revealed by Robert-Burton (2021) and Nordquist (2018), each sentence must contain a subject and a predicate in order to be considered complete and easy to understand. With these two elements, sentences become easier to understand because the reader can clearly grasp the essence of the message conveyed. This is also supported by the research of Clifton, C., and Frazier, L. (2011) which states that sentences that contain subjects and predicates tend to be easier to understand. As such, a good sentence structure is essential in ensuring clear and effective communication.

The ability to structure sentences well and ensure the unity of ideas also plays an important role in creating cohesion in a text. When students can consistently create complete and well-organized sentences, the paragraphs and essays they write will flow smoothly from one idea to the next. This improves readability and comprehension, as readers can follow the flow of the writing without feeling confused. In academic writing, this ability is crucial because it allows students to convey their ideas in a structured and easy-to-follow manner. Mastery of sentence unity and writing rules also allows students to be more precise in expressing ideas, so that the message they want to convey can be received clearly and without misunderstandings. This skill not only improves the quality of individual sentences, but also the overall quality of writing, allowing students to communicate their ideas effectively and convincingly.

Word strings that do not contain subject (S) and predicate (P) elements, as well as those that only contain one of these elements, can be seen in the following examples. First, there are word strings that do not contain S and P elements, such as "If you violate the rules at Undiksha Lab. Junior High School" (Kr.7/P2/SMP Lab.). This sentence does not provide a complete meaning because there are no subject or predicate elements that explain the action or situation. Second, there are a series of words that only contain predicate elements, such as "As well as becoming more aware of the school structure and system" (Kr.7/P2/SMP Lab.). Although there is a predicate that describes a condition, there is no subject that explains who is doing the action, so this sentence becomes unclear. Third, there are sentences that only contain subject elements, such as "After 07.10 we went to the field to see the introduction of the teachers" (Kr.14/P1/SMP Lab.). Although there is a clear subject, this sentence is incomplete because there is no predicate that explains the action or state that happens to the subject. These examples show that the completeness of the subject and predicate elements is very important in forming a complete and meaningful sentence. Without these two elements, the sentence becomes incomplete and confuses the reader. Therefore, writers need to make sure that every sentence they create fulfills this requirement so that the message can be conveyed clearly and effectively.

The word strings given above do not contain complete meaning because they lack the elements of subject (S) and predicate (P). In the first example, both the subject and predicate elements are missing, so the string of words does not form a sentence that has a complete meaning. In the second example, only the predicate element is present, while the subject element is missing, which means that the sentence cannot convey a clear message. Similarly, in the third example, only the subject element is present without the predicate, so the meaning conveyed is incomplete. Thus, the string of words in the three examples cannot be considered as a complete sentence. The presence of subject and

predicate elements is very important in forming sentences that contain complete meaning, as explained by linguists such as Reyner (2016), Collins & Stabler (2016), and Clifton & Frevier (2010). They emphasize that a sentence is a series of words that contain complete meaning, and this meaning can only be created if there are subject and predicate elements that complement each other.

The subject element serves as the core of the conversation or the main topic in the sentence, while the predicate element provides information or actions that are performed on the subject. With these two elements, the sentence becomes clear and easily understood by the reader or listener. The presence of subject and predicate in a sentence is a very basic element in the formation of an effective sentence. When these two elements are present in a sentence, the sentence can convey ideas or information in a structured and complete way. This makes it easier for the reader or listener to understand the message being conveyed, as they can easily recognize who is performing the action and what is being done to the subject. The subject and predicate elements play an important role in producing sentences that are meaningful, clear and effective in communication.

### **Sentence Structure Contained in the Essay of Grade VII Junior High School Undiksha Singaraja Laboratory**

Based on the data analysis carried out, it was found that the sentence structure in the essay of grade VII students of Undiksha Singaraja Laboratory Junior High School as shown in Table 3.3 below.

**Table 3.3: Sentence Structure Contained in the Essay of Grade VII Junior High School Undiksha Singaraja Laboratory**

No.	Sentence Structure	
	Single	Compound
1	S – P	S – S – P – O – K
2	S – P – O	S – S – P – K
3	S – P – K	S – P – P
4	K – S – P – Open	S – P – K – P
5	K – S – P – Pel	S – P / S – P – Open
6	K – S – P – O – K	S – P / S – P – K
7	K – S – P – K – K	S – S – P – Opel
8	K – S – P – Opel	S – S – P – Opel – K
9	K – S – P – K	S – P – P – K
10		S – P – P – Pel
11		K – S – S – P – O
12		K – S – P – Pel / S – P – O

Table 3.3 shows that the sentence structure in the essays of seventh grade students of SMP Laboratorium Undiksha Singaraja is quite varied, with 9 variations of single sentences and 12 variations of compound sentences. This shows the students' ability to compose different sentences to convey ideas clearly. This variation also reflects the development of students' ability to combine clauses to convey information in more detail. The diversity of sentence structures is important to improve the quality of writing and flexibility in conveying messages effectively. Therefore, the development of sentence

structure variation needs to be encouraged so that students become more proficient in writing.

Table 3.3 in the research results section shows that the sentence structure in the essays of seventh grade students of SMP Laboratorium Undiksha Singaraja is quite varied, both in the form of single sentences and compound sentences. This diversity is reflected in the use of sentences to convey ideas, which aims to avoid boredom and increase the effectiveness of message delivery. The variety of sentence structures shows the students' high level of intellectual maturity and language skills. This is in line with the opinion of Winch, G., et al. (2006), which states that the higher a person's level of intellectual maturity, the better their language skills. With high language skills, students can use various sentence structures appropriately, which in turn enriches the way they express ideas clearly and interestingly.

## CONCLUSIONS

The variety of sentence patterns found reflects students' efforts to convey ideas in a structured and clear manner. Some errors in the use of sentence elements, such as subjects and predicates, were found in some sentences, which resulted in the sentences being incomplete or difficult to understand. Students can also construct more complex sentences, but the organization of ideas in the sentences is not yet fully consistent. This indicates the need to improve understanding of syntactic rules, especially in the correct use of sentence elements and coherent sentence construction. More intensive practice and a deeper understanding of sentence structure are expected to help students produce more effective and communicative sentences. This improvement in syntax skills is not only important in academic contexts, but also in everyday life, so that students can become more skillful writers who are able to convey ideas in a clear and systematic way.

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