

**THE ANALYSIS OF SENTENCE PROBLEMS IN STUDENTS' WRITING  
AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF STATE UNIVERSITY OF PADANG**

**THESIS**

*Submitted as Fulfillment of the Requirement to Obtain Strata One (S1) Degree  
at English Department of State University of Padang*



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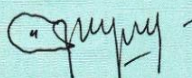
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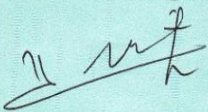
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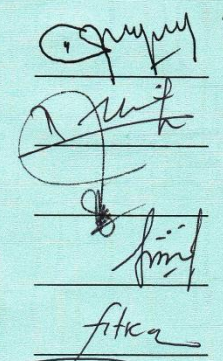
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## ABSTRAK

Rahmadhani, Revi. 2015, "*The Analysis of Sentence Problems in Students' Writing at The English Department of State University Of Padang*". Skripsi. Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni, Universitas Negeri Padang.

Penelitian ini adalah penelitian deskriptif yang bertujuan untuk mengetahui jenis *sentence problems* manakah yang paling banyak ditemukan di dalam tulisan mahasiswa dan apa kesulitan yang dihadapi oleh mahasiswa dalam membuat kalimat *compound* dan *complex* ketika menulis sebuah karangan. Populasi dari penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa tingkat II Jurusan Bahasa Inggris tahun akademik 2014/2015 Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni Universitas Negeri Padang dengan teknik penyampelan *random cluster* dan yang terpilih adalah K-4. Instrumen penelitian adalah tes menulis dan angket. Mahasiswa diberikan instruksi menulis sebuah karangan dengan mempergunakan *compound* dan *complex sentences* minimal 10 kalimat. Berdasarkan hasil analisis data diperoleh bahwa persentase *run-on sentence* dalam tulisan siswa adalah 19,3 % dan *comma splices* 14,2 %; serta hasil klasifikasi jawaban mahasiswa terhadap angket meliputi tinggi dan rendah. Sehingga dapat disimpulkan bahwa *run-on sentences* lebih banyak ditemukan dalam tulisan mahasiswa dan mahasiswa mengalami kesulitan menggunakan kata penghubung dalam membuat *compound* dan *complex sentences* ketika menulis; serta mahasiswa sulit mengidentifikasi dan mengoreksi *sentence problems*. Lebih lanjut, penulis mengharapkan dosen Grammar dapat bekerjasama dengan mahasiswa untuk memperhatikan penggunaan kalimat *compound* dan *complex* sehingga *sentence problems*; *run-on sentence* dan *comma splices* dalam tulisan mahasiswa dapat diminimalisir.

Kata kunci: *sentence problems*, *run-on sentences*, *comma splices*, *compound sentences*, *complex sentences*

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **A. Background of the Problem**

Writing is one of language skills that is needed to communicate with others. Through writing, the writer's ideas can be delivered to the readers. It is supported by White (1987:10) who said that writing is the learning process to express the ideas, knowledge, experience, or information that is organized in written form. It means that if the students want to tell their ideas to the reader, they should write it. Because writing can help the writer to share ideas to the reader, it needs to be mastered.

One of the ways to be mastering in writing is that the students need to understand the basic element of an essay, and they need to write any types of essay in English. This ability has been learnt in *Essay Writing* and *Academic Writing*. Thus, it is expected that the students have already mastered in writing any types of an essay. In writing an essay, the students do not only understand about how to express idea in written form, but also about how to write an accurate grammar in order to make the reader understand what the writer writes. Because writing and grammar are integrated with each other, grammar is also needed to support writing. It can be seen while the students are writing an essay; they need grammar to construct the sentences.

As we know that the students at English Department of State University of Padang have learnt about composing sentences; they learnt to construct a simple sentence, compound sentences, and complex sentences. They learn those materials beginning from Grammar I until Grammar III. They have learnt it more than one. For instance, the students who have learned about compound and complex sentences in Grammar I; they also learn it again in Grammar II and Grammar III. The purpose of learning compound and complex sentences more than one is that the students are able to get more understanding about them. It means that they have mastered the sentence construction in writing an essay, but possibly not all of the students are able to construct compound sentences in writing an essay. Because possibly not all of students can compose compound and complex sentences well, they might tend to make sentence problems in writing an essay.

According to Warner and Nelson (2007:374), run-on sentences, comma splices, and sentence fragments are categorized as sentence problems. Yarber (2009:196) says it can be called as run-on sentence if the students combine two simple sentences to become compound and complex sentence without any connecting word; for instance, *The daily exam is postponed the class is canceled as well*. It needs a semicolon in order to separate sentences, so the correct should be *the daily exam is postponed; the class is canceled as well*. Meanwhile, comma splice is combining two clause or sentences together just with comma. It is like a sentence, but it is not a correct sentence (Langan, 2010:180); for example, *Lena said I like the new Tailor Swift album, she was right*. Sentences was only separated by commas, so the correct form should be *Lena said I like the new*

*Taylor Swift album, and she was right.* The other sentence problem is sentence fragment. According to Langan (2010:163), sentence fragment is an incomplete sentence; one of which is a dependent clause. For instance, *because he had another agreement.* Previous example can be called as sentence fragment because it is a dependent clause. Dependent clause can be a complete sentence if there is an independent clause. Thus, the sentence should be *Richard canceled his meeting because he had another agreement.*

Related to the sentence problems, Weaver (1996) has done a research. In his research, the result shows that the upper-level undergraduates made some sentence problems in their writing. He found that the students just use comma between two independent clauses. The students do not realize that they did not put coordinating conjunction or transition to separate two independent clauses. As a result, the students made sentence problems in their writing.

Chandler (2013) also has done a research about sentence problems while the students are writing. He found that the first- or second-year students do not use conjunction to separate independent clauses. The students just make it like one sentence. Chandler give the example that the students make in their writing “*she told me about it I answer her question*”. This sentence is wrong because the students should put the conjunction between the simple sentences. The students can add coordinating conjunction *and*, or they can put semicolon to connect these sentences. The sentence should be “*she told me about it, and I answer her question*”, or the students can write it like “*she told me about it; I answer her question*”.

Based on the researcher's experience when wrote an essay in the fourth semester, the researcher made sentence problems in constructing compound and complex sentences. The sentence problem that the researcher made was putting an appropriate conjunction, and transition in writing an essay. Another problem that have been faced by the researcher in writing an essay was that when the researcher wrote an essay, the researcher just put commas to separate simple sentences in order to make compound and complex sentences. The researcher should have used conjunctions to separate the sentences.

Besides, the problem that was found in writing an essay was forgetting to put semicolon before transition to compose compound and complex sentences in writing an essay. The other problem was forgetting to capitalize in the connecting word of transitions, or capitalizing the connecting word of coordinating conjunction. In order to support the researcher's experience, the researcher had asked several students in academic year 2012/2013 informally. Some of those students also faced the same problems with the researcher.

Furthermore, students also said that they made sentence problems because of difficulties in composing compound and complex sentences. The difficulty that the students felt in composing compound and complex sentences while writing an essay linked to the understanding of sentence types. It was also related to the connecting words that the students use to compose sentences; compound and complex sentences. They said that it was difficult to differentiate the use of each connecting word in order to compose compound and complex sentence.



Awareness of making sentence problems is one of students' difficulties in composing compound and complex sentences while writing an essay.

Therefore, the researcher wants to analyze these cases. The researcher wants to know whether students in Academic year 2014/2015 also have the same problems with the researcher and researcher's friends in academic year 2011/2012. These problems have to be explained so that the students can realize that they made sentence problems in writing an essay. Based on the problems that have been shown above, the researcher did the research about sentence problems that the students made in writing an essay. Thus, the researcher chooses *the analysis of sentence problems in Students' Writing at English Department of State University of Padang* as the title of this research.

## **B. Identification of the Problems**

Based on the background of the problem above, there were several sentence problems in composing compound and complex sentences while writing an essay that have been identified by the researcher. The problems were identified as followed: the first one was that the students might be combined two simple sentences without using any conjunction, or it can be called as run-on sentences. Another one is a sentence fragment or an incomplete sentence. Students also might be confused to put an appropriate conjunction, and transition in writing an essay. When the students wrote an essay, they might just put commas to separate simple sentences in order to make compound and complex sentences; it was known as comma splices. Besides, the students also forgot to put semicolon

before transition to compose compound sentence in writing an essay. The sentences problems that the students made in writing an essay was not regardless with students' difficulties in composing compound and complex sentence while writing an essay. The difficulties were to identifying sentence types, using connecting words, and identifying sentence problems themselves.

### **C. Limitation of the Problems**

Because not all of the problems will be analyzed in this research, this research focuses on analyzing sentence problems in compound and complex sentences while the students are writing an essay. Actually, sentence problems are categorized into sentence fragments, run-on sentences, and comma splices. However, this research only analyzed run-on sentence and comma splices because sentence fragment have been analyzed by previous researcher. Thus, this research analyzed sentence problems; run-on sentence and comma splices that were made by students in composing compound and complex sentences while writing an essay, and students' difficulties in composing compound and complex sentences while writing an essay.

### **D. Formulation of The problems**

Related to the limitation of the problem, the problem was formulated as follows: "What kind of sentence problem that is mostly made by second grade students in academic year 2014/2015 of English department in composing compound and complex sentences while writing an essay?"

### **E. Research Questions**

To analyze the formulation of the problems, here are the research questions:

1. What kind of sentence problem that is mostly made by students in composing compound and complex sentences while writing an essay?
2. What are the students' difficulties in constructing compound and complex sentences when they write an essay?

### **F. Purposes of the Research**

The purposes of this research are:

1. To find out kind of sentence problem in compound and complex sentences that the students mostly write in an essay.
2. To find out the difficulties of students in constructing compound and complex sentences while writing an essay.

### **G. Significance of the Research**

This research was important to be done because it presented explanation about sentence problems that was faced by the students in writing an essay. This research also gave significant information to the students about how to combine sentences accurately in writing. Through this research, the English Department students were expected to be more careful in combining sentences when they wrote an essay so that the sentence problems were less found in their writing. In addition, for the teacher, it was expected that the teacher can be aware about the students' mistake in writing related to combine sentences.

## **H. Definitions of Key Terms**

Compound sentence : A combination of simple sentences that are joined by using coordinating conjunction, transitions, semicolon.

Complex sentence : A sentence that contains at least one independent clause and one dependent clause.

Sentence problems : Problems that the students make in constructing a compound and complex sentences; it can be run-on sentence and comma splices.

Run-on sentence : A sentence that is combined by two simple sentences that are connected with punctuation that is unconventional or without any conjunction.

Comma splice : The two independent clauses or sentences that are united only with commas.