Types of Sentences Filled with Character Values in Elementary School Students' Writings: A Syntactic Study

Ida Bagus Putrayasa
Ganesha University of Education
Jalan Udayana No. 11, Singaraja, Kec. Buleleng, Indonesia
ibputra@gmail.com

Abstract—This research purpose, designed with a descriptive-qualitative approach, was to explain the types of sentences containing character values in the students' writing. The study took the fourth-grade students' essays as the study subject, and the study object was sentences containing character education values found in the essays of fourth-grade students in the province of Bali. Data was collected by document recording method. Furthermore, the collected data were analyzed descriptively-qualitatively. The results showed that the types of sentences found in the essays of fourth-grade elementary school students in the province of Bali can be divided based on (a) content: there are 1298 news sentences, question sentences: 0, and command sentences: 0; (b) the number of clauses, there are 804 single sentences and 494 compound sentences; (c) the constituent predicates: there are 976 verbal sentences and 322 nominal sentences; and (d) the nature of the actor-action relationship: there are 893 active sentences and 405 passive sentences. The character values identified in the students' writings were (a) religious, (b) honest, (c) hard work, (d) fond of reading, (e) caring for the environment, (f) social care, and (g) responsibility. From those findings, it is suggested that students need to be more concerned with the types of sentences that express character values in producing an essay to ensure that the essay is effective and maintains the ideas that they want to share.

Keywords— types of sentences; character education; composition; syntax

I. INTRODUCTION

Communicating effectively and efficiently in spoken and written communication is one of the major objectives of learning the Indonesian language in elementary school [1]. Effective and efficient communication will happen if the students already master the language skills that include four language aspects, and one of them is writing skills. In writing (composing), students will express ideas using written sentences. Still, many sentences made by the students do not express comprehensive meaning. This incomplete understanding can be seen from the absence of the Subject or Predicate in their sentences. Students still need to learn more about the elements of sentences for expressing ideas [2]. Besides that, students lack practice in determining the elements of a sentence. Students' low understanding and practice cause the low quality of the language used to convey ideas, especially in writing.

Apart from students' problems with the language used in writing, the sentences they produce also have problems with politeness and language ethics. Thus, it can be said that those sentences lack character values. Considering that problem, examining students' writings from the syntactic aspect and character values is crucial. The syntactic aspect and character values of students' writings are interesting to analyze from a sentence-type point of view. This study's results can enrich syntax studies in students' essays.

From the explanation above, preparing research and theory on syntax seems urgent, specifically on types of sentences containing character education values. Thus, this study is beneficial as it becomes preliminary research for further research, especially for developing writing learning materials. Apart from that, the results of this research can also provide an overview of the procedures for expressing an idea in spoken and written language. This study focused on the types of sentences containing character values found in fourth-grade elementary school students' essays. In more detail, the problem studied in this paper concerns the types of sentences based on (a) content, (b) the number of clauses, (c) forming predicates, and (d) the nature of the actor-action relationship.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Syntax is the word order that forms meaning [3]–[5]. Another opinion says syntax is the relationship between one word and another [6], [7] and the relationship between these words forms an understanding [8]–[10]. Syntax studies sentences that have a complete meaning [2], [11], [12]

Syntax analyzes sentences. It means that syntax uses the theory of the sentence to do the analysis. A sentence can be defined as a group of words that contains a complete meaning [4], [6], [13]. Ideas conveyed in these strings of words should consist of a subject and predicate [14]. Those sentence elements must align with their constituents, between the subject and the predicate, predicate and object, and predicate and information [5], [8]. Apart from harmony, another aspect that must be considered in sentences is the type of sentence used to express ideas [15], [16].

Sentence types can be reviewed based on several aspects, including (1) the content, (2) the number of clauses, (3) the predicate that forms it, and (4) the nature of the actor-action relationship. Briefly, these four aspects are described below. Based on its content, sentences can be divided into three parts: declarative, interrogative, and imperative. In addition, sentences can also be divided into a single sentence or a compound sentence, considering the clauses they have. Based on their constituent predicate, sentences are divided into verbal and nominal sentences. Following the actor-action relationship, sentences are divided into active and passive sentences.

Several studies are related to the study of syntax, especially sentence elements, but carried out separately, as well as research conducted by Putrayasa [17]. The study analyzed the differences in the elements of objects and descriptions and confirmed that the students have a low ability to determine the sentence elements. That finding indicates that the students need to improve their understanding of the concept of a sentence, the elements of a sentence, and sentence types. Furthermore, comprehensive research using syntax with character education values has never been conducted. Character education is a stable personal attitude resulting from progressive and dynamic consolidation and integration of statements and actions [18]. Some studies have been done to study character education [19], [20], but these studies were conducted separately. Thus, the two things in this study are examined simultaneously by combining syntactic studies and character education values.

III.   METHOD

This research design is descriptive qualitative. This study was conducted in some elementary schools in Bali. This study used the area random sampling technique to determine the study sample. They were the North, South, West, East, and center parts of Bali Island. Three elementary schools were taken from each part, and those three schools represent the good, medium, and poor school categories. Following that criteria, 15 elementary schools were chosen. Since the study analyzed the essays written by the fourth-grade students and ten essays were collected from each school, there were 150 student essays taken as study samples. Table I shows the number of essays from each area.

TABLE I.   REGENCY, NUMBER OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, AND NUMBER OF STUDENT ESSAY

No.	Area	Number of Elementary School	Number of Student Essays
1	Buleleng (North)	3	30
2	Tabanan (Center)	3	30
3	Denpasar City (South)	3	30
4	Jembrana (West)	3	30
5	Karangasem (East)	3	30
Total		**15**	**150**

To collect data, the researcher used the documentation method. This means that the researcher took student essays the teacher collected. Then, inductive analysis was carried out after the data were collected [21]. This means the researcher groups and abstracts any data identified during the study [22].

IV.   RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Types of Sentences Produced by the Students

This section explains the first result of the study. In this section, the researcher provides the students' essay analysis results from the types of sentences based on their content, the number of clauses, the predicates forming them, and the nature of the actor-action relationship in the essays made by the students.

The researchers collected 150 essays from the fourth-grade elementary school students selected as the study samples. Those essays consisted of 3 paragraphs. The total number of sentences was 1298. These sentences were studied in terms of their content, number of clauses, forming predicates, and the nature of the actor-action relationship. From the collected data, the sentence types in those essays were classified into some categories. Table II shows the types of sentences found in this study.

TABLE II.   Types of Sentences in the Students Essays

No.	Types of Sentences Based on...				Frequency	Amount
	Fill	**Number of Clauses**	**Forming Predicate**	**The Nature of Actor-Action Relations**		
1	News Sentences	-	-	-	1298	
2	Interrogative sentence	-	-	-	0	1298
3	Imperative sentence	-	-	-	0	
4	-	Single Sentence	-	-	804	
5	-	Compound Sentences	-	-	494	1298
6	-	-	Verbal Sentences	-	9 76	
7			Nominal sentence	-	322	1298
8	-	-	-	Sentence Active	893	
9				Sentence Passive	405	1298

Table II shows that types of sentences made by the students can be categorized based on (a) contents: there are 1298 news sentences, interrogative sentences: 0, and imperative sentences: 0; (b) the number of clauses, there are 804 single sentences and 494 compound sentences; (c) the constituent predicates: there are 976 verbal sentences and 322 nominal sentences; and (d) the nature of the actor-action relationship: there are 893 active sentences and 405 passive sentences.

In the explanation above, the types of sentences found in the students' essays are compound. From the collected data, the researchers found many compound sentences; there were 494 sentences. That finding indicates that students' spoken language affects their writing. They transformed their spoken language into written language. Besides, this result also reveals that the students did not follow or understand the rules in written language. Transferring spoken language to written language makes their sentences ineffective because they are long sentences with several clauses. The example of a compound sentence made by the student can be seen in the data excerpt below.

> "… on Galungan and Kuningan Day, my mother made offerings, and my father cleaned the temple, and I helped my mother. I cleaned the room, and my sister was playing, and my mother called me to tell me to go my father went to buy things my mother pushed my sister to clean the yard." (Kr.10/P1/SD5.Bll)

The paragraph in the excerpt consists of some sentences. Specifically, it consists of some clauses that do not obey the rules in writing an effective sentence. Since they did not follow the writing rules, the compound sentences, as shown in the excerpt above, do not have a clear unity of ideas. The result of this study is similar to the study result conducted by Yu Tai [23]. In that study, it was found that second language learners' writing results are less accurate or the unity of ideas is less clear, making their writing hard to be understood by the readers. To create a paragraph with a unified and clear idea, students need to follow the rules for writing effective sentences. A sentence must be started with a word with a capital letter at the beginning and ended with punctuation: period, question, or exclamation [5], [24], [25]. The sentences will produce a paragraph with a clear and unified idea if those sentences are written effectively based on the writing rules.

Besides, the students tend to compose complex sentences when asked to write a paragraph. The ability to produce complex sentences has something to do with their cognitive and language development. Winch et al. [26] explain language and intellectual capabilities grow together. Thus, when language skills improve, at the same time intellectual capabilities increase. A similar opinion was also delivered by Batterink and Neville [14], who believe that adult learners normally produce more compound and complex sentences.

B. Character Values in the Students' Essays

The data analysis results show that the students inserted several character values in their essays. Specifically, this study found seven character values. Those character values and the examples of the data can be seen in Table III.

TABLE III.   Character Values Identified in Students' Essays

No.	Character Values	Example
1	Religious	When the bell rings, I go to the court for *tri sandya* (praying).
2	Honest	Reno admitted that he was wrong.

3	Hard work	He studied diligently, and he won the championship.
4	Like to read	He likes reading books.
5	Environmental care	He met a bird whose wing was broken, then he cared for the bird.
6	Social care	Mr. Farmer distributed goods to poor People.
7	Responsible	At home, I help my mother sweep, mop, and wipe the glass.

Table III shows seven character values found in the students' essays. Those seven character values were only 38% of the 18 (eighteen) character values that were expected by the Ministry of Education and Culture [27], namely: (1) Religious, (2) Honest, (3) Tolerant, (4) Discipline, (5) Hard Work, (6) Creative, (7) Independent, (8) Democratic, (9) Curiosity, (10) National Spirit, (11) Love for the Motherland, (12) Appreciation of Achievement, (13) Friendly/Communicative, (14) Love of Peace, (15) Love of Reading, (16) Care for the Environment, (17) Social Care, and (18) Responsibility.

From the findings of this study, it was confirmed that the students' character values and understanding need to be improved. Considering the study results, some factors cause the students to have low character values mastery. They are: (a) students' potential development is not yet done optimally between the exercise of the heart (ethics), the exercise of thought (literacy), exercise of feeling (aesthetics), and exercise (kinesthetics); (b) the large population of students, teachers and schools spread throughout Indonesia; (c) the synergy of responsibility between schools, parents and the community did not work optimally to support character education; (d) the negative effect of social media on students' lifestyles that reduces religious and local wisdom values; (e) insufficient parental support for their children that causes an identity crisis and disorientation of the child's life goals; and (f) insufficient facilities to support character education [28]. These conditions show that character values cultivation must be increased by conducting activities that strengthen character education in each educational unit, as designed by the Ministry of Education and Culture [27] with material stated in [29] regarding Strengthening Character Education.

Strengthening Character Education is a school educational program to strengthen students' character by harmonizing hearts, feelings, thoughts, and sports by involving the students' parents and communities to reach the Mental Revolution movement. To implement character education, schools may integrate it into intra-curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities. Furthermore, those activities may also be conducted inside and/or outside the formal education unit environment.

Teachers may promote character education values in language learning (writing/composing). In writing, teachers may ask the students to use language by paying attention to the type of sentence and understanding how best to use language. Therefore, language rules are applied. They are politeness and ethics [30]. Politeness and language ethics reflect character values that language users need to obey when they use the language in spoken and written language contexts. This context may include the situation, goal, participant, action, instrument, keyword, norm, and genre.

V.   CONCLUSION

Considering the results of the study, this study concludes (1) the sentences in the students' essays can be classified based on (a) their content: there are 1298 news sentences, question sentences: 0, and command sentences: 0; (b) the number of clauses, there are 804 single sentences and 494 compound sentences; (c) the constituent predicates: there are 976 verbal sentences and 322 nominal sentences; and (d) the nature of the actor-action relationship: there are 893 active sentences and 405 passive sentences. Furthermore, the values of character education in the students' writings include (a) religious, (b) honesty, (c) hard work, (d) fondness of reading, (e) caring for the environment, (f) social care, and (g) responsibility. From the findings of this study, it is suggested that students should pay attention more to the types of sentences that indicate character values when they are writing essays to ensure that their sentences are effective and can maintain the ideas they want to share.

VI. REFERENCES

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