

THE USE OF MULTILEVEL SENTENCE STRUCTURES AS A STRATEGY TO OVERCOME SYNTACTIC ERRORS IN FOURTH GRADE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study is a literature study that aims to examine the use of multilevel sentence structure as a strategy in overcoming syntactic errors in grade IV elementary school students. The syntax errors in question include the arrangement of phrases, clauses, and sentences that are not in accordance with linguistic rules, such as the use of inappropriate prepositions, the influence of regional languages, and non-standard sentence structures. The factors that cause these errors are divided into two, namely internal factors such as low language skills, interest in reading, and vocabulary mastery; as well as external factors such as lack of habituation to use good and correct language in the study and home environment. Multilevel sentence structures, or multi-level compound sentences, are seen as an effective alternative strategy in overcoming such errors. By introducing semantic relationship patterns such as time and conditions in sentences, students are trained to compose sentences that are more complex and according to syntactic rules. This strategy is aligned with communicative and contextual learning approaches that support the improvement of students' critical thinking skills and writing skills. Based on the results of a literature review, the use of multilevel sentence structure can be an innovative and applicable solution in Indonesian learning in elementary schools.

Keywords: *Elementary School Students, Learning Strategies, Multilevel Sentences, Syntax*

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INTRODUCTION

The ability to use the Indonesian language can certainly be continuously improved through learning activities and practicing using the Indonesian language continuously as well (Budiman & Nasrullah, 2022). We use language, both in spoken and written forms. The spoken form of Indonesian is commonly used in everyday conversations during discussions of various official meetings (Syaputri, 2019). The written form of Indonesian is used both in informal writings and in formal writings. Language errors occur not only in speech but also in written language. This is viewed from the variation of language based on its use. From the perspective of the means of use, language variations can be categorized into spoken and written forms.

Writing skills are one of the language skills that are beneficial for human life, especially for students. When writing, students are required to think in order to express their ideas in written form based on the knowledge and experience they possess (Sardila, 2015). The ability to write is a characteristic of educated individuals or nations. In writing, students are expected to express their thoughts using language that adheres to the rules of Indonesian language (Firdaus & Sukmawan, 2022). Written language is bound by language rules, such as spelling, arrangement, systematics, and writing techniques. If students do not adhere to the rules of written language, language errors occur. The language errors made by students during the teaching and learning process imply that the goals of language instruction have not been fully achieved.

The higher the quantity of language errors, the fewer the

language teaching goals are achieved (W Syaputri, 2014). The language errors made by students must be reduced to a minimal level, and it is even sought to eliminate them altogether. This can be achieved if the language teacher has thoroughly studied all aspects of those language errors (Fitriani, 2018). In Indonesian language learning, many students still make language errors. One of the written language errors that students often make is syntactical errors (Nopriani, 2020).

When students argue in their writing, language errors can occur even though the elements of language have been explained by the teacher before instructing the students to write expository texts. The language errors made by students are due to the language habits used in their living environment, influenced by the languages they have previously mastered, the use of foreign languages, the students' lack of understanding of the Indonesian language, as well as inadequate or imperfect teaching of the Indonesian language, resulting in confused or chaotic forms in the students' written texts (W Syaputri, 2014).

Common syntax errors include incomplete sentence structures, improper use of conjunctions, and mismatches between subjects and predicates. To address these issues, effective learning strategies are needed to enhance students' abilities to construct sentences. One strategy that can be used is the introduction and use of multi-level sentence structures. Multi-level sentence structures not only enrich students' sentence variations, but also train them to understand the relationship between the main ideas and explanatory ideas within a single sentence. By understanding and using this structure, students are expected to avoid syntax errors and improve their language skills comprehensively. This article aims to examine the use of multi-level sentence structures as a strategy to address the syntax errors commonly experienced by fourth-grade elementary school students. This study was conducted through a literature study approach referring to relevant syntax theories and Indonesian language learning strategies.

METHOD

This research uses the Literature Study method (Library Research), which is a research method carried out by examining, reviewing and analyzing various library sources. The sources used in this study include books, scientific journals, articles, and other documents related to syntax, language errors, multilevel sentence structures, and Indonesian language learning strategies in elementary schools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Understanding Syntax

Syntax is a branch of linguistic science that studies the arrangement of words into phrases, clauses, and sentences. Syntax discusses the relationships between elements within those language units to form meaningful structures. (Ramlan, 2005) "Syntax is a part of grammar that discusses the intricacies of discourse, sentences, clauses, and phrases." Meanwhile, according to (Chaer, 2009) "Syntax is a branch of linguistics that studies the structure of sentences and the relationships between elements of sentences, including word order, phrase structure, and the relationships between phrases in sentences." Elements of language included in the scope of syntax comprise phrases, clauses, and sentences. In discussing syntactic structure, there are three basic things: syntactic function, category, and role. Syntactic function is a structure in syntax that is filled with categories.certain.

The structure includes subject (S), predicate (P), object (O), complement (Kom), and adverb (Ket). The structure includes subject (S), predicate (P), object (O), complement (Kom), and adverb (Ket). Syntactic categories are types of words or phrases that fulfill syntactic functions. These categories relate to nouns (N), verbs (V), adjectives (A), adverbials (Adv), numerals (Num), prepositions (Prep), conjunctions (Konj), and pronominals (Pron). In this case, nouns, verbs, and adjectives are included in the main category and the others are additional categories. Meanwhile, syntactic roles are verbs or action words that fulfill the function of P, including the center of a clause

(preposition). Basically, syntactic functions consisting of the elements mentioned previously are empty boxes that have no meaning. Furthermore, these functions will have meaning if they are associated and connected with syntactic categories and roles so that they have certain categories and roles. (Pradestania et al., 2022)

An important discussion in syntax is discussing syntactic units. The largest units of words commonly discussed in syntax are phrases, clauses, and sentences, respectively. The main syntactic functions in language are subject, predicate, object, adverb, and complement (SPO-Ket-Pel). An example sentence is as follows: (1) I(S) going (P) to campus (Ket); (2) Brother (S) reads (p) book (o); and (3) Book (S) read (P) by Older brother (Note) (Pradestania et al.,2022)

Syntactic Errors of Elementary School Students

Syntactic errors are errors or deviations in the structure of phrases, clauses, or sentences. Syntactic errors relate to syntactic functions in language, namely predicates, subjects, objects, complements, and adverbs. The causes of syntactic errors include: (1) sentences with non-standard structures, (2) ambiguous sentences, (3) unclear sentences, (4) inappropriate diction in forming sentences, (5) sentence contamination, (6) coherence, (7) use of redundant words. (Bahasa et al., 2023). These errors are common. found in fourth grade students because at this stage they aredevelop the ability to think and organize ideas in writing.

The research conducted by (Pradestania et al., 2022) revealed syntactic errors in students' descriptive essays, including:

1. Regional language influence error

"I played soccer yesterday with my friends. "

Should be: "I played soccer with my friends yesterday."

2. Preposition usage error

"The travel time to Malioboro is 1 to 2 hours."

Should be: "At the travel time to Malioboro, it is 1 to 2 hours."

3. Phrase error

"After we play, we eat and rest a bit."

Should be: "After playing, we eat and rest a bit."

Factors Causing Syntactic Language Errors in Students'

Descriptive Texts

The causes of syntactic errors in students' descriptive writings include internal and external factors. Internal factors arise from the students' abilities, including the use of language that is good and correct, not having been taught how to construct sentences, students' low interest in reading, and errors in word choice or diction. Then, external factors are errors that occur due to outside influences that affect syntactic mistakes, including not being taught the proper and correct use of language by teachers during lessons, the influence of foreign languages or languages, and environmental factors such as the mother tongue, foreign language, and regional languages. Causing Syntactic Language Errors in Students' Descriptive Essay Texts The causes of syntactic errors in students' descriptive essays are internal and external factors. Internal factors occur due to factors of the student's body's abilities, including the use of good and correct language, not being taught to construct sentences, students' interest in reading is still low, errors in word choice or diction. Then external factors of errors that occur due to external factors that influence syntactic errors include not being taught the use of good and correct language by teachers during learning, the influence of foreign languages or languages, the influence of environmental factors such as mother tongue, foreign languages, and regional languages.

Multilevel Sentence Structure

Multilevel sentence structure, or known as complex sentences, is part of syntactic studies that discusses the arrangement of sentences consisting of one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses. Based on its grammatical structure, sentences are divided into two types: simple and compound sentences. A simple sentence is a sentence that only involves the two most essential elements in sentence formation, namely the subject (S) and the predicate (P). However, a simple sentence can also be followed by an object and a predicate. This type of sentence is usually called a simplex sentence. Meanwhile, a compound sentence is one that consists of two or more sentence patterns. Compound sentences are usually marked by conjunctions. This type of sentence is typically called a complex sentence. The

conjunctions used to express temporal relationships include: during, when, before, after, at the time, when, past, and many others. The data found by (Murdiani et al., 2023) analyzes 2 complex sentences of the same type because the average complex sentences of the same type have the same pattern.

Complex Sentences of Subordinate Clause Time Relation Time relation is one type of semantic relationship between one clause and another found in complex subordinate sentences (Prabawa, 2015). Data 1: The sentence "This phenomenon continues until it reaches the tree level." in the scientific work titled "Characteristics of the Vegetation Habitat of the Orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus morio*) in the Forest along the Menamang River, East Kalimantan."

Clause 1: This phenomenon continues to occur

Clause 2: To the level of trees

Combination: This phenomenon continues to occur up to the level of trees

The main clause is in clause 1 because clause 1 has complete elements that form a clause, namely the subject (This phenomenon) and the predicate (continues to occur). Therefore, clause 1 can stand alone as a complete sentence. Meanwhile, clause 2 is a subordinate clause because it only has an adverb (to the level of trees) and cannot form a complete sentence that contains a subject.

The sub and main clause of complex sentences with conditional relationships are connected by conditional conjunctions that indicate how one condition must be met by another condition. The conditional conjunctions include, namely if, if, supposing, and as long as.

Data 1: The sentence "If not followed up, such conditions will result in a further decrease in the width and area of the forest." In the scientific work titled "Characteristics of Orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus morio*) Habitat Vegetation in the Forests along the Menamang River, East Kalimantan."

Clause 1: such conditions will result in a further decrease in the width and area of the forest

Clause 2: not followed up

Combination: If not followed up, such conditions will result in further

reduction in the width and area of the forest. The main clause can be found in clause 1 as it has a complete clause element, namely the subject (such conditions), predicate (will result and further reduction), and object (width and area of the forest). For this reason, clause 1 can stand alone as a complete sentence. Meanwhile, clause 2 only contains a predicate (not followed up) so it cannot become a complete sentence as it requires a subject. (Murdiani et al., 2023)

Language Learning Strategies in Elementary Schools

In Indonesian language learning, the processes of listening, speaking, reading, writing, speaking, understanding language, and appreciating literature must be studied as a whole, integrated, and dynamic. (Kuswandi et al., 2020). The strategies for learning the Indonesian language in elementary schools should refer to communicative and contextual approaches. In this case, introducing variations of sentence structures, including multi-level sentences, can be an alternative to improve students' syntactic abilities. This strategy also supports the development of critical thinking and good writing skills.

CONCLUSION

The syntax errors that occur among elementary school students, particularly in the fourth grade, are common issues encountered in Indonesian language learning. These errors include sentence constructions that do not adhere to grammatical rules, such as the use of incorrect phrases, the influence of local languages, as well as mistakes in the use of prepositions and sentence structure. The causes stem from both internal aspects (language ability, reading interest, and vocabulary mastery) and external aspects (language environment, teaching methods, and mother tongue influence). As one solution, the use of multi-level sentence structures or complex sentences can be an effective strategy to correct students' syntactic errors. By introducing sentence patterns that contain time, condition, or cause-and-effect relationships, students can learn to construct complex sentences correctly and logically. This strategy is also in line with the communicative and contextual learning approaches, which can gradually develop students' critical thinking skills and writing abilities.

Therefore, it is important for Indonesian language teachers in elementary schools to apply teaching methods that emphasize understanding of correct sentence structures. The systematic introduction of multi-level sentence structures can help students build a strong syntactic ability from an early age.

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