

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN WRITING COMPLEX SENTENCES

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ABSTRACT

This study mainly to describe the gender differences in writing complex sentences. Twelve (12) students grade eight (8) junior high school students in two different places, one is in North Sumatera and another one is in Manado – 6 males and 6 females – were instructed to write an informal letter to their friends. The writers use a descriptive qualitative method to classify and analyze the writing complex sentences. The object of this study was 12 students' informal letter. The findings of this research are following:

1T-units (1 independent clause) for male is 36% and 1T-units for female is 64%; it shows a big gap. However, the 2T-units (2 independent clauses) for male is 21% and for female is 17%, and 3T-units (3 independent clauses) for male is 11% and for female is also 11%.

Keywords : *Gender differences, Complex Sentences, Writing, Informal Letter, Junior high school.*

1. Introduction

Male and female language use varied early on in the study, according to Suganob-Nicolau and Sukanto^[1], who cited Lakoff (1975), Eckert (1989), Tannen (1990), and Cameron (2005). Numerous studies show that there are disparities between male and female students in terms of language skills when it comes to the particular situation of male and female students learning a second language or foreign language. The article by Suganob^[1] demonstrates that female students are more proficient in spoken and written products than male students based on the findings of Ng (2010), Saeed, (2011), Bijami (2013), and Cornett (2014). In another case, Kamari^[2] conducted a survey of 150 studies at Azad Islamic University in Ahwaz and examined both genders in terms of their ability to write descriptive paragraphs and opinion paragraphs. The results showed that male students outperform female students when it comes to writing an opinion paragraph essay, while female students outperform male students when it comes to writing a descriptive one.

In a different instance, Kamari, Gorjian, and Pazhakh^[2] polled 150 students at Azad Islamic University in Ahwaz and looked at how well both genders wrote opinion and descriptive paragraphs. The findings demonstrated that while female students scored better than male students when it came to writing a descriptive essay, male students performed better when it came to producing an opinion paragraph essay.

2. Review of Literature

A genre is a teaching strategy that outlines the procedures or sequential writing orders that instructors or students should adhere to. While genre as a product exhibits its own writing qualities in terms of organization, appearance or layout, purpose of communication, and language methods employed.^[3] A framing method conceptualizes the construction of gender identities as a part of the construction of broader social identities in the context of language and gender studies. Following Ochs^[4], Kendall (p. 604) states that "women and men do not generally choose linguistic options with the intention of creating masculine or feminine identities; rather, they draw upon gendered linguistic strategies to perform pragmatic and interactional functions of language and, thus, constitute roles in a

gendered way." Being a "good manager" or a "good mother" are examples of social roles in which people construct their identities in a way that is tied to gender.

According to early gender sociolinguistic research, gender should be investigated in the most prominent context and is most noticeable "in cross-sex interaction between potentially sexually available interlocutors or same-sex engagement in gender-specific activities".^[5]

When it comes to essay writing, you can notice how students use grammar in their sentence construction. It can be used to determine how well students can put together various sentence structures. Simple sentences, compound sentences, complex sentences, and compound complex sentences are the four categories of sentences in English.^[6] One or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses make up a complicated sentence.^{[7][8]} Subordinate conjunctions, such as adjective, noun, and adverb clauses, are used to connect it.

One way to assess an EFL learner's proficiency is by looking at how they utilize the language. The use of complicated sentences based on unit T is one of many metrics that may be used to evaluate a learner's writing progress.^{[9][10][11]} The T unit is "the smallest unit from which speech fragments can be deleted without leaving any sentence fragments," according to Hunt^[9] (quoted in Nicalau, 2016). Each T unit, in Hunt's view (quoted in Nicalau, 2016), is composed of independent and dependent clauses.

According to Ure^[12], letters can be used for a variety of purposes, including persuading, thanking, congratulating, advertising, and many more. Even though letters are frequently utilized, their genre and kind are rarely given any thought. The formal letter and the casual letter are the two forms of letters that Ure discusses in his article. The content, intent, language, and format of each of those categories varies from one another. Informal letters are more intimate than formal letters, which are typically used for business and professional communication.

Informal letters are sent to the writer's personal friends, family, and other loved ones. The letters have a casual and intimate tone because they are written to close family. When composing informal letters, informal language is employed. Additionally, the letters could occasionally include a subtext of emotion.

Most informal letters are written for personal purposes. They are not required to adhere to any particular pattern, format, or tradition. They may be written in accordance with the author's preferences and the demands of the circumstance. Consequently, the letter is written in a friendly, informal style that comes across as genuine.

3. Research Method

A descriptive research strategy was applied in this study. According to Arikunto^[13], the research for the study was planned to look into the conditions, events, scenario, and other activities. The results were then given in the form of a research report. When describing conditions or happenings, descriptive research is utilized literally.

The focus of this study was on junior high school students from North Sumatera and Manado who were writing informal letters and using complicated language. Arikunto^[13] asserts that if there are more than 100 study participants, the researcher may select a sample size of 10 to 15 percent. In this case, 12 students served as our sample. The students produced a total of 12 essays.. The essays were an informal letter.

The procedure of descriptive research is as follows: define the objectives clearly, design the approach, collect the data, analyze the data, draw the conclusion, and report the result.

While the steps in analyzing the data in this study are (i) identification, identification was conducted to differentiate the complex sentences produced by the male and female students. These steps allowed the writer to differentiate the complex sentences produced by male and female students (ii)

classifying or unitizing; consequently, sentences are evaluated manually to identify the frequency of T-units and measure the complexity of sentences produced by male and female students, according to Hunt's (cited in Nicalau, 2016) basic standard. (iii) tabulating: the writing of the students will be grouped according to the T-Units based on Hunt's (cited in Nicalau, 2016) essential yardstick for measuring the complexity of the sentences created by the male and female students and finding the differences between the complex sentences created by the male and female students, (iv) describing; after the third step, the writer conducted the last step, which is the description of the result of the data analysis. In this, the writers describe the data presented. Considering the steps above, the writers drew the conclusion of the data analysis, and finally, the writer reported the result of the study.

4. Results and Findings

Based on the data of this study, the following is the analysis of students' writing:

Table 1.1.: Analysis of Students' Writing

No	Students	1 T-units	2 T-units	3 T-units	Introductory words
		1 independent clause	2 independent clauses	3 independent clauses	
1	Student A (Male)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hi Celine , how are you? ➤ By the way, the current situation in the world is at the covid pandemic. ➤ What is the current situation in Tangerang? ➤ Is it getting better or worse? ➤ I hope it getting better. ➤ That's for this letter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I wish you good always, including yourself and your big family. ➤ I don't expect things that are not good for yourself . ➤ I hope this letter is delivered to you and thank you for reading it. ➤ Lord Jesus always bless you and your 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Take care of yourself and your body health, don't stay up late and eat lately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I don't expect things that are not good for yourself.

			family too.		
2	Student B (Male)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How is the state of the pandemic there? ➤ What are your dreams today? ➤ I hope you can achieve it. ➤ My letter is up to here. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hi, Miracle, how are you I hope you and your family are in good health. ➤ I wish you well and always implement health protocols 		
3	Student C (Male)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I have bought lots of stuff for you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It has been a long time since I saw you. ➤ I am just waiting for my holidays to get over and meet you soon. ➤ I hope the work has been going well for 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It has been a long time since I saw you. ➤ There's only few days left in my holidays and after that's it's back to work.

			<p>you at work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There's only few days left in my holidays and after that's it's back to work. 		
4	Student D (Male)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Because I do love myself. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I hope you will understand what is this letter. ➤ This letter from 2021 is to understand my thankful and gratitude to you ➤ I'm waiting to see what you will do in the future. ➤ This is my letter hope you do love it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I gratefully love myself, hope you see this letter and smile as big as you want. ➤ I wanna give my thanks to you because I believe you do a good job as becoming me. ➤ I am waiting to see what you will do in the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Because I do love myself. ➤ I wanna give my thanks to you because I believe you do a good job as becoming me.
5	Student E (Male)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I hope you still remember. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I hope you and your family are doing fine, I am doing fine here. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I am writing this to thank you for helping me get ready for the hippo competitio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I am writing this to thank you for helping me get ready for the hippo

			<p>➤ I hope I did this correctly and I get a good score.</p>	<p>n and as a homework that you gave me.</p> <p>➤ The homework that you gave me was to write an informal letter to a person in the future, I hope you still remember.</p> <p>➤ I also want to thank you for helping me get ready for the hippo competition and that I appreciate it very much.</p> <p>➤ Today's date should be the 9th of November 2040 or more into the future so I think a lot has change but I hope you are still doing fine.</p> <p>➤ Meet you tomorrow or when this is graded or</p>	<p>competition and as a homework that you gave me.</p> <p>➤ I also want to thank you for helping me get ready for the hippo competition and that I appreciate it very much.</p> <p>➤ Today's date should be the 9th of November 2040 or more into the future so I think a lot has change but I hope you are still doing fine.</p>
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				20 years in the future.	
6	Student F (Male)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Are you healthy? ➤ I hope you are fine in this pandemic. ➤ So I'm writing this letter to you. ➤ Now I'm going to start writing the letter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How's your dad, is he better now? ➤ I'm fine with my family ➤ Right now I'm having an online class, and it's English. ➤ We are learning about letters, like formal and informal letter. ➤ I'm writing a letter that I can express it to you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Now we are focusing on writing 2 letters, a formal letter to 2 friends, and you're the only friend I know so I'm writing this letter to you. ➤ Once again, thank you for reading until the end because it is a long letter for you, because I know that you're lazy to read anything at this moment (with extension) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Now we are focusing on writing 2 letters, a formal letter to 2 friends, and you're the only friend I know so I'm writing this letter to you. ➤ Once again, thank you for reading until the end because it is a long letter for you, because I know that you're lazy to read anything at this moment (with extension)
7	Student G (Female)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hi Nat? ➤ How are you? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Natasya, is your city still quaranti 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I hope that you and your family will always 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I hope that you and your family

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Are you healthy? ➤ by the way how about your school? ➤ Ok Nat, this time, my letter. 	<p>ne? this pandemi c really troublin g a lot of people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I hope this pandemi c will end soon so we can have normal activitie s again. ➤ Convey my greeting to your parents and also your sister. 	<p>be healthy and also always get happiness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I miss face to face lessons with the teachers at school, play with my classmates, and also I miss laughing and spending time with you. ➤ I hope everything goes well so that we can meet and then pursue our dreams together 	<p>will always be healthy and also always get happiness .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I hope everythin g goes well so that we can meet and then pursue our dreams together
8	Student H (Female)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hello Syeren, how are you and your family there? ➤ Hopeful lu you and your family are always healthy and well there. ➤ How was your activites oday, was it fun? ➤ By the way, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Easter in our situation, I hope you always take care of about your health and don't forget to eat nutritious food, and we pray that this pandemic will end quickly, Amen... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Easter in our situation, I hope you always take care of about your health and don't forget to eat nutritious food, and we pray that this pandemic will end quickly, Amen...

			have you finished the exam? and how about your school?		
9	Student I (Female)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Okay, Are you doing well? ➤ Did you have some health issues? ➤ And what about your future goals? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What about your family are they doing okay? ➤ Well mine is doing fine they were fine ➤ What about your school Steph are they running well? ➤ Well mine too they doing good ➤ Okay cool I wish u okay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hi Stephany I just wanna ask how is your condition are you doing well? ➤ Well mine is not really cause there is a few thing that always made me don't wanna stay in home but I'm doing my best too stay at home. ➤ Well mine is just a normal fever or flu What about your daily life? ➤ Mine doing fine even kinda feel lonely hehe ➤ Well if you ask mine too they doing good ➤ Well if u ask mine I wish I could become a CEO of a great company. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Well mine is not really cause there is a few things that always made me don't wanna stay in home but I'm doing my best too stay at home. ➤ Well if you ask mine too they doing good ➤ Well if u ask mine I wish I could become a CEO of a great company.

10	Student J (Female)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hi future self! ➤ It suppose now you are studying and preparing for the IGCSE test. (with an extension) ➤ Always remember what kristania used to say “sufer now and enjoy later” (With an extension) ➤ I can’t wait to hear from you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I hope you are doing well wherever you are, though you read this at the age of 19, but remember big event happens in a short time. (with extension and a dependent clause) ➤ I am really curious to know what the result for the IGCSE is, but I hope it is excellent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Never forget that you are loved and supported by your family, friends, and relatives, though I suppose can come, but anyway I can only write this much. 	
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			<p>(with a dependent clause)</p> <p>➤ Anyway, always remember to be always independent and never ever do something against your will.</p>		
11	Student K (female)	<p>➤ How are you doing small teonie?</p> <p>➤ What are you working as now?</p> <p>➤ Singer, Pianist, or a business woman?</p> <p>➤ I hope you are doing fine.</p> <p>➤ I really miss you.</p> <p>➤ I just really wanna know how you are</p>	<p>➤ I still remember the day when you still like Ateez but you don't really watch them anymore after you know Geonu. (with an extensi</p>		

		<p>doing now. (with an extension)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I really hope we will meet again. (with an extension) ➤ I think that's all for now. ➤ Hope to see you soon. 	<p>on clause and a dependent clause).</p>		
12	Student L (Female)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Happy 28th birthday! ➤ If my counting wasn't wrong, you must be 28 now. (with a dependent clause) ➤ You must have grown very tall. ➤ It will be funny to see you, tall, thin, and shy. ➤ I hope by now you have gone out of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I also wonder if you still do roleplay games, you really like getting my attention sometimes. 		

		<p>your bad habits.</p> <p>➤ How are you, mentally?</p> <p>➤ I hate seeing you looking down at the floor.</p> <p>➤ You can get really mischievous.</p> <p>➤ Remember that I really love you to the moon and back, Pablo.</p>			
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The following table shows the distribution of the differences between the complex sentences produced by the male and female students.

Table 1.2: Classification of the Complex Sentences

No.	T-Units	Male	Female	Total	Percentage Male	Percentage Female
1	1 T-units	17	30	47	36%	64%
2	2 T-units	21	17	38	55%	45%
3	3 T-units	11	11	22	50%	50%
Total		49	58	107	46%	54%

From the tables above, the finding represented that the female students have more words in their writing than the male students: 1 T-units (1 independent clause) for male is 36% and 1 T-units for female is 64%; it shows a big gap. However, the 2 T-units (2 independent clauses) for male is 21% and for female is 17%, and 3 T-units (3 independent clauses) for male is 11% and for female is also 11%.

From the findings, it proves the previous research, as mentioned in the introduction of this research, which was cited by Nicolau^[1] from Bijami, Kashef, and Khaksari (2013) and Cornett (2014), that, compared to their male counterparts, female students were reported to have a better degree of competency in both oral and written products. It can be seen that this implies that female students have longer and more complicated sentences than male students. In examining female narrative pieces, we demonstrated ingenuity and strong imagination in crafting various stories (e.g., I still remember the day when you still liked Ateez but you don't really watch them anymore after you met Geonu; I also wonder if you still do roleplay games; you really like getting my attention sometimes). In terms of sentence

complexity, it is also important that the comparison between male and female students yielded the overall number of various words (types), and the total number of words (marks) demonstrated their vocabulary's diversity.

5. Conclusion

The findings show that female students have longer sentences and more sentence types than male students. This study shows that when writing narrative articles to generate sentence complexity, the students create more units T (1 independent clauses) in their writing. Their writing skill shows a continuous range of difficulty from simple to complex. It starts with 1 T unit, then 2 T units, and finally 3 T units. This consolidates the theory of second language acquisition^[14] namely, that the learner's ability to produce complex sentences proves the maturity of writing.

The researchers anticipated that other teachers would improve students' knowledge of writing complex sentences, particularly in developing sentences for informal letters, and will motivate students to learn more and try different approaches to encourage both male and female students to write complex sentences.

Based on the conclusion above, the writers propose a suggestion to those who might benefit from the results of this research.

The researchers hope that this research could improve the reader's knowledge of complex sentences in writing, especially in informal letters, for both male and female students. This could also be one of the readers' references when studying complex sentences. It is also hoped that after reading this research, readers will understand if people sometimes have implied intention in their text, allowing the reader to communicate effectively with others through written text.

The researchers hope that this research could be one of the references for studying gender differences in writing complex sentences in paragraphs, especially in writing an informal letter, and they also hope that in the future there will be other researchers who will conduct the same topic to complete this research, although in a different field.

The researchers hope that by knowing the difference between male and female students in writing complex sentences, it may help students to produce the sentences in making a paragraph or intention that may appear in the process of learning to write in the class. For teachers, it can be used as authentic material to teach writing subjects, especially in an informal letter, and can be a motivation to find creative ways to teach writing for both male and female students.

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