EXPLORING CLAUSE COMPLEXITY: A DETAILED ANALYSIS WITHIN A SPECIFIC TEXT

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Abstract
This study investigates the role of clause complexity in students' academic writing, focusing on the application of Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) symbols to create persuasive and coherent discourse. Employing a qualitative single-case method, the analysis examines a specific text on the dangers of smoking produced by students. The findings showcase the students' effective use of varied clause types and relationships, as well as their ability to present a systematic and logical flow of ideas supported by factual evidence. The results emphasize the importance of mastering multiple elements, such as utilizing diverse clause types and maintaining a strategic narrative flow, for successful academic writing. These insights can serve as valuable information for educators and academic writers alike, offering a deeper understanding of the implications of clause complexity and its role in fostering effective communication in academic writing.

Keywords: clause complex, systemic functional grammar, symbol usage, text analysis, students’ writing
1. INTRODUCTION
The study and analysis of clause complexity have been a focal point of interest in the field of systemic functional linguistics. This subject has seen a multitude of important research efforts, each contributing to a richer understanding of the subject.

Egan (2008) conducted a comprehensive investigation into the role of clause complexity in contrasting language studies. The research delved into the differences and similarities between English and Norwegian constructions, providing a detailed account of how various clauses such as simplex, complex, and dependent clauses interact within these languages. This study shone a light on the importance of understanding clause relationships in different languages for effective communication.

In Espunya (2011), the focus shifted to the complexity of clauses in legal texts. This research thoroughly analyzed the interaction between clauses in EU legal documents, highlighting the situational and pragmatic characteristics of juxtaposed clauses. The insights gained from this work added to the understanding of how clause complexity plays an essential role in shaping effective communication in the specialized field of legal discourse.

Wu (2013) further contributed to the study of clause complexity in legal documents by examining the systemic functional approach to the subject. This research provided an in-depth exploration of the nature of legal texts and the linguistic strategies employed to communicate complex legal ideas. Wu's work underlined the importance of understanding how clause interaction functions within the challenging context provided by legal texts.

Halliday (1985) produced foundational work in the field of systemic functional linguistics, delving into clause complexity and its interplay with functional grammar. This early but influential study laid the groundwork for future explorations into the topic by offering novel perspectives on how clauses interact, creating coherent and meaningful narratives.

In contrast to the previously mentioned research, which largely focused on broader linguistic concepts, different languages, or legal texts, the current research will examine clause complexity within a text produced by students at a specific school. This narrower context will enable a detailed analysis of the intricacies of clause use and structure, revealing their impact on student communication and writing skills.

By concentrating on actual student text from a singular source, this research can provide precise insights into clause complexity in an educational setting. These findings may prove invaluable for informing teaching strategies, enhancing language instruction techniques, and inspiring new perspectives for future study in the field of linguistics.

In conclusion, with its specialized focus on a text produced by students within a specific educational setting, this research seeks to contribute a unique perspective to the study of clause complexity. By concentrating on a singular source of student text, the study stands to provide precise and contextualized insights. The objective is to reveal how clause structure and complexity play a role in the way students communicate their ideas and thoughts in writing. The value of these insights is
potentially far-reaching—improving teaching strategies, enhancing linguistic instructional methods, and providing a fresh viewpoint for future research in the field of linguistics.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Theory of Clause Complex, rooted in systemic functional linguistics, was introduced by Halliday (2014) and further developed by other linguists such as Matthiessen, Teruya, and Lam (2010). In this theory, a clause complex is a grammatical structure that consists of two or more clauses, which are interconnected through logical relationships and create a single, unified semantic meaning.

Furthermore, Halliday (2014) states that the purpose of creating clause complexes is to provide greater density of information in a more compact form, which in turn allows for more intricate logical connections and meaning relations. One key aspect of these logical connections is their role in advancing the speaker's or writer's main argument or narrative.

Symbols and their meanings in student-written text take on a new dimension when examined under the lens of Halliday's (2014) theory. He emphasized that language isn't just about words, it's also a source for expressing ideas and meanings. He described language as a network of options for making meanings. Within this network, symbols work as meaningful tools, adding layers of complexity beyond just their literal sense. It provides a solid foundation for understanding how symbols are used and deciphered in various contexts.

In systemic functional linguistics, a crucial aspect of analyzing clause complexes is to understand the interpersonal and experiential elements in communication (Martin & White, 2005). Interpersonal elements encompass the expression of subjective emotions, judgments, and evaluations, while experiential elements are related to the representation of events, processes, and participants (Martin & White, 2005).

Moreover, clause complexes are not only limited to written texts but are also important in understanding spoken discourse. As a result, researchers in systemic functional linguistics have applied the Theory of Clause Complex to both conversational and written language studies (Wu, 2018).

In conclusion, clause complex provides a profound framework to explore and interpret symbols and their meanings in student texts. This approach opens up nuanced understandings of language as more than just a string of words, but as a network dense with meanings. Symbolism, as seen through this lens, deepens the semantic layers that contribute to the communicative richness of a text. Furthermore, the application of this theory to both written and conversational language broadens the scope of its relevance and reveals the intricate logical connections and dense meaning relations inherent in clause complexes. As researchers continue to uncover the complexities of language through systemic functional linguistics, new insights about symbols and meanings are waiting to be discovered. The current study contributes to this ongoing exploration by shedding more light on symbolism within the framework of the clause complex theory.
3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a single-case research design. This design is selected to enable an in-depth exploration of symbolic meanings and representations within a students’ text. As this research aims to understand the students’ use of symbols and their implications in communication, a qualitative approach is aptly suited to acquire a nuanced understanding of the subject matter.

3.2 Data Collection

Data for this research comprises of a text produced by students from a specific school, selected for its unique English program that includes Regular English and Advanced English classes. The researchers chose this school because the Advanced English program deepens students' learning about various texts, making it an ideal source for studying complex sentence usage in student writing. Ethical considerations and permissions will be taken care of, and identifiers will be removed to maintain the anonymity. Relevance and potential for valuable insights will guide the selection of the text.

The collected text will be prepared meticulously for further analysis to preserve its authentic structure and meaning. Further information, if needed, will be gathered from students or teachers involved in the creation of the text. This approach not only ensures the integrity of the research process but also enriches the understanding of how advanced language learning influences students' ability to express complex ideas.

3.3 Data Analysis

The process of data analysis begins with a meticulous examination of the transcribed students’ text. The sentences present in the text are carefully identified and marked. This process allows for the structure of the text to be understood, providing a foundation for the subsequent stages of the analysis.

Once the sentences are highlighted, a dedicated search is launched for identifying symbolic elements within them. This analytical exercise digs deeper into the language choices made by students and how they employ different symbols to represent and communicate varied ideas and concepts. Careful attention is given to not just identify the symbols, but also understand their placement and usage within the sentence structure.

After the symbols are identified and understood in their context, the next stage involves interpreting their intended meanings. Each identified symbol is looked at in its sentence context, and an interpretation of its implied meaning is drawn. It is ensured during this phase that the interpretations are contextually accurate and respect the overall linguistic and semantic structure of the text.

4. FINDINGS

In this analysis, textual patterns within a students’ work on the dangers of smoking is examined. The objective is to understand the cohesiveness and
Exploring Clause Complexity: A Detailed Analysis Within a Specific Text

persuasive power of the text by analyzing the expressed thoughts and the connections between them. Here is the breakdown and analysis of each paragraph.

**Paragraph 1: Introduction**

Table 1. Results of Clause Type Analysis 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>xβ</td>
<td>Smoking is very harmful to your health (α)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^+</td>
<td>and can cause big problems not just for you, but also for those around you (α).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clause simplex

Here are four key dangers linked with smoking.

The text starts with an introduction that positions smoking as both prevalent and harmful. Using a complex clause (xβ), it accentuates the fact that smoking affects not only smokers but those in their vicinity. A simplex clause is then employed to highlight the four key dangers of smoking that will be discussed later in the text.

**Paragraph 2: Second-hand Smoke**

Table 2. Results of Clause Type Analysis 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clause simplex</td>
<td>Firstly, you might not think too much about second-hand smoke.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xβ</td>
<td>But the risks it brings can be just as bad as smoking a cigarette yourself (α).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clause simplex</td>
<td>Even if a smoker breathes in more smoke,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^-</td>
<td>that doesn’t mean second-hand smoke is safe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>αβ</td>
<td>Studies show (β) that second-hand smoke exposes people to the same illnesses as smokers, like lung cancer and heart disease (α).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clause simplex

This can be really bad for children, elders, and anyone who spends a lot of time around smokers.

Second-hand smoke is introduced as the first key danger. The students as authors opens with a simplex clause to establish the prevailing attitude that second-hand smoke may not be as harmful as smoking directly. With a complex clause (xβ), they argue that the risks of second-hand smoke are equivalent to smoking a cigarette themselves. Further, another simplex clause is used to underline that second-hand smoke is unsafe, no matter the proportion inhaled by the smoker. Lastly, a complex clause (αβ) is employed to support the argument with scientific findings, emphasizing populations at significant risk such as children and the elderly.

**Paragraph 3: Smoking and Non-cancer Health Risks**

Table 3. Results of Clause Type Analysis 3
Secondly, smoking is a dangerous habit that can put you in the way of different types of cancer, like mouth, esophagus, and throat cancer. The harmful stuff in cigarette smoke can hurt different parts of your body, causing more health problems than just cancer. These can be things like heart diseases, strokes, breathing problems, and even issues with having babies.

In the third paragraph, the student focuses on the dangers related to various types of cancers caused by smoking. A series of simplex clauses paints a broad picture of smoking’s health risks. They emphasize that aside from cancer, numerous health problems can occur due to smoking, such as heart disease, stroke, breathing problems, and fertility issues.

**Paragraph 4: Addiction to Nicotine**

Nicotine addiction is highlighted in the fourth paragraph as another major smoking hazard. The student uses simplex clauses to detail the addiction process, showing how nicotine induces cravings and transforms smoking into a daily habit. The narrative here reveals that the continuous exposure to harmful substances in cigarette smoke can lead to long-term body damage, facilitated by a hypotactic relationship between main and subsidiary clauses.

**Paragraph 5: Financial Impact of Smoking**

Nicotine addiction is highlighted in the fourth paragraph as another major smoking hazard. The student uses simplex clauses to detail the addiction process, showing how nicotine induces cravings and transforms smoking into a daily habit. The narrative here reveals that the continuous exposure to harmful substances in cigarette smoke can lead to long-term body damage, facilitated by a hypotactic relationship between main and subsidiary clauses.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clause simplex</td>
<td>Secondly, smoking is a dangerous habit that can put you in the way of different types of cancer, like mouth, esophagus, and throat cancer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clause simplex</td>
<td>The harmful stuff in cigarette smoke can hurt different parts of your body, causing more health problems than just cancer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clause simplex</td>
<td>These can be things like heart diseases, strokes, breathing problems, and even issues with having babies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^+</td>
<td>Thirdly, smoking can get you hooked. The nicotine in cigarettes makes your body crave more, and the habit of smoking can become a part of your daily life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>α</td>
<td>This can harm your body in the long run, with your body being constantly exposed to the harmful substances in cigarette smoke.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbol</td>
<td>Clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clause simplex</td>
<td>Lastly, smoking can have a huge impact on your wallet. The costs of smoking include not just how much you spend on cigarettes (α), but also the hidden costs of health problems due to smoking and not being able to work your best because of addiction (α).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The fifth paragraph discusses smoking’s financial impact. Both simplex clauses and complex clauses (xβ) are employed to show that the costs attributed to smoking are both apparent and hidden, in the form of health issues and diminished work performance. It is suggested that the financial pressure from smoking can result in stress for the individual and their family, affecting their overall financial stability.

**Paragraph 6: Conclusion and Call-to-Action**

Table 6. Results of Clause Type Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Clause Type Analysis 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clause simplex</td>
<td>To sum it up, smoking is a dangerous habit that causes many problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>β₁</td>
<td>It can lead to serious diseases like cancer (α₁),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xβ</td>
<td>get you addicted to nicotine (α₂),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^+</td>
<td>and have a bad impact on your money situation (α₃).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clause simplex</td>
<td>It's important to understand these dangers as a reminder of why we should help people quit smoking and prevent others from starting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The concluding paragraph brings together the various negative effects of smoking in a clause complex, listing the dangers sequentially to underscore the multifaceted problems caused by smoking. With a final simplex clause, the student emphasizes the need to understand these dangers as a means to help smokers quit and prevent non-smokers from starting.

5. DISCUSSION

The comprehensive examination of the students’ work reveals an effective implementation of clause types to create persuasive and informative discourse on the dangers of smoking. These findings align with previous research stressing the significance of utilizing diverse clause types in academic writing for enhancing the writing’s persuasive power and logical flow (Martin & Rose, 2008).

The text begins with a succinct introduction, employing both complex and simplex clauses to define the harmful effects of smoking and its wide-reaching impact. The students adeptly employ a mix of clause types that serve to both provide factual information and enhance the discourse’s persuasive potential. This supports previous findings that an effective mix of clause types can significantly enhance the efficacy of narrative pedagogy (Bull & Anstey, 2006).

In the subsequent sections, the students systematically unfolds the harmful implications of smoking, touching on primary aspects such as second-hand smoke, health risks associated with smoking, nicotine addiction, and the financial impact. The choice of clause type in each section is judicious and serves to convey the intended effects. The use of complex clauses is particularly effective in presenting...
contrary perspectives or introducing new notions, enriching the discourse and adding depth to the analysis.

The final paragraph provides a potent conclusion by assembling the various threats posed by smoking, clearly showing the multifaceted implications of smoking. The text ultimately promotes anti-smoking efforts, with the aim of inspiring readers to either quit smoking or prevent their peers from starting.

Overall, the clause type analysis demonstrates that the students effectively organized the text to ensure a logical flow of ideas, factually grounded their arguments, and effectively interwove each clause type to position their text persuasively. As such, the students’ work exhibits a remarkable level of understanding and effectiveness in using varied clause types for academic writing.

Instructors and practitioners can thus inform their pedagogical practices with insights from this analysis, as it underscores how such understanding and practical application of clause types can enhance the cohesiveness and persuasive power of academic text.

To sum up, this analysis highlights the crucial role that varied clause types play in the construction of a persuasive and coherent academic text. The students' work serves as an exemplary illustration of how employing both complex and simplex clauses effectively contributes to the development of a robust, persuasive argument. These insights can be invaluable for educators and academic writers alike, as they emphasize the importance of mastering different clauses and their strategic application in academic writing. Understanding and applying these elements not only fortifies the logical flow and depth of the discourse but also fosters the writer's ability to communicate their ideas perspicuously and compellingly.

6. CONCLUSION

In the students' text analysis, symbols derived from Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) are employed to articulate different types of relationships within the clause complex structure. Symbolizing additive, adversative relations, and more through symbols like (^+, ^-, α, β, xβ, αβ), these comprise the fundamental architecture of the text's discourse, fostering logical flow, depth of discussion, and persuasive delivery.

The meaning derived from these symbols in the students' discourse is multifold. Apart from adding coherence and depth to the narration, they effectively shape the persuasive aspect of the text. For instance, the additive and adversative relations brought forth by ^+ and ^- symbols, respectively, add dimension to the discourse while enhancing its persuasive quotient. The use of principal (α) and subsidiary (β) parts within a clause complex allows in-depth exploration of ideas, effectively reinforcing the central argument.

Beyond the astute use of SFG symbols, the students' work exhibits remarkable skill in constructing a narrative flow. The text was strategically structured, systematically unfolding the hazardous implications of smoking. This approach maintained the reader's interest while emphasizing the multifaceted detriments of smoking. The choice of clause type for each section was prudently chosen, conveying the intended effects without compromising coherence.
In conclusion, the students’ text analysis paints a comprehensive picture of the intricate construction of academic discourse. The adept use of SFG symbols, a strategic narrative flow, inclusion of factual evidence, and a thorough exploration of the topic all contribute to creating a compelling and coherent text. This analysis, therefore, underscores the importance of mastering multiple elements for the successful construction of academic writing.

REFERENCES