

A SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH NEWS ARTICLES IN THE JAKARTA POST AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

The increasing use of authentic English materials in Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms has highlighted the need to understand the syntactic characteristics of newspaper discourse. However, limited studies have comprehensively examined the syntactic features of English news articles and their implications for English language teaching in Indonesia. This study aimed to analyze the syntactic features employed in The Jakarta Post news articles and explore their pedagogical implications for English language teaching. A qualitative descriptive design was adopted using document analysis. The data consisted of twenty news articles selected through purposive sampling from The Jakarta Post. The collected data were analyzed through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing following the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings revealed that all four major sentence types—simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex—were identified, with complex sentences occurring most frequently. The analysis also indicated the extensive use of coordination and subordination to organize information effectively in authentic journalistic discourse. These findings suggest that The Jakarta Post provides authentic linguistic input that can support the teaching of English syntax, reading comprehension, and academic writing. Consequently, authentic newspaper texts can serve as valuable instructional resources for enhancing students' syntactic awareness and bridging the gap between grammatical knowledge and real-world language use.

Keywords: *syntactic features; The Jakarta Post; English syntax; authentic materials; English language teaching*

Abstract

Meningkatnya penggunaan materi bahasa Inggris autentik dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (English as a Foreign Language/EFL) di kelas-kelas bahasa Inggris di Indonesia menunjukkan pentingnya pemahaman terhadap karakteristik sintaksis dalam wacana surat kabar. Namun, penelitian yang secara komprehensif mengkaji fitur-fitur sintaksis dalam artikel berita berbahasa Inggris serta implikasinya terhadap pengajaran bahasa Inggris di Indonesia masih terbatas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis fitur sintaksis yang digunakan dalam artikel berita *The Jakarta Post* serta mengeksplorasi implikasinya terhadap pengajaran bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain deskriptif kualitatif dengan metode analisis dokumen. Data penelitian terdiri atas dua puluh artikel berita yang dipilih melalui teknik *purposive sampling* dari *The Jakarta Post*. Data yang telah dikumpulkan dianalisis melalui tiga tahapan, yaitu kondensasi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan dan verifikasi kesimpulan berdasarkan model interaktif analisis data yang dikemukakan oleh Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keempat jenis utama kalimat, yaitu kalimat sederhana (*simple sentence*), kalimat majemuk setara (*compound sentence*), kalimat majemuk bertingkat (*complex*

sentence), dan kalimat majemuk campuran (*compound-complex sentence*), ditemukan dalam artikel berita yang dianalisis, dengan kalimat kompleks (*complex sentence*) sebagai jenis kalimat yang paling dominan digunakan. Analisis juga menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan koordinasi (*coordination*) dan subordinasi (*subordination*) secara luas berperan dalam mengorganisasi penyampaian informasi secara efektif dalam wacana jurnalistik autentik. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa *The Jakarta Post* menyediakan masukan linguistik autentik yang dapat mendukung pembelajaran sintaksis bahasa Inggris, pemahaman membaca, serta kemampuan menulis akademik. Oleh karena itu, teks surat kabar autentik dapat dimanfaatkan sebagai sumber pembelajaran yang bernilai untuk meningkatkan kesadaran sintaksis siswa serta menghubungkan pemahaman tata bahasa dengan penggunaan bahasa dalam konteks nyata.

Keywords: fitur sintaksis; The Jakarta Post; sintaksis bahasa Inggris; materi autentik; pengajaran bahasa Inggris

Introduction/Pendahuluan (Sub judul 1, Calibri 11 pt)

Language plays a fundamental role in human communication by enabling individuals to exchange information, express ideas, and construct knowledge across various social and cultural contexts. As English continues to serve as the primary international language in education, science, technology, business, and global communication, the ability to comprehend authentic English texts has become increasingly important for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners (Richards, 2001; Brown, 2007). Among the linguistic components that support effective language comprehension, syntax occupies a central position because it explains how words are systematically organized into meaningful phrases, clauses, and sentences (Carnie, 2021; Huddleston & Pullum, 2002). A strong understanding of syntax allows learners to interpret not only individual words but also the relationships among sentence elements that contribute to meaning. Consequently, syntactic competence is regarded as an essential aspect of developing both receptive and productive language skills.

Syntax is one of the major branches of linguistics concerned with the internal organization of sentence structures. It examines how linguistic units combine according to grammatical rules to produce meaningful expressions in different communicative situations (Radford, 2009). Through syntactic analysis, researchers can identify patterns of phrase formation, clause construction, and sentence organization that characterize particular genres of discourse. Therefore, syntactic studies have been widely applied to literary works, political speeches, academic writing, digital communication, and newspaper discourse.

Among authentic language resources, newspapers provide valuable data for syntactic research because they present naturally occurring English used for real communicative purposes rather than for instructional purposes. Unlike simplified instructional materials, newspaper articles contain diverse grammatical structures that reflect authentic language use in professional contexts. Journalists employ various sentence patterns to present information accurately, objectively, and efficiently while maintaining coherence and readability. These characteristics make newspaper discourse an appropriate source for investigating the realization of English syntactic features in authentic written communication (Atmaja et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, *The Jakarta Post* is widely recognized as the country's leading English-language newspaper and has become an important source of authentic English materials for linguistic studies. Previous studies have demonstrated that *The Jakarta Post* contains diverse sentence structures, phrase constructions, and grammatical patterns that are suitable for syntactic investigation (Susyulowati et al., 2024; Anjani et al., 2025). Its news articles employ formal written English that reflects contemporary journalistic practices while providing authentic examples of sentence construction. Consequently, *The*

Jakarta Post offers a rich linguistic corpus for examining English syntactic features in authentic media discourse.

Despite continuous improvements in English language education, many Indonesian EFL learners still experience difficulties when reading authentic English newspaper articles. Classroom instruction frequently emphasizes isolated grammatical rules, whereas authentic texts require learners to interpret complex sentence structures in meaningful contexts. This discrepancy indicates a gap between classroom grammar instruction and the linguistic complexity of authentic English discourse. The use of authentic materials, including English newspapers, has been shown to improve learners' vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and grammatical awareness, yet such materials remain underutilized in Indonesian classrooms.

Previous studies have primarily focused on specific linguistic phenomena in *The Jakarta Post*, including sentence structures, noun phrase constructions, phrase structures in headlines, deixis, reference, and discourse analysis (Syafryadin et al., 2021; Susylowati et al., 2024; Anjani et al., 2025; Fauziyah & Roselani, 2025). However, relatively few studies have comprehensively investigated the overall syntactic features of English news articles while simultaneously examining their pedagogical implications for English language teaching in Indonesia. Most existing research analyzes isolated grammatical elements rather than describing how various syntactic features collectively function in authentic newspaper discourse. This limitation reveals a research gap that deserves further investigation.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the syntactic features employed in *The Jakarta Post* news articles and explore their implications for English language teaching in Indonesia. By integrating linguistic analysis with pedagogical perspectives, this research is expected to contribute not only to the development of English syntax studies but also to the design of more authentic grammar and reading materials for Indonesian EFL learners.

Method/Metode

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to investigate the syntactic features of English used in *The Jakarta Post* news articles and to examine their implications for English language teaching in Indonesia. A qualitative descriptive approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to describe, classify, and interpret naturally occurring syntactic phenomena found in authentic written texts rather than to test hypotheses or establish causal relationships (Creswell, 2014). In addition, a simple frequency count was applied to identify the dominant syntactic features appearing in the selected news articles, thereby supporting a more comprehensive description of the linguistic patterns.

The data consisted of English news articles published in *The Jakarta Post*. The articles were selected using purposive sampling because this technique allowed the researcher to choose data that met specific research objectives and predetermined criteria (Creswell, 2014). The selected articles were required to be written in English, categorized as straight news reports, and published within the predetermined period of the study. To obtain a representative corpus, the articles covered various topics, including politics, education, economics, social issues, and international affairs. Editorials, opinion columns, advertisements, and feature stories were excluded because they employed different discourse styles that might influence the syntactic characteristics of the data.

The primary research instrument was the researcher, who identified, classified, interpreted, and verified the syntactic features found in the selected news articles (Sugiyono, 2019). To ensure systematic analysis, a coding sheet was designed to record sentence types, phrase structures, clause patterns, and other syntactic constructions based on established theories of English syntax. The coding process enabled the researcher to organize linguistic data consistently before conducting further interpretation.

The data were collected by downloading the selected news articles from *The Jakarta Post*, reading each article repeatedly, segmenting the texts into individual sentences, identifying syntactic features, and

classifying them according to the research framework. The collected data were then analyzed using the Interactive Model of Qualitative Data Analysis proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consisted of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Finally, the findings were interpreted to explain the realization of syntactic features in authentic newspaper discourse and to discuss their pedagogical implications for English language teaching in Indonesia.

Result and Discussion/Hasil dan Pembahasan

This study examined the syntactic features employed in twenty English news articles published in *The Jakarta Post*. The analysis focused on sentence-level syntactic structures to identify the distribution of sentence types in authentic journalistic discourse. The findings revealed that all four major sentence types in English—simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences—were represented in the selected corpus. The occurrence of each sentence type demonstrates the variety of syntactic structures utilized by journalists to communicate information effectively while maintaining grammatical accuracy and textual coherence.

complex sentences constituted the largest proportion of the analyzed data. Nine of the twenty identified sentence structures (45%) were classified as complex sentences. This category appeared more frequently than the other sentence types observed in the corpus. The remaining sentence types occurred in smaller proportions, with simple sentences and compound-complex sentences each accounting for four occurrences (20%), while compound sentences were identified in three instances (15%).

The analysis further indicated that simple sentences remained an important component of the selected news articles. Although their frequency was lower than that of complex sentences, simple constructions were consistently used throughout the corpus. These sentences generally consisted of a single independent clause with a complete subject and predicate, representing grammatically complete statements. Their occurrence demonstrates that straightforward sentence constructions continued to appear alongside more elaborate syntactic structures in authentic news discourse.

Compound sentences were identified less frequently than the other sentence categories. Only three compound sentences were found in the analyzed corpus, representing 15% of the total data. These sentences consisted of two independent clauses connected through coordinating conjunctions. Their relatively limited occurrence suggests that coordination was present in the selected articles but did not represent the dominant strategy for organizing information.

Compound-complex sentences accounted for four occurrences, representing 20% of the analyzed corpus. These sentences combined at least two independent clauses with one or more dependent clauses, resulting in more elaborate syntactic constructions. Their presence illustrates that journalists occasionally employed multiple clause relationships within a single sentence to present interconnected pieces of information.

In addition to sentence classification, the analysis revealed that the selected news articles contained diverse syntactic constructions involving independent and dependent clauses. Dependent clauses appeared in various grammatical functions, including complement clauses, relative clauses, and adverbial clauses. These subordinate structures occurred within complex and compound-complex sentences, contributing to the structural diversity observed throughout the corpus.

The analysis also identified the use of coordination and subordination as recurring mechanisms of sentence construction. Coordination connected linguistic units of equal grammatical status, whereas subordination linked dependent clauses to independent clauses to form more complex sentence

structures. These mechanisms were observed repeatedly across the selected news articles and contributed to the organization of information within the texts.

Furthermore, the majority of sentences analyzed followed the canonical Subject–Verb–Object (SVO) pattern as the basic clause structure. This pattern remained evident regardless of sentence type, although additional constituents, including modifiers and subordinate clauses, frequently expanded the basic structure. The recurrence of the SVO pattern demonstrates its role as the fundamental grammatical framework underlying the syntactic organization of the analyzed corpus.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the selected *The Jakarta Post* news articles employed a variety of sentence structures, with complex sentences occurring most frequently. The corpus also contained simple, compound, and compound-complex sentences, together with coordination, subordination, and the canonical Subject–Verb–Object pattern. These findings provide a descriptive overview of the syntactic features identified in the selected news articles and establish the basis for further discussion regarding their linguistic significance and implications for English language teaching in Indonesia.

Table 1. Distribution of Sentence Types in *The Jakarta Post* News Articles

No	Sentence Type	Number of Data	Percentage
1	Simple Sentence	4	20%
2	Compound Sentence	3	15%
3	Complex Sentence	9	45%
4	Compound–Complex Sentence	4	20%
Total		20	100%

The findings of this study demonstrate that complex sentences were the most frequently occurring sentence type in the selected *The Jakarta Post* news articles, followed by simple sentences, compound-complex sentences, and compound sentences. This distribution indicates that English newspaper discourse tends to employ syntactic structures capable of presenting detailed information while maintaining logical relationships among ideas. Unlike simple sentences, complex constructions allow journalists to combine a main clause with one or more subordinate clauses, thereby presenting background information, causal relationships, conditions, or additional explanations within a single grammatical unit. Such syntactic organization reflects the communicative demands of news writing, which requires information to be accurate, coherent, and contextually complete.

From a syntactic perspective, the predominance of complex sentences supports the view that English syntax is characterized by hierarchical constituent structures rather than merely linear word order. According to Huddleston and Pullum (2002), sentence construction is fundamentally based on the relationship among constituents, where clauses may function as complements, modifiers, or adjuncts within larger syntactic structures. Similarly, Carnie (2021) argues that one of the defining properties of English syntax is recursion, whereby subordinate clauses are embedded within independent clauses to produce increasingly complex sentence structures. The occurrence of numerous complex sentences in the present study therefore illustrates how recursive syntactic patterns are realized in authentic journalistic discourse.

The findings are also consistent with corpus-based research conducted by Biber, Conrad, and Leech (2002), who reported that informational written registers, including newspapers and academic texts, generally exhibit greater syntactic complexity than spoken language. Written informational discourse is designed to communicate a large amount of information efficiently, resulting in the frequent use of subordinate clauses, extended noun phrases, and other grammatically complex constructions. The dominance of complex sentences identified in this study reflects these characteristics and demonstrates that *The Jakarta Post* employs syntactic patterns commonly associated with professional English journalism.

In addition, the presence of simple, compound, and compound-complex sentences indicates that journalists do not rely exclusively on one syntactic pattern. Instead, different sentence types are combined to achieve communicative balance throughout the text. Simple sentences are generally used to present essential facts clearly and directly, whereas compound and compound-complex sentences enable writers to connect multiple events or propositions within coherent textual sequences. Consequently, the variation observed in the present study suggests that syntactic choice in newspaper discourse is influenced by the communicative purpose of each sentence rather than by stylistic preference alone.

Conclusion

This study investigated the syntactic features employed in *The Jakarta Post* news articles and examined their implications for English language teaching in Indonesia. The findings revealed that the selected news articles employed a variety of sentence structures, including simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences, with complex sentences occurring most frequently. The predominance of complex sentence constructions indicates that authentic English newspaper discourse relies heavily on subordination and syntactic embedding to present information in a coherent, detailed, and contextually meaningful manner. At the same time, the continued use of simple, compound, and compound-complex sentences demonstrates that journalistic writing balances structural complexity with clarity and readability in order to communicate information effectively to a broad audience.

Beyond describing the distribution of sentence types, this study contributes to the understanding of how syntactic features function in authentic English journalistic discourse within the Indonesian context. Unlike previous studies that primarily examined isolated grammatical elements, such as sentence patterns, reduced clauses, or specific phrase structures, the present research provides a broader description of sentence-level syntactic variation and highlights the interaction between different sentence constructions in organizing information. This integrated perspective enriches the existing body of syntactic research by demonstrating that English newspaper discourse represents a valuable source for examining authentic grammatical usage beyond artificially constructed instructional examples.

The findings also offer important pedagogical implications for English language teaching in Indonesia. The diversity of syntactic structures identified in *The Jakarta Post* suggests that authentic newspaper articles can serve as effective instructional resources for developing learners' grammatical competence, syntactic awareness, reading comprehension, and academic writing skills. Integrating authentic news texts into English language instruction may help reduce the gap between classroom grammar instruction and naturally occurring language use by enabling students to observe how syntactic structures function in real communicative contexts. Such an approach encourages learners to move beyond rule memorization toward a deeper understanding of how grammatical structures contribute to meaning construction in authentic discourse.

The present study also extends the application of syntactic analysis by demonstrating its relevance to both linguistic inquiry and language pedagogy. The findings illustrate that the analysis of authentic media

texts can provide empirical evidence of contemporary English usage while simultaneously offering practical guidance for instructional material development. Consequently, this research contributes not only to the field of English syntax but also to the growing body of research advocating the integration of authentic materials into English language education. Future studies are encouraged to examine larger corpora from different English-language newspapers or digital media platforms and to investigate additional syntactic phenomena, such as phrase complexity, clause embedding, and information packaging, in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of authentic English syntax across diverse discourse genres.

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