

The Analysis of Children stories

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Introduction

Writing is a process of discovering and organizing ideas, putting them on paper, and revising them. Writing is the hardest skill for almost everyone who is learning English. They are confronted with a lot of difficulties to transfer idea and construct some clauses in a written text. In writing any kind of text, we need complex grammar to express the idea comprehensively. Having good writing, the students must know well how to construct some clauses in written text, in order that the students' writing may develop well and completely.

The writer uses content analysis with the steps according to Functional Grammar of Halliday (1995). This article writes the grammatical intricacy on the short children story descriptively. The materials as the source of data used for analysis will be the writings from Hans Christian Andreas. The data of this study is the clause complex. This analysis concentrates on measuring grammatical intricacy of texts as well as on studying the construction of the clauses complex.

The method of collecting data uses text observation containing clause complex, and the technique of the collecting data uses the Internet.

Research Questions

1. What is Grammar Intricacy ?
2. What is Grammar Intricacy used for?
3. Why did you decide to determine Grammar Intricacy in the children short story?

Abstract

Grammatical intricacy is an important concept in charactering complexity of language (Halliday, 2008). However, this concept has not yet been fully investigated in the children story. This paper aims to examine grammatical intricacy in the short children story written by Hans Christian A as the main theoretical framework and Halliday's method as a measure of grammatical intricacy to look at how this language feature was used in reading comprehension at different levels including elementary, pre-intermediate, inter-mediate and upper-intermediate. The findings revealed that grammatical intricacy increased in accordance with the book levels. Particularly, the mean scores of grammatical intricacy showed a gradual increase from the elementary to the intermediate book level; though they were not different significantly and the upper-intermediate story did not show the topmost grammatical complexity.

Keywords: grammatical intricacy, English textbooks, Systemic Functional Linguistics

Review of The Related Literature

Theoretical Framework

a. Definition of Writing

Writing is a complex activity. Writing is the hardest skill for almost everyone who is learning English. It can happen because when they want to write something, they are confronted with a lot of difficulties to transfer thought and idea in written form. That's why teacher must be to provoke student engagement with material which is relevant and involving. The problems faced in the class are students have difficulties to build and develop their ideas, choose the right diction, and use the grammar, so they feel difficult to arrange what they think into a paragraph.

b. Grammatical intricacy

Grammatical intricacy refers to how often a clause complex appears in the text in comparison with simple clauses. It is accepted that any text has a different level of intricacy (complexity). This is all related to how much information is introduced in a clause complex which can contain more than one simple clause. Classification of clauses (sentences) applies to the determination of grammatical intricacy (complexity) of a text. If in a text there are more clause complexes than simple clauses, it can be said that the text is more complicated in the sense that it presents more information in a condensed way. Consequently, the learners are potential to encounter problems. Grammatical intricacy is essential to be uncovered because the text is said to be difficult because of the intricacy of information. A simple clause is easier to understand in the sense that the amount of information presented is less than that of a clause complex. In other words, a clause complex as indicated in functional grammar contains more information than a simple clause. To understand the total meaning of a text, the types of clauses in English must be familiar to the students.

It often occurs that students cannot understand a clause complex as they cannot identify the subject and predicate. No matter how long a clause is, they should be able to recognize the subject and predicate because of these two elements of grammar which create certain meanings. It is commonly known that a clause is composed of a proposition. The proposition contains the concepts of relation, events, attributes, and things. It means that every clause must have a subject (what is being explained) which is described by showing its relation to other things or events. A person, for instance, can learn English because the language is very important. He then studies it at a course and reads many books to get information. This man as the subject of the sentence should be described in details, which means that information is intricate. In this case, the levels of GI counted by analyzing the High and Low level of grammatical intricacy (complexity) of a text. If the number of clause complex is more dominant than a simple sentence in a text, it means that the text has a high level of GI, and contrary if the number of clause complex is lower than a simple sentence, it means that the text has a low GI.

The level of intricacy can be found by finding the ratio between the simple clauses and clause complexes in the real analysis, and a simple clause may be regarded as consisting of subject and predicate. Every type of clause has a different level of difficulty. This is true of the clauses which contain a different amount of information. Various studies showed that clause complexes, for instance, clause complexes are more difficult to process than simple clauses, reflecting their relatively greater intricacy as defined by (Slobin, 1979: 5). Concerning understanding clauses in reading text, the levels of knowledge and skill must constantly be called upon in the simple and effortless course of understanding the message. Simply, a brief comparison will give more comprehension in analyzing the levels of GI. The texts are taken from different sources.

Grammatical Intricacy and the Logical Metafunction

Grammatical intricacy deals with the logical metafunction. It is a way of managing complexity and construes the ideational metafunction of language. Halliday (2008) states that

The intricacy that is characteristic of spoken language is a different manner of deploying grammatical energy, exploiting the —logical way of looking at phenomena (note that —logical here always refers to grammatical logic, not to formal logic — which is a designed extension of it). The principle of setting up a logical-semantic relationship between two figures is extended recursively, so that it can be extended to construe complex sequences of figures that are related systemically: in grammatical terms, a —nexus can initiate a —complex of any length. [...] It is a powerful resource; it suits the —choreographic spoken language, which unfold in time and builds up its own discursive momentum. (p.163)

The relationship between clauses in clause complex is determined by taxis and logico-semantic systems. Firstly, taxis refers to two degrees of interdependency between clauses including parataxis (equal status) and hypotaxis (unequal status) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). They are independent and dependent clauses in the traditional terms respectively. Parataxis is —the relation between two like elements of equal status, one initiating and the other continuing (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, pp. 374-375). Hypotaxis is —the relation between a dependent element and its dominant, the element on which it is dependent (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 374). Hypotactic structures are often presented by Greek letters (e.g. α , β), while paratactic structure by numerical notation (e.g., 1, 2). Secondly, a clause complex can be formed through a range of different logico-semantic relations which —holds between a primary and a secondary member of a clause nexus (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 377). Two kinds of logico-semantic relations are expansion and projection. Expansion is the secondary clause expanding the primary clause, by (a) elaborating it, (b) extending it or (c) enhancing it. Projection is the secondary clause projected through the primary clause, which instates it as (a) a locution or (b) an idea (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.373), as summarised in Figure 1

Methodology

3.1 Text and Textbooks Selection

This study examined grammatical intricacy of the short story entitled Thumbelina written by Hans Christian Anderson. First of all, we looked for the story from the Internet at www.americanliterature.com.

3.2 Method of Analysis

Grammatical intricacy is measured as the number of ranking clauses in the clause complex (Halliday, 2008).

$$\text{Grammatical intricacy} = \frac{\text{total number of ranking clauses}}{\text{total number of clause complexes}}$$

As far as the formula of calculating grammatical intricacy is concerned, —the intricacy of grammar is captured in terms of how many clauses join together to form a clause complex, and the higher the index is, the more intricate the text. (Castello, 2008, p.97). Then, we highlighted the sentences and the clauses to divide them.

3.3 Procedure of Grammatical Intricacy Analysis

Grammatical intricacy was determined based on the following steps. First, ranking clauses which are non-embedded including hypotactic and paratactic clauses were counted based on the classification of parataxis, hypotaxis and embedded clauses discussed in theoretical background section. To summarise briefly, parataxis includes *‘and/or’* type complexes, i.e. *‘e.g.’* type complexes, *‘then/so/but’* type complexes and direct speech complexes. Hypotaxis includes *‘besides/instead of’* type complexes, *‘non-defining relative’* complexes, *‘when/because/if’* type complexes and indirect speech complexes (Halliday, 1985b, p.83). Embedded clauses were not counted in calculating grammatical intricacy. Second, total of clause complexes were determined. As for clause complex.

structure that consists of one clause working by itself, or a group of clauses that work

together through some kind of logical relationship (Butt et al., 2000, p.30). In other words, the clause complex determined in this study coincides with the orthographic unit of sentence ending with full stops. The ratio of ranking clauses per clause complexes is the grammatical intricacy index.

3.4 Sample Grammatical Intricacy Analysis

To understand the sample intricacy analysis, please look at the notational conventions in SFL provided previously.

Marriage is an ancient religious and legal practice [[celebrated around the world]] |||. (x β) Although the reasons that people marry are similar in many places, ||(α) wedding customs vary from country to country |||.

In many countries, it is customary for the bride to wear a white dress as symbol of purity. ||| In traditional Japanese wedding ceremonies, the bride wears a white kimono. ||| The tradition of wearing a special white dress only for the wedding ceremony started around 150 years ago. ||| Before that, most women could not afford to buy a dress that they would only wear once. ||| (1) Now, bridal dresses can be bought in a variety of styles and fabrics, || (+2) and many brides have their dress specially made |||.

Findings and Discussion

The raw data on grammatical intricacy including the number of ranking clauses, clause complexes and grammatical intricacy score of each text was displayed in the Appendix. As demonstrated in Table 3, data is presented as mean \pm standard deviation plus minimum and maximum scores. The grammatical intricacy mean score increased from the Elementary (1.58.30) to Pre-intermediate (1.76 \pm .41) to Intermediate (1.80 \pm .28) and maintained the relatively similar figure at the Upper intermediate level (1.73 \pm .28). These figures indicate that on average, there were 1.58 ranking clauses per clause complex in the Elementary book. The number of ranking clauses per clause complex in the other three levels of book was 1.76, 1.80 and 1.73 from low to high respectively. A one-way ANOVA test was conducted to determine if grammatical intricacy formula was different for the four levels of books. Although grammatical intricacy increased in accordance with the book levels, there were no statistically significant differences in grammatical intricacy scores among different levels of textbooks as assessed by one-way ANOVA test ($F(3,20) = .548, p = 0.655 > 0.05$).

Conclusion

The teacher will get description and information about the grammatical intricacy on the students writing. The teacher will improve the way his/her teaching in a writing course more accurately. He teaches students how to construct the clause complex completely. Besides that, the students can be motivated in learning English after knowing the result of the study. The students know how to construct clause complex and improve their English writing well. The other advantages, it is good for getting knowledge and description about the grammatical intricacy on the writings of the English department students, the writer hopes will be able to give a contribution to developing ELT (pedagogical purpose) in writing or grammar and discourse course as well to the students.

ATTACHMENT

Thumbelina

A long time ago and far, far away an old woman was sitting in her rocking chair thinking how happy she would be if she had a child. Then, she heard a knock at the door and opened it. A lady was standing there and she said, "If you let me in, I will grant you a wish." The old woman let the woman in firstly because she felt pity, secondly because she knew what she'd wish for...a child. After she washed the lady up and fed her, she saw that she was really beautiful. The lady slept soundly all night long and then right before she left, she said, "Now, about your wish. What do you want?"

The lady thought about most people's wishes to be richest in the world, most powerful person, the smartest, and the prettiest. But the old woman wished for

something the lady could not believe. She said, "I would like a child."

"What did you say?" she asked because she was astonished at what the old lady asked for. The old lady repeated what she said. "I would like a child."

The lady then placed a tiny seed in the old woman's hand and gave her instructions. "Plant this seed, water it carefully, watch over it, and give it your love. If you do all those things, then you will have a child."

So the old woman did all of those things the lady had told her to. In a week, there was a beautiful yellow flower in place of the seed. The next day, the flower bloomed. Inside the flower was a beautiful little girl who was the size of the woman's thumb so she called her Thumbelina. She made her a little dress out of golden threads. Thumbelina slept in a walnut shell and brought the old woman joy and happiness.

But, one day when Thumbellina went down for her nap, a frog hopped through the open window and said, "You will be a perfect bride for my son," and she took Thumbellina to a lily pad and hopped off to find her son.

Thumbellina cried and some little guppies heard her and chewed the roots off the lily pad to help her escape. Thumbellina's lily pad floated away. A few hours later, she finally stopped floating. During the summer, she ate berries and drank the dew off the leaves. But then winter came and she needed shelter. A kindly mouse let her stay with it, but it said, "You'll have to marry my friend, Mole, because I cannot keep you for another winter."

The next day she went to see Mole. In one of tunnels, she found a sick bird and said, "Poor thing, I will bury it." Then she found out that it was still alive and she cared for it until was ready to fly. It flew off. That fall she nearly had to marry Mole. But then she heard a familiar tweet and an idea popped up in the bird's head.

"You can come down to the warm country," said the bird, so Thumbellina hopped on the bird's back and flew to the warm country. The people there who were like her renamed her Erin. She married a prince and she lived happily ever after.

Sentence	Clause
an old woman was sitting in her rocking chair thinking how happy she would be if she had a child	an old woman was sitting in her rocking chair thinking
	how happy she would be if she had a child
she heard a knock at the door and opened it.	
A lady was standing there and she said	A lady was standing there
	and she said
"If you let me in, I will grant you a wish.	"If you let me in,
	I will grant you a wish.
The old woman let the woman in firstly because she felt pity, secondly because she knew what she'd wish for...a child.	The old woman let the woman in firstly
	because she felt pity, secondly because she knew

	what she'd wish for...a child.
After she washed the lady up and fed her, she saw that she was really beautiful. The lady slept soundly all night long and then right before she left, she said,	After she washed the lady up and fed her, she saw that she was really beautiful. The lady slept soundly all night long and then right
	before she left, she said,
What do you want?"	
The lady thought about most people's wishes to be richest in the world, most powerful person, the smartest, and the prettiest. But the old woman wished for	The lady thought about most people's wishes to be richest in the world, most powerful person, the smartest, and the pretties
	But the old woman wished for\
Sentence	Clause
something the lady could not believe. She said, "I would like a child."	something the lady could not believe
	She said,
	"I would like a child."
"What did you say?"	
she asked because she was astonished at what the old lady asked for. The old lady repeated what she said.	she asked
	because she was astonished at what the old lady asked for
	The old lady repeated
	what she said.

"I would like a child."	
The lady then placed a tiny seed in the old woman's hand and gave her instructions.	
Plant this seed, water it carefully, watch over it, and give it your love. If you do all those things, then you will have a child."	Plant this seed, water it carefully, watch over it, and give it your love.
	If you do all those things, then you will have a child."
So the old woman did all of those things the lady had told her to	So the old woman did all of those things
	the lady had told her to
there was a beautiful yellow flower in place of the seed	
the flower bloomed.	
Inside the flower was a beautiful little girl who was the size of the woman's thumb so she a called her Thumbellina	Inside the flower was a beautiful little girl
	who was the size of the woman's thumb so she a called her Thumbellina
She made her a little dress out of golden threads. Thumbellina slept in a walnut shell and brought the	
when Thumbellina went down for her nap, a frog hopped through the open window and said,	when Thumbellina went down for her nap
	, a frog hopped through the open window and said,
You will be a perfect bride for my son,	

she took Thumbellina to a lily pad and hopped off to find her son.	
when Thumbellina went down for her nap, a frog hopped through the open window and said	when Thumbellina went down for her nap
	, a frog hopped through the open window and said
Thumbellina's lily pad floated away.	
she finally stopped floating	
she ate berries and drank the dew off the leaves	
But then winter came and she needed shelter.	But then winter came
	and she needed shelter.
A kindly mouse let her stay with it, but it said,	A kindly mouse let her stay with it,
	but it said,
You'll have to marry my friend, Mole, because I cannot keep you for another winter."	You'll have to marry my friend, Mole,
	because I cannot keep you for another winter."
she went to see Mole	
she found a sick bird and said,	
I will bury it	
she found out that it was still alive and she cared for it until was ready to fly.	she found out
	that it was still alive and she cared for it until was ready to fly.
It flew off.	

she nearly had to marry Mole.	
But then she heard a familiar tweet and an idea popped up in the bird's head.	
"You can come down to the warm country," said the bird, so Thumbellina hopped on the bird's back and flew to the warm country.	<p>You can come down to the warm country," said the bird</p> <p>so Thumbellina hopped on the bird's back and flew to the warm country.</p>
The people there who were like her renamed her Erin.	who were like her renamed her Erin.
She married a prince and she lived happily ever after.	She married a prince
	and she lived happily ever after.
42	38

From the table, the Grammatical Intricacy can be defined as the following. The whole sentences are 42 and the clauses are 38. To determine the Grammatical Intricacy, we have to divide the total number of clauses and the total number of sentences.

No	Title of story	Written	Source	Number of words
1	Thumbelina	Hans Christian Andersen	www.americanliterature.com	550

Why do you want to analyze it?

We intend to determine the grammar intricacy in a child story. Also, we want to find out whether the text uses spoken language or written language to express the idea.

1. How popular is the story ?

The story is obviously not as popular as Snow White, Rapunzel, and Cinderella. However, the story still has got the valuable messages for children.

2. What is the message behind the story ?

If we do good things, eventually they will come back to us. It is closely related to a proverb said “ you will harvest what you plant”. Therefore, kindness and sincerity are the keys of helping.

3. What is the theme of the story ?

The theme is sincerity of helping others.

4. What is the impression of the readers about the stories ?

The story is fully fictive as well as a fairy tale. This impresses the readers by figuring out the atmosphere of nature.

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