

## Sentence Patterns and Types used in the Editorials from “The Global New Light of Myanmar”

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### Abstract

Sentence patterns and types are important in grammar because they help writers communicate their ideas clearly and effectively. The aim of this paper is to examine the sentence patterns and types used in the five editorials from opinion section in “The Global New Light of Myanmar” published from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024. The objectives of this study are to classify the sentence patterns and types used in the five editorials from opinion and to find out which sentence pattern and type are most frequently used. Sentence patterns are analyzed, based on the theory proposed by Quirk et al. (1985) featuring SV, SVC, SVO, SVA, SVOO, SVOC and SVOA patterns. The theoretical concept of Verspoor & Sauter (2000) is used to classify the sentence types, namely simple sentence, compound sentence, complex sentence, and compound-complex sentence. The result of the study showed that SVA sentence pattern is the most frequently used among seven sentence patterns, and the most commonly used sentence type is simple in the five editorials. It is hoped that this study will be of great help to English learners in enhancing their writing skills when composing texts or essays.

**Keywords:** Sentence pattern, sentence type, editorial, opinion section

### INTRODUCTION

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, a newspaper is a set of large printed sheets of paper or a website containing news, articles, advertisements, and more. One of the fastest and most reliable ways to obtain news is through newspapers.

A newspaper offers its readers a variety of materials to read. It carries articles of an extremely diverse nature and has thus become an important tool for providing the information. News stories and features play essential role in newspapers. News stories keep the public informed about current events with accuracy and brevity. To present the ideology of the paper, there appears an opinion section on a page in the newspaper in which an editorial is often written by a subject-matter expert, a person with a unique perspective on an issue, or a regular columnist employed by the paper. An editorial, accordingly, may be seen as an article in a newspaper expressing the opinion of the newspaper on a topic or news item of public concern. The purpose of the editorial, therefore, is to stimulate readers into action. To achieve its goals, the editorial explains or interprets an idea, an event or an action by either praising or criticizing it. It is clear, therefore, that the process of persuasion is an important consideration for the editorial writer. As a result, he needs writing skills to convey the information to be interesting by varying language uses - phonological, lexical, grammatical, discursual, etc. This research is confined to the analysis of sentence patterns and types.

In Myanmar, “The Global New Light of Myanmar” newspaper is distributed in both Myanmar and English. Originally established on 12th January 1964 as “The Working People’s Daily”, the Global New Light of Myanmar is Myanmar’s oldest English daily. The Working People’s Daily changed its name into The New Light of Myanmar on 17th April 1993. Even if a small percentage of individuals have shifted to online news sources recently, many people continue to read newspapers. Thus, it can be said that the newspaper greatly impacts society.

The reason for selecting “The Global New Light of Myanmar” for this research is that it is the only daily newspaper which has a large readership in English version. Among the sections included in the newspaper, the opinion section is chosen as a research material because an editorial is traditionally written in a literary style and makes for a literary piece in literature aside and apart its factual or scientific content.

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The research aims to examine the sentence patterns and types used in the five editorials from the opinion section of “The Global New Light of Myanmar”. The objectives of the research are to classify the sentence patterns and types used in the five editorials from opinion section in “The Global New Light of Myanmar”, and to find out which sentence pattern and type are most frequently used in these editorials.

### **Literature Review**

Using sentence variety is an essential aspect of effective writing. It involves incorporating different sentence patterns and types to create a more engaging and interesting piece of writing. Without sentence variety, writing can become monotonous and boring, which causes readers to lose interest. In contrast, a writer who uses varied sentence patterns and types can capture the reader’s attention and create a more enjoyable reading experience. In addition to improving reader engagement, sentence variety enhances the clarity and impact of one’s writing. By using different sentence patterns and types, writers can emphasize key ideas, convey tone and mood, and deliver a more nuanced message. This allows writers to convey the intentions more effectively with greater impact, which makes their writing more persuasive and memorable.

According to Quirk et al. (1985), there are seven major sentence patterns: subject + verb (SV), subject + verb + complement (SVC), subject + verb + object (SVO), subject + verb + adverbial (SVA), subject + verb + object + object (SVOO), subject + verb + object + complement (SVOC), and subject + verb + object + Adverbial (SVOA). Each pattern accommodates the writer to compose a sentence based on the information piece that they have.

Aside from the sentence patterns, there are also sentence types (Bornstein, 1977, p. 245). According to Verspoor & Sauter (2000), sentences may have different degree of complexity. They may consist of one or more main clauses or they may consist one or more main clauses with one or more dependent clauses. They are called simple, compound, complex or compound-complex sentences, depending on the types of clauses they contain.

There are some previous researches related to the present research. Kristianingsih et al. (2023) carried out research entitled “A Syntactic Analysis of the Sentence Structure in Motivational Quotes using Tree Diagram for English Learning”. The result of the study shows that the motivational quotes from the novel *Atomic Habits* have all types of sentences. In addition, the researcher also found the types of sentences that frequently emerge in motivational quotes from the novel, namely 22 simple sentences, 2 compound sentences, five complex sentences, and one compound-complex sentence. So, the dominant motivational quote is a simple sentence. This study has various types of sentences in motivational quotes that can be used to help English learners and improve writing skills in a text or essay according to grammatical rules.

There is another research paper entitled “Syntactic Analysis of Sentence Patterns and Types of BBC News Articles” conducted by Andriani & Bram (2021). This research analyzed the sentence patterns and types used in BBC news articles. It was also found that four sentence types, namely simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences, were used. Among the used sentence patterns, S+V+O was the most frequent, and the most frequent sentence types was the complex sentence.

In the research paper entitled “A Syntactic Analysis on Sentences Found in the English Textbook for the Tenth Grade Students Entitled “Bahasa Inggris Kelas X”, Mumrikoh et al. (2019) studied sentence types and sentence structures. It is based on the analysis of sentence structure by using a syntactic approach that portrayed in the tree diagram. It focused only on the discussion covering the identification of types of sentences and sentence structure. The finding of the analysis shows that the English textbook has all types of sentences, based on both several clauses and their syntactic properties.

### Materials and Methods

For the data of present research, the five editorials selected from opinion section in “The Global New Light of Myanmar” published on 23 November 2024, 24 November 2024, 25 November 2024, 26 November 2024, and 27 November 2024 were used. Serial or consecutive days of opinions are chosen to track and analyze how events, issues, or stories evolve over time. In addition, serial days can help reduce potential biases that may arise from selecting random days, such as picking days with particularly unusual events (e.g., a major disaster or holiday). Serial days provide a more representative sample of regular news cycles, leading to more reliable data.

In the analysis of data, quantitative-qualitative method is used. In the analysis of data on sentence patterns, the theory of Quirk et al. (1985) was used. In analyzing sentence types, the theoretical concept of Verspoor & Sauter (2000) was used.

### Findings and Discussion

Based on the theory of Quirk et al. (1985) for sentence patterns, the present study analyzed a total of five selected editorials from the opinion section in “The Global New Light of Myanmar”. The results of sentence patterns across the five editorials from the opinion section are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Sentence patterns used in five editorials from the opinion section in “The Global New Light of Myanmar”**

| No.        | Title  | SV | SVO | SVC | SVA | SVOO | SVOC | SVOA |
|------------|--|----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|
| 1.         | Protect the health and longevity of living beings from air pollution | 1  | 7   | 6   | 14  | -    | -    | 5    |
| 2.         | Pass down noble cultural heritage through generations                | 2  | 3   | 11  | 12  | -    | -    | 1    |
| 3.         | Remember National Victory Day to initiate future State               | -  | 3   | 8   | 11  | -    | -    | 6    |
| 4.         | Eliminate gender discrimination and violence against women           | -  | 3   | 5   | 15  | 1    | -    | 6    |
| 5.         | Effectively control malaria to save the lives of people              | 2  | 4   | 6   | 12  | -    | -    | 7    |
| Total      |  | 5  | 20  | 36  | 64  | 1    | -    | 25   |
| Percentage |  | 3% | 13% | 24% | 42% | 1%   | -    | 17%  |

According to table (1), there are 151 sentence patterns in the five editorials from the opinion section. Among them, the most used sentence pattern was SVA with 64 sentences (42%) of the total used sentence patterns. The second most used pattern used in all editorials was SVC with 36 sentences (24%). SVOA was the third most used pattern with 25 sentences (17%). The fourth most used pattern was SVO with 20 sentences (13%) of the total sentence patterns, while SV was the second least used one with 5 (3%). The least used sentence pattern was SVOO with 1 sentence (1%) in all the editorials from the opinion section.

(a) SVA

The sentences with SVA pattern are as follows:

- (1) If so, **actions of gender discrimination will disappear in society** whereas violence against women will fade out eventually.

- (2) **Without inhaling clean air, living beings could die**, and if they breath in polluted air, it can shorten their lifespan and lead to death.

In the above two sentences, the subjects are “actions of gender discrimination” (noun phrase) and “living beings” (compound noun). In sentence (1), the verb phrase is “will disappear”, with “will” (indicating the future tense that the action of disappearing will occur in the future) and “disappear” which is an intransitive verb and present simple showing the action in the future). The adjunct in sentence (1) is “in society” which provides the location where the disappearance will take place. In sentence (2), the verb phrase is “could die”, with “could” (indicating the possibility) and “die” (indicating the action that may occur). “Without inhaling clean air” is an adjunct and modifies the main clause “living beings could die...”, providing a condition or circumstance under which the action in the main clause could occur. Those examples, and most sentences (41.7%), fit in the SVA patterns.

(b) SVC

The sentences with SVC pattern are as follows:

- (1) As a result, **the oxygen in the surrounding environment is gradually becoming more polluted.**
- (2) **Violence against women and girls is a widespread human rights violation**, occurring in various forms around the world.

In sentence (1) and (2), the subjects are noun phrases that contain prepositional phrases: “the oxygen in the surrounding environment” and “Violence against women and girls”. In sentence (1), the verb phrase is “is gradually becoming more polluted”: is – the auxiliary verb that forms present progressive, “gradually” – an adverb modifying the verb “becoming”, indicating the gradual nature of the process, “becoming” – a linking verb, forming the progressive aspect in combination with the auxiliary verb “is”, and more polluted –the complement of “becoming”, which describe the state of the subject. In the sentence (2), the verb “is” is a linking verb which connects the subject “Violence against women and girls” to the subject complement “a widespread human rights violation”.

(c) SVOA

The sentences with SVOA pattern are as follows:

- (1) **Colonialists exploited the nation’s valuable natural resources for their benefit** and ruled oppressively.
- (2) Myanmar’s Ministry of Health reports that **around 500,000 people contract malaria annually.**

In the sentence (1) and (2), the subjects are “colonialists” and “around 500,000 people”. The verb in sentence (1) is “exploited”, the main verb (past tense), indicating what the subject “colonialists” did. The noun phrase “the nation’s valuable natural resources” functions as the object of the verb “exploited”. Adjunct is “for their benefit” which indicates the purpose behind the exploitation. In the sentence (2), “contract” is a main verb in the present tense and represents the action performed by the subject “the people” in relation to the object “malaria”. The object of the verb is “malaria” which presents the disease that the subject “people” is contracting. “Annually” is an adverb modifying the verb “contract” to indicate the frequency of the action.

(d) SVO

The sentences with SVO pattern are as follows:

- (1) **The history of Myanmar’s struggle for independence showed the spirit of patriotism and unity** which have proven to be a powerful force, as evidenced by the national victories that were achieved.

(2) **South Asian countries such as India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh are experiencing the highest level of air pollution.**

The subjects in the above sentences are “The history of Myanmar’s struggle for independence” and “South Asian countries such as India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh”. Both subjects are noun phrases, containing prepositional phrases. The verb in sentence (1) is “showed” that is a past tense action verb connecting the subject to the direct object “the spirit of patriotism and unity”. On the other hand, the sentence (2) uses present continuous tense verb “are experiencing” that indicates ongoing action. The objects of these sentences are “the spirit of patriotism and unity” and “the highest level of air pollution”.

(e) SV

The sentences with SV pattern are as follows:

(1) **The love and respect for Myanmar and the Myanmar people will naturally grow.**

(2) **While malaria may never be completely eradicated,** continuous efforts are essential to control its spread and protect lives within the community.

The subjects in the above two sentences are “the love and respect for Myanmar and the Myanmar people” and “malaria”. The subject in sentence (1) is compound subject which contains two nouns or noun phrases that are joined by the conjunction “and”. The verb phrase in sentence (1) is “will naturally grow”, with “will” as the auxiliary verb indicating the future tense, “naturally” as the manner of adverb modifying the verb, and “grow” as the main verb representing the action. In the sentence (2), the verb phrase is “may never be completely eradicated”. The word “may” is a modal auxiliary, expressing possibility, whereas “never” negates the possibility, indicating that eradication will not happen. The word “be” is an auxiliary verb used to form the passive construction. The word “completely” modifies “eradicated”, indicating the manner in which the action “eradication” could occur, and “eradicated” is the past participle verb, indicating the action in the passive voice. Therefore, the verb phrase in sentence (2) is passive voice.

(f) SVOO

The sentences with SVOO pattern are as follows:

(1) **This shift will offer families and communities the opportunity** to thrive in peace and prosperity.

In the above sentence, the subject is “this shift” – noun phrase which contain a demonstrative adjective and a noun, and the verb phrase “will offer” – in which the modal verb “will” is the future form and “offer” is the main action verb of the sentence, expressing what “this shift” will do. The indirect object is “families and communities” and the direct object of the verb “offer” is “the opportunity”, indicating what is being offered to “families and communities”.

(g) SVOC

None of the editorials contain any SVOC sentences.

In this study, sentences are divided into four categories: simple sentences, compound sentences, complex sentences, and compound-complex sentences – to classify the sentence types used in five selected editorials from the opinion section in “The Global New Light of Myanmar”. The results of sentence types from all five editorials from the opinion section re presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Sentence Types in five editorials from the opinion section in “The Global New Light of Myanmar”**

| No.        | Title  | Simple | Compound | Complex | Compound-Complex |
|------------|--|--------|----------|---------|------------------|
| 1.         | Protect the health and longevity of living beings from air pollution | 14     | -        | 8       | 1                |
| 2.         | Pass down noble cultural heritage through generations                | 7      | 1        | 8       | 1                |
| 3.         | Remember National Victory Day to initiate future State               | 12     | 1        | 6       | -                |
| 4.         | Eliminate gender discrimination and violence against women           | 16     | -        | 5       | 1                |
| 5.         | Effectively control malaria to save the lives of people              | 13     | -        | 9       | -                |
| Total      |  | 62     | 2        | 36      | 3                |
| Percentage |  | 60 %   | 2%       | 35%     | 3%               |

According to table (2), there are 103 sentence types in the five editorials from the opinion section. It is found that there are 62 simple sentences (60%), 2 compound sentences (2%), 36 complex sentences (35%) and 3 compound-complex sentences (3%) in the selected editorials.

The sentence type that was used the most was a simple sentence. A simple sentence contains one independent clause that can stand alone. Below are the examples:

- (1) Colonialists exploited the nation’s valuable natural resources for their benefit and ruled oppressively.
- (2) Air pollution can cause diseases such as cancer and other chronic illnesses.

Sentence (1) has one independent clause, which contains a compound predicate: the subject is “Colonialists” and the compound predicate is “exploited the nation’s valuable natural resources for their benefit” and “ruled oppressively”. Although the predicate is compound (i.e., it has two actions, “exploited” and “ruled”), there is only one subject (“Colonialists”) and no dependent clauses. Thus, this sentence is a simple sentence with a compound predicate. In sentence (2), the subject is “air pollution”, the verb phrase is “can cause”, and the object is “diseases such as cancer and other chronic illness”. The sentence consists of one independent clause with a single subject and a single predicate. There are no dependent clauses or additional clauses, so it is classified as a simple sentence.

The second most used sentence type was a complex sentence. A complex sentence contains one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses. A dependent clause is a clause that cannot stand alone as a sentence while an independent clause is a clause that can stand alone as a sentence. A dependent clause needs to join an independent clause to form a complete sentence. Below are the example sentences taken from the editorials:

- (1) While husbands earn the family income, wives manage the household, ensuring the well-being and prosperity of their families.
- (2) The celebrations of National Victory Day, which were held annually without fail across the entire Union of Myanmar, have now reached their 104<sup>th</sup> year.

In sentence (1), the main or independent clause is “wives manage the household, ensuring the well-being and prosperity of their families”. The clause “while husbands earn

the family income” is the subordinate or dependent clause introduced by subordinating conjunction “while”. It cannot stand alone as a complete sentence and provides additional information about when the action in the main clause takes place. Since the sentence contains both an independent clause and a dependent clause (introduced by “while”), it is a complex sentence. “The celebrations of National Victory Day have now reached their 104th year” is the main clause in sentence (2) while the relative clause “which were held annually without fail across the entire Union of Myanmar” is the dependent (subordinate) clause that provides additional information about the subject of the main clause (“the celebrations of National Victory Day”). This clause is introduced by the relative pronoun “which”, which connects it to the noun “celebrations.” Since the sentence contains an independent clause and a dependent (relative) clause, it is classified as a complex sentence.

The third most used sentence type was compound-complex. This sentence type combines complex sentence and compound sentence forms. It contains one or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses. Moreover, it has at least three clauses in one sentence: at least two independent clauses (each can stand alone as a complete sentence) and at least one dependent clause. Below are the examples:

- (1) It is time for lasting change, where women’s safety is a priority, and everyone benefits from a harmonious society.
- (2) Once these feelings expand and spread, different opposing cultures will not only fail to invade but Myanmar’s cultural heritage will endure and remain steadfast across the world.

Sentence (1) has two independent clauses: “It is time for lasting change” and “everyone benefits from a harmonious society”. The dependent clause is “where women’s safety is a priority” which is a relative clause that modifies “lasting change.” It is introduced by the relative pronoun “where” and cannot stand alone as a complete sentence. Therefore, the sentence has two independent clauses and one dependent clause, making it a compound-complex sentence. Sentence (2) is a compound-complex sentence because it has one dependent clause and two independent clauses that are joined by the coordinating conjunction “but”. The subordinate clause is “once these feelings expand and spread” which functions to provide the condition under which the actions in the independent clauses take place. The two independent clauses are “different opposing cultures will not only fail to invade” and “Myanmar’s cultural heritage will endure and remain steadfast across the world”.

The least used type was compound sentence. This sentence type contains two independent clauses. A coordinating conjunction (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) often links the two independent clauses and is preceded by a comma. Below are examples:

- (1) Through mutual respect and understanding between national races, cooperation between individuals can be fostered, and misunderstandings and conflicts can be reduced, resolving issues through dialogue.
- (2) Most Myanmar people are Buddhists, and as such, religious and spiritual elements play an important role in the traditional festivals and celebrations of Myanmar culture, bringing joy and a sense of tranquility.

Sentence (1) has two independent clauses: “Cooperation between individuals can be fostered” and “misunderstandings and conflicts can be reduced”. These two independent clauses are joined by the coordinating conjunction “and”. The adverbial prepositional phrase at the beginning “through mutual respect and understanding between national races” provides the context or condition for the action that follows. The phrase “resolving issues through dialogue” is a participial phrase that provides additional information, modifying the previous clause “misunderstandings and conflicts can be reduced”. It is not a not a dependent clause. Thus, this sentence is compound, consisting of two independent clauses

joined by "and." The adverbial prepositional phrase at the beginning provides context for the actions, and the participle phrase at the end gives additional information on how the reduction of misunderstandings and conflicts is achieved. Sentence (2) also has two independent clauses "Most Myanmar people are Buddhists" and "as such, religious and spiritual elements play an important role in the traditional festivals and celebrations of Myanmar culture, bringing joy and a sense of tranquility connected by the coordinating conjunction "and". The first clause provides a statement about the Myanmar people, and the second clause elaborates on how religious and spiritual elements play a significant role in cultural festivals. The second clause contains a prepositional phrase ("as such") and a participle phrase ("bringing joy and a sense of tranquility) that provide additional context and modify the main clause. Therefore, it is a compound sentence.

There are two objectives for carrying out the research. The first objective is to analyze the sentence patterns and types used in the five editorials from opinion section in "The Global New Light of Myanmar". According to the first objective, the sentence patterns used in the five editorials from opinion section are analyzed based on the theory proposed by Quirk et al. (1985) and the theory of Verspoor & Sauter (2000) is used to analyze the sentence types. The second objective is to find out which sentence pattern and type are most frequently used in five editorials from the opinion section. For this purpose, the percentage needs to be computed. The common sentence patterns used in "The Global New Light of Myanmar" are SVA, SVO and SVOA. These patterns let readers easily know who is doing the action and what the outcome of the action is.

### **Conclusion**

This present study explored the sentence patterns and types used in five editorials from opinion section in "The Global New Light of Myanmar". It is found that various sentence patterns were used in five editorials from opinion section in "The Global New Light of Myanmar" with a different number of occurrences. As to sentence types, all sentence types were used in "The Global New Light of Myanmar". However, the use of those sentence types varied in number. It is found that the SVA sentence pattern is most frequently used in five editorials from the opinion section, and the mostly used sentence type is simple sentence. While the most frequently used sentence type used in "The Global New Light of Myanmar" is simple sentence, complex sentence is the second most frequently used sentence type.

The Global New Light of Myanmar is a local newspaper, especially intended for the non-native speakers and readers of different level of educational background. This may be the reason why the editorials in the newspaper are written in the simple sentence. In writing, using complex sentence has advantages over the other sentence types. The choice of complex sentence ensures that, within a sentence, the main idea – expressed in the independent clause – is set apart from the supporting ideas – often expressed in the dependent clauses. As a result, the reader is able to distinguish the important ideas from the supporting or extra ideas in a sentence. Therefore it is likely that editorial writers use complex sentences as well as simple sentences in the newspaper.

### **Acknowledgements**

Firstly, I would like to express my wholehearted gratitude to Dr. Soe Myint Aye, Rector of Sagaing University, for giving permission to do the research paper. Secondly, I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Phyu Phyu Myint, Pro-rector of Sagaing University, for her valuable advice and constant encouragement to do researches. Thirdly, my sincere gratitude is extended to U Thaug Naing, Associate Professor and Head of English Department, Sagaing University, for his careful guidance on conducting this research work. Finally, I offer my thanks to all of my colleagues who give necessary assistance for the timely completion of the research.

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