



## The Use of Complex Sentence in Selected Play: As a Stylistic Study

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### Abstract in English

This paper tackles the investigation of the use of complex sentences in Stoppard's play "Jumpers" and the types of sentences. It aims to examine how the complex sentences are used in his play "Jumpers," to investigate the reasons behind the use of such kinds of sentences, and in order to find out whether this structure is evenly employed or whether it is an idiosyncrasy of one of the writers. This study will also review the structure and type of sentences. In the play "Jumpers," the use of complex sentences depends on the type of character. The study showed that the complex sentences rise according to the importance of the character in the play. The investigation arrived at several facts regarding the use of complex sentences in the play, which is mentioned later on in the conclusion of the study.

### Paper Info

Received: 2025/4/24

Accepted: 2025/5/21

Published: 2025/7/28

### Keywords

*Key Words:*  
*Stylistics, style,*  
*complex sentence,*  
*sentence structure,*  
*jumpers*

doi: <https://doi.org/10.63797/bjh>.

## 1. Introduction

It is assumed that the literary authors shape the language of their writings in various ways depending on their purposes and their methods. So they vary in choosing the patterns of syntax and the different vocabularies. Moreover, they may depart from the norms and rules of language to attract the readers, and this means that language is an objective structure in any literary text, and this structure is described by the linguist.

Complex sentences are used most often by writers as a syntactic device to correlate the elements of their text. If the writer's aim is to present complex ideas or experience, then complex sentences are preferred as they provide additional information which is of help to the reader in understanding what the text is. However subordinate clauses make the reader ready to receive the next sentences, and they help in expressing the relationships among the characters as well as the idiosyncratic features of each character.

This study deals with the famous playwright, Tom Stoppard. He uses complex sentences and he has his own purposes.

Tom Stoppard is a dramatist who writes in the absurd theatre, so he uses complex sentences for developing his ideas and thoughts of this type of drama. (Fleming 2001: 114)

## 2.1 Style

Style is defined by Wales (1989: 435f) as “the manner of expression in writing and speaking”. It has “evaluative connotations” as being “good” or “bad” styles, and accordingly it is classified into two broad senses. The first is the evaluative sense in which style is seen as the features that distinguish someone or something from

“undistinguished background”. It also implies judgements such as “excellence of performance” and “standard production” as when person is judged as having good style. In this sense, style may be “good” or “bad”. When one thinks of styles as good, one must not accept a single theory as a norm of writing, but one must understand that there are many good styles, each has its own value yet it may be “ill adopted” by other writers. (ibid) The second sense of style is the descriptive sense which implies a description of the characteristics that identify persons, things, or places. For example, we describe the “Shakespearean style”, or we talk about the “informal” and “Logical” styles. Fowler (1969: 186) expresses this meaning of the word style as “a recognizable and characteristic way of doing something”.

Burton (1980: 7) argues that in order to understand what the term “style” means, “we need to have access to an accumulation of linguistics information about the standard language, and information which is working towards theoretical coherence and is descriptively adequate at all the linguistics levels that are to be considered in any text which is to be studied.

## **2.2 Style and Linguistics**

James (2001: 10) takes into consideration the relation between style and grammar as he distinguishes between the “elaborated” code which is concerned with the grammatical complexity and the use of subordination to express the relations among the elements of the text. This code is usually used by writers to express individual thought. The other code is the “restricted” code which is concerned with conveying intent by using short or simple sentences.

Spencer and Gregory (1964: 59) assert that style is the result of abstraction. They say "The concept of style is, of course, the product of abstraction. It is abstract in the sense that style is one quality out of several possessed by any work of

literature. A poem, a novel, or an essay is clearly more than its style, of its totality its style is a part".

They suggest that style is both an individual quality and a general quality and a general. Another sense of the relation between linguistics and style is the predictability (probability) of a linguistics item in a specific context. Enkvist (1964:146) makes clear this sense when he notes that this probability can be measured in three ways; the first "is the classical method of literary critics to rely upon the experience or "sense of style" when deciding what expressions are common and what expressions are not". The second method in which frequencies of item in each context can be pointed out with the aid of the "statistical formulae" or by the use of the computer. The third method implies giving a number of informants the text wanted to be analyzed and asking them to pick out the linguistics items which are predictable or possible in the text.

In this study the second method is used with the help of the statistical formulae.

### **2.3 Style and Literature:**

Warner (1961: 1) sees style as "a way of writing, a manner of expressing one's thoughts and feelings in words". He insists that when style is considered "as the voice of the author's personality", then the importance of such qualities that go beyond the simple and the plain must be admitted.

He says that this is obvious in writing novels and essays where the writer can convey the ideas he wanted to say effectively by mixing styles.

However, it is assumed that literary language is a language in context, that is, words must be related with each other so that the quality of the literary work is obtained from the work as a whole.

### **2.4 Stylistics**

Turner (1973: 7) presents a definition in which he considers stylistics a part of linguistics which is concerned with alternative ways of language use. Most of the attention is focused on the most complex and conscious use of language in literature. As a branch of linguistics, stylistics must be concerned with generalizations and the particular concepts adds to such generalizations.

Leech (1985: 37) refers to the general and particular concepts of stylistics. General stylistics usually refers to the study of style in text of all kinds, whereas the particular concept refers to literary stylistics; that is, the study of style in literary works.

Stylistics, as Leroy (1967: 132) points out occupies an important position in the study of linguistics, and inspite of being on the fringe, it has made instructive contributions to the science of linguistics, it has also received certain impetus from linguistics.

## **2.5 Definitions of the Sentence:**

In writing, “any sequence of words which begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop (period), a question mark or an exclamation mark” is called a sentence (Nelson, 2001: 9).

In speaking, “the groups of words could form a sentence by using the tone of the voice and by pauses”. However, Krapp indicates that “not every group of related words forms a sentence”. (ibid)

So, according to Roberts (1956: 58), a sentence is a group of words expressing a complete thought. However, to Crystal (1990: 12), this definition is almost meaningless; it is too vague to be helpful, since it is impossible to tell whether thoughts are complete or not. Many sentences express a single thought but which are not complete, for example: Taxi!, Beautiful day!, Nice one. In addition, many

sentences are complete, but express more than one thought. For example (A car, Visit to the cinema, For his birthday) (Crystal, 1990: 12). As for Branford (1967: 155), the basic criterion for a sentence is being grammatically self-contained; it can be described as “a minimum complete utterance”.

Parrott (2000: 250) defines a sentence as any word or group of words which make sense.

## **2.6 Types of the Sentences**

English sentence constituents can be recognized by two perspectives:

“what they are in terms of the words that make them up”.

“the function they perform in sentences” (Parrott, 2000: 251).

### **2.6.1 Simple Sentences:**

A simple sentence contains one main clause, i.e. it contains one subject and one verb and expresses a complete thought (Selby, 1992: 54). For example:

“John is a student”.

### **2.6.2 Compound Sentences:**

A compound sentence consists of two or more complete clauses, all of equal importance (Sneddon and Spence, 1963: 1). A compound sentence contains two or more main clauses and no subordinate clauses. They may be joined by a comma and a coordinate conjunction. For example:

“The Nile is a river and flows through Egypt”.

### **2.6.3 Complex Sentences**

A complex sentence has one main clause and one or more subordinate clauses (Selby, 1992: 57). For example:

“After I read the article, I disagreed with the author even more than before”.

According to Sneddon and Spence (1963: 1), this means there are two statements, but one is more important than the other.

#### **2.6.4 Compound-complex Sentences**

A compound-complex sentence contains two or more main clauses and one or more subordinate clauses (Selby, 1992: 58). For example:

“I wanted to go to the outdoor concert, but I had to change my plans since my lab report is due by 5:00 p.m.”.

### **2.7 Types of English Sentences According to Function**

If we consider the purpose of speech, for a moment without reference to grammatical form, three basic types of utterance appear to be: statements, questions and commands (Branford, 1967: 156).

Roberts (1956: 58-59) states that sentences have three purposes: to state, to ask and to command. However, other English grammarians such as: Nelson (2001: 25-27) distinguishes four types of sentences according to function, these sentences are: Declarative, Interrogative, Imperative and Exclamative sentences.

#### **2.7.1 Declarative Sentences**

Declarative sentences (statements) are sentences in which the subject is always present and generally precedes the verb (Quirk et al., 1972: 385). For example:

6. John will speak to the boss today.

A declarative sentence is typically used to convey information or to make a statement (Nelson, 2001: 25).

### 2.7.2 Interrogative Sentences

Interrogative sentences (questions) are sentences marked by one or more of these three criteria (Quirk et al., 1972: 386):

- a. The placing of the operator in front of the subject.

For example:

7. Will John speak to the boss today?

- b. The initial positioning of an interrogative or Wh-element.

For example:

8. Who will you speak to?

- c. Rising “question” intonation.

For example:

9. You will speak to the □Boss?

In general, an interrogative sentence is used to ask question.

### 2.7.3 Imperative Sentences

Commands are sentences which normally have no overt grammatical subject, and whose verb is in the imperative mood (Quirk et al., 1972: 386). For example:

10. Speak to the boss today.

However, the subject (you) may sometimes be included for emphasis. For example:

11. “You” fix it.

12. Don’t ‘you’ believe it. (Nelson, 2001: 26)

### 2.7.4 Exclamative Sentences



Exclamations are sentences which have an initial phrase introduced by what or how, without inversion of subject and operator. For example:

What a noise they are making! (Quirk et al., 1972: 386)

Manley (1965: 8) states that exclamation sentences are not always given in full. When one is surprised or unexpectedly hurt, he may say: Oh!, Ouch!, Bother!. Unless someone sees what has happened, a full sentence will be required to make full sense. For example:

- . A: Ouch! (Exclamation)  
B: What is the matter? (Question)  
A: I have hit my thumb. (Statement)

### **3. Methodology of the Study**

#### **3.1 The Procedures:**

1. A theoretical background of style and stylistic is presented through a survey of the available studies and definitions.
2. An overview of complex sentences is provided.
3. A statistical analysis of the complex sentences in Stoppard's play is carried out.
4. The results of the analyses are explained.

#### **3.2 Data Collection**

##### **A. The playwright: Tom Stoppard**

Tom Stoppard is one of the most gifted and most distinctive playwrights, he was born in Czechoslovakia in 1937, because of the war he traveled with his family from one country to another. He threw up his education at seventeen and began a process of self-educating. (Hunter 1982:93).

Stoppard started writing plays with a great sense of urgency, he felt that he will accomplish much more in life through his writings. Stoppard is very careful in

his writings, he reads a great deal but very slowly, and revises each page several times.(ibid).

His process of writing is described by Derek Marlow, cited in Fleming (2001:115), as “for Tom writing a play is like sitting for an examination, he spends ages on research. Hunter (1982: 68) calls Stoppard” a writer his finger-tips”. He adds that Stoppard has a “rare command of language” that makes his “continuing productivity an exciting feature of the current literary scene”.

As Stoppard lives the life of the bourgeois intellectuality; therefore, his plays deal with the values, views and ideologies of this life. His plays motivate the receiver to think and grapple with the intellectual and philosophical ideas which these plays revolve around. He is concerned in working ideas out for their logical conclusions “which undergird the structure of his highly imaginative and theatrical plays.” (Fleming 2001:114) Stoppard, as cited in Fleming (2001:114), considers it as “a personal failure to write a play which is not consistent in every way,” that is a writer is obliged to write a play of a very high order.

Stoppard’s plays are concerned with the social, moral, metaphysical and personal condition of being human in an unstable and uncertain world. His plays are well known by virtue of their linguistic mastery, intelligence and theatricality. (ibid:116).

Hunter (1982:95) observes that Stoppard argues through language that all abstract reality exists beyond language and this reality cannot be described since it precedes utterance. It is a fact that is “knowable” but not “nameable”.

## **B. The Play " Jumpers"**

Jumpers exemplifies Stoppard’s drama at its best, and the establishment of Stoppard as a name. It is considered the master piece of Stoppard. The events of the play are about moral philosophy. In the play, Stoppard builds up his long speeches

in the climax of Act One, that is, when George Moor, the most important and central character in the play, starts talking about moral absolutes. Jumpers is the dramatic realization of the metaphysical assumptions that Stoppard wants to say. A crime takes place in George's house and the actions continue to reveal the relationship between George and his young wife Dotty and the latter suspicious relationship with Archie.

### 3.3 Data Analysis

In order to examine the paper which read as follows:

1. The use of the complex sentences depends on the type of character.

#### Type of Sentence Percentage According to Character

	Simple	Compound	Complex
<b>George</b>	42%	1%	47%
<b>Dotty</b>	54%	3%	43%
<b>Archie</b>	59%	2%	39%

It can easily be seen that the rate of the complex sentences in a character's turns runs parallel with the character's importance in the play. The rate of the complex sentences rises according to the importance of the character. Character's importance is also reflected through the length of the turns. Turn length by simple sentence in George's case is 42%, while it is 54% for dotty and Archie with 59% sentences.

Compound sentences in George's case is 1%, while it is 3% for dotty and Archie with 2% sentences.

Complex sentences in George's case is 47%, while it is 43% for dotty and Archie with 39% sentences.

#### 4. Discussion of Results

The study's analysis show that a character's significance in "Jumpers" play is correlated with the frequency of complex sentences in their turns. The analysis shows that a larger proportion of complex sentence structures are used in dialogue by characters with more prominent roles, especially George. Their philosophical and intellectual roles within the play, where language serves as a medium for more in-depth reflection and abstraction, are consistent with this stylistic approach. George's speech is notable since 47% of his sentences are complex, whereas Dotty and Archie's sentences are 43% and 39% complex, respectively. This implies that Stoppard used grammatical complexity to highlight a character's intellectual gravity in addition to using it for stylistic flourish. George's preference for embedding subordinate ideas rather than coordinating separate ones may be a reflection of his philosophical mentality, as evidenced by the data showing that he uses substantially less compound sentences (1%) than Dotty and Archie (3%).

Additionally, this order of importance is influenced by the length of time of each character's turn. Despite having a lower percentage of simple sentences (42%), George's speech is typically lengthier and more complex. Dotty and Archie, on the other hand, use simpler structures more frequently (59%), which may indicate a simpler worldview or a purposeful stylistic contrast to George's verbosity.

These results add weight to the idea that Jumpers' syntactic decisions are functionally related to characterization rather than random. The relationship between character significance and sentence complexity aligns with stylistic patterns found in other theatrical works, where linguistic elements are used to improve character distinctiveness and thematic depth.

## 5. Conclusion

This study has attempted to arrive at certain facts regarding the problems of complex sentence in English play:

The fact that Stoppard's characters use a significantly higher percentage of complex sentences may due to either of two possibilities:

First, that the amount of complex sentences indicates an idiosyncratic style of Stoppard's or

Second, that this is due to the fact that all three. characters of Stoppard's are of the educated type who tend to use more complex sentences than the less educated ones. In spite of diversity in the siege of the data, 741 sentences in Stoppard's, i.e, much less than half, the role assigned for the main character. However it is not worthy that the different amounts complex sentences used by each character in Stoppard's play are as 47%, 43% and 39%.

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### الملخص

تتناول هذه الورقة البحثية دراسة استخدام الجمل المعقدة في مسرحية ستوبارد "القافزون" وأنواع الجمل. وتهدف إلى دراسة كيفية استخدام الجمل المعقدة في مسرحيته "القافزون" والتحقيق في أسباب استخدام هذا النوع من الجمل. وتستعرض هذه الدراسة أيضًا بنية الجمل وأنواع الجمل. في مسرحية "القافزون" يعتمد استخدام الجمل المعقدة على نوع الشخصية. وأظهرت الدراسة أن الجمل المعقدة ترتفع وفقًا لأهمية الشخصية في المسرحية. وتوصل البحث إلى العديد من الحقائق المتعلقة باستخدام الجمل المعقدة في المسرحية والتي تم ذكرها لاحقًا في خاتمة الدراسة. وتهدف الدراسة إلى دراسة كيفية استخدام الجمل المعقدة في المسرحية ومعرفة الأهداف وراء استخدام الكاتب المسرحي للجمل المعقدة من أجل معرفة ما إذا كان هذا الهيكل مستخدمًا بالتساوي أم أنه سمة مميزة لأحد الكُتّاب.