

AN ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL ERROR IN THESIS ABSTRACT OF FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE STUDENTS OF BORNEO TARAKAN UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

The aims of this research are: (1) to identify and describe the types of grammatical error in thesis abstract of Agriculture Faculty students of Borneo Tarakan University, and (2) to describe the possible causes of the grammatical error. This research is a descriptive study. 56 abstracts from year 2016 were taken as the samples. Taking the samples was done in the university library and those were in the form of softcopy. To collect the data, researcher followed some steps; they were identifying, categorizing, and describing the error. To categorize the errors, researcher used Surface Structure Taxonomy (SST) and also used Comparative Analysis Taxonomy (CAT) to analyze the causes of errors. The results of this research show that 2832 errors found in 56 abstracts and those were categorized based on the four types of SST. The errors percentages are 22.2% for omission error, 27.7% for addition error, 18.7% for misordering error, and 31.1% for misformation error. Besides, the errors based on the CAT, it was found that developmental error were 1331 errors, interlingual error were 830 errors, ambiguous error were 435 errors, and other error were 146 errors. From the results, the errors mostly found are misordering error and developmental error.

Keywords: Error Analysis, English Grammar, Abstract

INTRODUCTION

English system is different from Indonesian language system. One popular distinctive language system between English and Indonesian is grammar. It is central to the study of language, in any of its dialects, standard, all of contrasts of the meaning, or otherwise (Crystal, 2006:96-98). According to the importance of grammar, the researcher found a problem that most students from Borneo Tarakan University are not aware of the grammar when they should write their thesis abstract in English. The correlation of these issues made the researcher interested to study it. Abstract is a precis of the thesis (research) which is usually bound into the thesis immediately after the title page (Oliver, 2004:106). It should point out the main points or ideas to represent all of the writing content. Therefore, students should note the rules of writing, including grammar, to establish good communication in their abstracts. Since the students from Borneo Tarakan University are asked to write their thesis abstract in English, the language rules need to be followed but not all of students are able to write well. The students who find it difficult to write their abstracts in English commonly are not from English Department.

There are seven faculties in Borneo Tarakan University. Except English Education Department, all of the rest students are only get two chances to improve their English. There are only one English course and a TOEFL training are not sufficient to help mastering the

language skills. As the example, it may be difficult for Faculty of Agriculture students writing English abstract since it should deliver thesis content well with correct grammar and Agricultural terms in English. To prove this problem, the researcher had done a brief preliminary study which is reading some thesis abstract made by Faculty of Agriculture students on March 28th 2018 at library of Borneo Tarakan University, and found some errors generally include missing the article, singular/plural noun, passive voice, tenses, and inappropriate word selection. These results made the researcher believe that there are other possible students who commit similar grammatical errors in their abstracts.

The researcher's reason to take Faculty of Agriculture as the sample, beside the findings in the preliminary study, is that no one has studied this faculty about grammatical error analysis. There are some previous studies with the similar topic but it was in Faculty of Teacher Training and Education and Faculty of Economics. Specifically, the sample from Faculty of Agriculture that will be investigated is from students who graduated in 2016. The interest to select 2016 graduates is because the researcher found from university statistic data (BAKK Akademik, 2017) that Faculty of Agriculture also had passed freshmen the most among other faculties that have not yet been researched at that year. Hence, this research hopefully can contribute new innovations for the freshmen especially in the faculty.

Moreover, the researcher deliberation to do the research is the importance of studying students' errors. It can indicate to the teachers and curriculum developers which part of the target language students have most difficulty producing correctly and which error types detract most from a learner's ability to communicate effectively (Dulay et al., 1982: 138). Shortly, this study is expected to be the reflection for the university or the faculty to develop the solution for the thesis abstract writing problem by analyzing the grammatical errors and its causes, so that the students' abstracts can be called proper in term of English as the used language.

METHOD

The researcher used descriptive qualitative design for this study. This research was considered as descriptive one because it aimed to describe the grammatical errors and the possible causes in thesis abstract by Faculty of Agriculture students. Any hypothesis was not provided since no variable is going to be tested. In addition, qualitative approach was applied in this research because its objectives were in line with the general purpose of qualitative research, that to investigate, explain, and analyze the data finding before provided them in the finding and discussion section.

Population of this research was thesis abstracts from Faculty of Agriculture students of Borneo Tarakan University who graduated in 2016. To decide the size of sample, the researcher considered the related theory from Arikunto. According to Arikunto in Muharatun (2012:63), the way to decide the sample is from the number of the subject. If it is less than 100 subjects, the researcher will take all of it. On the other hand, if the subject is 100 or more, researcher can take 10% - 15% or 20% - 25% or more. In line with the theory, the researcher took the 56 subjects as the sample because it was less than 100 subjects.

The researcher used herself to be the instrument of the study according to Creswell (2009:175) that researcher of qualitative research can be the instrument. In addition, other instruments are correction symbols adapted from Oshima and Hogue in their book entitled "Writing Academic English 4th Edition" (2006), Oshima and Hogue's correction symbols adaption by Putri (2017:45-47), and also the relevant English grammar books.

Taking the samples was done in the university library and those were in the form of softcopy. To collect the data, researcher followed some steps; they were identifying the error by comparing the sentences learners produce with what seem to be the normal or 'correct' sentences in the target language and marked the errors using the correction symbols; categorizing using Surface Structure Taxonomy (SST); describing the error; and predicting the errors causes by investigating the errors using Comparative Analysis Taxonomy (CAT).

RESULTS/FINDINGS

a. Classification of Errors

After finishing the analysis, researcher count the distribution of data based on the Surface Strategy Taxonomy. The researcher found that the student from Faculty of Agriculture committed error in their abstract, in the use of some type of grammar rules, such as *verb be*, *determiner*, *auxiliary*, *verb tense*, *subject agreement*, *plural*, *adverb*, *adjective*, *pronoun*, *possessive*, *noun*, *verb*, *preposition*, *conjunction*, *article*, *modal*, *quantifier*, *spelling*, and *gerund*.

Distribution of Data Based on the Surface Strategy Taxonomy

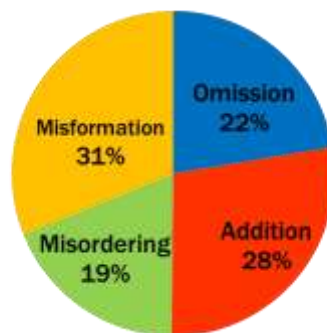


Figure 1. Chart of Distribution of Data Based on the Surface Strategy

The omission errors found were 637 errors with the highest number of error about preposition.

Omission Error		
Identification of Error	Classification of Error	Reconstruction of the Error
This research was conducted in the greenhouse using a randomized block design ↓ prep (RAK) single factor and each treatment was replicated four times.	omission of preposition	This research was conducted in the greenhouse using a randomized block design (RAK) with single factor and each treatment was replicated four times.

Table 1. Identification Table of Omission Error

They were occurred in the grammatical rule application of *verb be*, *determiner*, *auxiliary*, *verb tense*, *subject-verb agreement*, *adverb*, *adjective*, *pronoun*, *possessive*, *noun*, *verb*, *preposition*, *conjunction*, *article*, *modal*, and *gerund*. The omission error found in the students' abstract might be the sign of the students' lack of vocabulary in the target language.

The addition errors were found as many as 785 errors and the most addition error was about preposition. The grammar rule application found in this type of error are *verb be*, *determiner*, *auxiliary*, *verb tense*, *subject-verb agreement*, *adverb*, *adjective*, *pronoun*, *possessive*, *noun*, *verb*, *preposition*, *conjunction*, *article*, *modal*, *spelling*, and *gerund*. This type actually showed how the students had already acquired some target language rules but all-too-faithful use of the rules still happened.

Addition Error		
Identification of Error	Classification of Error	Reconstruction of the Error
This research was aimed to find out <u>the influence of</u> ↙ prep <u>the given of super gib</u> towards the fall of flowers and the productivity increase of two varieties of large chilies (<i>Capsicum annum</i> L.).	addition of preposition	This research aimed to find out the influence of super gib giving towards the fall of flowers and the productivity increase of two varieties of big chilies (<i>Capsicum annum</i> L.).

Table 2. Identification Table of Addition Error

The total number of misordering was 529 errors with the most error found is noun misordering. The grammatical rules applications that noted as this type were *verb be*, *determiner*, *auxiliary*, *verb tense*, *subject-verb agreement*, *adverb*, *adjective*, *pronoun*, *noun*, *verb*, *preposition*, *conjunction*, *article*, *modal*, and *gerund*.

Misordering Error		
Identification of Error	Classification of Error	Reconstruction of the Error
↙ Nn <u>The methods analysis that researcher used to know</u> the efficiency of marketing are channel pattern of marketing institute, margin of marketing, and shift share analysis.	misordering of noun	<u>The analysis methods that researcher used to know</u> the efficiency of marketing are channel pattern of marketing institute, margin of marketing, and shift share analysis.

Table 3. Identification Table of Misordering Error

For the misformation error, there were 881 errors that counted and the highest number was about spelling. This type was found in the variations of grammar applications of *verb be*, *determiner*, *auxiliary*, *verb tense*, *subject-verb agreement*, *plural*, *adverb*, *adjective*, *pronoun*, *noun*, *verb*, *preposition*, *conjunction*, *article*, *modal*, *quantifier*, *spelling*, and *gerund*. Moreover, the data was connected to Dulay et al.'s (1982) opinion to make sure that the errors were misformation. According to his opinion, students from Faculty of Agriculture who made misformation errors might be already able to supply some English words but still incorrect.

Misformation Error		
Identification of Error	Classification of Error	Reconstruction of the Error
The study prepared by using treatment <u>randomized block</u> ↙ spell <u>desing</u> (RAK) with 1 (one) factors which fertilizer compost nibung with four replications.	misformation of spelling	The study was prepared using <u>randomized block design</u> (RAK) with 1 (one) factor which was nibung compost fertilizer with four replications.

Table 4. Identification Table of Misformation Error

b. Possible Causes of the Errors

Here is the distribution of possible causes of the errors.

1) Developmental error

The example of sentence contains error caused by developmental:

Identification of error: This research conducted in Aji Kuning Village Sebatik Center Subdistrict Nunukan Regency Central. (AB3)

Reconstruction of the error: This research was conducted in Aji Kuning Village, Central Sebatik Subdistrict, Central Nunukan District.

Explanation: this erroneous sentence was indicated as developmental error because the error was the result of target language interference. The student might think that there was no auxiliary be to construct the passive voice sentence. In other words, the student tried to simplify the verb in passive voice structure.

Generally, the errors happened due to the lack of student's knowledge about the English structure. The researcher found that they often missed some words to construct the appropriate English sentences.

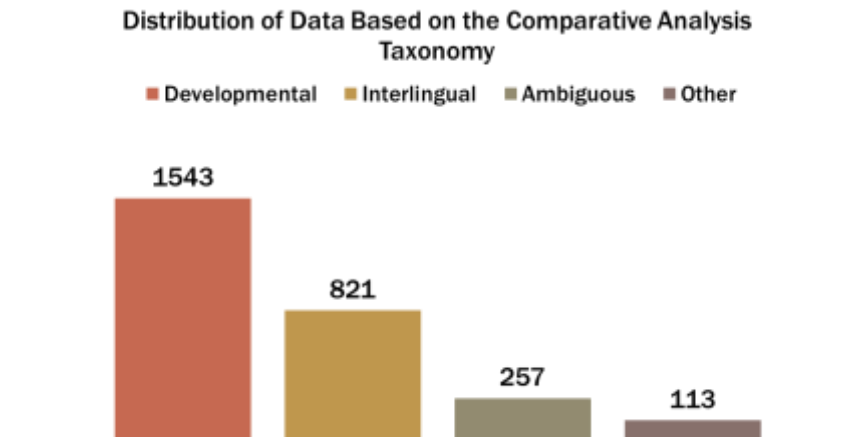


Figure 2. Chart of Distribution of Data Based on the Comparative Analysis Taxonomy

2) Interlingual error

Here is the example of interlingual error:

Identification of error: Study Tolerance Genotypes of Maize (Zea Mays. L) on Acid Soils. (AT49)

Reconstruction of the error: Study of Maize (Zea Mays. L) Genotypes Tolerance in Acid Soil.

Explanation: the error was influenced by the native language structure. This was indicated that the error was an interlingual error. The student tried to translate sentence in his native language, "*Kajian Toleransi Beberapa Genotip Jagung (Zea Mays. L) Pada Tanah Masam.*" into English. However, he still used the Indonesian language structure, so the sentence did not make sense according to English sentence structure.

In most case, students tended to arrange the words to construct a complete sentence still based on the native language structure. However, this prediction was done by comparing the sentences students produced in the target language and the sentences in the version of students' native language.

3) Ambiguous error

Example of this error is:

Identification of error: "Analysis of farmer Income **large** chili in Nunukan Regency South Nunukan." (AB20)

Reconstruction of error: "Analysis of **Big** Chili Farmer Income in South Nunukan Subdistrict, Nunukan District."

Explanation: this error was predicted as ambiguous error because the sentence had error after viewed from the native language and the target language. Here the student used word 'large' to translate the word "*besar*" in Indonesia. However, due to the way of following the translation, the student actually translated the word incorrectly according to the context of the sentence. Since Indonesian language doesn't have various words for referring

‘big’, the students might be confused to decide the contextual word to refer ‘big’ in her English sentence.

4) Other error

The errors that the cause couldn’t be predicted as developmental and interlingual error called other error. 113 errors were guessed that caused by neither native nor target language interference. The example of this error is:

Identification of error: This research held at Lahan Petani Organik Kampung Enam on June until **agust** 2015. (AT46)

Reconstruction of error: This research was held at Lahan Petani Organik Kampung Enam in June until **August** 2015.

Explanation: this error was indicated as other error because it couldn’t be identified as developmental or interlingual error. Researcher predicted that the error was committed due to the mistype of word ‘August’. The character ‘u’ was missing.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis process of the data, researcher found lot of errors in the abstracts from Faculty of Agriculture students. There are 2832 errors committed by the students. The errors categorized into four categories; omission, addition, misordering, and misinformation. Besides classifying into four categories, it was also classified into 19 subcategories that are about the grammatical aspects in English.

There are 637 errors of omission, 785 errors of addition, 529 errors of misordering, and 881 errors of misinformation. Percentage of errors based on the categories can be concluded that omission has 22.4% errors, addition has 27.7% errors, misordering has 18.7% errors, and misinformation has 31.1% error. Moreover, students commonly made errors related to *conjunction, plural, verb tense, adjective, spelling, verb be, article, preposition, and noun*. These subcategories of errors have more than 100 errors for each type.

The causes of the errors were developmental, interlingual, ambiguous and others. Based on the findings, it could be referred that most of the causes of error committed by the students were developmental causes. This type of cause showed that students lacked theory or understanding about the native language rules.

Developmental had the highest frequency in affecting the students committed errors as many as 1543 times. On the other hand, the students committed errors caused by interlingual as many as 821 times. In addition, ambiguous category was positioned in the third based on the frequency of errors (257 times) committed by the students. The last category was other error that had the lowest frequency in causing the students’ grammatical errors. The students committed the other error as many as 113 times.

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