

AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH ABSTRACTS WRITTEN BY UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF TANJUNGPURA UNIVERSITY

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Submitted: 2023-06-26

Accepted: 2023-08-28

Abstract: This research aimed to identify grammatical errors encountered in the undergraduate theses abstracts written by students at Tanjungpura University. This research applied the descriptive method. The data were collected with the purposive sampling technique. The subjects numbered 20 abstracts published in 2021; they were analyzed employing the error analysis technique. The findings showed that the students made errors classified into omission, misinformation, addition, and misordering. The most frequent errors made by the students were omission (52.9%), and the least frequent ones were addition and misordering, each of which occurred (5.88%). Of 20 abstracts, only five were without errors; others contained errors.

Keywords: English abstract, error analysis, grammatical error, undergraduate student

INTRODUCTION

An abstract is one of the academic written products. The abstract might serve as the basis for a conference or symposium oral presentation or as a chapter in a scientific manuscript, thesis, or report (Drury et al., 2023). The students of Tanjungpura University are required to write abstracts in English regardless of their study programs. It is a compulsory part of presenting a thesis. Most Indonesian-based journals require the authors to write abstracts in two languages, namely Indonesian and English (Fitria, 2020). Writing abstracts in English caters the international readers, and the Indonesian version the Indonesian readers.

An abstract is a standalone overview of a research project (Nundy et al., 2022). It is usually bound into the thesis after the title page. This type of academic writing text is essential for reports because more people will read it than the entire thing. The abstract of a completed research study must include a summary of all significant findings, including how and why the research was conducted (Nundy et al., 2022).

The abstract must emphasize the significance of the study and its findings because the abstract is frequently the section of a conference or journal paper that receives the most reader attention. The abstract is the sales pitch determining whether the research should be considered for publication. Additionally, because potential reviewers base their decisions on a paper's title and abstract, a poorly written abstract can slow down the reviewing process (Piedra, 2022).

Most journals offer free electronic access to publish abstracts, not entire articles. An abstract plays a vital role in introducing the content to potential readers. The main points of an abstract include the ideas to represent the concerned article. It is written grammatically to establish good communication with the readers. The reader can obtain the full range and knowledge within the research article by reading the abstract. Thus, an abstract needs to be written structurally and grammatically correct to deliver the information effectively.

A good abstract should include information about the study's objectives, methodology, key findings, and conclusions. A structured abstract is usually written in the IMRAD format (Bahadoran et al., 2020). 'I' refers to the introduction stated in the opening line. 'M' refers to the methodology used to complete the study. 'R' refers to the result or findings, And lastly, 'D' for discussion.

There are various kinds of abstracts. Nundy et al. (2022) categorize it into five categories: descriptive, informative, critical, highlighting, and structured. (1) A descriptive abstract is typically written for humanities, social sciences, and psychology papers. It has between 50 and 100 words. Since it only summarizes the paper's main ideas, this abstract cannot be used to draw any conclusions. (2) Informative abstracts are mostly science-related manuscripts that are informative and serve as surrogates for the research that has been done. They are short paragraphs, typically between 100 and 150 words, that give the reader an overview of the research paper. Conclusions can be drawn from the abstracts and the recommendations written in the final line.

(3) The critical abstract is about 400-500 words long. This discusses the authors' own research for validity, judgment, and reliability. It is also contrasted with earlier studies of a similar nature. (4) The highlighting abstract type is infrequently used in scientific writing. The abstract's format is intended to draw in more readers. It does not provide a fair or thorough summary of the article with which it is published. (5) A structured abstract includes information under subheadings such as background, goals, materials and methods, results, conclusion, and recommendations.

A piece of an abstract is vital in research article. Berkenkotten as cited by (Mursida, 2021) lists four reasons. Firstly, an abstract contains essential information or description that is easy to approach. Secondly, it is a screening appliance that lets readers decide whether they have finished reading the content. Thirdly, it gives a framework for readers to read the article. Fourthly, an abstract recaps the fundamental points of the whole writing scope.

Students still need to be professional writers. They need to be taught the language rules. Making errors is common and natural in language learning because the learners' competencies are still being improved. The deviating forms from the adult grammar of native speakers convey the inter-language capability of the language learners. In the context of language learning, 'error' is not synonymous with 'mistake.' An error occurs when a learner lacks competency or incompetence, whereas a mistake occurs when a learner fails to perform what he knows despite having complete proficiency in the language (Nuraini, 2019).

Writing is typically regarded as the most challenging skill to learn. It should only be introduced to students after they have mastered the other skills. This is due to the fact that the

rules of the language being learned differ from those of the learners' native language. In contrast to Indonesian, which lacks tense changes, English has a different structure.

The difficulty in writing also stems from the fact that it requires learners to not only translate their ideas into readable text, but also to generate and organize ideas. Widiati as cited by Vera et al. (2019) affirm that writing is the most difficult of the four skills. Students must be able to comprehend some linguistic elements when writing, including spelling, grammar, vocabulary, and punctuation. Writing as an activity necessitates that learners understand grammar [rules] in order to produce grammatically correct sentences (Rex L et al., 2022). Mastering grammar in particular is crucial to writing ability as it aids students in creating proper sentences.

The term 'grammar' refers to the system as a whole (Young, 2013), the rules that make up the language. Grammar is a set of rules that describes how to properly organize words and word groups in a language to form sentences. Grammar issues, such as misspellings and a lack of grammatical understanding, are believed to be influenced by the mother tongue. The problems of grammatical errors are believed to be as a result of mother tongue influence such as misspellings and lack of grammatical understanding (Rex L et al., 2022). Although grammar lessons have been taught long before the final semester, grammatical errors still need to be corrected in students' writing.

Error analysis is one way to measure the student's language mastery. James (2013) affirms that error analysis concludes the occurrence, nature, reasons, and effect of unsuccessful language. An error analysis is one of the practical solutions to prevent learners from misusing language. Studies of second language acquisition have tended to focus on learner errors because they can predict the difficulties involved in learning a second language. Through performing this, educators can be aware of the challenging topics that learners will have to deal with and can give those topics extra attention and care.

Error analysis is a subset of linguistic analysis that focuses on the mistakes that students make. It involves comparing the mistakes made in the target language to the target language itself. The significance of second language learners' errors is emphasized by error analysis. It's important to note that errors in the learner's target language are not always caused by interferences from his mother tongue.

Errors should be carefully examined in order to determine how far learners have progressed in learning the language and how much more they need to learn (Sermsook et al., 2017). Richard et al as cited by Khansir (2012) argued that the study of errors or error analysis is used to (1) identify strategies that language learners use in class, (2) pinpoint the reasons why language learners make mistakes, and (3) gather data on common challenges in language

learning as a teaching tool or for the creation of instructional materials. He further added that error analysis can be a powerful ally for remedial teaching and it can also reveal the program's successes and shortcomings throughout the teaching process.

Generally, there are four classifications of errors, omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. Omission error is characterized by the absence of an item that should appear in a correct form of utterance. For instance, "there is painting on the wall." This sentence omits the article "a" that should come before the word "painting." In another example, "Joseph Evans president the company". The word "is" is missing from this sentence. Therefore, a well-written sentence would be "Joseph Evans is the president of the company".

In contrast to omission, an item that must not appear in a proper form of utterance is defined as an additional category. Addition errors are most common in the later stages of second language learning, after the learner has already learned some target language rules. Three different types of addition mistakes exist: double marking (a) — as in "she doesn't knows him" (b) regularization, for instance: the verb *eat* becomes *ate* rather than *eated* (c) simple addition, for instance: the fishes doesn't live in the pond.

The wrong form of morpheme or structure characterizes misformation. In this condition, learners still supply something in their second language production even though it is incorrect. Misformation errors come in three different subcategories: (a) Regularizations, such as the substitution *runned* for *ran*. (b) Archi-form, as in: *that dogs* should be *those dogs*. (c) Alternating forms, such as *him* for *he*.

Furthermore, incorrectly placing a morpheme or a group of morphemes is the character of misordering errors. The word-for-word translation of the surface structure and due to the influence of the native language can result in this kind of error. For instance: "My grandmother will visit *morning tomorrow*." The adverb of time "*morning tomorrow*" is arranged incorrectly in this sentence. The phrase must be changed to "My grandmother will visit *tomorrow morning*." In another case, *what she is doing?* It should be written as *what is she doing?*

There were several studies on error analysis. Fitria (2021) investigated the grammatical errors in English abstracts published in Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi Islam (JIEI) in both English and Indonesian in 2020. The study found three grammatical errors in English abstracts in the JIEI journal. They were misinformation, omission, and addition. Sadiah (2019) identified students' grammatical errors in writing descriptive text. She reported that the students mostly made errors in verb agreement caused by incorrect forms of the simple present, followed by pronoun, usage, sentence pattern, spelling, and capitalization error.

Another study was conducted by Lalogiroth (2018), identifying a thesis abstract written by the English Education Department undergraduate students at the State University of Manado.

He reported that the most frequent error made by the students was an omission, with 19 errors (37.25%); addition, with 8 errors (15.68%); archform, with 6 errors (11.76%), misformation with 11 errors (21.56%), and the least was misordering with 2 errors (3.92 %).

Another researcher, Qamariah et al.(2020), reported her study that her research participants made 11 types of grammatical errors, namely, errors in the use of the verb, tense, singular/plural noun, adjectives, preposition, to be, articles, modal/auxiliary, noun, objective pronoun, and phrasal verb, with a total of 48 grammatical errors produced by students in their writing sheet. Additionally, Firharmawan et al. (2021) reported that the students made errors in their descriptive writing. She ranked error rates in order from most prevalent to least prevalent, with errors of misformation (61%), omission (20%), addition (15%), and misordering (4%).

University students need to write abstracts to complete their theses. However, it is undoubtedly vital that students still be concerned about the errors they potentially perform in writing the abstract. Thus, the research was designed to identify the type of grammatical errors when writing the abstracts of undergraduate theses at Tanjungpura University.

METHOD

The present research was a descriptive study. It identified the grammatical error encountered in thesis abstracts written by the students of Tanjungpura University. The data were sorted from twenty abstracts published in 2021 as the corpora. They were accessed through Portal Jurnal Ilmiah UNTAN. The data were analyzed qualitatively. This type of research does not use statistical procedures in analyzing the data but gives an idea or commentary on the state of things as straightforwardly as possible without treating the object studied.

The present research involved 3 main steps from Huberman's theories (2014). They were data condensation, data display, and conclusions and verification. In the data condensation, the researcher documented abstracts in an undergraduate thesis published in 2021. Afterward, the researcher read and checked the error sentences presented in the undergraduate theses. In the data display step, the researcher categorizes the error with theory in table form. The last step, the error calculation, was made to find the most frequent and the minor error, then conclusion and verification. In counting the systematic errors, the researcher uses the following formula:

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The present research found that the students made errors categorized into omission, addition, and misformation. They were displayed and explained in the table below.

Table 1.

Grammatical Error Contained in Students' Abstracts

No.	Error Recognition	Category of Error	Correct Form
1	This study aims to examine economic resistance ...	Misformation	This study aimed to examine economic resistance ...
2	(...) The student gave great feedback ...	Omission of the Article 'the'	The student gave great feedback ...
3	... growth has a positive impact ...	Omission of Article 'a'	... growth has a positive impact ...
4	The writer draws (...) conclusion that the analysis of ...	Omission of the Article 'the'	The writer concludes that the analysis of ...
5	Mechanical solidarity between students who live in subsidized apartments ...	Omission of preposition	Mechanical solidarity between students who live in subsidized apartments ...
6	Radio is also quite (...) effective media	Omission of the Article 'an'	Radio is also a pretty effective media
7	There was a significant difference...	Misformation of subject and verb agreement	There was a significant difference ...
8	The obstacle faced by a teacher when doing storytelling ...	Misordering	The obstacles faced by the teacher when doing storytelling ...
9	The research method used is descriptive in the form of qualitative research.	Addition	The research method used is descriptive in the form of qualitative research.
10	The results of the study show that ...	Omission of Article 'the'	The results of the study show that ...
11	To solve (...) problems and prove ...	Omission of Article 'the'	To solve the problems and prove ...
12	The data of this study (are) the lesson plan, the learning activity, and ...	Misformation of to be	The data of this study (were) the lesson plan, the learning activity, and the ...
13	... the communities also were in difficulty...	Misordering	... the communities were also in difficulty ...
14	Fourteen terms relate to ingredients and spices, and twelve terms relate to (...) serving method	Omission of the Article 'the'	Fourteen terms relate to ingredients and spices, and twelve terms relate to the serving method

15	Student mean score was higher than ...	Omission of the Article 'the'	The mean student score was higher than ...
16	A sample was selected ...	Misformation of subject and verb agreement	A sample was selected ...
17	... one of the technique in ...	Misformation in subject and verb agreement	... one of the techniques in ...

The frequency of error encountered in the abstracts written by undergraduate students of Tanjungpura University can be seen in the following table:

Table 2.
Percentage of Grammatical Error Contained in Students' Abstracts

No.	Types of Error	Number of Error	Percentage
1	Omission	9	52,9 %
2	Addition	1	5,88 %
3	Misformation	5	29,4 %
4	Misordering	1	5,88 %

As shown in the above table, seventeen grammatical errors were detected in the abstracts written by undergraduate students of Tanjungpura University. The most errors made by the students were classified as omission and misformation. The least errors made by the students were misordering and addition.

The example of errors classified 'omission' is 'serving method' as seen in (1). This noun phrase does not include an article to show the countability of its head, that is, method. This phrase should include article 'the' before the noun phrase as seen in (2). Other examples can be seen (3) where the noun phrase 'positive impact' should be preceded with an indefinite article 'a' as seen in (4).

- (1) Fourteen terms relate to ingredients and spices, and twelve terms relate to serving method.
- (2) Fourteen terms relate to ingredients and spices, and twelve terms relate to **the serving method**.
- (3) ... growth has positive impact ...
- (4) ... growth has **a positive impact** ...

The second most common errors made by the students dealt with 'misformation'. For example, the phrase 'the technique' (5) should be in the plural form 'the techniques' (6) because it initiated by 'one of'. Depending on the sentence's subject, the verb that follows may be singular or plural.

Since this sentence refers to a single member of a group, the verb "one of the" should be conjugated with a plural noun (Carter et al., 2016).

The noun or a pronoun used after the phrase "one of" is always in the plural form

(5) ... one of the technique in...

(6) ... one of the techniques in...

Addition and misordering appear minor. The only example of 'addition' is shown in (7) where the definite article 'the' of the noun phrase 'the qualitative research' is not required grammatically. It should be written as shown in (8). The error type of 'misordering' is illustrated with 'also were' (9). Its order must be the auxiliary verb 'were' should be before the adverb 'also' as shown in (10). Auxiliary verbs appear alongside main verbs and indicate the speaker's tense, aspect voice, mood, or intention. The adverb 'also' must come after the modal verb or first auxiliary verb, or after be as a main verb (Carter et al., 2016).

(7) The research method used is a descriptive method in the form of the qualitative research.

(8) The research method used is a descriptive method in the form of qualitative research.

(9) ... the communities also were in the difficulty ...

(10) ... the communities were also in the difficulty ...

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that undergraduate students of Tanjungpura University whose thesis-based articles were published in 2021 made errors classified into omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. After learning and discussing the findings of this study, the researcher would like to conclude that many authors are still making grammatical errors in writing English abstracts for journal publication. Thus, the authors and journal management should pay more attention to check the writing before publishing it in a journal. The writers can ask their peers, supervisor to review it, or they may apply grammar checker software.

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