

## An Analysis of Grammatical Errors on Undergraduate Thesis Abstract

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### Abstract:

The academic genre of abstract has its own organizational framework and linguistic characteristics. The abstract summarizes the most important aspects of the work or research as succinctly as possible. The goal of this study is to find out what grammatical mistakes undergraduate students make when writing their thesis abstract in English. As a result, this is a descriptive qualitative study. The respondent in this study is a group of undergraduate students from Universitas Lancang Kuning's Biology Department, Faculty of Education and Teachers Training, in 2016. In the April 2016 timeframe, 10 abstracts from the biology department were completed. Finally, the researcher believes that there are four types of grammatical faults identified on biology students' theses abstracts at Universitas Lancang Kuning in writing abstracts: omission, addition, and misformation.

*Keywords: Analysis, Thesis, Abstract*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the most practical applications of language abilities. It could not be rejected in an academic setting. For example, these days, the thesis is the ultimate project in completing or completing a student's studies; also, the abstract is a vital issue that must be written using proper grammar. Students must meet certain requirements when creating a thesis abstract, including writing principles, grammatical skills, vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation.

The writers should have high grammatical mastery in arranging thoughts and information, or good sentence structures to create the best style that is appropriate for the main topic and the expectations of the readers, particularly when writing the abstract, which is the most significant portion of the thesis.

The academic genre of abstract has its own organizational framework and language characteristics. The abstract summarizes the most important aspects of the work or research as succinctly as possible. The background, purpose, method, result, and conclusion sections of the abstract are normally written in this order. Furthermore, the abstract should be no longer than one page long and contain between 150 to 250 words. In addition, the tenses simple present tense, simple past tense, and present perfect tense are widely employed in abstracts. These tenses are available in both active and passive voice.

Furthermore, the abstract serves a variety of functions. One of them is to provide an article's knowledge. The abstract can also be viewed as a persuasive rhetorical device that conveys the significance of the text. Furthermore, the abstract can have a vital social role by allowing readers to

observe how people work to establish themselves within their communities. As a result, the research paper abstract should be well-written. When writing an abstract, there are several crucial considerations to be considered, one of which is the use of tenses. There were some previous researches on abstracts have focused on a range of linguistic aspects. Tense, modality, negation, and passive voice are the most prevalent. In addition to examining the frequency with which various linguistic traits appear in abstracts, at least one research has sought to clearly link them to function. The writing used in the abstracts of students' theses has not been studied so far. As a result, the purpose of this study is to examine grammatical faults in students' thesis abstracts from Lancang Kuning University's biology department.

According to the surface strategy taxonomy, there are four sorts of errors: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering mistake. The absence of things that must be present in a well-formed speech is characterized by omission errors. The reverse of omission errors are addition errors. They're distinguished by the existence of anything that shouldn't be present in a well-formed utterance. The use of unsuitable forms of the morpheme or structure is characterized by misformation mistakes. While omission mistakes result in no item being supplied at all, misformation errors result in the learner providing something, even if it is inaccurate. Misordering mistake is defined as the erroneous placement of a morpheme or set of morphemes in an utterance. Misordering errors are common in both first and second languages.

In writing a thesis abstract, the students should have the knowledge of sentence construction that will be constructed into compound sentences, and a simple paragraph. There were four different types of sentences, as seen below:

a. A simple sentence consists of a single independent clause. Carbon monoxide is found in cigarette smoke, for example.

b. A compound sentence is made up of two or more clauses that are independent of one another. For example, Brittany was once an autonomous country, but it is now a part of France.

c. A complex sentence consists of one independent phrase and one or more dependent clauses, such as an adverb, an adjective, or a noun. Three competitors, for example, spin a roulette wheel in this game. Two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses make create a compound-complex sentence.

According to (Thornbury, 2000, p. 1) the study of what forms (or structures) are possible in a language is part of grammar. This can be interpreted to mean that grammar is the study of how to produce a form in a language. This also implies that grammar is necessary in order for a sentence to be meaningful and understandable. The building of forms contributes to the formation of a meaningful sentence.

In addition (Azhar, 2007, p.3) Grammar is the sound, structure, and meaning system of language, according to this definition. Grammar is present in all languages, and each language has its unique grammar. Grammar assists students in discovering the nature of the language. For example, a language includes predictable patterns that allow us to understand what we say, hear, read, and write.

Furthermore, according to (Baskaran, 2005, p. 58), the term "grammar" in linguistics can refer to the full system of describing the structure of a language, from its sounds system to its meaning system, or only the organization (shape) of words (morphology) and their arrangement into sentences (syntax). It can be inferred that grammar is an orderly pattern made up of words that is assembled into meaningful

sentences. Related to the above idea, the researcher is going to find out the students' grammar error on their thesis abstract sentences. The term "abstract" is a loose term that refers to any concise summary of a longer paper. It's not a review, and it's not an assessment of the work being abstracted. It's a condensed version of a lengthier piece of writing that highlights the most important elements, intentionally describes the writing's subject and scope, and briefly summarizes the writing's contents. The important points of the paper are summarized in the abstract.

Writing a research paper abstract can be done in two ways (Swales and Feak, 2004, p. 282). The results-drive-abstract is one of them. This type of abstract focuses on the research findings and what conclusions may be drawn from them. Another option is to provide a concise abstract for a research paper. The writer delivers a one- or two-sentence overview of the four sections in this type of abstract.

There are two different types of abstracts that are frequently used: There are two types of descriptions in academic writing: descriptive and informative (Davis, 2005, p. 112). A descriptive abstract (a) educates readers about the report, article, or paper's contents; (b) covers the report, article, or paper's purpose, methodology, and scope; and (c) summarizes the report, article, or paper. (c) lacks any results, conclusions, or recommendations; and (d) is always brief, usually under a page.

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To meet those goals, the abstract must be a short, basic, yet totally self-explanatory report on a scientific investigation. Just like the report itself, the abstract must include (1) the study objectives and rationale for conducting the inquiry, (2) the basic methodology used, and (3) the results and key conclusions that can be drawn. An abstract can be condensed in order to establish boundaries that the writer cannot cross. Some of the data in the above list can be combined or eliminated.

There were some previous researchers who did the same topic with this research. Firts (Siminto, 2009) with the research entitled "Grammatical Errors in the Students' Thesis Abstract (A Study on the Students' Enhancement in English Grammar)". Word order, plural-singular nouns, verb tense, missing and misapplying article, ineffective sentence, punctuation, unparalleled structure, misspelling, verb tense, punctuation, Indonesian terms used, run-on sentence, article (missing and misusing), meaning not clear, ineffective sentence, redundant words, misspelling words, word form, incomplete sentence, misusing possessive nouns and adjectives.

Second (Luthfiyah et al, 2015) had done a research entitled "An Investigation of Cohesion and Rhetorical Moves in Thesis Abstract". The purpose of this study was to look at the cohesiveness and rhetorical gestures in English Education students' thesis abstracts. A qualitative research

design was used in this study, with 10 abstracts chosen as samples. The rhetorical moves are evaluated using Swales and Feak's framework, while the cohesiveness is analyzed using Halliday and Hasan's notion. Except for substitution, all cohesive devices are used, according to the results. The reference device is the most commonly utilized of these devices. The findings also reveal that some cohesive devices are being implemented inappropriately. Based on the results, seven abstracts (70%) are still in the medium cohesiveness group, while three abstracts (30%) are in the high cohesion category. In addition, seven abstracts are grouped in diverse movement patterns that do not obey Swales' rules.

Third, with a study titled "The Lexical Phrases Employed in the Thesis Abstracts of English Department Students" (Ngadiman, 2013). The current research focuses on lexical phrases found in thesis abstracts written by English Department students. The data sources were randomly selected from abstracts of thesis papers written by English Department students for one of their Bachelor's degree requirements. There are four types of lexical phrases used in students' thesis abstracts: (a) verbal phrases, (b) noun phrases, (c) prepositional phrases, and other clausal structures, which are generally longer. (a) relaying what others have said, (b) describing difficulties, (c) describing the situation, and (d) presenting results e) Research and study objectives (f) expressing points of view, (g) expressing degrees of certainty, (h) presenting arguments, I connectors, (j) comparing and contrasting, and (k) expressing degrees of certainty.

Fourth, Hidayati (2010) published a study named "English Grammatical Errors in the Abstract Section of Civil Engineering Students' Thesis, Diponegoro University." According to the researcher's hypothesis, the substance of the abstracts written by Diponegoro University civil engineering students can be comprehended easily and

does not leave the readers in doubt about what they aim to convey. Even if there are some grammatical flaws, this does not cause the reader to form their own opinion or guess about the material. Those inaccuracies had no effect on the abstract's overall understanding and meaning.

Fifth (Fitriya, 2014) has conducted a research entitled "The Cohesion Devices of Thesis Abstracts Written by Students of Academic Year 2009 of Study Program of English Universitas Brawijaya". To address the study's issues, this research employs a descriptive qualitative approach and document analysis. The information was gathered from 12 abstract papers submitted by students in the 2009 academic year who took linguistics, and the writer chose them at random. The writer used Renkema's theory to analyze the data (1993). The findings of this study revealed that the students' thesis abstracts had grammatical and lexical cohesiveness. There are two forms of grammatical cohesiveness that appeared in the students' thesis abstract. They're called conjunction and reference, respectively. Conjunction takes up the most space (52 percent), followed by reference (48 percent). There are three forms of lexical coherence that appeared in the students' abstract. Repetition (61%) is the most important factor, followed by reference (48%). For lexical cohesion, there are three types that occurred in the students' abstract. The biggest part is repetition (61%), then followed by hyponymy (25%), and the last is antonyms (14%).

Budi Susanto conducted study on the sixth point (2014). He discovered that students in class 3A, semester 5 of the Accounting Department at the State Polytechnic of Malang still struggled to write English abstracts. External influences have no bearing on students' inability to write English abstracts. The DWA implementation could help students enhance their ability to write English abstracts.

According to the indication, 82 percent of pupils might enhance their abstracts. It was higher than predicted because the success criteria were that 80% of the students could write better English abstracts. The teacher's performance was not the reason of the kids' problem, according to the findings of the observation. The DWA, according to all students, assisted them in improving their ability to write English abstracts. The

The last research was done by Rahmawati, A. (2017) under the title *The Study of Abstract Written by the Students of IAIN Surakarta*, the findings are in the following: The structure of the students' abstract paragraphs: 3 students (6%) wrote in four paragraphs, 44 students (88%) wrote in three paragraphs, 2 students (4%) wrote in two paragraphs, and 1 student (2%) wrote in one paragraph. While, according to Cindy and Lewiston's beliefs, the components of the abstract form in students are: Introduction (I), Purpose (P), Methods (M), Result (R), and Keywords (K) (K). The following are the results: 5 components IPMRK were written by 5 students (10%), 4 components PMRK were written by 17 students (34%), 4 components IPMR were written by 2 students (4%), 3 components PMR were written by 15 students (30%), 3 components PRK were written by 7 students (14%), and 2 components PR were written by 3 students (24%). (6 percent).

The use of language in the students' abstract was analyzed using Jacobs' theory, which included sub-components such as agreement, tense, word order, article, pronoun, and preposition. The use agreement's conclusions 11 students have a need for improvement level, 33 students have a passed level, and 6 students have an excellent level. The results of the tense experiment 44 students have a need for improvement level, while 6 students have a passed level. The results of the usage word order study 13 students have a need for improvement level, 29 students have a

passed level, and 8 students have an excellent level. The results of the use article are as follows: 12 students have a need for improvement level, 30 students have a passed level, and 8 students have an excellent level. The use of pronouns by practically all students resulted in a pass rate of 49 students. The final point is the usage of prepositions. There are 6 students who have a high level of need.

## 2. METHOD

It was evident from the study's problem that the goal was to characterize the grammatical faults committed by undergraduate students when writing their thesis abstract in English. As a result, this was a descriptive qualitative study. As a result, qualitative data was required in this situation. Qualitative research is most suited to handle a research problem in which you don't know the variables and need to examine, according to (Creswell, 2012, p. 16).

This study was conducted in the Faculty of Education and Teachers Training, Lancang Kuning University on Jl. Yos Sudarso Rumbai, and used a qualitative research approach to discover grammatical problems in these abstracts. The study was completed in January of this year. The data was gathered from the abstracts of theses written by Undergraduate Biological Department Students who graduated in 2016. Because of the nature of the study and the types of data sources that were employed, the instrument used was a document. In a qualitative study, one of the most essential sources of data is documents; in this case, the researcher used theses abstracts as the research instrument. The researcher also looked at various abstracts in order to better understand and describe the tenses problem.

Qualitative data gathering, according to (Creswell, 2012, p. 205), entails more than merely determining whether to observe or interview people. Qualitative data collection entails gathering information from a small number of individuals or sites, using forms with general, emerging questions to allow the participant to generate responses; gathering word (text) or image (picture) data; and gathering information from a small number of individuals or sites, according to the general characteristics of qualitative research. According to Creswell, the method of gathering qualitative data consists of five interconnected steps:

1. We chose our participants and venues through purposeful sampling, focusing on places and people who could best assist us in understanding our fundamental phenomenon.
2. We'll need more access to the place because we'll usually go there to interview or observe folks. This technique necessitates a higher level of involvement from the site than does quantitative research.
3. In qualitative research, we use broad interviews or observations to ensure that participants' perspectives are not limited. We will not collect data using a closed-ended instrument as in quantitative research; instead, we will collect data with a few open-ended questions that we construct.
4. In qualitative research, we will record information on self-designed protocols that help us arrange information supplied by participants to each question, rather than utilizing predesigned instruments from others or instruments that we build.
5. Finally, we carried out our qualitative data collection techniques with awareness of the difficulties and ethical

considerations that come with gathering information face-to-face, often in people's homes or workplaces.

For this research, the researcher have conducted collecting document. The document collected were theses abstract of Biology department students. There 10 theses abstract taken. These were the key sources that helped the researcher keep track of material relevant to the research's goal of analyzing undergraduate thesis abstracts. The documents were obtained by making the ten abstracts available as public documents. The content or document analysis technique was employed to study the abstract as a document.

In this part, Preparing and organizing data, exploring and coding the database, describing findings and forming themes, representing and reporting findings, interpreting the meaning of the findings, and validating the accuracy of the findings were the six steps involved in analyzing and interpreting qualitative data.

1. It takes an inductive approach, moving from specific or detailed data (such as transcriptions or typed notes from interviews) to broad codes and themes.
2. It entails assessing and gathering data at the same time. Data collection and analysis (and sometimes report writing) are all done at the same time in qualitative research. When you're gathering data, you can also be reviewing other information you've gathered in the past to seek for major themes. This strategy contrasts from standard quantitative research methods, which start with data gathering and then move on to data analysis.
3. The phases are also iterative, meaning you cycle back and forth between data collection and

analysis. In qualitative research, you might collect stories from individuals and return for more information to fill in gaps in their stories as your analysis of their stories proceeds.

4. Qualitative researchers analyze their data by reading it several times and conducting an analysis each time. Each time you read your database, you develop a deeper understanding about the information supplied by your participants.
5. There is no single, universally approved method for interpreting qualitative data, despite the existence of various guidelines. It's a jumbled process.
6. Qualitative research is "interpretive" research in which you make an individual judgment on a description that fits the scenario or themes that capture the primary categories of data. For example, your perception of a transcript differs from that of another person. This does not indicate that your interpretation is superior or more correct; rather, it implies that you offer your own unique viewpoint to the table (Creswell, 2012, p. 238).

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher had collected the documentation of the thesis abstract of students graduated in April 2016. There were 10 thesis abstract of students as the samples in this research have been copied as the instrument of the research which have been taken from Biology Department, Faculty of Education and Teachers Training, Lancang Kuning University Graduated in April 2016. The document has been employed to get the answer of the research question: to identify students' Grammatical Errors on Undergraduate Thesis Abstract of Biological Department Students Academic Year 2016

of FKIP UNILAK Pekanbaru. In order to find them, the researcher separated the abstract to be in each sentence in numbers. Using this categorization, the researcher would find out whether there were some addition, omission, misformation, and misordering on the parts of speech and agreements in the theses abstract. Then, the researcher analyzed the sentences separately.

After separated each abstract to be in each sentence to be analyzed, the researcher would formulate the reconstruction of the error found after doing identification. As long as the researcher analyzed the error on each sentence, then the researcher also would classify whether there was error or not and then stated what error that was identified. Furthermore, the analysis of the ten thesis abstract would be presented in the following discussion.

In this study, the most common errors were in the area of omission errors, which dealt with the tenses in English grammar. The writer discovered a pattern in which the majority of the errors were found: subject and verb agreement. The writer or sentence producer frequently creates sentences in which the subject and verb are grammatically incorrect. This trend was found in nearly half of the sentences where errors occurred.

In general, the content of the abstracts written by undergrad students at Lancang Kuning University's Biology Department can be comprehended well and does not leave the reader confused about what they wish to convey. Even if there were certain grammatical faults, the reader did not form their own opinion or hypothesis about the material. These flaws have no major impact on the abstract's overall understanding and meaning.

The researcher recognized grammatical faults and categorised them into four

aspects: omission, misformation, addition, and misordering, in order to learn more about the description of grammatical problems in biology students' abstracts.

There were 31 (37.3 percent) omission errors in total, with the omission of articles, verbs, and prepositions being the most common. The researcher discovered a fault in the student's grammar in this scenario, which omitted important elements of the sentence. The most likely reason is that the pupils wrote in English but expressed their ideas in Bahasa Indonesia style or word order. The following is an example:

The mean N-gain the control **class 0,48** with the medium category, while in the experimental **class with a 0,71** high category.

In this case, it was not a sentence yet, there was no "predicate" stated. However, the meaning of the words structure could still be understood by the readers, even though it was not fulfilling the grammar criteria correctly. In fact, the sentence did not employ some correct word choice. Therefore, the researcher proposed the following correction:

The mean of N-gain of the control **class is 0,48** categorized as mid, while the experimental **class is 0,71** categorized as high.

The word "is" in the sentence is supposed to be a predicate which follows the subject in front. Therefore, the predicate in the sentence was missing.

Any incorrect form of particular morphemes or structures is referred to as misformation. In all, 19 (22.9 percent) errors demonstrate misformation, with the majority of the errors occurring on verbs and nouns. In this situation, the researcher noticed that certain pupils struggled to produce error-free verbs and nouns. On the one hand, verb

errors frequently take the form of inter-language, which is a mixture of two tenses, a violation of numerical agreement, or the use of the active-passive voice incorrectly. Error nouns, on the other hand, frequently take the form of singular-plural confusion and incorrect usage of word families. The examples and explanations of misformation mistakes discovered in the thesis abstract are listed below.

Example:

It can be concluded that **there were effect** of cooperative learning type Numbered Head Together based on Somatic, Auditory, Visual, intellectual ....

It might seem that the sentence does not contain any errors, but the researcher identified an error in the sentence which is the bold words violating the generalization rule and number agreement of English grammar. This study suggested the following correction to the sentence:

Based on SAVI (Somatic Auditory, Visual, and Intellectual), it can be determined that Cooperative Learning Type NHT (Numbered Head Together) had an effect....

So, "effect" should be in their plural form because in front of this noun, stated a plural predicate.

Any usage of non-essential components in sentences is referred to as addition. In the abstracts of the students' theses, there are 18 (21.7 percent) faults that show addition, and they are errors on articles, conjunctions, collocations, verbs, prepositions, pronouns, and nouns. The most likely cause is that the students wrote their abstracts in an Indonesian speaking manner.



Example:

Based on the result of t-test was significant different between control class and experiment.

Here, the researcher noticed that the student added the collocation “based on” before “the result of t-test” which is unnecessary as proper words do not need be stated in front of the sentence. Therefore, the writer corrected the error as followed:

**The result of t-test was significantly different between control and experiment class.**

Some similar cases happened in addition of word unnecessary. Even though the collocation appears to be little, it has the potential to affect the entire context and meaning of the statement. In fact, pupils still struggled with collocation since they may not understand the proper application and placement in a phrase.

Misordering is any incorrect placement of certain morphemes in sentences. There are 15 (18.1%) errors showing misordering in students’ theses abstract, and they are mostly misordering between adjective and noun and verb and adverb.

Example:

The method of this research used **was experiment quasi** with the matcing only pretest-posttest group design.

In this case, the student misordered the words “work” and “team”. The correct sentence should be as followed:

The method of this research **was quasi-experimental design** with the matching only pretest-posttest and control group.

Related to the above the data finding, the researcher realized that misformation, omission, and addition distributed equitably

among the students. Besides, the students do not undertsnd well the abstact componens or elements that must be written.

There are five abstract components must be written on students abstract completely, such background, purpose, method, result, and conclusion. Most of students start writing their abstract by using puspose.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

According to the explanation in previous section, the researcher concludes that the grammatical errors found on the biological students’ theses abstract, Universitas Lancang Kuning in writing abstract are 4 errors namely omission, addition, misformation, misordering. The researcher identified 83 errors, of which the most frequent error is omission, there are about 37.7% of the errors occurred of the total by this error, The omission of articles, verbs, and prepositions are among the faults. In all, 19 (22.9 percent) errors demonstrate misformation, with the majority of the errors occurring on verbs and nouns. In the abstracts of the students' theses, there are 18 (21.7 percent) faults that show addition, and they are errors on articles, conjunctions, collocations, verbs, prepositions, pronouns, and nouns. In the abstracts of students' theses, there are 15 (18.1 percent) errors indicating misordering, the majority of which are misordering between adjective and noun.

Concerning the conclusions above, it is necessary for the researcher to give some suggestions as in the following:

1. This study is therefore dedicated to analyse the grammatical errors in the students’ thesis abstracts of biology department university of Lancang Kuning, for students who would make on writing thesis abstract in English.
2. The abstract can be thought of as a persuasive rhetorical device that

conveys the significance of the text. Furthermore, the abstract can have a vital social role by allowing readers to observe how people work to establish themselves within their communities. As a result, the research paper abstract should be well-written.

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