

Error Analysis on Noun Phrase in Students' Undergraduate Theses

Tania Syafutri

Bengkulu University
taniajimin@yahoo.com

Syafriyadin

Bengkulu University
syafryadin@unib.ac.id

Dedi Sofyan

Bengkulu University
Dedisofyan73@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is (1) to analyze the components of noun phrase errors that are often made by students in the introduction parts of their undergraduate theses, (2) to analyze the types of noun phrase errors that are often made by students in the introduction parts of their undergraduate theses, (3) to find out the differences between noun phrase errors made students in the introduction parts of their undergraduate theses. The method used in this research was mix method. The instrument comprised observation and documentation. The result of this research was as follows: (1) the most dominant component of noun phrase error made by UPI and Unib students in the introduction parts was a head error, (2) the most dominant type of error in noun phrases made by UPI was addition error; however, the most dominant type of noun phrase errors among Unib students was omission error, (3) the number of noun phrase errors in Unib was higher than those in UPI. It is recommended that students improve their mastery of noun phrases, that lecturers teach students how to write the introduction well, specifically on noun phrases, and that next researchers investigate additional aspects of noun phrases.

Keywords: Error Analysis, Noun Phrase, Undergraduate Thesis.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important elements of writing a thesis is the introduction section because this chapter talks about the foundation of the problem and the reason why the researcher wants to do the research. According to Hidayat (2015), the first chapter in the structure of a thesis is the introduction, which is divided into three sections: introduction and identification of study difficulties, discussion of previously done and relevant research, and discussion of data obtained during pre-research. According to Pardede (2012), the introduction section provides background information about the study problem or what the researcher wants to communicate about their research.

Thus, the introduction section is one of the essential parts of the thesis but many undergraduate students in English Education, who generally master English, sometimes make an error in their thesis writing, including in the introduction. Even though grammar learning, especially on noun phrases, has been taught to English Education students since the early stages of their education, noun phrase errors could still be discovered in many of their language activities, especially in writing. Generally, the noun phrase errors that students develop are due to a lack of mastery of basic writing mechanics and noun phrase rules. The errors could appear minor and non-significant, and yet they could have a major impact on the quality of their writing. This is also supported by Hidayat (2015), who stated that an error occurred in the introduction section of the thesis because students did not understand basic writing structure and grammar structure.

The students can make errors in their writing, such as thesis, including chapter 1 until chapter 5. In chapter 1 there is the introduction. When the students write the introduction, they ought to make it by using good structures suitable to grammatical rules in a foreign language, especially on the noun phrase. Otherwise, one of the grammatical errors that the students usually do in their thesis writing is noun phrase error. This is probably because students are influenced by their first language or mother tongue, carelessness, or translation factors (Norrish, in Rinata, 2018). The way to know about students' errors is through error analysis. According to Richard, in Situmorang (2019), error analysis is the analysis of errors made by second and foreign-language speakers.

Thus, the reason that the researcher analyzed the noun phrase errors in students' undergraduate theses, especially in the introduction sections, is because this research and other articles have differences, namely, most previous studies focused on the error analysis of noun phrases in descriptive texts. However, this research focuses on noun

phrase forms of students' undergraduate theses, especially in the introduction sections. Besides that, the previous studies used descriptive methods to analyze texts, but this research used the comparative method to investigate the noun phrases written by the students of the Indonesia University of Education, which has an "A" accreditation, especially for the English study program, and the students of Bengkulu University, which have a "B" accreditation, particularly for the English study program. The similarity of this research to the previous studies, it mostly uses the same theories that are from Dulay (1982) and Greenbaum & Nelson (2015).

On the other hand, the reason that the researcher analyzed students' undergraduate theses only in the introduction is that, in the chapter, the students write the introduction by combining their ideas with preliminary data and supporting theories. Errors are more likely to occur in this section because they must build it by writing their thoughts and explanations (Hidayat, 2015). In the introduction, the students tell about all of the basics of research, such as the foundation of the problem or the reason why they do the research, in their own words in English. Because of that, sometimes they make errors, especially noun phrase errors, in a thesis introduction.

Three research objectives of this research, namely to analyze the components of noun phrase errors that are often made by the Indonesia University of Education and Bengkulu University students in the introduction parts of their undergraduate theses, to analyze types of noun phrase errors that are often made by the Indonesia University of Education and Bengkulu University students in the introduction parts of their undergraduate theses, and to find out the differences between noun phrase errors made by Indonesia University of Education and Bengkulu University students in the introduction parts of their undergraduate theses.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Error analysis

Divsar and Heydari (2017:143) state that error analysis (EA) is a method for gathering errors identified in students' language, determining whether the problems are systematic or not, and clarifying the causes for errors that are found in students. Jabeen, Kazemian, and Mustafai (2015:53) contend that error analysis provides a comprehensive insight into the process of language learning that is performed by students. Thus, error analysis is the way to identify the errors in students' language; it is also to know the causes of students' errors in learning the language, and

it can give a comprehensive insight into the process of language learning that is performed by students.

Noun phrase

According to Swierzbina (2014), English learners must understand nouns, but it is much more essential to remember noun phrases for establishing a more particular meaning than the noun itself. Moreover, the noun phrase could be used to express accurate information in a timely and precise way, because then the writing does not appear wordy in every sentence formed by the noun phrase. Abdurrahman (2018) suggests that students at the university level ought to be able to master a foreign language, particularly English noun phrase forms.

The component of a noun phrase

There are three components of noun phrases. They are:

a. Head

A noun is the most general head of a noun phrase. However, a noun phrase can be without any element and just consists of a noun; it is also called a bare noun phrase, such as "pencils", which is possible for plural nouns and mass.

b. Premodifier

Premodifier is the part of a noun phrase that occurs before the noun phrase or head. Besides that, the premodifier is an adjective phrase, such as a blue motorcycle. According to Jackson, in Junaid (2018), a premodifier contains several word classes, such as a noun modifier and a numeral identifier/quantifier adjective.

c. Post-modifier

Post-modifier consists of a clause, adverb phrase, prepositional phrase, and adjective phrase. Post-modifier has the function in English noun phrases as adjunct or complement.

Thesis Introduction

According to Hidayat (2015), the first chapter in the structure of a thesis is the introduction. It is divided into three sections: introduction and identification of study difficulties, discussion of previously done and relevant research, and discussion of data obtained during the research.

The introduction is one of the most important *things* in the thesis because it gives information to the readers about the thesis clearly and comprehensively. In the introduction, the students write the introduction by combining their ideas with preliminary data and supporting theories. Errors are more likely to occur in this section because they must build it by writing their thoughts and explanations (Hidayat, 2015). The students also tell about all of the basics of research in the introduction, such as the foundation of the problem or the reason why they do the research, in their own words in English.

Noun phrase in a thesis introduction

According to Kusuma, Sujoko, and Sulistyowati (2014), a noun phrase is the structure of the head and its modifiers. A noun phrase also has the function to describe a person, a thing, or a place specifically. The introduction is one of the most difficult portions of writing a paper or thesis; here, writers need to focus on how to begin and what they precisely need to say. The introduction should be brief and compelling, and it should explain why the writer decided to conduct the research. Noun phrase in the introduction is important because, if the students or writers want to explain specifically about something, they can use noun phrase to make the readers understand clearly what they want to deliver in the introduction section, without misleading or misunderstanding the meaning of sentences.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research method that was used in this research was a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative methods. In this research, the type of mixed method that the researcher used was an explanatory sequential design. According to Creswell & Clark (2017), an explanatory sequential design is composed of initially collecting quantitative data and afterward gathering qualitative data to further interpret or elaborate on the quantitative results. The reason was that the researcher focused on a quantitative method to answer the research question about the component and type of noun phrase errors that were most often made by students in their undergraduate thesis, and the researcher used the quantitative method because the data were also shown in the percentage of occurrence to answer the first and second research questions. On the other hand, the researcher used a comparative study because the researcher wanted to know the differences and similarities in noun phrase errors between students' undergraduate theses at Bengkulu University and the Indonesia University of Education.

The subjects of the research were the introduction parts (the backgrounds of the studies) of the theses of undergraduate students at English Education in Indonesia University of Education and Bengkulu University students in 2019. For the number of words in the introduction sections (backgrounds of the studies) that were analyzed by the researcher, there were just 1000 words of the introduction sections (backgrounds of the studies) to analyze the noun phrase errors here. It was because the introduction section (background of the study) in the Indonesia University of Education is mostly simple and brief,

namely, around 1000 words or even less than 1000 words. However, at Bengkulu University, the introduction section (background of the study) is mostly around 1000 words or more than that.

To collect the data, absolutely the researcher required several instruments to help the researcher. In this research, the researcher used observation and documentation. There were several steps in the procedure of the research, based on Creswell (2014) that are identifying a research problem, reviewing the literature, specifying a purpose for research, collecting the data, evaluating and analyzing the data, and making the report. In the quantitative method, the researcher used Cohen Kappa (statistical analysis) to validate the data with the co-rater. However, in the qualitative method, the researcher used triangulation. The researcher analyzed the data by using Dulay's (1982) and Nelson & Greenbaum's (2015) theories to find out the components and types of noun phrase errors.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

There were 51 noun phrase errors in 10 thesis introductions of students at the Indonesia University of Education and 65 noun phrase errors in 10 thesis introductions of students at Bengkulu University. Thus, the total was 116 noun phrase errors.

The researcher used Cohen Kappa theory to minimize subjectivity, where the researcher and a co-rater determined the agreement of the findings of components and types errors of noun phrases in students' theses in the introduction parts (backgrounds of the studies).

Components of noun phrase errors in students' introduction sections

Table 1

Component of noun phrase errors made by the students

| Component of Noun Phrase Errors | Frequency | | Percentage | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|------|------------|-------|
| | UPI | Unib | UPI | Unib |
| Head error | 28 | 39 | 54.9% | 60% |
| Pre-modifier error | 20 | 23 | 39.2% | 35.4% |
| Post-modifier error | 3 | 3 | 5.9% | 4.6% |
| Total of noun phrase error | 51 | 65 | 100% | 100% |
| The result of noun phrase error | 51 | 65 | 3.9% | 6.1% |

| | | | | |
|------------------------|-------|-------|--|--|
| Total of a noun phrase | 1,299 | 1,067 | | |
|------------------------|-------|-------|--|--|

Table 1 shows that Indonesian University of Education students (UPI) made errors with the noun phrase components in the head, which amounted to 28 items (54.9%) of noun phrases in students' introductions, in which the frequency was *often*.

Table 2
The quality of components of noun phrases made by UPI students

| Frequency of noun phrase | | Total of students' noun phrases | Percentage | Category |
|--------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| error | correct | | | |
| 51 | 1,248 | 1,299 | 96.1% | Excellent |

Based on the table above, the quality of components of noun phrases that Indonesian University of Education students made in their introduction sections was *excellent*, which was 96.1%.

Table 3
The quality of components of noun phrases made by Unib students

| Frequency of noun phrase | | Total of students' noun phrases | Percentage | Category |
|--------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| error | correct | | | |
| 65 | 1,002 | 1,067 | 94% | Excellent |

Based on the table above, the quality of components of noun phrases that Bengkulu University students made in their introduction sections was *excellent*, which was 94%.

Types of noun phrase errors in students' introduction sections

Table 4
Type of noun phrase errors made by the students

| Type of Errors | Frequency | | Percentage | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|------|------------|-------|
| | UPI | Unib | UPI | Unib |
| Omission error | 19 | 32 | 37.3% | 49.2% |
| Addition error | 20 | 15 | 39.2% | 23.1% |
| Misformation error | 12 | 18 | 23.5% | 27.7% |
| Misordering error | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total of noun phrase errors | 51 | 65 | 100% | 100% |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|------|------|
| The results of noun phrase errors | 51 | 65 | 3.9% | 6.1% |
| Total of noun phrases | 1,299 | 1,067 | | |

Table 4 shows that Indonesia University of Education students (UPI) made the type of error (omission error) in the noun phrase, which amounted to 19 items (37.3%), out of 1,299 noun phrases in students' introductions, while the frequency was *sometimes*. However, Bengkulu University students made the type of error (omission error) in the noun phrase, which amounted to 32 items (49.2%), out of 1,067 noun phrases in students' introductions, while the frequency was *often*. However, the total of types of noun phrase errors in Indonesia University of Education and Bengkulu University students had differences in frequency and percentage, which for Indonesia University of Education students was 3.9% and for Bengkulu University students was 6.1%.

Table 5
The quality of types of noun phrases made by UPI students

| Frequency of noun phrase | | Total of students' noun phrases | Percentage | Category |
|--------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| error | correct | | | |
| 51 | 1,248 | 1,299 | 96.1% | Excellent |

Based on the table above, the quality of types of noun phrases that Indonesian University of Education students made in their introduction sections were *excellent*, which was 96.1%.

Table 6
The quality of types of noun phrases made by Unib students

| Frequency of noun phrase | | Total of students' noun phrases | Percentage | Category |
|--------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| error | correct | | | |
| 65 | 1,002 | 1,067 | 94% | Excellent |

Based on the table above, the quality of the types of noun phrases that Bengkulu University students made in their introduction sections were *excellent*, which was 94%.

The differences between the number of noun phrase errors in UPI and Unib students' introduction sections

Figure 1

(Bar Chart 1) The differences between the number of noun phrase errors in UPI and Unib students' introduction sections

Thus, from the bar chart, the students at the Indonesia University of Education and Bengkulu University had differences in the number of noun phrase errors. The Indonesia University of Education students had 51 items, out of 1299 noun phrases, in components and types of noun phrase errors (3.9%), of which the frequency was *rare*; however, Bengkulu University students had 65 items, out of 1,067 noun phrases in components and types of noun phrase errors (6.1%), of which the frequency was *rarely*.

The result showed that the most frequent component of noun phrase errors made by Indonesia University of Education and Bengkulu University students in the introduction parts of their undergraduate theses was a head error. This was probably because the students were still influenced by their first language (interlingual error). The differences in the systems of both languages make the learning process complicated and contribute to students' errors in learning languages. This was supported by the data when the students did not use suffixes in plural nouns; it meant that the students were still influenced by their first language, which is *Bahasa Indonesia*, in which *Bahasa* does not use suffixes in the plural noun. This finding was in line with the finding by Hmouma (2014), in which the component of noun phrase error that students often did was in the noun (head). In addition, the finding was also supported by the finding from Novianti (2018), in which the result of her research was that the students often wrote noun phrases that contained head errors. Although the students made some noun phrase errors, the quality of the components of noun phrases in their introduction sections was in the excellent category.

The researcher discovered just 3 out of 4 noun phrase error types, based on Dulay's theory, in students' undergraduate thesis introductions written by Indonesia University of Education students and Bengkulu University students, in which they made the errors of the types of noun phrases in omission error, addition error, and misformation error. The most frequent type of noun phrase errors in introductions among Indonesia University of Education and Bengkulu University students had a difference which, in the case of the Indonesia University of Education, was an addition error. This happened probably because the students who learned English as a foreign language were still confused or made errors

in noun phrase form. This statement was also supported by Kurniawati, Fauziati, & Sutopo (2015), who said that students were still confused and did not master noun phrase forms because of the differences between Indonesian and English forms in noun phrases. This is also known as intralingual error, based on James's theory (2001), and this happens when students are unfamiliar with a target language pattern at any standard or in any category. However, at Bengkulu University it was an omission error. It was probably because of an Interlingual error. The students are affected by their mother language's persistence when using the new language. Based on the result of analyzing students' undergraduate thesis introductions, the researcher discovered the omission of "s" for a plural noun. This was in line with Erlangga, Suarnajaya, and Juniata (2019), who found that the omission of "s" for a plural noun was an interlingual error. This finding was supported by Kusuma, Sujoko, and Sulistyowati (2014), whose research result showed that the most frequent type of noun phrase error was omission error. In addition, the finding was also supported by the result from Sitorus and Sipayung (2016), in which the most frequent type of noun phrase error was omission error. Thus, students at the Indonesia University of Education and Bengkulu University were influenced by intralingual and interlingual errors. Although the students made some noun phrase errors, the quality of the types of students' noun phrases in their introduction sections was in the excellent category.

The differences between noun phrase errors made by Indonesia University of Education and Bengkulu University students in the introduction parts of their undergraduate theses, in which there were differences, such as the most frequent type of noun phrase error in the student's undergraduate thesis introductions. In the case of the Indonesia University of Education, the error, based on Dulay's theory, was an addition error. However, in the student's undergraduate thesis introductions at Bengkulu University, concerning the noun phrase error, based on Dulay's theory, the most frequent type was omission error. Besides that, the number of noun phrase errors that occurred in students' undergraduate theses, in introduction sections, at Bengkulu University was higher than at the Indonesia University of Education. This happened probably because the accreditation of the University, especially the study program, also influences students' outcomes; for example, in a university that has an "A" accreditation for its study program, its students' undergraduate theses have fewer errors than those in a University which has a "B" or "C" accreditation for its study program. This is in line with Kumar, Shukla, & Passey (2020), who stated that the development and

application of curriculum, as well as the achievement of academic results, were heavily reliant on qualified faculty. Volkwein, in Kumar, Shukla, and Passey (2020), discovered that accreditation was a major driving force in such a set of convergent variables that impacted academic programs and learning. Ulker and Bakioglu (2019) also supported that the accreditation had the greatest impact on the emphasis placed on academic results and also had an impact on the number of students graduating from a program. Furthermore, another reason why Indonesia University of Education students had few noun phrase errors than Bengkulu University students was probably that students' competitiveness at the Indonesia University of Education was higher than that in Bengkulu University, because the Indonesia University of Education has stricter filtering, in accepting the students for its university or study program than Bengkulu University.

Besides that, there were also several similarities between Indonesia University of Education and Bengkulu University in students' undergraduate thesis introductions, in which the most-frequent component of noun phrase errors in students' introductions in Indonesia University of Education and Bengkulu University was a head error. Then, the quality of the components of students' noun phrases in students' introduction sections at Indonesia University of Education and Bengkulu University was in the excellent category. Finally, there was no misordering error as one of the noun phrase error types in students' undergraduate thesis introductions at Indonesia University of Education and Bengkulu University.

CONCLUSION

Based on 20 students' thesis introductions, which consisted of 10 students' thesis introductions from the Indonesia University of Education and 10 students' thesis introductions from Bengkulu University, the researcher found the differences between noun phrase errors made by the Indonesia University of Education and Bengkulu University students in the introduction parts of their undergraduate theses, the researcher found some differences and similarities. Concerning the differences in the number of noun phrase errors, students at Bengkulu University had a higher number than those at the Indonesia University of Education, in which there were 51 noun phrase errors in 10 theses' introductions of students in the Indonesia University of Education and 65 noun phrase errors in 10 theses' introductions of students in Bengkulu University. The students at the Indonesia University of Education had the most frequent type of noun phrase error in addition error; however, students at Bengkulu University had the most frequent type of noun phrase error in

omission error. Even though they had a different results in the type of noun phrase error, students at Indonesia University of Education and Bengkulu University still had a similarity in that the most frequent component of noun phrase error in these two universities was the head error.

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