# GRAMMATICAL ERRORS IN THESIS BACKGROUNDS WRITTEN BY STUDENTS AT THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM OF UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG

**THESIS**

*Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment Requirement to Obtain Bachelor of Education (B. Ed) in English Language Education Program*


**By:**

**MUHAMMAD HABIB AZZUHUDI**
**NIM: 18018072**

**Advisor:**

**Dr. Yuli Tiarina, S. Pd., M. Pd.**
**NIP. 197707202002122002**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DEPARTMENT**
**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND ARTS**
**UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG**

**2024**

## HALAMAN PERSETUJUAN SKRIPSI

| | |
|---|---|
| Judul | : **Grammatical Error in Thesis Backgrounds Written by Students at the English Language Education Program of Universitas Negeri Padang** |
| Nama | : Muhammad Habib Azzuhudi |
| NIM | : 18018072 |
| Program Studi | : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris |
| Departemen | : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris |
| Fakultas | : Bahasa dan Seni |

Padang, Maret 2024

Disetujui oleh,

Pembimbing

**Dr. Yuli Tiarina, S.Pd., M.Pd.**

**NIP. 197707202002122002**

Mengetahui,

Ketua Departemen Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris

**Dr. Yuli Tiarina, S.Pd., M.Pd.**

**NIP. 197707202002122002**

## HALAMAN PENGESAHAN LULUS UJIAN SKRIPSI

Dinyatakan lulus setelah di pertahankan di depan Tim Penguji Skripsi Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Departemen Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni Univesitas Negeri Padang dengan Judul

**Grammatical Error in Thesis Backgrounds Written by Students at the English Language Education Program of Universitas Negeri Padang**

| | |
|---|---|
| Nama | : Muhammad Habib Azzuhudi |
| NIM | : 18018072 |
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| Departemen | : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris |
| Fakultas | : Bahasa dan Seni |

Padang, Maret 2024

| Tim Penguji | | Tanda Tangan |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Ketua | : Dian Safitri, M.Pd. | |
| 2. Sekretaris | : Witri Oktavia, S.Pd., M.Pd. | |
| 3. Anggota | : Dr. Yuli Tiarina, S.Pd., M.Pd. | |



iii

KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN KEBUDAYAAN
RISET DAN TEKNOLOGI
UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG
FAKULTAS BAHASA DAN SENI
**DEPARTEMEN BAHASA DAN SASTRA INGGRIS**
Jl. Prof. Dr. Hamka Air Tawar, Padang 25131 Tlp. (0751) 447347
Web: http://english.unp.ac.id

## SURAT PERNYATAAN TIDAK PLAGIAT

Saya yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini:

| | |
|---|---|
| Nama | : 18018072 |
| NIM / TM | : 18018072 / 2018 |
| Program Studi | : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris |
| Jurusan | : Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris |
| Fakultas | : Bahasa dan Seni |

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Ketua Departemen Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris

Dr. Yuli Tiarina, S.Pd., M.Pd.

NIP. 197707202002122002

Saya yang menyatakan,

Muhammad Habib Azzuhudi

NIM. 18018072



iv

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer would like to express his deepest gratitude to the Almighty Allah *Subhana Wa Ta'ala* for mercy, blessing, kindness, opportunity, and healthy so that the writer could finish this thesis. Also, peace and blessing upon the Prophet Messenger, Muhammad *Sallallahu 'Alaihi Wassallam,* who had struggled wholeheartedly to deliver his teachings from Allah through *Al-Qur'an,* and *Sunnah* that are relevant until the end of time. In writing this thesis, many people gave the writer many advice, motivations, support, and solutions. In this valuable opportunity, the writer wants to express his gratitude and appreciation to the following people:

1. Dr. Yuli Tiarina, M.Pd., the Head of the English Language and Literature Department.
2. Dr. Yuli Tiarina, M.Pd., her thesis supervisor, patiently gave her chances, advice, and solutions.
3. Dian Safitri, M.Pd., and Witri Oktavia, S.Pd., M.Pd., her thesis examiners.
4. All of the lecturers at the English Language and Literature Department.
5. His beloved and precious parents, Yusniwalti and Gusnedi, who became his core strength to finish this thesis, always give encouragement, motivation, advice, and love.
6. His siblings, Humaira Salsabila Nalurita, Salma Puti Nalurita, and Sarah Saliha Nalurita.
7. His friends, and colleagues from K – 1 18 who he can get along the best from the beginning of his college life up until now.

Finally, the writer realizes that this thesis is not perfect yet. However, the writer hopes this thesis can be helpful for him and all people. Furthermore, any criticism and comment are acceptable for improving this thesis from the weaknesses.

Padang, March 2024

The Researcher

# ABSTRAK

**Habib Azzuhudi, Muhammad: Grammatical Errors in Thesis Backgrounds Written by Students at the English Language Education Program of Universitas Negeri Padang**

Kesalahan merupakan hal yang umum dilakukan oleh siswa ketika mereka belajar, dalam hal ini adalah kesalahan siswa dalam belajar bahasa Inggris. Analisis kesalahan merupakan salah satu metodologi untuk menemukan kesalahan-kesalahan tersebut. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan kesalahan mahasiswa dalam menulis proposal skripsi yang mengambil mata kuliah Penulisan Skripsi di Universitas Negeri Padang. Penelitian deskriptif diterapkan pada penelitian ini dengan menggunakan metode kuantitatif. Data penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa angkatan 2019 K1-K5. Dengan menggunakan cluster random sampling untuk menentukan sampel, K1 adalah sampel yang terpilih dalam penelitian ini. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan 23 tugas akhir mahasiswa di kelas Paper Thesis Writing yaitu latar belakang proposal tesis sebagai data. Kesalahan mahasiswa diklasifikasikan menjadi empat jenis, yaitu penghilangan, penambahan, kesalahan informasi, dan kesalahan pengurutan. Setelah menganalisis data, tiga dari empat jenis kesalahan ditemukan dalam proposal tesis mahasiswa. Dari total 96 kesalahan yang ditemukan, kesalahan penulisan (misformation) merupakan kesalahan yang paling banyak ditemukan yaitu sebanyak 61 kesalahan, diikuti dengan kesalahan penambahan (addition) sebanyak 18 kesalahan, kesalahan penghilangan (omission) sebanyak 17 kesalahan, dan tidak ada kesalahan pengurutan (misordering).



**Kata Kunci:** analisis kesalahan, proposal tesis, kesalahan siswa

# ABSTRACT

**Habib Azzuhudi, Muhammad: Grammatical Errors in Thesis Backgrounds Written by Students at the English Language Education Program of Universitas Negeri Padang**

Errors are common occurrence made by students when they are learning which In this case, students' error in learning English. Error analysis is a methodology to find these errors. This study aimed to describe students' errors in writing thesis backgrounds who took Paper Thesis Writing class in Universitas Negeri Padang. Descriptive research was implemented to this study using quantitative method. The population and sample of this research was K1-K5 2019 students. By using cluster random sampling to decide the sample, K1 was the chosen sample of this research. This study was conducted by using the 23 students' final project in Paper Thesis Writing class which is thesis proposal backgrounds as the data. Students' errors were classified into four types which was omission, addition, misformation and misordering. After analyzing the data, three out of four types of error were found in students' thesis background. Among the total of 96 errors found, misformation had the highest occurrence of 61 errors, followed by addition with 18 errors, omission with 17 errors and no misordering error.
**Keywords:** error analysis, thesis proposals, students' error

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... v
ABSTRAK ..... vii
ABSTRACT ..... viii
TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... ix
LISTS OF TABLES ..... xi
CHAPTER I ..... 1
INTRODUCTION ..... 1
A. Background of the Problem ..... 1
B. Focus of the Research ..... 5
C. Formulation of the Problem ..... 6
E. Research Questions ..... 6
F. Purpose of The Research ..... 6
G. Significance of The Research ..... 6
H. Definition of Key Terms ..... 7
CHAPTER II ..... 8
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE ..... 8
A. Review of Related Theories ..... 8
B. Study of Previous Research ..... 16
C. Conceptual Framework ..... 19
CHAPTER III ..... 21
METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH ..... 21
A. Research Design ..... 21
B. Data and Source of Data ..... 21
C. Instrumentation ..... 22
D. Technique of Data Collection ..... 22
E. Technique of Data Analysis ..... 23
CHAPTER IV ..... 25
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION ..... 25
A. Data Findings ..... 25
B. Discussion ..... 31
CHAPTER V ..... 36
CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION ..... 36
A. Conclusion ..... 36

B. Suggestion ..... 37
REFERENCES ..... 38
APPENDIXES ..... 41

## LISTS OF TABLES

Table 1. Omission Error in Students' Proposal backgrounds ..... 25
Table 2. Addition Error in Students' Proposal Backgrounds ..... 26
Table 3. Misformation Error in Students' Proposal Backgrounds..... 27
Table 4. Error percentage in Students' Proposal Backgrounds ..... 30

# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

## A. Background of the Problem

When students attend a higher level of education such as university, specifically a bachelor's degree, they are obligated to write a thesis in order to graduate. This thesis is where all the skills and knowledge they have acquired over the past seven semesters of college are put to the test. They are required to write a thesis paper as part of their requirements to graduate. In preparation for writing a thesis, students must have the knowledge necessary to do so. Therefore, students must take a paper-writing class in order to prepare themselves before writing the actual thesis paper. Specifically for EFL students, they can only be considered eloquent in English when they have mastered the four aspects of language skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Most students start learning by trying to understand and comprehend English through receptive skills, which are reading and listening. After gaining enough knowledge, they continue with productive skills which are writing and speaking.

Among the four skills, writing has the highest difficulty to master. Writing skills require mastery of grammar along with the ability to establish ideas with proper and efficient words (Harmer, 2003). Levinson (2000) argues that writing is a form of communication where words, ideas, information, and emotions are manifested in print or hard form from one mind to another. By controlling the words, writers can influence the readers. Good writing is defined as the ability of readers to understand the messages of a written text. A commitment is required

during the writing process in order to make a good writing. Much editing and revising is also necessary in writing.

The four language skills are critical to master in order to communicate efficiently in English. In writing, however, a great deal of complexity involving profound knowledge in morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and discourse is required in expressing feelings and thoughts in written form (Gillon, 2004 in The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, n.d.). Thus, many have agreed that writing is by far the most challenging skill, making mastery of writing a point measurement for one's proficiency in language skill (Kencanawati and Aina, 2016; Richard and Renandya, 2002; Tillema, 2012).

Writing in English is a complex process for English as foreign language learners. Committing errors in writing is found to be an inevitable part of language learners' writing. Ellis (1997) emphasized the lack of documentation of learners' grammar in first language acquisition instead of its importance in second language acquisition. Corder (1967) considered errors as evidence of the learners' hereditary syllabus, which exposed how first- and second-language learners advance an independent system of language. Therefore, the analysis of errors has turned into an imperative arena of linguistics. This arena of language teaching values the outcomes of linguistics in various cases involving error analysis.

Furthermore, a thesis paper, as part of academic writing, has a higher level of difficulty than other types of writing. It must be reliable and be based on existing theories and research. Academic writing requires a certain amount of planning and organization. Written ideas and experiences must be organized around a formal order or structure, and they must be supported by references. In

addition to that, the physical structure of academic writing demands the division of the written discourse into the beginning, the middle, and the end. The beginning works as an introduction and informs about the topic; the middle is the body that explains, elucidates, and analytically discusses the topic; and the end is the conclusion, which summarizes whatever was discussed earlier. A proper outline or summary, a formal tone, precise language, presentation of the point of view in the third person, analysis of the facts presented, deductive reasoning, avoiding slang and abbreviations, referencing, and shaping ideas and concepts in a concrete language with apt words and phrases are some of the salient features of academic writing.

Paper thesis Writing is one of the subjects in English Department provide in Universitas Negeri Padang. In this subject some kinds of research paper, such as thesis, dissertation, journal, and article are introduced. The students are trained to think academically and critically, and summarize a certain topic. The ability of conveying ideas scientifically and systematically are very important during this process. In addition, the use of correct grammar, punctuation and spelling also cannot be ignored. The process of writing a research paper is not a simple process since errors could be either found in conveying the ideas.

Regarding the necessity of error analysis in language learning, a number of similar investigations have been conducted in respect to EFL/ESL learners'. It indicates that error is of leading areas to be further studied and thus, still becomes a field of interest for EFL/ESL researchers to conduct. Research on errors in EFL writing has been carried out and continues to grow in various countries until now and in various education levels (Kumala, Aimah and Ifadah, 2018). Karim et al. (2018) examined the most frequent writing errors made by

Bangladeshi students. He discovered that students frequently made grammatical errors, misformation, disorganization, and overgeneralization.

Other research conducted by Rusmiati (2019) analyzed errors of verb usage in narrative paragraphs of second semester students. Eight narrative paragraphs were scrutinized closely to detect errors pertaining to verb tense. Among those, misformation is found to be the most prevalent type committed by the learners, as many as 62 errors. Similar research was also conducted in universities, Octaberlina and Muslimin (2022) probed into English Education Department students' thesis proposals in one of public university in Indonesia. The results revealed that the most dominant error was the addition error where students tended to add more than the structure or grammar needs. Students overgeneralized to use affix –s in verb and to use double auxiliaries (be, are, is).

From the previous research on writing errors conducted by the researchers above, it can be noted that research on grammatical errors in EFL writing has expanded, evolved and covered a variety of topics and parts of students' writing skills at high school and university levels. Therefore, based on previous research above, the researcher seeks to investigate errors of students' writing in paper thesis writing class, specifically the background. The consideration for choosing this class is that this is the class they will thoroughly learn about thesis paper where they will be required to write them when taking undergraduate thesis. This is where errors in writing have more urgency to be analyzed, compared to previous research where the subjects are second semester students in writing narrative paragraphs. Furthermore, the reason the researcher decides to investigate the writings from paper writing class specifically their final test results instead of research proposals is to see the skill of the students' ability at

the time. If the researcher chooses to investigate research proposals instead, there are chances that the proposals were already have revision and alteration since the students have received guidance from their respective advisors. The researcher also focused the investigation to the research background part. The researcher focused this study on this part due to dynamics of many different grammatical tenses used this part. This is caused by the nature of research background to explain the reason for a research to be conducted and how it connects previous studies to the current research topic.

A further reason for this investigation is that thesis writing requires seriousness and thoroughness of the writer and good writing skills. The results of the analysis can be used as an evaluation for lecturers of paper thesis writing class. This helps the students when they finally start to write their thesis papers for the requirements to graduate university where they will have fewer revisions in writing their thesis paper later on and can finish their degree earlier. Thus, the researcher is interested to conduct a research titled "GRAMMATICAL ERRORS IN THESIS BACKGROUNDS WRITTEN BY STUDENTS AT THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROGRAM OF UNIVERSITAS NEGERI PADANG".

## B. Focus of the Research

Based on the background above, the focus of the research is exploring the grammatical errors committed by students taking paper thesis writing class in Universitas Negeri Padang.

## C. Formulation of the Problem

In accordance to the focus of the research, the researcher formulates the problem as "What errors do paper thesis writing class students make in their thesis proposals' background?"

## D. Limitation of the Problem

This study identified grammatical errors of students who were taking paper thesis writing class and especially students of English Education Program only due to the researcher also study in the same program.

## E. Research Questions

Based on the background of the research above, the researcher composes the research questions to:

1. What kinds of grammatical error are committed by paper thesis writing class students in their thesis proposals' background?
2. Which type of grammatical error committed the most by paper thesis writing class students in their thesis proposals' background?

## F. Purpose of The Research

The purpose of this research is to find out what kinds of errors in writing are made by students who take thesis paper writing class.

## G. Significance of The Research

This study would be meaningful to be conducted since it will bring a theoretical and practical significance. In theory, the results of the research are expected to provide information what errors are made by the students who take paper writing class in writing thesis proposals. In practice, the researcher expects