



The Errors Found in Thesis Abstract Translations Made by English Department Students of UNP

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Abstract

Writing thesis abstracts in two languages, Indonesian and English, is one of the requirements for undergraduate students in Indonesia. Therefore, translation plays a significant role in exchanging information written in abstracts from Indonesian to English. This study aims to analyze the morpho-syntactic errors made by the fifth semester English education students of Universitas Negeri Padang. Descriptive research design was employed in this study. This study's population consisted of fifth semester English education students at Universitas Negeri Padang. The purposive sampling method was used to select 20 students as the sample. A translation test was used to collect data. The researcher analyzed and categorized the morpho-syntactic errors based on its types. Findings revealed that there were in total 196 morpho-syntactic errors found in students' translation results. The most frequent type of error found is error in the use of articles, with a total amount of 63 data. Meanwhile, the least frequent type of errors is wrong sequence of tense, with a total amount of 2 data.

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INTRODUCTION

Writing is one way that people can communicate, as shown in books, newspapers, novels, and even scientific studies. Through writing, English, as the international language, has brought people from all over the world together. Thesis abstract is one of the examples of how people can share information and communicate in the field of education. An abstract is an essential part of a thesis. This statement is supported by the statement of Berkenkotter & Huckin in Emilia (2008) that there are four factors that contribute to the importance of abstracts in research articles. First, it offers essential information and statements that are accessible. Second, it serves as a filtering tool that allows readers to decide whether or not to read the entire article. Thirdly, it provides the framework for readers to follow as they read the full text. Fourthly, it offers concise summaries of a research article's main ideas. Those statements have proven that the existence of an

abstract is essential in a research article. In fact, writing thesis abstracts in two languages, Indonesian and English, is one of the requirements for undergraduate students in Indonesia. Therefore, translation plays a significant role in exchanging information written in abstracts from Indonesian to English.

In general, translation is the process of communicating the meaning, concepts, or messages of a text from a particular language to another. Different experts have offered numerous definitions of translation. Newmark (1988) stated that “translation is rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text”. This statement argues that the meaning of the source text has to match the way that the author intended to say in the target text. Similarly, to that statement, Nida & Taber (1982) claimed that “Translation consists of reproducing in the receptor language to the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in term of meaning, secondly in term of style.” By this definition, it can be implied that message and language style are the aspects that must be maintained by the translator in translating.

Mahardini (2020) claims that despite the fact that every student in Indonesia has studied English for more than ten years in primary and secondary school; number of students are still unable to convert their own thesis abstract into English. This has demonstrated that it is not an easy task to translate texts from Indonesian to English, especially for students. The goal of translation is to communicate the meaning and styles that the translators must convey in the most equivalent and natural way, which is more difficult than just substituting words from one language to another. As a result, there are many factors to take into account when translating texts like thesis abstract, and one of the considerations is to avoid the errors in translation.

An error generally refers to a non-native speaker producing improper written or vocal forms because of the ignorance of the target language rules. According to Richards (2010), error is the use of a linguistic item, which a native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning. Seguinot in Kafipour & Jahanshahi (2015) argues that errors are the effect of misunderstanding the source text or incapability of translators to produce the target text. From those statements above, it can be concluded that an error is when the translator incapable to transfer the meaning in the source text and cause violation in linguistic items.

Norrish in Rahmawati (2019) stated that translation errors can be caused by first-language interference, lack of knowledge about both source and target language, or even carelessness of the translators. It provides difficulties for readers to understand and might cause meaning alternation of the intended message. Error that is made by learners is sometimes systematic (Ellis, 1997). This statement is supported by Arsyi (2018) in her thesis stating that linguists have revealed that errors produced by learners are systematic and it reflects their developmental stage that they have reached. Thus, one learner and another learner may make different errors under certain conditions, but the source of the error may be the same.

Several researches on thesis abstract translation errors have been conducted in the past few years. Mohammed & Jamel (2021) conducted research to investigate the most frequent surface translation errors occurred in literary and scientific texts made by Bahdini EFL university students. The results show that out of 307 surface translation errors, the percentage of misinformation in scientific texts was the highest (43.2%) and misordering had the lowest percentage (with 7.8%). Another research about translation errors was done by Munawir (2020), investigating the types of errors in translation made in writing abstracts of dissertations and theses of universities in Makassar. The research found that omission errors were the most common kind of error and inversion is the least type of errors that occur.

Since abstract is an essential part to be read by the readers, avoiding errors need to be done by students when translating it. The errors they produced might make the readers become misunderstood and confused when reading the texts. The fifth semester students of UNP are taking the subject of Introduction to Translation and Interpretation. As the students are being trained to translate, they are expected to avoid errors in their translation result. Therefore, a research analyzing errors in translation is needed.

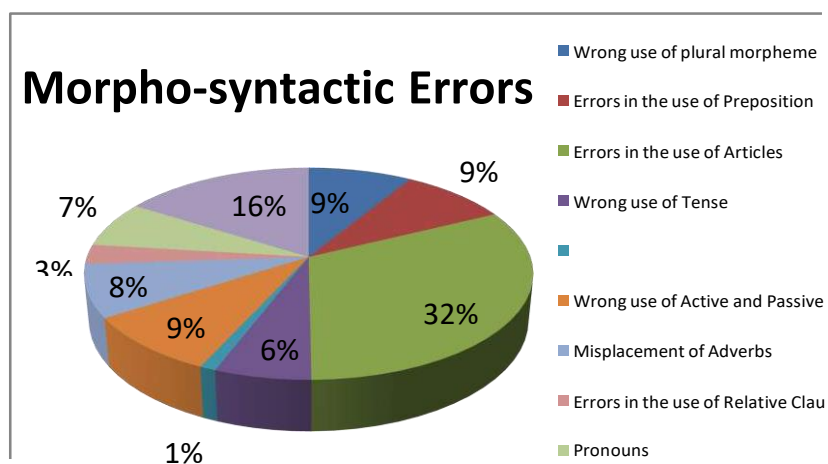
RESEARCH METHOD

This research used a descriptive design which aimed to evaluate the translation quality and errors occurred in thesis abstract translations result by fifth semester English education students of UNP. This study focused on the analysis of the morpho-syntactic errors proposed by Keshavarz (2015). To obtain the data required, a translation test was held for the students to get the translation results of a biology-related thesis abstract. The test was distributed through Google Form and limited to only 90 minutes. After getting the translation result, the researcher categorized the the morpho-syntactic produced by the students based on its types.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings & Analysis

Based on the translation of thesis abstracts made by students, there were some errors occur in their texts. This study only focuses on the morpho-syntactic errors produced by the students. The morpho-syntactic error was categorized into the 14 types using the theory proposed by Keshavarz (2015). However, there were only 10 types of morpho-syntactic errors found in the students' text. The frequency of the errors is illustrated as follow.



There are in total 196 data of morpho-syntactic errors found in this study. The most frequent type of errors produced by students is Errors in the use of articles, with a total amount of 63 data with the percentage of 32%. Meanwhile, the least frequent type of errors produced by students is wrong sequence of tense, with a total amount of 2 data with 1%.

Translation Errors

Among 14 types of morpho-syntactic errors proposed by Keshavarz (2015), the result of this study found 10 types of error produced by the students in translating the thesis abstracts.

Wrong Use of Plural Morpheme

There are 17 errors in the wrong use of plural morphemes out of 20 data taken from the student. One of the examples of the wrong use of plural morpheme is:

Table 1 Wrong Use of Plural Morpheme

1	The estrous cycle has been affected by <i>hormone</i> , thus, the extract of cat whiskers leaf that contains with flavonoids, alkaloids and isoflavones is suspected to be used as a way to fix the estrous cycle.
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The word ‘...hormone’ from the table above is marked as an error. After all, the word is not being described neither in singular or plural form. Meanwhile, it should be written in plural form because it is being described generally in the sentence. Therefore, this error occurs due to the omission of the suffix –s after those words to describe that it is plural noun.

Errors in the use of Preposition

There are 18 errors in the use of preposition from the students’ translation result. There are some criteria for this category of error, for example; the omission of prepositions, wrong use of prepositions, unnecessary or redundant use of prepositions. The following table shows some of the examples of errors in the use of preposition.

Table 2 Errors in the Use of Preposition

1	This research aims to know <i>the given the cat’s whiskers extract</i> (<i>Orthosiphon aristatus</i> (Blume) Mic) to the recovering of mencil estrous cycle (<i>Mus musculus</i> L. Swiss Webster).
2	The estrous cycle is affected by hormones. Therefore, the extract from cat’s whisker leaf that <i>contains of</i> flavonoids, alkaloids, and isoflavones is said to be able to recover the estrous cycle.

The words ‘...the given the cat’s whiskers...’ in the first data is missing the preposition ‘of’ to describe the relationship of the verb and the object. Therefore, the correct phrase should be ‘...the given of the cat’s whiskers...’ Another error that occur is described in the second data, on the line ‘...contains of flavonoids, alkaloids and isoflavones...’ Even though many verbs can be followed by a prepositional phrase, the verb ‘contains’ in this sentence should not be followed by any prepositions. Therefore, this error occurs due to the unnecessary use of the preposition ‘of’ after the verb ‘contain’ in the sentence.

Errors in the Use of Articles

The error in the use of articles is revealed as the most frequent error that occurs in the students’ translation results. There are 63 errors in the use of articles found in students’ translation results. Similar with the previous error, the criteria for this error includes the omission of articles, wrong use of articles, unnecessary or redundant use of articles

Table 3 Errors in the Use of Article

1	The extract of cat whiskers is given orally <i>using gavage needle</i> once a
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day for 24 days with A (kontrol), B (0,035 mg/ekor), C (0,135 mg/ekor) dan D (0,175 mg/ekor).

- 2 The estrous cycle is affected by *the* hormones, so it is expected to be able to recover by using the extract of cat's whisker leaf.

The first data is categorized as errors in the use of article due to the omission of an article before the noun '...gavage needle...' There should be the article 'a' to describe that noun. Meanwhile the next error showed in the second data occurs in the line 'The estrous cycle is affected by the hormones.' This sentence has the unnecessary article 'the' before the word 'hormones', which has been described in plural form in the sentence. Therefore, the most appropriate sentence should be without the article 'the'.

Wrong Use of Tenses

In this research, it was found that the wrong use of tense are mostly caused by the use of simple present tense instead of past tense when describing past events. The examples of those kinds of errors are described in the following table.

Table 4 Wrong Use of Tense

1	The results of study <i>show</i> that the length of the estrous cycle in treatment A <i>is</i> 5.26 days, B <i>is</i> 6.5 days, C <i>is</i> 5.74 days, and D <i>is</i> 4.54 days.
2	This research is an experimental research which <i>uses</i> a complete random design(CRD) with 4 treatments and 6 repetitions.

The examples above show that the students, as the translators, used the simple present tense to form the sentence. However, those sentences need to describe the events that have happened in the past. Therefore, the appropriate kind of tense to be used has to be the simple past tense. Another example of wrong use of tense error produced by the student is described in the following table.

Wrong Sequence of Tenses

There are two kinds of wrong sequence of tense that have been found in this research. The following table describes the examples of the error.

Table 5 Wrong Sequence of Tense

On A, C and D, it was found that the cycle <i>return</i> back to normal.	
1	From A, C and D treatment, it was found that the cycle <i>goes</i> back to normal after the treatment.

The sentences above reported about events in the past by using passive voice. However, after the relative pronoun 'that', the students used the verb 'return' and 'goes', which is included as present verbs, to form the subordinate clause. Because

the sentences report about past events, then it must be written using the past tense, not present tense. Therefore, the verb ‘returned’ and ‘went’ is the most appropriate verbs to be used in those sentences.

Wrong Use of Active and Passive

There are some criteria of sentences that can be included in the wrong use of active and passive voice, as examples, the absent or wrong use of prepositions before agent, the absent of verb to be before past participle, using active order but passive form and vice versa.

Table 6 Wrong Use of Active and Passive

1	The estrous cycle phase <i>decided by using</i> the vaginal smear method.
2	The estrous cycle is affected by hormones, therefore, the extracts of cat whiskers containing flavonoids, alkaloid and isoflavones <i>are consider</i> to be used to regenerate the estrous cycle.

The first data omits to be ‘was’ before the past participle ‘decided’ in forming passive voice. Another case of error happened in the second data due to the wrong use of verb in forming passive voice. This sentence uses the present verb ‘consider’, meanwhile in passive voice structure, the verb should be written in past participle to describe events. Therefore, the correct verb to be used in the sentence is the past participle ‘considered’.

Misplacement of Adverbs

There are 15 error data found in their translation results. The following is some of the example of the errors in misplacement of adverbs.

Table 7 Misplacement of Adverbs

1	This is an experimental study which used the <i>complete random design</i> with 4 treatment and 6 repetition
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The words ‘complete random design’ is not properly written. An adjective cannot describe or modify another adjective. It has to describe nouns or pronouns. In this sentence, the noun ‘design’ is being modified by the adjective ‘random’. However, the adjective ‘complete’ tries to modify the adjective ‘random’. This kind of structure is not correct. Therefore, the adjective ‘complete’ has to be changed to the adverb ‘completely’, so that it can modify the adjective ‘random’.

Errors in the use of Relative Clauses and Relative Pronouns

There were 6 data included in this category. However, none of the errors included as errors in the use of relative clauses. In fact, all of the data error found in this category was related to errors in the use of relative pronouns. The errors are described as follows.

Table 8 Errors in the Use of Relative Clauses and Relative Pronouns

1	The estrous cycle is influenced by hormones, so the cat’s whiskers extract <i>which</i> contains flavonoids, alkaloids and isoflavones is used to
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recover the estrous cycle.

- 2 The estrous cycle is affected by hormones, then the cat's whiskers leaf extract *that* contains flavonoids, alkaloids and isoflavones, is suspected to be able to be used to recover the estrous cycle.

The first error caused by the absence of commas before the relative pronoun, which makes his sentence becomes a restrictive or independent clause. The relative pronoun 'that' is the correct relative pronoun to be used in an independent clause. While the second data produced contrary errors as the previous data. This sentence is included as a dependent clause because the use of comma after the relative pronouns. However, the student chose to use the relative pronoun 'that' in this sentence. Meanwhile for a dependent clause, the appropriate relative pronoun to be used is the relative pronoun 'which'. Therefore, the correct clause needs to be '...extract, which contains flavonoids, alkaloids and isoflavones, is suspected...'

Wrong Use of Verb Groups

There are some criteria of wrong use of verb groups, they are; wrong construction of verbs, wrong use of gerunds and infinitives, and other. The examples can be seen as follows.

Table 9 Wrong Use of Verb Groups

1	Whereas in treatment B, <i>the cycle still</i> in an extended condition.
2	<i>The goal of this research to understand</i> the effect of the cat's whiskers extract (orthosiphon aristatus (blume) miq) given to restore the mice's estrous cycle (mus musculus L. Swiss Webster).

Based on the table above, the researcher found that the sentences are missing to be before to infinitive 'to understand' in the first data and the adjective 'still' in the second data. This error has made the sentences become sentence fragments due to the absence of to be to complete the sentence.

Errors due to Lack of Concord or Agreement

The error due to lack of concord or agreement is the second most frequent error produced by the students. There are 32 amount of data related to error due to lack concord or agreement, either it is related to subject-verb agreement or the lack of concord within noun groups.

Table 10 Errors due to Lack of Concord and Agreement

1	The <i>extracts</i> of cat whiskers <i>is</i> given orally using gavage needle once a day for 24 days with A (control), B (0,035 mg/ekor), C (0,135 mg/ekor) and D (0,175 mg/ekor). .
2	This is an experimental study which used the complete random design with <i>4 treatment and 6 repetition</i> .

In the first data, the subject 'extracts' is written in plural form, therefore the

correct verb to be used is to be 'are' not to be 'is'. Moreover, the second data lacks of concord within noun groups. The word 'treatment' and 'repetition' in data number 02 needs to be written in plural form, with the suffix -s at the end of each word, because there are more than one treatments and repetitions given to the object in the text.

Discussion

There were 196 data of morpho-syntactic errors found in this research. The most frequent type of error made by students is the errors in the use of articles, with a total amount of 63 data, followed by errors due to lack of concord or agreement with 32 data, errors in the use of preposition and wrong use of active and passive voice with 18 data, wrong use of plural morpheme with 17 data, misplacements of adverbs with 15 data, wrong use of verb groups with 14 data, wrong use of tense with 11 data, errors in the use of relative clauses and relative pronouns with 6 data and wrong sequence of tense as the least frequent errors occurred with 2 data.

The findings of this study are similar to the research conducted by Gayo and Widodo (2018), who analyzed the syntactical and morphological errors on English writing of Junior High School students. According to their findings, the most common syntactical error was subject-verb agreement, which accounted for 9% of all errors. Meanwhile, inflection, preposition, and copula be accounted for 14% of all morphological errors.

Moreover, the findings in Al-Badawi (2012), who studied about phonetic, morphological and syntactic errors produced by Arabic-speaking learners of English in speaking tasks, are also similar with this study. It was discovered that the definite article and indefinite article were swapped in 70% of the data. Particularly, 42.5% of the sample had noun phrase subject-verb agreement violations. Similarly to this research that found 63% of the data belongs to errors in the use of article and 32% of the data belongs to errors due to lack of concord and agreement.

On the other hand, Yuliasri (2016), who studied the translation results about early childhood education in English Translation Course at English Department of Unnes, found different results. There are some common errors produced in the texts which diction, gerund after prepositions, number (singular/plural), subject-verb agreement, subtle predicate, and fragment. While in this study, the common errors that occur are errors in article usage, lack of concord or agreement, active and passive voice and wrong use of plural morpheme.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

This study looked into the types of morpho-syntactic errors that were discovered in the translation result of thesis abstract made by the fifth semester of English education students of Universitas Negeri Padang. It is revealed that there are 10 kinds out of 14 morpho-syntactic errors found in students' translation results. The primary error identified in the students' abstract translation is the error in the use of articles with the total of 63 data. Most students omitted the use of articles in their translation texts. Meanwhile, the least frequent type of error is the wrong sequence of tense. There were 2 data of wrong sequence of tense data identified.

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