

Analysis of PGSD UNMUL student papers: a semantic study

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ABSTRACT

Writing scientific papers requires the application of strict linguistic rules, especially on the accuracy of meaning at the semantic level. However, in practice, word selection errors (diction) are still often found in students' academic assignments. This study aims to describe the forms of semantic errors, identify the causative factors, and formulate alternative solutions in minimizing these errors. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a content analysis method. The subject of this research is two papers of the first semester student papers of the Elementary School Teacher Education Study Program (PGSD) of Mulawarman University entitled "National Identity" and "Humans and Religion". The data collection technique is carried out through the see-and-record (read, record, conclude) method. The data analysis is based on the foundation of Gorys Keraf's Word Choice Theory (Diction). The results of the study showed that there were ten dominant semantic error data, including errors in the accuracy of contextual meanings, symptoms of pleonasm (redundancy of meaning), synonym selection errors, and illogical lexical meanings. The main factors that cause these errors are the limitation of academic vocabulary, lack of precision in editing documents, and the strong influence of non-formal spoken language. The recommended solution is the optimization of the use of language error detection applications (such as SIPEBI) as well as increasing the intensity of the practice of editing scientific papers independently.



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INTRODUCTION

As part of the academic community, students have various academic responsibilities that must be fulfilled while studying at university. One of the most important academic tasks is writing scientific papers. The activity of writing scientific papers is not only a means to convey ideas and results of thought systematically, but also a form of developing critical, analytical, and scientific thinking skills. Various types of scientific works that are commonly compiled by students include papers, scientific articles, research reports, theses, research proposals, journals, and other scientific papers that are compiled based on applicable academic rules.

The ability to write scientific papers is a competency that students must have because through these activities students can develop knowledge, communicate the results of studies, and contribute to the development of science. According to the theory of academic writing, scientific papers must be composed objectively, logically, systematically, effectively, and using language that is in accordance with the rules of good and correct Indonesian language. Therefore, the accuracy of the use of language is one of the important aspects that determine the quality of a scientific work.

In the process of writing scientific papers, there are several things that need to be considered, such as the accuracy of the writing structure, the use of spelling, the choice of words (diction), effective sentence preparation, and the clarity of the meaning to be conveyed. Clarity of meaning has a very important role because the main purpose of a scientific paper is to convey information and ideas appropriately to the reader. If there is a use of words or sentences that do not match the meaning, then the information conveyed can cause different interpretations and reduce the quality of the scientific writing.

Studies that study meaning in language are known as semantic terms. Semantics is a branch of linguistics that studies the meaning of words, phrases, sentences, and the relationship of meaning in a language. In the realm of linguistics, semantics serves to understand how meanings are formed, used, and interpreted in the process of communication. Semantic studies cover various aspects, such as lexical

meaning, grammatical meaning, polysemim, synonym, antonymy, ambiguity, and the accuracy of the use of words according to the context. Therefore, an understanding of semantic aspects is very necessary in writing scientific papers so that the ideas conveyed by the author can be understood appropriately by readers.

Semantics is no longer a peripheral object, but rather an object equivalent to other fields of linguistic study. A lot of attention is directed to semantics. Various theories about meaning have emerged. Indeed, if we remember the theory of the modern Father of Linguistics, Ferdinand de Saussure, that linguistic signs (*signe linguistique*) consist of significant and signifie components, then in fact the study of linguistics without the study of semantics is meaningless, because the two components, *signifie* and *signifi *, are two inseparable things. Like a piece of metal currency, *signifian* is on one side and *signifi * is on the other (Chaer, 2009).

The urgency of mastering the semantic aspect for students is increasingly important considering that students are prospective academics who are required to be able to produce quality scientific writing. Semantic errors that occur in scientific papers can cause unclear information, confusion of meaning, and even misinterpretation of the content of the writing. This condition shows that the ability to choose and use words correctly is one of the indicators of students' academic competence in producing good scientific works.

Based on the importance of accuracy of meaning in writing scientific papers, this research is focused on the analysis of semantic errors contained in student papers. This study aims to identify the forms of semantic errors that appear, describe the characteristics of these errors, and explain their impact on the clarity of meaning in scientific writing. Thus, the results of this research are expected to be evaluation and learning materials for students in improving the quality of language use, especially in semantic aspects, so as to be able to produce better, effective, and in accordance with academic linguistic principles.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research applies a qualitative approach with a descriptive method of content analysis (This approach is empirically oriented to explain real linguistic symptoms in the form of verbal descriptions of words or sentences, not numerical data (Qomaruddin, 2024). The subject of this study is a text document from two first-semester student group assignments of the PGSD Community of Mulawarman University for the 2025/2026 academic year, respectively entitled "National Identity" (Civic Education Course) and "People and Religion" (Islamic Religious Education Course).

The data collection technique is implemented through the hermeneutic method of listening and recording through the stages of carefully reading the entire corpus of paper texts, marking sentence units that are indicated to have deviations in meaning, and recording them in a data grouping table (Qomaruddin, 2024). The data analysis technique is carried out interactively which includes the stages of data reduction (selection of valid data), presentation of data in the form of matrix tables, and drawing conclusions or theoretical verification (Ahmad & Muslimah, 2021). The validity of the data is ensured through peer triangulation procedures to minimize the biases of the researcher's single interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Semantic error analysis was carried out on two student papers of the Elementary School Teacher Education Study Program (PGSD) Mulawarman University. This analysis aims to identify forms of meaning deviations contained in the use of language in students' scientific works. The semantic errors found were analyzed based on the accuracy of meaning, diction selection, the relationship of meaning between words, and the suitability of language use with the scientific context.

In the first paper that discussed national identity, five semantic error data were found. These errors include inaccuracies in the contextual meaning of the use of the word *life* to explain noble values, the use of metaphorical diction such as being rooted in Pancasila, the inaccuracy of synonym selection in the word *rigid*, the symptom of pleonasm in the phrase *symbol or slogan*, and the incompatibility of diction in the use of the word *unifying tool*. These errors show that the author is still not precise in choosing words that are in accordance with the context of scientific language so that the meaning conveyed becomes less effective.

In the second paper that discusses humans and religion, five semantic error data were also found. These errors are in the form of inaccuracies in the scientific variety in the use of physical and

spiritual terms, the use of clichéd expressions in the phrases of inseparable sections, the symptoms of pleonasm in the definition of classification, redundancy of meaning or tautology in the phrases of God's revelation, and ambiguity of meaning in the use of the words the journey of life of the nation and state. These errors show a tendency to use inappropriate words or phrases, thus reducing the clarity of meaning and accuracy of the presentation of ideas.

Overall, the results of the analysis show that the most dominant semantic errors are imprecision of diction and redundancy of meaning. Both types of errors often arise because authors tend to use expressions that are metaphorical, cliché, or exaggerated without considering the accuracy of the meaning in the context of scientific works. In fact, scientific language demands the use of words that are straightforward, objective, and do not give rise to double interpretation.

These findings show that students' ability to choose the right words still needs to be improved. Understanding the semantic aspects is very important in writing scientific papers because misunderstandings can affect the quality of the writing and the clarity of the information conveyed to the reader. Therefore, learning about the accuracy of diction, the relationship of meaning, and the use of scientific language needs to receive more attention in the process of learning Indonesian in higher education.

Based on the results of data reduction analysis on two papers of PGSD students of Mulawarman University, 10 significant semantic error data were found. All of these data are presented in the form of the following analysis instrument table.

Table 1 Semantic Error Analysis Matrix in National Identity Papers

<i>No</i>	<i>Error Type</i>	<i>Semantic Error Data</i>	<i>Repair Form</i>	<i>Information</i>
1	Contextual Meaning Inaccuracy.	Nilai nilai luhur yang hidup di tengah masyarakat...	Nilai-nilai luhur yang diterapkan di tengah masyarakat...	The word 'hidup' carries a biological metaphorical connotation, whereas 'diterapkan' is more objective and appropriate for describing social practices.
2	Metaphorical Diction Error.	Nilai nilai tersebut berakar dari Pancasila...	Nilai-nilai tersebut bersumber dari Pancasila...	The word 'berakar' is considered less logical when used to refer to an abstract idea, whereas 'bersumber' is more standard and semantically appropriate.
3	Inappropriate Synonym Selection.	Identitas nasional bukan sesuatu yang bersifat kaku...	Identitas nasional bukan sesuatu yang bersifat statis...	The word 'kaku' carries a relatively informal meaning, whereas 'statis' is more precise and appropriate in the context of social sciences.
4	Pleonasm/Semantic Redudancy.	Identitas nasional bukan hanya symbol atau slogan tetapi...	Identitas nasional bukan sekadar lambang tetapi...	The combination of "simbol" and "slogan" creates semantic redundancy because the two expressions convey closely related meanings.
5	Inappropriate Object Diction.	Identitas nasional juga, berfungsi sebagai alat pemersatu...	Identitas nasional juga berperan sebagai pemersatu...	National identity is an abstract concept; therefore, the word "berperan" is more semantically appropriate than "alat".

Table 2 Semantic Error Analysis Matrix in the Paper Humans and Religion

No	Error Type	Semantic Error Data	Repair Form	Information
1	Inappropriate Scientific Diction.	manusia tidak hanya membutuhkan pemenuhan kebutuhan jasmani, tetapi juga kebutuhan rohani.	manusia tidak hanya membutuhkan pemenuhan kebutuhan fisik, tetapi juga kebutuhan spiritual.	The terms 'jasmani' and 'rohani' are considered more traditional in usage, whereas 'fisik' and 'spiritual' are more widely accepted in academic discourse.
2	Inappropriate Selection of Cliched Synonyms.	agama telah menjadi bagian yang tidak terpisahkan	agama merupakan elemen integral...	The phrase 'tidak terpisahkan' carries a cliched nuance, whereas 'integral' is more concise and effective.
3	Extreme Pleonasm.	Klasifikasi adalah suatu cara atau proses mengelompokkan objek, gagasan, atau fenomena.	Klasifikasi adalah proses pengategorian data	The accumulation 'objek, gagasan, and fenomena' makes the sentence verbose and semantically redundant.
4	Semantic Redudancy (Tautology).	Agama wahyu adalah agama yang ajarannya berasal langsung dari wahyu Tuhan.	Agama wahyu adalah agama yang ajarannya bersumber dari wahyu Ilahi...	The word 'wahyu' lexically implies a divine origin; therefore, the phrase 'wahyu Tuhan' result n semantic redundancy.
5	Semantic Ambiguity.	menjadikan perjalanan hidup berbangsa dan bernegara.	menentukan arah hidup berbangsa dan bernegara.	The word 'perjalanan' denotes a dynamic process, whereas the context of the sentences requires the word 'arah' to express a sense of purpose or direction.

Paper 1

1. Error in the phrase "hidup di tengah masyarakat" The data found is the use of the word *hidup*. According to Keraf (2010), the choice of words in scientific papers must prioritize the accuracy of the denotative meaning. The word *hidup* is potentially ambiguous because it is the biological nature of living beings. Therefore, in order for its meaning to be logical and scientific, the word is adapted to its context to be *diterapkan*.
2. Error in the word "berakar" Data shows that the values of Pancasila are called *berakar*. Based on Keraf's diction theory, the use of words with nuances of concrete plant metaphors is not compatible with the abstract idea of ideology in formal works. A more appropriate choice of raw words is *bersumber*.
3. A mistake in the word "kaku" The word *rigid* was invented to describe the nature of national identity. According to Keraf, semantic errors often occur due to the choice of synonyms that are not polite or unscientific. The word *kaku* is more inclined to the language of informal conversation, so the precise scientific form is *static*.
4. Errors in the phrase "symbol or slogan" Writing the word *symbol* or *slogan* triggers a buildup of meaning. Keraf emphasized that word sparing greatly supports the clarity of semantic meaning. Since both terms refer to the embodiment of a similar representative, this phrase is simplified into *a lambang* to be effective.

5. Error in the phrase "berfungsi sebagai alat" National identity is categorized as *a tool*. This mistake violates the principle of harmony of Keraf's diction because national identity is an abstract sociological idea, not a physical object in the form of perkakas (*alat*). A compatible word is *berperan*.

Paper 2

1. Errors in the words "jasmani" and "rohani" The words *jasmani* and *rohani* are found in the discussion of the orientation of human needs. Based on scientific semantic theory, this diction is not compatible with the more universal rules of writing a variety of modern sciences. The choice of synonyms that have more academic weight is *fisik* and *spiritual*.
2. An error in the phrase "tidak terpisahkan" Sentence data indicates the use of *an tidak terpisahkan phrase*. According to Gorys Keraf, word selection must avoid clichéd expressions so that ideas are conveyed straightforwardly. The use of integral absorption diction is considered much more effective and strengthens the structure of the meaning of scientific texts.
3. Error in the phrase "mengelompokkan objek, gagasan, atau fenomena" This data shows symptoms of extreme pleonasm. Based on semantic rules, the accumulation of three words of objects that overlap each other makes the main message lose its direction. Sentences are fixed in a concise way into *pengategorian data*.
4. Error in the phrase "langsung dari wahyu tuhan" Found the sentence formulation *wahyu tuhan*. Based on the lexical meaning of KBBI, the term *wahyu* already contains an absolute essence as a guide from God. The merging of these two words triggers the inefficient redundancy of semantic meaning. The sentence is corrected into *wahyu ilahi*
5. Error in the word "perjalanan" The first sentence uses the word *perjalanan hidup bangsa*. Based on Keraf's theory, this error triggers misinterpretation (ambiguity) because the word *perjalanan* is narrative without clear operational boundaries. The word logical according to the direction of the scientific goal is *arah*.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the content analysis of the academic tasks of students of the Elementary School Teacher Education Study Program, Mulawarman University, it can be concluded that the level of language errors at the semantic level is still quite significant. These deviations materialize in the form of inaccuracies in contextual meaning, the use of incompatible metaphorical diction for formal discourse, the misselection of scientific synonyms, and symptoms of pleonasm or extreme meaning tautology. These findings reflect that students' cognitive reflexes in assembling formal language of various sciences are still strongly influenced by non-formal oral registers and limitations of academic vocabulary. These various semantic errors can be minimized through increasing students' linguistic sensitivity, habituating the practice of editing scientific papers independently, and optimizing the use of standard language detection applications in every academic assignment preparation process.

Based on the findings of the research, students need to improve their understanding of the semantic rules of the Indonesian language, especially related to the accuracy of diction selection, the use of contextual meanings, the use of appropriate synonyms, and the avoidance of the use of words that cause ambiguity and pleonasm in writing scientific papers. Lecturers who teach Indonesian language courses in universities are expected to provide more intensive learning and practice on aspects of meaning and the application of semantic rules in academic writing. In addition, further research can expand the object of study by analyzing more student papers and covering various other semantic aspects so that a more comprehensive picture of language errors at the university level is obtained.

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