

Analysis of syntactic errors in student papers in civic education courses

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify and analyze syntactic errors contained in student papers in the Civic Education course. Syntax errors are a form of language errors that are often found in scientific papers, especially related to sentence structure, the use of conjunctions, the accuracy of sentence structure, and the effectiveness of sentences. The method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method with a look-and-record technique. The research data is in the form of sentences that contain syntactic errors in student papers. The results of the study showed that there were sixteen syntactic errors consisting of ineffective sentence errors, incomplete sentence errors, sentence ambiguity errors, sentence element inconsistency errors, and incorrect use of detail elements. The findings of the study show that students still have difficulties in composing sentences that are effective and in accordance with the rules of syntax in Indonesian. Therefore, it is necessary to increase understanding of sentence structure in writing scientific papers.



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INTRODUCTION

Language is a means of communication that functions to convey ideas, information, and thoughts to others. In the academic world, language has a very important role because it is the main tool in the preparation of scientific papers. Good scientific work is not only determined by quality content, but also by the use of language in accordance with linguistic principles. One of the aspects that affects the quality of scientific work is syntax.

Syntax is a branch of linguistics that studies the relationships between words in forming phrases, clauses, and sentences (Chaer, 2015). Through syntax, an idea can be arranged into sentences that are concise, logical, and easy to understand. Inaccuracies in the arrangement of sentence elements can cause syntactic errors that result in unclear meaning and reduce the quality of academic writing.

Syntax errors are often found in student writing. These errors can be in the form of ineffective sentences, incompleteness of sentence elements, inappropriate use of conjunctions, ambiguity, and inconsistency of elements in sentences. According to Setyawati (2019), syntax errors are a form of deviation from the rules of sentence composition that cause messages not to be conveyed optimally.

In writing scientific papers, the use of effective sentences is an important requirement so that information can be well understood by readers. First, sentence errors are ineffective. Alwi et al. (2017) stated that effective sentences are sentences that are able to convey ideas precisely, clearly, and economically without using excessive words. Ineffective sentences are characterized by the use of redundant words, unnecessary repetition of elements, or illogical sentence structure. Second, incomplete sentence errors, namely sentences that do not have mandatory elements that form sentences. Ramlan (2005) explained that a sentence must at least have subject elements and predicates. If one of these elements is not present, the sentence becomes ungrammatical and the meaning is not complete.

Third, the error of ambiguity of the sentence. Chaer (2015) states that ambiguity occurs when a sentence has more than one interpretation of meaning, causing ambiguity for the reader. Ambiguity can arise due to improper phrasing or the choice of words with multiple meanings. Fourth, the error of inconsistency of sentence elements. Putrayasa (2014) stated that parallelism is the harmony of grammatical forms in a detail or series of sentences. If the elements in a sequence have different shapes, the sentence becomes ineffective and difficult to understand. Fifth, the misuse of detail elements, namely inaccuracies in the writing of details caused by the absence of conjunctions before the last element or the use of punctuation marks that are not in accordance with the rules of the Indonesian

language (Setyawati, 2019). Sixth, the inaccuracy of the arrangement of phrases, namely the order of words in phrases that do not follow the logical pattern of the Indonesian language so that the ideas conveyed become less clear (Sugono, 2016).

Based on the results of observations of student papers in the Citizenship Education course, several syntactic errors were found related to sentence structure and the use of linguistic elements. These errors are interesting to analyze because they can provide an overview of students' ability to apply the rules of Indonesian syntax. In addition, research on syntactic errors in student papers of the Civic Education course still needs to be carried out to provide a more specific picture of the forms of errors that arise in the context of academic writing in the course.

This research aims to identify, describe, and analyze the forms of syntactic errors contained in student papers in the Civic Education course. The results of the research are expected to provide theoretical benefits as an additional reference in the study of Indonesian syntax and practically become evaluation material for students and lecturers in improving the quality of scientific paper writing. Thus, this research is expected to contribute to improving students' written language skills in accordance with the rules of good and correct Indonesian language.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. The descriptive method is used to describe and explain the forms of syntactic errors found in the research data systematically and objectively (Sugiyono, 2014).

The source of data in this study is in the form of student papers in the Civic Education course. The research data is in the form of sentences that contain syntactic errors. The data collection technique is carried out by the observation method and the recording technique, which is to read the paper carefully and then record sentences that contain syntactic errors.

The data that has been collected is analyzed through several stages using language error analysis techniques. The analysis techniques applied in this study refer to the procedures proposed by Tarigan (2011), namely: (1) rereading technique, which is repeatedly and carefully re-reading data to ensure the accuracy of error identification; (2) matching techniques, namely matching data with syntactic rules that apply in standard Indonesian; (3) the technique of disappearing, which is to remove or eliminate certain elements in a sentence to test whether the sentence remains grammatically acceptable; and (4) replacement techniques, namely replacing the wrong sentence elements with the correct form to verify the type of error. In addition to these techniques, analysis is also carried out through discussion to ensure consistency and categorization of data. The overall analysis stage includes data identification, classification of error types, analysis of the cause of errors, and provision of forms of correction in accordance with Indonesian language rules.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the analysis, several types of syntax errors were found in student papers, namely the absence of subjects, ineffective sentences, inaccurate phrase arrangements, ineffective sentences, ambiguity of sentences, incomplete sentences, inconsistencies of sentence elements, and misuse of detail elements.

The absence of a subject is a syntactic error when a sentence does not have a clear subject element, even though the subject functions as the subject of the conversation in the sentence so that without the subject the meaning of the sentence becomes difficult to understand. In addition, ineffective sentences were also found, namely sentences that were arranged inappropriately so that the meaning was unclear, long-winded, or contained unnecessary elements, such as word repetition, redundant use of words, or inappropriate sentence structure. The next mistake is the inaccuracy of the arrangement of phrases, namely the order of words in the phrase that is not in accordance with the rules of the Indonesian language or illogical so that the meaning becomes less clear. Furthermore, less effective sentences occur when a sentence actually has complete elements, but the arrangement is still not precise so that the message conveyed is not optimal, for example due to the use of punctuation or inappropriate word choices. Sentence ambiguity is also found, which is a state when a sentence has more than one meaning or interpretation so that it can cause confusion for readers. Another mistake is in the form of incomplete sentences, namely sentences that do not meet the main elements that form the sentence such as subject or predicate so that the ideas conveyed become incomplete. In addition, there is an

inconsistency of sentence elements, namely the misalignment of grammatical forms in a detail or sequence, for example the use of different word forms so that sentences become less neat and ineffective. Finally, it was found that there was a mistake in the use of the element of detail, namely inconsistencies in the writing of details, such as the absence of conjunctions and before the last element or the use of improper punctuation, so that the relationship between elements in the sentence became less clear.

Results of the First Data Analysis

The data from Table 1 is a finding of syntactic errors in the student's first paper. The ten errors reflect the author's inaccuracy in applying the rules of sentence composition in Indonesian, especially related to the completeness of sentence elements, sparing of words, and logical phrasing.

Data (1) And as for the Function of the Constitution, among others: shows a double error in the form of the use of the coordinating conjunction "And" at the beginning of the sentence as well as the absence of an explicit subject. According to Chaer (2015), effective sentences must have complete subject elements and predicates, while coordinating conjunctions cannot occupy the initial position of sentences in the scientific variety. The improvement was made by eliminating the "and" conjunction so that the sentence has a standard structure.

Data (2) and (8) are examples of redundant sentences. In data (2), the phrase owned by a country does not add a new meaning because the constitution is implicitly already associated with the state. Alwi et al. (2017) emphasized that sentences are effective in avoiding unnecessary repetition of information for the sake of economy. Similarly, data (8) shows the waste of the inner preposition after the guideline word that is structurally dysfunctional and is simply omitted without changing the meaning of the sentence.

Data (3), (7), and (9) show an inaccuracy in the order of phrases. Logical order in scientific writing puts the more general or concrete elements before the more specific or abstract ones. Sugono (2009) explained that the arrangement of sentence elements must follow the logic of the accepted language so that the message can be conveyed appropriately. In data (9), the repetition of what action phrases is unnecessary causes the sentence to be inefficient and can be condensed without reducing the meaning.

Data (4) shows the use of the word *can* which makes the sentence ambiguous because it implies possibility, not certainty, even though the sentence functions as a concluding statement. Data (5) shows the absence of a predicate: the entire phrase is positioned as a subject without an explicit predicate before the colon. Ramlan (2005) states that sentences must at least have subject elements and predicates. Data (6) shows predicate waste because our phrase is expected to be repeated twice in a single sentence, resulting in an ineffective sentence structure and can be condensed using conjunctions at once.

Results of the Second Data Analysis

Table 2 shows the six syntax errors found in the second paper. The errors in this data are more varied and include sentence ambiguity and element inconsistency that was not found in the first paper.

Data (1) show sentences that are less effective because correlative pairs are *good... or ...* is not separated by a comma from the preceding clause. According to Putrayasa (2014), effective sentences must have clarity in the relationships between their parts, including the accuracy of punctuation placement, so that the meaning can be understood by readers correctly.

Data (2) show the use of passive forms applied which are not appropriate in the scientific variety. The form of nominalization of the implementation of the multiparty system is more appropriate because it produces a more straightforward and standard sentence structure. According to Alwi et al. (2017), effective sentences must prioritize clarity and accuracy in the delivery of ideas, including in the selection of word forms that are in accordance with a variety of scientific writings.

Data (3) contains ambiguity in the phrase political freedom of the media that allows for more than one interpretation: whether it means political freedom for the media, or political freedom and media freedom at the same time. Chaer (2015) explained that good sentences must avoid double meanings so that information can be received appropriately by the reader.

Data (4) is an incomplete sentence because it does not have a clear subject; it consists only of predicates and descriptions without subject elements. Ramlan (2005) states that sentences must at least

have subject elements and predicates. Improvements were made by adding the subject of the Reformation Period so that the sentence became syntactically complete.

Data (5) shows the inconsistency of the elements in the details. The elements of money politics and disinformation are in the form of nominal phrases, while low legal awareness is in the form of adjectival phrases, so the three are not grammatically aligned. According to Putrayasa (2014), the alignment of forms is one of the important characteristics of effective sentences. Improvements are made by adding conjunctions and before the last element to emphasize the relationships between the elements in detail.

Data (6) shows the incorrect use of the breakdown element because there is no conjunction and before the last element in the detail series. Setyawati (2019) emphasized that the use of appropriate conjunctions is necessary to maintain clarity of the relationship between elements in a sentence, especially in details that contain three or more elements.

Overall, the findings of this study are in line with the results of previous research showing that ineffective sentence errors dominate the types of syntactic errors in student writing. This indicates that the mastery of the rules of effective sentence preparation in Indonesian still needs to be improved, especially related to the completeness of sentence elements, word sparing, and the harmony of elements in detail. The errors of ambiguity and inconsistency found in the second data also indicate the need for more attention to the logic between elements in compound sentences in students' scientific papers.

Table 1 Syntax Error Analysis in Group 4 PKn Papers

No	Types of Errors	Data from the Paper	Repairs	Brief Description
1	Absence of Subject	Dan adapun fungsi Konstitusi, antara lain:	Adapun konstitusi antara lain:	Sentences begin with the conjunction 'And' and have no subject; The 'And' conjunction at the beginning of the sentence is omitted.
2	Ineffective Sentences	Konstitusi merupakan dasar hukum tertinggi yang dimiliki oleh suatu negara.	Konstitusi adalah dasar hukum tertinggi suatu negara.	The use of the phrase 'owned by' is redundant so that the sentence becomes ineffective.
3	Phrase Arrangement Inaccuracies	Nilai konstitusional bersifat filosofis dan ideologis karena mencerminkan cita-cita dan tujuan suatu bangsa.	Nilai konstitusional bersifat filosofis dan ideologis karena mencerminkan tujuan dan cita-cita suatu bangsa.	The sequence of phrases 'ideals and goals' is less logical; 'Goals and aspirations' are common in academic contexts.
4	Ineffective Sentences	Dengan demikian, hubungan sosial dapat berjalan dengan baik.	Dengan demikian, hubungan sosial berjalan dengan baik.	The use of the word 'could' makes the sentence ambiguous and ineffective as a concluding statement.
5	Absence of Predicate	Beberapa lembaga negara yang diatur dalam UUD 1945 antara lain:	Lembaga negara yang diatur dalam UUD 1945 antara lain:	The phrase 'Some state institutions regulated in the 1945 Constitution' serves as a subject without a clear predicate before the colon.
6	Ineffective Sentences	Kami berharap makalah ini dapat	Kami berharap makalah ini dapat	Sentences are too long and repetitive because the phrase

No	Types of Errors	Data from the Paper	Repairs	Brief Description
		memberikan informasi dan pengetahuan yang bermanfaat bagi pembaca dan kami juga berharap dapat memperoleh saran maupun kritik yang membangun.	memberikan informasi yang bermanfaat bagi pembaca sekaligus memperoleh saran dan kritik yang membangun.	'we hope' is used twice in a single sentence.
7	Phrase Arrangement Inaccuracies	...tidak akan terwujud tanpa bantuan, bimbingan, serta dukungan dari berbagai pihak.	...tidak akan terwujud tanpa dukungan, bimbingan, dan bantuan dari berbagai pihak.	The phrase 'help, guidance, and support' doesn't follow a general pattern from general to specific.
8	Ineffective Redundant Sentences	Norma berfungsi sebagai pedoman dalam bertindak laku bagi setiap anggota masyarakat.	Norma berfungsi sebagai pedoman bertindak laku bagi setiap anggota masyarakat.	The preposition 'in' after 'guidelines' is redundant and makes the sentence uneconomical.
9	Phrase Arrangement Inaccuracies	Dengan adanya norma, seseorang mengetahui tindakan apa yang diperbolehkan dan tindakan apa yang tidak boleh dilakukan.	Dengan adanya norma, seseorang mengetahui tindakan yang diperbolehkan maupun yang tidak boleh dilakukan.	The second repetition of the phrase 'what action' is unnecessary and causes the sentence to be inefficient.
10	Absence of Subject	Oleh karena itu, pada kesempatan ini kami menyampaikan ucapan terima kasih kepada:	Oleh karena itu, kami menyampaikan ucapan terima kasih kepada:	The phrase 'on this occasion' is redundant and extends the distance between the conjunction and the subject of the sentence.

Table 2 shows six syntax errors found in the second student's paper. In contrast to the first paper which contains more errors in the form of absence of subject and ineffective sentences, the errors in this second paper are more varied and include types of errors such as ineffective sentences, ineffective sentences, ambiguity of sentences, incomplete sentences, inconsistencies of sentence elements, and misuse of detail elements. The diversity of these types of errors indicates that the authors of the second paper face more complex challenges in applying syntactic rules, particularly those related to logic, in compound sentences and the alignment of elements in detail.

Table 2 Syntax Error Analysis in Group 2 PKn Papers

No	Types of Errors	Data from the Paper	Repairs	Brief Description
1	Less effective sentences	Dalam demokrasi, rakyat memiliki hak untuk menentukan arah kebijakan negara baik secara langsung maupun melalui wakil-wakil yang mereka pilih.	Dalam demokrasi, rakyat memiliki hak untuk menentukan arah kebijakan negara, baik secara langsung maupun melalui wakil-wakil yang mereka pilih.	Sentences are less effective because the relationship of correlative elements has not been marked appropriately so that the clarity of sentence structure is reduced.
2	Ineffective sentences	Diterapkannya sistem multi partai menyebabkan sering terjadi pergantian kabinet sehingga pemerintahan tidak stabil.	Penerapan sistem multipartai menyebabkan sering terjadinya pergantian kabinet sehingga pemerintahan tidak stabil.	The use of the applied form causes sentences to be less straightforward and less in accordance with the scientific variety.
3	Ambiguitas kalimat	Pemerintahan Soeharto menekankan stabilitas nasional, namun membatasi kebebasan politik media.	Pemerintahan Soeharto menekankan stabilitas nasional, namun membatasi kebebasan politik dan kebebasan media.	The phrase political freedom of the media has a double meaning so it needs to be clarified.
4	Incomplete sentences	Ditandai dengan kebebasan pers, pemilu langsung, partisipasi masyarakat yang lebih luas.	The Reformation period was marked by press freedom, direct elections, and wider public participation.	The sentence does not have a clear subject so it does not qualify for a complete sentence.
5	Inconsistency of sentence elements	Masa Reformasi ditandai dengan kebebasan pers, pemilu langsung, dan partisipasi masyarakat yang lebih luas.	Meskipun banyak kemajuan telah dicapai, berbagai tantangan seperti politik uang, rendahnya kesadaran hukum, dan disinformasi masih menghambat kualitas demokrasi.	The breakdown elements are not arranged in parallel because there is no conjunction before the last element.
6	Detail element errors	Oleh sebab itu, diperlukan komitmen bersama antara pemerintah, masyarakat, dunia pendidikan untuk memperkuat budaya demokrasi.	Oleh sebab itu, diperlukan komitmen bersama antara pemerintah, masyarakat, dan dunia pendidikan untuk memperkuat budaya demokrasi.	Details of more than two elements require a conjunction and before the last element for the relationship between the components to be clear.

Based on the comparison of the analysis results in Table 1 and Table 2, it was found that several types of syntax errors both appeared in both papers. The most prominent and consistent type of error appearing on a paper is ineffective sentence errors. This shows that students in general still have difficulty composing sentences that are cohesive, clear, and not long-winded.

In addition, incomplete sentence errors are also found in both, although they are different forms. In the first paper, the incomplete sentence occurs because the predicate is not explicitly present, while in the second paper, the incomplete sentence is caused by the absence of the subject. Errors in the use of detail elements also appear in both papers, especially in the form of inaccuracies in the use of conjunctions in the series of details.

On the other hand, there are types of errors that are only found in one of the papers. The absence of subject and the imprecision of the phrase arrangement only appear in the first paper, while sentence ambiguity and element inconsistency are only found in the second paper. This shows that even though there is the same pattern of errors, each writer has different weaknesses in applying the rules of Indonesian syntax.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, sixteen syntactic errors were found in student papers in the Civic Education course. These errors include ineffective sentence errors, incomplete sentence errors, sentence ambiguity errors, sentence element inconsistency errors, and incorrect use of detail elements.

The most dominant errors are those related to sentence effectiveness. These findings show that students still need to improve their understanding of sentence composition in accordance with the rules of Indonesian syntax. Therefore, Indonesian language learning needs to pay more attention to the ability to write effective sentences in scientific papers.

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