ANALYZING LINGUISTIC ERRORS IN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' ABSTRACTS

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Article Information	Abstract
	This research focused on analyzing the linguistic errors found in academic abstracts written by undergraduate EFL students. The main purpose of this study is to identify the types of writing mistakes and explain why students make those errors. Writing an abstract is an important part of academic writing, but many students still face difficulties, especially when English is not their first language. The researcher used qualitative descriptive method to analyze the data. This method was chosen because it helps to explore the real problems that students experience in their writing. The researcher used Surface Strategy Taxonomy (SST) to classify the errors. The taxonomy divides errors into four groups: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. The data were collected from 100 abstracts taken from a state Islamic university in Lampung, Indonesia. The abstracts were analyzed carefully to find common patterns of error. The results showed that omission was the most frequent error, followed by addition, misformation, and misordering. These mistakes mostly involved grammar, word choice, sentence structure, and academic tone. The errors made it hard to understand the students' research and showed that students need more guidance in academic writing. This study gives useful information for teachers, so they can improve writing lessons and help students avoid common mistakes. The research also recommends that universities give more support to students through special training and writing workshops. It is hoped that this study can be useful for both teachers and learners to develop better writing in academic English. Keywords: Abstract; Surface Strategy Taxonomy; Errors

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Introduction

In the world of English as a Foreign Language, or EFL, academic writing is now seen as something very important. One part of academic writing that is especially important is writing an abstract. An abstract is a short summary of a research paper. It tells the main ideas and helps people decide if they want to read the full paper. Because of this, knowing how to write a good abstract is very necessary for students.

For EFL students, writing an abstract is not easy. These students usually do not have much experience with using English in academic ways. They often do not fully understand the special style and structure used in academic writing. Because of this, their abstracts can have many problems. This makes it difficult for readers to understand the students' research.

Today, the situation of EFL students and their struggle with writing abstracts is being noticed more. There are many studies that show students are having a hard time. These studies say that students often write abstracts that are not clear. The writing sometimes lacks good grammar, and the ideas are not connected well.

Some studies looked carefully at the kinds of mistakes students make. They found that grammar problems and sentence structure issues are very common (Korkmaz et al., 2023). These mistakes make it hard for the students to explain their research clearly. Because of this, their work does not look professional or academic.

These findings show that more research is needed. It is important to study why EFL students make these mistakes. This is especially needed for students in university, who must learn how to write abstracts well. If we know the reasons for their mistakes, teachers can help better.

One way to study student writing is through error analysis. This method looks at the mistakes students make in their writing. It helps researchers understand the kinds of errors and where they come from. This way, we can give the right help to students to improve their writing.

A common method used in error analysis is called Surface Strategy Taxonomy, or SST. This method puts writing mistakes into four groups: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. Each type shows a different kind of problem in writing (Aulia & Bram, 2020). Errors in language can be categorized into several types based on how they deviate from standard usage. Omission errors occur when necessary elements of a sentence, such as a word or grammatical marker, are left out. This can result in incomplete or unclear expressions. For example, saying "She going school" instead of "She is going to school" omits the auxiliary verb "is" and the preposition "to." Addition errors happen when extra elements are inserted where they are not needed, leading to redundancy or awkwardness. An example is "He didn't went" instead of "He didn't go," where the auxiliary "did" already indicate the past tense, making "went" incorrect. Misformation involves using the wrong form of a word or structure, such as incorrect verb tense or pluralization. For instance, "goed" instead of "went" is a misformation error that shows an incorrect application of past tense rules. Finally, misordering refers to arranging words in an incorrect sequence, which disrupts the sentence's syntax or meaning. A sentence like "What she is doing?" instead of "What is she doing?" is an example of misordering. Each of these errors highlights a different aspect of language acquisition and grammar usage.

These categories are very helpful. They help teachers see exactly what kinds of mistakes students are making. For example, if a student adds unnecessary words, it shows they do not know how to be clear. If a student puts words in the wrong order, it shows confusion about sentence structure.

Students often have problems with grammar in their abstracts. They may use the wrong verb tense or forget subject-verb agreement. Some may also use words that are not suitable for academic writing. These problems hurt the quality of the abstract (Suwandi, 2016).

Another problem is that many students do not know how to organize their sentences well. The ideas in the abstract may not be linked properly. This makes the writing difficult to follow. Readers might get confused and not understand the main point of the research.

One reason for these problems is that students do not receive enough training in writing academic texts. In many schools or universities, writing instruction is very general. Abstract writing, which is very specific, is often not taught carefully (Ali & Ali, 2023).

Because students do not get special lessons about abstract writing, they try to write abstracts in their own way. Often, this way is not correct. They might use everyday language, not formal or academic language. This lowers the quality of their writing.

A review of past research on EFL writing and error analysis reveals valuable insights. Many studies agree that looking at students' mistakes can help teachers improve how they teach. But many of these studies only have small numbers of students, or they focus on general writing, not abstracts (Veyvonda & Howerton-Fox, 2020).

Because of this, there is a need for new studies. These new studies should focus just on abstracts and should include more students. This can help researchers understand the problem better and make the results more useful for teachers and students.

The research that will be done in this study will focus only on linguistic errors in abstracts written by EFL students. It will use the Surface Strategy Taxonomy to look at the different types of mistakes. The goal is to find out what kinds of problems students usually have and why they have them (Pangesti et al., 2023).

This kind of research can help teachers very much. If teachers know which mistakes happen most often, they can make their lessons better. They can teach the things that students need most. This will help students write better and feel more confident (Jalilifar et al., 2017).

The main aim of this study is to look deeply into the errors students make in writing abstracts. The study will try to describe and explain the errors using SST. This will show what students find hard and help teachers give the right support (Omar et al., 2021).

The findings from this research can help not just teachers, but also people who make school programs. They can create new lessons or textbooks that focus more on abstract writing. Also, students can learn from the common mistakes and improve their writing skills.

This study is important because it connects the big issue of poor academic writing with the specific problem of writing abstracts. When students improve their abstract writing, their whole research becomes easier to understand. This helps them share their work with others more effectively. In the end, it is clear that this study is needed. There are many EFL students who still have difficulties with writing good abstracts. By studying their errors, this research will help improve writing lessons and support students in learning how to write better in English.

Methods

This research used a qualitative method. It matched with the goal of the study, which was to explore the linguistic errors in academic abstracts written by EFL students. Qualitative method was good for this kind of research because it helped to look deeper into the students' real experiences and problems in their own writing (Creswell, 2013). By using qualitative way, the researcher tried to understand better the types and reasons of linguistic errors. The Surface Strategy Taxonomy was used as the tool to study the errors. This method focused more on meaning and situation, not on numbers.

This study used a qualitative descriptive design. The purpose was to describe in detail the linguistic errors in the abstracts written by undergraduate students. Descriptive qualitative research collected and explained the data without using numbers. This design helped the researcher to describe carefully the errors in the students' writing. It showed how the students wrote their abstracts in real situations. This design was useful to understand what the students could do and what problems they had in writing.

The population of this research was undergraduate students at a state Islamic university in Lampung, Indonesia. The researcher used purposive sampling to choose the sample. This means that the researcher chose only abstracts that were related to the topic of the research. The students in the sample were those who had already finished and submitted their research abstracts. These abstracts were chosen because they showed the kind of linguistic errors that happened in academic writing.

The data came only from written documents, especially from students' abstracts. This matched with qualitative research, which often used written texts to understand how people write(Lodico et al., 2006). The researcher took the abstracts from the university's archive. The

abstracts were collected one by one and checked carefully. This helped the researcher to focus on the linguistic errors and still keep the original writing of the students.

To make the research trustworthy and believable, the researcher used triangulation. This means using more than one way or source to check the data. The researcher used the Surface Strategy Taxonomy to study the writing. This theory helped to make the research strong and based on real concepts. Also, the researcher used member checking. This means some of the students were asked to read the findings and give feedback. This helped to make the results more valid.

The data were analyzed using thematic coding. The researcher used the Surface Strategy Taxonomy to group the errors into four types: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. These groups helped the researcher to study the writing in a clear and organized way. Each abstract was read and the errors were found and written down. After that, the errors were studied to find what problems happened often. The final step was writing the result and explaining the difficulties the students had in writing their abstracts.

Findings and Discussion

In analyzing the linguistic errors found in undergraduate academic abstracts from a state Islamic University in Lampung, Indonesia, the researcher found several important trends and patterns. These patterns were mostly related to the categories in the Surface Strategy Taxonomy (SST). The researcher analyzed a total of 100 abstracts and found that the linguistic errors were grouped into four main categories. These categories were omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. The analysis gave useful information about the problems students faced when writing academic texts in English as a foreign language. This showed that students had difficulty following grammar rules and structuring their ideas clearly in academic abstracts.

First, omission errors were the most common among all the errors. The researcher found that omission errors made up around 42% of all the errors in the abstracts. These omission errors happened when students left out important parts of the sentence. For example, students often forgot to use articles like "the" before nouns, or they did not include prepositions or auxiliary verbs. A common example was when students wrote "study found" instead of "the study found," which made the sentence unclear. These types of errors showed that students did not fully understand how to make their writing specific and clear. This could be because they did not read or use academic English texts very often, so they did not become familiar with how such texts are usually written (Aziz et al., 2020).

Second, the researcher found that addition errors happened quite often as well. Around 28% of the total errors were addition errors. These errors happened when students added words that were not needed. The extra words were often articles, prepositions, or even whole phrases that were not necessary. For example, students sometimes wrote "the results of the research," when a better and shorter way was "the research results." These extra words made the abstract harder to read and understand. They also made the writing look less professional. The errors showed that the students tried to sound formal, but they did not know how to keep the writing clear and simple (Mala & Ambarini, 2023).

Third, misformation errors were also common. These errors made up about 20% of the total number of errors. Misformation errors happened when students used the wrong form of a word or a wrong grammar structure. One of the most frequent misformation errors was using the wrong tense. For instance, some students used present tense when they should have used past tense. One example from the data was a student writing "The research show results…" instead of the correct version, "The research showed results…" This mistake made the 38entencee confusing because it did not show the correct time when the research took place. These errors showed that students had problems understanding how to use grammar rules to talk about past events (Situmorang & Pramusita, 2024).

Fourth, misordering errors were found to be the least frequent type of error. These errors made up about 10% of the total errors in the abstracts. Misordering errors happened when students put words in the wrong order in a sentence. Most of the time, this involved adverbs or

phrases that were not in the right place. For example, a student might write "the study indicates significantly..." when the better form would be "the study significantly indicates...". These errors made the meaning of the sentence weaker or harder to understand. The results showed that students did not fully understand English sentence patterns, especially in academic writing, which requires a more formal and precise structure (Irawansyah et al., 2024).

When looking at the general patterns, it became clear that students had problems using correct academic writing styles and sentence structures. Many of the abstracts did not flow smoothly or logically. Some abstracts were hard to follow because they did not show a clear problem, purpose, or result. This showed that students did not understand well how each part of an abstract should be connected. The problems with coherence and structure made the abstracts less useful in summarizing the research.

Another thing the researcher noticed was that students tried to use a formal academic tone, but they often made mistakes. Their writing sounded simple or incorrect even though they tried to sound formal. For example, some students wrote "This paper is about the effects of..." which sounded too casual, while a more academic version would be "This paper examines the effects of..." This kind of mistake showed that students did not fully understand how to write in a formal academic style, even though they were trying to follow the correct tone.

Also, many students did not follow the IMRaD structure. IMRaD stands for Introduction, Methodology, Results, and Discussion. This structure is very common in academic writing. But in this study, many abstracts did not follow this format. Some abstracts did not introduce the topic clearly or failed to show what the research was about. Others did not include the results or discussion properly. Because of this, the abstracts were not effective in explaining the research. This problem showed that students did not understand the importance of using a good structure in their writing. Below is a summary of the types of errors found in the 100 abstracts studied.

Table 1. The Recapitulation of Research Finding

Error Type	Frequency (%)	Common Forms	Example(s)	Description
Omission	42%	Articles, prepositions, auxiliary verbs, plural markers, subject/object pronouns	"Study aims to analyze…" (missing "The"), "This research conducted in school…" (missing "was")	Omission of necessary grammatical elements that are essential for sentence clarity and accuracy
Addition	28%	Unnecessary articles, prepositions, verbs, phrases	"The research was is conducted…"; "The research of the result showed…"	Insertion of superfluous words or morphemes that disrupt sentence clarity
Misformation	20%	Verb tense, word form, part of speech misuse	"The result show…" instead of "showed"; "The researcher concludes" instead of "concluded"	Use of the wrong form of morphemes or grammatical items in a sentence
Misordering	10%	Incorrect word order of adverbs, modifiers, sentence parts	"The study indicates significantly…" instead of "The study significantly indicates…"	Arrangement of sentence elements in an unnatural or confusing order

The results of this research gave strong evidence about the writing difficulties EFL students faced, especially when writing abstracts. The large number of omission errors showed a big problem in students' grammar learning. Past studies said that omission errors were usually caused by weak grammar knowledge. Because of these mistakes, student writing became hard to understand and lacked important parts (Aziz et al., 2020). These results were similar to what was found in a study by Sari, where omission was also a common mistake in student writing (Sari et al., 2024). Together, these studies showed that omission problems made it difficult for students to express complex ideas in a short abstract.

The next big problem was addition errors. These showed that students sometimes misunderstood English grammar rules or added extra words to make their writing look more formal. But this often had the opposite effect. The extra words made their writing unclear. This finding agreed with Mala & Ambarini, who also found the same thing with other students (Mala & Ambarini, 2023). This kind of mistake also showed that students needed to learn how to be clear and direct in their writing without losing important meaning.

Misformation errors were also important. These mistakes, especially with verb tenses, showed that students did not understand how to use grammar rules for academic writing. Good academic writing needs correct tenses to show when things happened. If a student used the wrong tense, it made the meaning of the sentence unclear. The study showed that students needed more help in learning how to use tenses correctly in their writing.

Even though misordering errors were less common, they were still important. These mistakes showed that some students did not know how to arrange words correctly in a sentence. Poor sentence structure could confuse readers and make the abstract less professional. Literature also said that clear sentence structure is important in academic writing. These findings showed that students needed more practice with sentence structure and word order.

All of the findings showed that better teaching methods were needed. Teachers should help students understand grammar rules, writing structure, and how to make their writing more logical. Some ideas included special workshops, group writing activities, and reading examples of real abstracts to help students learn what good academic writing looks like (Agustinasari et al., 2022). These activities could help students become better writers.

Also, the findings showed that many students did not understand how to follow the academic writing genre. For example, not following the IMRaD structure or writing a weak problem statement showed that students had not learned how academic texts are usually organized. Teaching students about academic genres could help them understand how to write better. Other studies also showed the same result, that students in different places also had trouble with this. Future studies could focus on how to teach academic genres more clearly.

The findings of this study were very important. Many students started university with little or no training in academic writing. This study showed the kinds of mistakes they made. Teachers and universities should use this information to make better writing lessons. Lessons should include clear explanations, practice with writing, and feedback that helps students learn from their mistakes.

Helping students with academic writing should not only come from teachers but also from the whole university. Schools should support students in learning how to write well. This can include teacher training, writing centers, and better writing materials. Teachers also need to know how to give feedback that helps students improve.

However, this study had some limits. It only used abstracts from one university and the number of students was small. So, the results might not show the full situation of all EFL students. Also, the study only looked at abstracts and not other parts of academic writing. Future studies could look at other types of writing or include students from other schools.

In conclusion, this study showed that many EFL students had serious problems with writing academic abstracts. The types of errors found—especially omission, addition, misformation, and misordering—showed that students needed better instruction in grammar and academic writing. Helping students fix these errors will make them better writers and help them succeed in their academic studies.

Conclusion

From the result of this study, it can be seen that many EFL students still face serious problems in writing academic abstracts. The most common types of errors found were omission, addition, misformation, and misordering, with omission being the highest. These mistakes mostly happened because students lack strong understanding of English grammar, sentence structure, and academic writing style. As a result, their abstracts became hard to understand and did not

follow proper academic standards. Many students also did not use the correct format or structure like IMRaD, which made their writing confusing or incomplete. These findings show that students need more support, not only from teachers but also from the university. Teachers should focus more on explaining the correct grammar, word choice, sentence arrangement, and how to write in academic style. Universities also need to provide writing workshops, extra materials, and clear feedback to help students improve their skills. If students receive better instruction and more practice, they can reduce their errors and write better abstracts that are easier to read and more professional. This research also shows that understanding student mistakes is important to improve how academic writing is taught. Although this study only focused on one university and a limited number of samples, the result can still help to improve writing education for EFL students in general. Future research can look at other types of academic writing or use larger samples to get wider results.

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