

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer explains the overview of the study. Background provides an explanation of the research topic. The research questions guide the investigation, focusing on identifying and interpreting syntactical errors. The objectives of the study outline the specific goals of the research. The significance of the study discusses its theoretical and practical contributions. Lastly, the scope and limitations of the study defines its scope and limitations

1.1 Background of the Study

Language is a powerful tool that enables us to communicate effectively, express our thought, and bring out our emotions. It acts as a bridge that connects individuals, allowing for interaction and understanding each other. According to Gee (2018), language is not only for a tool of communication but also a way for building social connections and convey background identity. Our ability in using language shapes our relationship, both in personal and professional, or formal and informal environments. A good language use is linked to positive personal traits, affecting how we communicate and build interpersonal relationships (Saleh, 2014).

There are four main skills in language, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing skill. Mastering these four language skills makes communication goes effectively (Brown, 2014). These skills are learned over time through both formal and informal education, showing that learning a language is a about process. A study of language called linguistics, one of the branches of linguistics is syntax. Chomsky (2002) stated syntax is a key branch of linguistics that focuses on the rules arranging how words combine to form phrases and how phrases come together to create sentences. It deals with the structure and organisation of language, helping us to understand the underlying patterns that determine how different elements of a sentence relate to one another.

Syntax is one component of grammatical structure, alongside morphology, which deals with the structure of words. While morphology focuses on the internal formation and structure of individual words, syntax organises of these words into

phrases and sentences, determining how they combine to create meaningful expressions (Noel, 2022).

In the study of syntax, sentence is commonly analysed through two key methods: constituent structure (also known as phrase structure rule) and tree diagrams (Carnie, 2013). According to Chomsky (2015), constituent structure involves breaking down a sentence into smaller components, or constituents, such as noun phrases (NP), verb phrases (VP), and prepositional phrases (PP).

Shifting focus to spoken language, the application of these syntactic rules becomes important for communication in real-time interactions. Unlike writing, which allows for careful construction and revision, speaking requires the speaker to produce grammatically coherent sentences spontaneously. Even though speaking or talking follows many of the same rules as writing, but it can be more flexible and adaptable because it happens right away during a conversation (Brown, 2014).

In spoken language, key elements like noun phrases (NP) and verb phrases (VP) remain very important. However, the rules of grammar can be more flexible, particularly in casual conversations where people often feel more comfortable expressing themselves freely. In these informal settings, speakers frequently rely on intonation, pauses, and nonverbal things, such as gestures and facial expressions that are absent in written communication. This use of vocal and physical signals adds depth to communication and makes it richer. Therefore, analysing spoken syntax becomes priority especially intriguing or interesting. It not only involves looking at the structure of sentences but also considers how these linguistic elements interact with some features of those nonverbal aspects that support and enhance what is being said. Combining language with nonverbal signals gives a full picture of how people communicate in daily life (Noel, 2022).

Furthermore, in everyday conversation, people often use incomplete sentences, interrupt each other, and correct themselves. Even with these changes, the basic rules of sentence structure still hold. For example, a speaker might start to say something, change what they want to say, and then return to their original thought, all while keeping clear patterns in their sentences. This shows how flexible talking can be while still following important grammar rules (Chomsky, 2002). This

flexibility in how people speak shows that they can easily handle the rules of sentence structure while talking in real time during conversations.

Moreover, spoken language requires adaptation to context and audience. In formal speaking situations, such as public speeches or presentations, speakers tend to use more complex and structured sentences that resemble written language. However, in casual conversations, speakers tend to use simpler sentence structures, but they still follow basic grammar rules that help keep their communication clear and effective (Brown, 2014). Then, the study of syntax is important for understanding both written and spoken language. In speaking, just as in writing, syntactic knowledge is important for organising ideas into coherent sentences, allowing speakers to communicate effectively in daily life. Understanding the role of syntax specifically in spoken, it is key to consider the process of first language acquisition and how it shapes a speaker's syntactic knowledge. First language acquisition occurs naturally during childhood, with young people typically acquiring the basic structures of their native language by the age of five (Berko Jean & Ratner Bernstein, 2016). During this time, children naturally start to understand how sentence structure works, learning how to combine words into phrases and sentences based on the grammatical rules of their native language (Chomsky, 2015). This process mostly happens without us being aware of it, thanks to our brain's natural ability to organise and understand language.

As young people grow up, their understanding of sentence structures becomes more advanced. This helps them create more complex sentences when they speak and write. The patterns they learn in their first language build a strong foundation for their communication skills. This influences how they handle both casual conversations and more formal communication. However, the situation becomes more complex when young people start to learn a second language (L2), such as English. Second language acquisition (SLA) often involves the transfer of syntactic patterns from the learner's first language (L1) to the second language, which can lead to both alignment and deviations from standard L2 syntax. According to Brown (2014), second language learners may rely on the syntactic rule of their L1 as they attempt to construct sentences in the L2. This habit can create interlanguage, which means the learner speaks using a mix of their first language and the new language

they are trying to learn. It is a temporary stage where parts of both the first language and the new language are mixed together while the learner is still improving. However, during this stage, learners often make grammar mistakes because they try to use rules from their first language when speaking or writing in the new language. Errors in using a language can help us understand how someone is learning, showing which parts of the new language are still difficult for them to follow. According to Brown (2014), these errors can be grouped into two types: interlanguage errors, which come from the influence of the learner's first language, and intralingual errors, which happen because of the difficult rules or patterns within the second language itself.

For young people acquiring English as a second language, syntactic errors often occur when the rules of their L1 diverse with those of English. For example, Indonesian learners may struggle with subject verb agreement or word order, as these elements function differently in their native language compared to English. These kinds of errors are a normal part of learning and offer useful knowledge into how the learner is developing their understanding of English grammar (Noel, 2022). When learners improve their skills in language, they slowly take in the grammar rules of the second language. This allows them to create grammatically correct sentences more often. Their ability to manage the sentence structures of both their first and second languages shows their increasing language skills, especially in formal situations where it is important to be precise in how they construct sentences.

In this study, the focus is on the students of Universitas Trunojoyo Madura, particularly those in the English Department. Analysing these students' sentences is important for a few reasons. Universitas Trunojoyo Madura has students who come from many different language and cultural backgrounds. These students have been learning English through formal education, starting as early as elementary school, and continuing through junior and senior high school.

Multicultural environment influences these students' language-learning experiences. Many of them are exposed to various Indonesian languages and dialects, such as Javanese, Madurese, and Bahasa Indonesia, in addition to English. This multilingual setting often leads to unique language use and mixing, potentially

affecting their English sentence structures. The combination of academic learning and diverse linguistic makes these students an intriguing group to study.

The English learning journey for young people typically begins in elementary school, where students are introduced to basic vocabulary, phrases, and sentence structures. This early learning helps prepare students for more formal English education in junior high school, where they start learning more complex grammar, including the rules for building sentences. By the time they reach senior high school, many students are expected to have a good command of English, which includes mastering basic sentence structures needed for both speaking and writing. However, for many young people, English learning does not stop at formal education. Many continue to improve their English skills through various way, such as social media, online courses, including movies, music, English learning application and video games. This way of learning allows them to strengthen their knowledge of sentence structure, especially in spoken English, where they can try out different sentence patterns during real-time conversations.

Moreover, the researcher chooses senior students from the last semester to be analysed because they have already completed all the required subjects in the English Department at Universitas Trunojoyo Madura (UTM). Throughout their academic journey, these students have been exposed to a wide range of courses, including grammar and syntax, which contribute to their overall language proficiency. Since they have undergone formal training in English for several years, their spoken utterances are expected to reflect a more advanced level of syntactic competence.

By selecting participants from the 8th semester, the researcher assumes that these students have developed a strong foundation in English and have had sufficient opportunities to practice speaking in academic and real-life situations. They are likely to have acquired essential linguistic skills, including sentence structure, vocabulary use, and grammatical accuracy, which are crucial for effective communication. Analysing their spoken utterances will help determine whether they still make syntactical errors and what types of errors occur despite their advanced level of study. If errors are still present in their speech, this may indicate

specific areas where students struggle, highlighting potential gaps in English instruction.

As Brown (2014) notes, second language learners often have difficulty transferring sentence structure rules from their native language, which can lead to differences from standard English. Choosing students from UTM is relevant because the native language (often Javanese or Indonesian or maybe Madurese) are quite different from English in their sentence grammar. For example, differences in word order or subject verb agreement between Indonesian and English may result in syntactic errors when young people speak English.

This mix of formal education and informal language learning creates a special environment for studying English sentence structure among young people. Their learning to English from various sources, along with the influence of their native language, makes them an interesting group for analysing how sentence structures are learned and used. Based on the statements above, this study aims to analyse the syntactic error and the factors of the error of English utterances produced by senior students of English Department in Universitas Trunojoyo Madura (UTM).

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the study that has been described, the research problems are formulated as follows:

1. What are syntactical errors found in the English utterances produced by senior students of English department in UTM?
2. What are the factors that influenced the errors in the English sentences of senior students of English department in UTM?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the syntactical errors that appear in the English utterances produced by senior students of English department in UTM.
2. To explain the factor of the errors in the English sentences of senior students of English department in UTM.

1.4 Significance of the Study

There are two significances of this study they are

1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically this study will enrich the results of research on syntactical error. Also, it will enrich the knowledge about the theories that used in this study.

2. Practical Significance

Practically, the results will benefit students analysing similar topics by deepening their understanding of errors and broadening their knowledge, helping them avoid similar mistakes. Additionally, this study will support lecturers by highlighting students' syntactic issues and offering useful information to help students recognise common syntactic errors.

1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The scope of this study is limited on the area of error which is focused on syntax based on the Error Analysis proposed by Gass et al. (2013) as the theory. This study limits the data taken from the utterances produced by 8th semester of Surabaya students (2021 academic year) of English Department of UTM that consist of errors

