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Volume 2, 31 Agustus 2017

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Bengkulu, Agustus 2017 Tim Redaksi

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## COMMON ERRORS IN USING FUNCTION WORDS

#### By:

## Sinarman Jaya Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu

#### Abstract

This study investigated the common errors of using function words by the Students of English Language Education Study Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu in written form. The study focused on the written errors encountered by the students in the background of their theses. The object of the study was 20 theses written in Academic Year 2015/2016. The data was taken by using checklist of function words. The sentences in the student's theses background were grouped into some categories based on table of using function words. It was found out that there were errors encountered by the students in using functions words such as: plural and singular, auxiliary verbs, determiners, particles, pronouns, conjunctions, and preposition. The errors might be caused by student's lack of awareness when they expressed ideas in written form, lack of knowledge of grammar, and lack of writing ability. It is suggested that students consider the importance of using correct form of function words in written form and take a lot of time practicing their writing skill.

Key terms: Common Errors, function words, thesis background.

#### INTRODUCTION

Writing a thesis is an important part for university students. It is not an easy job for some of them. They often find it frustrating. Once they start writing down their thesis they will be forced to think of it clearly, logically, and concisely. They are expected to present ideas in simple and correct words. The sentences in a thesis should be grammatically correct, clear, specific and detail related to the topic being discussed. Moreover, it should be supported by empirical data, research findings, fact, and real condition in the field. It means that the writers have to demonstrate deep understanding of the concept, explore, discuss and even answer questions of the research.

A writer should take into account some elements of a good research to make his ideas flow smoothly and logically that make readers easy to follow what are presented in the thesis. One of the most important elements for your readers is the background. The background of your study will provide context to the information discussed throughout the research paper. Background information may include both important and relevant studies. This is particularly important if a study either supports or refutes your thesis. Sufficient background information helps your reader determine if you have a basic understanding of the research problem being investigated and promotes confidence in the overall quality of your analysis and findings. In addition, the background of the study helps the readers to follow the flow of

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Many students of English Study Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu encounter problems in organizing and writing their theses. Incomplete sentences, redundant phrases, obvious misspellings, and some grammatical errors are common problems for students in thesis writing. Some grammatical errors commonly happened are prepositions, pronouns, determiners, conjunctions, subject-verb-agreements, auxiliaries, verb forms, and particles (Myonglish, 2015, Abisamra, 2003). However, spelling and grammatical errors can be embarrassing. This study was aimed at finding out" What are common errors encountered the students of English Language Study Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu Academic Year 2015 / 2016 in writing theses background". AND THE RESERVE OF THE PARTY OF

#### METHODOLOGY

The design of this study was descriptive because it was intended to gain insight about the nature of a particular phenomenon (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001).

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The objects of this research were the theses background written by English Language Education Study Program graduated in 2015 / 2016 Academic Year. The theses were written by students in the Academic Year 2015/2016. There were 10 theses in the Academic Year 2015 and 10 theses in the Academic Year 2016.

Instrument is something used in performing a work (Ary, 2002). The instrument that had been used in collecting the data was "a table of checklistof students' errors in using function words in theses background assessments".

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The data in this study was collected by accessing the theses in the library, took 10 theses graduated in 2015 Academic Year and 10 thesis graduated in 2016 Academic Year.

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study was conducted revealed common errors faced by English Language Education Study Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu in using function words in their theses background.

Based on the research finding, the researcher had found there was one example of students' errors in using "preposition" from students' theses background part in academic year 2015 and 2016. The finding had explained below.

1. Source: RH (2016)

Title

: "A study of English Language Education program students' out of class English learning activity at Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu"

Finding:

From learning can make people understand anything, clever, success, and has a good attitude and morality. (Background: second paragraph of second sentence)

From the result above, the researcher could explain that the error was placed on the use of preposition "from" in the beginning of sentence. On the other hand, this form was incorrect because it was not suitable with the context of the sentence. The use of "from" did not make the meaning of the sentence became clear, even it made the meaning of the sentence was confusing. The use of "from" in the sentence was un needed. In addition, the verb "has" in the sentence was also incorrect because it was not suitable for the subject it "people". So that, if it was corrected the correct form was like this:learning can make people understand anything, clever, success, and have a good attitude and morality.

#### Students' Error in Using Function Words "Conjunction"

-หรือได้ - ที่เดือน แม้ คนเลเล อาเมาตาก - เมาติ - โดยสำนักนี้ และ

Based on the research finding, the researcher had found there was also only one example of error. which had been done by the students in the case of function words from students' theses background in academic year 2015 and 2016. The finding had explained below.

2. Source : FH (2016)

Title : "Using top down approach toward pronunciation ability of

Common Errors in Using Function Words Sinarman Jaya

fifth semester English students at Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu"

Finding:

Partner or people whom not understating what we are talking about, because our poor pronunciation. (Background: second paragraph of fourth sentence)

From the sentence above, so the error was placed on the part Partner or people whom not understating ...., this was error because the student used whom to connect subject and sentence object. In English this form was not allowed because the meaning of the sentence would be confusing. Then, the correct form of the sentence was: "Partner or people do not understanding what we talking about because of our poor pronunciation. (Background: second paragraph of fourth sentence)."

## Students' Errors in Using Function Words "Auxiliary Verb"

3. Source : RH (2016)

Title: "A study of English Language Education program students' out of class English learning activity at Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu"

Finding:

Learning very important to our life because many purpose we can get from learning. (Background: second paragraph of first sentence)

From the result above, the researcher could said that the error was placed between "learning" and "very" on the sentence. The student must place an auxiliary verb between those words, such as "is". In addition, the word "purpose" also must be as by -s to identify that it was plural form. So that, if it was corrected the correct form was like this: Learning is very important to our life because many purposes we can get from learning. (Background: second paragraph of first sentence).

4. Source: RH (2016)

Title: "A study of English Language Education program students' out of class English learning activity at Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu"

Finding: And learning can do in everywhere, like in the classroom and out classroom.

(Background: third paragraph of third sentences)

The error was placed on the use of modal verb in the beginning of sentence. The form of "can-do" was not appropriate with the context of sentence because the meaning was confusing. The correct form was if the writer changed the form into passive form. So that, if it was corrected the correct form was like this: Learning can be done in everywhere, like in the classroom and out classroom.

## 5. Source : KO (2016)

Title: "students' contraction ability in listening at the first and the third semester of English Study Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu"

Finding:

In fact, based on researcher's experienced and the result of the preliminary research data some students of English language Education Study Program at Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu in Academic Year201/2016 have problems in understand English contractions in listening. (Background: fourth paragraph of first sentence)

The error was placed on the word "experienced" in the beginning part of the sentence. This was incorrect because the form of "experienced" was not a noun form and it could not be placed to identify the main subject "researcher." In addition, if it was corrected the correct form was like this: In fact, based on researcher's experience and the result of the preliminary research data some students of English language Education Study Program at Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu in Academic Year201/2016 have problems in understand English contractions in listening.

#### 6. Source :ARA (2015)

Title: "Using Jumble alphabet in teaching vocabulary (A study at second grade Junior High School in SMP Negeri 02 kota Bengkulu Academic Year 2014/2015)".

Finding:

But in Indonesia, English is foreign language because the mother tongue not usual to use speak like a vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar and so on. (Background: fourth paragraph of first sentences) present form too. So that, if it was corrected correct form was like this: Therefore, in research the researcher wants to make a st about how to teach English Vocabulary by us jumble alphabet at junior high school.

The sentence was said error because in the middle part the writer did not put "to be" to link between subject "mother tongue" with "not usual". In addition, if it was corrected the correct form was like this: But in Indonesia, English is foreign language because the mother tongue is not usual to use speak like a vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar and so on

#### 7. Source: ARA (2015)

Title: "Using Jumble alphabet in teaching vocabulary (A study at second grade Junior High School in SMP Negeri 02 kota Bengkulu Academic Year 2014/2015)"

Finding:

Vocabulary also have important character to give expression own individual and talking ideas in English with others or to speech very important for her quickly build up a large store of words. (Background: fifth paragraph of second sentence)

From the sentence it could be seen that the error part on the auxiliary verb "have". It must be changed into "has" to make the sentence became correct form. Like the following form: Vocabulary also has an important character to give individual expression talk ideas in English with others or to speech is very important for her quickly build up a large store of words.

#### 8. Source : ARA (2015)

Title: "Using Jumble alphabet in teaching vocabulary (A study at second grade Junior High School in SMP Negeri 02 kota Bengkulu Academic Year 2014/2015)"

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The Finding: The transfer that the many the second transfer to the second transfer transfer to the second transfer transfer

Therefore, in this research the researches want to make a study about how to teach English Vocabulary using jumble alphabet at junior high school. (Background: sixth paragraph of fourth sentence)

From the sentence it could be seen that the student's errors in forming verb "want" and the written form of "researches". On the other hand, this form was incorrect because the sentence was present form then it must be formed by using present form too. So that, if it was corrected the correct form was like this: Therefore, in this research the researcher wants to make a study about how to teach English Vocabulary by using jumble alphabet at junior high school.

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9. Source: RKP (2016)

: "An analysis of cultural content Title based global material and local material in English text book for

senior high school"

Finding:

Textbook play a significant role in EFL teaching and learning by providing useful material to both teacher and students. (Background: first paragraph of first sentence)

This part of error had been found that the sentence had been used in the chapter I of her thesis. The error was placed on the use of verb "play" in the sentence between the subject "textbook" and noun "a significant". On the other hand, this form was incorrect because the verb was not followed by -s to state present tense. So that, if it was corrected the correct form was like this: Textbook plays a significant role in EFL teaching and learning by providing useful material to both teacher and students.

10. Source: ARA (2015)

: "An analysis of cultural content Title based global material and local material in English text book for senior high school"

Finding:

An English text book have to follow second (Background: curriculum. paragraph of first sentence)

In this thesis it could be seen that the students' had errors in using function words "auxiliary verb". On the other hand, this form was incorrect because the verb "have" was not written by "has" to identify singular subject as present tense form. Meanwhile, the correct form was like this: An English text book has to follow curriculum. THOU I HAVE I THE OF THE

11. Source : TS (2016) Title : "The effect of using 4/3/2 technique toward students' speaking fluency (a study of the third semester students of English Study Program in Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu)" green - tradit in a tradit of a second or second

and the commencer of the old the other and Finding: In speaking 1, the students practice to describe a picture in front of class, here the students are gave a picture and be asked to describe the picture activities in front of

class. (Background: second paragraph of second sentence)

In TS's theses it had been found that the sentence had been used in the chapter I of her theses. From the sentence it could be seen that the student had error in using function words "are gave". The error was placed on the used of verb "gave" in the sentence. On the other hand, this form was incorrect because it was a passive form but the writer used second verb after to be. otherwise the right form of passive form was to be followed by past participle form. So that, if it was corrected the correct form was like this: In speaking I, the students practice to describe a picture in front of class, here the students are given a picture and asked to describe the picture activities in front of class.

12. Source: LL (2016)

: "Students' ability in developing Title semester in fifth the paragraph Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu" Finding:

If a paragraph have a correct components of writing, it makes our writing can be understood easily. (Background: third paragraph of second sentence)

From the sentence it could be seen that the students' had errors in using function words "have". It could be error because the subject of the sentence was singular form but the verb which was used was "have". The right form of this case was; If a paragraph has a correct components of writing, it makes our writing can be understood easily.

13. Source: WJS (2016)

: "An appropriateness of the syntactic and semantic use of modal auxiliary in theses background at English Study Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu academic year 2014/2015"

Finding: Semantic describes and analyze meaning that relationship with words and sentence. (Background: third paragraph of first sentences)

Charles of British and Jane From the sentence it could be seen that the students' had errors in word "analyze". The word was error because it was not added by -s to identify that the sentence was simple present form. So that, if it was corrected the correct form was .10

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listening. (Background: third paragraph of first sentence)

From the sentence it could be seen that the student had error in the plural form of the word "skill. "This was error because before the word "skill" the writer had written word "four" so that to identify that it was plural form the writer must added -s in the word skill. In addition, if it was corrected the correct form was like this: In learning English as foreign/second language there are four skills to support learning: speaking, writing, reading, and listening.

18. Source: RH (2016)

Title: "A study of English Language Education program students' out of class English learning activity at Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu"

Finding:

And there are some component to support four skill in learning English like and grammatical, vocabulary third pronunciation. (Background: paragraph of second sentence)

From the sentence it could be seen that the student had error in the plural form of the word "component." This was error because before the word "component" the writer had written word "some" so that to identify that it was plural form the writer must added -s in the word skill. In addition, if it was corrected the correct form was like this: And there are some components to support four skills in learning English like grammatical, vocabulary and pronunciation.

19. Source: ARA (2015) Title ":"Using Jumble alphabet in teaching vocabulary (A study at second grade Junior High School in SMP Negeri 02 kota Bengkulu Academic Year 2014/2015)"

Finding: Based on researcher's observation, many English teachers taught some technique to teach vocabulary such as by song, movie, games, wall word, pictures, and grouping words and so on. (Background: sixth paragraph of first sentence)

programme de la composition della composition de One other part which had been taken by researcher as error in function words was the sentence Based on researcher's observation, many English teachers taught some technique to teach vocabulary such as by song, movie, games, wall word, pictures, and grouping words and so on above. It had been found from ARA's theses (2015) with the title "Using Jumble alphabet in teaching vocabulary (A study at second grade Junior High School in SMP Negeri 02 kota Year 2014/2015)" Bengkulu Academic Meanwhile, from the sentence it could be seen that the students' had errors in using function word "plural/sigular". The error was placed on the use of singular form in the word "technique" in the sentence. So that, if it was corrected the correct form was like this: Based on researcher's observation, many English teachers taught some techniques to teach vocabulary such as by song, movie, games, wall word, pictures, and grouping words and so on ..

The study found out that common errors of using function words in students' theses preposition, conjunction, background were auxiliary verbs, and plural and singular. The finding supported the statement of Abisamra (2003) that the common errors in writing theses into five categories, namely, grammatical or function words (preposition, articles, adjectives, causative verbs, etc.); syntactic (coordination, sentence structure, word order, etc.); lexical (word choice); semantic and substance (punctuation, capitalization, and spelling); and discourse errors.

In addition, Myonglish (2015) argues that function words (also called grammatical words) are words that have little lexical meaning or have ambiguous meaning, but instead of serve to express grammatical relationships with other words within a sentence. Function words are closed-class words. Languages do not easily add new words to this set. They are always relatively few and resistant to change. They are lexically unproductive and are generally invariable in form. For examples; Prepositions: of, at, in, without, between. Pronouns: he, they, anybody, it, one. Determiners: the, a, that, my, more, much, either, neither. Conjunctions: and, that, when, while, although. Auxiliary: verbs be (is, am, are), have, got, do. Particles: no, not, nor, as, and plural/singular. 

## CONCLUSION

1745 E 1774 C C STATES SE 4 (25 TH 25 C The findings indicates that the students of English Language Education Study Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu graduated in 2015 / 2016 Academic Year encountered errors in using function words in their theses background. The common errors were on area of singular, auxiliary verbs, determiners, particles, pronouns, conjunctions, and preposition. The errors might be caused by student's lack of awareness when they 12

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like this: Semantic describes and analyzes meaning that has relationship with words and sentence.

14. Source : DS (2016)

Title : "Internal factors influencing English Education Program students in speaking English at Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu"

Finding:

In mastering speaking, the students should know the factor influence in speaking English to improving their speaking ability. (Background: second paragraph of first sentence)

From the sentence it could be seen that the students' had errors in the word "improving". This could be error because the word "improving" was not functioned as gerund but it was a simple verb form which followed to- infinitive, so that the right form of the sentence was; In mastering speaking, the students should know the factor influence in speaking English to improve their speaking ability

15. Source : DS (2016)

: "Internal factors influencing Title English Education Program students in speaking English at Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu"

Finding:

Based on the background above, so the researcher interest to conducted the researcher by the title "Internal factors influencing English Education Program students in speaking English Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu. (Background: sixth paragraph of first sentence)

From the sentence it could be seen that the student had error in functioned simple present formula like in the part of sentences "so the researcher interest to conducted" and the use of "the researcher". This automatically error because after subject must be followed by first verb and added by -s or -es if the subject was third personal person. In addition, the form of to-infinitive in the sentence was also error because to- infinitive must be followed by first verb and not second or third verb. The form of "the researcher" was incorrect to be functioned as a noun in that sentence because it did not match with the context of sentence. So that, if it was corrected the correct form was like this: Based on the background above, so the researcher. is interested to conduct a research by the title

"Internal factors influencing English Education Program students in speaking English at Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu.

16. Source: DBP (2016)

Title : "An analysis of Junior High School students' learning style in learning English at SMPN 1 and SMPIT IQRA kota Bengkulu"

Finding:

Based on the background above, this the researcher want to conduct a research on analysis of Junior High School students' learning style in learning English at SMPN and SMPIT IQRA kota Bengkulu. (Background: eighth paragraph of first sentence)

The error was placed on the use of present formula form "the researcher want". It must be written in the right form of simple present, the verb "want" must be added by -s because the subject was third personal person. So that the correct form was "Based on the background above, the researcher wants to conduct a research on analysis of Junior High School students' learning style in learning English at SMPN 1 and SMPIT IQRA kota Bengkulu."

## Students' Errors in Using Function Words "Plural and Singular"

Black (2015) states that Function words are the words those are used to make sentences grammatically correct. Pronouns, determiners, prepositions, plurai/singular, and auxiliary verbs are examples of function words. If function words are missing or used incorrectly, it is probably considered poor speakers of English, but the listener would probably still get the main idea of what the speakers are saying. Based on the research finding, the researcher had found there were three findings of students' errors in function word plural and singular from students' theses background in academic year 2016. These finding had explained below. the term of the many of the state of

17. Source : RH (2016)

Title : "A study of English Language Education program students' out of class English learning activity at Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu"...

Finding: In learning English as foreign/second language there are four skill to support learning: speaking, writing, reading, and

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expressed ideas in written form, lack of knowledge of grammar, and lack of writing ability. It is suggested that students consider the importance of using correct form of function words in written form and take a lot of time practicing their writing skill.

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