Exploring Students' Use of Subject Noun Phrases and Subject Pronouns of their Thesis Writing Majoring in English Language at Universities in Ternate of North Maluku

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Abstract: One of the main characteristics of academic writing in English is the language used in texts which is more complex than in spoken language. This can be seen from the use of noun phrases in an academic text which is denser than in a spoken one. This article is part of the research which is to explore the students' use of subject noun phrases and their pronouns in sentences of their thesis writing. This qualitative research used documents in the form of the 'Background' section of 'Chapter I Introduction' of ten thesis from the students who graduated in 2018 at English Letters Study Program of Universitas Khairun to collect data. The data collected were analyzed using content analysis. Findings from the data analysis were discussed.

1 INTRODUCTION

Scientific writing as part of the tasks that must be carried out by students in academic life at a university is a productive skill that must be mastered by students to express their ideas in written form. Tarigan (1987: 7) said that writing is one of the language skills used for direct communication. In addition, Rimes (1983: 76) states: "Writing is a skill in which we express ideas, feelings, and thoughts arranged in words, sentences and paragraphs using eyes, brain, and hand". Students can communicate ideas and opinions through written forms such as communication through various forms such as letters, messages, or invitations. In the academic field, communication of ideas in the form of written works such as summaries, scientific works such as research proposals, and student research reports such as theses and dissertations are commonplace for students. It can be concluded that writing scientific papers is related to a process where the final product of writing is not produced in a short time or in an instant manner (immediately), but through a long stage. First, the students must think about the topic, do a mapping to understand the topic while looking for various information related to the topic.

Furthermore, whatever type of scientific writing to be written, various ideas related to the topic are written in words and sentences arranged in a number of paragraphs to produce writing according to the rules of good scientific writing.

Various forms of scientific papers such as books, reports, results of translations, essays, conference or seminar papers, scientific journals, research proposals, theses, dissertations, and abstracts are writings that are made to fulfill a task requirement at a college or university. Scientific papers are also used for various publications that are read by teachers or lecturers, or which are presented at conferences or seminars. "Academic writing could include any writing assignment given in academic settings" (Student Learning Centre Flinders University, 2017).

The life of students is always dealing with activities in writing scientific papers. It is a routine activity carried out by students in fulfilling the duties of lecturers and researchers in fulfilling their academic obligations. Each task in the form of scientific papers mentioned above must fulfill the elements or characteristics as a scientific writing. Good scientific papers must have a number of characteristics such as aspects of formality,

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accuracy, objectivity, explicitness (explicitness), complexity, and other scientific rules. The complexity of languages in scientific papers, especially those in English, can be seen from the use of noun phrases, especially those that function as the subject or subject matter of the sentence.

For students who specialize in English Language and Literature, each of these documents must be written in English. This is a challenge because English rules are very different from Indonesian, which is both their mother tongue and their official language. That is why students must strive aside from having to master the structure of English sentences, word choices and paragraphs in English, they must also know and be able to apply the principles of writing scientific papers in good English. Various obstacles are often faced by students in writing scientific papers in English because English is a foreign language that is only used formally when they are in school or university.

Based on the problems stated above and considering the importance of writing scientific papers for students when they are dealing with final assignments such as thesis writing, the researcher is interested in conducting research with the title: ' Exploring Students' Use of Subject Noun Phrases and Subject Pronouns of their Thesis Writing Majoring in English Study Program at Universities in Ternate of North Maluku'.

The objectives of this study are: First, to identify aspects that are characteristic of the complexity of English, especially the use of subject noun phrases, subject pronouns in students' English theses. Second, to investigate the obstacles faced by students in the use of subject noun phrases, subject pronouns in their English language thesis.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Definition of Scientific Writing

Some experts define the term of scientific writing. In English, scientific papers are often associated with the term of academic writing or scientific paper. The Indonesian Institute of Sciences, often abbreviated as LIPI (2012) defines scientific papers as the writing of R & D results and / or reviews, reviews, reviews, and systematic thinking as outlined by individuals or groups that fulfill scientific rules. Meanwhile, academic writing is defined as "any writing done to fulfill a requirement of a college or university, used for publications that are read by teachers and researches or presented at the conference" (Flinders University Student Learning Center, 2017). In other words, academic writing is intended as "any writing assignment given in an academic setting".

From some of these definitions, it can be concluded that scientific papers are written results of in-depth studies conducted either individually or in groups in the academic environment and follow scientific principles. In short, it can be said that scientific papers contain at least four important elements, namely the results of R & D or study, the perpetrators of either individuals or groups, scientific rules, and in the academic environment. It should be underlined that in the academic environment such as in universities, scientific papers are not only made by lecturers and researchers, but also commonly done by students in various forms. Elbows in Murray and Moore (2006: 22) argues that all people involved in the academic world are optimistic that they can write well. But there is another problem that is important for people to write is that they cannot avoid the writing process itself. Based on these opinions, it is important for those who are associated with writing scientific papers to know various forms of scientific writing as well as to understand and be able to apply scientific rules in scientific papers.

2.2 Various Forms of Scientific Writing

There are various forms or genres of scientific writing. According to the Student Learning Center, Flinders University (2017) scientific writing includes scientific papers, namely books, reports in the form of books, translations, essays, research papers and articles, conference papers, scientific journals, thesis, dissertations, and abstracts. Furthermore, LIPI (2012) mentions various forms of scientific papers such as scientific books, scientific magazines / journals, and proceedings.

Of the various forms of scientific writing, there are several forms of scientific writing that are usually made by students when studying in a college, namely translations, essays, papers and research articles, conference papers, scientific journals, theses, theses, dissertations, and abstract.

2.3 Scientific Writing Rules

There are several scientific rules that must be fulfilled in every scientific paper. LIPI (2012) defines scientific rules as a standard rule and generally applies relating to science. Furthermore, LIPI (2012) proposes generally accepted scientific

scientific papers, namely logical rules in (sequential), objective, systematic (following the rules of a systematic mindset), reliable (tested and valid), design (planned and have a design), accumulative (a collection of various sources recognized for its truth). In terms of the language used in scientific papers, Gillett (2017) underlines a number of characteristics of English scientific papers, namely: 'formal, precise, objective, explicit, accurate, hedging, responsible, and complex. Underlining the opinions of Halliday (1989), Gillett (2017) asserts that 'Formality' means that scientific writing avoids the use of: unofficial or colloquial expressions such as imprecise words namely stuff, a lot of, thing, sort of, big, nice, like; abbreviated words like can, don't, don't, don't, etc; and the form of a double verb like put off, bring up.

Meanwhile, 'precision' means using exact or specific information. For example, not writing "a lot of people" but "50 million people". 'Objectivity' means that what is emphasized is the information or argument that you want to convey not you. For this reason, the use of words 'I, me, myself, you should be avoided in English scientific research. For example, not "In my opinion, this is a very interesting study", but "This is a very interesting study." Another example, not "You can easily forget how different life was 50 years ago.", But "It was easy to forget how difficult life was 50 years ago."

Furthermore, 'explicitness' means there is a connection between one idea and another which is characterized by the use of signpost words (signs) both in sentences and paragraphs, for example, however, similarly, in addition, because, for example. "Explicitness" is also related to the need to write sources that become references in scientific papers, for example "McGreil (1977: 363-408) has shown that ...", and not "Researchers have shown that ...

'Accurate' is related to the accuracy of using words in scientific papers. For example when using the words "money", "cash", "currency", "capital" or "funds" in accordance with the right context. 'Accurate' is also related to the correct spelling of a written word.

"Hedging" is related to caution in expressing ideas through the use of cautious language or vague language. For example, the use of words "seem, believe, may, often, definite, and definitely".

Finally, 'responsibility' relates to claims made in scientific papers. That is, if an author claims a statement then the person concerned must provide evidence and justification.

From these two opinions, there is a link between scientific rules proposed by LIPI (2012) and Gillett (2017). For example, the logical term (LIPI, 2012) is in line with the meaning contained in the term 'explicitness' (Gillett, 2017; objective (LIPI, 2012) in line with 'precision' (Gillett, 2017); reliable (LIPI, 2012) in line with 'responsibility' (Gillett, 2017) and accumulative is also in line with the meaning of the term 'explicitness'.

'Complexity' is related to the fact that written language is more complex than spoken language. 'Complexity' in written language in English includes, among others, in sentence arrangement, more commonly used noun phrases, subordinate clauses, complement clauses with that / to, long series of prepositional phrases, nominalization, attributive adjectives, and adjective groups as complements.

The noun phrase as the subject consists of various compositions as outlined in the following examples of sentences:

a). Problems related to the concept of a delinquent subculture.

b.) If a student of British politics demanded to guide his research, the compiler would have little difficulty about the first and most significant maxim in the creed.

c). Nicolson's account is far too discreet, and obscures some of the most important features of the crisis.

d). The three main works are all rather slight when they come to the complexities of the Liberal attitude during the crisis.

e). The first step towards understanding the crisis of 1931 is to distinguish between different types of coalition government.

Noun phrase in sentence a). *certain problems* associated with a delinquent subculture consist of a combination of adjectives, nouns, adjectives derived from passive verbs, prepositions, articles, nouns, prepositions, articles, adjectives and nouns with the core nouns 'problems'. This includes a relatively long form of the subject noun phrase.

The noun phrase of the subject in sentence b). *a* student of British politics, derived from a combination of articles, noun words, prepositions, adjectives, and nouns with the core nominal word 'student'. Meanwhile, sentence noun phrases c). Nicolson's account is a form of a personal noun that functions as an adjective and noun word 'account'. In section d). The three main works, this noun phrase is a form of the word article, adjectives for numbers, adjectives, and nouns with the core noun ina works'. Finally, the noun phrase in the sentence e). The first step towards understanding the crisis of 1931 is a

combination of articles, adjectives in the form of ordinal numbers, prepositions, gerund-shaped verbs that function as nouns, articles, nouns, prepositions, and numbers with the 'step' core noun.

Some of the examples above illustrate that the noun phrase of the subject in English is relatively long consisting of various combinations of words. The noun phrases mentioned above also show that the noun phrase of the subject is usually an object not a person or often also called impersonalization, meaning that the noun phrases of the subject place more on the topic being discussed than the person. Meanwhile, because the subject noun phrases are usually nouns, then the subject pronouns are usually used such as 'this, that, these, those, they, and it'.

It is important to underline that all these rules must be fulfilled in every scientific paper. Moreover, scientific papers that deal with English must pay close attention to scientific rules that must also be met in terms of the language used. Murray and Moore (2006; 11) state: 'academic writing as being characterized by a dynamism that is often frustrating for those who are charged with the responsibility of doing it' shows that scientific writing is characterized by dynamic activity so that is something important but can make the writer feel frustrated because it is an obligation for them to solve it. In this regard, students as persons who are responsible for their writing must be able to complete the task properly.

2.4 Format of Scientific Writing

The format of scientific writing depends on the form or genre of scientific writing. For example, the essay format is different from the thesis format. But in general, the structure of scientific writing consists of three important parts, namely introduction, body, and conclusion. Particularly for scientific papers in the form of theses which are the focus of this research are divided into several chapters which include the Introductory Chapter, Literature Review Chapter, Methodology Chapter, Analysis and Interpretation Chapter. Especially at the beginning of the Introduction Chapter there is a Background text and this text is the main concern of this study.

The studies that have been carried out that is relevant to this research are what have been conducted by Parkinson and Musgrave (2013), Ansarifar, Shahriari, and Pishgadham (2017), and Hasan (2017). Parkinson and Musgrave (2013) conducted a study entitled "Development of phrase complexity in the writing of English for Academic Purposes students." This study focused on the use of noun phrases using the developmental progression index hypothesis suggested by Biber, Gray, and Poonpon (2011) to find out the academic writing produced by two L2 postgraduate level writers. The first group was those who are preparing postgraduate studies while the second group was those who have already registered for postgraduate studies. Noun phrases in the form of two sets of data were identified and pre-and post-modifiers (words that describe the noun phrase) were manually coded. The findings confirmed the proposed developmental index where a less proficient group used the attributive adjectives in the nominal phrase as previously thought. Also, the use of noun modifiers by more advanced groups (more proficient groups) in their numbered phrases was closer to the norm as in the publication of academic papers rather than noun phrases used by less proficient groups. In short, less proficient students used modifiers in the form of adjectives as pre-modifiers in their nominal phrases. Meanwhile, more proficient students used noun pre-modifiers and prepositional phrases in their number phrases.

Ansarifar, Shahriari, and Pishgadham (2017) conducted research entitled "Phrasal complexity in academic writing: A comparison of abstract written by graduate students and experts in applied linguistics." They also relied on the hypothesis used by Biber, Gray and Poonpon (2011) about a series of stages predicting development in examining the complexity of the formation of the use of noun phrases. Primarily, the purpose of their study was to compare abstracts by L1 MA Persian authors, L1 Persian PhD writers, and authors of publications in applied linguistics in terms of the characteristics of noun phrase modifications. Their findings indicated that the L1 MA authors group was differed significantly from the publication expert group in the use of four types of modifiers (types of modifiers), namely: pre-modifying nouns; -ed participles as post-modifiers; adjective-noun sequences as premodifiers; and multiple prepositional phrases as noun post-modifiers. Meanwhile, the L1 PhD group did not show any significant differences in using noun modifiers when compared with the expert group of authors, except for the use of multiple prepositional phrases as noun post-modifiers. The findings from this study helped understand how academic writing is more complex along with experience.

In the context of Indonesia especially in North Maluku, Hasan (2017) carried out research with the title 'English Language Formality in students' thesis specialized in English Language Study Program in Ternate of North Maluku' with the object of studens' thesis in three universities in Ternate City, North Maluku. Findings showed that from 12 Background text of students' thesis from four study programs specializing in English in three different universities in North Maluku province, there was still found the use of English that is not in accordance with the provisions of English language formality. For example, there is the use of informal language expressions such as 'like', followed by 'a lot of' and 'thing'. The 'like' word was found in the thesis text of the students of the English Literature Study Program at the Faculty of Literature and Culture of Khairun University and STKIP Kie Raha. It was also found that the use of the word "a lot of" was found in the thesis text of students of the English Language Education Study Program at North Maluku Muhammadiyah University and students of the English Language Education Study Program, FKIP, Khairun University. Meanwhile, the use of the word 'thing' was proven to be used in the thesis text of the students of the English Literature Study Program at the Faculty of Literature and Culture of Khairun University and STKIP Kie Raha. The abbreviated words found are 'etc' and 'e.g. The word 'etc' was found in the thesis text of students of the English Language Education Study Program at Muhammadiyah University and English Education Study Program Students, FKIP, Khairun University. Whereas the word 'e.g. 'was found in the students of the English Language Education Study Program at the Muhammadiyah University of North Maluku.

The research above relates to the rules of scientific writing with a focus on research on aspects of the formality of English. This research is still related to the rules of scientific writing but is more focused on aspects of the complexity of English, especially in the use of subject noun phrases as has been done by Parkinson and Musgrave (2013) and Ansarifar, Shahriari, and Pishgadham (2017) and how subject pronouns but more specifically involving S1 students who have written their thesis in English.

3 METHOD

3.1 Research Design

This research was a qualitative research because the researcher wanted to know in detail the phenomena being studied rather than trying to associate between two or more variables. In addition, the data obtained were in the form of text (words) from student thesis documents and not in numerical form, and analyzed to find thematic descriptions through text analysis rather than statistical analysis. Creswell (2012) states that in qualitative research "at each stage of the research process: exploring a problem and developing a detailed understanding of a central phenomenon; ... collecting data based on words ...; analyzing the data for description and themes using text analysis.

3.2 Research Subjects

The research subjects were not humans but in the form of objects, especially texts on the Background of Chapter 1 of undergraduate thesis (S1) students who specialize in English language and literature graduated in 2018 at both public and private universities in Ternate. The total number of subjects of this research is Background text in Chapter I of English-language theses are 37 (thirty seven) theses with details as follows: 10 (ten) theses of English Letters Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Studies and 10 (ten) theses from the English Language Education Study Program of the Faculty of Teachers Training and Education, both from Khairun University. Then, 10 (ten) theses from English Language Education Study Program of North Maluku Muhammadiyah University, and 7 (seven) thesis from the College of Teacher Training and Education (STKIP) Kie Raha, North Maluku. The ten theses from each faculty or college were randomly selected without considering the gender of the owners of the thesis.

3.3 Location and Time of Research

This research was conducted at Khairun University, and the College of Teacher Training and Education (STKIP) in Ternate City for a period of 3 (three) months from August to October 2018.

3.4 Data Collection Technique

The research data were in the form of documents (Creswell, 2012). In this case, the researcher collected a total of 40 English-language theses in 2018 graduates stored in the Library or Study Program specializing in English Language and Literature at Khairun University, Muhammadiyah University, and the College of Teacher Training and Education. Then, the researcher read and gave codes in the Background section of Chapter I text from each of the student's thesis for further analysis.

3.5 Data Analysis Technique

The data collected in the form of photocopies of text Background of the first chapter of the student's thesis were then analyzed using Content Analysis according to the focus of the research in this study, namely the use of subject noun phrases and subject pronouns of English in the English thesis text section.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results

The following data analysis is divided into three parts. Part I is the analysis of the data of 'Background' thesis from respondents from the English Letters Study Program at the Faculty of Cultural Studies. There are ten theses consisting of five 2017 theses and five 2018 theses.

Analysis of the data in the 'Background' section of ten student theses shows that noun phrases are more likely to use a single noun in the form of people's noun names or other people such as "Myth is one of reliance ...", "Mythopoeic is exploring ...", "Twilight is one of the novel ... ". In addition, also used noun phrases with modifiers in the form of adjectives, articles, or demonstrative words such as: "Literary works help the ...", "This novel is the first series of ...". Only a few more complex noun phrases are used either by using nouns or prepositions and nouns relative to: "The legend of the vampire is trusted by", " Novel 'Twilight' as the fiction which is released in twentieth century brings a different image ... "," The part of the story is still consistent with ... "

The data also show that the ten students used pronouns either referring to people or objects, for example: "It can save ...", "They can go out ...", "It makes the researcher ...". In its use, it is often that the pronouns are not appropriate or in line with the verb used. For example in the phrase "She meet with ..." the right verb is "meets" if simple present tense or "met" if simple past tense.

Meanwhile, Part II, the analysis of 'Background' text data from the ten thesis of the students of FKIP English Language Education Study Program (five in 2017 and five in 2018) show a more similar finding with the thesis of English Letters Study Program's students. Data show that more single nouns are used in the composition of noun phrases, followed by noun phrases consisting of noun words with premodifiers in the form of adjectives or articles or demonstrative words. For singular nouns are for example in the phrase: "Language is used as means of ...", "Language can be considered as ...", "People use language to ...", "English is the foreign language ...", "Dictation is one technique that ... "," Students will listen the text ... ". The use of noun phrases with pre-modifiers is in the form of adjectives or article words or pointers can be seen in the following example: "The technique or method must be relevant in ...", "Therefore, the researcher is interested in using ...", "The activities are preferred by ... " Also, there are only a few uses of noun phrases with nouns or prepositions such as: "As one of international language, most of the world used English in ...", "Aim of this research is students' dictation ..." (see Table 2).

The data also shows that the ten students used the pronominal in the 'Background' text of their thesis either referring to people or objects, such as: "He feels helpless whenever ...", "They learn more in grammar ...", "It is one of the parts of speech ... ". Also found is the use of pronominal which is out of sync with the verb used, for example: "That are very important that ..."

Analysis of the data from the 'Background' text on the seven theses of STKIP Kie Raha English Language Education Study Program students show the following: 1. The use of single nouns is still found in their texts such as: "Reading is the active process ...", "Reading can make every one ... "," In English department, reading is one of the skills that ... "," And also Reading is one of the skills which ... "," Reading determines the successful of ... ". What is interesting is that there was more use of noun phrases with adjective pre-modifier, article words and with prepositional phrases than their colleagues in FIB and FKIP. For example, the use of noun phrases with adjective pre-modifier and article words: "This learning model is not only used ...", "The goal, therefore, is to gain ...", "many problems are found in ...", "Because short story is a piece of ... "," From the result of observation, the same problem was happened at ... "," So, the teacher must choose interesting ... ". The use of noun phrases with prepositional phrases, including using possessive pronouns can be seen in the example sentences such as: "All teachers in Indonesia are more specialized teachers in ...", "When you are going to come before ...", "Because the "The students' problem in learning narrative text can be overcome and ...", "Thus, having abilities in translation becomes a primary necessity for ...", "The errors in translation ... " A sentence like this seems to come from the results of

paraphrasing or quoting a sentence from the reference source used.

Data from the seven 'Background' thesis of STKIP students also show pronouns uses such as: "It will take time and opportunity for teachers to ...", "It means that the ...", "So, they are so lazy to read and ...", "They have difficulties in ...", "It is associated with ...", "Hence, they need media to help students in ...", "As the result, it does not show a ...". Also there are still pronominal uses that do not match the verb used as in the sentence: "He / She also needs to be reinforced ...".

4.2 Discussion

Data analysis from the text 'Background' thesis of students from the FIB English Letters Study Program, FKIP English Language Education Study Program, and STKIP Kie Raha English Language Education show similarities in the use of noun phrases namely single nouns and noun phrases with adjective pre-modifiers. Referring to the hypothesis of development progression index from Biber, Gray, and Poonpon (2011) as quoted by Parkinson and Musgrave (2013) and Ansarifar, Shahriari, and Pishgadham (2017), this indicates that the use of the noun phrase of the three study programs can categorized as less proficient writers in writing academic texts on the thesis they wrote. However, the indicators leading to writers who are proficient in their thesis are evident from the use of noun phrases that use complex prepositions and noun phrases even though their portions are still small.

There are still errors in concordance with the use of pronouns and verbs indicating that respondents still have problems with the sentence structure, especially related to the composition of the subject and predicate in sentence formation.

There needs to be encouragement and more directives to use complex noun phrases including awareness using the sentence structure correctly from the composition of the subject and predicate especially by lecturers who teach "Advance Writing" or "Academic Writing" courses.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The results of the text analysis of 'Background' thesis students from FIB English Letters Study

Program, FKIP English Language Education Study Program, and STKIP Kie Raha English Language Education show that there are similarities in the use of noun phrases namely single nouns and noun phrases with adjective premodifiers. By referring to the development progression index hypothesis theory from Biber, Gray, and Poonpon (2011) as quoted by Parkinson and Musgrave (2013) and Ansarifar, Shahriari, and Pishgadham (2017), it can be concluded that the students' use of noun phrases from the three study programs can be categorized as less proficient writers in writing academic texts on the thesis they wrote. The direction to the writers who are proficient in their thesis is evident from the use of noun phrases that use other complex noun phrases and noun phrases even though the portions are still small. Also, there are still concordance errors in the use of pronouns and verbs indicating that respondents still have problems with the sentence structure, especially related to the composition of the subject and the predicate in sentence formation.

5.2 Suggestions

From the conclusions, there is a need for strong encouragement and direction from lecturers in the 'Advance Writing' or 'Academic Writing' courses in practicing writing academic writing by paying attention to complex noun phrases as distinctive features of English academic writing, including awareness of using sentence structure correctly from the subject and verb agreement.

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