

An Analysis of Indonesian Language Proficiency in Academic Assignments: A Case Study of Pharmacy Students

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ABSTRACT

Indonesian language, as the official and unifying language of Indonesia, plays a critical role in various aspects of life, including education. In higher education, Indonesian serves as a vital medium for effective communication, particularly in expressing scientific ideas. This study aims to explore how pharmacy students utilize the Indonesian language to complete academic assignments. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the research seeks to examine the phenomenon of language use in these academic tasks. A purposive sampling method was used to select the research sample, consisting of documents submitted as assignments by pharmacy students. Data were collected through document analysis, focusing on sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and terminology usage. Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the data. The findings provide a detailed account of the language use in pharmacy students' assignments, revealing several recurring linguistic errors. Common issues include errors in word formation, letter usage, word choice, punctuation, sentence construction, and paragraph organization. These challenges are attributed to a limited understanding of linguistic rules and the prevalence of informal writing habits.

Keywords: Indonesian language, linguistic, assignments

I. Introduction

As a united language and official language, Indonesian plays a significant role in many facets of society, including education. Speaking Indonesian should be a useful communication procedure in higher education, particularly when discussing scientific concepts. The requirement to utilize Indonesian in academic activities, including completing student projects, is outlined in Law Number 24 of 2009 regulating the National Flag, Language, and Emblem and the National Anthem.

Since pharmacy students are the country's future generation, it is their duty to learn good scientific language that corresponds with proper Indonesian language standards. However, it is frequently observed that the use of Indonesian does not follow the rules in terms of grammar, spelling and the arguments. One reason for this is the prevalence of foreign language literature in the pharmaceutical industry, which has an impact on students' thought processes and their capacity to articulate ideas in Indonesian.

In addition, it can be difficult to break the practice of using foreign words without attempting to translate them into the proper language. This issue may make it more difficult for pharmacy students to communicate effectively with the general public, the majority of whom are non-technical users of daily language. Pharmacy students are actually expected to be able to use

easily understood language to connect pharmaceutical expertise with societal requirements as future healthcare providers.

Therefore, this research aims to identify how pharmacy students use Indonesian in completing academic assignments. This research will also examine the factors that influence the quality of Indonesian language use, as well as efforts that can be made to improve students' language skills in the pharmaceutical field.

Thus, it is hoped that the results of this research can make a real contribution to developing students' scientific language competence, especially in the pharmaceutical field. Through this research, it is hoped that it can provide support for preserving Indonesian as the language of science.

II. Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the use of the Indonesian language in academic assignments by pharmacy students (Krippendorff, 2018). This approach was selected to gain insights into the characteristics, challenges, and influencing factors associated with the use of Indonesian in academic contexts. The research was conducted within the Faculty of Pharmacy at ITEKES Bintang Persada, involving students from undergraduate and diploma-level pharmacy programs who were engaged in completing academic assignments (cf. Laba and Narlianti, 2024)

The study population comprised all pharmacy students enrolled in these programs. A purposive sampling method was used to select participants, focusing on early-level students actively working on various academic tasks and willing to participate in the research. The sample size was determined based on data saturation, ceasing when no new information emerged. The primary instrument for this study consisted of documents containing students' academic assignments, complemented by an observation guide designed to document the use of Indonesian during group discussions and presentations.

Data collection was conducted through document analysis, examining students' academic assignments to evaluate their use of the Indonesian language, particularly in terms of sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and terminology. Participatory observation was also employed, involving direct engagement in academic activities such as discussions and presentations to observe the practical application of Indonesian in these contexts. Thematic analysis techniques were utilized for data analysis, following a systematic process of data reduction and interpretation. Data reduction involved selecting relevant information from the documents and observations, focusing on aspects pertinent to the research objectives (cf. Laba, 2024). Interpretation entailed providing an in-depth analysis of identified patterns and offering recommendations for improvement based on the findings.

III. Findings and Discussion

A detailed presentation of the research findings on the usage of Indonesian in pharmacy student assignments is provided. This study examines a number of common language problems, such as misspellings, typographical errors, poor word choice, punctuation, and poorly constructed phrases and paragraphs.

Spelling Errors

Spelling errors in student assignments include the use of “di” as a prefix and preposition. In Indonesian, “di” has two main functions, namely as a prefix and as a preposition. The prefix “di-” is used to form passive verbs, while “di” as a preposition is used to indicate place. Errors in the use of “di” are often found in formal and non-formal writing, especially in spelling that does not comply with the General Guidelines for Indonesian Spelling (PUEBI). “Di” as a prefix is written together with the word that follows it, while “di” as a preposition is written separately from the word that follows it. In student assignments, errors were found in writing in as a prefix and preposition.

The writing error in can be seen from the following example.

Written	Revision
di bentak	dibentak
di marah	dimarah
di mengerti	dimengerti
diklinik	di klinik
dirumah	di rumah
dikampus	di kampus

(1) ... yang kita jelaskan ke pasien bisa *di mengerti* sehingga

(1a) ... yang kita jelaskan ke pasien bisa *dimengerti* sehingga

(2) ... pasien akan merasa dirinya *di bentak* bahkan seperti *di marah*.

(2a) ... pasien akan merasa dirinya *dibentak* bahkan seperti *dimarah*.

The prefix “di-” is wrongly separated from the root word by the author. This occurs when spelling standards, particularly those pertaining to passive sentences, are not understood. Particularly in professional writing like reports or official papers. These mistakes can obfuscate content and diminish text clarity.

(3) Saya sebagai asisten apoteker yang bekerja *diklinik*.

(3a) Saya sebagai asisten apoteker yang bekerja *di klinik*.

(4) Bahasa Indonesia juga digunakan pada saat pendidikan dan pelatihan, baik *dikampus* ataupun di luar kampus.

(4a) Bahasa Indonesia juga digunakan pada saat pendidikan dan pelatihan, baik *di kampus* ataupun di luar kampus.

The preposition “in” and its following word are wrongly combined by the author. Informal writing practices or the impact of spoken language, which does not distinguish the function of “in,” are the causes of this inaccuracy. This demonstrates a lack of focus on writing spelling rules. Repeated mistakes can also result from primary and secondary education levels' lack of explicit instruction regarding the distinctions between prefixes and prepositions. In addition, the impact of informal writing—particularly on social media—which frequently disregards grammatical

conventions, is significant since it can develop into a habit. These mistakes can be reduced with improved instruction and technology assistance to improve the standard of written Indonesian.

Letter Writing

Another error that often occurs related to spelling is the use of capital letters. Capital letters are one of the important elements in grammar which function to provide emphasis, indicate proper names, or differentiate certain meanings in the text. In practice, many errors are found in the use of capital letters, both among students, writers and the general public. This research aims to analyze patterns of errors in the use of capital letters, causal factors, and solutions to improve the quality of the use of capital letters in writing. Errors in using capital letters can be seen from the following data.

(5) *bahasa Indonesia* memiliki peran penting dalam bidang farmasi.

(5a) *Bahasa Indonesia* memiliki peran penting dalam bidang farmasi.

(6) Karena walaupun *Niat* kita *Baik Tetapi* cara kita menyampaikannya salah atau penggunaan *Bahasa* kita kurang *Baik* orang-orang tidak akan mendengarnya.

(6a) Karena walaupun *Niat* kita *Baik Tetapi* cara kita menyampaikannya salah atau penggunaan *Bahasa* kita kurang *Baik* orang-orang tidak akan mendengarnya.

The above data (5) and (6) demonstrate improper capitalization usage. Data (5) demonstrates a writing error at the start of the sentence, where capitalization should be utilized but is not. Data (6) demonstrates that capitalization is used everywhere and is impacted by informal language usage.

The primary factor contributing to errors in the use of capital letters is a limited understanding of spelling conventions. Many writers perceive the rules governing capitalization as minor and therefore frequently overlook them in writing practices. Additionally, informal writing habits, often shaped by spoken language and social media usage, further contribute to the disregard for formal grammatical standards. Moreover, the lack of rigorous proofreading in both educational contexts and publishing processes aggravates the issue. The editing process often fails to adequately address capitalization errors, allowing such mistakes to persist without correction or improvement.

Word Choice

Understanding word structure enables authors in appropriately forming words and selecting the best words to express their ideas accurately and clearly (Narlianti, 2024). The results of this study showed that the word choice was out of place given the sentence's context. The use of question words in a statement sentence is an ordinary word choice failure.

The primary purpose of using question words like what, who, when, where, why, and how in sentences is to formulate questions. In reality, however, question words are frequently employed in statement sentences, either unintentionally or for rhetorical or informational reasons. Mistakes or variations in this usage may result in ambiguous or unclear communication.

(7) *Dimana* bahasa nasional adalah bahasa yang lebih menonjolkan jati diri.

(7a) Bahasa nasional adalah bahasa yang lebih menonjolkan jati diri.

- (8) ... agar bisa berkomunikasi dengan baik pada pasien *dimana apa* yang kita sampaikan ...
(8a) ... agar bisa berkomunikasi dengan baik bersama pasien, *sehingga hal* yang kita sampaikan ...
- (9) ... belajar lebih baik lagi *bagaimana* cara berbahasa Indonesia yang baik dan benar.
(9) ... belajar lebih baik lagi *terkait tata* cara berbahasa Indonesia yang baik dan benar.

Data (7), (8), and (9) show errors in using question words in statement sentences. In terms of form, the sentence above is a statement sentence, so the question word is not appropriate to use in this sentence.

Data (7) shows errors in using words that should not be needed in a statement sentence to explain something. Data (8) shows that there are two question words in one statement sentence. The use of question words in data (8) can be replaced with improvements that can be seen in sentence (8a). By changing the question word and adding punctuation, you can make the sentence more effective and easier to understand.

Data (9) shows something similar, namely the use of question words in statement sentences. The word “bagaimana” in this sentence functions to emphasize an opinion or idea. However, in the academic realm it would be better if the use of question words in statement sentences was minimized. This aims to make a sentence unambiguous.

Although question words serve a number of purposes in statement sentences, including rhetorical and idea-strengthening, they are frequently overused. It lowers communication efficacy and clarity. The usage of language checking software, text editing improvement, and a deeper comprehension of syntax are required to solve this issue.

Writers or speakers often do not understand the difference between the function of question words in questions and statements. In oral communication, the use of question words often does not follow formal grammatical rules, and this habit is carried over to writing. It is best if writers and speakers need to adapt the use of question words to the communication context, especially in formal texts.

Use of Punctuation

An essential component of grammar, punctuation serves to separate ideas, make sentences more understandable, and provide writing structure. Nonetheless, punctuation mistakes occur frequently in both official and non-official writing. These mistakes can lower the quality of written communication, lead to ambiguity, and make it difficult to understand the writing's topic. Commas and colons were among the punctuation mistakes still discovered in this study and this hampered the text's readability.

- (10) Selain itu bahasa Indonesia sangat penting dalam interaksi dengan para tim medis
(10a) Selain itu, bahasa Indonesia sangat penting dalam interaksi dengan para tim medis
- (11) Dimana bahasa Indonesia, merupakan alat komunikasi yang digunakan oleh ilmuan
(11a) Bahasa Indonesia merupakan alat komunikasi yang digunakan oleh ilmuan

- (12) ... dalam bidang farmasi, yaitu: memudahkan komunikasi antartena Kesehatan dan pasien, mengurangi hambatan dan kesalahpahaman, meningkatkan
- (12) ... dalam bidang farmasi, yaitu memudahkan komunikasi antartena Kesehatan dan pasien, mengurangi hambatan dan kesalahpahaman, meningkatkan

Data (10) and (11) above show errors in the use of comma punctuation written by pharmacy students. Data (10) shows the lack of comma punctuation after the word “selain itu”. The comma punctuation mark in the sentence functions to provide a pause and emphasize the idea in a sentence. Data (11) shows the inappropriate use of commas in a sentence that aims to explain something. Commas can be used in a sentence that contains elements of detail, so using commas in data (11) is not appropriate. This error can lead to errors in understanding the content or meaning to be conveyed in a piece of writing.

Data (12) shows an error in using colon punctuation in a sentence. A colon is used at the end of a complete statement which is immediately followed by details or explanation (Kemendikbud, 2022). In data (12), a colon is not needed because there is already the word “yaitu” which is the link between the statement and the details.

The emergence of errors in using punctuation marks can be triggered by various factors. Lack of understanding regarding the basic rules of punctuation according to the General Guidelines for Indonesian Spelling (PUEBI) can give rise to writing that does not comply with the rules. The habit of writing on social media with relaxed grammar often carries over into formal writing. To overcome this, an editing stage is needed before the text is used. Text that has not gone through an editing process tends to have punctuation errors, especially in writing that was completed in a hurry. Education needs to be carried out to remind people of the importance of using correct punctuation to clarify meaning and improve the quality of writing.

Ineffective Sentences

The use of effective sentences is a crucial element of written communication. An effective sentence clearly, concisely, and logically conveys ideas, ensuring the message is understood without causing confusion for the reader or listener. However, in practice, the importance of effective sentence construction is often overlooked, particularly in informal writing and online media. This tendency frequently extends to academic texts. In this study, ineffective sentences were identified as those that were overly long, lacked focus, or failed to adhere to the principles of effective academic communication.

- (13) Peran bahasa Indonesia ini sangat penting untuk kita agar bisa memberikan penjelasan atau berkomunikasi kepada pasien dengan jelas sehingga mudah dimengerti oleh pasien.
- (13a) Bahasa Indonesia memiliki peran penting untuk memudahkan komunikasi dengan pasien.

Data (13) shows that the use of sentences is ineffective because the sentences are too long and not focused. Unfocused sentences make it difficult for readers to understand the message the author wants to convey.

The use of ineffective sentences in writing is often caused by several main factors. One of the main causes is a lack of understanding of grammatical rules and correct sentence structure.

Many writers don't understand the basic principles of effective sentences, such as clarity, brevity, and cohesiveness. Apart from that, the influence of spoken language also plays a big role in creating ineffective sentences, because speaking styles that tend to be informal and unstructured are often carried over into writing.

Another contributing factor is the habit of writing without sufficient revision or editing, which often allows errors such as word redundancy, verbose sentences, or illogical sentence structures to go unnoticed. Time constraints in writing can further impact sentence quality, particularly when writers are required to work quickly without attention to detail. Additionally, in the digital era, the influence of social media has introduced a preference for brief, non-standard writing styles that frequently disregard grammatical rules. Furthermore, limited writing practice and inadequate instruction on crafting effective sentences within formal education settings leave many writers ill-equipped to produce clear, concise, and comprehensible text. The interplay of these factors significantly contributes to the prevalence of ineffective sentence use across various forms of writing.

Paragraph Formation

A paragraph is the smallest unit of writing that conveys a single main idea, supported by additional explanatory ideas. Proper paragraph construction is essential to ensure a clear and coherent flow of information, making it easier for readers to understand the content. However, in practice, errors in paragraph formation are common. These include excessively long paragraphs that lose focus, a lack of logical connections between sentences, or paragraphs consisting of only a single sentence. Ideally, a well-constructed paragraph contains two or more sentences centered around a single main idea.

- (14) Dalam bidang farmasi bahasa Indonesia perlu juga dikuasai dengan sangat baik dalam peran menjelaskan ke setiap pasien bagaimana cara penggunaan atau pemanfaatan obat tersebut komunikasi yang baik yang kita gunakan yaitu dengan bahasa Indonesia yang sudah tepat dapat mengurangi kesalahpahaman atau meminimalisir kesalahan terjadi saat memberi informasi tentang obat.
- (14a) Dalam bidang farmasi, bahasa Indonesia perlu dikuasai dengan baik agar dapat menjelaskan cara penggunaan atau pemanfaatan obat kepada pasien. Komunikasi yang baik dihasilkan dengan menggunakan bahasa Indonesia yang tepat. Hal ini dapat mengurangi kesalahpahaman atau meminimalisir kesalahan yang terjadi saat memberi informasi tentang obat.

Data (14) shows a paragraph consisting of one long sentence. This shows that data (14) cannot be categorized as a paragraph because it only consists of one sentence. A paragraph ideally consists of several sentences that support each other and have one main idea. Paragraphs don't always have to be long, but they must contain the main idea and explanatory sentences.

Errors in paragraph formation often stem from a lack of understanding of the structure and fundamental principles of effective paragraph writing. One significant factor is the neglect of the main sentence as a guiding element, leading to paragraphs that lack focus and coherence. Additionally, insufficient skills in logically developing ideas contribute to disorganized paragraphs, with ideas that fail to support one another or even contradict each other. The use of

excessively long or overly brief sentences without clear connections further disrupts the flow of the paragraph. Another contributing factor is the influence of conversational language styles, which can lead writers to adopt informal, spoken patterns that undermine the clarity and formal structure of their paragraphs.

IV. Conclusion

The findings from the study on the use of Indonesian in pharmacy students' academic assignments reveal several common language errors. These errors include issues with word spelling, letter usage, word choice, punctuation, ineffective sentence construction, and paragraph formation. Errors related to spelling, letter usage, word choice, and punctuation can be categorized as spelling errors, often stemming from a lack of understanding of Indonesian spelling rules. Mistakes in constructing effective sentences and forming coherent paragraphs are attributed to limited knowledge of the structural principles required for effective communication. Additionally, the influence of conversational language styles contributes to writing that mirror spoken language, resulting in sentences and paragraphs lacking clarity and formal structure. Overall, these issues can be traced to inadequate knowledge of linguistic conventions and the prevalence of informal writing habits.

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