Analysis of Mandarin Syntax Errors by the Students of Tourism Business Management Study Program of Politeknik Negeri Bali

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Abstract. The purpose of this research is to find out the mistakes that are often made by the Tourism Business Management Study Program, Politeknik Negeri Bali when learning Mandarin. This research was conducted for 6 months (one semester) in the basic Mandarin language class of Bali State Polytechnic (PNB). 80 PNB students from 4 regular classes were this research's respondents. The data collection methods used were observation and questionnaires. The questions were based on the results of the researcher's observations while teaching basic Mandarin language. The result shows that MBP students still often make mistakes. There are some methods to change the habits namely to master the direction, students be able to design their picture and then tell them the direction of the road, for example, the direction from home to campus so that students can get used to using the word "zuǒ" instead of "zǒu"; explain the rules for using the numbers "yī" and "yāo"; explain greeting words again with examples; explain how the word "bù" changes when it is followed by another word; provide examples of similar questions at each meeting; provide games about right or wrong; the material presented in class is supported by videos and voice recordings that students can listen to again.

Keywords: Misformation, Misselection, Misordering, Omission, Overinclusion, Syntax Error

1   Introduction

Language error is often identified with L2. Therefore, language errors are also often interpreted as a form of deviation from the use of the target language elements (L2) (Subandi et al., 2020). Errors are seen as non-native consequences of learners' lack of linguistic knowledge and negative transfer of their mother tongue. Studies on the analysis of students' errors in foreign language learning have developed since the 1970s (Trihardini, 2015). There are four types of errors: misinformation, addition, omission, and misordering (Dewi et al., 2021; Dulay et al., 1982; Tizazu, 2014). The analysis of grammatical errors proposed by Dulay et al. (1982) is called Surface Structure Taxonomy, namely misformation, misorder, addition, and omission. Firstly, misformation errors mean the learners use the wrong form or structure. There are three

kinds of misformation errors, namely regularization, archi-form, and alternate forms. Secondly, misorder means the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance. Thirdly, addition means when the presence of an item that must not appear in well-formed utterances. Errors of addition are divided into three parts, namely regularization, double marking, and simple addition. Fourthly, omission is the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance. In classifying the types of errors in students' conversation practice, this study used the types of errors in the surface structure taxonomy by Dulay et al. (1982), namely omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. Chuang & Nesi (2006), improve the version created by Dulay et al. (1982) and list common linguistic features for errors under each category based on their empirical error type research. The Taxonomy has been revised and now has five parts: misformation, misselection, misordering, omission, and overinclusion. According to them, an omission error means a missing item; an overinclusion one points to a redundant item; misformation is defined as a mechanical error involving an incorrect form of morpheme; a misselection error involves selecting the incorrect form due to a more challenging conceptual activity; a misordering error involves misplacing a sentence's constituents. Based on the actual statistics and classification of errors, some adjustments are modified by Liu & Wu (2023), for the convenience of error description. In the process of learning Mandarin, making mistakes is very common, mistakes in language learning often occur, and these mistakes can even be made by Mandarin speakers themselves. Moreover, for people who learn Mandarin as a second language, it does not require the possibility of mistakes either intentionally or unintentionally (Ibrizah & Subandi, 2020). The factors and forms of errors also vary depending on the level and length of learning time. Errors are a characteristic of language learning. However, errors are very disruptive in efforts to achieve language teaching goals. Therefore, errors that often occur should be reduced and avoided as much as possible. With error analysis activities, aspects that cause errors can be identified so language error analysis activities are very important (Weifen, 2020). By analyzing language errors made by students, language teachers can help learners correct the language errors they make so that they can improve students' language skills. In addition, they can also improve the methods and teaching materials used, so that they can improve the quality of learning (Sahertian, 2016). Accuracy in writing occurs when the language learner conforms to the rules of the target language, and error occurs when it does not. Those rules may be at different levels: pronunciation, morphology, syntax, lexicon, discourse, or sociolinguistics. Since the focus of the study is grammatical errors, the appropriate levels for the errors are morphology and syntax levels made by the students in their essays (Sukarno, 2016). Through this background, the author will discuss several mistakes made by MBP students in the Mandarin language learning process for approximately 6 months. Mistakes in choosing the answers above can be caused by several factors such as not knowing how to use these words, cultural influences or habits, a very short learning period, and their level of Mandarin. The purpose of this study is to find out the mistakes that are often made by the Tourism Business Management Study Program, at Politeknik Negeri Bali when learning Mandarin.

2   Methodology

This research was conducted for 6 months (one semester) in the basic Mandarin language class of Bali State Polytechnic (PNB). Both the population and the sample were students who majored in the Tourism Business Management (TBM) Study Program of Bali State Polytechnic (PNB). The data collection technique used was purposive sampling. According to Babbie (2008), there are times when probability sampling would not be appropriate even if it were possible. Many such situations call for nonprobability sampling. Purposive sampling is a type of nonprobability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected based on the researcher's judgment about which ones will be the most useful or representative. The sample selection was based on students who attended the first meeting in the advanced Mandarin language class. 80 PNB students from 4 regular classes were this research's respondents. The data collection methods used were observation and questionnaires. The questions given were based on the results of the researcher's observations while teaching basic Mandarin language. The question format is divided into two, namely true or false questions and also the most appropriate answer choice questions. The question can be seen in Table 4 below.

3   Result and Discussion

Mandarin and Indonesian come from different language families. Mandarin is an isolating language, which means a language that has certain rules, while Indonesian is an agglutinative language, which means a flexible language. Apart from that, Mandarin is a tonal language while Indonesian is not a tonal language. These factors cause Tourism Business Management (TBM) students to experience difficulties when learning Mandarin. The following are the results of an analysis of 9 questions given to TBM students who have studied Mandarin at the Bali State Polytechnic about surface structure taxonomy by Dulay et al. (1982). The nine questions given are divided into two, namely choosing True and False questions and choosing the most appropriate answer.

3.1   True and False Questions

Table 1 shows the sentence "*Yīzhí wǎng qián zuǒ*" is a wrong sentence because of misuse of the word class. The ordering of the sentence above is correct, but the word "*zuǒ*" which means "left" is not appropriate in this sentence. The phrase "*Yīzhí wǎng* qián" means "straight ahead", it shows a "movement", so the following word needed is just a "verb" not a " noun of direction". Figure 1 shows that out of the 80 respondents, 62 people thought the statement was true and 18 people thought the statement was false. This shows that PNB students do not properly understand the word class for each of the words above. In addition, they also cannot differentiate between the words "*zuǒ*" and "*zǒu*".

Table 1. Question number 1

Right sentence: *yīzhí wǎng qián zǒu*			
Yīzhí	*Wǎng*	*Qián*	*Zuǒ*
Straight ahead	Direct	In Front of	Left
Yīzhí	*Wǎng*	*Qián*	
		Noun	Noun

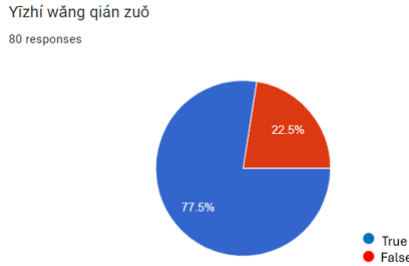Yīzhí wǎng qián zuǒ

80 responses

22.5%

77.5%

● True
● False

Figure 1. Question about "*yīzhí wǎng qián zuǒ*"

The statement "*Wǒ huì xǐhuān chī zhá jī (x)*" in Table 2 is a false statement because of the redundancy of auxiliary verbs "huì". Figure 2 shows that out of the 80 respondents, 45 respondents answered incorrectly, but in contrast, only 35 respondents answered correctly. This result shows that a large number of beginners of Mandarin language in PNB use the feelings and habits of their mother language---Indonesian to answer Mandarin questions. The sentence "*Wǒ huì xǐhuān chī zhá jī* (I can like eating fried chicken)" is correct in Indonesian. The words "*huì*" and "*xǐhuān*" in Mandarin cannot be combined because the word "*huì*" can only be followed by a verb that shows an ability or a skill, for example, "*Wǒ huì yóuyǒng*" which means "I can swim". However, PNB students think that "*huì*" is "modal" which means "can" so that 56% answered correctly. The word "*xǐhuān*" is a class of verbs that means liking something, so it does not match the class of words "*huì*" which is also a class of verbs.

Table 2. Question number 2

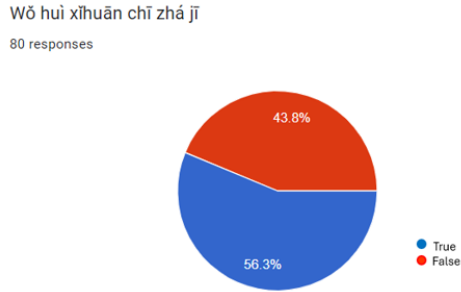| Right Sentence: *wǒ xǐhuān chī zhá jī*				
Wǒ	*Huì*	*Xǐhuān*	*Chī*	*Zhá Jī*
I	Can/Be Good At	Like	Eat	Fried Chicken
	Auxiliary/ Helping Verb	Psychological Verb	Verb	

Wǒ huì xǐhuān chī zhá jī

80 responses

Figure 2. Question about "*wǒ huì xǐhuān chī zhá jī*"

There are two pronunciations of the number one in Mandarin, namely "*yī*" and "*yāo*". The writing of the number one in telephone numbers can be seen in Table 3. Figure 3 shows that of the 80 respondents 68 or 85% answered correctly. This shows that PNB students do not yet know the use of the words "*yī*" and "*yāo*". When pronouncing a telephone number, the number one will be read as "yāo". Apart from that, in Mandarin, the word "*yāo*" is used more often in everyday life than the pronunciation of the word "*yī*". The word "*yāo*" is usually used to pronounce room numbers, and car/motorbike plate numbers, indicate the number of nouns, and so on.

Table 3. Question number 3

Right Sentence: 08142678988 (*líng bā **yāo** sì' èr liù qī bā jiǔ bā bā*)
08142678988 (*líng bā **yī** sì' èr liù qī bā jiǔ bā bā*)

Phone number pronunciation : 08142678988
Líng bā yī sì' èr liù qī bā jiǔ bā bā

80 responses

Figure 3. Question about the pronunciation of telephone numbers: 08142678988

3.2   Choose the right answer

Pronunciation of numbers: 260.3530. *Liǎng bǎi liùshí wàn sānqiān wǔbǎi sānshí.*
The pronunciation of the numbers above is for the number "two hundred". Figure 4
shows that of the 80 respondents, 52 or 65% of students answered correctly. This shows
that they understand the use of the numbers "liǎng" and "èr" because more than 50%
of students answered correctly. In Mandarin, the pronunciation "liǎng" is used to refer
to numbers with a nominal value above one hundred and also to refer to the number of
objects consisting of two.
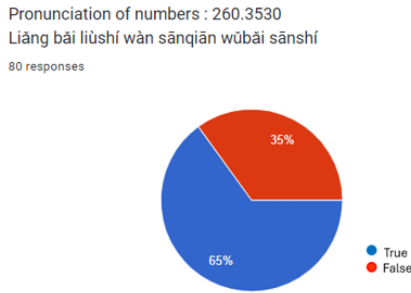
Figure 4. Question about the pronunciation of numbers: 260.3530

Greetings when you just meet an old friend. Greetings in Mandarin are divided into
three parts, namely greeting when you first meet with the word "*Nǐ hǎo*" and responding
with the word "*Nǐ hǎo*". The second greeting is "*Nǐ hǎo ma*?" which is used when
meeting old friends/family/relatives. The third greeting is an everyday greeting.
Discussion of this material was provided at the beginning of the lecture. Figure 5 shows
that out of 80 respondents, 35 respondents chose the answer "*Nǐ hǎo ma*?" and there
were 45 respondents who answered "*Nǐ hǎo*". This shows that there are still PNB
students who still cannot differentiate between the use of the greeting "*Nǐ hǎo ma*?"
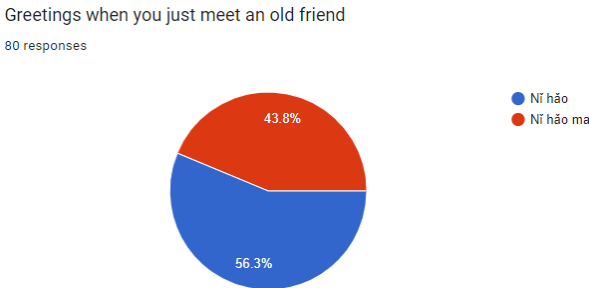with "*Nǐ hǎo*".

Figure 5. Question about greetings when you just meet an old friend

Nín hǎo. Wǒ shì…If the position and name in Mandarin appear at the same time, the ordering of the name will be higher than the position. Figure 6 shows that as many as 53 or 66.3% of students answered correctly. This shows that PNB students have understood the order of names and positions.
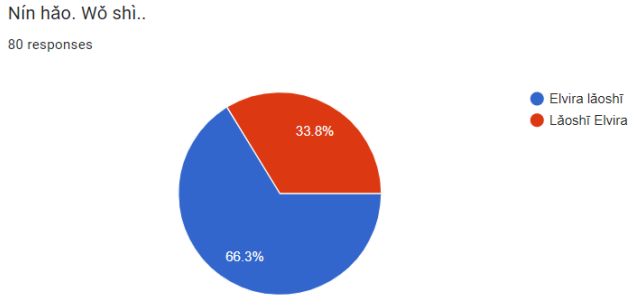

Figure 6. Question about *Nín hǎo. Wǒ shì…*

Wǒ yǒu... Dìdì. In Mandarin, the number two has two names, namely "*liǎng*" dan "*èr*". The number "*liǎng*" is used if the total number is more than two hundred or indicates the units consisting of two. Figure 7 shows that 55 respondents or 68.8% were correct while there were still people who answered incorrectly.
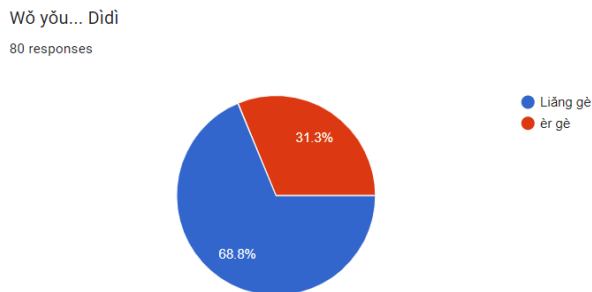

Figure 7. Question about *Wǒ yǒu... Dìdì*

Wǒ zhù zài... The use of "*de*" is used when indicating possession. Figure 8 shows that there were 47 respondents or 58.8% who answered correctly. This shows that students of the Tourism Business Management Study Program know the use of "*de*" well. But there are still 33 students who do not understand the use of "*de*".
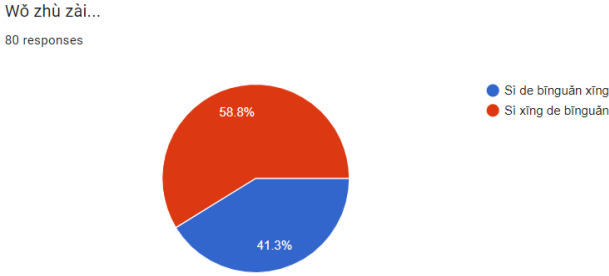
Figure 8. Question about *Wǒ zhù zài...*

Nǐ huì yóuyǒng ma? Figure 9 shows that the correct answer is "*Bù, wǒ bú huì yóuyǒng*". There were 26 respondents or 32.5% of students who answered correctly and there we 53 respondents or 67.5% of students who answered incorrectly. This shows that students of the Tourism Business Management Study Program do not yet understand the rules of the word "*bù*". In Mandarin, the rule "*bù*" has several changes. When the word "*bù*" is followed by a word with a fourth tone, the tone of the word "*bù*" changes to a second tone. However, if the word "*bù*" is followed by words with one, two, and three tones then there is no change in tone in the word "*bù*".
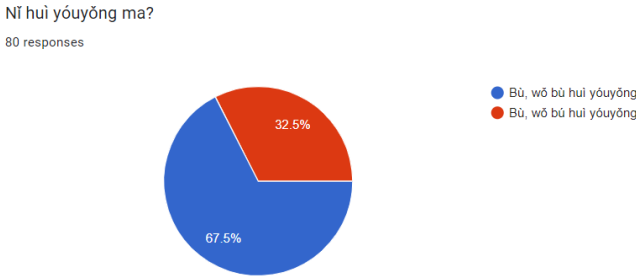

Figure 9. Question about *nǐ huì yóuyǒng ma?*

Chuang & Nesi (2006) improve the version created by Dulay et al. (1982) and list common linguistic features for errors under each category based on their empirical error type research. The Taxonomy has been revised and now has five parts: misformation, misselection, misordering, omission, and overinclusion. According to them, an omission error means a missing item, an overinclusion one points to a redundant item, a misformation is defined as a mechanical error involving an incorrect form of morpheme, a misselection error involves selecting the incorrect form due to a more challenging conceptual activity, a misordering error involves misplacing a sentence's constituents. Based on the actual statistics and classification of errors, some adjustments are modified by Liu & Wu (2023) for the convenience of error description. Table 4 shows the results of the types of errors in the surface structure taxonomy for 9 questions given to students of the Tourism Business Management Study Program.

Table 4. Category of errors

No.	Question	Right answer	Wrong answer	Type error
1	*Yīzhí wǎng qián zuǒ*	18	62	Misselection
2	*Wǒ huì xǐhuān chī zhá jī*	34	45	Overinclusion
3	Phone number pronunciation: 08142678988 *Líng bā yī sì' èr liù qī bā jiǔ bā bā*	12	68	Misselection
4	Pronunciation of numbers: 260.3530 *Liǎngbǎi liùshíwàn sānqiān wǔbǎi sānshí*	52	28	Misselection
5	Greetings when you just meet an old friend	35	45	Misselection
6	*Nín hǎo. Wǒ shì..*	53	27	Misordering
7	*Wǒ yǒu... dìdi*	55	25	Misselection
8	*Wǒ zhù zài...*	47	33	Misordering
9	*Nǐ huì yóuyǒng ma?*	26	54	Misselection

Table 4 shows the most frequent error type made by students of the Tourism Business Management Study Program is the misselection type. In the first question, 62 students made the misselection "Incorrect choice of groups of words". The students chose the wrong answer because students were still unable to differentiate between the pronunciation of the words *zuǒ* and *zǒu*. In the second question, 45 students over included "Redundant copula". Most students chose "true" because if the statement is interpreted in Indonesian then the statement is correct or acceptable. In the third question, 68 students misselected "Misuse of the number of nouns". In Mandarin, the pronunciation of the number one has two pronunciations, namely "*Yi*" and "*Yao*". In this question, many students still forget about the use of the pronunciation of the numbers *yi* and *yao*. However, in question number four which is related to the use of the pronunciation of the number two, MBP students understand better when to pronounce the number two with "*er*" and when to pronounce the number two with "*liang*". The fifth question is related to the misselection "Incorrect choice of groups of words". There are 45 students answered this question incorrectly. This is because MBP students before learning Mandarin often hear the words "*Nǐ hǎo ma?*" so they think that greeting words in Mandarin are just those words and can be used to greet someone. Questions number six, seven, and eight show that most of the students of the Tourism Business Management Study Program have understood the ordering of words for names and positions, selection for the use of choosing the number two in a sentence, and the ordering of the use of the word "*de*". The last question shows that 54 students answered the misselection of "tone". MBP students know the answer, but there are still students who do not understand the change in tone of the word "*bù*" when used together with other words.

4   Conclusion

The most common type of error made by students of the Tourism Business Management Study Program is misselection "Misuse of the number of nouns". This shows that teachers need to provide more examples of questions related to the use of

the number one, namely the use of the words *yi* and *yao*. From the results of this study, the author also provides several methods that can be used to change this habit, namely For the road directions section, the author directs students to design their house and then tells them the direction of the road, for example, the direction from home to campus so that students can get used to using the word "*zuǒ*" instead of "*zǒu*". Explain the rules for using the numbers "*yī*" and "*yāo*", explain greeting words again with examples explain how the word "*bù*" changes when it is followed by another word, provide examples of similar questions at each meeting, provide games about right or wrong and the material presented in class is supported by videos and voice recordings that students can listen to again.

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