



Chomsky's Theory of Generative Transformative Grammar and Its Application in the Grammatical Sciences of the Batak Simalungun Language

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to identify the dominant forms of linguistic anomalies or language errors in internship reports written by Business Administration students at Politeknik Negeri Sriwijaya (Polsri), analyze their causative factors, and explore their implications for professional competence. The study employed a qualitative descriptive approach utilizing the Error Analysis (EA) framework based on the Indonesian General Guidelines for Spelling (PUEBI) and standard Indonesian grammar. The sample consisted of 30 internship reports from 2024 Business Administration students selected through purposive sampling. Analysis of a total of 880 linguistic anomalies (estimated) revealed that Spelling and Punctuation (SP) errors ranked the highest, accounting for 37.50% of the total errors. The most frequent sub-category within this domain was Standard Word Usage (15.34%) (e.g., *Praktek* instead of *Praktik*). The second highest was Morphological and Syntactical (MS) errors (34.66%), with Ineffective Sentences (24.43%) being the primary syntactical issue (characterized by word redundancy and the use of non-standard conjunctions like *Dimana*). These errors are attributed to a combination of intralingual factors (*overgeneralization* of affixation rules) and extralingual factors (*interference from spoken/informal register*). Overall, these findings have serious implications, namely diminishing the reports' credibility and fostering a negative perception of students' professionalism within the industry due as they are perceived as careless and lacking meticulousness.

Keywords: Chomsky's theory, generative transformative grammar, application, grammatical science

Teori Tata Bahasa Generatif Transformatif Chomsky serta Aplikasinya dalam Gramatikal Bahasa Batak Simalungun

ABSTRAK

Bahasa adalah sistem simbol yang kompleks dan terorganisir yang memungkinkan manusia menyampaikan pengalaman, ide, dan gagasan. Banyak teori telah dikembangkan dalam bidang linguistik untuk memahami dasar bahasa. Salah satu yang dibangun oleh Noam Chomsky pada pertengahan abad ke-20 adalah Teori Tata Bahasa Generatif-Transformatif. Kajian ini tidak hanya menjelaskan teori-teori linguistik modern dengan bahasa daerah, tetapi juga memperluas pemahaman kita tentang berbagai struktur bahasa di Nusantara. Selain itu, ia menekankan pentingnya teori linguistik universal dalam konteks lokal. Berdasarkan penjelasan di atas, penulis akan melakukan penelitian ini dengan menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif berdasarkan studi pustaka. Fokus penelitian ini adalah teori tata bahasa generatif transformatif (TGT), yang akan dijelaskan melalui analisis literatur yang mendukung studi TGT. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa setiap teori-teori linguistik modern dengan bahasa daerah memperluas pemahaman kita tentang berbagai struktur bahasa di Nusantara. Kesimpulannya, Teori generatif transformatif Chomsky memberikan pendekatan yang sistematis dan terstruktur untuk memahami tata bahasa dan struktur kalimat. Pendekatan ini membantu pembelajar memperluas pemahaman mereka tentang bahasa Batak Simalungun dan meningkatkan kemampuan berkomunikasi mereka. Dengan penggunaan yang tepat dan disesuaikan dengan kebutuhan individu, pendekatan ini dapat menjadi alat yang efektif dalam meningkatkan pembelajaran bahasa Batak.

Kata kunci: teori tata bahasa, generatif transformatif Chomsky, aplikasi, gramatikal

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INTRODUCTION

Language is a complex and organized system of symbols that allows humans to convey experiences, ideas, and concepts (Amelianda Amelianda et al., 2024). Many theories have been developed in linguistics to understand the foundations of language. One such theory, developed by Noam Chomsky in the mid-20th century, is the Generative-Transformative Grammar Theory. This theory critiques structural grammar, which he argued could not explain human linguistic creativity. Chomsky emphasized that language is not simply a collection of observable sentences but also a representation of the speakers' mental abilities, enabling them to generate and understand many new sentences.

Generative-Transformative Grammar argues that every language has a deep structure (deep) that reflects basic meaning and a surface structure (outer) that reflects actual utterances (Aminallah et al., 2023a). Transformation serves as a mechanism that connects these two structures. This method bases language analysis on universal principles, rather than simply formal forms. When applied to the study of regional languages, such as Batak-Simalungun, Chomsky's theory becomes relevant (Ambarita, n.d.). As one of the regional languages of North Sumatra, Batak Simalungun possesses a unique grammatical structure, both in morphology and syntax. To understand how Simalungun speakers organize meaning and form, phenomena such as clause structure, affixation processes, word order, and interrogative and negative sentence patterns can be studied using the lens of generative-transformative grammar.

In addition to providing theoretical understanding, the application of generative-transformative theory to Batak Simalungun also has practical benefits, such as language documentation, revitalization, and the development of teaching materials for the younger generation. Given the challenges facing regional languages in the era of globalization, in-depth linguistic studies such as this are expected to strengthen efforts to pre-

serve and develop Batak Simalungun so that it remains alive and serves as a cultural identity. Therefore, it is crucial to conduct an investigation into "Chomsky's Generative-Transformative Grammar Theory and Its Application to Batak Simalungun Grammar (Mahbubi et al., 2023)." This study not only explains modern linguistic theories with regional languages but also broadens our understanding of the various language structures across the archipelago. Furthermore, he emphasized the importance of universal linguistic theory in local contexts.

Chomsky's transformative generative theory must be researched and applied to the grammar of the Simalungun Batak language because, according to positive logic, a theory can only be considered true or false after thorough testing in data analysis. According to transformative generative theory (also known as TGT), language is intrinsic, has an inner and outer structure, consists of abilities and performances, and is creative. However, fundamentally, TGT is based on three main assumptions: the distinction between competence and performance, the distinction between inner and outer structure, and finally, the creativity of language. The competence and performance hypotheses serve as the foundation of Chomsky's method of linguistic inquiry, and the hypotheses of inner and outer structure components produce transformations in their analysis. Furthermore, the creative aspect of language is recognized as an essential part of TGT theory.

Thus, the problem formulation in this study focuses on several things, namely: what is the form of generative structure in the Batak Simalungun language, how the process of sentence transformation occurs based on the theory of generative-transformative grammar, what types of transformations exist in Batak Simalungun sentences. The objectives of Chomsky's Theory of Generative Transformative Grammar and its Application in Batak Simalungun Grammar are: to describe the form of generative structural in Batak Simalungun language, describe the process of sentence trans-



formation occurs based on the theory of generative-transformative grammar, and describe what types of transformations exist in Batak Simalungun sentences. The benefits of this research for the development of linguistics, This research can provide new insights into how Chomsky's Generative Transformative Grammar theory is applied in Batak Simalungun language, as well as enrich the treasury of linguistic theory, especially in the context of regional languages in Indonesia. By understanding the grammatical structure of the Batak Simalungun language, this research can also contribute to the preservation of the language, which is currently facing the threat of extinction. The previous research used to reference this journal is:

- 1) Kusuma, E. R. (2017). Characteristics of Mochtar Lubis's Novel "Senja di Jakarta" as a Reason for Developing Literature Learning Materials in Schools. In Proceedings of the National Seminar at the University of Muhammadiyah Malang (107-113).
- 2) Harahap, E. M. (2022). Syntactic Typology in the Batak Mandailing Language. *Hata Poda Journal*, 1(1), 14–21.

Chomsky, N. (1957). *Syntactic Structures*. This book is one of Chomsky's early works popularizing the theory of Generative Transformative Grammar, which serves as the basis for this research.

METHOD

This research, entitled "Chomsky's Generative Transformative Grammar Theory and Its Application in the Grammatical Structure of the Batak Simalungun Language," is a qualitative study (Aminallah et al., 2023b). The data in this study are sentences in the Simalungun language that have undergone a transformation process. The data were collected through note-taking (Gantina et al., 2021). This study aims to investigate Chomsky's theory and its application to the transformative generative theory in the grammar of the Simalungun Batak language. This is because, based

on previous research and ideas, no studies have examined this theory. Based on the explanation above, the author will conduct this research using a qualitative research method based on literature review (Ilhami et al., 2024). The focus of this research is the transformative TGT, which will be explained through an analysis of literature supporting the study of TGT (Widari & Ardiansyah, 2025).

RESULT

The theory of Transformative Generative Grammar (TGTG), proposed by Noam Chomsky, aims to explain the linguistic abilities possessed by native speakers (Widana et al., 2024). This ability consists of subconscious knowledge that enables them to create and understand an infinite number of new sentences. The Theory of TGTG states that language is not simply a collection of habits or imitations, but rather a system that can generate numerous sentences and undergo change through the transfer and transformation of its elements, governed by innate principles called Universal Grammar (Safitri et al., 2024). The essence of TGTG is the existence of two levels of representation in sentence structure and a set of rules for connecting them:

- 1) Deep Structure (D-Structure). This is a description of the meaning or essence of a sentence, generated by the rules of phrase structure. This level applies to all languages and plays a crucial role in understanding meaning.
- 2) Surface Structure (S-Structure). This is the sound form or way of conveying a sentence as it is actually spoken or written. This level is used as input for sound interpretation and indicates the actual word order.
- 3) Transformational Rules. A number of rules that transform the inner structure into the outer structure. These rules explain how important meanings can be conveyed through various sentence types, such as changing an active sentence to a

passive sentence, or the position of interrogative elements within a sentence.

DISCUSSION

1. History of Chomsky's TGT Theory

Structural linguistics has dominated modern linguists' thinking for many years and has become an ideal tool for analyzing language. Chomsky later wrote the book *Syntactic Structure*, which criticized this school. Transformational theory originated from his dissertation. This book was published in 1957 as a critique of the theories of Leonard Bloomfield (1887-1949) and Ferdinand De Saussure (1857-1913). Chomsky's book was revised in 1965 under the title "Aspects of the Theory of Syntax," following criticism and recommendations regarding the theory's shortcomings.

Standard Theory" is Chomsky's theory, first published in 1965. In 1972, it was revised and renamed "Extended Standard Theory." In 1975, it was revised again to "Extended Standard Theory," becoming what is now known as "government and bond theory." Linguists attempted to apply this grammatical theory to explain the rules of English. However, when adherents of this theory tried to apply it to rules in other languages, new problems arose, leading linguists, who initially considered this theory perfect and applicable to all languages, to encounter many new problems. Therefore, students and adherents of this theory attempted numerous improvements or revisions.

2. Definition of Chomsky's TGT Theory

According to Chomsky's theory, one of the goals of language research is to construct a grammar (Niswah, 2023). According to Chaer (364), language can be considered a collection of sentences consisting of sequences of sounds that have meaning. Therefore, the task of grammar is to clearly and precisely demonstrate the relationship between sounds and meaning. In line with his principles, Chomsky distinguishes between generative and transformative concepts, deep and outer structure, competence and performance, and generative

and transformative aspects. These concepts can be applied in the analysis of the Batak Simalungun language to explain how its grammatical system works.

2.1 Deep Structure and Surface Structure

Deep structure is the actual form spoken or written after a transformation process, while surface structure is an abstract representation that contains the core meaning of a sentence, which is not directly visible in speech.

Examples of words in the Batak Simalungun language:

1. Simple declarative sentences

- a. Internal structure: (Subject: Host) + (Predicate: Mangan) + (Object: Gule)
- b. Surface structure: Inang mangallang gule (Mother eats vegetables).

The internal structure only retains the basic meaning "mother eats vegetables," while the surface structure is the concrete form in Simalungun.

2. Interrogative sentences (WH transformation)

- a. Internal structure: (Host + Mangan + aha)
- b. Surface structure: Aha Inang mangan? (What does Mother eat?).

There is a shift of the constituent (aha 'what') from the object position to the front of the sentence. This transformation is in accordance with the wh-movement principle in Chomsky's theory.

3. Passive sentences

- a. Internal structure: Inang + Mangan + Gule
- b. Surface structure: Gule di-allang Inang (Mother eats vegetables).

Passive transformation shifts the object to the subject position, while the original subject becomes the agent actor with the prepositional marker (by/with).

4. Complex Structure

- a. Deep structure: [Amang menurut surat] + [Ala di Pangido Inang]
- b. Surface structure: Amang manurra surat, ala di pangido Inang (Father wrote the letter because Mother asked him to).

The deep structure represents a cause-and-effect relationship, while the surface structure embodies this relationship in a subordinate clause.

2.2 Competence and Performance

Chomsky distinguishes between competence and performance.

1. Competence: The speaker's intuitive knowledge of the rules of their language. This is mental, systematic, and ideal.
2. Performance: The realization of language use in actual speech, which can be influenced by psychological, social, or situational factors.

Examples in the Simalungun Batak Language. Competence (the speaker's ideal knowledge)

- a. Grammatical sentence: Inang mangallang gule
- b. Ungrammatical sentence: Mangallang gule
Inang (in context)
- c. Neutral sentence.

A native speaker intuitively knows that the first sentence is correct, even if they have never been formally taught the syntactic rules.

Performance (actual practice of using the language)

- a. Variation sentence: Gule na di Allang Inang (It was the vegetables that Mother ate).
- b. The speaker shifts the object to the front to emphasize/topicalize.

3. The Influence of Bilingualism

Many Simalungun speakers also speak Indonesian. In practice, code-mixing or interference often occurs: "Inang lagi mangallang gule" (a structure influenced by Indonesian). However, in pure Simalungun language competence, this form is usually not used. This distinction between ability and performance is important for distinguishing between the mental rules of language (native competence) and variations in usage caused by external factors..

3. Generative and Transformative

Generative transformative grammar is a combination of two terms: generative and transformational. Generative comes from the term "untuk menghasilkan," which means to produce, give rise to, and result in (Astawan & Sadwika, 2020). Synonyms are "Ratas," and "untuk Tetap," which means to estimate, guess, with conditions and certainty. The term "generative," introduced by Chomsky, aims to distinguish grammatical sentences from ungrammatical ones (Temuan et al., 2024). To obtain grammatical sentences, grammatical rules or principles are required. Using principles or methods, you will obtain sentences that are not limited but still grammatically correct.

Example in the Batak Simalungun language
General structure: FN (Noun Phrase) + FV (Verb Phrase) + FN (Object)

- Inang Mangallang gule
(Mother eats vegetables).

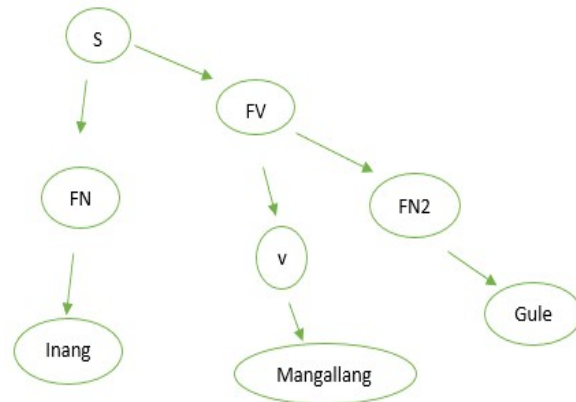


Figure-1
Simalungun Sentence Structure Tree "Inang Mangallang Gule"

The following is a diagram of the generative structure for the Simalungun sentence "Inang mangallang gule":

- a. S (Sentence) consists of FN (Host) as the subject, and FV (mangallang) as the predicate, and FN2 (Gule) as the object.

In FV, there is V (mangallang) as the verb, and FN2 (gule) as the object.

Transformative, meanwhile, refers to the term used to indicate the shift that occurs between the sentence's internal and external structures (Kadek et al., 2024). Initially, Chomsky preferred the term generative because it was sufficient to explain his theory. Transformative was only a segment of generative theory. However, the transformative approach became popular, and the two terms were later combined into generative transformative or vice versa.

Example in a Simalungun sentence:

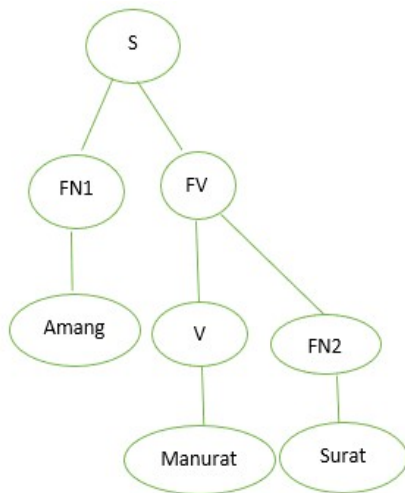


Figure-2
 Active Sentence: Amang manurat surat

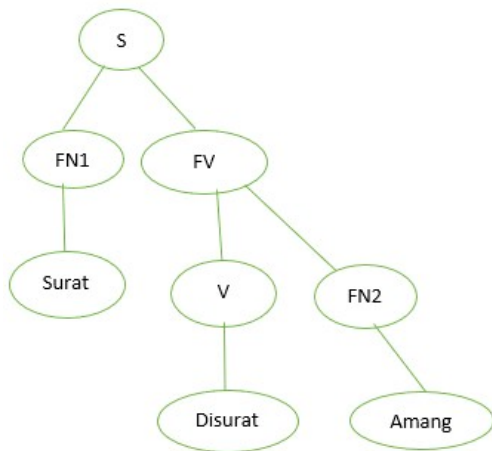


Figure-3
 Passive Sentence: Surat disurat amang

Meanwhile, transformation methods consist of two categories: single transformations (single transformations) and general transformations (general transformations) (Henry, 82). All of the transformations mentioned above are explained here:

Single Transformation

This transformation process uses a single sentence as input and produces a single sentence as output (Togatorop et al., 2021). This process is included in generative grammar created by Noam Chomsky. This grammar analyzes how sentences are formed by converting meaning structure into utterance form or vice versa, and distinguishes between the inner and outer structures of sentences. In a single sentence in Indonesian, this can be done through (1) the process of addition, (2) the process of deletion, (3) the process of permutation (rearrangement), (4) the process of substitution, and (5) the process of shortening.

General Transformation

General transformation is all projections of meaning into the outer structure derived from two or more input sentences with inner structures. It can be said that the two input sentences with deep structures are transformed into one sentence with outer structure (Yustina Sako & Antonius Bere, 2023). The sentence "older brother and younger sister go to school" is included in the general transformation because it is formed from two input sentences, namely "older brother goes to school" and "younger sister goes to school."

CONCLUSION

Language is a complex and organized system of symbols that allows humans to convey experiences, ideas, and concepts. Many theories have been developed in linguistics to understand the foundations of language. Chomsky emphasized that language is not simply a collection of observable sentences but also a representation of the speakers' mental abilities, which enable them to produce and understand many new sentences.



Chomsky's theory has three basic assumptions: competence and performance, deep and outer structure, and linguistic creativity (generative-transformative).

Generative has many rules between them. Meanwhile, transformative has two types of methods: general methods and single methods. Some examples of single methods include: deletion, addition, expansion, transposition, substitution, and abbreviation. Meanwhile, the general method process is a combined transformation. Transformation serves as a mechanism connecting these two structures. This method bases language analysis on universal principles, not just formal forms.

Chomsky's Generative-Transformative Grammar Theory and Its Application to the Grammar of the Simalungun Batak Language not only explains modern linguistic theories with regional languages but also broadens our understanding of the various language structures in the Indonesian archipelago. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of universal linguistic theory in local contexts. Therefore, Chomsky's Generative-Transformative Theory is being studied and applied to the grammar of the Simalungun Batak language because, according to positive logic, a theory can only be considered true or false after being thoroughly tested in data analysis.

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