An Analysis of Students' Grammatical Errors in Writing Narrative Texts

Ayu Mirah Prihandani[1*] iD

[1] Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha, Singaraja, Indonesia
*Corresponding author: mirah.prihandani@gmail.com

Abstrak

Siswa sekolah menengah atas masih banyak melakukan kesalahan terkait tata bahasa ketika mereka menulis teks naratif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis jenis kesalahan tata bahasa, mengidentifikasi sumber kesalahan, dan mengetahui kesulitan menulis yang biasa dihadapi oleh siswa kelas sepuluh sekolah menengah atas dalam teks naratif mereka. Metode kualitatif deskriptif digunakan dalam penelitian ini. Ada dua jenis data yang digunakan yaitu data kuantitatif dan data kualitatif. Ada tiga instrumen berbeda yang digunakan seperti, guru, tes tertulis, dan angket. Hanya ada 23 teks naratif yang dikumpulkan dan dianalisis. Berdasarkan analisis kesalahan, terdapat 308 kesalahan tata bahasa yang diklasifikasikan ke dalam empat jenis, yaitu 'omission', 'misformation', 'addition', dan 'misordering errors' dalam teks naratif siswa. 'Misformation error' jumlah error terbanyak ada 131, error yang paling dominan adalah 'misformation of alternating form errors'. Kesalahan terjadi karena transfer interlingual dan intralingual siswa. Ada masalah kognitif yang membuat siswa merasa kesulitan dalam menulis teks naratif karena kurangnya pengetahuan tata bahasa dan kosa kata bahasa Inggris.

Kata Kunci: Kesalahan Tata Bahasa, Analisis Kesalahan, Teks Naratif

Abstract

Senior high school students still make a large number of errors related to grammar when they have writing narrative text. This study aimed to analyze the types of grammatical errors, identifying the sources of errors, and knowing the writing difficulties commonly faced by the tenth grade students of senior high school in their narrative texts. Descriptive qualitative method was used in this study. There were two kinds of data being used namely quantitative data and qualitative data. There were three different instruments applied such as, the teacher, writing test, and questionnaires. There were only 23 narrative texts collected and analyzed. Based on the error analysis, there were 308 grammatical errors classified into four types, namely 'omission', 'misformation', 'addition', and 'misordering errors' in students' narrative texts. 'Misformation errors' are the biggest number of errors there were 131, the most dominant errors are 'misformation of alternating form errors'. The errors occured because of the students' interlingual and intralingual transfer. There were cognitive problem that made the students feel difficult in writing narrative texts because of their lack of knowledge of English grammar and vocabularies.

Keywords: Grammatical Errors, Error Analysis, Narrative Texts

1. INTRODUCTION

English is a language used by almost everyone in the world. In Indonesia, it is a compulsory subject learned by the student at schools (Hashim & Yunus, 2018; Thi Ngoc Nguyen & Nguyen, 2020). The purpose of English teaching at school is to develop students' competences to use the language in their daily communication whether in spoken or written forms. The curriculum requires the learners to master four English language skills, which consist of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is a complex skill and critical thinking activity that involves advanced skill that must be mastered by the students for the educational success. Complex activity of writing needs a long process which involves critical thinking and logical idea development (Bakoko & Pratiwi, 2021; Durga et al., 2018; Friantary et al., 2020). Writing can help to develop students' competency in delivering their ideas in written form. In written activity, the student will demonstrate the ability to: 1)

generate relevant and sufficient content, 2) organize his or her thoughts coherently, 3) use correct terminology and rich vocabulary, 4) adhere to the conventions of grammar and sentence structure, and 5) use correct mechanics, which refers to the graphic composition in arrangement of writing format (Asfihana, 2021; Suryanto & Sari, 2021). These aspects were covering the writing assessment used in assessing students writing competency. Writing process is a writing instruction which emphasizes on what they think and do to produce their final writing products. Concerning to writing product, previous study states that writing product has several types of texts, which can be written by the students, such as; descriptive, narrative, procedure, recount, report, etc (Feng, 2014; Georgieva, 2019). In relation to this study, writing product focused on narrative text, which refers to folk-legend/folklore written by the students of the tenth grade students of senior high school as it is one of text types required by the English Curriculum 2013.

Narrative text is a description of events. Narrative text is a story writing, in which the writer tells about events happening (Awada & Plana, 2018; I.G.S. Darma et al., 2021). Narrative text is a sequence of time and space which has cause and effect relationship in the story. Narrative texts formally have the sequences of people/characters in time and space. EFL students in Indonesia, feel difficult in mastering writing skill, since there are some differences between Bahasa and English such as structural and grammatical terms and styles (Al-Ta'ani, 2018; Mukhsinah, 2020; Sukandi & Syafar, 2018). Grammar in writing is an important thing to be mastered by the students especially in speaking skill and writing skill. Grammar is the concern of language rules, which is used to form the sentences (Castillo-Cuesta, 2022; Hashim et al., 2018). In addition, previous study describes that grammar is as a study of language that focuses on how words are put together to be a grammatically correct sentence (Manik & Suwastini, 2020). Therefore, in writing process, grammar is an essential thing to be considered in forming sentences to make a good writing product.

Nevertheless, there is a fact that many of senior high school students still make a large number of errors related to grammar when they have writing assignment. Errors are breaking the uses of words or grammatical items made by students in such a way to produce imperfect writing products (Atmaca, 2016; Islamiyah & Fajri, 2019; Permatasari et al., 2018). According to previous study errors in English learning are the defects sides of the students' writing or speaking, which are based on the students' competence deviations (Permatasari et al., 2018). Regarding the previous statements, it can be concluded that errors are the flawed sides of students' competence. Errors cause students to make mistakes constantly in spoken or in written language. Errors occur because the learners have no sufficient knowledge of target language system and they have no capability of doing self-correction.

It is similar to the tenth grade students of IPA-1 at SMA Negeri 3 Singaraja where this study was conducted who committed various types of grammatical errors in writing their narrative texts, which was due to some sources of grammatical errors. They still found that writing English narrative text was very difficult because of their very limited knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary. They tended to use their own first language as much as possible to write a text assigned as they were not impressed to the writing activity. The fact was reflected by the result of grammatical errors analysis on students' writing assignment conducted by the researcher in the classroom.

Error analysis is the procedure of observing, analyzing, and classifying errors made by learners in the process of acquiring target language. Error analysis as a procedure used by researchers and classroom teachers in collecting samples of someone's language, which includes such steps as; identifying errors within the sample, describing those errors, classifying them based on their nature and causes, and evaluating their seriousness (Mustadi & Amalia, 2020; Pasaribu, 2021). Error analysis is an action done to identify errors found in speaking and writing. In this study, error analysis concerns a procedure conducted by a

researcher to know the students' deviations in using grammar related to types and sources of grammatical error, as well as the students' writing difficulties.

Previous study argues that there are two sources of errors, such as: interlingual error and intralingual error. Interlingual error is an error made by the students because of the influence of L1 language elements (Islamiyah & Fajri, 2019; Wang & Zhong, 2021). Whiles, intralingual error occurs when students break the use of words or grammatical items of the target language, because they have not yet mastered the target language system which causes them to produce imperfect sentences (Manik & Suwastini, 2020; Nishanthi, 2018). In relation to students' writing difficulties, means a problem as a state or quality of being hard to do or understand something that causes problems for the students. Writing difficulty is a problem for the students in writing activity. This study aimed to analyze the types of grammatical errors, identifying the sources of errors, and knowing the writing difficulties commonly faced by the tenth grade students of senior high school in their narrative texts.

2. METHOD

This study aimed to analyze the types of grammatical errors, identifying the sources of errors, and knowing the students' writing difficulties, particularly in writing narrative texts. A descriptive qualitative research design was applied in this study to describe the data as naturally and clearly as possible to answer the determined research questions (Nassaji, 2015). This study was conducted at SMA Negeri 3 Singaraja-Bali-Indonesia. The subjects of this study were the tenth grade students of X-IPA-1at SMA Negeri 3 Singaraja, whiles the objects of this study were the narrative texts written by the students of class X-IPA-1. There were 36 students assigned to write narrative texts. However, there were only 23 narrative texts collected and analyzed in this study. This was because of the uncompleted narrative texts written by other 13 students during the provided time. Those 23 narrative texts were analyzed by using grammatical errors analysis to obtain the students' grammatical errors in writing narrative texts.

In this study, there were two kinds of data being used namely quantitative data and qualitative data (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018). Quantitative data found from the result of the writing test conducted in this study, in which the researcher did marking and tabulating process on students' narrative writing, then calculating the number of each error category of grammatical errors types and displayed them in percentage. Meanwhile, qualitative data concerned with data obtained by delivering the questionnaires to the students to get information about their writing difficulties. There were three different instruments applied in this study to collect valid and reliable data such as: (1) the teacher (the researcher herself). (2) Writing test, this had been used in order to get information about the students' grammatical errors types and sources of the errors in writing narrative texts. (3) Questionnaires, which were applied to gain more information concerning to the students' writing difficulties based on Muth'im theory, especially in writing narrative texts.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Based on the grammatical analysis on the students' narrative texts, it was found that most of the students could not use English grammar properly yet. They were not able to use verbs, nouns, to be, articles, and prepositions properly in constructing sentences. In other word, they often omitted the use of verbs, nouns, to be, articles, and prepositions in their narrative writings, or they added unaccepted items in English grammar. In addition, students used unavailable items in English grammar in their writing, which enabled them to produce imperfect writings, narrative texts in particular. In other word, the students made a lot of

errors in writing narrative texts. There were 308 grammatical errors encountered by the students of XIPA-1 of SMA Negeri 3 Singaraja in writing narrative texts, which basically consisted of omission, addition, misformation, and misordering errors, and were developed into 11 types of errors all together in analyzing the students' narrative texts.

Misformation errors were the most frequent errors made by the students in writing narrative texts. There were 131 or 42.53% occurrences consisted of 40.91% of misformation of alternating form, then followed by misformation of regularization errors (1.29%), then, misformation of acrhi-form errors (0.32%).

The next frequent errors encountered by the students were the omission errors types. There were 83 occurrences or 26.95% of omission errors, which dominated by omission of to be (12.01%), followed by omission of article (6.17%), then followed by omission of preposition (5.52%), and omission of verb (3.25%). Whiles, addition errors occurred as many as 65 or 21.10% out of all errors made by the students in writing narrative texts. It consisted of simple addition errors which were as many as 57 occurrences or 18.50% in percentage; addition of regularization which equal to 6 or 1.95% occurrences; and then followed by addition of double marking error type (2 occurrences or 0.65%). Moreover, the researcher found missordering error type in amount of 29 occurrences or 9.42% out of the whole errors made by the students. Missordering errors happened because of the incorrect placement of a morpheme, word, or phrase in a sentence structure.

The occurrences of those students' grammatical errors types were due to the two different sources, such as: interlingual transfer (206 or 66.88%), and intralingual transfer (102 or 33.12%). The students made the errors in writing narrative texts because they treated English as their own mother tongue. They often used their own first language structure, and words order in writing English texts without any consideration that they were totally different from the English grammar itself. The students often used English vocabularies and words order in the same ways as those in their own first language.

Discussion

Considering the result of the questionnaires conducted in this study, it was shown that the students got many difficulties in writing narrative texts. They still found that it was difficult how to start writing (Pratiwi, 2016; Widyaningrum & Hasanudin, 2019). They got confused on what words they could choose to express their ideas into a piece of writing product. They felt stuck when they were assigned to write, and could not be able to continue their writings. Those problems appeared because of their lack of grammar, and vocabularies mastery, as well as their lack of writings exercises (Başar, 2020; Dewi & Huda, 2020). They had no ideas how to write an English text. They were not certain about what they had written. They were always doubtful about their writing if they had used the right grammar or not. They were not certain if they had chosen proper noun, verbs, article, etc., to express their ideas in written forms. As a result, they found that writing was very difficult, frustrating, and tiring (Hawkyard et al., 2014; Menbet, 2018; Yoandita, 2019).

There was only one student who said that he did not really like English as he did not understand English words and grammar. It was only 10.00% of students' difficulties could be categorized as psychological problem. Cognitive problem (50.00%) was likely the most frequent problem faced by the students in writing narrative texts. The students mostly found that it was difficult to understand the generic structure of narrative texts they wanted to write (Awada & Plana, 2018; Blangsinga et al., 2021). They did not understand how to organize their ideas, because of their lack of knowledge of English grammar and vocabularies and other linguistic aspects. There were 40.00% of students' writing difficulties were in the form of linguistic problems. In this case, the students found that writing was very difficult because they did not have enough linguistic knowledge, such as: spelling, punctuation, grammar,

vocabulary, tenses, and rhetoric (Blangsinga et al., 2021; Megawati, F., & Anugerahwati, 2012; Munawaroh, 2019).

Although they made such a lot of errors, and had very limited knowledge of English grammar and vocabularies, most of students were still interested in writing as if they had no psychological problem in writing narrative texts. They liked English very much, especially to write narrative texts. Therefore, they often used internet assistance or Google Translate application to accomplish their writing tasks assigned by the teacher. They wrote the writing assignments in *bahasa* (Indonesian) first, then translate them in to English through the Google application.

This study is expected to enable students to improve their writing competence and decrease their grammatical errors, and other writing difficulties, especially in writing narrative texts. In addition, this study is expected to give some benefits to the English teachers who want to help students to decrease their grammatical errors and problems in writing activities, and to encourage students to master 4C *(Critical thinking, Creative, Collaborative, and Communicative)* based on the current curriculum. Moreover, this study is expected to be beneficial for other researchers in designing and developing more intensive researches by investigating other variables and other grammatical errors as well as students' difficulties in writing narrative texts in the future.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussions, it was shown that the tenth grade students of IPA-1 at SMA Negeri 3 Singaraja committed various types of grammatical errors in terms of omission, addition, misformation, and misordering in writing narrative texts. Those grammatical errors occurred because of two different sources, such as: interlingual transfer, and intralingual transfer. As a result, they found that writing was very difficult, frustrating, and tiring. Those students' writing difficulties, which could be categorized as psychological problem, cognitive problem, and linguistic problem, which absolutely influenced the students writing activities, especially in writing narrative texts.

5. REFERENCES

Al-Ta'ani, M. H. (2018). Integrative and Instrumental Motivations for Learning English as a University Requirement among Undergraduate Students at Al-Jazeera University/Dubai. *International Journal of Learning and Development*, *8*(4), 89. https://doi.org/10.5296/ijld.v8i4.13940.

Asfihana, R. (2021). Pre-service English Teachers' Strategies in Incorporating Character Education during the Teaching Practice Program at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin. *IJELTAL (Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics)*, *5*(2), 309. https://doi.org/10.21093/ijeltal.v5i2.718.

Atmaca, Ÿ. (2016). Error Analysis of Turkish EFL Learners: A Case Study. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *232*, 234–241. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.10.007.

Awada, G., & Plana, M. G. C. (2018). Multiple strategies approach and EFL reading comprehension of learners with dyslexia: Teachers' perceptions. *International Journal of Instruction*, *11*(3), 463–476. https://doi.org/10.12973/iji.2018.11332a.

Bakoko, R., & Pratiwi, D. I. (2021). The application of cooperative principle in learning spoken English. *International Journal of Education and Language*, *1*(1), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.5349/ijel.v1i01.

Başar, S. (2020). Teacher Cognition in Grammar Teaching: A Case Study in a Turkish EFL

Context. *International Journal of Modern Education Studies*, *4*(2), 57. https://doi.org/10.51383/ijonmes.2020.51.

Blangsinga, G. W. K. A. A., Suwastini, N. K. A., Lasmawan, I. W., Adnyani, N. L. P. S., & Rusnalasari, Z. D. (2021). Patriarchal binary oppositions in narrative texts included in English textbook for senior high school in Indonesia. *2nd International Conference on Technology and Educational Science (ICTES 2020)*, 135–141. https://doi.org/https://dx.doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.210407.227.

Castillo-Cuesta, L. (2022). Using Genially Games for Enhancing EFL Reading and Writing Skills in Online Education. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *21*(1), 340–354. https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.21.1.19.

Cresswell, J. W., & Cresswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design; Fifth Edition*.

Dewi, F. S., & Huda, M. C. (2020). An Analysis of Students ' Errors in Writing Descriptive Text at Tenth Grade of SMAN 1 Tulungagung in Academic Year 2018 / 2019. *A Journal of English Language Teaching, Linguistics, and Literature*, *3*(1), 11–20. https://www.academia.edu/download/87227928/1544-3105-2-PB.pdf.

Durga, Sri, S., & Rao, C. S. (2018). Developing Students' Writing Skills in English-A Process Approach. *Journal for Research Scholars and Professionals of English Language Teaching*, *2*(6), 1–5. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/V-Chandra-Rao/publication/325489625.

Feng, Z. (2014). Using teacher questions to enhance EFL students' critical thinking ability. *Journal of Curriculum and Teaching*, *2*(2), 147–153. https://doi.org/10.5430/jct.v2n2p147.

Friantary, H., Afriani, Z. L., & Nopitasari, Y. (2020). The Implementation of Indonesian Language Learning for Dyslexic in Children at Elementary Schools in Bengkulu. *Linguists : Journal Of Linguistics and Language Teaching*, *6*(2), 23. https://doi.org/10.29300/ling.v6i2.3750.

Georgieva, S. (2019). The role of feedback when training pre-service native language teachers. *V International Forum on Teacher Education*, *1*, 323–337. https://doi.org/10.3897/ap.1.e0196.

Hashim, H. U., & Yunus, M. M. (2018). English as a Second Language (ESL) Learning: Setting the Right Environment for Second Language Acquisition. *Tadris: Jurnal Keguruan Dan Ilmu Tarbiyah*, *3*(2), 207. https://doi.org/10.24042/tadris.v3i2.2941.

Hashim, H. U., Yunus, M. M., & Hashim, H. (2018). Language learning strategies used by adult learners of teaching english as a second language (tesl). *TESOL International Journal*, *13*(4), 39–48. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1244116.

Hawkyard, R., Dempsey, I., & Arthur-Kelly, M. (2014). The handwriting experiences of left-handed primary school students in a digital age: Australian data and critique. *Australian Journal of Education*, *58*(2), 123–138. https://doi.org/10.1177/0004944114530062.

I.G.S. Darma, N.N. Padmadewi, & D.P. Ramendra. (2021). A Using Edmodo as Scaffolding Technique in SMK Masudirini for 10th Grade Students on Teaching Writing Skill in Academic Year 2019/2020. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Indonesia*, *9*(1), 32–36. https://doi.org/10.23887/jpbi.v9i1.257.

Islamiyah, M., & Fajri, M. S. Al. (2019). Error Analysis and Its Implications for the English Classroom : A Case Study of an Advanced English Learner. *Indonesian EFL Journal: Journal of ELT, Linguistics, and Literature*, *5*(2), 1–13. http://ejournal.kopertais4.or.id/mataraman/index.php/efi/article/view/3736.

Manik, N. P. I. M. C., & Suwastini, N. K. A. (2020). Analyzing grammatical error in students' recount text writing in junior high school. *Humanis*, *24*(3), 238–246. https://doi.org/10.24843/jh.2020.v24.i03.p02.

Megawati, F., & Anugerahwati, M. (2012). Comic strips: a study on the teaching of writing narrative texts to , . *Indonesian EFL Students. Teflin Journal*, *23*(2), 183–205. https://doi.org/10.15639/teflinjournal.v23i2/183-205.

Menbet, A. A. (2018). The Use of Effective Strategies to Improve Saudi EFL Dyslexic Learners' Writing Skills. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *8*(12), 1611. https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0812.06.

Mukhsinah, A. F. (2020). The Use of E-Portfolio Assessment To Improve Students ' Writing. *RETAIN*, *8*(2), 164–170. https://www.researchgate.net/profile.

Munawaroh, S. (2019). Teaching the narrative texts using animation video: raising students' skills on reading comprehension. *Utamax : Journal of Ultimate Research and Trends in Education*, *1*(1), 18–22. https://doi.org/10.31849/utamax.v1i1.2791.

Mustadi, A., & Amalia, M. (2020). Spelling Writing Error Analysis in Nonfiction Essay of Elementary Students. *Jurnal Prima Edukasia*, *8*(2), 177–187. https://doi.org/10.21831/jpe.v8i2.33436.

Nassaji, H. (2015). Qualitative and descriptive research: Data type versus data analysis. *Language Teaching Research*, *19*(2), 129–132. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168815572747.

Nishanthi, R. (2018). The importance of learning English in today world. *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development*, *Volume-3*(Issue-1), 871–874. https://doi.org/10.31142/ijtsrd19061.

Pasaribu, A. N. (2021). A Common Error Analysis in Students' English Narrative Writing. *English Education and Art (LEEA) Journal*, *4*(2), 436–445. https://doi.org/10.31539/leea.v4i2.2338.

Permatasari, A. D., Wijayatiningsih, T. D., & Mulyadi, D. (2018). Error Analysis on EFL Learners' Analytical Exposition Writing. *Surakarta English and Literature Journal*, *1*(1), 22–30. https://doi.org/10.52429/selju.v1i1.204.

Pratiwi, K. D. (2016). Students ' difficulties in writing English : A study at the third semester students of English education program At University of Bengkulu. *E Journal Universitas Bengkulu*, *1*(2), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.29300/ling.v3i1.106.

Sukandi, S. S., & Syafar, D. N. (2018). EFL students' responses to learning basic reading and writing skills. *Studies in English Language and Education*, *5*(1), 40–53. https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v5i1.8419.

Suryanto, & Sari, Z. E. (2021). *Difficulties and Strategies in Learning English: An Analysis of Students From English and Non-English Education Department in Indonesia*. *518*(ICoSIHESS 2020), 313–331. https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.210120.140.

Thi Ngoc Nguyen, C., & Nguyen, T. T. (2020). Non-Language-Major Students' Autonomy in Learning English in Vietnam. *Arab World English Journal*, *11*(3), 184–192. https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol11no3.11.

Wang, & Zhong. (2021). Research and Implementation of English Grammar Check and Error Correction Based on Deep Learning. *Hindawi Scietific Programming*, 1-10. https://doi.org//10.1155/2022/4082082.

Widyaningrum, H. K., & Hasanudin, C. (2019). Kajian Kesulitan Belajar Membaca Menulis Permulaan (MMP) di Sekolah Dasar. *Pedagogia : Jurnal Pendidikan*, *8*(2), 189–199. https://doi.org/10.21070/pedagogia.v8i2.2219.

Yoandita, P. E. (2019). An Analysis of Students' Ability and Difficulties in Writing Descriptive Text. *Jurnal JOEPALLT (Journal of English Pedagogy, Linguistics, Literature, and Teaching)*, *7*(1). https://doi.org/10.35194/jj.v7i1.534.