



## **AN ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL ERRORS OF SELECTED ESSAY IN ENGLISH WRITING CLASS OF FAJAR UNIVERSITY ON FACEBOOK GROUP**

**Ana Rosida, Bahar, & Rini Rahayu**

<sup>123</sup>Universitas Fajar, Makassar, Indonesia, 90231.

Correspondence Email: ann.rosyed@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

This study examines grammatical errors in student essays, with the aim of identifying and categorizing those errors. The four grammatical categories analysed in this study include omission, addition, mis-formation, and mis-ordering. A quantitative research method was employed to gather and analyse data from the English Writing Class of Fajar University (Unifa) group on Facebook. The analysis was conducted using the grammar theory proposed by Heidi Dulay (1982). The findings of this study indicate that the majority of grammatical errors in the selected essays were related to omission as 43% errors. Mis-formation accounted for 41% of errors, addition constituted 12% of errors, and mis-ordering represented 4% of errors. This study provides valuable insights into the prevalent grammatical errors in student essays, highlighting areas where further attention and improvement are needed both in Grammar and Writing class.

Keywords: Grammatical Error, Quantitative, Essay, Students.

### *Abstrak*

*Penelitian ini meneliti kesalahan tata bahasa dalam esai mahasiswa, dengan tujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan mengkategorikan kesalahan-kesalahan tersebut. Empat kategori tata bahasa yang dianalisis dalam penelitian ini meliputi penghilangan, penambahan, kesalahan pembentukan, dan kesalahan pengurutan. Metode penelitian kuantitatif digunakan untuk mengumpulkan dan menganalisis data dari grup kelas menulis Bahasa Inggris Universitas Fajar (Unifa) di Facebook. Analisis dilakukan dengan menggunakan teori tata bahasa yang diusulkan oleh Heidi Dulay (1982). Temuan dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa mayoritas kesalahan tata bahasa dalam esai yang dipilih terkait dengan penghilangan sebanyak 43% kesalahan. Kesalahan pembentukan sebesar 41% kesalahan, penambahan merupakan 12% kesalahan, dan kesalahan pengurutan mewakili 4% kesalahan. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan yang berharga tentang kesalahan tata*

*bahasa yang lazim terjadi dalam esai mahasiswa serta menyoroti area yang membutuhkan perhatian dan perbaikan lebih lanjut pada kelas tata Bahasa dan Menulis.*

*Kata kunci: Kesalahan Tata Bahasa, Kuantitatif, Esai, Mahasiswa.*

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

In today's era of globalization, it has become imperative for individuals to possess English language skills. This is because English has emerged as the second language in many countries and is widely regarded as an international language. As stated by Baratta (2019), English has been exported and imported across the globe, and it holds a prevalent status as the international language, if not the primary one. This highlights the significance of English as one of the most crucial languages to acquire.

Each language has its own rules, including English. Grammar is the term used to describe the rules of English Language. When learners do not understand English grammar, a few errors are committed. English grammar may be defined as a system of rules that govern the organization of words, phrases, and expressions in various languages. Grammar has an important role in understanding English so that people who learn the language better understand the message conveyed. Based on Strumpf & Douglas (2004:13) cited in (Royani & Sadiyah, 2019) argue “we study grammar then we may speak and write in a clearer and more effective manner”.

As the foreign language of a country like Indonesia, many people have difficulty using the rules of English, and this is because English is a complex language. Martin (2017) in his book state that English is often said to be more complicated than most other languages, so English means a very complicated language. Johnston & Powers (2017) also state that English is a complicated language.

Foreign language errors, particularly those in English, are difficult to prevent. Several factors might lead foreign learners to make errors and mother tongue interference is one of them. This grammatical error is most commonly observed in written works, as writing takes substantial information as well as the ability to construct word for word to form a phrase with proper grammar. However, sometimes people find it difficult to define errors and mistakes. According to Rafoth (2014) that notion of error in the field of second-language acquisition make an important distinction between errors and mistake, an error is something learners say or write incorrectly and usually cannot recognize or repair on their own because they do not know the rule behind it, while a mistake is something they can both recognize and repair because they have learned the rule and can apply it.

It can be said that a mistake is made accidentally but knows the applicable rules. While errors usually occur due to a lack of understanding of grammar itself, especially if the language is a second language in a place, such as in Indonesia.

As the purpose of this research, it is focusing on the grammar essay of writing class made by students. The researchers identified grammatical errors in essays in Yusri (2018) on the Facebook group. On December 17, 2018, the group was founded by Yusri, a writing lecturer in Fajar University. This group was created to serve as a repository for student assignments, as proved by posts uploaded by lecturers who are knowledgeable about the subject.

According to Richards & Schmidt (2010), an essay (in composition) is a lengthy piece of writing, notably one produced by a student as part of a course of study or by a

writer writing for publication, that reflects the writer's point of view on a topic. So, an essay means a type of prose that describes a new point of view or a brilliant idea by the author accompanied by accurate arguments so that the reader can understand the idea clearly. Writing an essay is particularly common in academic life, especially in college. Students at this level expect to compose educational writing. Writing an essay is one of the numerous responsibilities assigned to students. The researcher assumes that the students may also have some errors in grammatical when they write in English writing.

According to Myles (2002:230) cited in (Limengka & Kuntjara, 2012), as students using a second language, namely English, students might produce errors, so this research is helpful to find out what grammatical errors often occur in student essays and to find out the extent to which students understand to assemble a sentence with the correct grammatical structure. To analyse the errors made by students, the researchers used the surface strategy taxonomy theory by Dulay et al. (1982), in which there are four types of errors, namely omission, addition, mis-formation, and mis-ordering.

Therefore, the aim of this research is to find out grammatical errors frequently happen in the selected essay in the English Writing class of UNIFA on the Facebook group. There are four categories of errors: omission, addition, mis-formation, and mis-ordering.

## **B. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1. Grammar**

According to Hariyono & Carthy (2008) grammar is the study of how to arrange words that have a certain form into a proper sentence. Grammar investigates language unit functions and how they are used in a sentence to convey meaning (Hirai et al., 2010). According to Ekaningsih (2017) that Grammar is the study of the classes of words, their inflections, and their functions and relations in the sentence. It is concluded that grammar is a science that studies the relationship and how to arrange words informing appropriate sentences so that they can convey the meaning of sentences clearly.

### **2. Classification of Error**

Dulay et al. (1982) stated that there are four categories of error classification. These are linguistic category, surface strategy, comparative analysis, and communicative effect.

#### **1) Linguistics Category**

In accordance with Dulay et al. (1982) linguistic category taxonomy classifies mistakes in keeping with both or each the language factor such as syntax and morphology (grammar), phonology (pronunciation), discourse (style), semantics and lexicon (meaning and vocabulary).

- 1. Morphology:** Politzer, Robert L.; Ramirez (1973) categorized errors in morphology into indefinite article incorrect, possessive case inaccurate, third-person singular verb incorrect, simple past tense incorrect, part participle incorrect, and comparative adjective/adverb incorrect.

- 2. Syntax:** Politzer and Ramirez (1973:90) also categorize syntax into a noun phrase, verb phrase, verb and verb construction, word order, and some transformations.

#### **2) Surface Strategy**

The surface strategy taxonomy shows the methods through which surface systems deviate from the norm. Learners may, for example, omit or add necessary elements or mis-form or mis-order objects. Surface strategy taxonomy was classified by Dulay et al. (1982) as omission, addition, mis-formation, and mis-ordering.

### 1. Omission

Omission errors are characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance. Content morphemes carry the bulk of the referential meaning of a sentence: Nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs. Language learner omit grammatical morphemes much more frequently than content words (Dulay et al., 1982).

For example: “*Jessica is the teacher in the new school*”

From the example above, it can be divided into two parts, namely content word or content morpheme and grammatical morpheme.

- a. Content morpheme including ***Jessica, teacher, new, school.***

*Jessica the teacher in the new school* (Omission “*is*”)

- b. Grammatical content including ***is, the, in, the.***

*Jessica is the teacher in the new* (Omission “*School*”)

### 2. Addition

This addition category is the opposite of the omission category. They are characterized by the presence of an item that must not appear in a well-formed utterance (Dulay et al., 1982). The addition category is divided into double marking, regularization, and simple addition.

- a. Double marking

A double marking issue occurs when unnecessary elements are added to a particular linguistic structure. Double marking occurs when two objects are tagged for the same feature. For examples of double marking;

- She *didn't went/goed*
- He doesn't *eats*.

- b. Regularization

Regularization is included in the additional category, where a morpheme is added to exceptional words. A regular rule or an error is used to signify an item that requires special rules. For examples of regularization;

- *Sheeps, Deers* (regularization error) → Sheep, Deer (correction)
- *Putted, Hitted* (regularization error) → Put, Hit (correction)

- c. Simple addition

Simple addition is a type of addition error that is not covered by double marking or regularization. This simple addition has no special characters, this error should not appear in well-structured disclosures. For example;

- *On* over there or *In* over there (Simple addition error) → Over there (The preposition 'in' and 'on' are by no means used while pronouncing over there).

- I can played the game (Simple addition error) → I can play the game (There has simple addition of verb one after modal).

### 3. Mis-formation

According to Dulay et al. (1982), mis-formation errors are defined by using the incorrect form of the morpheme or structure. The three types of mis-formation are regularization, archi - form, and alternating forms.

#### a. Regularization Error

This type of error includes those in which a typical marker is used instead of an irregular one. Examples for regularization error; His self (himself), I falled (fell), Ghooses (geese), Childs (children)

#### b. Archi – forms

The selection of one variation of a category of forms to represent others within the class, known as archi-form mistakes, is a prevalent aspect of all phases of second language acquisition.

Example: *This books* can be correct become *these books* because it is plural.

#### c. Alternating forms

The employment of archi - forms typically gives way to the seeming open alternation of various class members with one another as the learner's vocabulary and grammar expand.

Example: *I written a letter yesterday.*

*Rose is beautiful. She likes swimming*

Because the example is a past phrase, the proper form of the verb is 'wrote.' It is incorrect because subject Rose is a girl, so it must be use *she*. *The correct one is: I wrote a letter yesterday, Rose is beautiful. She likes swimming*

### 4. Mis-ordering

According to Dulay et al. (1982), mis-ordering errors are the improper placement of a morpheme or set of morphemes in an utterance.

Example: He is *all the time late*.

The correct one is: *He is late all the time*

### 3. Error

Errors in language are something that is difficult to avoid, especially if the language is the second language of a place. According to Dulay, Kharsen, Burt, and Krasen (1982:138) errors are the flawed side of learner speech or writing. They are those parts of conversation or composition that deviate from some selected norm of mature language performance. Another opinion was then expressed by Richards & Schmidt (2010:201) that the use of a linguistic item in a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning.

Language error analysis is a theory that is used to analyse the language between (interlanguage) language learners (Pranowo, 1996:48). According to Crystal (1985:95) cited in R. & Yusri (2020:3), error analysis is a technique for systematically discovering, categorizing, and understanding linguistic errors made by learners studying a foreign or second language.

According to the two definitions above, error analysis is the practice of methodically examining mistakes using a theory. The examined language mistakes were vocal and written language faults committed by someone while delivering information. This language error analysis is required to understand the language errors that occur so that they may be corrected more quickly.

Error and mistake are two different terms but sometimes it is difficult to identify. According to H. Douglas Brown (1987:263) cited in Agustina & Esti (2016:2) error is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the interlanguage competence of the learner, while a mistake refers a performance error that is either a random guess or a ‘slip’ in that is a failure to utilize a known system correctly.

According to the expert's perspective, an error is produced by a lack of knowledge and comprehension of the language pattern utilized. In contrast, an error is an unintentional despite knowing the grammatical rules. In this study, the researcher interviewed six samples. They said that before writing the essay, they first received direction from the concerned lecturer and still received guidance in the process.

Based on the interview results, it can be concluded that what happened to the essay is an error because the samples had learned but were still experiencing errors, so it can be said that the six samples lacked grammar knowledge.

### C. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses quantitative research methods. This method analyse how many each grammatical error appears in the research object, so it focuses on gathering numerical data. Babbie (2010) stated quantitative methods emphasize objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data collected through polls, questionnaires, and survey, or by manipulating pre-existing statistical data using computational techniques.

The population for this research consists of participants from the Facebook group "English Writing Class of Fajar University (Unifa)." This group comprises students ranging from the 2nd to 10th semester of study. In order to conduct the research, a sample size of 6 students was selected. These students were chosen randomly, and their essays were included for analysis in the study. By including a diverse range of participants and their written work, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the writing skills exhibited within this specific group. The researcher used two data collection instruments, namely interviews and documentation.

### D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 1. Finding

Based on the explanation above, the researcher can calculate the grammatical error of the selected essay based on the types of errors according to Dulay. Here is the tabulation of errors:

**Table 5. Tabulation of Errors**

Error Found	Types of Error			
	Omission	Addition	Mis-	Mis-ordering

			<b>formation</b>	
Student 1	3	3	8	1
Student 2	6	2	3	1
Student 3	3	1	4	0
Student 4	2	0	6	0
Student 5	7	1	4	0
Student 6	11	2	6	1
Amount of Error	32	9	31	3
	75			
Percentage of Errors	43%	12%	41%	4%

## 2. Discussion

### a. Omission Error

According to Nonkukhetkhong (2013) omission refers to the absence of required form or grammar in a sentence that should be present. Most of students made error in omission which is 32 or 43% of errors. Some examples would be tabulated from each student in the omission errors below;

**Table 1. The representative data of omission error**

Students	Omission Error	Reconstruction of Error	Explanation
Students 1	Some <b>student</b> said they have long hair because there were too many college assignments that they carried and made them forget to take care <b>(of)</b> their hair.	Some <b>students</b> said they had long hair because there were too many college assignments that they carried and made them forget to take care <b>of</b> their hair.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The sentence describes more than one student and is countable, so the noun must be plural.</li> <li>- The error in the sentence is the lack of the preposition "of" after "take care." By including the preposition "of," the sentence properly indicates that they need to take care of their own hair.</li> </ul>
Students 2	Based of the data, English Literature has <b>(the)</b> lowest students every year except for 2018.	Based on the data, English Literature has <b>the</b> lowest students every year except for 2018.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Superlative sentences use "<b>the</b>" because they refer to the highest or lowest degree of something within a specific context.</li> </ul>
Students 3	<b>(The)</b> data shows on march 22, 2 people <b>(were)</b> infected of corona virus. <b>And</b> keep increase on march 19 to 309 people infected, 25 people	<b>The</b> data shows that on March 22, 2 people <b>were</b> infected with the coronavirus. <b>It</b> continued to increase on March 19, with 309 people infected, 25 people dying, and 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Must be added, "the" to show something obvious.</li> <li>- Passive sentence needs to be. Since it is past event, so it used <b>were</b>.</li> <li>- The second sentence omit the subject which it should have a subject in every sentence/</li> </ul>

Students	Omission Error	Reconstruction of Error	Explanation
	died, and 15 people cured from <b>(the)</b> coronavirus.	people recovering from the coronavirus.	clause.
Students 4	There are more than 60% who choose accounting majors in 2019, while students who choose English literature <b>(in)</b> 2017 only 20%.	There are more than 60% who choose accounting majors in 2019, while students who choose English literature <b>in</b> 2017 only 20%.	Missing preposition. The sentence must be added with the preposition "in" to describe the year. The preposition "in" was used before the period of time (Downing et al., 2006)
Students 5	But in 2019, both significant dramatic changed, so many <b>registration</b> for management and accounting majors, which both shifted dramatically, occupying a high position in number of registrations of many.	But in 2019, both significant dramatic changed, so many <b>registrations</b> for management and accounting majors, which both shifted dramatically, occupying a high position in number of registrations of many.	The noun must be in plural form because it follows the quantifier "many," which requires a plural noun.
Students 6	The data <b>show</b> the type of fuel that <b>(is)</b> used by some countries in Asia.	The data <b>shows</b> the type of fuel that <b>is</b> used by some countries in Asia.	- Missing "s" for simple present tense. - Passive sentence should have to be in every sentence/ clause.

#### b. Mis-formation Error

Mis-formation has 31 errors or 41%. This is the second highest frequency error made by students in their essays. Mis-formation refers to the act of using incorrect forms of words or structures. This can include spelling errors, choosing the wrong words, using verbs in the wrong form, using adverbs or adjectives improperly, and using nouns incorrectly. The representative data would be explained in table below;

**Table 2. The representative data of Mis-formation error**

Students	Mis-formation Error	Reconstruction of Error	Explanation
Students 1	Behind The Long Hair of Engineering Students <b>in</b> Fajar University.	Behind The Long Hair of Engineering Students <b>at</b> Fajar University	The use of an inappropriate preposition, because it indicates a specific place, should use "at".



Students	Mis-formation Error	Reconstruction of Error	Explanation
Students 2	Based <b>of</b> the data, English Literature has the lowest students every year except for 2018.	Based <b>on</b> the data, English Literature has the lowest students every year except for 2018.	Use incorrect prepositions. It must be used “on” to show the basis or reason for something.
Students 3	Data shows on march 2, Indonesian citizens who infected <b>of</b> coronavirus total 2 people and increased every day.	Data shows on march 2, Indonesian citizens who infected <b>with</b> coronavirus total 2 people and increased every day.	It correctly uses the preposition "with" to indicate the cause of the infection (coronavirus)
Students 4	There are more than 60% who <b>choose</b> accounting majors in 2019.	There are more than 60% who <b>chose</b> accounting majors in 2019.	The sentence talking about past event, so, the word must be in the form of past.
Students 5	In this table, we can <b>seen</b> that students which who are enrolled in English Literature and Communication Studies greatly dropped in 2017	In this table, we can <b>see</b> that students which who are enrolled in English Literature and Communication Studies greatly dropped in 2017	The word must be in base form. According to Yule (2015) a word that comes after modals is always in base form.
Students 6	Some countries in Asia <b>used</b> Nuclear to generate electricity except Thailand.	Some countries in Asia <b>use</b> Nuclear to generate electricity except Thailand.	Using the wrong tense. The sentence is simple present tense.

### c. Addition Error

The student made 9 addition error or 12% from 6 students. This is the third frequency that made by students. The representative data of addition error would be shown in table below;

**Table 3. The representative data of Addition error**

Students	Addition Error	Reconstruction of Error	Explanation
Students 1	According to what was said by Nanang Wijayanto electrical Engineering <b>students</b> in third semester	According to what was said by Nanang Wijayanto electrical Engineering <b>student</b> in third semester	The word students refer to one of the students in the third semester of electrical engineering, so the

Students	Addition Error	Reconstruction of Error	Explanation
			word should be in singular form, not using <b>s</b> .
Students 2	The students climbed to over 20 <b>students</b> for both departments in 2018.	The <b>number of</b> students climbed to over 20 for both departments in 2018.	The word is unnecessary in that sentence, it seems wordy.
Students 3	Next, on March 15, coronavirus increase to 117 people infected <b>of coronavirus</b> , 5 people died, and 8 people cured, and in 3 days increase to 227 people infected of coronavirus.	Next, on March 15, coronavirus <b>increased</b> to 117 people infected, 5 people died, 8 people <b>were</b> cured, and in 3 days <b>increased</b> to 227 people infected <b>with</b> coronavirus.	The sentence is wordy.
Students 4	There are more than 60% <b>who</b> choose accounting majors in 2019.	There are more than 60% <b>chose</b> accounting majors in 2019	The relative pronoun “who” is always placed after a noun that refers to a person.
Students 5	In this table, we can see that students <b>which</b> who are enrolled in English Literature and Communication Studies greatly dropped in 2017.	In this table, we can see that students who are enrolled in English Literature and Communication Studies greatly dropped in 2017.	The sentence has two pronouns. It seems wordy, so one of these must be deleted.
Students 6	There was not any addition error found in student’s 6 essay		

#### d. Mis-ordering Error

Mis-ordering has 3 errors or 4%. Mis-ordering is is putting the words or sentences in the wrong order for example, incorrect placement of adjectives, nouns, or verbs. The representative data of mis-ordering error would be seen in table below;

**Table 4. The representative data of Mis-ordering error**

Students	Mis-ordering Error	Reconstruction of Error	Explanation
Students 1	According to what was said by Nanang Wijayanto electrical Engineering <b>students</b> in third semester	According to what was said by Nanang Wijayanto electrical Engineering <b>student</b> in third semester	The word students refer to one of the students in the third semester of electrical engineering, so the word should be in singular form, not using <b>s</b> .
Students 2	There was not any mis-ordering error found in student’s 6 essay		

<b>Students</b>	<b>Mis-ordering Error</b>	<b>Reconstruction of Error</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Students 3	The data shows <b>day after day the corona cases are increasing</b> because corona virus very contagious.	The data shows <b>that corona cases are increasing day after day</b> because coronavirus <b>is</b> very contagious.	Word placement error.
Students 4	<b>For management majors, students choosing majors in 2017 30%</b> , while in 2018, management majors began to skyrocket to 50%,	<b>30% of students chose management majors in 2017</b> , while in 2018, management majors began to skyrocket to 50%,	Word placement error.
Students 5	English literature a changed <b>in dramatically</b> 2019 higher than in previous years,	English literature changed <b>dramatically in 2019</b> higher than in previous years	Word placement error.
Students 6	There was not any mis-ordering error found in student's 6 essay		

Since the data above is the representative data from each student and each error, the whole data from all students' essays explained that student 1 committed the most diverse range of errors, with 3 omissions, 3 additions, 8 mis-formations, and 1 mis-ordering. Student 2 had a similar distribution, with 3 omissions, 1 addition, and 4 mis-formations. Student 3 made the highest number of errors overall, with 11 omissions, 2 additions, 6 mis-formations, and 1 mis-ordering. Student 4 had fewer errors, recording 1 omission, 4 additions, 4 mis-formations, and 1 mis-ordering. Student 5 made several mistakes as well, with 9 omissions, 7 additions, 6 mis-formations, and 1 mis-ordering. Finally, student 6 had a significant number of omissions (8) and a minimal number of mis-formations (2).

The result concludes, the first is omission which has 32 or 43% errors. The second most common error is mis-formation. It has 31 errors or 41%. The third is addition with 9 errors or 12%, and the last is mis-formation with 3 errors or 4%. This error is made by using learners who have begun to collect parts of the target language but still lack competence. This is evidenced by the results of the interviews of the six samples. They said that before they wrote the essay, they first learned how to write, which included teaching about grammar. In addition, in working on the essay, they get directions regarding the steps that must be taken in writing. This shows that an error occurred because the error was not realized to be an error.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

Based on the data provided, it is evident that grammatical errors were found in the essays of six students. The errors were categorized into four forms: omission, addition, mis-formation, and mis-ordering. Student 1 and Student 2 had a similar distribution of errors, with omissions, additions, and mis-formations. However,

Student 3 had the highest overall number of errors, including omissions, additions, mis-formations, and mis-ordering. Student 4 had fewer errors compared to the others, while Student 5 made several mistakes in all four forms. Student 6 had a significant number of omissions and fewer mis-formations. Overall, the most common errors were omissions and mis-formations, while mis-ordering occurred infrequently. These findings highlight the areas where the students need to focus on improving their grammar skills.

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