

**AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' GRAMMATICAL ERROR IN
WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT: A descriptive study on the
eleventh grade students at SMA Negeri 4 Praya in the academic
year of 2017/2018**



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**” AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS’ GRAMMATICAL ERROR IN
WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT: A descriptive study on the eleventh grade
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Abstract

The purpose of this research are to find out (1) what types of errors are produced by the students in writing descriptive text, and (2) which type of error in descriptive text is the most dominantly produced by the students. This research uses classification of errors based on Corder (1982); error of omission, error of addition, error of misformation, and error of misordering. This research uses descriptive qualitative method. The population in this research were 338 grade students of Senior High School No. 4 Praya in academic year of 2017-2018 who divided into 10 classes. Purposive sampling technique was used in this research, and IX IPA 4 was chosen as a sample that consisted of thirty four students. Writing test was used as the research instrument. This research shows that the students produced 239 or 53% of misformation errors, 124 or 28% of omission errors, 61 or 14% of addition errors, and 24 or 5% of misordering errors. The dominant type of error is misformation error. The students produced 239 or 53% errors from 448 of total number of errors in writing descriptive text.

Keywords: Errors, Error Analysis, Writing, Descriptive text

**“ANALISIS TERHADAP KESALAHAN TATA BAHASA SISWA DALAM
MENULIS TEKS DESKRIPTIF: Studi deskriptif terhadap kelas sebelas di
SMA Negeri 4 praya tahun ajaran 2017-2018”**

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Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menemukan (1) apa jenis kesalahan yang dibuat oleh siswa-siswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif, dan (2) manakah jenis kesalahan yang paling sering dibuat oleh siswa dalam menulis teks deskriptif. Penelitian ini menggunakan klasifikasi kesalahan berdasarkan teori Corder (1982); error of omission, error of addition, error of misformation, and error of misordering. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Total populasi dari penelitian ini berjumlah 338 siswa kelas XI SMA Negeri 4 Praya tahun ajaran 2017/2018 yang dibagi dalam 10 kelas. Teknik purposif sampel digunakan dalam penelitian ini, dimana kelas XI IPA 4 dipilih sebagai sampel yang terdiri dari 34 orang siswa. Tes menulis digunakan sebagai instrumen penelitian dalam penelitian ini. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa siswa membuat 239 atau 53% kesalahan dalam bentuk kata, 124 atau 28% kesalahan dalam penghilangan kata, 61 atau 14% kesalahan dalam penambahan kata, 24 atau 5% kesalahan dalam urutan kata. Jenis kesalahan yang paling dominan ialah kesalahan dalam bentuk kata. Siswa-siswa membuat 239 atau 53% kesalahan dari 448 jumlah total kesalahan dalam menulis teks deskriptif.

Kata kunci: Kesalahan, Analisis Kesalahan, Menulis, Teks Deskriptif

I. INTRODUCTION

As a global language, English has influenced many aspects of human life, such as education, business, tourism, and so on. Along with its importance, English is taught as a compulsory subject in Indonesia's national curriculum. It begins to be learnt at elementary school level, and continues to be taught at high school level. In learning English, there are four skills need to be mastered, namely; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In addition to the four skills, learners have to master linguistic competence. Theodore and Rodgers (1992:6) state that "one of dimensions of communicative competence is grammatical competence, it refers to what Chomsky calls linguistic competence." From the statements above, it is clear that the learners have to learn linguistic competence to be proficient in English and one of the linguistic competence is grammar.

Understanding the target language grammar is important for a foreign language learner. Thus, it helps study the language much more effectively. Arifuddin (2007:144) argue that "Grammar has an important place in an institution's teaching, it has to be accepted that grammatical ability, or rather the lack of it, sets limits to what can be achieved in the way of skill performance. In order to place students in the most appropriate class for the development of skill, knowledge of student's grammatical ability would be very useful information."

However, the mastery of grammar often becomes problematic for learners. The learners cannot avoid producing errors as they mostly occur during the learning process. Dulay and Burt (1982) maintain that all language learners tend to make errors when they learn target language. Making errors are natural for

people learning a second language because it indicates that a learning process is taking place. It happens because they use different form to deliver their ideas, feelings or messages so they need considerable amount of time to be able to master the target language well.’’

Grammatical errors often occur in learners’ production of a language. Research found that learners made grammatical errors in writing for example in the use of past tense verb i.e. *I buyed a booked yesterday*. This is supposed to be *I bought a book*. Another example is on the use of subject and verb agreement, i.e. *She have black hair*. It should be *She has black hair*. Or even error in spelling the word, for example *My father stoped smoking*, whereas the right sentence is *my father stopped smoking*

Based on my teaching experience in junior high school no 23 Mataram the problem that students faced in writing descriptive text was the difficulties in writing descriptive text. I found that many students made errors in writing. The students made errors in translating the sentences from Indonesian to English when students wrote and they could not use English grammar in the correct form.

Based on the foregoing, there is a need to further investigate the kinds of errors made by the learners in writing. There is a necessity to understand that an error analysis has an important role to reveal the kinds of error that students produced. This study focuses on using an error analysis to analyze and describe students’ errors in writing descriptive text. It has been known that Descriptive text is one type of texts learned in high school level. In conclusion, the writer is

interested in analyzing students' grammatical error in writing descriptive text at SMAN 4 Praya in academic year 2017/2018.

1.1 Research Question

1. What types of grammatical errors are produced by the second year students of SMA Negeri 4 Praya in writing descriptive text?
2. Which type of errors in writing descriptive text is dominantly produced by the second year students of SMA Negeri 4 Praya ?

1.2 Objective of The Study

Based on the problems above, the objectives of the study are :

1. To find out the types of grammatical errors produced by the second year students of SMA Negeri 4 Praya.
2. To find out the most dominantly type of errors produced in writing descriptive text.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Errors reflect gaps in the learner knowledge. They occur because learners do not know the correct form. On the other hand Mistakes reflect occasional lapses in performance. They occur because, in a particular instance, the learner is unable to perform what he or she knows (Ellis, 1997).

Meanwhile, Corder makes a distinction between a mistake and error. Whereas a mistake is a random performance caused by fatigue, excitement, and so on. Therefore can be readily self-corrected. However

Error is systematic deviation made by learners who have not yet mastered the rules of the L2. A learner cannot self-corrected an error because it is a product reflecting his or her current stage of L2 development, or underlying competence.

One way to distinguish errors and mistakes might be to check the consistency of the learners' performance. Learners produced errors if they consistently substitute the similar 'wrong word or sentence', it indicates a lack of knowledge. However, if the learner sometimes says the 'wrong word or sentence' and sometimes says the 'correct word or sentence', this would suggest that the learners possess the knowledge of the correct form and just slipping up, which means that learners make mistakes (Ellis, 1997).

Concluding about the definition above, it could be said error is something happen when the students unsuccessful in determining a new language or second language. The students have the lack of knowledge of it because they do not realize what they did is an error unless other people explain about it. They cannot correct that error by themselves. Meanwhile, mistake is getting it wrong but knowing how to put it right. The students know their errors when the teacher ask them.

2.1 Types of Error

According to Klassen (1991: 259) defines that error may be viewed as being either Global and Local errors. These errors are divided into two kinds of error:

a. Global Errors

Global errors are errors that effects overall sentence organization which possibly influence the flow of communication. For example the wrong order of major constituents, “English language use many people.” The sentence should be, “Many people use English language.”

b. Local Errors

Local errors are errors that effect one element or constituent in a sentence which usually do not break the flow of communication. These errors include errors in noun and verb inflection, articles, and auxiliaries. For example, “why you like him?” the listener of the utterance will still understand the speaker’s message although the sentence does not contain auxiliary.

In addition, in classifying the student’s error in writing descriptive text the writer would like to use Corder’s theory of errors classification; errors of omission, errors of addition, errors of misformation, and errors of misordering that will be explained below.

a. Error of Omission

Error of omission is an absence of an item that should appear. Klassen (1991) states that “errors of omission is error where some elements are omitted which should be present.” The learner omits the items that should appear in a good utterance. Dulay (1982: 150) states that “Omission has two types of morpheme that are omitted more than others. They are content morphemes and grammatical morphemes.” Content

morphemes are morphemes that have meaning like a nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Grammatical morphemes are little word that have minor play in sentences like noun and verb inflection, articles, auxiliaries, and preposition. Example: *Angelina is an actress*. From the explanation and example above, the word *angelina* and *actress* are content morphemes because *Angelina* and *actress* are noun and has a mayor meaning. The word *is* and *an* grammatical morphemes because they are verb auxiliaries and article, and they also play a minor meaning in that sentence.

b. Error of Addition

Addition is the opposite of omission. Addition is the presence of an item that must not appear in well-form utternces (Ellis, 2008). In addition the learners add the utterences which is not needed in the sentence, or learners add some unnecessary element. For example: *She didn't studied yesterday*. From the example above, the learner wants to tell that *She didn't study yesterday*. She knows that to tell past event, she has to use the past verb, but she puts two items for the same features; *didn't* and *studied*.

c. Errors of Misformation

Misformation is characterized by the use of wrong form of the morpheme or structure. For example, in misformation errors the learner supplies a wrong form or structure “She is one of very beautiful girl in the class” instead of “She is one of the most beautiful girl in the class”.

d. Error of Misordering

Misordering is the error where the items presented are correct but wrongly order. For example; *I have pen blue*, from the example above, the items are correct, but the writer doesn't put the items in the appropriate order.

In addition Ellis (1997) describes errors into three types; omission, misformation, and misordering.

a. Omission

Omission is leaving out an item that is required for utterances to be considered grammatical.

b. Misformation

Misformation is using one grammatical form in place of another grammatical form.

c. Misordering

Misordering is putting the words in an utterance in the wrong order.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Research Methods

Qualitative descriptive was used as the method of the study, where the data of the analysis was descriptive. As the focus of this research which was mentioned in the first chapter; the aim of using this method is to analyze and describe the grammatical errors which found in the second grade students of senior high school no 4 Praya.

3.2 Population and Sample

The population in this research was all the second grade students of Senior High School 4 Praya in academic year 2017-2018 which was divided into 5 classes; those were XI IPA 1, XI IPA 2, IPA 3, IPS 1, and XI IPS 2. Each class consisted of 29- 33 students.

The purposive sampling technique was used. One class was taken as a sample. According to English teacher suggestion of second grade of senior high school 4 Praya, XI IPA 4 was chosen as a sample that consisted of thirty four students because it has got the lowest achievement in writing text.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

The descriptive writing test was given to the students of XI IPA 4. Ten minutes was allocated to give the treatment to the students before they start to write the test. The students have to write a descriptive text in English with a maximum length of five paragraphs. The result was analyzed based on Corder's theory of errors classification; errors of omission, errors of addition, errors of misformation and errors of misordering.

3.4 Research Instrument

Writing test was used as the research instrument. The topic was offered to the students to efficiencies of the time. Each student has written the writing task based on the topics that researcher offered to the students. The topics were (1)

Describing yourself, (2) Describing your favorite place, (3) Describing your favorite idol, (4) Describing your hobby, and (5) Describing your friend.

3.5 Data Analysis

In analysing the errors of descriptive text written by students, the analysis of errors referred to the common error in English and linguistic feature in writing descriptive text. This research was focused on the four types of errors: errors of omission, errors of addition, errors of misinformation, and errors of misordering.

The steps in analyzing the data as follows:

1. Identifying errors

In this steps, the gained data were identified to find out the grammatical errors by underlying the errors. The data were analyzed as objectively as possible.

2. Describing Errors

This step means to describe errors that learners made after identifying them. It will be described into the types of errors according to corders' classification, those are; errors of omission, errors of addition, errors of misinformation and errors of misordering.

3. Calculating Errors

The next step means to calculate the frequency and percentage of students' errors. For calculating the error the researcher decides to make the abbreviation for each error.

- Error of Omission =(EO)

- Error of Addition =(EA)
- Error of Misformation =(EF)
- Error of Ordering =(EM)

In calculating the errors the researcher will be used the formula as follows:

$$P = \frac{n1}{\sum N} \times 100\%$$

Notes:

P : percentage of errors

$n1$: total of the given errors

$\sum N$: total of the whole errors

4. Explaining the errors

This step explains the grammatical errors in writing a descriptive text produced by the students based on the writing test result by providing the examples of the errors.

IV. RESULT

4.1 Classification of Error

Having identified the students' errors in writing descriptive text, the four types of errors in students' writing result were described referred to the four types of errors classified by Corder (1982). The four types of errors are omission errors, addition errors, misformation errors, and misordering errors.

The students' errors in writing descriptive text are classified into the four types of errors as shown in table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1 Percentage of Error

No	Types of Errors	Number of Errors	Percentage of Error
1	Errors of Omission	124	28%
2	Errors of Addition	61	14%
3	Errors of Misformation	239	53%
4	Errors of Misordering	24	5%
Total Number of Errors		448	100%

According to table 4.1, they are (124) errors in Omission, (61) errors in Addition, (239) errors in Misformation, and (24) errors in Misordering. It is calculated by the formulation $\frac{n1}{\Sigma N} \times 100\%$, where the percentage is the result of the frequency of errors which is divided by the number of errors. The percentages of student's grammatical errors are explained as follows:

- a. Errors of omission $: \frac{124}{448} \times 100\% = 28\%$
- b. Errors of addition $: \frac{61}{448} \times 100\% = 14\%$
- c. Errors of misformation $: \frac{239}{448} \times 100\% = 53\%$
- d. Errors of misordering $: \frac{24}{448} \times 100\% = 5\%$

Based on the percentage of error, it can be noted that error of misformation has the highest percentage (53%), followed by error of omission (28%), error of

addition (14%), and error of misordering (5%). While the lowest percentage of error produced by the second grade students is misordering error (5%).

4.2 The Dominant Type of Error

Having found the amount and percentage of each type of errors, the most dominant type of errors and the lowest type of errors can be seen in the table and diagram below.

Table 4.2 Percentage of errors

No.	Types of errors	Frequency of Errors	Percentage
1.	Error of omission	124 errors	28%
2.	Error of addition	61 errors	14%
3.	Misformation	239 errors	53%
4.	Misordering	24 errors	5%
Total		448 errors	100%

Table 4.2 The Percentage of Grammar Error

From the five types of errors, the type of errors which has the highest percentage is word misformation error. The number of misformation errors found in students' writing descriptive is 239 errors from 448 errors or 53%. This number of errors determines misformation error as the most dominant type of students grammatical errors in writing descriptive text. This type of error can be caused by the translation from Indonesian to English and also a lack of knowledge. beside that, subject-verb agreement is the most factor contribute the errors in this type. In Indonesia, there is no such a rule like in English language. There is no changing in

the verb and it has no relation to the subject, the subject would not affect the verb in Indonesian language. Those differences in grammar and structure between the two languages cause the English language learners tend to add –s after plural, and omit –s after singular. There are some students who still encounter sentence structure error. The number of percentage shows that most of students cannot avoid this error. Errors in sentence structure vary. Meanwhile, the lowest type of errors that students produced in writing descriptive is misordering error. The number of misordering error found in the students' writing is 24 from 448 errors or 5%. The percentage of this error is the lowest than other error, this error might occur because the students translate their first language into English language.

V. Discussion

The four types of errors made by the students are discussed in this chapter. The incorrect word or sentence are underlined by the writer. Each error was given the explanation and the correct word or sentence. The respondents' names are changed into initial name in describing the error. Below is the discussion of four types of errors.

A) Error of omission

Error of omission is the absence of the item that must appear in the well-formed utterance (Klassen, 1991). In writing descriptive text the second grade students made 124 or 28% error in this type of error. There were some kinds of omission errors made by the students in writing descriptive text. The errors are as follows:

Table 4.2 Errors of omission

No	Students	Incorrect sentence	Correct sentence
1	MHS	My ambition is doctor	My ambition is a doctor
2	BAIC	His name Jefri Nichol	His name is Jefri Nichol
3	BAIC	He handsome	He is handsome
4	BYMP	I was born ketare 03 rd february 2001	I was born in ketare on 03 rd february 2001
5	CS	I have two sister	I have two sisters

The sentences above show that the students produced errors of omission in writing descriptive text, sentence (1) show that the student omitted an article (*a*). Sentences (2) and (3) students omitted *to be (is)*. Also in sentence (4) the student omitted *preposition (in)* and (*on*). While in sentence (5) the student omitted the plural marker (*s*) that indicates the pluralization in that sentence.

b) Error of addition

Addition error is characterized by the presence of an item which must not appear in a well-formed utterance (Ellis, 2008). The students made 61 or 14% errors of addition in writing descriptive text. Below are some sentences in which students produced errors of addition:

Table 4.3 Errors of addition

No	Students	Incorrect sentence	Correct sentence
1	LM	I <i>am</i> don't have brother	I don't have brother
2	PSN	My hair is black <i>colour</i>	My hair is black
3	GW	I'am <i>to be</i> happy with him	I'am happy with him
4	DA	She always <i>to</i> get champion in the class	She always get champion in the class

5	NIC	We <i>very</i> love and miss father and mother	We love and miss father and mother
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In the first sentence the student added *to be (am)* which must not appear in well-formed utterance. In sentence (2), it is correct grammatically, however, the word *black* has already semantically means colour meaning. So, it is incorrect to put the word *colour* after *black*. Therefore, this error is categorized as addition. In sentence (3), the sentence is grammatically incorrect because the student add the word (*to be*) which must not appear in a well-formed utterance. Then in sentence (4) students add *preposition* (*to*) which must not appear in well-formed utterance. While in sentence (5) the student wrote *adverb of frequency* (*very*). All of these errors are over use of words in sentence in which the students additionally used words in their sentences.

c) Error of misformation

Misformation error is characterized by the use of wrong form of the morphem or structure (Dulay & Krashen, 1982). The students produced 239 or 53% errors of misformation in writing descriptive text in which there were some kinds of misformation errors produced by the students. The sentence were as follows:

Table 4.4 Errors of misformation

No	Students	Incorrect sentence	Correct sentence
1	NIC	<i>She</i> hobby is drawing.	Her hobby is drawing
2	NIC	<i>We</i> parent is a hero.	Our parent is a hero
3	MTA	My hobby <i>are</i> playing basket ball.	My hobby is playing basketball
4	RGK	I have <i>my</i> friend.	I have a friend
5	RR	I go to school <i>use</i> bicycle.	I go to school by bicycle

In the first sentence student used *the third singular person (she)* instead of (her), similar with the sentence in number (2), the student used the wrong *subject (we)* instead of using subject pronoun (our). Also in sentence (3) the student produced error in using *to be (are)* instead of (is). Then in sentence (4) the student misused the use *possessive adjective (my)* instead of using *article (a)*. In sentence (5) the student misused in using *verb (use)* instead of using *preposition (by)*. So, all of this five sentences are categorized as misformation errors.

d) Error of misordering

Misordering is characterized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morpheme in an utterance (Dulay & Krashen, 1982). The students produced 24 or 5% errors of misordering in writing descriptive text. There were some kinds of misordering errors produced by the students in writing descriptive text. The sentences were as follows:

Table 4.5 Errors of misordering

No	Students	Incorrect sentence	Correct sentence
1	AW	I have friends the most	I have the most handsome

		handsome	friends.
2	YTU	My favorite food is chicken fried	My favorite food is fried chicken.
3	YTU	My colour favorite is red and white	My favorite colour is red and white
4	DA	She is child very nice	She is very nice child

The sentences above are the kinds of misordering error produced by the students in writing descriptive text. In sentence number (1) the student wrote *noun* (friends) which come before *adverb of comparison* (*the most handsome*). This sentence is incorrect order. Also in sentence (2) and (3) the students are wrong in using *adjective modifier* (*chicken fried* and *colour favorite*). While in sentence (4) the sentence is also incorrect order, because *adjective modifier* (*Very nice*) come after the *noun* (*child*).

VI. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion in the previous chapter the following conclusions are drawn.

1. Four types of errors produced by the second grade students were errors of omission, errors of addition, errors of misformation, and errors of misordering. Misformation is the highest number of error produced by the students, the second number is omission error, the third number is addition error, and the lowest number is misordering error.
2. Based on the percentage of each error, the second conclusion can be drawn that error of misformation is the most dominantly

type of errors produced by the second grade students of Senior High School No. 4 Praya in writing descriptive text, while the lowest type of errors produced by the second grade students is error of misordering.

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