



The Grammatical Errors In Students' Writing Descriptive Text At English Education Program *Islamic University Of Batanghari*

Adang Ridwan¹ Ria Karmila²

¹English Education Program, Faculty of Education and Teacher Training Universitas Islam Batanghari

adangridwan903@gmail.com

²English Literature Program, Adab and Humanities Faculty UIN STS Jambi

riakarmila66@gmail.com

Astract

The aim of this study was to grammatical errors in students' writing descriptive text at second semester English Language Education at Universitas Islam Batanghari. This is a qualitative research, the research employing documentation to collect data and data analysis in this research was descriptive analysis. The result of the study showed that the common types of grammatical errors made by the students at second semester English Language Education at Islamic University of Batanghari were omission error occurs because student omits some important items that must appear in the sentence, addition error occurs because student gets failure to omit unimportant item in sentence, misformation error occurs because students use be and verb together in simple present sentence and misordering error occurs because students make the sentence has incorrect placement item and addition of preposition. And the dominant errors made by the students at second semester English Language Education at Islamic University of Batanghari is Omission error because from five 5 data itself consist of two topics of descriptive text students always make mistake in Omission error. It was possibly caused by carelessness of the students. The carelessness was often closely related to lack of motivation

Keywords: *grammatical errors, descriptive text*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is an important part of language teaching, it also functions as an essential tool for learning (Sari, 2021). Writing is also a language skill that is used for indirect communication. The students can communicate their ideas and thoughts to others through written form such as

letter, message, or invitation for communication. Nurcaerani et al., (2020) said that writing is an important skill, because through writing the students can enhance their ideas, thoughts and experiences. Moreover to express their feeling, need and desire in writing form, the students need writing skills. It means that

writing is one language skills to express idea, thought, feeling and opinion in written form. In order to make writing meaningful, one important component that should be correctly used is grammar.

Grammar is a fundamental aspect in writing. It reflects the meaning, genre, and the discourse of the writing product (Yuliawati & Sri Andayani, 2020). Besides, it reflects the content and meaning of the writing product. Sometimes, it seems very hard for the second language learner. The rules of grammar and writing are developed so that readers understand the information. Nanning et al., (2020) mention that grammar means the rules which structure our language. It means that grammar is the description of the ways in which words can change their forms and can be combined into sentences in that language and grammar is also a theory of a language, of how language is put together and how it works. Thus, grammar is very important to be mastered by the students in their English skill.

Grammar competence as a major component of communication has an important position and tenses which are considered as the most difficult skill to learn for the Indonesian students (Hidayat et al., 2020). In tenses, the learners or the writers should combine some parts of grammar, like subject, verbs, auxiliary

verbs, articles, objects, adjectives, adverbs, and so on. Thus, with a good grammatical structure, the content of the writing will be easily understood and the messages, ideas, or information will be delivered properly and more meaningful. Without good or correct structure, there will be misunderstanding as a result (Qamariah et al., 2020). So that, learners' difficulty in writing may lead the EFL learners tend to make errors, especially for them who still lack competence.

In learning English, it is common that students make mistakes or errors in written form, especially in how to use the verb correctly based on tenses which will be used (Lestari et al., 2021). Error that the students make when they learn a language is very common. They often make grammatical errors An error is an action which is inaccurate or incorrect (Sinaga & Ramadhani, 2021). In some usage, an error is synonymous with a mistakes. Errors are typically made by learners who do not yet fully command some institutionalized language system (Islam & Mufidah, 2022). In other words, errors arise due to the imperfect competence in the target language. If the learners do not understand about system of language, it will cause them make many errors in their learning.

Mufidah (2022) said that grammatical errors analysis is important to

be analyzed in order to find out how students learn a language, their progress in learning the target language, their problems, and the aspects where improvement need to be made. By analyzing the students' grammatical errors, it will give the important role in giving feedback for the lecture and researchers in order to evaluate and develop the material in teaching learning process. Sometimes students make grammatical errors. They often produce incorrect utterances. However, making error is fundamentally human in learning process. Therefore, it is possible for students to make errors unconsciously when they are writing (Setiyorini et al., 2020). It means that it is important to examine the grammatical errors in students' writing as a way to prevent mistake in the future.

The researcher found that there were many students who still made many errors in writing English paragraph and found difficulties in applying tenses, structure, syntax, semantic, lexical meaning, and phonology into sentences. Here are some examples of error in using tenses that often occurs in students' writing, "*My teacher drink coffee last night*". Actually, this incorrect sentence was to be understood well, but it was exactly wrong in the form of English grammar. This sentence talked about the past event, so it should use simple past tense. The simple past indicates that an activity or situation began and ended at a

particular time in the past. The verb of this sentence should use past form (verb 2). The correct sentence is "*My teacher drank coffee last night*". This error occurred because the students translated Indonesian into English directly without paying attention on using Standard English. They made this error also because they did not understand the grammar well and mother tongue interference was still interfered their minds.

Therefore, error analysis has an important role to help the lecturer to reveal what kind of error that mostly the students do in writing and the causes of the error they make. By knowing the errors, the lecturer could improve their method in teaching and would avoid the errors by giving the extensive materials about the errors in writing. The students also would have better understanding of what they were learning and would be able to write correctly and awarded with their previous error.

RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, the researcher uses the descriptive qualitative design, because it describes the grammatical errors in students' writing descriptive text in second semester English Language Education at Islamic University of Batanghari where the students had good skill in writing descriptive text and it can be seen from

their writing. The researcher selected this method because it conveys a broader understanding of the grammatical errors in students' writing descriptive text. The data collected in the form of texts and words as a descriptive explanation than a number (Sugiyono, 2020). The result of students' writing contains quotation and it is not written in the form of figures and tables with statistical measures, but it was illustrated in the form of describing words to the grammatical errors in students' writing descriptive text and it was presented in narrative.

Based on explanations above, it can be concluded that descriptive qualitative is analyzing about descriptive data that is collected from grammatical errors in students' writing descriptive text, by using descriptive qualitative the researcher will get the answer about the question in analyzing the common types of grammatical errors made by the students at second semester English Language Education at Universitas Islam Batanghari.

The data in this research is in the form of sentences. It was the students' descriptive text writing assignment which the lecturer had given as an assignment for the students (Perdana & Safitri, 2022). The sources of data in this study are the grammatical errors in students' writing descriptive text based on the surface

strategy taxonomy at second semester English Language Education at Universitas Islam Batanghari. This research uses one technique to collect the data. Documentation of students' student's work would be used as the main source of this research before the data are going to be analyzed.

Documentation is used to collect students' writing in descriptive texts. The data are in the form of phrases, sentences and paragraphs. To get the data, the researcher takes some steps. First, the researcher reads the students descriptive text paragraph on describing person, animal and place. It will help the researcher to know the students' ability in writing. Second, the researcher determines second semester as the object of the research. The researcher takes twelve data from the class. Third, the researcher asks to the lecturer the writing product to be analyzed. The lecturer gives the limit time in doing this descriptive paragraph. Students have to finish to make paragraph of descriptive text in the class for one meeting (about 90 minutes). There are some steps which are done by the researcher

First, after arranging the data, the researcher gives correction to the students' writing one by one. The correction is adding underline in each of words, phrases or sentences which contain grammatical

error and correct the error ones with the correct answer. The researcher only focuses on the students' writing analysis and she does not pay attention in the student creativity.

The second, after giving correction to the students writing, the researcher underlines and classifies the data into four types of error according to Oshima and Hogue's surface strategy taxonomy. The third step is describing the data systematically to the best understanding about grammatical errors problem. The researcher describes the data in the form of sentences and paragraphs.

The fourth, the researcher calculates the error by giving conclusion about the dominant error. It does not present in the form of percentage because it is qualitative research. The last, the researcher looks for the source of error to decrease the similar or different errors for other learners (Febiola & Saputra, 2022).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Common Types of Grammatical Errors Made by the Students

In this research, the researcher analyses 5 data about descriptive text related to the research questions of the research. 5 data itself consist of two topics of descriptive text. It is about favorite person and place. After

analyzing all of the data that is found in the student's writing, the researcher determines the source of errors, the researcher gives initial name to explain the identity of the writer. From the writing above, the researcher found some types of error. Those types of error are omission of error, misinformation error and misordering error. The classification of error is explained below:

a) Omission

The researcher found that in writing the story about a person, the students made grammatical errors in Omission, it can be seen below:

The first is omission error in first story. Omission errors are described as the absence of an item that must appear in a well- formed utterance. The kinds of omission error found in the student's writing are the omission of subject, omission of suffix-s and suffix-ing. Here is an example of error of omission of subject that the researcher picks from the data. In Bahasa Indonesia, the student wants to say "juga selalu menasehatiku". The student translated it word by word and it becomes: "**Also keep advise me**". This sentence is grammatically incorrect because

there is no *subject* in the sentence. Subject is the most important item that must appear in the sentence and it is useful to make the reader understand the context easily. The correct sentence should be **“She also advises me”** or **“she also keeps advising me”**. In the first correction, the verb is followed by suffix- s because it is based on subject -verb agreement. Verb which follows third person singular in the simple present tense should be added by suffix s/es. The second correction is based on gerund form.z

The next error in first story is omission of suffix-s. This is a general phenomenon happened in EFL students. Here is an example of error of omission of *suffix-s*, **“she wear a veil”**. The sentence is incorrect because the student ignores the rule of subject- verb agreement. In this sentence, the subject pronoun is indicated with *she* (singular). Verb which follows third person singular should be added by suffix s/es. The correct sentence should be **“she wears a veil”**. Moreover, omission of *be* is also happened. Here is the example,

“Now she just at home”. This sentence is grammatically incorrect because there is no *be* in the sentence. The sentence should be added by *be* and the correct sentence should be “Now, she is just at home”. The function of *be* in this sentence is as the substitution of verb. Then, *to be* should be *is* because the student describes something in the simple present form.

The next error is happened because of omitting suffix- *ing* and verb. Here is an example error of omission of suffix- *ing* and verb, **“Start from appetizer, main course until the dessert”**. In this sentence, the researcher found the use of gerund. A gerund is the *-ing* form of a verb used as a noun (Azar, 2000). A gerund is used in the same ways as a noun. It can be used as a subject or as an object. The example above shows that gerund is used as a subject. Meanwhile, the researcher also found other error in the sentence. The student mentions the object of sentence without showing the verb. It makes the sentence is difficult to understand. The sentence should be, **“starting to make**

appetizer, main menu and the dessert". The verb is in the form of *to infinitive* because *start* can be followed by *gerund* and *to infinitive*.

The researcher also found omission of plural marker from descriptive text above. The error is found in the sentence, "**She also has pointed nose, red lip and two dark brown eyes**". In detail, omission of plural marker is found in the noun phrase, red lip. Lip is count noun and it is included regular plural noun. Therefore, it should be added by plural marker to show the plural noun. The correct sentence will be, "**She also has pointed nose, red lips and two dark brown eyes**". The source of those type of errors is interlingual transfer because errors are made as the result of transferring from the native language. The researcher found that in writing the story about a place, the students made grammatical errors in Omission, it can be seen below:

The student often forgets some important parts in a sentence. In the descriptive text above, the researcher found three examples of omission error. The first example is

shown in this sentence, "**It located at Lapangan**". Actually, in Bahasa Indonesia student wants to say "Dia terletak di Lapangan". This sentence should be in the form of passive sentence and it needs *be* in front of *past participle verb*. Besides, conjunction *and* has some functions such as, connecting two or more noun, adjective in the sentence. It also can be used to connect two sentences as additional information but, each of sentences should have a subject. Therefore, the correct sentence should be, "**It is located at Lapangan**".

The researcher also found omission of *be* in descriptive text. Here is an example of omission of *be*, "**The building height around 132 meters**". Sentence should has a subject, verb and object or it can use *be* as *verb*. It means the second sentence which is related by conjunction also need subject. The correct sentence should be, "**The building height is around 132 meters**". Other example error found in the sentence, "**for a long time, Monas be the tallest building in Jakarta**". The error is caused by using of *be*. The student does not explain *be* in detail form. It has to

use *is* because the student writing context is simple present form. Here is the correct sentence, **“Monas is the tallest building in Jakarta for a long time”**.

In addition, the researcher also found omission of plural marker. It is shown in the sentence, **“But, there are much building”**. It is clear that the student translates the sentence word to word. In the context of omission error, the student omits plural marker in *building*. Instead, the student adds unnecessary items in a sentence such as, conjunction and preposition. However, the use of conjunction in the first sentence above is unnecessary and it must be omitted. Then *much* should be changed into *many* because *building* is count plural noun. The correct sentence should be, **“There are many building”**. The source of this type error is interlingual transfer because the student translates the sentences from Bahasa Indonesia to English.

In addition, the researcher also found misordering error in the descriptive text above. Misordering error happens because student puts

morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance in incorrect placement. Although, it is only an article, it can influence the meaning of the sentence. Here is an example of misordering error, **“She is very lonely, patient, funny and a good housewife”**. The article “a” should be put in front of the first adjective. Then, *lonely* is incorrect adjective to put in the sentence because the meaning is awkward. The correct sentence becomes **“She is a very lonely, patient, funny and good housewife”**. The source of this error type is communication strategies because student uses production strategies to enhance getting their messages across.

The last error is misordering. This sentence has incorrect placement item and addition of preposition. For making effective sentence, we have to diminish the use of inappropriate preposition. The example of misordering can be seen in this sentence, **“Monument Nasional is one of monument that has the value of history for Indonesia”**. Preposition *of* can be changed by arranging the correct noun phrase such as, *the value of*

history becomes *historical value*. The correct sentence should be **“Monument Nasional is one of monument that has historical value for Indonesia”**. The source of this type error is communication strategies because student uses production strategies to enhance getting their messages across

Discussion

Based on the research finding, the researcher found some data which showed that errors in constructing descriptive text were still performed by second semester English Language Education at Universitas Islam Batanghari. From 31 worksheets which were sample of this research, many students of the study still made errors in constructing a written descriptive text. In this research, the researcher has read, presented and analyzed five data from eight graders students which contain grammatical errors. Then, the researcher discusses the whole data to answer the research problem. Those research problems are the types of error found in the descriptive text made by second semester English Language Education at Islamic University of Batanghari and the sources of errors made by students in their descriptive text paragraph. The researcher found four types of error in the descriptive text written by second semester English Language

Education at Universitas Islam Batanghari. Those types of error are omission error, addition error, misformation error and misordering error.

The result of the study proved that the omission error of letter as the most error which often happened in this study. It was possibly caused by carelessness of the students. The carelessness was often closely related to lack of motivation. The errors performed by the students were also caused by several factors which happened in their learning process as the causes of their errors; one of factors is interlingual transfer. The different systems of both target language (English) and source language (mother tongue) were the main factor of the existence of errors in their construction a descriptive text. Omission error occurs because student omits some important items that must appear in the sentence. From the analysis, students are categorized because they omit subject, suffix-*s*, *be*, verb, article, plural marker. Omission of subject and verb makes the sentence incorrect because subject is the most important item in the sentence. It is also important to pay attention the use of *suffix-s* and *be* because it has strong relation with subject and verb agreement. While, the use of article and plural marker influence the meaning of the sentences. It is

similar lines with the finding of (Lestari et al., 2021)

Addition error is the opposite of omission error. It occurs because student gets failure to omit unimportant item in sentence. It means that student add unnecessary item that must not appear in the sentence. Based on analysis, addition error is signified by adding preposition, article, be and apostrophe's. In addition, (Ila, 2018) classified the types of addition error and researcher found double marking and regularization error in the analysis. The regularization error happens because students apply the rules use to produce the regular one to those that are irregular. In the students' writing, researcher found *builded*. It is similar lines with the finding of (Irnawati et al., 2020). Double marking happens because two items rather than one are marked for the same feature (tense and apostrophe's, in these example).

Misformation error found in some sentences. It can be misformation of verb, misformation of auxiliary and misformation of preposition is also found phenomena which is called as double marking. Researcher found this phenomenon in substituting auxiliary verb of plural noun to the auxiliary verb of plural noun. Misordering error also found in some sentences, where the sentence has incorrect

placement item and addition of preposition. It is similar lines with the finding of (Mufidah, 2022)

Many students generated the system of English language with their native language, Indonesia language. The students used Indonesian system of language to construct English sentences in their descriptive text writing. Students who performed errors because of this source generally brought their native language behavior. For example, when the student wanted to write Indonesian sentence "*mereka bermain dengan keluarga* they constructed English sentence "they are play with family". It is also supported by Husnayaini et al., (2021) that error was because of the students lacked of knowledge about English. They translated directly their mother tongue into English. Consequently, the sentence was grammatically incorrect because the student makes incorrect word order.

The other factor that influences the learner's error is intralingual transfer. **According to** Hidayat et al., (2020) intralingual interference refers to items produced by the learner which do not reflect the structure of mother tongue, but generalizations based on partial exposure to the target language. In her research, the writer found many facts that students made

errors from this factor. For example: “Also keep advise me”. This incorrect form of *to be* was included into intralingual source of errors because the student ignored the restrictions of the use of *to be* auxiliary for plural subjects. She picked *to be* auxiliary without considering the correct use of it.

From the discussion above, the common types of grammatical errors made by the students at second semester English Language Education at Islamic University of Batanghari were omission error occurs because student omits some important items that must appear in the sentence, addition error occurs because student gets failure to omit unimportant item in sentence, misformation error occurs because students use *be* and *verb* together in simple present sentence and misordering error occurs because students make the sentence has incorrect placement item and addition of preposition. And the dominant errors made by the students at second semester English Language Education at Islamic University of Batanghari is Omission error because from five 5 data itself consist of two topics of descriptive text students always make mistake in Omission error. It was possibly caused by carelessness of the students. The carelessness was often closely related to lack of motivation.

CONCLUSIONS

The finding indicated that the common types of grammatical errors made by the students at second semester English Language Education at Islamic University of Batanghari were omission error occurs because student omits some important items that must appear in the sentence, addition error occurs because student gets failure to omit unimportant item in sentence, misformation error occurs because students use *be* and *verb* together in simple present sentence and misordering error occurs because students make the sentence has incorrect placement item and addition of preposition. And the dominant errors made by the students at second semester English Language Education at Islamic University of Batanghari is Omission error because from five 5 data itself consist of two topics of descriptive text students always make mistake in Omission error. It was possibly caused by carelessness of the students. The carelessness was often closely related to lack of motivation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Alhamdulillah the grace and gifts of God, I can finish this thesis. I dedicate this thesis to: For my father and who always give prayer, motivation and suggestion for me over the years. I will try to give the best for you. How this self wants to see you guys proud of me with the results that I have achieved today. The last for all people

who have helped me in writing this thesis. I would like to say thank you so much. I love you all as always.

REFERENCES

- Febiola, J., & Saputra, R. (2022). An Analysis of Grammatical Errors in Students' Conversation. *Interaction : Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa*, 9(2), 268–275.
- Hidayat, D. N., Fitriyani, N., Alek, A., Septiawan, Y., & Eviyuliawati, I. (2020). An Investigation into The Grammatical Errors of Students' Writing. *Eduvelop*, 4(1), 9–16. <https://doi.org/10.31605/eduvelop.v4i1.806>
- Husnayaini, I., Rizki, M. T., & Savitri, C. (2021). An Analysis of Students' Grammatical Errors in Writing Procedure Texts. *EEdJ: English Education Journal*, 1(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.32923/eedj.v1i1.1791>
- Ila Amalia. (2018). Available online at Loquen: English Studies Journal. *LOQUEN: English Studies Journal*, 11(01), 40–56.
- Inawati, D., Saputri, E. R., & Bili, L. L. (2020). An Analysis of Students' Grammatical Errors in Writing Descriptive Text by Using Picture of 7th-Grade SMPN 05 Tamansari. *Scope : Journal of English Language Teaching*, 5(1), 28. <https://doi.org/10.30998/scope.v5i1.6628>
- Islam, S., & Mufidah, P. N. (2022). An Analysis of Grammatical Error on Students' Writing. *International Journal of English Education and Linguistics (IJoEEL)*, 4(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.33650/ijoeel.v4i1.3826>
- Lestari, I. A., Juliansyah, J., & Pratama, Y. (2021). Grammatical Errors in Students' Writing: Descriptive Study on Grade 7 Students. *Journal of English Language and Culture*, 11(1), 23–38. <https://doi.org/10.30813/jelc.v11i1.2265>
- Mufidah, P. N. . & I. S. (2022). an Analysis of Grammatical Error on Students' Writing Putri Nuril Mufidah 1 , Syaiful Islam 2. *IJoEEL (International Journal of English Education and Linguistic)*, 04(01), 1–13.
- Nanning, N., Saepuddin, & Munawir. (2020). An Analysis of Grammatical Error of English Students in Writing Skill. *Eduvelop*, 3(2), 145–160. <https://doi.org/10.31605/eduvelop.v3i2.636>
- Nurchaerani, M., Andrian, N., Delvi, M., & Al Baqoroh, R. (2020). the Grammatical Errors of Student'S Writing Descriptive Text in Sman 84 Jakarta. *University EsaUnggul*, 1, 1–6.
- Perdana, A. P., & Safitri, D. (2022). Students' Grammatical Errors Analysis in Writing Manual Procedure Text: A Study on SMK Negeri 1 Batusangkar. *Journal of English Language Teaching* , 11(3), 288–294. <https://doi.org/10.24036/jelt.v11i3.119368>
- Qamariah, H., Sri Wahyuni, & Meliana. (2020). an Analysis of Students' Grammatical Errors in Writing English Text in the Second Grade Students of Smk-Smti Banda Aceh. *Getsempena English Education Journal*, 7(1), 58–71. <https://doi.org/10.46244/geej.v7i1.1041>
- Sari, R. (2021). Highlighting Grammatical Errors By Using Writing Journal to Improve Writing Accuracy. *KABASTRA: Kajian Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 1(1), 94–104. <https://doi.org/10.31002/kabastra.v1i1.>

- Setiyorini, T. J., Dewi, P., & Masykuri, E. S. (2020). The Grammatical Error Analysis Found in Students' Composition. *Lensa: Kajian Kebahasaan, Kesusastraan, Dan Budaya*, 10(2), 218.
<https://doi.org/10.26714/lensa.10.2.2020.218-233>
- Sinaga, Y., & Ramadhani, P. (2021). Students' Grammatical Error in Writing Narrative Text. *English Education : English Journal for Teaching and Learning*, 8(2), 189–200.
<https://doi.org/10.24952/ee.v8i2.3240>
- Yuliawati, L., & Sri Andayani, E. (2020). Type of Error on Articles in Students' Writing. *Visi Ilmu Sosial Dan Humaniora (VISH)*, 1(2), 199–208.