

# AN ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL ERRORS IN WRITING RECOUNT TEXT AT THE FIRST YEAR CLASSES OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Elyza Martiarini<sup>1</sup> and Eva Nurul Candra<sup>2</sup>  
Dosen Universitas Indraprasta PGRI  
Jalan Nangka No. 58 C (TB. Simatupang) Jakarta Selatan  
elyza.martia@gmail.com<sup>1</sup>, evanurulcandraa@gmail.com<sup>2</sup>

---

**Abstract:** The objective of this research is to find out and analyze the types of error made by students at the first-year classes in writing a recount text. The methodology of the research used is qualitative methods and the research design is a case study. Moreover, the writers chose the first-year classes students of English Department and observed 40 students. The writers used a written test to gain the data about error in writing a recount text. Based on the analysis of students' recount text writing, there were several mistakes made by the students, with the total number of percentages was 76%. Of these, 76% errors including 15% errors of irregular verb usage, 12% errors of regular verb, and the type of error most often done by the students was 32% errors of word choice, 2% errors of omission, 3% errors of auxiliary verb, 5% errors of intra-lingual transfer, 2% errors of adverb, error of misordering was 5%, and error of unclear meaning was only 2%. The number errors of be was 17%, and the use of personal pronoun errors was 7%.

**Keywords:** Analysis, Grammatical error, Recount text.

**Abstrak:** Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui dan menganalisis jenis kesalahan yang dibuat oleh siswa di kelas tahun pertama dalam menulis teks recount. Metodologi penelitian yang digunakan adalah metode kualitatif dan desain penelitian adalah studi kasus. Selain itu, penulis memilih siswa kelas tahun pertama Jurusan Bahasa Inggris dan mengamati 40 siswa. Penulis menggunakan tes tertulis untuk mendapatkan data tentang kesalahan dalam menulis teks recount. Berdasarkan analisis penulisan teks recount siswa, ada beberapa kesalahan yang dilakukan oleh siswa, dengan jumlah persentase 76%. Dari jumlah tersebut, 76% kesalahan adalah termasuk 15% kesalahan penggunaan kata kerja tidak beraturan, 12% kesalahan dari kata kerja reguler, dan jenis kesalahan yang paling sering dilakukan oleh siswa adalah 32% kesalahan pilihan kata, 2% kesalahan kelalaian, 3% kesalahan kata kerja tambahan, 5% kesalahan transfer intra-bahasa, 2% kesalahan kata keterangan, kesalahan misordering 5%, dan kesalahan makna tidak jelas hanya 2%. Kesalahan jumlah be adalah 17%, dan penggunaan kesalahan ganti kata pribadi adalah 7%.

**Kata kunci:** Analisis, Kesalahan Tata Bahasa, Teks Recount

---

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In learning English, as students of second language learning must have patience and perseverance because it is a continuous process so that it can create adequate language skills. There are four basic language skills in learning and communicating using English, namely:

listening skill, speaking skill, reading skill, and writing skill. The four skills are related to each other so that they must be implemented in a consistent and integrated manner.

Writing skill which is one component of English language skills is very important to be taught. This can also be used as a provision for higher levels of schooling, also serves to train

students in delivering or expressing their thoughts regularly, both in the form of sentences and in the form of essays. An essay is a written work resulting from a person's activities to express ideas and convey them through language written to the reader to be understood. In composing an essay, students should understand the important things contained in it such as the selection of topic or title, word selection, the use of effective sentences, and the proper use of punctuation. Likewise, in composing recount text, student retells her/ his experience or something that happened into writing so that other people can feel what the writer wrote in the essay. By paying attention to these things it is expected that students can produce quality and quality essays and their contents are easily understood by readers.

Writing is the most difficult ability compared to other abilities. Writing is one of the basic abilities that involve activities to create a note or information to express ideas, ideas, feelings, and opinions through writing. In English we are also familiar with the use of grammar. English grammar has variations in structure and uses that are different from structures and patterns in Indonesian.

In the use of grammar (grammatical), students often face mistakes in writing. The obstacles that are often experienced by students in general are grammatical (grammatical) errors, verbs (verb), personal pronouns, and so on in the essays they make. This happens because students understand English is not comprehensive, students do not understand and master the grammar of English well and finally they have

difficulty when they want to start writing a essay assigned by a teacher. However, success in teaching English cannot be easily measured by seeing mistakes, but also from how students' interests in learning English subjects.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

Analyzing errors in students' writing is very important. In fact the ability to write with the correct grammatical rules of English is very difficult for students. Errors, or rather deviations from the correct structure, are divided into two categories, namely errors, and mistakes, but in concept, they are different.

Grammatical errors in foreign languages are unavoidable and naturally occur. This error is caused by several factors, including: the influence of the original language, excessive generalization, not knowing grammatical rules, or grammatical rules being misunderstood. The definition of an error according to <http://jlt-polinema.org/?tag=error-analysis> explains that: "Errors (errors) are deviations from correct grammar because they do not understand the rules of grammar. Therefore, these speakers usually cannot immediately correct the error. Errors usually occur systematically and often occur repeatedly. Speakers will realize their mistakes if notified by other speakers or teachers. "

Still from the same source, it was explained that: "Mistake is a deviation that is not intentionally spoken or written by a speaker, and can easily be corrected by the speaker himself.

All people, both native and non-native speakers, can make mistakes. But if he can immediately correct the mistake because he is aware that he made a mistake then this is not because he does not apply the rules of correct grammar. Errors are usually caused by psychological issues, such as: fatigue, lack of listening, drowsiness, thinking about other things, and so on."

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that mistakes and errors are two synonymous words that have more or less the same meaning, errors can usually be corrected by the students themselves if the concerned person is more careful or introspective, and therefore errors are not long. While errors are caused by the ability to discuss students, so it takes time to fix them.

Error is a defective part of a conversation or essay that deviates from certain norms. If we look at the "Oxford Dictionary" (2010, p. 496) there is an explanation that "Error is a mistake." Error is a system of deviation carried out by students against the target language because he does not have expertise or does not learn the actual form. Errors usually occur consistently, so systematically. The error can last long if it is not corrected. Improvements are usually carried out by the teacher, for example through remedial teaching, training, practice, and so on.

Error analysis is an attempt to analyze language errors made by students with a view to explaining students' mistakes in learning a second language. According to Siahaan and Shinoda (2008, p. 51), "Analysis is expository text. It is about the truth of a fact object. It is written to expose the truth of the fact to the object reader."

*An Analysis Of Grammatical Errors In Writing Recount Text At The First Year Classes Of English Department (Elyza Martiarini and Eva Nurul Candra)*

According to Manurung (2007, p. 1), "Grammar is very important to be mastered, because the grammar is closely related to the structure of language, the form and type of words and the way in which words are combined into phrases or sentences. Therefore, grammar is a scientific translation of language.

"Elsjelyn (2009, p. 81) said that "Without grammar, people cannot assemble the words they have into an understood expression or otherwise people will find it difficult to understand the meaning and function of a speech or writing if it only captures the meaning of each word that is heard or read."

According to the explanation from the two sources above, it can be concluded that grammar is very important to learn and master, because grammar is used to make a phrase or sentence will be meaningful. If writing does not use grammar then the writing cannot be understood, thus to have a meaningful and a good writing, the writer must use the correct grammar.

The notion of grammar according to Thornbury (2000, p. 1) says that "Grammar is partly the study of what are the structures that are possible in a language" the meaning of the grammatical statement is a study of the form language. According to the Oxford Dictionary (2010, p. 651) explains "Grammar is the rule in language for changing the form of word and joining them into sentences." The purpose of the explanation above is grammatical (grammar) is the rule of language to convert several words into sentences.

Pardiyono (2010, p. 81) stated that in the context of communication, we still often find many sentences in the context of oral and written

communication that still use inappropriate tense forms. We also often find that information that should be expressed in the past tense form is revealed in the present form. Although it seems trivial, the use of inappropriate tense will definitely change the meaning of information. That is certainly very detrimental.

One of the factors that cause errors in English does not understand the meaning and function of tenses. The meaning of tense according to Ali (2009, p. 1) reveals that tenses are an illustration or explanation, when an event, event, statement, news and action occurs in a sentence that is in accordance with the circumstances, including: now, past, or will come or change the time form of the verb. Ali (2009, p. 3) further states that tenses are divided into four types (four fundamental tenses), namely Past Tense (if past), Present Tense (now), Future Tense (when it will come), and Past Future Tense (expressing the second form of sentence). Each of these tenses has four sentence patterns, namely: simple (simple), continuous (moderate), perfect (already / already), and perfect continuous (already medium).

In this study, the writers used the simple past tense. Simple past tense is one explanation of the time that must be mastered, because simple past tense sentences include sentence forms that are often used, both in everyday conversation and in the story. According to Hariyono and Burnley (2011, p. 326) "Simple Past Tense" is a form of time used to explain events or actions performed at a certain time in

the past in a simple form. The time of occurrence of an event or action is known."

Writing has the main function as explained by Tarigan (2008, p. 22) "The main function of writing is as an indirect communication tool." So, the main function of writing is as a mean of communication between humans in writing or indirectly. Writing is very necessary in everyday life, if we cannot write, there are so many losses.

According to Tarigan (2008, pl 22), "Writing is very important for education because it makes it easier for students to think. It can also help us think critically. It can also make it easier for us to feel and enjoy relationships, deepen our responsiveness or perceptions, solve the problems we face, form a sequence for experiences." In addition, writing also has several objectives, Tarigan (2008, p. 24) argues about several goals for writing, including:

1. Writing that aims to inform or teach, which is called informative discourse (informative discourse).
2. Writing that aims to be convincing or urgent is called persuasive discourse (persuasive discourse).
3. Posts that aim to entertain or please or which contains an aesthetic purpose called literary writing (literary discourse).
4. Posts that express strong feelings and emotions or fiery is called expressive discourse.

Recount text is one of the types of English writing skill that retells past events or experiences. This recount text is almost the same as English narrative text. In recount text there is no complication (complication) as in the

narrative text. Recount is to tell someone about something, especially something that someone has experienced.

The purpose of the explanation above is that someone explains or tells something, especially something that has been experienced. Similar to the previous explanation, Budiyan (2013, p. 58) explained that "Recount text is one genre of text in English that retells a story, event, or experience in the past."

In accordance with the explanation above, as for the purpose of writing recount text is to report events, events, and activities for the purpose of preaching or entertaining without conflict in the story. According to Budiyan (2013, p. 58) "The purpose of recount text is to provide entertainment or information to the reader." Writing a recount text is based on three generic structures. Next are the three generic structures in the recount text.

#### 1. Orientation

Orientation is the initial part of the recount text written in the first paragraph of the recount text. Orientation contains information about who, where, and when the events told in the text occur.

#### 2. Events

Events are part of the recount text that tells the events or events that have occurred. These events are told in chronological order that is coherent from beginning to end.

#### 3. Reorientation

Reorientation is the final part of the recount text. Reorientation contains a summary of the previous sections. In this section there is

a repetition of information conveyed in orientation or events. However, reorientation is optional.

The characteristics of recount text are:

1. Noun or pronoun as a pronoun for people, animals or objects involved, for example Joe, the rabbit, she, and so on.
2. Action verbs, for example read, sleep, walk, and so on.
3. Past tense, for example We went to the zoo, she was happy, and so on.
4. Connecting words and connecting times (conjunction and time connectives) that sequence events, events, or activities, for example and, but, then, after that, and so on.
5. Adverbs and adverbs phrases to express place, time and way. For example, yesterday, at my house, slowly, and so on.
6. Adjectives to explain nouns. For example, beautiful, funny, and so on.

In collecting data, the writers use sample survey research method. Arikunto argues (2013, p. 312) that information obtained from survey research can be collected from the entire population then called census research and also can only a portion of the population refer to as sample survey. This research is a descriptive qualitative research that is quality learning research. The writers conduct survey research directly to the first generation of students in the English language by assigning assignments to students to make recount essays. Samples were chosen randomly so that all subjects were considered the same. According to Suseno (2013, p. 33) "Simple random sampling is the taking of sample members from the population

done randomly regardless of the strata that exist in that population." In this case, the writers re-explained the recount text to students and each student was free to express his thoughts in an essay by applying the recount text they already knew.

In analyzing errors, the writers use the essays of students themselves to measure their ability to use grammar (grammatical) in the essay. After the writers analyze the results of the students' essays, the writer groups the students' errors based on classifying their mistakes.

This research is a descriptive type of research so it does not have an initial hypothesis. As stated by Arikunto (2003, p. 309): "Descriptive research is a study that is intended to gather information about the status of existing symptoms, namely the state of symptoms according to what they were at the time the research was conducted."

The steps carried out by the writers in analyzing grammatical errors in recount essays in English made by students are as follows:

1. Collect Data

Data on student errors in working on the task of writing an English recount that student cannot correct themselves.

2. Recognize and identify students' mistakes in writing essays in recounting English by underlining words or incorrect sentence arrangements.

3. Classify these errors.

4. Reconstruct sentences made by students in English recount essays. In this case the writers correct the grammatical errors of

students in the correct grammatical arrangement.

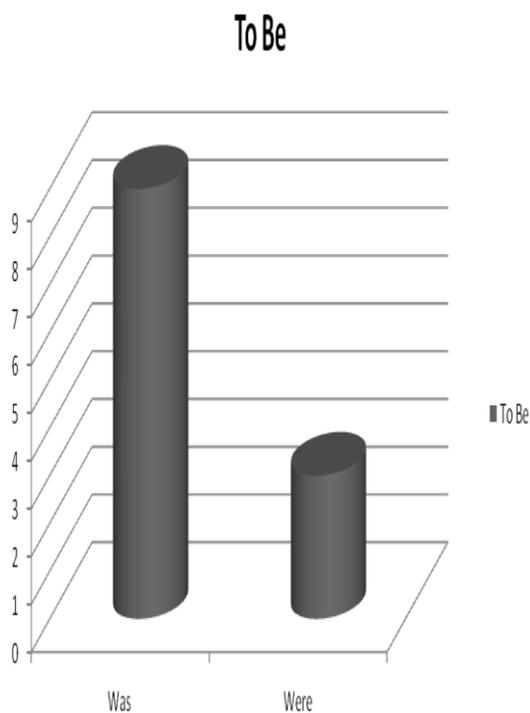
5. Group errors from student essays into tables.

### 3. RESULTS

Based on the analysis of data, it was found that students generally made three mistakes. First, we can see in the essays above that the majority of students make mistakes in using the verb, they lack understanding of the change from verb one to the second verb. They also have difficulty in changing from Bahasa sentences to English sentences. They make Bahasa sentences first, then interpret them per word into English, while English has a different pattern to Bahasa.

Second, mistakes occur in use to be. they are still mistaken in using to be on simple past tense with the present continuous tense. So, there are still some students who use "am, is, are" in their essays in the form of simple past tense. For example, it is so wonderful, it should be so wonderful. Third, there is also an error in the use of personal pronouns. The use of personal pronoun seems to be sufficiently understood by all students. So, this error was very little done, but there were still some students who make this mistake. For example, my grandmother was dead of his illness, it was supposed to be, my grandmother was dead of her illness, because the grandmother's word instead was, she, and the pronoun she had ownership was her, not his.

From these errors, the writers present the calculation and percentage of each student's error based on the type of error.



| No            | Types of Error          | Errors | Percentage of Errors                  |
|---------------|-------------------------|--------|---------------------------------------|
| 1             | <i>Verb</i>             | 45     | $\frac{45}{59} \times 100\%$<br>= 76% |
| 2             | <i>To be</i>            | 10     | $\frac{10}{59} \times 100\%$<br>= 17% |
| 3             | <i>Personal Pronoun</i> | 4      | $\frac{4}{59} \times 100\%$<br>= 7%   |
| Total         |                         | 59     | 100%                                  |
| Maximum Score |                         | 45     | 76%                                   |
| Minimum Score |                         | 4      | 7%                                    |

**Table 1. Types of error**

From the table above, it is clear that most students make grammatical errors using verb errors, 45 errors or 77%. At least there are errors in the type of personal pronoun errors, namely only four (4) errors or 6%.

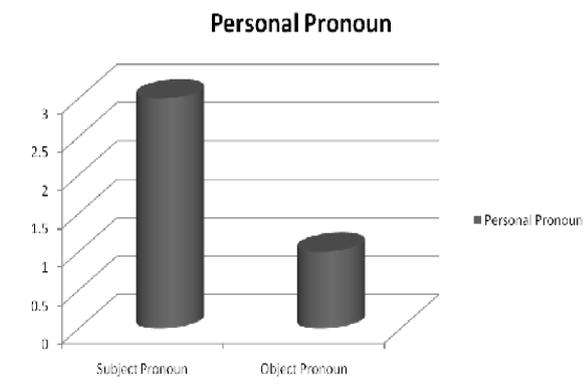
While the types of verb errors can be categorized as follows:

Students often make mistakes of word choice in the verb category. Most of them firstly make essay in Bahasa, then translate into English, so there are so many sentences that are not suitable with the target language, because the pattern of both Bahasa and English is very different. For example, "while the girls were preparing food for eat together", supposedly "while the girls were preparing for food for lunch together". Why is "eat" changed to "lunch"? because in the previous sentence there was a statement that it was already noon.

Errors in irregular verbs occur due to a lack of understanding of the second form of verbs, or also because they do not carry a dictionary, and they do not memorize the second verb, so they write the first verb, with the reason that the sentence can be understood by the reader.

Likewise, with errors in the regular verb, students are confused to determine irregular or irregular verbs.

There are still some students who use to be (am, is, are) in their recount essays. For example, "I am so tired", it should use "was", "I was so tired", but so far, no writing errors have been exchanged between "was" with "were".



There are still some students who make mistake in placing the subject pronoun with the object pronoun. For example, "I could see beautiful garden" should be "Me could see beautiful garden". But there is also a student who still mistakenly distinguishes "she" from "he". He is telling his grandmother, but using a personal pronoun in the form of "he", for example "my grandmother dead with his illness" should use "her", becoming "my grandmother dead with her illness".

#### 4. CONCLUSION

After tabulating the students' essays, the facts about grammar misuse in the recount essay are as follows:

1. The most common mistake that students made were verb, 76%. This mistake was made by students because of several factors, namely lack of vocabulary mastery, lack of understanding of the simple past tense pattern, and also being carried away with Bahasa sentence patterns.
2. The second, most mistake made by students is "to be" as much as 17%. In the use of almost all students are correct, but there are still some students who seem to not understand the simple past tense sentence patterns, so they make mistakes, some even repeat the same mistakes.
3. The least mistake made by students was the use of personal pronoun which was 7%. This mistake was caused by students have not understood yet and could not distinguish it.

After knowing a number of mistakes made by students, the writers want the teacher to do a remedial program to increase knowledge for students. The teacher should pay more attention to the weaknesses of students' weaknesses, especially in writing English sentences. Then the teacher does the analysis of writing to students.

The process of teaching and learning English should be taken into account both in the form of theory and practice. The teacher must be skilled and appropriate in applying learning methods, so that students feel motivated during the learning process, because the success of

foreign language learning is emphasized on its process.

## REFERENCES

- Ali, A.Faidlal Rahman. 2009. *Cara Cepat Belajar 16 tenses*. Penerbit Yogyakarta: Pustaka Widyatama.
- Arikunto. Suharsini. 2006. *Prosedur Penelitian Suatu Pendekatan Praktik*. Jakarta: PT Rinela Cipta
- Budiyani, Sari. 20013. *Writing Tips*. PT Intas Sejati.
- Elsjelyn, Evelyn Rientje. 2008. *English Made Easy*. Penerbit Jakarta Pusat: Kesaint Blanc-Anggota IKAPI.
- Hariyono, Rudi dan Robert Burnley. 2011. *Pocket English Grammar*. Gitamedia Press.
- Hornby, A S. 2010. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. Oxford University Press.
- Manurung, Heldin. 2007. *Simplified English Grammar*. Jakarta : Kesaint Blanc.
- Pardiyono. 2010. *Pasti Bisa Mastering Grammar*. Yogyakarta: C.V Andi Offset.
- Siahaan, Sanggam dan Kisno Shinoda. 2008. *Generic Text Structure*. Penerbit Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu.
- Suseno, Imam. 2013. *Statistika Dalam Penelitian Pendidikan*. Penerbit Jakarta: Unindra Press.
- Tarigan, Henry Guntur. 2008. *Menulis Sebagai Suatu Keterampilan Berbahasa*. Penerbit Angkasa: Bandung.
- Thornbury, Scott. 2000. *How to Teach Grammar*. Bluestone Press: UK.

Zubaidi. *Analisis Jenis dan Frekuensi Kesalahan Gramatikal Bahasa Inggris Tulis Mahasiswa*. (Online). (Accessed from <http://jlt-polinema.org/?tag=error-analysis>, on October 20<sup>th</sup> 2018, 14:22)