

Grammatical Errors in Students' Recount Text Writing (A Case Study in The Third Grade of SMAN 22 Jakarta)

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ABSTRACT

This study is aimed to find out grammatical errors and the sources of errors in students' recount texts. The subject of this study is the third-grade students of SMAN 22 Jakarta in the academic year 2023/2024 which consists of 23 students. Specifically, their recount texts focused on recounting their vacation activities. From the entire third-grade class of 23 students, 16 students were selected as the study sample using the purposive sampling technique. This study used a qualitative approach to analyze and identify grammatical errors. The analysis was carried out by referring to Dulay, Burt & Krashen's theory, a surface strategy taxonomy consisting of Omission, Addition, Misformation, and Misordering and the sources of errors based on Ellis's theory are Interlingual Transfer and Intralingual Transfer. The result of this study showed that the total number of grammatical errors made by the students in their recount texts is 32 errors. Which consist of 4 omission errors, 7 addition errors, 8 misordering errors, and 13 misinformation errors. Accordingly, the most frequent error is misinformation error which corresponds to 13 (40,6%) of the total error. Furthermore, this study also revealed that most of the errors are caused by Intralingual Transfer (30 errors or 94% of the total error). Based on these findings, it concluded that the students had some difficulties in applying English grammar rules in their writings. Therefore, it is suggested to be aware and pay more attention to improve the English teaching and learning process.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Writing is distinct from other exercises in many linguistic elements that come into play during writing, including model texts, grammar, spell-check, punctuation, and prepositions. According to Harmer (2015), several norms in writing set it apart from speaking. Along with disparities in vocabulary and grammar, there are problems with how letters, words, and texts are formed. These problems include handwriting, spelling, layout, and punctuation. Writing, therefore, gives students the chance to expand their vocabulary, learn grammar, and build their awareness of how things are expressed and how well their message is understood in writing. Hayes & Flower (2016) state that writing is challenging because it involves various complex cognitive processes. They explain that writing is not just the physical activity of putting pen to paper or typing on a keyboard but a mental process that involves planning, drafting, revision, and continuous monitoring. Writing requires writers to organize ideas,

integrate information, and think about their audience and communication goals. Writing can be done in groups, which is commonly done at universities (Rahayu, 2020), or individually for middle and lower school levels.

When writing skill is taught in class, students are expected to be able to write English using the correct structure or grammar. At third-grade in high school, students are expected to have mastered grammar compared to the school level below. This is because, third-grade is the highest level in any school. Grammar is one of the essential components which are very important in writing. Harmer (2015) defined grammar as a system of rules that governs the structure of words and sentences in a language.

Grammar includes tenses, aspect, mood, voice, pronouns, auxiliary verbs, articles, prepositions, conjunctions, and phrases and clauses. Grammar helps language speakers organize words into meaningful sentences that others can understand. According to Larsen-Freeman & De Carrico (2019), grammar is a system of rules and structures that govern how words are combined to form sentences and expressions in language. Grammar includes aspects of morphology (word forms) and syntax (sentence structure), as well as rules regarding punctuation and layout. Grammar is essential in language learning because it helps speakers understand and produce correct and meaningful sentences. By understanding grammar, speakers can communicate more effectively orally and in writing.

Some or even all students consider grammar a difficult subject, so they are not interested in learning it. They prefer to avoid learning grammar, especially since English is not a language, they use daily. Therefore, they have a level of complexity in learning it. Students often need to correct grammatical errors when they compose something in English, for example, when they write a recount text. According to Fisher (2016), recount text is a type of text that retells events or experiences that happened in the past. Its primary purpose is to inform or entertain the reader by providing a chronological sequence of events. Recount texts typically include an orientation, which sets the scene by giving background information, a series of events presented in order, and a re-orientation, which often concludes the narrative with personal comments or a summary of the events. Fisher emphasizes that recount texts are structured to help readers understand and visualize past events, making them essential to learning to read and write effectively.

Focusing on students' errors will help students and teachers address the problem. For students, it can help students understand the writing errors they make before they move on to a higher level of school, namely university. Therefore, it will be very important for teachers to know what mistakes students may make so that they can pay more attention to the subjects that cause these mistakes.

Based on this explanation, this study identifies grammatical errors based on Dulay, Burt & Krashen's theory, a surface strategy taxonomy consisting of Omission, Addition, Misformation, and Misordering. Then, the sources of errors made by students based on Ellis's theory are Interlingual Transfer and Intralingual Transfer in writing Recount Text by third-grade students of SMAN 22 Jakarta. It helps the teachers to identify the students' strength and weakness and provide feedback to them.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this literature review, the writer discusses the definition of grammar, definition of recount text, the definition of errors, the types of error, and the source of errors.

2.1 DEFINITION OF GRAMMAR

Grammar is central to teaching and the basic knowledge to learning language effectively. Grammar makes the production and comprehension of a potentially unlimited number of utterances possible because no language can exist without grammar, and no one can use a language fluently without knowledge. Therefore, grammar plays a crucial role as a bridge between speaker and listener in people's communication in speaking and writing.

First, according to Jackson (2014), grammar in the context of English can be defined as a system of rules that govern the structure and use of words, phrases, and sentences to convey meaning in communication. His semantic approach emphasizes the relationship between grammatical structure and understanding meaning in a language context. Secondly, Harmer (2015) defined grammar as a system of rules that governs the structure of words and sentences in a language. Grammar includes elements such as tenses, aspect, mood, voice, pronouns, auxiliary verbs, articles, prepositions, conjunctions, and different types of phrases and clauses, and the last one is Larsen-Freeman & De Carrico (2019) state that grammar is a system of rules and structures that govern the way words are combined to form sentences and expressions in language.

2.2 DEFINITION OF RECOUNT TEXT

Recount text is probably the most common kind of text we encounter in our daily lives, especially when we tell others about past events. According to Fisher (2016) in the article "Students' Reading Techniques Difficulties in Recount Text," recount text is a type of text that retells events or experiences that happened in the past. Its primary purpose is to inform or entertain the reader by providing a chronological sequence of events. Recount texts typically include an orientation, which sets the scene by giving background information, a series of events presented in order, and a re-orientation, which often concludes the narrative with personal comments or a summary of the events. Fisher emphasizes that recount texts are structured to help readers understand and visualize past

events, making them essential to learning to read and write effectively. In Yunita's (2018) exploration of recount texts, the genre is defined as a form of writing where individuals narrate past events, typically chronologically. The primary aim of a recount text is to inform the reader about what happened, often factually and straightforwardly. This genre is commonly used in academic and non-academic contexts to recount personal experiences, historical events, or observations.

2.3 DEFINITION OF ERROR

Error in the view of psycholinguistics is found in the terms “error” and “mistake”. The terms of performance and competence can distinguish both. Most sources call an error performance by mistake, while competence is sufficient for error. According to Dulay, Burt & Krashen (1982, p.138), learner speech or writing errors are flawed. As discussed previously, errors are something wrong that comes with a correct sentence structure in writing or speaking. Error is something that can be observed directly in students' writing. Texts with some errors are a natural thing that invariably arises while learning a foreign language.

According to Amara (2015), errors in the context of foreign language teaching can be defined as discrepancies or inaccuracies in language use that result in difficulties in comprehension or communication. Amara highlights the importance of understanding the sources and types of errors language learners make in her approach to error correction. These include errors in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and understanding of context. Error correction aims not only to improve the technical aspects of language but also to increase learners' knowledge and confidence in using the target language more precisely and effectively. Amara emphasizes that a holistic, context-focused approach to individual learning helps identify, analyze, and correct errors effectively in foreign language teaching.

2.4 THE TYPES OF ERROR

Dulay, Burt & Krashen's (1982) classified the types of errors into a surface strategy taxonomy. Those errors are omission, addition, misordering, and misinformation.

2.4.1 Omission

Omission errors are characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance.

Learners make an incomplete sentence by omitting any morphemes. For example:

You are good student. → You are a good student.

2.4.2 Addition

Addition is the opposite of omission, characterized by something that should not be inadequately composed speech. There are three types of addition errors, they are double markings, regularizations, and simple addition.

2.4.2.1 Double marking

Many addition errors are more accurately described as the failure to delete specific items required in some linguistics construction but not others. For example:

She didn't studied there. (error)

The sentences should be:

She didn't study there. (correct)

2.4.2.2 Regularization

A regularization error occurs when an item is changed by equating an irregular rule to a regular one. For example:

- “Mans” instead of “Men” (plural form of “man”)
- “Buyed” instead of “Bought” (past form of “buy”)
- “Childs” instead of “Children” (plural form of “child”)

2.4.2.3 Simple Addition

Simple addition is characterized by addition errors other than double markings and regularization. For example:

- I am a student. (addition of to be ‘is’)
- We doesn't have much time. (addition of –es for the plural subject).
- He could played football well. (addition of verb one after modal).

2.4.3 Misordering

When the learner places a morpheme incorrectly in a grammatical construction. For example:

- What *you are* doing? (Error)
- What are you doing? (Correct)
- *You don't have* breakfast every morning? (Error)
- *Don't you have* breakfast every morning? (Correct)

2.4.4 Misinformation

The category was characterized by the wrong form of morpheme or structure. In this condition, learner supplies something in their second language production even though. There are three types of misinformation:

Regularization errors are misinformation in which a regular marker is used in place of an irregular one, as in eatted for ate; Archi-forms refer to the selection of one member from a class of forms instead of applying all

members, as if a learner temporarily selects just one of the English demonstrative adjectives this, that, these, and those to do the work for several of them; and Alternating forms are interpreted by the free alternation of various members of a class with each other following the growth of the learner's vocabulary and grammar, as in the example those dogs and these cats are used by the same learner.

2.4.5 Sources of Error

Sources of error in language learning are crucial to understanding as they reveal the underlying reasons behind learners' mistakes and inform effective teaching strategies. Errors in language learning can stem from various factors, including interference from the learners' first language and issues within the target language itself. These errors provide insights into the cognitive processes of acquiring a new language and highlight areas where learners struggle the most. According to Ellis & Barkhuizen (2005), there are two types of sources of errors in language learners:

2.4.2.2 Interlingual Errors

The first type is interlingual errors. Ellis & Barkhuizen (2005) explain that interlingual errors refer to errors that occur when second or foreign-language learners are influenced by previously mastered first-language structures or rules. When individuals learn a new language, they try to apply rules or conventions from their first language to the language being learned, often leading to language comprehension and production errors.

For example, an English learner who speaks Spanish may use Spanish sentence structure rules that are different from English, such as different word order or grammar. For example, "I have 20 years old" instead of "I am 20 years old". Her analysis shows that interlingual errors describe the shift or interference from the structures and rules of the first language to the second language, which can hinder learners' communicative ability in the new language learned. Therefore, a deep understanding of the differences between the first and second languages is crucial in identifying and correcting interlingual errors.

2.4.5.2 Intralingual Errors

The second type is intralingual errors. According to Ellis & Barkhuizen (2005), intralingual errors refer to errors that occur due to a lack of understanding of the rules and structures of the language being learned. This kind of error arises because learners are still in the process of internalizing the language they are learning, and they often occur even though they understand their first language well. An example of intralingual errors can be found in English language learning, where a learner still learning about English grammar and vocabulary might make mistakes in sentence construction or incorrect use of words.

For example, a learner might use the noun "car" as a verb by saying "I car to school" instead of "I drive to school". His analysis shows that intralingual errors reflect learners' inability to apply the rules and conventions of the language learned appropriately in communication. This emphasizes the importance of structured practice and a deep understanding of language structure to correct intralingual errors and improve learners' language proficiency.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative approach to analyze and identify grammatical errors. The focus of this study was the grammatical errors in writing recount text made by the third-grade students of SMAN 22 Jakarta. According to Lester, Cho & Lochmiller (2020), qualitative analysis is a systematic process for understanding, organizing, and interpreting data obtained from qualitative research. In qualitative research, data is often verbal or non-verbal text generated from interviews, observations, or written materials.

This approach allowed the writer to explore the multiple dimensions and contexts of the phenomenon under study and understand the perspectives and subjective experiences of the individuals or groups involved in the research. Qualitative analysis also often recognizes the dynamic and iterative nature of the research process, where researchers can constantly develop their understanding through reflection, revision, and dialogue with the data. Thus, qualitative analysis is not only a tool to reveal patterns or findings in the data but also a reflective process that allows researchers to explore the meaning of human experiences and complex social contexts, especially in learning activities.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 The Types of Error

The writer describes the various grammatical errors found in the recount texts written by the students. The analysis includes the types of errors and the frequency of each type of error. The findings are expected to provide a deeper insight into the challenges faced by students in writing recount texts in English and provide recommendations for improvement in the learning process. Look at the recapitulation of students' errors in the table below.

Table 4.1 Recapitulation of Students' Error

No	Students	Types of error			
		Omission	Addition	Misordering	Misinformation
1.	Student 1	0	0	0	0
2.	Student 2	0	0	0	0
3.	Student 3	0	1	1	0
4.	Student 4	0	0	0	0
5.	Student 5	0	1	0	1
6.	Student 6	0	0	0	1
7.	Student 7	0	0	0	0
8.	Student 8	1	0	0	1
9.	Student 9	1	1	2	2
10.	Student 10	0	2	0	2
11.	Student 11	1	1	3	2
12.	Student 12	0	0	0	1
13.	Student 13	0	0	0	1
14.	Student 14	0	0	1	1
15.	Student 15	1	1	1	1
16.	Student 16	0	0	0	0
Total of each error		4 (12,6%)	7 (21,8%)	8 (25%)	13 (40,6%)
Total of all errors		32 (100%)			

The table shows the types of grammatical errors found in the recount essays themed "Activities During Vacation" written by third-grade students of SMAN 22 Jakarta. The table includes 16 students and five grammatical errors: omission, addition, misordering, and misinformation. The data showed that some students made no errors at all, such as Student 1, Student 2, Student 4, Student 7, and Student 16. However, some students made various types of errors, such as Student 11, who made 7 total errors (1 omission, 1 addition, 3 misordering, and 2 misinformation), and Student 15 (1 omission, 1 addition, 1 misordering, and 1 misinformation). Therefore, the total number of errors that occurred was 32, with details of 4 omission errors, 7 addition errors, 8 misordering errors, and 13 misinformation errors.

Based on the table above, shows the percentage of types of grammatical errors found in recount essays themed "Activities During Vacation" written by third-grade students of SMAN 22 Jakarta. From the table, misinformation errors are the most dominant, with a percentage of 40,6%, showing that students often use the wrong information in their sentences. Addition error ranks second with 25%, followed by misordering with 21,8% and omission with 12,6%. This data shows that misinformation and addition are the most frequent types of errors, while omission and misordering are also significant. This analysis helps identify areas that need more attention in teaching grammar to students.

4.1.2 The Sources of Error

The writer explains the different sources of error found in the students' writing. The analysis identifies the origins of these errors, categorizing them into intralingual and interlingual errors. The findings aim to understand better the specific areas where students struggle when writing in English. This detailed analysis will help design better teaching strategies and materials to address these issues effectively. Look at the recapitulation of students' sources of error in the table below.

Table 4.2 Recapitulation of Sources of Error

No	Students	Sources of Error	
		Interlingual transfer	Intralingual transfer
1.	Student 1	0	0
2.	Student 2	0	0
3.	Student 3	1	1
4.	Student 4	0	0
5.	Student 5	0	2
6.	Student 6	0	1
7.	Student 7	0	0
8.	Student 8	0	2
9.	Student 9	0	6
10.	Student 10	0	4
11.	Student 11	1	6

12.	Student 12	0	1
13.	Student 13	0	1
14.	Student 14	0	2
15.	Student 15	0	4
16.	Student 16	0	0
Total of each error		2 (6%)	30 (94%)
Total all errors		32 (100%)	

The table above shows the number of interlingual and intralingual errors that occurred in grade 3 students of SMAN 22 Jakarta when writing recount texts about activities during the holidays. From the data provided, most of the errors come from intralingual transfer. The student with the most intralingual errors is Student 11 with a total of 7 errors, followed by Student 9 with 6 errors. Meanwhile, there were only 2 interlingual errors from Student 3 and Student 11. Therefore, there were 2 interlingual errors and 30 intralingual errors, with a grand total of 32 errors. This shows that students' main challenges in writing recount texts have more to do with mastering English rules and structures than their first language's influence. This data can assist teachers in designing more effective teaching strategies to address intralingual errors and improve students' writing ability in English.

The table above also illustrates the percentage of interlingual and intralingual errors found in the study on grade 3 students of SMAN 22 Jakarta when writing a recount text about activities during vacation. From the table, 94% of the total errors are intralingual, while only 6% are interlingual. This shows that most of the errors made by the students come from intralingual errors, which occur due to the student's lack of understanding of the rules and structures of the English language being learned. In contrast, only a small percentage of errors stem from the influence of the student's first language or interlingual errors. These results indicate that the primary attention in teaching should be given to improving students' understanding of English grammar and structure. By focusing on intralingual errors, teachers can help students reduce the number of errors they make and improve their writing ability in English. This diagram clearly highlights the importance of addressing intralingual errors in the second language learning process.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis in Chapter IV, several common types of errors made by students were found, namely omission, addition, misordering, and misinformation. The most common error is misinformation (40,6%), followed by misordering (25%) addition (21,8%), and omission (23,6%). Misinformation dominated with the highest number. These errors often occur because students use the wrong words, phrases, or grammatical forms in their sentences. For example, improper use of verbs such as "bayed" instead of "bought" or inappropriate prepositions such as "at there" which should be "there." This shows a lack of deep understanding of the correct verb tense and the use of prepositions in the proper context. These information errors often occur because students have not fully mastered English grammar rules and are still trying to adjust to more complex structures.

Misordering errors come second in frequency, as they cause sentences to be unclear or strange due to incorrect word order. Addition errors come in third and usually occur when students add elements that are not needed in the sentence, causing redundancy. Omission errors come second in terms of frequency. These errors often occur because students do not include essential elements in the sentence, such as the subject, object, or preposition. These errors reflect a lack of understanding of the structure of a complete sentence and the need for some aspects for the sentence to be clear and grammatically correct.

It can also be concluded that the analysis of sources of error in the data findings reveals common issues primarily related to intralingual errors. These mistakes occur due to a lack of understanding of English grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, and proper punctuation. Common errors include incomplete sentences, incorrect use of singular and plural forms, redundancy, misuse of prepositions and verbs, and wrong word order. Many errors stem from attempts to emphasize statements, leading to unnecessary additions or incorrect phrases. Rahayu & Sagimin (2024) recommend conducting regular corrective feedback on students' writing according to what was written in the research.

Based on the analysis, there are similarities and differences between the findings of the three studies and the study the writer conducted. All studies, including this study, use Dulay, Burt & Krashen's theory to identify grammatical errors in students' recount text. Both the writer's and Elvita's (2022) study identified the primary source of errors as intralingual, showing that students' lack of understanding of English rules is a significant issue. Additionally, misinformation errors are prevalent in both this study (40,6%) and Fitri's (2018) study (57.3%), highlighting that students frequently use incorrect information in their sentences. However, differences also exist. For instance, while this study finds addition errors (25%) as the second most common type, Elvita's study highlights omission errors as the primary type, and Suhaila's (2021) study also finds misinformation errors as the most common (62.76%). Lastly, while this study shows a high percentage of intralingual errors (94%), specific sources of errors were not a primary focus in Suhaila's study.

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