

## AN ERROR ANALYSIS IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT AT ONE PRIVATE SCHOOL OF SINTANG

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**Abstract:** *This research aims to classify the kinds of errors found in the student's writing descriptive text; recognize the most common errors found, and describe the factors that cause the students to make errors. The method used was qualitative research. The subject of this research is the 20 writing descriptive texts of the students in class X. The data collection technique used documents and interviews. The instruments of data collection were the students' worksheets and interview guidelines. The finding showed, there were four types of errors found in the students' writing products. They were classified as 20.8% errors of omission, 4% errors of addition, 73,2% errors of misinformation, and 2% errors of misordering. Based on these findings, the researchers suggest that: learning English should emphasize linguistic aspects such as the use of tenses. Besides, students should be assisted in translating assignments and teachers should provide feedback on student work.*

**Keywords:** *error analysis, descriptive text, writing*

### INTRODUCTION

Based on the pre-observation, the researchers found four types of errors found in writing a descriptive text of the students at SMA Nusantara Indah. During the pre-observation process, the researchers knew that SMA Nusantara Indah used online classes in English learning during the covid-19 pandemic in 2021. Based on the learning, the researchers found various kinds of problems faced by students of SMA Nusantara Indah. SMA Nusantara Indah implemented

the 2013 curriculum in the learning process, so the students must be active in the class online. During the learning process, the researchers saw many students still did not understand using simple present tense in writing descriptive text. The simple present tense is a very important component in compiling descriptive text. Therefore, the researchers classify kinds of errors, recognizes the most common errors found, and describes the cause of errors found in writing descriptive text.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Related Theory**

#### **Writing**

According to Meyers cited in Autila & Theresia (2018), writing is a process of finding, organizing, and putting ideas on paper, rephrasing, and revising.

In lined with Lyons & Heasley (2006), writing is a process that involves the ability to communicate and express an idea or words from a writer in full and detailed manner. English writing has a variety of different types of texts, one of which is a descriptive text. Descriptive, expository, persuasive, narrative, technical, and poetry are parts of text in the genre in English writing. The types in communicating written that have differences between objects, forms, and complaints are called genre (Delahunty & Garvey, 2010: 6).

Descriptive text is one of the genres that describe something or someone. The descriptive text has a generic structure and language features. The generic structures are Identification and description. While, the language features are specific participant, simple present tense,

adjective, linking verb, action verb, mental verb, noun, and adverb.

### **Error Analysis**

The researchers discussed the use of simple present tense which is one of the elements in the language features of descriptive text. The simple present tense is used to show an event or situation that occurs repeatedly, all the time, and is happening which are facts and findings, theorems, definitions, lemma, proof, etc. (Wallwork, 2013: 49). In this research, the researchers analysed the error of using simple present tense found in writing descriptive text. Error analysis is interpreted to find and describe the student learning process in writing which is related to the cognitive processes of students in understanding and accepting English learning that has been given by the teacher according to the target language (Keshavarz, 2012: 58).

In other definition, the process of observing and discovering an event, its nature, cause, and consequence of inappropriate, ambiguous, and unsuccessful language is called error analysis (James, 2013: 1).

### **Type of Errors**

Based on the error analysis, the

researchers analyzed four types of errors found in writing descriptive text.

According to Dulay, Burt, & Kashen's in Ma'mun (2016: 104) suggest that there are four principal ways in which learners modify target forms, namely as follows: Omission, addition, misinformation, and misordering. After the researchers analyzed the errors, the researchers made a code for every error. This is evidenced to help the researchers analyze the errors found in writing descriptive text.

According to an expert appropriate for virtually all qualitative studies, but particularly for grounded theory research that extracts participant action/ interaction and consequences are called the process of coding (Miles., Huberman., & Saldana, 2014: 81). The purposes of this research are to classify the kinds of errors found in writing descriptive text, to recognize the most common errors found, and to describe the factors that cause students to make errors.

Based on the general objective of this research, the researchers used descriptive qualitative research. An approach that is carried out by attaching questions about who, what, where, and why of the object to be described based on experience is called descriptive qualitative research (Neergaard et al in Bradshaw, Atkinson, & Doody, 2017: 3).

## **METHODOLOGY OF STUDY**

The method used qualitative research. Saldana (2011: 89) declares that data analysis is often given short shrift in introductory textbooks on qualitative research. In this data analysis, the researchers followed the procedures of error analysis and the procedure of coding.

Therefore, the researchers should know the steps of error analysis. According to Ellies in Auliya (2017: 6) there are four steps to analyze the learner's errors in writing: Identifying the errors, describing the errors, explaining the errors, and evaluating the errors.

According to Bryman, Strauss, and Corbin in Qureshi and Unlu (2020: 2) in the Straussian approach, there are three stages in coding, namely as follows: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. The following is an explanation of three stages, namely as follows: Open coding, Axial coding, and Selective coding.

The subject is 20 writing descriptive text at SMA Nusantara Indah Sintang. The researchers conducted the students in one class

that is class X. The participants of class X were 20 students.

The researchers conducted a descriptive qualitative method in this research. The data collection technique used documentation and interview. Meanwhile, the instrument of data collection used students' worksheets and interview guidelines.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted at SMA Nusantara Indah in class X. After conducting the research, the researchers found various kinds of errors were made by the students found in writing descriptive text, especially in using simple present tense. There were four types of errors were found, namely: addition, omission, misinformation, and misordering. Omission has four types, namely omission of subject, omission of to be, omission of –es/-s in the verb, and omission of –es/-s in the plural noun.

Meanwhile, addition has three types, namely addition of subject, addition of to be, and addition of preposition. The researchers gave a code for each error to make it easier for the researchers to analyse the

errors found in writing descriptive text. Omission of subject was coded, namely (OS), omission of to be was coded (OT), omission of –es/-s in the verb was coded (OV), omission of –es/-s in the plural noun was coded (OP), (AS) was a code for addition of subject, (AT) was a code for addition of to be, (AN) was a code for addition of preposition, (MF) was the code given for misinformation, and (MO) was the code given for misordering. Based on the data, the researchers found 250 cases of the four errors consist of 52 cases of omission, 10 cases of addition, 183 cases of misinformation, and 5 cases of misordering. The following was an explanation of the four types of errors found in writing descriptive text.

### Omission

Based on the explanation above, the researchers found as many as 52 cases of errors in omission consisting of 3.8% omission of subject (OS), 3.8% omission of to be (OT), 50% omission of –es/-s in the verb (OS), and 42.4% omission of –es/-s in the plural noun (OP). Based on the percentages of results in the four types of omission above, the researchers can find out that the most common errors found in omission were omission of –es/-s in the verb (OV). This error occurred because

many students did not understand to add '-s' at the end of verb 1, so there was a reduction in '-s' at the end of verb 1. Therefore, if the students used a singular subject, so they must add '-s' at the end of verb1.

The second, the most common errors found in omission were omission of -es/-s in the plural noun (OP). This error was caused by many students who did not understand to add '-s' at the end of plural noun, so that there was an omission of -es/-s in the plural noun found in writing descriptive text. Then, the most common errors found with the same percentage occurred in the omission of subject (OS) and omission of to be (OT).

Omission of subject (OS) was caused by the lack of understanding of students in adding the subject as a behavior that performs an action in an English sentence, namely in writing descriptive text, so that the subject was omitted in the sentence. Meanwhile, omission of to be (OT) was caused by students misunderstanding in adding the use of to be as a liaison between subject and predicate, so that the omission of to be in the sentence. The following was a pie chart used by researchers to obtain a display of percentages of errors from omission displayed as follows:

### **Addition**

Based on the data, the researchers found 10 cases consisting

of 80% addition of subject (AS), 10% addition of to be (AT), and 10% addition of preposition (AN).

Based on the percentage results above, the researchers known that the most common errors found in addition was addition of subject (AS). This was caused by the students being able to explain in detail about the cases of errors in addition.

Addition of subject (AS) was caused by the students who were excessed in adding subject in writing descriptive text, due to ignorance in differentiating the use of subject pronoun with possessive adjective. This caused the addition of double subject in one English sentence found in writing descriptive text.

Furthermore, the least error in addition were addition of to be (AT) and addition of preposition (AN) with the same percentage, namely 10%. Addition of to be (AT) was caused by the students' lack of understanding in using to be excessively in one English sentence which was found in writing descriptive text.

Then the last one was addition of preposition (AN) which was caused by inaccuracies in the use of preposition in writing descriptive text,

so that there was an inappropriate or excessive placement of preposition.

### The Most Common Errors

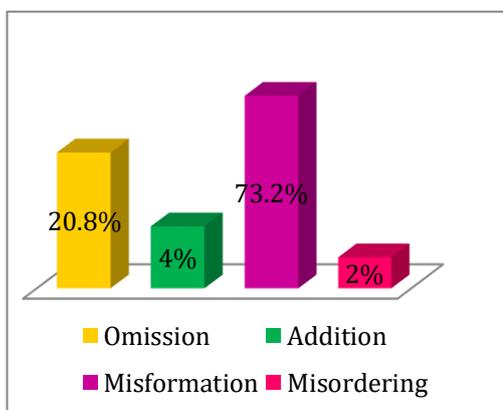


Chart 4.3 the results of common errors analysis

Based on the graph above, the researchers could explain that the most common errors found were misinformation. The researchers found 183 cases of misinformation from the 250 cases of totals errors from omission, addition, misinformation, and misordering. This was caused by the students' incomprehension in using 'to be' and verb for simple present tense sentence found in writing descriptive text. This was evidenced by the errors made by the students where the students used a plural subject a lot, but they used singular 'to be', so that the sentence was wrong. Therefore, the correct sentence if the students used the plural subject (I, you, they, we), then 'to be' must use plural too (am, are). In other sentence, if the students used a singular subject, so the 'to be' must use also singular 'to be' (is). This also applied to students who used the

subject plural, so there was needed to add '-s' at the end of verb 1. In addition, in writing descriptive text, it was also not followed by verb 2.

The second, the most common errors found in writing descriptive text was omission. This omission was found in 52 cases of four types of omission which consist of omission of subject (OS), omission of to be (OT), omission of -es/-s in the verb (OV), and omission of -es/-s in the plural noun (OP). This needed to be done by researchers to find out of the overall percentage of omission, namely 52 cases errors of omission from the 250 cases of all errors from omission, addition, misinformation, and misordering. Omission was caused by missing subject, to be, -es/-s in the verb, and -es/-s in the plural noun in English sentences found in writing descriptive text.

The third, the most common errors found in writing descriptive text were addition. This addition found 10 cases of all errors from addition of subject (AS), addition of to be (AT), and addition of preposition (AN). The researchers combined the errors of addition into one, because to find out the totals errors of addition, as there was 10 cases of addition from the 250 cases of all errors from omission, addition, misinformation, and misordering. This addition was caused by the excessive addition of subject, to be,

and preposition in one English sentence found in writing descriptive text. Then the least error found in writing descriptive text was misordering. This misordering found 5 cases of errors in misordering from the 250 cases all errors of omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. This misordering was caused by the inaccuracy between the use of an inverted and noun in an English sentence found in writing descriptive text.

## DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the data analysis, the researchers found some errors in the students' writing descriptive text products; omission was the most common error after misinformation. Therefore, the researchers conducted interviews with teachers and students to clarify the cause and appearance of errors. Based on the results of the interview with the teacher, the researchers found out that the cause of the omission was due to the teacher's lack of time in teaching descriptive text, namely the use of the simple present tense. The teacher was only given 40 minutes during online learning, so the teacher did not explain much time about the use and example of the simple present tense where the user of the singular subject must be

followed by verb 1 which was added with '-s'. This is evidenced by the expert stating that omission is a characteristic with the reduction of a morpheme that must appear in a well-formed sentence structure (Dulay in Ma'mun, 2016: 106). This was also justified in the opinion of students who stated that there was a lack of time in giving material about the descriptive text in the using of simple present tense which was done online so that the students have difficulty when asked to write a descriptive text. in addition, the researchers also knew that the students did not re-learn or repeat learning descriptive text in the using of the simple present tense at home, so they did not understand the use of simple present tense.

Based on the results of the analysis, the researchers found that addition was the most common error found after omission. Therefore, the researchers conducted interviews with teachers and students to confirm the causes of the addition. The researchers knew that addition was caused by the lack of time given to the teacher in explaining the material and example the user of the simple present tense, which resulted in the students having

difficulty writing descriptive text. This was reinforced by the opinion of students who stated that they had difficulty in writing descriptive text because of the lack of time for online class learning. Based on the expert explained that addition is to add the items or morphemes that should not be in good sentence structure (Dulay, Burth, & Khashen's in Ma'mun, 2016:107). Misinformation was the most common error found in writing descriptive text. Therefore, the researchers conducted interviews with teachers and students to confirm the cause of the error. Based on the results of interviews with a teacher, the researchers knew that misinformation was caused by the students' misunderstanding in the use of simple present tense, namely 'to be' and verb 1, but the students still have difficulty understanding to use the simple present tense. This was because descriptive text learning was carried out in a self-directed manner online for 40 minutes only. This was of course still very ineffective for the teacher in providing material more clearly and in detail about the using of simple present tense. This statement was reinforced by the opinion of

students who stated that the students lacked time when learning descriptive text took place by online class. So that resulted in students did not understand in learning descriptive text about the use of simple present tense that was 'to be' and verb 1. This was proven by the misinformation that was often found in writing descriptive text. This is evidenced by the expert description about misinformation is a morpheme or structure error (Dulay, Burth, & Khasen's in Ma'mun, 2016: 108). Then finally, the researchers found errors in the form of misordering found in writing descriptive text. Misordering was caused by random grammar or the arrangement of English sentences that were not correct or reserved. This was reinforced by an expert who stated that it was a characteristic where there was an inappropriate arrangement of a morpheme or a group in an expression (Dulay, Burth, & Kashen's in ma'mun, 2016: 109). Based on the results of the field analysis, the researchers can conclude that the errors found by the researchers regarding four types of errors, namely omission, addition, misformation, misordering which were the same as

the theory according to expert opinion, namely the theory of four principal ways according to Dulay, Burth, & Kashen's in Ma'mun (2016). However, there were also differences, namely in the types of omission and addition. Therefore, in this research, the researchers explained clearly and in detail each type of error.

Based on the results of interviews conducted by the researchers with the teacher in SMA Nusantara Indah to answer the third research question, it was stated that descriptive text learning had been taught by the teacher in class X. At the time of learning descriptive text, the teacher saw that the students' responses were very positive, but there were still many students at class X who did not understand about learning descriptive text, especially in using simple present tense because the descriptive text material was taught online/ without face-to-face because still in the covid-19 pandemic.

This has resulted in many students did not learn English again and they did not master English vocabulary, which has resulted in many students did not understand the learning of descriptive text very well

in addition to the lessons taught by the teacher through online classes.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

### **Conclusions**

Based on the results, the researchers found many errors made by the students of class X at SMA Nusantara Indah in writing descriptive text. The errors were omission of the subject (OS), omission of to be (OT), omission of -es/-s in the verb (OV), omission of -es/-s in the plural noun (OP), the addition of subject (AS), the addition of to be (AT), the addition of preposition (AN), misinformation (MF), and misordering (MO). Based on the results of the analysis of the four errors, the researchers found out that the most common errors found in writing descriptive text were misinformation (MF).

Based on the errors above, the researchers found out the factors causing the errors found in writing descriptive texts. First, the students do not understand the use of the simple present tense. Second, students do not have much time to study descriptive texts. Third, students have difficulty in translating Indonesian sentences into English sentences and the limited number of students' vocabulary.

**Suggestion**

Based on these findings, the researchers suggested that: first, learning English should emphasize linguistic aspects such as the use of tenses. Second, the time allocation for writing learning must be further increased in terms of duration and implementation techniques. Third, students should be assisted in translating assignments and teachers should provide feedback on student work.

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