

STUDENTS' ERROR ANALYSIS IN WRITING ESSAY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

One of the successful learning English writings is by knowing students' errors in writing an English essay. Since English writing essay becomes a compulsory subject that must be taken by students at college, therefore the English essay has a big contribution. Although writing an English essay does not pay attention much to the proportional explaining and giving instruction in learning, but it still has meaningful contributions for writing skill. It is not for writing essay but also for other writing skills such as writing paragraph, writing scientific paper, and etc. Type of this research was qualitative content analysis through documents of English essays written by students of third semester of Universitas Dharmas Indonesia. Respondents of this research were 14 students. The analysis of all documents reveals that there are 220 total numbers of students' errors that classified into 12 types of errors made by the students. Spelling is classified as the biggest error committed by 46 times or 20.90%. Then, verb-agreement is a kind of errors that committed by 38 times or 17.27%. Next is error of sentence fragment that committed by 24 times or 10.90%. Relating to research finding, It is recommended that English writing lecturers should much pay attention to divide, discuss, and explain all these errors in order to minimize and make writing essays easy written and conducted by English students.

Keywords: Error Analysis; English Essay; Writing

Abstrak

. Salah satu keberhasilan pembelajaran pada keterampilan menulis bahasa Inggris adalah dengan mengetahui kesalahan mahasiswa pada penulisan karangan esai berbahasa Inggris. Sejak keterampilan menulis karangan esai berbahasa Inggris menjadi mata kuliah wajib yang harus diikuti mahasiswa pada pendidikan tinggi, maka keterampilan penulisan esai ini memiliki kontribusi yang sangat berarti pada pembelajaran keterampilan menulis yang tidak hanya bagi keterampilan menulis esai berbahasa Inggris namun juga bagi keterampilan menulis lainnya seperti penulisan paragraf, karya tulis ilmiah, dan lain-lain sebagainya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisa kesalahan-kesalahan mahasiswa pada penulisan essay bahasa Inggris di Universitas Dharmas Indonesia. Jenis penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif yang berorientasi pada analisis isi melalui dokumen hasil penulisan essay bahasa Inggris mahasiswa. Responden pada penelitian ini berjumlah 14 mahasiswa. Seluruh dokumen hasil penulisan esai ini didapat bahwa terdapat 220 jumlah kesalahan yang dibagi pada 12 kelompok. *Spelling* merupakan kesalahan terbanyak yg dilakukan oleh siswa dengan jumlah 46 kali atau 20.90%. Selanjutnya, *verb-agreement* dengan kesalahan sebanyak 38 kali atau 17.27%. Kemudian diikuti oleh *sentence fragment* dengan jumlah kesalahan 24 atau 10.90%. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, direkomendasikan khusus bagi dosen pengampu mata kuliah keterampilan menulis harus lebih membagi, mendiskusikan, serta menjelaskan semua kesalahan pada penulisan esai ini agar kesalahan ini bisa diperkecil sehingga penulisan esai bahasa Inggris akan lebih mudah dilakukan oleh mahasiswa

Kata Kunci: Analisis Kesalahan, Esai Bahasa Inggris, Karangan

Introduction

Generally, there are two ways to express someone's ideas in communication; spoken and written. Spoken can be expressed the ideas orally, whereas written can be expressed the ideas through writing some words to create sentences, paragraphs, and essays. Both written and spoken can bring ideas to communicate among the people around the world, they are not only for general communication but also for academic purposes. Especially for academic writing, students are asked to fully understand how to write and bring ideas into a sentence, a paragraph, an essay, a thesis paper, then a journal, etc. In a sentence; students are expected to write a simple sentence such as the use of subject and verb. In a paragraph; students are demanded to write several sentences that talk about a particular topic. In an essay, students are expected to write several paragraphs to develop some main ideas of a topic. In a thesis paper, students are asked to write a scientific paper through research that one of the requirements to finish their study at the university. Last but not at least is a journal. Students are demanded to write research and publish the research to the journal system, etc.

In order mastering writing English skill as a foreign language, the Indonesian government has changed the university curriculum becomes *Kurikulum Perguruan Tinggi* (KPT) or college curriculum. Some of subjects that being learned at college have changed, such writing 3 becomes academic writing. Academic writing at a university is mostly learned by students to be able to do research and present it to a scientific paper including English students. English students must learn academic writing that starts in the earlier semester of the academic year. Students are prepared and introduced a basic concept of writing such as the use of parts of speech, the use of kinds of tenses, the use of simple sentences to complex sentences, the use of appropriate vocabulary, etc. Even though students are prepared and introduced to the basic concept of academic writing, but students still get difficulties constructing and write sentences, paragraphs, and essays because they must bring ideas that can be understood by readers. This idea also supported by (Raimes, 1983) that writing is difficult because, in writing, students try to communicate with other people: to understand them, to talk to them, to read what they have written, and to write them who are not present, not listen, and not looking at the gesture and facial expression. In line with Raimes, (Ilmillahdini & Sumarsono, 2014) also explain that students' get difficulties in writing for L2 students to master because it appears in generating and organizing ideas. To make the reader interested in it, a researcher must think about all of the aspects of writing for instance detailed information, the reader, the readers' personality, and others. According to (Pardosi et al., 2019), Writing is the most difficult skill in English for students because writing is a thinking process, thus it can guide and help readers to deepen understanding. To write, students must think and possess some elements, such as knowledge about the thing to write, vocabulary, knowledge about language, the knowledge of how to express their ideas in a good way, and so on.

An essay is a part of academic writing that must be learned by students at a university. It must have at least three paragraphs, but a five-paragraph essay is a common length for academic writing, namely introduction, body, and conclusion. To complete those aspects, writers should comprehend those aspects to write complete thought ideas of an essay. Based on (Wijaya, 2017), writing an essay needs to comprehend more than those aspects because writing an essay is asked students to create logical excepted ideas. As preliminary research, the researcher has interviewed four students of the third-semester students of Universitas Dharmas Indonesia, on 8 of March 2022. Based on the interview result, they generally have already known the main components of an essay; introduction, body, and conclusion. Although they have already known the main components of the essay in their writing, they still had difficulties when they wrote an essay because they must write their writing task appropriately with good structure, like pay attention to grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, words chosen, and the unity and coherence of writing. Besides, based on preliminary observation through students' midterm test, it was found that almost every student got difficulties creating simple sentences, misspelling, inappropriate words, etc. The problems that occurred at third-semester students at Universitas Dharmas Indonesia make the researcher is curious to find out the types of errors done by students in writing essays.

In this research, the researcher had formulated the questions to guide the research process for an analysis. There are two research questions relates to this study, they are: (1) to find out and identify types of errors made by the students in ELT during writing essays in Academic Writing. (2) to find out the problems face by students in ELT during writing essays. However, the focus of this study is simply about to find out and identify types of errors made by the students in ELT during writing essays.

Expressing ideas is commonly used in writing because it is a medium to connect writers and readers. On this occasion, many researchers have done and investigated researches about writing. (Meyers, 2004) defines that writing is speaking to others on paper or a computer screen. Writing is a combination of skill and talent. In line with Meyers, Sokolik as cited by (Linse, 2005) also says that writing is a combination of process and product that involves the act of gathering ideas and working with them until they are presented through comprehension meaning to readers. Bram as cited by (Munawwaroh, 2015) states that writing is a process of composing and expressing ideas into the written form which involves more than just producing words and sentences, but try to produce or reproduce written messages.

Besides the definition of writing, writing also has its goals. When a person writes something, he or she has a purpose for the writing. The writer may have motivations of which he or she is unaware. The writer may also have mixed, and even contradictory, motivations for writing. For instance, a student writing an essay for a class may wish to please the teacher and to amuse his or her classmates through a narrative essay, or for describing something through a descriptive essay, etc. Therefore, before writing, the writer should know who he or she is writing for. According to (Harmer, 2004), writing skill is likely to take place when students are writing real messages for real audiences, or at least when they are performing tasks which they are likely to have to do in their out-of-class life. In summary, writing brings writers to real situations. Dealing with the classification above, it can be said that writing has many contributed purposes. For instance, writing can express the writer's ideas and feelings, entertain her/himself or the reader, inform the reader, and can be nonverbal communication between writer and reader.

(Oshima, 2006) says that an essay is a piece of writing several paragraphs long that consists of one topic. Next, not much different from Oshima, (Richards & Schmidt, 2010) formulates that an essay is a long thought of writing that is mainly written by students as part of a course of study and develops idea through a particular topic. Also, (Meyers, 2004) says that an essay is an organized discussion of a subject in a series of a paragraph. A paragraph and an essay share many traits. The essay explores a broader topic, which it introduces in a thesis statement and then supports in a separate paragraph. The thesis statement helps determine and shape the content of the entire essay. An essay is not simply a longer version of a paragraph. The content of an essay is more complex and needs more development. However, the essay is similar to the paragraph in structure, for it contains three parts: introductory paragraph, body paragraph, and concluding paragraph.

Moreover, an essay also has components in guiding writing an essay. According to (Oshima, 2006), there are three components of an essay; the introductory paragraph, the body paragraph, and the concluding paragraph. (1) Introduction. An essay introduction consists of two parts: a few general statements to attract your reader's attention and a thesis statement to state the main idea of the essay. A thesis statement for an essay is like a topic sentence for a paragraph: It names the specific topic and gives the reader a general idea of the contents of the essay. (2) The body consists of one or more paragraphs. Each paragraph develops a subdivision of the topic, so the number of paragraphs in the body will vary with the number of subdivisions or subtopics. (3) The conclusion, like the concluding sentence in a paragraph, is a summary or review of the main points discussed in the body.

Meanwhile, (Duigu, 2002) states there are three parts of an essay. They are the introduction, body, and conclusion. The introduction expresses the topic and the writer's attitude, opinion, or idea about the topic. The body paragraph begins with a topic sentence and supporting details. It can be more than one

paragraph. Then, the conclusion is stated in the concluding paragraph. It brings together the important ideas of the essay and makes a final statement about the thesis. Thus, there are three parts of an essay; the thesis statement, body paragraph, and conclusion. Besides (Meyers, 2004) divides three main parts of an essay. They are an introduction, several supporting paragraphs (body paragraph), and a conclusion. The introduction or opening paragraph consists of background information and a thesis statement. The background information gets the reader's attention by using anecdotes, quotations, questions, facts, and statistics. The body paragraph consists of a topic sentence, one or more supporting paragraphs by explaining and giving examples about the topic. Then, the conclusion or concluding paragraph consists of final comments by restating main points, asking a question, suggesting a solution, making a recommendation, or making a prediction. So, there are main parts of the essay which include an introduction (opening paragraph), body paragraph, and conclusion (concluding paragraph). Referring to the explanation above, it can be concluded that an essay has three main parts or components. An essay should have an introductory paragraph, body paragraph, and concluding paragraph. In the body paragraph, it can be more than one paragraph.

Based on Crystal as cited by (Sawalmeh, 2013), Error Analysis in language teaching and learning is the study of the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a language. In line with James and Crystal, (Brown, 2000) also states that error analysis is an analysis of mistakes made by students in a process of constructing a new system of language needed. Bootchuy as cited by (Pardosi et al., 2019) Error analysis is the study of learner error, providing the way to examine learner language, being a part of language teaching, finding out whether errors were caused by first language interference or developmental factors. It can be said that error analysis is an error made by the students in constructing essays.

Method

This research was qualitative content analysis. (Elo et al., 2014) states that content analysis is a method of analyzing written, verbal, or visual communication messages. In this research, the researcher used a document of writing which was written by the third-semester students who have taken Writing in Professional Context course of English department of Universitas Dharmas Indonesia registered in 2020/2021 academic year as the data. In this research, the researcher did not conduct any tests. The researcher utilized the students' final tests of Essay in Writing in Professional Context. There are six topics on students' essays, they are my school library, reading is good habit, social media, importance of friends in our life, climbing a mountain, and learning in pandemic covid-19. The students chose one topic and then wrote the essay based on the topics. The instruments were writing tests made by the lecturer.

Finding

The result of document analysis through students' final tests shows that there are 238 numbers of errors and 20 types of errors committed by students. The data got can be seen as table follows:

Table 1. Analysis of Errors Made by English Students

No	Type of Errors	Number of Errors	Percentage (%)
1	Article	7	3.18
2	Parallelism	11	5
3	Spelling	46	20.90
4	Sentence Fragment	24	10.90
5	Verb tenses	5	2.27
6	Pronoun	21	9.54
7	Verbs Agreement	38	17.27
8	Punctuating	17	7.72
9	Connecting words	11	5
10	Double verbs	11	5
11	Singular/plural	15	6.82

12	Preposition for	14	6.36
	Total	220	100 %

For detailed information of errors types in writing English essays, it can be seen as follows:

1) Article

The article is a word that is used with a noun to indicate the type of reference being made by the noun. English has two articles: *the* and *a/an*. *The* is used for specific or particular nouns. Meanwhile, *a/an* is used to modify non-specific or non-particular nouns. We call *them* as the *definite* article and *a/an* as the *indefinite* article. Errors of article occur when some student used "an" followed by a noun that is "first consonant letter". Then, some students also utilized "the" without a specific noun that being addressed. It can be assumed that some students are confused about the use of the article itself. It can be proved by the following example below:

Table 4. Errors Analysis of Article Made by English Students

Error Classification	Error Identification	Error Correction
Articles	Education is an important asset for the progress of an nation	Education is an important asset for the progress of a nation

2) Parallelism

Parallelism means that each item in a list or comparison follows the same grammatical pattern. If writing a list and the first item in the list is a noun, write all the following items as nouns also. If the first item is an "ing" word, make all the others "ing" words, and then if it is an "adverb clause", make all the others "adverb clauses". Errors of parallelism occur when some students employed "and" to begin a sentence whereas, the previous sentence has the connecting idea. Then, some students also employed "but" which separates the previous sentence. It can be said that some students are not aware of how to use article a/an, and in a sentence. The examples of data can be seen as follow:

Table 5. Errors Analysis of Parallelism Made by English Students

Error Classification	Error Identification	Error Correction
Parallelism	Some people believe go to school from a younge age is good for the children. And they are also believe that the children should be allowed to stay at home and playing until they are 6 or 7	Some people believe that going to school from a younger age is good for children, and they are also believe that children should be allowed to stay at home and playing until they are 6 or 7

3) Spelling

Spelling means the act or process of writing words by using the letters conventionally accepted for their formation. At this time, errors of spelling occur when some students are confused to write the correct form of words. It can be seen as follows:

Table 7. Errors Analysis of Spelling Made by English Students

Error Classification	Error Identification	Error Correction
Spelling	1) This matter has negatively influenced sicial connection ability among this a group	This matter has negatively influenced social connection ability among this a group.

4) Sentence Fragment

A sentence fragment is incomplete sentences or parts of sentences that do not have either subject or verb or does not both of subject and verb. Errors of sentence fragments occur when some students did not concern with to subject and verb in one sentence. It can be seen as follows:

Table 8. Errors Analysis of Sentence Fragment Made by English Students

Error Classification	Error Identification	Error Correction
Sentence Fragment	1) Children to go to school from young age many benefits from them	Children that go to school from young age have many benefits from them

5) Verb tenses

Errors of verb tenses can be seen when some students did not place the correct tense to the verb in the sentences. In this case, it can be assumed that some students are not aware of the different rules for tenses usage. It can be seen as follows:

Table 9. Errors Analysis of Verb Tenses by English Students

Error Classification	Error Identification	Error Correction
Verb tenses	It is believe by some people that staying at home	It is believed by some people that staying at home

6) Pronoun

A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun. The use of pronouns is to make sentences less awkward and less repetitive. They have been classified into several types: the personal pronoun, the demonstrative pronoun, the interrogative pronoun, the indefinite pronoun, the relative pronoun, the reflexive pronoun, and the intensive pronoun. Errors of pronouns occur when some students blurred how to place personal pronouns appropriately. It can be seen as follows:

Table 10. Errors Analysis of Pronoun Made by English Students

Error Classification	Error Identification	Error Correction
Pronoun	Second, child gets the education, they will be more polite and they have good personality	Second, children get the education, they will be more polite and they have good personality

7) Verb Agreement

Verb agreement is consistency between subject and verb: if the subject of a sentence is singular, then the verb must be singular and if the subject of a sentence is plural, then the verb must be plural. Errors of verb agreement occur when some students are confused to place verbs based on and subjects both of active and passive voice. It can be seen as follows:

Table 11. Errors Analysis of Verb Agreement by English Students

Error Classification	Error Identification	Error Correction
Verbs Agreement	1) Here they are will be build confidence, courage and spirit	Here they are will be built confidence, courage and spirit

8) Punctuating

Punctuating refers to the use of explicit marks such as commas, semicolons, dashes, and periods to clarify meaning in written sentences or to represent spoken sentences in writing. Errors of punctuating occur when some students were not aware to put appropriate punctuating in sentences. It can be seen as follows:

Table 12. Errors Analysis of Punctuating Made by English Students

Error Classification	Error Identification	Error Correction
Punctuating	First if a child who.....	First, if a child who

9) Connecting words

Connecting words refers to coordinating conjunctions that connect grammatically equal elements. Errors of connecting words occur when some students were not conscious that connecting words are a part of sentences. It can be proved by the following examples below:

Table 13. Errors Analysis of Connecting Words Made by English Students

Error Classification	Error Identification	Error Correction
Connecting words	After that, many effect if we do not have education. But in this Era, if the national exam is still held	After that many effect if we do not have education, but in this Era, if the national exam is still held

10) Double verbs

Errors of double verbs occur when some students could not differentiate between verb be and verb to do. It can be seen as follows:

Table 15. Errors Analysis of Double Verbs Made by English Students

Error Classification	Error Identification	Error Correction
Double verbs	They are will be learn about alphabet, numeric, etc.	They are will be learned about alphabet, nomic, etc.

11) Singular/Plural

Singular refers to a word or form which expresses one word. Meanwhile plural refers to a word or form which expresses more than one. On this occasion, students were not aware of the use of plural forms such as *s* and *es* in sentences. It can be proved by the following examples below:

Table 17. Errors Analysis of Singular/Plural Made by English Students

Error Classification	Error Identification	Error Correction
Singular/plural	In Indonesia formally uses 2 kind of go to school	In Indonesia formally use 2 kinds of go to school

12) Preposition For

Preposition refers to express purpose to say what the general purpose of a thing is and it is followed by a gerund. On this occasion, some students were not aware of using gerunds after *for*. It can be seen as follows:

Table 18. Errors Analysis of Preposition For Made by English Students

Error Classification	Error Identification	Error Correction
Preposition	In fact, the aim is just for introduce the children about education	In fact, the aim is just for introducing the children about education

Discussion

The research finding towards the analysis students' error analysis in writing English essays shows that there are 12 total numbers of errors made by the students. The results of documents proves

that spelling is classified as the biggest error committed by 46 times or 20.90%. Then, verbs-agreement is a kind of errors that committed by 38 times or 17.27%. Next is error of sentence fragment that committed by 24 times or 10.90%. Errors of spelling occur when students are confused to write the correct form of words because it is influenced by students' native language that is different utterance and spelling. This in line what Brown (1994) and Connor (1996) as cited by (Darus, 2009), one of students' errors made by the students are those errors that are influenced by students' first language or mother tongue. These errors are also stated by Crystal (1999) as cited by (Sawalmeh, 2013), error analysis in language teaching and learning is kind of study of the unacceptable forms committed by students in learning English as a foreign language.

Students' errors in writing English essays give much contribution to learning and teaching English writing, especially in writing an essay. One of them is conducting materials and giving feedback to the students that relates to the writing an essay. (Sarfraz, 2011) states that these errors holds significant importance to English language teachers for providing students' learning feedback along with the learning complexities that manifest the developmental process of it. Therefore, the study examines the common errors that students commit in their English writing.

In line with Sarfraz, (Saputra, 2017) also states that feedback can be done in terms of writing because feedback consists of the correctness of the grammar or pronunciation. It can be said that feedback on form: not only focus on of what students say, but also focus on structure of what students write in their essays.

Conclusion

This research has given an account of the main errors made by students at Universitas Dharmas Indonesia in their written essays. Based on the discussion of the findings and the examples given, it could be said that the students committed eighteen common errors. They can be classified as noun clause, adjective clause, article, parallelism, punctuating direct quotations, spelling, sentence fragment, verb tenses, pronoun, verbs agreement, punctuating, connecting words, connecting idea, double verbs, adjective, singular and plural, preposition, capital letter, modal auxiliary, and comparisons. This research indicates that English lecturers on academic writing need to take careful and pay attention much to the transfer and interference of the students' mother tongue in their spoken or written production. Therefore, one way to highlight the influences of the mother tongues on the students' learning of English is to collect these errors and ask the students to analyze them and if they could to correct them. (Kumala, Aimah, and Ifadah, 2018) state that the different structures in the first language and the second language potentially generate error in writing. The way Indonesian sentences formed is different from the English way. So, it is normal when learners make errors in language in writing. Therefore, when the teachers teach, they find their students face some difficulties. It is recommended that English writing lecturers should much pay attention to dividing, discussing, and explaining all these errors in order to minimize and make writing essays easy to conduct by students.

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