

# AN ANALYSIS OF ERRORS OF THE USE OF ARTICLE IN DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

Bobby Pramjit Singh Dhillon <sup>a,1\*</sup>, Bernieke Damanik <sup>b,2</sup>,  
Joice Siadari <sup>b,3</sup>, Agnes Prianti <sup>b,4</sup>

a.1, b.1, b.2 b.3, b.4 Universitas HKBP Nommensen, Medan, Indonesia

<sup>1</sup>[bobysingh@uhnn.ac.id](mailto:bobysingh@uhnn.ac.id) \*, <sup>2</sup>[berniekedamanik@uhn.ac.id](mailto:berniekedamanik@uhn.ac.id)

<sup>3</sup>[joyce.siadari@student.uhn.ac.id](mailto:joyce.siadari@student.uhn.ac.id) , <sup>4</sup>[agnes.prianti@student.uhn.ac.id](mailto:agnes.prianti@student.uhn.ac.id)

## ABSTRACT

**In learning English as a foreign language, writing is also an essential skill to be mastered. In Indonesia, writing has not become a culture. For the research design, the researcher used descriptive statistical analysis to attempt to describe and analyze the object by reality with instrument of collecting data is writing test and interview. Based on the finding and discussion in this research, the researcher can conclude that students in grade X IPA-1 of SMA Negeri 15 Medan who joined the writing test in this research still made errors in the use of English articles in descriptive text. There are three types of an error made by the student. The high frequency of error is an error of omission from 31 students; there are 113 or 55.3% errors of omission made by the student. Next is an error of misinformation from 31 students; there are 56 or 27.5% errors of misinformation made by the student. Last is the addition error from 31 students, with only 35 or 17.2% errors of addition made by the student.**

**Keywords:** Writing, Errors, Article, Descriptive Text

## 1. Introduction

Learning English is important since most people communicate and absorb information, culture, and technology. According to Brumfit (1994), English is spoken worldwide as a native or second language. In Indonesia, English has become the first foreign language, and it is an important subject taught and learned in schools. Based on the current school curriculum number 32/ 2013 Chapter 7 Kurikulum (2013), in learning English, students are required to master four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

As one of the language skills, writing plays an essential role in learning English. Students can develop their thinking through writing skills such as grammar, vocabulary, and English. Afrin (2016) states that writing is considered a productive and helpful tool for learning. It is the most used skill in evaluating students' performance in almost all levels of education. Musa (2018) claimed it is well-recognized that writing skills are one basic skill that English language learners can master and three other English skills. According to Swan (2017), writing helps students communicate their emotions in a written form, serves as a benchmark for evaluating language skills, and becomes a prerequisite in a test. In addition, writing could also be beneficial because writing will assist one in thinking objectively, articulating thoughts, and deepening one's understanding (Mundriyah, M., & Parmawati, 2016).

In learning English as a foreign language, writing is also an essential skill to be mastered. In Indonesia, writing has not become a culture. Many Indonesian people do not want to learn and improve their writing skills. Indonesian people still think writing is difficult because many Indonesians still doubt their knowledge of grammar. Setyowati & Sukmawan (2016) state that most English as a Second Language (ESL) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students have a negative attitude toward writing. A study was conducted by Toba et al. (2019) to identify the Indonesian EFL students' explanations for why they are having trouble writing compare and contrast essays. They lacked writing practice, disliked writing, had poor writing motivation, had writing anxiety, and had a negative writing perception, in addition to their low writing skill. Sometimes, Indonesian people never pay attention to grammar when writing. English as a foreign language (EFL) Language development for learners would be severely limited without good grammar knowledge. Alufohai (2016) argues for writing compositions in the English language. Grammar at the sentence level is important. Many grammar rules include articles, part of the expression, sentences, tense, etc. Muhsin (2016) stated that specific errors occur when students do not understand English grammar. If the teacher does not realize students' errors, they may repeatedly happen because they do not have the correction.

According to Boardman & Frydenberg (2001), the most common English words are English articles (a, an, and the). Moreover, Master (1990) states that the word 'the' is the most common in written or spoken English. English articles are an important part of the English language. Further, it notes that L1 language learners have made several errors.

The researcher found a case in SMA Negeri 15 Medan grade 10. In that case, the writer found that there were many errors in using articles when learning descriptive text. Some students did not understand the use of articles in English, and of course, this impacts the descriptive learning process. The researcher believes that an error analysis plays an important role in knowing students make errors in writing paragraphs and their causes. So, in the writing paragraph, the teacher knows about their problem and tries to solve it. That is why the writer is interested in analyzing the writing error of students.

## **2. Method**

For the research design, the researcher used descriptive statistical analysis to attempt to describe and analyze the object by reality. The descriptive statistics analysis is implemented because the researcher presented the data analysis descriptively. According to Thompson (2008), descriptive statistics summarize the data to describe what occurred in the sample. In conclusion, this research used descriptive qualitative methods because this research aims to find out the student's errors in the use of English articles in writing descriptive text. The researcher investigated the use of the article's errors in the student descriptive text. In this way, the researcher gathers the students' descriptive text writing, examines whether the correct articles method or a mistake was used, and classifies the errors.

The researcher used a cluster sampling technique. Cluster sampling is a sampling technique where the sample elements are elements (clusters). The researcher took the class IPA-1 as the sample for two reasons. First, it is based on the English teacher-only class IPA-1, which has completed the material of the descriptive text. Second, the population of male and female students in classes IPA-2, IPS-1, and IPS-2 is not balanced. In class IPA-2, there are more female students, while in class, IPS-1 and IPS-2 are dominated by male students. The writer use writing test and interviews to collect the data.

### 3. Result/s and Discussion

**Table 4. 1 Number of Students Error Made in Descriptive Text**

<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Total Errors of Omission</b>	<b>Total Errors of Addition</b>	<b>Total Errors of Misinformation</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Students 1	5	0	1	6
Students 2	2	6	1	9
Students 3	8	5	4	17
Students 4	4	3	1	8
Students 5	3	0	2	5
Students 6	3	0	3	6
Students 7	3	1	1	5
Students 8	2	1	2	5
Students 9	4	1	2	7
Students 10	3	2	3	8
Students 11	5	0	0	5
Students 12	4	2	3	9
Students 13	1	0	2	3
Students 14	5	1	1	7
Students 15	3	0	2	5
Students 16	6	0	1	7
Students 17	7	2	4	13
Students 18	6	0	3	9
Students 19	2	1	1	4
Students 20	8	0	2	10
Students 21	3	3	4	10
Students 22	4	5	2	11
Students 23	2	0	2	2
Students 24	2	1	0	3
Students 25	1	0	4	5
Students 26	6	0	4	10
Students 27	1	0	2	3
Students 28	3	1	1	5
Students 29	5	0	2	7
Students 30	4	0	2	6
Students 31	1	2	5	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>204</b>

In this part, the researcher would like to analyze the causes of errors made by the students in using English articles in descriptive text. The researcher would like to analyze the cause of errors based on the interview with the tenth-grade student in SMA Triguna Utama Ciputat. Based on the result of the test, there are 113 errors of omission, 56 errors of misinformation and 35 errors of addition made by the student. Some students made an errors when using English articles. Furthermore, based on the interview result, the high frequency of the cause of the error is Overgeneralization with the percentage of 67.8%, and the second is ineffective teaching process with the percentage of 32.2%.

The researcher found some errors considered as Overgeneralization. From the question “Apakah kamu mengetahui perbedaan penggunaan definite article dan indefinite article?” (Do you know the difference between the use of the definite article and the indefinite article?) the answer is most of the students unfamiliar with the definite and indefinite article, the example from student one the answers “kurang paham”, Student 2 “cukup”, Student 3 “sedikit paham”, Student 4 “tahu dan paham”, Student 5 “cukup”. The researcher found there 60 are the student still does not know how to use the article ‘A’, ‘The’ and ‘An’. For the example from student number 18 in the sentence: “She said that (a) products covered all genders” from that sentence after the article there is a noun (plural noun) which should use definite article or article ‘The’ the correct sentence could be “She said that the products covered all genders”. Not only that, but also most of the students still do not know how to use the English articles in the right place. For the example from student number 19 in the sentence: “As the Indonesian, I eat the rice as the main food”. From this example, the researcher found that the student did not know how to use English articles correctly. The correct sentence should be “As an Indonesian, I eat rice as the main food”. Another example from student number 11 “We often play (...) video games together in my house”. The student does not use an article before the noun in this sentence. The correct sentence should be “We often play video games together in my house”. To support the cause of the errors, based on the result of the interview with the students, most of them did not know how to use English articles and cannot differentiate the use of article ‘A’, ‘The’ and ‘An’.

The cause of error comes from student ignorance and the ineffective teaching process in English subjects, especially the material of English articles. The result from the interview most of the students do not get the specific material about English articles. In the tenth grade, the student only got the material about the descriptive text. From the material of the descriptive text, the teacher did not specifically explain how to use English articles in descriptive text. For example in the interview test “Apakah guru bahasa inggris pernah secara spesifik menjelaskan penggunaan artiles ketika pembelajaran materi descriptive text?” Jika ‘Iya’ “bagaimana guru Kamu menjelaskan penggunaan English articles?” (Does the English teacher ever specifically explain the use of articles when learning descriptive text?) (If ‘Yes’ how did your teacher explain the use of English articles?) The answer from student 1 “tidak, guru hanya spesifik menjelaskan descriptive text” (No, the teacher only focus explained descriptive text), student 2 “tidak, namun saya mendapatkan penjelasan English Articles ketika kelas smp” (No, I got the material of English articles in junior high school), student 3 “pernah, ketika saya smp dan cukup di mengerti” (Ever, when I in junior high school and little bit understand), student 4 “tidak, ketika di kelas X tidak di jelaskan” (No, in the tenth grade the teacher did not explained it), student 5 “Tidak” (No).

From that result of the interview, the researcher found that while learning descriptive text, the teacher did not review the material English article. Let us see the example from writing test from student number 3: “Connecting the Seberang Ulu and Seberang Ilir” from this sentence, the student still does not know how to use English article, from that sentence the student put article after the name of the place which in the name of the place is do not use any article. This error might happen because the teaching process and the teacher do not explain the material of English articles. The students did not realize the importance of understanding English articles when making a descriptive text. The researcher formulated the sequence of error types from the high frequency to the lowest frequency.

**Table 4. 2 The types of student’s error in using English articles in descriptive text**

No	Type of Error	Frequency of Error	Percentage of Error
1	Omission	113	55.3%
2	Misinformation	56	27.5%
3	Addition	35	27.5%
Total		204	100%

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the finding and discussion in this research, the researcher can conclude that students in grade X IPA-1 of SMA Negeri 15 Medan who joined the writing test in this research still made errors in the use of English articles in descriptive text. However, they confessed that if they don't understand the English articles, it doesn't prevent students from learning English. Based on the data that has been described in the previous chapter, the researcher can conclude that most of the students made an error when using English articles in descriptive text. There are three types of an error made by the student. The high frequency of error is an error of omission from 31 students; there are 113 or 55.3% errors of omission made by the student. Next is an error of misinformation from 31 students; there are 56 or 27.5% errors of misinformation made by the student. Last is the addition error from 31 students, with only 35 or 17.2% errors of addition made by the student.

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