

TEXTUAL ERROR ANALYSIS ON THE USE OF SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE IN WRITING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

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Abstract

Finding out the frequency, kind, causes, and effects of linguistic failures is the process of error analysis. This study aims to pinpoint students' mistakes when using the simple present tense to write a descriptive text. To complete the investigation, the researcher uses the qualitative approach. Students' mistakes affect the descriptive English content. Twenty junior high school students from west Jakarta were given writing prompts. Their text demonstrates how their sentences lost all of their original meaning. When asked to create an English descriptive text, they encountered challenges. Following an investigation of the students' English descriptive texts, twenty errors have occurred in the simple present tense; error of omission, error of selection, error of addition and error of ordering.

Keywords— Simple Present Tense, Textual Error, Descriptive Text.

INTRODUCTION

Students study and apply English as an international language for oral and written communication. English is taught in schools to Indonesian students as an official foreign language. Since Indonesians do not utilize English daily, English has become a strange language to them. There are different types of English language acquisition, including speaking, writing, reading, and listening. The majority of people consider writing to be the most challenging aspect of learning English. English can be acquired in various ways, including speaking, writing, reading, and listening. According to (Heaton, 1988), "The writing skills are complex and certainly difficult to teach, requiring not only of grammatical and theoretical devices but also conceptual and judgmental elements." Most people think that writing is the most challenging aspect of learning English.

For some students, writing in English is a significant challenge. Besides being a second language, grammatical rules are frequently a stumbling hurdle in writing. Writing is complex since it is critical to pay attention to structure and grammar accuracy when writing. Understanding structure and language, taut, is critical for successful writing.

Harris and Cunningham in (Lestari, 2020) stated that writing is the most challenging skill because it takes a deep understanding of what will be written, appropriate vocabulary, and acceptable grammar to the reader.

Grammar proficiency is crucial for pupils' ability to write in English. Standard and formal language use in school writing classes is closely related to pupils' command of grammar, particularly tenses. Because of this, students frequently have difficulty developing the core topic of their work due to tenses.

Following the junior high school level writing instruction, students are expected to compose a description text. Simple present is the tense that is utilized for writing descriptive text. As a result, the researcher wants to look at the mistakes made when writing descriptive text in the simple present tense.

Literature Review

(Tarigan, 1982) said that writing is a productive skill for writing indirect communication. The nature of the character is highly different from that expressed by speaking directly, so writing is included as an ability. The researcher can say that saying something oral differs from writing in this context. When opposed to making statements orally, writing them down requires more skill.

Linguistics is also an issue in writing because “Linguistics is the scientific study of language,” (Todd, 1987). There are various branches of linguistics, each of which serves a specific purpose and aids learners in learning to write. “With writing, on the other hand, language competence involves the association of a meaning with a sign, a visual symbol” (Todd, 1987).

(Murphy, 1985), “We use the present simple to talk about things in general. We are not thinking only about the present. We use it to say that something happens all the time or repeatedly, or that something is true in general. It is not important whether the action is happening at the time of speaking.” He continues describing the formula and sets how it uses with four conditionals:

1. Use *do/does* to make question and negatives sentences:
2. Use the present simple when we say how often we do things:
3. Note that we say, ‘Where do you come from?’ (=Where are you from?)
4. When you make a suggestion, you can say, ‘*Why don’t you?*’

(Azar, 1989) explained that generally, the simple present expresses events or situations that always exist, usually, habitually; they exist now, have existed in the past, and probably will exist in the future. Azar continued describing in her book (Azar, Fundamentals of English Grammar, 1992).

Past Now Future



a. Water consists of hydrogen and oxygen. b. Most animals kill only for food. c. The world is round.	The simple present says that something was true in the past, is true in the present, and will be true in the future. It is used for a general statement of fact.
d. I study for two hours every night. e. My classes begin at nine. f. Me always eats a sandwich for lunch.	The simple present is used to express habitual or everyday activity.
g. I have only a dollar right now. h. I don’t recognize that man. i. He needs a pen right now.	Certain verbs are not used in progressive tenses. With these verbs, the simple present may indicate a situation that exists right now, at the moment of speaking.

The simple present expresses daily habits or usual activities, as in ‘Anne takes a shower every day,’ and ‘I usually eat lunch at the cafeteria.’ The simple present expresses general statements of fact, as in ‘Babies cry,’ and ‘The earth revolves around the sun.’ In sum, the simple present is used for events or situations that exist, such as always, usually, or habitually in the past, present, and future.

The shape of simple Present:

Statement: (I – You – They – We) work.
(He – She – it) works.

Negative: (I – You – They – We) do not work.
(He – She – it) does not work.

Question: Do (I – You – They – We) work?
Does (He – She – it) work?

Frequency Adverbs from 100% of the time to 0% of the time

100% always
↑ usually
often
sometimes
↓ seldom
rarely
0% never

Example: eat breakfast

Response:

Student A: I usually eat breakfast.

Student B: I never eat breakfast.

Student C: (Student A) usually eats breakfast. (Student B) never eats breakfast.

Spelling Final –s vs. –es

a) visit → visits answer → answers speak → speaks happen → happens	Final –s, not –es, is added to most verbs. (Incorrect: visites, speakes, answeres, happenes)
b) hope → hopes write → writes	Many verbs end in –e. Final –s is simply added.
c) catch → catches wash → washes pass → passes fix → fixes buzz → buzzes	Final –es is added if the verb ends in –ch, –sh, –s, –x, or –z.
d) do → does go → goes	Final –es is added to do and go.
e) study → studies try → tries	If a verb ends in a consonant + –y, change the –y to –i and add –es. (Incorrect: studys)
f) pay → pays buy → buys	If a verb ends in a vowel* + –y, simply add –s (Incorrect: paies or payes)

(Bahnar, 2021), “A descriptive text functions on describing a single location, object, event, person, or place. It endeavors to engage all five of the reader’s senses to evoke the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and feel of the text’s subject.” The purpose of descriptive writing is to allow the author to express to the reader what is on their mind by using words to describe a condition. To provide the reader with an

image nearly identical to or even the same as what is being delivered, the description is given in as much detail as is practical. Following Atac, 2015; Stick et al.: Yigitoglu & Reichelt, 2012 in (Yani, 2021), "Descriptive writing is vivid, colorful, and detailed."

As they wrote, they usually focused on writing a suitable title, deciding on the appropriate topic sentence, developing the topic sentence into a whole paragraph, constructing grammatical sentences, arranging supporting sentences coherently, using appropriate words or phrases, and using appropriate writing mechanics Flores in (Yani, 2021)

Based on (Hendrickson, 1979), he grouped the errors into two types, they are:

1. **Global Errors.** Global errors are same as communicative errors.
2. **Local Errors.** Local errors are also called linguistics errors.

Based on the theories, the linguistics experts classified the errors into four types, they are:

1. **Social Error.** The social errors, the errors commonly occurred in the structure element.
2. **Register Error.** This error happened because the language used didn't suitable for a certain occasion
3. **Referential Error.** This error happened between the linguistics form with the objects or the situations happening outside the class.

4. **Textual Error.** This error happened related to the learners' knowledge based on the target language patterns. (Corder, 1971) explained, "The learner's errors are classified as a textual error when he does not select the structurally correct form in his sentence of intended relation between two sentences". Textual errors are:

- a. **Errors of Omission.** Error of omission is the missing of some elements which should exist.
- b. **Errors of Addition.** Error of addition is the adding of some elements which shouldn't exist.
- c. **Errors of Selection.** Error of selection is the use of words which shouldn't be used.
- d. **Errors of Ordering.** Error of ordering is the elements which are not put in the proper place.

By examining the faults, English teachers can identify students' mistakes when writing a descriptive text in English. Understanding the mistakes that students made hopes that future students will not make the same mistakes. (Sharma, 1983) stated, "An error analysis is a process based on analysis of learner's error."

(Ellis, 1994) defines *error analysis* as a process involving gathering examples of errors, categorizing them following their assumed causes, and determining their importance. "The teacher and researcher use it for pedagogical purposes as a tool for investigating how the students learn a language."

(Dulay, 1982), the errors analysis have two purpose, they are:

- a. It provides data from which difference about nature of the language learning process can be made;
- b. It indicates to teacher and curriculum developers which part of the target language students have most difficulty producing correctly and which error types distract most from a learner's ability to communicate effectively.

Research Method

The researcher used descriptive qualitative to complete this report since it was the best method for describing the research's findings. Through data analysis, a descriptive study gathers quantitative data that can be utilized to draw statistical conclusions about the target audience. This research style employs closed-ended questions, which restricts its capacity to offer a distinctive perspective.

The researcher herself serves as the research instrument in qualitative research, so the validity of the findings is determined by looking at a few different factors, including

1. the researcher's comprehension of the qualitative research method,
2. the researcher's knowledge of the observed objects that should be mastered, and
3. the writer's readiness to engage with the observation object both academically and logically.

The study's instrument was derived from the English-language descriptive writing of junior high school students in West Jakarta who attended private schools. Based on the learner's English descriptive text, the evaluation is done in order not only to get the errors done by the learner but also to analyze them.

Moleong in (Lestari, 2020) that qualitative research aims to understand phenomena experienced by research subjects such as motivation, action, perception and others using descriptions in the form of words in a particular context and method natural. The researcher used descriptive qualitative to complete this study since it was the best method for describing the research's findings. Through data analysis, descriptive research gathers quantitative data that can be utilized to draw statistical conclusions about the target audience. This research style employs closed-ended questions, which restricts its capacity to offer a distinctive perspective.

Results and Discussion

1. She pretty.

This is an error of omission. The absence of a subject and a verb are the prerequisites for a sentence. The subject *she* and adjective *pretty* are parts of speech in the sentence above. Due to its incompleteness or lack of a verb, this statement is incorrect. Therefore, a verb must be added for the phrase to have meaning. According to the author's intended meaning, "*She (the woman) is beautiful*," it is necessary to add a reference to the singular subject to the sentence for it to become the appropriate one that serves as a verb.

2. My mother tall and pretty.

This is an error of omission. The subject *My mother* and two adjectives, *tall* and *pretty*, are present in the previous phrase. The author's desire to say, "*My mother is tall and pretty*", can be comprehended. However, the phrase above cannot be referred to as a sentence because a sentence must have both a subject and a verb. Consequently, the phrase reads, "*My mother is tall and pretty*." in the meantime, the sentence above consists of a subject and an adjective. As a result, a verb must be added for the statement to have meaning. Subject *My mother* falls within the category of a single subject. Hence I have the legal right to go with her.

3. She like to cook my favorite food.

This is an error of selection. As is well known, there are two different kinds of subjects in English: the singular subject, also known as a single subject, and the plural subject, sometimes known as multiple subjects. Keep in mind that the verb for the singular subject must have the letters *s/es* appended to the end. It is clear from this line that the author intended to say, "*He likes to cook my favourite dishes*," however the verb *likes* was improperly used because it was written without an apostrophe. The subject used is singular. Hence the word like should be spelt *likes*, per the explanation above. The correct phrase would thus be, "*She likes to cook my favorite food*."

4. Jung Kok and V is handsome.

This is an error of selection. According to the completion of the part of speech, the preceding sentence has already completed a sentence because it already includes the subject, in this case, *Jung Kok and V*, and a verb in the form of *tobe*, in this case, *is*. The preceding phrase, "*Jung Kok dan V itu tampan*," can also be understood. Unfortunately, it is not permissible to use it in this sentence because *to be* is only used for single subjects like *he*, *she*, *it*, and a person's name. This sentence's subject, *Jung Kok and V*, is a plural subject because it refers to more than one individual. Therefore, *to be are* is the proper usage of the verb *to be*. The correct phrase would thus be "*Jungkook and V are handsome*."

5. I am not put it on table.

This is an error of selection. The phrase "*I am not put it on table*" is incorrect because *to be am* in the preceding sentence must be followed by a verb in an active sentence. When people want to describe themselves, they use the verb *to be* (*am*, *is*, or *are*) in the simple present tense, which is employed as a verb followed by an adjective (*tall*, *short*, *clever*). As a result, the previous statement is incorrect since the

verb *-ing* will come after *to be* in the sentence. Additionally, the narrative tense employed is the essential present and does not include *to be*. The following phrase should read, "*I put it on the table.*"

6. She don't like apple.

This is an error of selection. The kind of subject used in the simple present tense is crucial. The subject is split into two categories, as is common knowledge: singular (*he, she, it*) and plural (*I, you, they, we*). In the formulation outlined by (Azar, 1989), each verb carried out by a singular subject requires the addition of *s/es*, while a plural subject only requires the use of a bare verb. It is crucial to include *does not* for the single form and *do not* for the plural form if the statement is negative. *She* is a singular subject. Hence the previous sentence is incorrect; it should read, "*She doesn't like apple.*"

7. We reading it everyday.

This is an error of selection. The word *have* is being misused. Since the word *have* is employed with plural subjects as *I, you, them*, and *we*. *She* is a singular subject, so the appropriate verb is *has*, which means "*to have*," in the previous sentence. Therefore, "*She has two brothers*" is the proper sentence.

8. She have two brothers.

This is an error of selection. The simple present tense is used with the temporal adverb *every day*. Thus, it is appropriate to employ the adverb *every day*. However, there is no previous *to be*. Therefore the verb *reading* that comes after the subject *we* is ineffective. Do not use *to be* in the simple present tense simply because the word *routine* denotes routine; hence the correct phrase is "*We read it every day.*"

9. My brother like ice cream.

This is an error of selection. The statement "*My brother likes ice cream*" demonstrates a habit. The simple present tense is used in this statement. *My brother* is the singular subject of this sentence. Hence it is incorrect. In the simple present tense formula, subject singular and verb are joined by *-s/ -es*. According to the tense principles, the statement "*My brother like ice cream*" is not suitable. "*My brother likes ice cream*" is the appropriate response.

10. She making my favorite food everyday.

This is an error of selection. The word *every day* in the adverb of time is one clue that the line is in the simple present tense. The actions taken in the statement are a habit due to the inclusion of the word *daily*. However, the phrase "*She making my favourite food every day*" is incorrect because the verb includes a *-ing*. Verbs use the primary verb in the present simple. "*She makes my favourite food every day*," is the correct sentence. Since *She* is a singular subject, the verb *make* employs the letter *-s* to become *makes*.

11. He playing football every week.

This is an error of selection. One clue that the sentence is in the simple present tense is using the time adverbs *every week*. The word usage *every week* indicates that the actions mentioned in this sentence are habits. However, because there is an *-ing* in the verb, the statement "*He playing football every week*" is incorrect. The primary verb is used with verbs in present simple sentences. "*He plays football every week.*" The subject *He* is singular. Thus the verb *play* utilizes the *-s* sound to become *plays*.

12. My mother is always cooking every day.

This is an error of addition. The use of temporal adverbs, such as *every day*, is one clue that the statement is in the simple present tense. The actions taken in the statement are a habit due to the inclusion of the word *every day*. However, because there is a *tobe* and a verb with an *-ing* in the verb, the statement *My mother is always cooking every day* is not a phrase in the simple present tense. Verbs use the primary verb in the present simple. "*My mother always cooks every day*" is the correct phrase. Since *She* is a singular subject, the verb *cook* employs the letter *-s* to become *cooks*.

13. His hobby is play badminton and football.

This is an error of addition. Self-description is done in phrases using the simple present tense. Position of *tobe* is between the subject and the adjective in a self-description. The *tobe* is used correctly in the sentence "*His hobby is playing badminton and football*," but because the word that comes after it is a

verb, the word *play* should be *playing*. "*His hobby is playing badminton and football*", thus it is the perfect statement to use.

14. My teacher math is like to teach us every day.

This is an error of ordering. *My teacher math* should be written as *My math teacher*. *Tobe* is not necessary and should not be used in this statement. The correct phrase is "*My math teacher likes to teach us every day*." The simple present tense of the sentence is demonstrated by the use of the adverb *every day*. Due to the singular nature of the subject *My math teacher*, the word *like* is transformed to *likes*.

15. He always give me motivation to can math.

This is an error of omission. The word *always* in the time signal is one clue that the sentence is in the simple present tense. It is clear from the usage of *always* that the actions mentioned in the sentence are routine. *He always give me motivation to can math*; however, it is not the right way to use the verb *give* in a sentence. Though it uses a primary verb, the verb in the present simple phrase depends on the subject's classification. Due to the singular nature of the subject *He*, the appropriate verb is *gives* by adding a -s to the base verb. Another grammatical problem can also be found in the statement *He always give me motivation to can math*. The sentence is better written, "*He always give me motivation to do math*," instead of using the word *to can math*.

16. My father reading newspaper in house.

This is an error of selection. Time signals are not strictly necessary in the simple present tense. However, since this study requires students to construct sentences using the simple present tense, it might be said that the usage of the verb *reading* in the sentence as mentioned above is inappropriate because it employs the -ing verb. When a verb is added -s/-es to a singular subject in the simple present, it should be the primary verb. Therefore, *reads* the appropriate verb to use. So, the correct sentence is "*My father reads newspaper in house*."

17. Name my cat Mimi.

This is an error of ordering and omission. The phrase above contains several mistakes, particularly in sentence structure and language. It should read *my cat name* instead of *Name my cat*. The next mistake happens due to the sentence not meeting the prerequisites for creating a sentence. A subject and a verb must be present for a sentence to be formed. The subject is *My Cat's Name*, and the object is *Mimi* in the preceding clause. There is no verb in this statement; hence it is incorrect. Therefore, a verb must be added for the phrase to have meaning. According to the author's intended meaning, "*My cat's name is Mimi*," it is required to add a *tobe* as a pronoun relating to the single subject, making the appropriate *tobe* that serves as a verb *is*. "*My cat's name is Mimi*," so the sentence has some significance.

18. My cat big and have thick hair.

This is an error of selection and omission. A subject and a verb must be present for a sentence to be formed. The subject *my cat*, and the adjective *big* are the parts of speech used in the previous sentence. There is no verb in this statement; hence it is incorrect. Therefore, a verb must be added for the phrase to have meaning. According to the author's intended meaning, "*My cat is big and have thick hair*," it is required to add a *tobe* as a pronoun relating to the single subject, making the appropriate *tobe* that serves as a verb *is*.

19. My mother always give me food a week.

This is an error of omission. The word *always* in the time signal is one clue that the sentence is in the simple present tense. It is clear from the usage of *always* that the actions mentioned in the sentence are routine. However, it is improper to use the verb *give* in the statement "*My mother always gives me food once a week*." The verb in the simple present conditionally depends on the kind of subject but nevertheless employs a primary verb. Given that *My mother* is a single subject, the correct verb is *gives*, which is simply *give* with a -s added. The word *every* should be used in place of article *a* because it is improper to use article *a* to denote routine. The correct phrase would read, "*My mother always gives me food every week*."

20. He have many book.

This is an error of selection. It is incorrect to use the verb *have*. Since the word *has* is used with plural subjects such as *I, you, them, and we*. *He* is a singular subject; hence the proper verb in the previous sentence is *has*, meaning *to have*. The word *book* is also inappropriate because there is a word *many* that shows the quantity of the *book* is more than one. Therefore, "*He has many books*" is the proper phrase.

Conclusion

Simple present tense sentences are typically identified by adverbs of time such as *always, often, or usually*. The simple present is used to express a factual event or event. The researcher discovered in this study that the student's English descriptive texts contained simple present tense errors. The researcher examined their writing and found 20 simple present tense textual errors, including omission, selection, addition, and ordering errors.

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