

**A MORPHOSYNTACTIC ANALYSIS ON EFL STUDENTS' WRITING**

**(A Script)**

**By:**

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**ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM  
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LAMPUNG UNIVERSITY  
2016**

## ABSTRACT

### A MORPHOSYNTACTIC ANALYSIS ON EFL STUDENTS' WRITING

By

Riskha Windari

This research aims at investigating and identifying morphosyntactic issues on EFL students' writing. 24 participants of English Department of FKIP Unila in Academic Year of 2015/2016 were chosen as the participants of the research. Systematically, they were asked to write a free composition based on the two tasks given. This present study applied qualitative approach because the researcher intended to reveal out the problems faced by the students in learning English. As a whole, this present study referred to a *discourse analysis* in which the analysis had covered the linguistic aspects regarded as the problems in language learning. In relevance with this issue, the researcher used a *focused description* as the design of this research in which the researcher had prepared some categorical data from both issues: morphology and syntax before collecting the data.

The result of analysis revealed out that 56% of syntactic errors covering seven areas were committed by the students, 31% of all six areas of morphological errors and 13% of morphosyntactic errors. Based on the result, the morphosyntactic errors were mostly committed by the majority of students, followed by the errors of omission of suffix *s/es* and regular/irregular inflection. Therefore, it can be inferred that the first language interference becomes the main cause of the error production of morphosyntax.

*Key words: discourse analysis, error analysis, morphosyntax*

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**A Script**

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In

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Teacher Training and Education faculty



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LANGUAGE AND ARTS DEPARTMENT  
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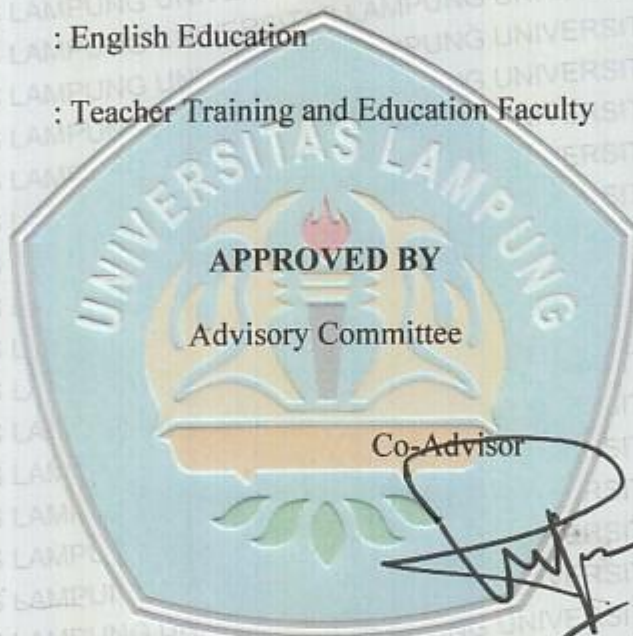
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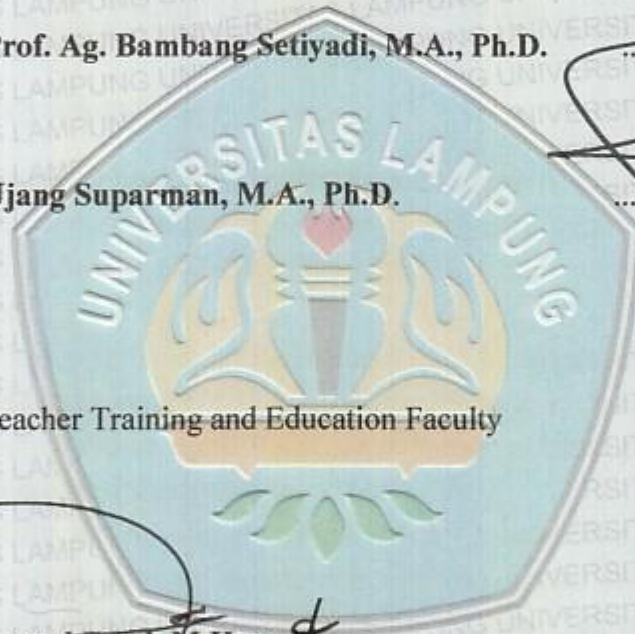
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## **CURRICULUM VITAE**



The writer is Riskha Windari who was born on July 11, 1991 in Serdang, South Lampung. She is the first daughter of five siblings from a nice couple, Sarimin and Lasinah. In October 9, 2015 she married a wise humble man named Cahyo HidayahS.T. and soon will be blessed by having their first child.

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## DEDICATION

*This script is especially dedicated to:*

*My beloved parents*

*My lovely husband and our sweetheart baby-born (will be)*

*All of my sisters and friends*

*My great lecturers*

*My almamater*



## **MOTTO**

“What we need to reach the true happiness is by being thankful”  
(The Writer)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Praise be merely to the almighty Alloh Swt who has given all best merciful things to the writer so that she could finish this script entitled *A Morphosyntactic Analysis on EFL Students' Writing*. Besides, this script also was written as a partial fulfillment of the requirement for S1 degree of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Lampung University.

The writer is eager to present her countless gratitude to the people who had supported her especially in finishing this script. Thus, the writer wants to express her sincere respect and gratitude to:

1. The writer's lovely parents who never stops supporting her in completing her study.
2. The writer's beloved husband who always keeps patient in motivating and giving countless prayer to the writer.
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4. Prof. Ag. Bambang Setiyadi, as the writer's examiner.
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6. My beloved almamater, UNILA.

Bandar Lampung, October2016

The Writer

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**ABSTRACT**

**CURRICULUM VITAE**

**DEDICATION**

**MOTTO**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**LIST OF TABLES**

**LIST OF CHARTS**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

1.1. Background .....	1
1.2. Identification of The Problems.....	4
1.3. Limitation of The Problems .....	5
1.4. Formulation of Research Question .....	5
1.5. Objective .....	5
1.6. Uses .....	6
1.7. Scope .....	6
1.8. Definition of Terms .....	6

### **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

2.1. Review of Previous Research .....	8
2.2. Review of Related Literature .....	11

2.2.1. Error Analysis .....	11
2.2.2. Error vs Goofing .....	12
2.2.3. Error Analysis in Language Teaching .....	12
2.2.4. Implication of Error Analysis for Language Teachers .....	13
2.2.5. Implication of Error Analysis for Syllabus Designers .....	14
2.2.6. Morphosyntactic Analysis .....	15
2.2.7. Morphological Analysis .....	16
2.2.8. Syntactic Analysis .....	18
2.3. The Advantages of Morphosyntactic Analysis in Language Teaching .....	20
2.4. The Disadvantages of Morphosyntactic Analysis in Language Teaching .....	21

### **III. METHODS**

3.1. Setting .....	22
3.2. Research Design .....	22
3.3. Research Participants .....	23
3.4. Data Collecting Technique .....	23
3.5. Credibility and Consistency of The Research .....	24
3.5.1. Credibility .....	24
3.5.2. Consistency .....	25
3.6. Research Procedure .....	25
3.7. Data Analysis .....	26

### **IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

4.1. Result .....	29
4.2. Discussion .....	46

**V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

5.1. Conclusion ..... 53  
5.2. Suggestion ..... 54

**REFERENCES**

**APPENDICES**

## LIST OF TABLES

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Table 1.</b> The distinctions of inflectional and derivational morphology .....	17
<b>Table 2.</b> The error areas of morphology .....	18
<b>Table 3.</b> The type of syntactic errors .....	19
<b>Table 4.</b> Morphological error check-list.....	26
<b>Table 5.</b> Syntactic error check-list.....	27
<b>Table 6.</b> Result of morphological errors in numbers .....	29
<b>Table 7.</b> Result of syntactic errors in numbers .....	34
<b>Table 8.</b> Result of morphosyntactic errors in numbers .....	42
<b>Table 9.</b> The result of whole analysis area .....	46

## LIST OF CHARTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Figure 1.</b> The percentage of morphological error categories .....	33
<b>Figure 2.</b> The percentage of syntactic error categories .....	41
<b>Figure 3.</b> The percentage of morphosyntactic error categories .....	45
<b>Figure 4.</b> The percentage of whole types of error .....	50

## I. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher tries to elaborate the background, the scope, the research question, the objective and the definition of terms of the research.

### 1.1. Background

Learning a language means learning both the forms (words) and the rules (structures). These terms cannot be avoided by those who are learning English as the second or foreign language. Literally, the study of words forming or more likely called *syntax* is concerned with the way of how words are combined to form phrase, clause and sentence, while *morphology* deals with the study of structuring anew-built word from other word. These studies will be commonly learnt deeply in the university level although they both actually have been started and introduced in the early level of education (e.g. junior and senior high school). It is true that learning a new language is a continuous process so that the language learners really need long process to master the language. The problems of confusion or distracters will be definitely faced during their process of acquiring English. Some may get solved but some others may remain problematic. Eventually, their development in English may get stuck and it can cause some problems in their acquiring process.



Going to the higher level of education, the students started involving themselves in more complex studies of English including morphology and syntax. Because language especially English belonged to a structural language, those studies seemed to be really obligated to be learnt. Having got some chances to have an English private class, the researcher saw the difficulties mostly faced by students were especially producing the correct sentences. She tried to understand that it might be their lack of knowledge because they were still at senior high school (SMA). However, in other occasion, when the researcher observed some students having entered to higher level of education, some spots of errors were still found in their oral production. The researcher saw that the errors they committed might occur in their past learning and without realizing it, the errors that were not completely solved yet, sometimes repeatedly appeared. Having this phenomenon, the researcher assumed that when the errors they committed in their past learning were not perfectly corrected, the errors they neglected in the past might be re-occurring problems in this level.

Entering to the higher level of education and having passed some years enrolling in English courses might get the EFL learners have better understanding and ability in English. Actually, acquiring L2 seemed to be the same process as acquiring L1. Some mistakes in any oral or written production were seen as the productive errors somehow. However, entering to the first year of the higher level of education did not guarantee that the EFL students were perfectly able to produce English sentences correctly. Although they had already enrolled in some English courses including morphology and syntax and supposedly had been good

enough in producing English both in spoken and written, the fact said that most of the students still got difficult to produce English correctly either spoken or written. They still had a lack of ability to see what imperfection of sentences they had, so it was not doubt to say that the teachers would be the one who could help them to minimize the errors production. So that was why, it was necessary for the English teacher to be able to analyze the students' error because this activity could be a good way to keep the students on track of the right language rules. By having the analysis, the teachers would be able to identify and locate the errors and in the end they could get the students to understand better about how to use the language correctly and finally they could be successful language learners.

Dealing with the analysis on error production, the teacher could have this way to help the students minimize their error production by doing some error analysis. Error Analysis (EA) henceforth was obviously a branch of Applied Linguistics and had two functions. The first function was theoretical which had its place in methodology and described the learner's knowledge of the target language. It also helped the researcher find out the relation between the knowledge and the teaching which the learner had been receiving. The practical area of EA was to overcome the mismatch between the knowledge of the learner and the demands of the situation. Mourtaga (2004) pointed out that errors and mistakes were different from each other because an error could not be self-corrected and was caused by a learner's inadequate knowledge of the target language whereas a mistake could be self-corrected. Gas and Selinker (2001) explained that a mistake could be self-centered, but an error was systematic. Errors occurred repeatedly and could not be

recognized by the learner. Hence, only the teacher or researcher could locate them. Meanwhile, mistakes according to Yuksel (2007) were not a result of deficiency in competence. They could be characterized by the slips of the pen or the slips of the tongue. Lapses might result from some factors such as memory failure and physical or mental fatigue. Richards et.al (1985) described errors as the use of a linguistic item in a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language regarded as showing faulty or incomplete action.

Having argued about the importance or the significance of analysis or correction that needed to be done by English teachers or the researchers, in this present study the researcher intended to reveal out and to identify the problems mostly faced by EFL learners especially dealing with morphology and syntax. The analysis was aimed at writing because as the productive skill, the errors of language could be easily detected and analyzed in written forms. Because of this reason also, in this present study, the researcher was going to identify the errors on writing committed by the first year students in English Department of Lampung University especially in terms of morphology and syntax.

## **1.2. Identification of The Problems**

After having a free interview to some students, the researcher finally found out and categorized some problems faced by the EFL students in their first year at university. The common problems they had in English were dealing with:

- a. vocabulary
- b. preposition
- c. morphemes

- d. syntax
- e. conjunction
- f. pronunciation

### **1.3. Limitation of the Problems**

Relating to the essence of a language learning stated in the background of the research and also for having a detailed analysis, the researcher would only discuss the students' problems dealing with morphology and syntax in which she would analyze what areas of both studies which commonly got the students distracted.

### **1.4. Formulation of Research Question**

Related to the scope of this research, the researcher formulated the research question as follows:

What are morphological, syntactic and morphosyntactic errors committed by the first year students?

### **1.5. Objective**

In accordance with the research questions, the objective proposed by the researcher was as follows:

To investigate the errors committed by the first year students especially in term of morphology, syntax and morphosyntax.

### 1.6. .Uses

In general, the uses of this research covered:

1. Theoretically, this research could be used to verify the previous research and theories about morphosyntactic analysis.
2. Practically, it also might be used to confirm whether the implementation of morphosyntactic analysis was applicable to increase the understanding of both the teacher and the students.

### 1.7. Scope

The participants of this study were 24 of the first year students who were learning English as foreign language at English Department. The students were supposedly good at writing because they had enrolled in some English courses during the first semester of the academic year 2015 – 2016. Systematically, they would be asked to write a free composition based on the commands given by the researcher.

### 1.8. Definitions of Terms

There are several terms used in this research. They are defined as follows:

1. *Error Analysis* belonged to the way of correcting the slipped understanding of learners
2. *Morphosyntactic Analysis* is an analysis which focuses on *Morphological* and *Syntactic* rules which go hand-in-hand and influence one another
3. *Morphological analysis* refers to an analysis which focuses on morphological issues
4. *Syntactic analysis* deals with analyzing the errors in syntactic areas.

This is the end of chapter 1. Several points concerning with the background, the scope, the research question, the objective and the definition of terms of the research have been clearly elaborated. The discussion relating to literature reviews of the research will be explained in the next chapter.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses some previous research and also the related literature reviews.

### 2.1. Review of Previous Research

In line with the written errors commonly committed by the students especially dealing with morphological and syntactic errors, in this part the researcher took some previous research dealing with the morphological and syntactic issues on students' writing.

The first research investigating the written errors was done by Zawahreh (2012). It was conducted on purpose of identifying, estimating the predominant errors and explaining the causes of the written errors of English committed by 350 students in the tenth grade. The students were selected randomly from group of schools in Ajloun. Systematically, they were asked to write a free essay about *A journey to the ancient city of Jerash in Jordan* in an ordinary English language exercise in the classroom. The findings revealed out some issues. Firstly, the most predominant errors among tenth grade students in Ajloun schools within morphology were about a lack of agreement between subject and the main verb. Next, besides committing some errors concerning with morphology, the most predominant errors among the tenth grade students in Ajloun schools within function words were about insertion of prepositions. Thirdly, the most

predominant errors among the tenth grade students within syntax were omission of the main verb. The next most predominant errors among the tenth grade students within tenses were errors of using present instead of past. The last, the most predominant errors among the tenth grade students within lexical items were errors of lexical items wrongly used in place of others.

The second study came from Hijjo (2013) who analyzed 10 Malaysian secondary school students' writing consisting 50 pages in each using morphosyntactic analysis. He found that the most errors committed by the students were about the use of plural mark 's' as well as the 3<sup>rd</sup> singular person in present tense. Moreover, the students could not build a simple sentence due to the different word-order and sentence structure between Malay language and English in term of morphology and syntax. In a general sense, the morphological errors did not affect the sentence structure or the whole meaning of the phrase or the sentence. Moreover, the erroneous construction of the sentence did not lead to ambiguity in the whole meaning of the phrase or the sentence; the meaning can be fully understood through the context.

Further, the third study taken by the researcher was from Abushihab (2014) who analyzed 20 students who learnt English as a foreign language at Gazi University of Turkey. They were all enrolled in a writing course designed for second-year students in the academic year 2011- 2012. Systematically, the students were asked to write an essay of 200 -250 words about the difficulties they face in learning English. The result of students' essays was copied and given to



two other raters who had enough experience in teaching. Then, the researcher and the two other raters analyzed the written data, and then classified and identified the grammatical errors. Finally, the result that was obtained was classified into errors in the use of tenses, in the use of prepositions, in the use of articles, in the use of active and passive voice and errors in morphology. A total of 179 grammatical errors were found. The results presented that the most common grammatical errors were related to tenses (15%), prepositions (28%), articles (29%), active and passive voice (9.5%) and morphology (18.4%).

In the light of the research findings of some previous studies above, it could be inferred that generally most of EFL students had various problems in learning English. It was clearly seen that those previous studies investigated the students' errors in general issues which meant that none of the findings revealed out the students' errors in term of morphology and syntaxin details. To complete those findings, in this present study, the researcher intended to have an analysis focusing on morphological and syntactic issues on students' writing.

## **2.2. Review of Related Literature**

In this sub discussion, some terms relating to error analysis, morphosyntactic analysis, morphological analysis, and syntactic analysis would be clearly elaborated.

### **2.2.1. Error Analysis**

Error analysis (EA) examines errors made by L2 learners and Richards and Schmidt (2002:184) define it as the study and analysis of the errors made by second language learners. EA has become a preferred tool of studying second language analysis. It is seen as one of the best types of linguistic studies that focus on the learners' errors. However, the errors are supposedly important in some way because by analyzing the errors, it is possible to determine areas that need reinforcement in teaching.

In 2002, Ferris as quoted by Zawahreh (2012) showed that error analysis and corrective techniques could help in effective learning and teaching of English because foreign language is a gradual process, during which mistakes are to be expected in all levels of learning. He added that mistakes will not disappear simply because they have been pointed out to the learner, contrary to what some language learners and teachers believe. In fact, he insisted that mistakes are a natural process of learning and must be considered as part of cognition. So he argues that errors must be viewed positively. Supporting his note, Yufriзал (2008:28) also believes that an error made by EFL learners should not be seen as a failure of learning. On the contrary, it has been the evidence for the learners' progress in which it can give us insights into how they learn the language.

### **2.2.2. Errors vs. Goofing**

Actually, making some errors would be a common thing faced by all language learners. As quoted by Suparman (2010), the errors occurring during the language acquisition should not be seen as the failure because they should be and must be happening to all language learners. So that was why it was wisely and commonly called *goofing*. The reason why it was put in this discussion because what would be found out in this research dealing with the problems of students in morphology and syntax should not be regarded as the failure, but as the evidence that the students were involving themselves into an on-going learning process.

### **2.2.3. Error Analysis in Language Teaching**

It was inevitable that all learners made mistakes and committed errors. However, that process could be impeded through realizing the errors and operating on them according to the feedbacks given. The steps that learners follow got the researchers and language teachers realize that if the mistakes and errors of language learners in constructing the new language system were analyzed carefully, the process of language acquisition shall be understood. The analysis of errors thus had become a field of linguistics in that sense. The field of language teaching benefited from the findings of linguistics in many cases including error analysis. As indicated above, what a linguist looking for in understanding the language learning process contributed a lot to the questions of language teachers. Many of the teachers complained that their students were unable to use the linguistic forms that they were taught. Lengo (1995) stated that this situation was due to the teacher's false impression that output should be an authentic

representation of input. This belief ignored the function of intake- that knowledge of language was what the students internalize. Intake might be different from the teacher's syllabus being subject to be internalized. Error analysis enabled teachers to find out the sources of errors and took pedagogical precautions towards them. Thus, the analysis of learner language had become an essential need to overcome some questions and proposed solutions regarding different aspects.

By seeing the relevance of error analysis in language teaching, here the researcher agreed that error analysis also could contribute some beneficial points to both teachers and also syllabus designers as quoted by Erdoğan (2005). Those statements are presented as follows:

#### **2.2.4. Implications of Error Analysis for Foreign Language Teachers**

Teachers could benefit from the findings of error analysis in many ways. Errors told the teacher how far towards the goal the learner had progressed and what remained for him to learn (Corder, 1987). Following the student's progress, the teacher was able to carry on his studies in accordance with what the learner needed to know and what part of the teaching strategy to change or reconstruct. Errors were a means of feedback for the teacher reflecting how effective he was in his teaching style and what changes he had to make and to get higher performance from his students. Furthermore, errors indicated the teacher about the points that needed further attention. Additionally, errors showed the way to be treated when their sources were identified correctly.

### **2.2.5. Implications of Error Analysis for Syllabus Designers**

Syllabus design of an English teaching course was a very important component of teaching-learning process. There were many factors to be considered to decide on what to teach, to what level and age group. At this point, errors were significant data for syllabus designers as they showed what items were important to be included or which items needed to be recycled in the syllabus. Keshavarz (1997) maintained that an error-based analysis could give reliable results upon which remedial materials could be constructed. In other words, analysis of second language learners' errors could help identify learners' linguistic difficulties and needs at a particular stage of language learning. It was essential for a syllabus to provide with the needs for learning appropriately and errors were important evidence for that. Corder (1973) reminded of deSaussure's words that language was a *self-contained system*, in which each part was systematically related to another part. Then learning of some new item required the learning of all items that were already studied. Eventually, this required the necessity for a cyclical syllabus in language learning.

### 2.2.6. Morphosyntactic Analysis

The word *morphosyntactic* was the adjective of morphosyntax. *Morphosyntax* was derived from *morphology* which was the study of word formation and *syntax* which was the study of how words were combined into larger unit such as phrase and sentence. *Morphosyntax* was the combination of morphology and syntax. They were combined because they had very close relationship. According to Crystal (1980: 234) *morphosyntactic* was a term in linguistics used to refer to grammatical categories or properties for whose definition criteria of morphology and syntax both applied, as in describing the characteristics of words. Crystal (1980: 234) gave illustration that the distinctions under the heading of number in nouns constituted a morphosyntactic category: on the one hand, number contrasts affected syntax (e.g. singular subject requiring a singular verb); on the other hand, they required morphological definition (e.g. add –s for plural).

Based on the explanation above, it could be implied that word formation which was the concern of morphology had a very close relationship with the syntactic structure. In some cases, they both went hand-in-hand and influenced one another. For instance, in teaching simple present tense, the teacher should be better to explain the word *cooks* for example was formed from the morpheme *cook* and the morpheme –s. However, the word *cooks* was influenced by another word which, together with the word *cooks* itself – the third person singular subjects as in the sentence: *My mother cooks every morning*. In order to have clearer understanding, the researcher would explain each term concerning morphological and syntactic analysis in the following points.

### 2.2.7. Morphological analysis

According to Carstairs-McCarthy (2002:15), *morphology* referred to the area of grammar dealing with word structures. In investigating or analyzing words, their internal structure, and how they were formed, one of ways that could be done was through the identification and study of *morphemes* – the smallest linguistic pieces with a grammatical function. However, they believed that morphemes were not merely the smallest units of grammatical structures but also as the smallest meaningful units. It was so because when we saw that a morpheme would be identifiable from one word to another and it contributed in some ways to the meaning of the whole word. (Carstairs-McCarthy:2002,p.15) Literally, these views characterized the morpheme and made it widespread precisely because *bound morphemes* attached in words could produce many complex words not only brand new words like *ex-husband* but also the established ones like *unpredictable*. In short, it could be concluded that morphemes do not only have the structures in case of how they are formed but also the meaning that the morpheme brought to the attached words.

In doing the analysis dealing with morphemes, two types of morphemes hadbe taken as a focus in this paper; inflection and derivation. Simply, the affixation which was used or attached in words because of being conditioned by the grammatical factors, so that was what inflection meant. In contrast, derivational morpheme was when the affixation was not influenced by the grammar. To make it clear, the following was served some sentences containing both inflection and derivation.

- (a) He *explained* the same term last week
- (b) Nobody denies that he *explains* the terms many times
- (c) You may take his *explanation* for granted.
- (d) He has been *explaining* it several times

All those italic words contained a suffix: explain-*ed*, explain-*s*, explain-*ing*, and explain-*ation*. The examples in (a), (b), and (c) indicated the inflection because the suffix attached in each verb ( *-ed*, *-s*, and *-ing*) did not make any changes in their meaning as well as their word classes. However, in (c) the suffix *-ation* presented the new meaning and also the word class of *explain* and that was what the derivational morpheme worked in English words. To give the brief sense of what areas the inflection and derivation affected, the following table would clear it up.

INFLECTION	DERIVATION
<b>Regular and irregular inflection</b> (e.g. <i>tooth/teeth, perform/performs/performed/performing</i> )	<b>Adverbs derived from adjectives</b> (e.g. properly, shortly)
<b>Forms of nouns</b> (e.g. <i>cat/cats, house/houses</i> )	<b>Nouns derived from nouns</b> (e.g. pianist, princess, heroine, childhood)
<b>Forms of pronouns and determiner</b> (e.g. <i>he/him, we/us, apostrophe 's</i> )	<b>Nouns derived from adjectives/verbs</b> (e.g. performance, purity, goodness)
<b>Forms of verb</b> ( <i>regular/irregular forms; grammatically conditioned</i> )	<b>Adjectives derived from adjectives</b> (e.g. unbeatable,intangible, illegal)
<b>Forms of adjectives</b> (e.g. <i>young/younger</i> )	<b>Verbs derived from verbs</b> (e.g. rewrite, untie, disqualify,)
<b>Forms of adverb</b> (e.g. <i>soon/sooner</i> )	<b>Adjectives derived from members of other word classes</b> (e.g. interesting, broken)
	<b>Verbs derived from members of other word classes</b> (e.g. <i>breath(n ) – breathe (v)</i> )

**Table 1. Some most common distinctions of inflectional and derivational morphology**

(summarized from Carstairs-McCarthy:2002, p.31-54)



Having known the distinction between inflectional and derivational morphology displayed in Figure 1 above, here the researcher tried to put them into several error categories dealing with Morphological analysis. The areas of morphological errors were presented below:

Area	Error Categories
Morphology	Omission of " s " singular
	dition of suffixes to infinitive
	gular/irregular Inflection
	ck of agreement between nouns and pronouns
	monstratives
	reement between numbers.
	egular verbs
	mission of relative pronoun
	suse of possession

**Table 2. The error areas of morphology**

In short, it could be summarized that some words or lexemes had more than one form depending on the grammatical context or on choices of the grammar used (e.g. singular or plural). Some which had the changes on meaning and or the word classes from the core word were called *derivation* while some others which did not would belong to *inflection*.

### **2.2.8. Syntactic Analysis**

Syntax was closely related to the structure. However, the structure here was not about the word forming but mostly about the sentence structure. Thus, a sentence would be analyzed as a whole rather than analyzing it by breaking down every single word it contained. (Burton-Robert:1997) So, it was obvious that the sequence of words could not be analyzed if they had no structure. The arranged words would sound odd when they failed to constitute a good expression in the

language or usually defined as *ungrammatical sentence*. The following examples would represent what sentences meant:

(a) A young girl sitting.

(b) A young girl sits behind me.

We could easily notice that (b) was grammatically correct while (a) was not. Thus, it was clear that (a) did not belong to a complete sentence or in other words it was more like a phrase, not a full sentence. It was all because the subject '*a young girl*' had no its predicate or if we saw that the word *sitting* was its predicate, so the sentence was lack of auxiliary '*is/was*', depending on the grammar used. The point, after all, was that the sequences of words would remain nothing if they had no a structure which resulted from fitting them together in an understandably meaningful way.

In analyzing sentences dealing with syntax, here the researcher adapted and modified several areas of syntactical errors from a Ph.D thesis of Wakkad in 1980 as quoted by Zawahreh (2012):

Area	Error Categories
Syntax	Sequence of tense
	Using progressives
	Omission of verb to be
	Omission of the main verb
	Omission of <i>to</i>
	Addition of <i>to</i>
	Passive voice
	Modal auxiliaries occurred with simple past
	Agreement between subject and verb
	Addition of <i>suffixes</i> to <i>Infinitive/ To Infinitive Verb</i>

**Table 3. The type of syntactic errors**

### **2.3. The Advantages of Morphosyntactic Analysis in Language Teaching**

In language teaching, analyzing the errors was not only beneficial to teachers, syllabus designers and textbook writers by showing them the students' progress, but it was also significant to researchers and to the learners. Mungungu (2010) stated in his dissertation paper that doing some error analysis could show researchers what strategies that the learners used to learn a second language and also indicated the type of errors which they made and why they did so. When the learners had made some errors, the most efficient way to teach them was not only by simply giving the correct forms, but we also might let them discover the error. From the notes above, the researcher drew a conclusion that doing morphosyntactic analysis might be beneficial to help both teacher and students:

- (a) choose the best strategies in teaching as well as in learning
- (b) provide the information about the progress of the learner.
- (c) improve language competence

In conclusion, error analysis helped linguists and teachers realized that although errors sometimes obstructed communication, they could often facilitate second language learning, and they played a significant role in training teachers and helping them identify and classify learners' errors, as well as helping them construct correction techniques.

#### **2.4. The Disadvantages of Morphosyntactic Analysis in Language Teaching**

As most research methods, doing error analysis also had its drawbacks. According to Xie and Jiang in 2007 as quoted by Mungungu (2010) was that there was a danger in too much attention to learners' errors. For instance, in the classroom the teacher tended to become so pre-occupied with noticing errors that the correct utterance in the second language would go unnoticed. Although the diminishing of errors was an important criterion for increasing language proficiency, the ultimate goal of second language learning was still the attainment of communicative fluency in a language. Thus, the weaknesses of doing morphosyntactic analysis for English teachers that might be taken from some notes above could be:

- (a) too risky to be done for those who had a lack of knowledge concerning morphology and syntax
- (b) a distracter for the teacher because it could keep the teachers too closely pay attention to the errors rather than the student's competence

The discussions about reviews of the previous research and also some literature reviews have been clearly elaborated in this chapter. The next chapter would discuss about the methods used in this research.

### **III. METHODS**

Dealing with the research methods, this chapter elaborates some points concerning research design, subject of the research, data collecting technique, credibility and consistency of the research, research procedure, and also data analysis.

#### **3.1. Setting**

In doing this research, the data were taken from students' written works. The students were in the first year of English Department in Lampung University. Because the triangulation of time was best applied in this research, so the first data had been taken when the students were following their first semester and the second data were taken in their second year. It was based on the concept of applying triangulation of time proposed by Setiyadi (2006).

#### **3.2. Research Design**

This present study applied qualitative approach because the researcher intended to reveal out the problems faced by the students in learning English. As a whole, this present study referred to a discourse analysis in which the analysis had covered the linguistics aspect regarded as the problems in language learning. In relevance with this issue, the researcher used *a focused description* as the design of this research in which the researcher had prepared some categorical data from both

issues: morphology and syntax before collecting the data. By having the focused categorical data, the researcher could get the analysis easier because the possible result of analysis had been easily categorized. (Setiyadi, 2006:232)

As what qualitative researcher did, the achievement of learning was not focused but some issues concerning with morphology and also syntax would be something dug up through what the students had passed in learning English so far. Because of that, in applying this data analysis, the researcher had prepared some areas of linguistics aspect especially in terms of morphology and syntax as the check-list points of error categories, so at last the students' errors in this limitation could be easily classified.

### **3.3. Research Participants**

The researcher conducted the research to 24 students in the first year of English Department who were studying English as foreign language. They were chosen as subject in this research based on a consideration that they had been enrolling in English classes since they were still in junior until senior high school and had got a deeper knowledge during their first year in college.

### **3.4. Data Collecting Techniques**

#### **a. Interview**

To obtain the general information about the difficulties faced by the first year students in learning English, the researcher conducted an interview to the students. The interview was done informally so that the researcher could have various topics which flew naturally. The talking freely went by in English so that

the students did not realize they were being interviewed. When doing the interview, some notes dealing with students' errors were successfully taken from the talks and finally summed up and put into the identification of the problems in this research.

### **b. Writing Test**

As stated in previous lines, the investigation aimed at students' written works so that the writing test had been conducted as primary data collecting technique. The researcher had prepared two commands in which the students worked based on the commands given. (See appendix) The data finally had been collected and analyzed by the researcher and another rater.

## **3.5. Credibility and Consistency of The Research**

### **3.5.1. Credibility**

To get the trustworthiness of the finding, the researcher applied the triangulation of time in which the researcher had done the research to the same subjects but it was done in the different time. Besides, the commands in writing test were purposely made to elicit the possible errors displayed in the figure 2 and 3. This aimed at measuring the internal validity or in this qualitative research it was called credibility of the research. (Setiyadi, 2006:225)

### **3.5.2. Consistency**

After that, the collected data was analyzed by both the researcher and an English teacher who had enough experience in English teaching. In 1985, Lincoln and Guba as quoted by Setiyadi (2006:27) stated that the teacher worked to help the researcher interpret the result of the analyzed data. This was on purpose to make the finding of this research more consistent or reliable and also to avoid the subjectivity which could lower the validity of the finding.

### **3.6. Research Procedure**

In collecting the data of this research, the researcher did some steps as follows:

- a. Deciding the focus of the research
- b. Searching for the relevant literature reviews
- c. Deciding the subject of the research
- d. Going to get the data (written )
- e. Copying the data in two copies
- f. Analyzing the data
- g. Identifying the errors
- h. Classifying the errors
- i. Comparing the analyzed data to the teacher's
- j. Drawing the interpretation based on the result of analyzed data



### 3.7. Data Analysis

Data analysis involves working to uncover patterns and trends in data sets, and data interpretation involves explaining those patterns and trends. The techniques scientists use to analyze and interpret the data enable other scholars to both review the data and use it in future research. (Egger & Carpi, 2008:1).

The 24 written tasks used in this study were read and analyzed by the researcher for morphological and syntactic errors. Firstly, the researcher started with the selection of a corpus of language, and secondly the researcher did the identification of errors. Next, the researcher classified the errors according to their grammatical features. The collected data had been analyzed using the two following ways:

#### *a. Morphologically*

The data had been analyzed to find the errors referring morphological errors and was put into the following table of classification:

<b>Error categories</b>	<b>Total Number of errors recorded</b>
Misuse of pronouns	
Misuse of demonstrative	
Incorrectness of Possession	
Wrong word form	
<b>Total</b>	

**Table 4. Morphological error check-list**

*b. Syntactically*

To analyze the sentences syntactically, the researcher separated the sentences into two parts; *S+V*. After having analyzed the sentences, the researcher classified the errors into its type based on the following table:

Area	Syntactic error categories	Numbers of error
Syntax	Sequence of tense	
	Using progressives	
	Omission of verb <i>be</i>	
	Omission of the main verb	
	Omission of <i>to</i>	
	Addition of <i>to</i>	
	Passive voice	
	Modal auxiliaries occurred with simple past	
	Addition of <i>suffixes</i> to <i>Infinitive verb/To Infinitive Verb</i>	
<b>Total</b>		

**Table 5. Syntactic error check-list**

The researcher counted every student's error based on what category it belonged to. After all possible errors dealing with morphological and syntactic categories had been identified and classified, and then the researcher investigated what morphosyntactic issues mostly committed by the students.

This is the end of chapter 3. Some points related to research design, subject of the research, data collecting technique, credibility and consistency of the research, research procedure, and also data analysis have been completely explained.

## V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Referring to the result and also the discussion of the research finding in the previous chapter, the researcher has drawn some conclusion and also suggestions that will be summed up in this chapter.

### 5.1. Conclusion

To sum up the discussion of the research findings, the researcher draws some conclusion as follows:

The most predominant morphosyntactic errors committed by the students are dealing with omission of suffix *s/es/ed*(11%). These are taken based on the theory proposed by Crystal (1980) who generalizes a morphosyntax as a term in which it shows how morphology and syntax go hand-in-hand and influence one another. The finding of this study reveals out the occurrence of morphosyntactic issue which lies on subject-verb agreement in both categories; omission of suffix *s/es* and regular/irregular inflection. Besides, about 4% of students' errors dealing with morphology concern with wrong word form. Mostly, the errors occur in the words whose classes belong to noun and adjective (e.g. confuse – confused) and also those which belong to irregular words (e.g. *ourself*, *my live*, etc.). Meanwhile, syntactically about 40% of students' errors belong to the sequence of tense. It seems that most of students often lost their focus in using the proper tense. They

often used present tense instead of past tense in task 1 where past tense was more precise to be used. This finding seems to be relevance to the previous research done Zawahreh (2012) who analyzed the tenth grade students in Aljoun schools.

## **5.2. Suggestions**

Apart of those conclusions, the researcher also puts down some considerable suggestion as follows:

- a. Seeing the most problems faced by the students are due to the sequence of tense, it is very suggested for English teachers to include more exercises and practices dealing with tense use in variety of meaningful contexts in which the students are expected to be accustomed to use the proper type of tense. For instance, the teacher can teach the materials dealing with simple present tense by getting the students tell their routines. When discussing simple past tense, the students can be instructed to tell their best experience, etc. By having this, the students implicitly learn the English grammar by using it in the contexts. In other word, this activity aims at increasing their focus on this subject.
  
- b. This present study may not be enough to contribute in English language teaching. So, for the further researcher who has got interested in the same field as this study, it is suggested to have or to apply certain techniques in teaching English in order to reduce the production of students' errors, especially for those which deal with morphosyntax. For instance, by playing a game in which they can work in group to say some erroneous sentences, but without mentioning where the errors take place. The first group will give the

erroneous sentences to other group which is responsible to answer, and so on until all groups have the same chance to trick other groups. In the end, this activity can be applied to minimize the students' error production.

- c. Besides, because this present study is very limited in applying triangulation as the method of data collection, so having more kind of triangulations especially in analyzing the data for further researcher is necessarily suggested to get the next findings more valid and reliable.
- d. Seeing morpho-syntactic analysis and the error analysis in general really need a deep understanding, it is recommended for the next researcher not to work alone. Having other companion who masters better is necessarily recommended. For instance, the researcher can work together with someone having much knowledge about this issue (morphosyntax).

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