

**AN ERROR ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' DESCRIPTIVE WRITING AT  
KHADIJAH ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL**

**(A Script)**

**By  
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LANGUAGE AND ARTS EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
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LAMPUNG UNIVERSITY**

**2022**

## **ABSTRACT**

### **AN ERROR ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' DESCRIPTIVE WRITING AT KHADIJAH ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL**

**By**

**Samara Fitri Azhari**

The objectives of this research are to find out the types of grammatical errors in students' descriptive writing and to find out the most frequent type of errors in students' descriptive writing. The method of this research is a descriptive qualitative method. The data were collected from 22 descriptive writings which were written by the students. The researcher used the writings as the instrument. In this research, all types of grammatical errors were classified and described based on surface strategy taxonomy by Dulay Burt, and Krashen (1982). Based on the result of the analysis, there were 670 grammatical errors found in the students' descriptive writing. Misformation error occupies the first rank with 286 errors. Then following closely is omission error with 260 errors, next is addition error with 90 errors, and the last one is disorder error with 34 errors.

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**A Script  
Submitted in a Partial Fullfilment of  
The Requirements for S-1 Degree  
In  
Language and Arts Education Department of  
The Faculty of Teacher and Education**



**TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION FACULTY  
UNIVERSITY OF LAMPUNG  
BANDAR LAMPUNG**

**2022**

Research Title : **AN ERROR ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' DESCRIPTIVE WRITING AT KHADIJAH ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL**

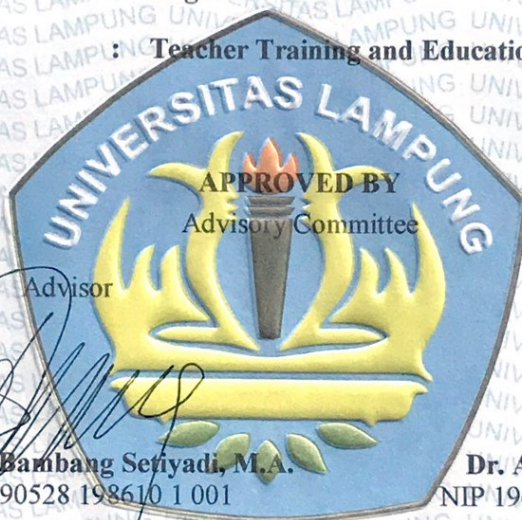
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## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

Samara Fitri Azhari is the daughter of Edi Azhari and Ervina. She was born in Metro, on March 6, 1998. She has a younger brother named Ridho Mukhlis.

Samara enrolled in English Education Department at the University of Lampung in 2016. Over the years of studying English, she found out that she enjoyed the process of learning a language. She proceeds to learn other languages as well. However, because she is a person who could only focus on just a few things, she could only learn the Korean language alongside English. In the last years of her study at university, she began to learn to translate a few passages from Korean to English. Although her translation skill and her Korean were still at a poor level, a publisher allowed her to join their company to translate a few Korean novels for English speaking audience. Over there her translation skills have been growing exponentially. After a year in the company, she decided to be an independent translator and a freelancer. Since then, she's been translating a few Korean novels.

## **DEDICATION**

*Dedicated to my dear family  
who always love me unconditionally.*



## Motto

티끌 모아 태산

“Dust gathers to be a tall mountain.”

水滴石穿，绳锯木断

“Dripping water pierces a stone; a saw made of rope cuts through wood.”

وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

“So lose not heart, nor fall into despair, and you will be triumphat if you are indeed believers.”

(The Quran 03:139)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Alhamdulillah, praise be to Allah, the Almighty God, the Most Merciful, without His blessings, this study would not be possible. The praises are also addressed to our Prophet Muhammad SAW who has guided us to the better life today. The myriad of gratitudes and grateful are extended to the following people who in some way have contributed in making this study possible:

1. The beloved parents, Mrs. Ervina and Mr. Edi Azhari for their unconditional support and love.
2. Prof. Dr. Ag. Bambang Setiyadi, M.A., the first advisor of this study, for his patience, kindness, and motivation in the years of teaching the writer and during the completion of the research.
3. Dr. Ari Nurweni, M.A., the second advisor of this study, for her evaluations, comments, and suggestion in the years of being her student and during the completion of the research.
4. Prof. Dr. Flora, M.Pd., the examiner of this study, for her encouragement, advice, and teaching through the years of being her students and during the completion of this research.
5. Mba Nur, the administration staff of English Language Department, for her friendliness and patience in facing the clueless writer doing a lot of paper work administration to finish this research.
6. The lectures and staffs of Language and Arts Department.
7. The beloved little brother, Ridho Mukhlis, for being annoying but somehow cute.
8. The beloved aunt and uncle, Mrs. Ferawati and Mr. Husni for cheering the writer up and motivate the writer to do better in life.
9. The beloved younger cousins, Najla, Alewa, Keanu, Faiq, Thariq, Aisyah, Azam, and Fatimah, for keeping the writer grounded and keeping their eyes on the writer so she should always try her best to be a good example for their future.

10. The beloved sister, Rachma Vivien Belinda, for being there for the writer, for her patience in listening the writer's non-sensical speech, and for her love and care despites not being a real sister.
11. The gaming buddies, Tus, Tazkia, and Syifa, for being so fun and lively.
12. The juniors in English Deartment 2018, Siti Fauziah and Vina, for the support, kindess, and helps.
13. The writer's dearest friends, Nabilah, Sakinah, Viola, for the beautiful moments of which they had been through together, and anyone who cannot be mentioned directly who has contributed to finish this research.

Last but not least: the writer want to thank herself—I want to thank me for believing in me, I want to thank me for doing all this hard work. I want to thank me for trying to fo more right than wrong. I want to thank me for just being me at all times. I want to thank me for never quitting.

Finally, the writer believes that her writing is in fact far from perfection. There are many flaws in this research. Therefore, comments, criticism, and suggestion are welcomed for better research. The writer hopes this research would give a postive contribution to the educational development, to the readers and to those who want to conduct further research.

Bandar Lampung, March 2023.

The writer,



Samara Fitri Azhari

NPM 1613042039



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  | Pages       |
|--|-------------|
| <b>COVER .....</b>   | <b>I</b>    |
| <b>ABSTRACT .....</b>  | <b>II</b>   |
| <b>APPROVAL.....</b>   | <b>IV</b>   |
| <b>ADMISSION.....</b>  | <b>V</b>    |
| <b>CURRICULUM VITAE.....</b>                                 | <b>VII</b>  |
| <b>DEDICATION.....</b>                                       | <b>VIII</b> |
| <b>MOTTO .....</b>   | <b>IX</b>   |
| <b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....</b>                                  | <b>X</b>    |
| <b>TABLE OF CONTENTS.....</b>                                | <b>XII</b>  |
| <b>LIST OF APPENDICES.....</b>                               | <b>XIV</b>  |
| <b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>                                  | <b>XV</b>   |
| <br>   |             |
| <b>CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION .....</b>                          | <b>1</b>    |
| 1.1 Background .....   | 1           |
| 1.2 Research Question.....                                   | 6           |
| 1.3 Objectives.....  | 7           |
| 1.4 Uses .....   | 7           |
| 1.5 Scope and Limit .....                                    | 7           |
| 1.6 Definition of Key Terms .....                            | 8           |
| <br>   |             |
| <b>CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>                    | <b>9</b>    |
| 2.1 Concept of Writing.....                                  | 9           |
| 2.2 Aspect of Writing.....                                   | 10          |
| 2.3 Process of Writing.....                                  | 11          |
| 2.4 Descriptive Writing.....                                 | 11          |
| 2.5 Error Analysis .....                                     | 12          |
| 2.6 Grammatical Error .....                                  | 18          |
| 2.7 The Disadvantages and Advantages of Error analysis ..... | 20          |
| 2.8 Previous Related Studies.....                            | 22          |
| 2.9 Theoretical Framework .....                              | 23          |
| <br>   |             |
| <b>CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODS.....</b>                     | <b>24</b>   |
| 3.1 Research Design.....                                     | 24          |
| 3.2 The Subject of the Research.....                         | 24          |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 3.3 Data Collection .....                               | 25        |
| 3.4 Research Procedures .....                           | 25        |
| <b>CHAPTER IV RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.....</b> | <b>28</b> |
| 4.1 Findings.....                                       | 28        |
| 4.2 Discussion .....                                    | 41        |
| <b>CHAPTER V CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS.....</b>        | <b>46</b> |
| 5.1 Conclusion .....                                    | 46        |
| 5.2 Suggestion.....                                     | 47        |
| <b>REFERENCE .....</b>                                  | <b>49</b> |
| <b>APPENDICES .....</b>                                 | <b>58</b> |

## LIST OF APPENDICES

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Appendix 1: Student's Paper No.1 .....                       | 59 |
| Appendix 2 : The Error Analysis of Paper's No.1.....         | 60 |
| Appendix 3 : Student's Paper No.2 .....                      | 62 |
| Appendix 4: The Error Analysis of Paper's No.2 .....         | 63 |
| Appendix 5 : Student's Paper No.3 .....                      | 64 |
| Appendix 6 : The Error Analysis of Paper's No.3.....         | 65 |
| Appendix 7 : Student's Paper No.4 .....                      | 67 |
| Appendix 8 : The Error Analysis of Paper's No.4.....         | 68 |
| Appendix 9 : Student's Paper No.5 .....                      | 69 |
| Appendix 10 : The Error Analysis of Paper's No.5.....        | 70 |
| Appendix 11 : The Calculation of Omission Errors .....       | 72 |
| Appendix 12 : The Calculation of Double Marking Errors.....  | 73 |
| Appendix 13 : The Calculation of Simple Addition Errors..... | 74 |
| Appendix 14 : The Calculation of Misformation Errors .....   | 75 |
| Appendix 15 : The Calculation of Misorder Errors.....        | 76 |



## LIST OF TABLES

|                |    |
|----------------|----|
| Table 3.1..... | 27 |
| Table 4.1..... | 29 |
| Table 4.2..... | 31 |
| Table 4.3..... | 32 |
| Table 4.4..... | 32 |
| Table 4.5..... | 33 |
| Table 4.6..... | 35 |
| Table 4.7..... | 37 |
| Table 4.8..... | 39 |

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter lays out the general point of the study. There are research background, research object, objectives of the research, use of the research, scope and limit, and definition of terms.

#### **1.1 Background**

English is a global language that native speakers and non-native speakers worldwide use for communication. In the education section, all students need the skills to search for information and obtain knowledge (Souriyavongsa, Rany, Abidin, & Mei, 2013). Therefore, many universities throughout the world need to include English as one of their educational tool requirements (Khader and Mohammad 2010). In doing so and based on the apprehension aspect discussed, Prihatmi (2017) states that students should master four skills of English: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Meanwhile, in the view of Megawati (2016) and Ariyanti (2016), language can be divided into two skills, receptive and productive. Reading and listening are receptive skills, while speaking and writing are productive. For productive skills, a student is about to produce language in terms of spoken and written to communicate with others (Ariyanti, 2016).

We could see that writing is one of the skills in English besides the other three: reading, listening, and speaking, that many people should become proficient.

Although both writing and speaking are productive skills, those two skills are different in various ways. Bachani (2001) stated that writing is slightly different from speaking in terms of communication context. Speaking is always intended for face-to-face communication among the audience. Writing is how the writers express and communicate their ideas to readers separated by time and space distances. Therefore, it requires a clearer and more comprehensive message (Akim, Rufinus, & Rezeki, 2017, p.1). Speaking and listening are acquired naturally for first and second language learners because the learners need the skills to communicate using the target language. Thus, speaking may show students' language acquisition level (Peng, 2011).

Contrary to speaking, according to Lennerberg (cited in Brown, 2000; 334; cited in Özdemir&Aydın, 2015), while human beings universally learn to walk and to talk, swimming and writing are culturally specific learned behaviors. We learn to swim if there is a body of water available and usually only if someone teaches us. We learn to write if we are members of literate society and usually only if someone teaches us. In this case, we could see that writing is a very important skill because it proves someone's ability in language as it needs specifically to be learned and studied.

Because writing is a skill that someone must specifically learn, it shows the different levels of difficulty of the skill. The difficulties have happened to both types of learners; English as first language learners and English as a second language or foreign language. The difficulties are even greater for English as a second or foreign language learner. According to Byrne (1995), there are three



factors associated with writing problems in a second language or foreign language. First, the psychological problem, which writing is essentially a solitary activity, and the fact that learners are required to write independently, without the possibility of interaction or the benefit of feedback, makes the act of writing difficult. Second, are linguistic problems. Learners have to compensate for the absence of the features, keep the channel of communication open through their effort, and ensure both their choice of sentence structure and the way their sentences are linked together and sequenced so that the text they produce can be interpreted on its own. Last, is a cognitive problem, in which writing is learned through a process of instruction. It means that learners have to master the written form of language and learn certain important structures for effective communication in writing (as cited in Rahmatunisa, 2015).

Along with writing problems, Akbar and Lio (2019) claim that writing is the hardest skill for students since to write effectively, the learners need to know the grammar, vocabulary, coherence, cohesion, semantics, and syntactic. Also, some effective variables hinder the students in writing, especially when writing using the target language. In the case of Indonesian students, many EFL learners face some difficulties in mastering writing since there are some differences between Indonesian and English such as structural and grammatical terms and styles (Husin and Nurbayani, 2017). Also, EFL students should work hard on transferring the meaning from Indonesia to the English context to make writing understandable and make sense when other people read it, especially native speakers (Ariyanti, 2016). The other common obstacle that the students always face is vocabulary limitations. Al-Khasawneh (2010) clarified that students could

not voice out their thoughts because they lack adequate stock of vocabulary. Hasan and Marzuki (2017) found that the problems in Indonesian EFL students' writing are the grammatical problems covering using plural forms, articles, verb forms, clauses, passive voice, and prepositions. All these challenges and difficulties sometimes cause students to make errors when they write.

Making errors naturally occurs during the process of second language acquisition. According to Corder (1981), we live in an imperfect world and consequently, errors would always happen despite our best efforts. In the L2 learner case, errors occur generally because of the interference of the mother language (Richards, 1984). It is a generally agreed observation that many—but not necessarily all—the errors made by L2 learners bear some sort of regular relation to the sentence of their mother tongue (Corder, 1981). Richards and Schmidt (2002) even stated that learners' errors committed during L2 learning are affected by several phenomena. Those involve extending models from the target language, borrowing patterns from the mother tongue, and showing purposes utilizing the known grammar and words (as cited in Poulidian, Sadegh, and Sadigi, 2017). However, others argued differently. According to Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982), an error is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker. It means that the learners make errors because they lack knowledge of the rules of the target language. The word “error” in writing shows faulty or incomplete learning in the use of the grammatical item, linguistic items, punctuation, and others (Alfiyani, 2013). According to Richards and Renandya (2002), students frequently make errors during learning-teaching in the writing process because of a lack of knowledge. However, it is different from the meaning of mistakes; an error has resulted from

incomplete knowledge. A mistake in writing is made by a learner when they lack attention, fatigue, carelessness, or some other aspect of performance. When learners did some mistakes, they normally would be aware of them and could correct them with more or less complete assurance.

Based on the explanation above, errors are acceptable. According to Corder (1981) making errors is an inevitable and a necessary part of the learning process. He further explained that the 'correction' of error provides precisely the sort of negative evidence which is necessary for the discovery of the correct concept of rule. Errors made by learners are beneficial to teachers, learners, and researchers. For teachers, errors are evidence of learners' progress in language learning. Teachers can refer to it to improve learners writing skills. For learners, errors can be the resources for their language learning. Lastly, errors provide evidence to the researcher on how learners learn and acquire the language (Corder: 1967).

Analysis of errors found in learners writing pieces can be very helpful (Corder, 1967; James, 1998; Nonkokhetkong, 2013; Hinnon, 2014; Rattanadilok Na Puhket and Othman, 2015; Sermsook, Liamnimitr, and Pochakorn, 2016). Therefore, the researcher will employ Error Analysis to assist the teachers and students in improving the student's writing performance. Presada and Badea (2014), for example, analyzed the causes of errors made by students in their translation classes and asserted that this method could help them sort out the real problems. It is confirmed that Error Analysis (EA) could lessen the number of errors in their students' work.

Having learned the advantage of Error Analysis (EA), the researcher believes that this approach could be helpful to assist the teacher to find proper learning methods and techniques in a way that helps the learner to acquire most expeditiously the correct forms of the target language. Hence, the researcher would like to analyze errors in descriptive writing written by Indonesian EFL students, specifically second-grade senior high school students at the Khadijah Islamic Boarding School Lampung. Furthermore, the focus of this research is to find out the types of grammatical errors based on the surface strategy taxonomy by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) in students' descriptive writing and the type of errors that are committed most frequently in the students' descriptive writing.

## **1.2 Research Question**

The research questions that can be formulated based on the explanation above are as follows:

1. What are the types of grammatical errors in students' descriptive writing based on surface strategy taxonomy?
2. Which type of error is committed most frequently in students' descriptive writing based on surface strategy taxonomy?



### **1.3 Objectives**

Based on the research questions above, the objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To describe the types of grammatical errors in students' descriptive writing based on surface strategy taxonomy.
2. To find out the errors committed most frequently in students' descriptive writing based on surface strategy taxonomy

### **1.4 Uses**

Some uses can be summarized from this research:

1. Theoretically, it would give the information to leading other studies.
2. Practically, it would help the teachers to measure and understand students' writing ability.

### **1.5 Scope and Limit**

This research would be limited to discussing an error analysis of students' descriptive writing based on surface strategy taxonomy by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen's (1982). The researcher would describe an analysis of omission, addition, misformation, and misordering based on surface strategy taxonomy. The data of this research are descriptive writing papers written by the second grade of senior high school students at the Khadijah Boarding School Lampung.

## **1.6 Definition of Key Terms**

### **1. Writing**

Writing is the mental work of inventing ideas, thinking about expressing and organizing them into statements and paragraphs that will be clear to a reader (Nunan, 2003).

### **2. Descriptive Text**

According to Knap and Watkins (2005), descriptive text is a text that is used to classify and/or describe a process.

### **3. Error Analysis**

Error Analysis is a systematic analysis that could assist the teacher to help learner acquires the correct form of the target language (Corder, 1981).

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter is related to several things discussed in the preceding chapter, and it is ahead of some theories discussed in the framework. It consists of the concept of writing, aspect of writing, essay writing, error analysis, and theoretical assumption.

#### **2.1 Concept of Writing**

According to Nunan (2003, p.88), there are a series of contrasting definitions of writing. The first one is writing is both a physical and a mental act. At the most basic level, writing is the physical act of committing words or ideas to some medium, whether it is hieroglyphics inked onto parchment or an e-mail message typed into a computer. On the other hand, writing is the mental work of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express them and organizing them into statements and paragraphs that will be clear to a reader. Secondly, its purpose is both to express and impress. Writers typically serve two masters: themselves and their desires to express an idea or feeling, and readers, also called the audience. Writers must then choose the best form for their writing—a shopping list, notes from a meeting, a scholarly article, a novel, or poetry are only a few of the choices. Each of these types of writing has a different level of complexity, depending on its purpose. Thirdly, it is both a process and a product. The writer imagines, organizes, drafts, edits, reads, and rereads. This process of writing is often cynical and sometimes disorderly. Ultimately what the audience sees, whether it is an instructor or a wider audience, is a product, an essay, a letter, a story, or a research report.

In conjunction with Nunan's statements, Hamp-Lyons and Kroll (1997, p.8) also stated that writing is 'an act that takes place within a context, that accomplishes a particular purpose, and that is appropriately shaped for its intended audience.' Moreover, Anker (2010, p.35) illustrated that audience is the person or people who will read what is written, while the purpose is the reason for writing. In the formal situation, which in this case is in the university, the audience is usually the instructor or lecturer, while the purpose of writing will be to describe, explain, or argue in the form of paragraphs and essays.

Additionally, Langan (2010, p.11) stated that writing is, in fact, a process. It is done not in one easy step but a series of steps and seldom in one sitting. Writing is a skill like driving or typing that could be mastered with hard work. Yule (2010, p.212) also stated that writing, unlike speech, is a system that is not simply acquired but has to be learned through sustained conscious effort.

From the theories above, it could be seen that writing is a long-term activity in which people transfer their ideas into writing. It is a complex, recursive, and creative process or set of behaviors that is similar in its broad outlines for first and second-language writers.

## **2.2 Aspect of Writing**

In general, to write well, there are several aspects that students should consider. Madsen (1983, p.101) mentioned a great number of aspects in writing such as mechanics (including spelling and punctuation), vocabulary, grammar, content, diction (or word selection), rhetorical matters of various kinds (organization, cohesion, unity); logic and style. In the meantime, Harris (1969, p.68) narrows down the number of aspects and proposes five aspects of writing:

1. Content: the substance of the writing, the ideas expressed.
2. Form: the organization of the content
3. Grammar: the employment of grammatical forms and syntactic patterns
4. Style: the choice of structures and lexical items to give a particular tone or flavor to the writing.

5. Mechanics: the use of the graphic conventions of the language.

After the explanation above, it could be seen that students could not neglect one of these aspects to writing well in general. Students need to master these five aspects to achieve good writing in general.

### **2.3 Process of Writing**

According to Harmer (2004), there are four elements in the writing process. It is planning, drafting, editing, and final version.

- a. Planning

It is the stage where the writers try and decide what they are going to say. It could be details notes or jotting down a few words.

- b. Drafting

It is the stage where the learners write the whole body of their piece of writing with the assumption that it would be amended later.

- c. Editing

Once the learners have produced their first piece of writing, they usually read through what they have written to see where it works and where it doesn't. They correct and polish their writing.

- d. Final version

After the editing, the learners would produce the final product and send their work to the audience.

### **2.4 Descriptive Writing**

According to Smalley and Ruetten (1986), descriptive writing is a type of written text with a logical arrangement of ideas and sentences that describes how

something looks—a place, a thing, or a person according to its physical description. It has a specific function to describe an object (living or non-living things) and it has the aim that is describing the object to the reader clearly (Pardiyono, 2007: 4, Cited in Sumarsih& Sanjaya, 2013). Moreover, Sumarsih and Sanjaya (2013) describe descriptive writing could vividly portray a person, place, or thing in such a way that the reader can visualize the topic and enter the writer's experience. It is a way to enrich other forms of writing or a dominant strategy for developing a picture of what something looks like.

According to Knap (2005), descriptive writing is also used extensively in many text types, such as information reports, literary descriptive, and so on. Descriptive writing is also a central feature of narrative texts providing the means for developing characterization, a sense of place, and key themes.

- Grammatical Features of Descriptive Writing

According to Knap (2005), descriptive writing could use present tense when describing things from a technical or factual point of view. For example:

An ant has three body parts.

However, he also mentions that, although present tense may be used in literary descriptions, it is past tense that tends to dominate; for example,

She felt unhappy.

He liked dancing.

## **2.5 Error Analysis**

### **2.5.1 Error Definition**

Errors are the flawed side of learner speech or writing. They are those parts of conversation or composition that deviate from some selected norm of mature



language performances. Making errors is an inevitable part of learning. People cannot learn a language without first systematically committing errors (Dulay, Burt, Krashen, 1982).

Intentionally plays a decisive role in this definition: an error arises only when there was no intention to commit one. One cannot spot so-called ‘deliberate errors’ because they do not exist. When any sort of deviance is intentionally incorporated into an instance of language, we do not say it is erroneous, but deviant, examples being poetic language or an advertising jingle (James, 1998)

James (1998) further explained that the corrigibility of a sentence also applies to this definition. An error is identified if the learner is unable or in any way disinclined to correct their output. On the other hand, if the learner is inclined and able to correct a fault in his or her output, the fault is not an error, but a mistake.

According to Keshavarz (2012), a distinction has been made between errors and mistakes. Errors are systematic, governed by rules, and appear because a learner’s knowledge of the rules of the target language is incomplete. They are indicative of the learner’s linguistic system at a given stage of language learning. They are likely to occur repeatedly and are not recognized by the learner. Therefore, only the teacher or researcher could locate them (Gass and Selinker, 1992).

Keshavarz (2012) further explained, that in contrast to errors, mistakes are random deviations, unrelated to any system, and instead represent the same types of performance mistakes that might occur in the speech or writing of native speakers, such as slips of the tongue or pen, false starts, lack of subject-verb agreement in a long-complicated sentence, and the like. He also elaborated that mistakes, which are due to non-linguistic factors such as fatigue, strong emotions, memory limitations, lack of concentration, etc., are typically random and can be corrected by the language user if brought to his attention.

Corder (1981) claimed that mistakes are of no significance to the process of language learning. A learner’s errors, on the other hand, provide evidence of the system of the language he is using (i.e. has learned) at a particular point in the

course. They are significant in three different ways. First to the teacher, in that they tell him if he undertakes a systematic analysis, how far towards the goal the learner has progressed and, consequently, what remains for him to learn. Second, they provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, and what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in his discovery of the language. Thirdly (and in a sense, this is their most important aspect) they are indispensable to the learner himself because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learner uses to learn. It is a way the learner has of testing his hypotheses about the nature of the language he is learning (Corder, 1981)

Davies and Pearse (2002: 103) stated that ‘errors are an integral part of language learning and not evidence of failure to learn.’ Those errors should be analyzed because they give a contribution to understanding the process of language learning. From their errors, learners can get feedback that can be used to find new attempts to achieve the goal of learning. It contains information on strategies that learners use to acquire language and can play an important role in studying a foreign language.

### **2.5.2 Definition of Error Analysis.**

Error Analysis is one of the approaches to studying the errors that saw language transfer as the central process involved in second and foreign language learning. A primary focus of error analysis is on the evidence that learner’s errors provide an understanding of the underlying process of second language acquisition. It studies the unacceptable form produced by second or foreign language learners (Keshavarz, 2012).

Error Analysis (EA) has two functions. The first function is theoretical, which has its place in methodology and describes the learners’ knowledge of the target language. It also helps the researcher determine the relationship between the knowledge and teaching the learner has been receiving. The practical area of EA is to overcome the mismatch between the learner's knowledge and the demands of the situation (Abushihab, 2014).

James (1998), as cited by Adam, Uthman, and Abdalla (2015, p.4), states that error analysis is the study of linguistic ignorance, which investigates what people do not know and how they attempt to cope with their ignorance. Corder (1967 in Khider, 2013, p.13) defines error analysis as a procedure used by both researcher and teachers which involves: collecting theory and practice in language studies samples of learners' language, identifying the errors in the sample, describing these errors, classifying them according to their nature and causes, and evaluating their seriousness.

Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) stated that the analysis of errors is the method to analyze errors made by EFL and ESL learners when they learn a language. Not only can it help reveal the strategies used by learners to learn a language, but it also assists teachers as well as other concerning people to know what difficulties learners encounter to improve their teaching.

From the definitions above, it can be clarified that error analysis is an activity to identify, classify, and describe the errors made by learners in speaking or in writing. It is carried out to obtain information on common difficulties faced by someone in speaking or writing an essay. In addition, by analyzing the learners' errors, the teacher can know how far the learners have learned or understood the lesson and what items remain for them. Therefore, it is clear that error analysis is needed in the process of language learning.

### **2.5.3 The Classification of Error**

According to Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982), there are four descriptive classifications of errors. They are (1) linguistic category; (2) surface strategy; (3) comparative analysis; and (4) communicative effect.

#### **1) Linguistic Category.**

The linguistic category taxonomies classify errors according to either or both the language component or the particular linguistic constituent. Language components include phonology (pronunciation), syntax and

morphology (grammar), semantics and lexicon (meaning and vocabulary), and discourse (style).

## 2) Surface Strategy Taxonomy

### a. Omission

Omission errors are characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance.

For example:

He from Sumatra.

The correct sentence should be: He *is* from Sumatra.

### b. Addition

Addition errors are the opposite of omissions. They are characterized by the presence of an item that must not appear in a well-formed utterance.

**Double marking:** two items mark the same feature, for example:

His teacher's is Frank.

The correct sentence should be: His teacher is frank.

**Simple Addition:** if the addition error is not a double marking, it is called simple addition.

She likes to travel to Korean

The correct sentence should be: She likes to travel to Korea.

c. Misformation

Misformation errors are characterized by the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure. While in omission errors the item is not supplied at all, in misformation errors, the learners supply something, although it is incorrect. For example:

- I like *him* because she is cute.

The correct sentence should be: I like *her* because she is cute.

- I like *she* story

The correct sentence should be: I like *her* story.

d. Misordering

Misordering errors are characterized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance. For example:

He lives in his grandfather's house big.

The correct sentence should be:

He lives in his grandfather's big house.

### 3) Comparative Taxonomy

The classification of errors in a comparative taxonomy is based on comparisons between the structure of L2 errors and certain other types of constructions. In comparative taxonomy, L2 errors have most frequently been compared to errors made by children learning the target language as their first language and to equivalent phrases or sentences in the learner's mother tongue. These comparisons have yielded the two major error categories in this taxonomy: **developmental errors** and **interlingual errors**.

a. Developmental errors

Developmental errors or Intralingual errors are errors similar to those made by children learning the target language as their first language. The errors have happened because of the mental mechanism underlying general language development that has come to play, not because of the rules and structures of the learner's native language.

b. Interlingual Errors

Interlingual errors are similar in structure to a semantically equivalent phrase or sentence in the learner's native language. They simply refer to L2 errors that reflect native language structure, regardless of the internal process or external condition that spawned them.

#### **4) Communicative Effect Taxonomy**

The communicative effect classification deals with errors from the perspective of their effect on the listener or reader. It focuses on distinguishing between errors that seem to cause miscommunication and those that don't.

### **2.6 Grammatical Error**

Nordquist (2006, p.38) defines grammatical error as a term used in perspective grammar to describe an instance of faulty, unconventional, or controversial usage. At the same time, Jabeen et al. (2015, p.55) see grammatical error as a misuse of the mechanics of a language, often intentionally but sometimes by errors or mistakes.

However, Chada (as cited in Muthardo, 2017) states that grammatical error is a grammatical deviation from the norms of the target language. He added that in language acquisition, an error is a systematic failure to conform to a rule of the



language being learned. Therefore, grammatical errors are kind of important to be considered by the learners.

English learners have to be able to understand the grammatical rules of English and how to apply them well, especially in writing. The grammatical errors found in students' text writing sometimes will influence the meaning of the text. Therefore, learning grammatical errors enables the students to produce good writing.

In the process of knowing the students' grammatical errors, the students must consider an important thing in the editing of their works in the part of grammatical error. Harris and Rowan (1989, p.21) proposed some steps in editing grammatical errors. They said that editing for grammatical error is not a one-step process but a complete series of steps that involve detecting a problem (finding a mistake), diagnosing the error (figuring out what is wrong), and rewriting (finding a mistake) diagnosing the error (figuring out what is wrong), and rewriting (composing a more acceptable version). Skilled writers do not always consciously need to move through all those steps, most students do.

In short, a grammatical error is something that is not suitable for the grammatical rules that make a sentence become not good. However, knowing grammatical errors gives a profit for students, just like other errors that students make in the process to comprehend the target language. The students can measure their knowledge of grammar skills and as an evaluation of their works. Undeniable, it will make them aware of their error in the future.

In classifying the grammatical errors in students' descriptive writing, surface strategy taxonomy by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) will be applied in this research.

## **2.7 The Disadvantages and Advantages of Error analysis**

### **Disadvantages**

According to Anson (2018), there are two major problems in EA, with the problem of avoidance being one of them. Some learners, especially those who are conservative, are afraid of using new and complicated structures in their essays because they do not want to misuse such structures. These learners tend to use only easy or familiar structures to avoid using complicated ones wrongly. As a result, the analysis obtained by looking into the errors made by these learners cannot tell the full picture of the errors (Schacter, 1974). Without having learners try new and complicated structures, EA cannot help very well improve learners' language proficiency.

Another problem has to do with the identification of errors. It is still a difficult task to distinguish errors from mistakes, especially when the database is not large enough. It is common for learners to have both correct and incorrect forms of the same item in one single task; and sometimes what counts as grammatical correct but stylistically unidiomatic expression and as simply erroneous expression is ambiguous (Lennon, 2008). Besides, even if the identification of errors is successful, the same error can be explained in several ways. Schachter & Celce-Murcia (1977) provided an example of errors made by Japanese learners of English: "Americans are easy to get guns.". They argued that it is possibly a misuse of extraposition, as in "Americans are easy to please.", but it is also possible to be related to misclassification of adjectives, e.g., whether or not the adjective can be followed by infinitival complements. The problem of possible multiple interpretations reduces the usefulness of EA.

### **Advantages**

Having said EA has its limitations, literature and empirical evidence suggest that it is useful for language learners and their instructors. EA allows learners to obtain information related to the common errors made by them and their counterparts and the causes behind them so that they can improve their language proficiency.

Learners should be more aware of their learning of certain features in the target language that may cause difficulties to them and be able to make improvements accordingly upon knowing their errors or some commonly made errors and the causes behind them (Hasyim, 2004; Khansir, 2012; Anson, 2018). Besides, EA helps learners know their progress in their FL learning and their difficulties in different learning phases (Johansson, 1975).

EA is also useful for language instructors and is therefore also indirectly useful for FL learners. One of such uses is to design remedial teaching for students after analyzing their actual errors (Khansir, 2012; Chan, 2018). Zafar (2016) used EA as a tool to improve the English business skills of her Saudi Arabian university students. She requires her students to write an English composition at the beginning of the semester and then carried out an EA. She then designed remedial teaching plans for students according to the problems she identified: more grammar exercises and sentence structure exercises to improve their intralingual errors; more translation to tackle problems related to false friends and transfer L1 sentence structures etc. She observed a significant decrease in errors made by her students at the end of the semester.

Hasyim (2004) even believed that EA could help teachers evaluate how successful their teaching is and which parts of the teaching materials need to be amended to suit the needs of their students. Richards (1984) found that EA for intralingual errors, EA allows us to re-examine the language-learning assumptions underlying the teaching materials. He provided an example related to the present continuous tense that has to do with how it is taught in English textbooks specially designed for FL learners: he found that it is commonly taught in a narrative sense. Examples can be “Ansin is coming out from his home. He is closing his door. He is going to take the elevator.” A clear problem here is that in a sequence of actions that happen consecutively, the simple present tense instead of the present continuous tense should be used, like how a commentator describes an ongoing football match. This design feature misleads students to believe that the present continuous tense is used for a narrative description. Using EA, Richards identified

how the design of textbooks possibly leads to the misuse of English language features.

## 2.8 Previous Related Studies

The first related study to this research is from a thesis by Alfiyani (2013) with the title *An Analysis of Grammatical Errors in Writing Among the Second Semester Students of English Department of Yogyakarta State University in The Academic Year of 2011/2012*. In her thesis, Alfiyanistated that omission error was found 281 times, misformation errors were committed 119 times, addition error occurred 189 times, and misordering error 6 times in the analysis. The similarity between this study and the writer's study is surface strategy taxonomy becomes the main key in the data analysis. There are two differences between Alfiyani's research and the writer's research. The first one is the object of the research. Alfiyani's objects are university students who have more advanced knowledge of the English grammatical structure, while this research object is the high school students who have lesser knowledge of the English language structure. The second one is Alfiyani's study analyzed the errors in students' final writing examination, while the writer's study analyzed descriptive writing.

The second related study to this research is from a thesis by Solihah (2017) with the title *Grammatical Errors Analysis in The Fourth Semester Students' Essay Writing at Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo*. In Solihah's research, she found that the highest frequency of errors happened in misformation error, which consisted of 45 errors or 42,06% after that is omission error with 44 errors or 41,12%, then addition error with 11 errors or 10,28%, and the last is misordering errors with 7 errors or 6,54%. The similarity between Solihah's study and the writer's study is using Dulay, Burt, and Khrasen's theory as the main key to the data analysis. The differences are the objects of the study and the data that were analyzed. The object of Solihah's study is fourth-semester students of the English

Education Study Program, while this research's object is the second-grade senior high school students. The data that Sholilah's study used were students' essay writing, while this study used descriptive writing.

## **2.9 Theoretical Framework**

From the frame theory and explanation above, the researchers assume that using Error Analysis could have a positive effect on students' descriptive writing, especially grammatical structure. The outcome of the error-based analysis of students' writing, therefore, serves as an effective means of improving students' language proficiency as it gives them an insight into some errors that they usually make in their writing. Moreover, by investigating students' errors, educators can get a real understanding of the problematic areas for learners, and they can evaluate the effectiveness of their instruction methods and materials as well (Pouladian, Bagheri, Sadighi, 2017).

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODS**

This chapter discusses the research design, the subject of the research, data collection, research procedures, and trustworthiness.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This research used a descriptive qualitative approach which produced descriptive data. Based on Bogdan and Biklen (1982), a descriptive qualitative approach is a research bringing about the descriptive data in the form of a written or oral form of the subjects of the research being investigated. According to Polkinghorne (2005), descriptive qualitative research is an inquiry aimed at describing and clarifying human experience as it appears in people's life and writers using qualitative methods gather data that serve as evidence for their distilled description. It means that descriptive qualitative is a research design where the writer presents the data using a description. Therefore, this descriptive qualitative research is taken in the form of written data, which is descriptive writing of the second-grade senior high school. The data are collected, analyzed, and interpreted in the form of verbal description words.

#### **3.2 The Subject of the Research**

The research is conducted at Khadijah Islamic Boarding School by focusing on the descriptive writing of second grade of senior high school as the research respondents. The researcher took 22 students' descriptive writings to represent the whole students. The researcher chose the second-grade senior high school students since descriptive writing is included in their syllabus. The grammatical errors they committed will assist them in greater learning and understanding of the learning English language.



### **3.3 Data Collection**

The data needed in this research are grammatical errors made by the second-grade senior high school students in their piece of descriptive writing. The researcher collected the students' writing papers to be documented and read carefully.

### **3.4 Research Procedures**

In analyzing the data, the procedures of error analysis were conducted (Ellis, 1997 as cited in Murtadho, 2017). The procedures are as follows:

#### **3.4.1 Identification of Errors**

After collecting the data, the data have identified the sentences that contain errors by the following steps:

- 1) Read every student's descriptive writing carefully.
- 2) Give a number for every sentence
- 3) Mark each grammatical error based on the classification of the subcategory of surface strategy taxonomy by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen's.
- 4) Select the sentences which contain grammatical errors in the students' descriptive writing and underline them.

#### **3.4.2 Description of Errors**

After all the errors have been identified, they are described into types based on surface strategy taxonomy by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen's by following steps.

1. Rewrite down the errors in the table and comprehend them.
2. Determine the error based on category by surface strategy taxonomy.

#### **3.4.3 Counting the errors**

After the data are identified, and the type of errors are described, the last procedure was counting. The errors are counted by the following steps:

- 1) Count the total of each type of grammatical error from the identification table.
- 2) Count the total number of all types of grammatical errors according to surface strategy taxonomy.
- 3) Make a percentage of each type of grammatical error to know the most frequent type of grammatical error. The researcher will use the methods by Corder in Ellis and Barhuizen's theory (2008, as cited in Solihah, 2017). The formula is as follows:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

P= percentage

F= frequency of error occurred

N= Total numbers of error

By using the formula above, the researcher could find out the frequency percentage of each grammatical error type more clearly.

The classification and counting of those errors figure out in the table below:

**Table 3.1**  
**Surface Strategy Taxonomy**

| No | Types of Errors | Frequency |   |
|----|-----------------|-----------|---|
|    |                 | N         | % |
| 1  | Omission        |           |   |
| 2  | Addition        |           |   |
| 3  | Misformation    |           |   |
| 4  | Misordering     |           |   |
|    | Total           |           |   |

### 3.5 Trustworthiness

This research has been consulted with the first and second advisors to confirm the data. The data is also analyzed based on Dulay, Burt, and Krashen's surface strategy taxonomy to support the findings. However, as those are not enough to prove the validity of the research, the researcher used self-repetition and the triangulation technique to support the validity of the data. As pointed out in Tannen (2007), 'repetition is a way that meaning is created by the recurrence and recontextualization of words and phrases in discourse.' It is a pervasive type of spontaneous pre-patterning in human social interaction. Meanwhile, triangulation is a technique to check the trustworthiness of data that used something else to be compared to the data (Moloeng, 1989). The type of triangulation that the researcher used is investigator triangulation. It is a technique where the data is tested by another investigator. In this case, the researcher asked her colleague, named Rachma Vivien Belinda, who has an advanced understanding of English language structure to analyze students' descriptive writing pieces to make sure the research point of view was valid.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

This chapter consists of the conclusion of this research and suggestions. The conclusion was settled based on the framed research question, while suggestions were given to provide information to the next researchers.

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

Based on the explanation of the previous research, this research was conducted to analyse and classify the types of students' grammatical errors in their descriptive writing. The errors were classified based on surface strategy taxonomy by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982). The error classifications are omission, addition, misformation, and misordering errors. There are a total of 670 errors made by 22 students in their descriptive writing with the most frequent errors, which 286 (42,69%) errors, classified as misformation. The second most frequent errors are part of omission errors, 260 (38,81%) errors are classified as omission errors. A total 90 (13,43%) are then classified as addition. Then, the rest of the errors are part of misordering errors, which is a total of 34 (12,59%) errors. These errors are happened due to many developmental factors, and the interference of the mother language.

## 5.2 Suggestion

Some suggestions are presented in hope that they could provide a new idea to the teachers and learners for a better learning process, and further research who is interested in this topic.

### 1. English Language Teachers

Students' errors are considerably one of the important devices to know more about the students' progress in language learning. The errors should be considered and analyzed as they provide several shreds of evidence to make a better learning process. From the errors, the teachers could know the students' weaknesses and could make appropriate learning methods in response to those weaknesses so that the students could improve their knowledge. For example, the teacher could focus on one subject first, explain it clearly, and have the students practice it often. Then, when the subject has changed, the teacher should also include the previous subject in learning the current subject. Another suggestion from the researcher, teachers could also use translation drills as a learning method to give the comparison between English language structures to the mother language structures.

### 2. The Students

Errors are not shameful things. It is common for language learners to make errors in their utterances. Knowing the errors could make a language learner know more about his or her needs. From that, to have a good improvement, it would be better if a language learner could learn and practice more by, not only learning with teachers but also independently. To learn independently, the students could find authentic English learning books to read so they have a guide in learning English, and practice books

so they could practice writing by themselves. There are many good books on the internet that could be the guide to improve English skills. This might be a quite boring activity, but the researcher finds it very effective as the researcher uses this technique herself to improve her reading and writing skills.

### 3. Further Research

It is expected that the result of this study could give informative input to future researchers who want to conduct similar research. It is believed that many phenomena could be revealed surrounding this topic. For example, in this research, the researcher did not put the coherence and cohesion of the written text into consideration. The next researcher could perhaps consider those two points in their error analysis research. The researcher expects that this result of the study could inspire other researchers to conduct research related to grammatical error analysis to enrich the existing study.

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