ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS ERRORS IN WRITING NARRATIVE TEXT AT GRADE XI OF SMA NEGERI 1 SIMPANG EMPAT

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study is to analyze the different kinds of error that SMA Negeri 1 Simpang Empat students in Grade XI make when writing narrative texts. The research employs a qualitative case study design, employing the Surface Strategy Taxonomy by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) to categorize errors into four classifications: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. A writing test with 35 pupils was used to gather data, who were asked to compose a narrative text based on the structure taught in class. The results revealed a total of 207 errors, with misformation being the most dominant type (55.55%), followed by addition (19.80%), omission (14.49%), and misordering (10.14%). These findings suggest that students face considerable challenges in applying correct grammar, particularly in verb usage and sentence construction. The study recommends that teachers provide more structured grammar instruction and interactive writing practice to help students reduce these common errors and improve their narrative writing skills.

Keywords: writing, error analysis, narrative text, surface strategy taxonomy

INTRODUCTION

One of the linguistic skills that learners of English need to master is writing (Mertosono & Erniwati, 2023). According to Khakim in (Dhananjaya et al., 2024), writing is a very important skill in learning English, although it is often considered difficult by many students. It is important because it enables students to write down their thoughts, emotions, and experiences. According to Siahaan and Shinoda, a text is both a written and spoken word that has significance in a certain context (Rika Widianita, 2023). Among the various types of texts taught in senior high schools, narrative text is particularly important because it helps students develop their ability to tell stories, organize events chronologically, and use language creatively (Chaironi, 2025).

However, writing a good narrative text in English is not an easy task for students. As a story, a narrative text clearly recounts or describes an event from the past (Nurhidayah, 2017). Many students face difficulties in organizing their ideas, applying appropriate grammar rules, choosing the right vocabulary, and maintaining coherence throughout the text. Though conversant with the orientation, complication, and resolution components of narrative texts (Rika Widianita, 2023) students often commit various types of errors that affect the clarity and quality of their writing.

Based on preliminary observations at SMA Negeri 1 Simpang Empat, It was discovered that many students in Grade XI still have trouble accurately producing narrative texts. The students'

narrative texts frequently contain various errors in grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure which fall within the four categories of errors listed in Dulay, Burt, and Krashen's (1982) Surface Strategy Taxonomy, error analysis, according to Dulay in (Azmi, 2021), is a technique for examining the weak points of pupils' mistakes, both in writing and speaking. Furthermore, four categories of errors are distinguished: communicative effect, comparative analysis, linguistic category, and surface strategy (omission, addition, alteration, and reordering).

Based on these findings, this research aims to answer two main questions: (1) What types of errors are made by students in writing narrative texts? and (2) What is the most frequent type of error? The study's objectives are to identify the types of errors and determine the most dominant error type based on the Surface Strategy Taxonomy.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative case study design. Qualitative research is a research method that aims to understand natural phenomena, by emphasizing description, interpretation, and in-depth understanding of the subjective meanings involved (Wulandari et al., 2023). In order to determine the most prevalent kinds of errors made by students when writing narrative texts, the case study method was selected. The study was conducted in May 2025 at SMA Negeri 1 Simpang Empat, located on Jalan Benteng, Sipaku Village, Kec. Simpang Empat, Asahan Regency, North Sumatra. The participants consisted of 35 students from Grade XI MIPA-1 in the 2024/2025 academic year.

According to (Arikunto, 2005), research instruments are tools used by researchers when collecting data with the aim of making research more systematic and easier. The researcher employed a written essay test to get the necessary data. As part of the test, the students were required to compose a narrative piece.

In this study, the researcher employed various data collection methods to obtain information relevant to the research objectives. The researcher delivered learning materials to the students about narrative texts. The aim of delivering this material was to ensure that the students had a solid understanding before beginning the writing process. Students were then instructed to compose a narrative text using the previously described general form. They were given the freedom to choose a story theme that interested them, such as legends, fables, or fairy tales. After the students completed the task, their written texts were collected directly by the researcher.

The collected narrative texts were then analyzed to identify writing errors made by the students. The analysis was carried out based on the theory proposed by Dulay and Krashen (1982), known as the Surface Strategy Taxonomy, which classifies types of errors based on the surface strategies used by students in sentence construction.

The Surface Strategy Taxonomy by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982), which divides errors into four categories—omission, addition, misformation, and misordering—was used by the researcher to examine the data. The steps included : First, the students' writing test results were analyzed, focusing specifically on the errors they made. Second, The study used the theory of Dulay et al. to categorize the different kinds of errors. Third, corrections were provided by rewriting the incorrect sentences. Finally, the results of the analysis were explained using a qualitative

method and interpreted with the help of a formula to address the research questions. The study employed the following formula to determine the percentage:

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

Notes:
P = The error percentage.
F = The sum of all errors
N = The total amount of sentences that students have.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

For the result this study analyzed the narrative writing of 35 students from Grade XI MIPA-1 of SMA Negeri 1 Simpang Empat using Dulay, Burt, and Krashen's (1982) Surface Strategy Taxonomy divides errors into four categories: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. The aim was to identify the types and frequencies of errors and determine the most dominant type found in the students' work.

According to Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) the error types are:

1. Omission

The absence of particular elements that ought to be in a sentence is what defines this kind of error. (Putri, 2023). For example a students wrote :

a. Wrote	: Before. ther father passed away, her stepmother and step sister.
Explanation	: Sentences is incomplete and missing key elements.
It should be	: Before their father passed away, her stepmother and stepsister were kind to her.
b. Wrote	: At once the cat ran to the nearest tree and climbed into its branches.
Explanation	: Missing comma after introductory phrase At once.
It should be	: At once, the cat ran to the nearest tree and climbed into its branches.

2. Addition

Unnecessary elements in a sentence are indicative of this kind of inaccuracy. As an illustration, a student wrote:

a. Wrote	: girl was whose biological mother...
Explanation	: The word "was" is unnecessary, as "whose" directly describes the previous noun.
It should be	: ...girl whose biological mother had passed away long ago.
b. Wrote :	Rapunzell Was a be very beautiful child
Explanation	: The addition of "be" is not necessary
It should be	: Rapunzell was a very beautiful child

3. Misformation

The employment of wrong structures is a defining characteristic of this kind of error. For instance:

a. Wrote :	After several year of Rapunzell being missing
Explanation	: "year" should be plural → "years"
It should be	: After several years of Rapunzell being missing
b. Wrote :	such as clenning the house, coking, washing clothes
Explanation	: "clenning" → "cleaning", "coking" → "cooking"
It should be	: such as cleaning the house, cooking, washing clothes

4. Misordering

This type of error is marked by inappropriate morpheme or word order. An example of this type is:

    a. Wrote :   Then after he asked for help, the farmer came.

    Explanation   :   "Then after" is redundant → just one

    It should be   :   After he asked for help, the farmer came.

    b. Wrote :   Inside it was a baby girl

    Explanation   :   Word order is not natural in English. Passive sentences lack the correct order.

    It should be   :   Inside, there was a baby girl

Table 1 The Categorization of Mistakes Made by Every Student

No	Students' Initial Name	Types of Errors				Total of Error
		OM	AD	MF	MO	
1.	AP	2	-	3	1	6
2.	MIAL	1	1	5	-	7
3.	RS	1	1	2	-	4
4.	AM	-	-	10	1	11
5.	RA	1	2	-	-	3
6.	AZ	-	-	3	1	4
7.	PDABP	-	-	4	-	4
8.	MFSS	1	-	2	-	3
9.	AKBH	-	1	2	-	3
10.	WS	2	-	1	-	3
11.	RAS	-	1	1	-	2
12.	SSA	1	2	1	-	4
13.	NSH	1	1	4	1	7
14.	DA	1	-	2	-	3
15.	MDY	1	-	3	2	6
16.	TAAS	1	1	2	1	5
17.	AP	-	-	6	1	7
18.	HRA	-	2	2	1	5
19.	HH	-	-	1	1	2
20.	RTA	3	-	-	-	3
21.	ECP	-	1	3	-	4
22.	KABL	-	-	2	-	2
23.	NR	3	-	3	1	7
24.	MU	2	-	3	1	6
25.	NTP	1	1	2	-	4
26.	MNA	-	3	7	1	11
27.	FAGS	1	3	7	4	15
28.	DFNL	1	4	3	1	9
29.	RM	2	1	4	-	7
30.	SAM	-	3	6	-	9
31.	DNN	1	2	2	-	5
32.	ADR	1	4	10	2	17
33.	RAP	1	2	-	-	3
34.	ME	-	4	5	-	9
35.	KLA	1	1	4	1	7
Fx Errors		30	41	115	21	207

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Following the collection of data on students' narrative text writing, the researcher used Surface Strategy Taxonomy to examine each student's sentences using Dulay theory. According to the analysis, there are 207 mistakes in total. They were:

a. Total of errors of Omission are 30 errors
b. Total of errors of Addition are 41 errors
c. Total of errors of Misformation are 115 errors
d. Total of errors of Misordering are 21 errors

To be clear this result can see from the table below :

Table 2 The Percentage of Students' Error

No	Typpe of Error	The items of Error	Percentage (%)
1	Omission	30	14,49 %
2	Addition	41	19,80 %
3	Misformation	115	55,55 %
4	Misordering	21	10,14 %
Total		207	100 %

Based on the study's findings, the researcher concluded that, according to the Surface Strategy Taxonomy, students most frequently made misformation errors when writing narrative texts, accounting for 115 errors (55.55%), while the least frequent was misordering with 21 errors (10.14%). The other types of errors were omission with 30 errors (14.49%) and addition with 41 errors (19.80%).

In summary, the results of this study indicate that the proficiency of SMA Negeri 1 Simpang Empat class XI MIPA-1 students in writing English narrative texts still faces several challenges, particularly in the aspect of grammar. Therefore, It is advised that English teachers give students more thorough and organized training on the language components of narrative texts. Teachers can also develop more contextual and interactive teaching methods, such as guided writing exercises, the use of visual media or short stories, and providing direct feedback on students' errors. With the right approach, it is hoped that students will better understand the structure and characteristics of narrative texts and reduce errors in their future writing.

CONCLUSION

Finding out what kinds of mistakes Grade XI students at SMA Negeri 1 Simpang Empat make when writing narrative texts and identifying the most common sort of error were the goals of this study. Based on the data analysis results, the researcher discovered that students committed a number of mistakes that fall under Dulay's (1982) Surface Strategy Taxonomy, which includes addition, omission, misformation, and misordering.

The researcher reached the conclusion that all four categories of faults were present in the narrative texts after analyzing the students' writing. Omission errors included missing auxiliary verbs, articles, or subjects. Addition errors consisted of unnecessary or redundant elements. Misformation errors involved the incorrect use of grammatical forms such as verb tense or word choice. Misordering errors were found in the incorrect sequence of words or phrases in sentences.

Misformation errors were the most common of all four types, followed by addition, omission, and misordering. This suggests that pupils continue to struggle with learning English grammar, especially in using correct verb forms and sentence structures. The findings also suggest that students lack practice in narrative writing and struggle to apply grammatical rules accurately.

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