# ERROR ANALYSIS ON STUDENTS' WRITING IN USING SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE IN DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

Maulidatul Mukarromah
*Universitas Nurul Jadid*
maulidatulmukarroamah@gmail.com


Bradhiansyah Tri Suryanto
*Universitas Nurul Jadid*
bradhiansyahs@gmail.com

**Abstract**

The objectives of this study are to know the types of errors and the dominant error made by the students of the ten grade of SMA Istiqlal. The researcher used the descriptive qualitative method as the research methodology. The data was collected from the written test done by the researcher. Based on the analysis that has done by the researcher, the result of the study found that all of the students produce error by total error 92 errors which classified into omission 46 error (50%), 5 error in addition (5,43%), 33 errors in miss-formation (35,86%) and 8 error in miss-ordering (8,69%). Thus, the dominant error was happened in the omission error by total error 46 errors (50%). The source of the error that made by the students are from interlingal and intra-lingual. However most of the errors are from the inralingual source which total 84 errors and 8 errors from inter-lingual.

**Keywords:** Error Analysis, Simple Present Tense, Descriptive Text

## INTRODUCTION

Descriptive text is a kind of a genre text that has a function to analyse a thing, a place and a person. A material about writing a descriptive text is included to the material of the senior high school specifically for the X grade. To make a descriptive text, students should know the rules of writing the descriptive text where the rules are; using the simple present tense and using the generic structure. Here the generic structures of the descriptive text are identification and description. Besides, when students try to make the descriptive text, students should have understanding about the language structure where it well known as a grammar.

Grammar is kind of important part that student must understand in learning the English language. Grammar is the support system of communication and learned to communicate better (Suryanto, 2018). By having understanding of grammar students are able to arrange words properly and correctly in speaking even in writing skills. Learning grammar has become a required material that must be taught in Indonesia, but unfortunately there are still many students in Indonesia who do not understand in using the grammar. They are still lack I n applying the grammar in their skills of learning the English language. Grammar is very important to be learned for everyone who wants to master the English language because by learning the grammar it may be help students to be able to arrange words correctly (Willis, 2021). Grammar is the study of all the contrast meaning that it is possible to make within sentences By using grammar, people can communicate clearly with the understanding of the English structure coherently. There are some language structures that students need to learn one of them is learning bout tenses and specifically learning about the simple present tense as the rule tense of the descriptive text.

Simple present tense is a kind of a tense which is used to talk about something general, something that always happen repeatedly or a general truth (Leo, 2021). The simple present tense is a kind of a tense that the most often being used in a daily life Simple present tense also becoming a crucial role in making a descriptive text because it is used as a rule tense of a descriptive text. Whereas, in making the descriptive text, students in Indonesia are still often occurring errors. That's why error analysis is include to the kind of analysis that interested to be analysed and observed what actually errors that made by the students in learning a foreign language and what the cause that they made the error.

According to Corder, error analysis is an experimental technique to validate transfer theory which aims to tell us something about the psycholinguistic process of language learning this means error analysis is a type of analysis that analyses the students' errors in learning a foreign language which can be observed. and classified to reveal something of the system that operates within the student (Corder, 1981). In this study the researcher is using the theory of Corder because Corder has given all the concept and the theory about what error analysis is and how to do the error analysis. Hence, this study will focus on analysing student's error in the senior high school.

SMA Istiqlal is a senior high schools, where the material about descriptive text has been touch and basically has become one of the materials in SMA Istiqlal based on the curriculum of SMA Istiqlal and the syllabus of the X grade of SMA Istiqlal. Unfortunately, when the students try to make descriptive text, they are still often making some errors in using the simple present tense. Base on the preliminary observation, most of the X grade students are still find problems in using the simple present tense it is like when the students are still confusing to differ the use of s/es in the verb of the present tense, some of them are still confuse to differ within the verbal and the nominal sentence. The students comprehending of the grammatical usage especially in the use of present tense are still low. By looking at those fact, the researcher wants to know what kinds of errors that made by the X grade students of SMA Istiqlal and the cause why they made the errors.

**Descriptive Text**
*Definition of Descriptive Text*
Descriptive text is a kind of genre text to describe a subject such as describing a person, a place and a thing (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). It means describing a subject as much as possible or as detail as possible. Descriptive writing reproduces the way matters look, smell, test, feel or sound it also affect moods such loneliness, happiness and fear. In addition, descriptive text is used to create a visual image of people, places, even of units of times-days, or seasons (Irawati, 2015). Descriptive text might be used as describing more than outward appearance of people. It is also may be tell about their traits character or personality. Thus, the reader can see what the writer sees, what the writer feels, what the writer hears, and even smells.

It can be concluded that descriptive writing is a kid of a genre text which aim to describe a person, a place and a thing as detail as possible. It is also must be concrete, so the reader knows and understand what the writer is telling about. At last, descriptive text also has a purpose to involve the reader of what actually the writer describes so the reader can really visualize the thing which is being described.

*The Purpose of Descriptive Text*
Descriptive text has aim to create a vivid influence of a person, place, object or event. The writer uses description to persuade others to suppose or act in unique ways. As the examples in the following chart show, description allows us to entertain categorical feelings, relate

experience, inform and persuade. The purposes of descriptive text are to convince the reader, express feelings, inform the reader, relate experiences, and persuade the reader (Harris et al., 2019).

### Generic Structure

In making the descriptive text, the writer should know the generic structure of descriptive text. Descriptive text has its own generic structure. The generic structure of descriptive text is including identification and discussion (Sipayung et al., 2021).

In the identification, usually it is in the first paragraph, it purposes to identify on object that the writer going to describe. Identification serves to introduce the reader about the object that will be described before the writer tells more in a detail description.

In a description, it is usually in the second paragraph and so on. It contains more detail features of something the writer going to describe such as qualities, physical appearance and other characteristic from the object that going to describe.

### Language Features of Descriptive Text

The language features of descriptive text are focus on a specific object, use an attribution and identifying process, frequent of use of classifies in nominal groups, and using the simple present tense (Ushchapovska, 2020).

### Simple Present Tense
### Definition of Present Tense

Simple present tense is a grammatical tense which has a function to locate a situation or action that happened in the present time that simple present tense explains an action that happened in the present time in a simple form or an action that is done regularly, or habitual activity. Simple present tense is talking about something in general (Sargeant, 2007). The simple present tense is a kind of tense which is denoting an action or event in the present time which is in general time (De Haan, 2011). The simple present tense is a grammatical tense which has a function to show a situation or event in the present time.

The simple present tense express events or situations that are exist always, habitually and usually (Alsagoff, 2009). From those definitions it can be concluded that simple present tense is a kind of tense to locate a time which is happened in the present time which means in the general time. Simple present tense also exist habitually, always ad usually.

### Formulation of Simple Present Tense
Verb Tense (verbal)
(+) S+ V1+ (s/es) + O
(-) S + do/does + not + O
(?+) do/does + S + V1 + O
(?-) do/does + not + V1 + O
Nominal tense
(+) S + to be (am, is, are) adj/adv/Noun
(-) S + to be (am, is, are) + not + adj/adv/N
(?+) to be ( am, is, are) + ad/adv/N
(?-) to be (am, is, are) + not + adj/adv/N
Caption read
S        =Subject
V1       =First form verb
(s/es)   =adding suffix to he verb appropriate to the subject

To be   =Linking verb
Adj      =adjective
Adv     =adverb
N         =Noun

In making the simple present tense, we should know the regulation of present tense (Cowper, 1998) as follows:

1. Both the nominal and the verbal sentence there are change in the use of the simple present tense. It is depended on the use of the verb and the linking verb. In the verb tense, if the subject using I, you, they and we, we don't need to add the s/es after the verb.
2. If the subject is using (she, he, it) we should add s/es after the verb but it does not need to add s/es in the negative and interrogative form.
3. Meanwhile there is a difference between adding s/es after the verb. Here, if the verb ending with –s, -sh, -ch, -x, -z, -o added suffix -es.
4. Besides, the verb which is ending with –y that preceded by consonant it should be added by –es and changing the last character from –y into –i.
5. For the verb which is ending with –y and preceded by vowel, it should be added by –es without modifying the last character from y into i.
6. Except those criterions, the verb is adding by –s exception for have and has. They do not need to be added by s/es. If the subject I, you, they and we it uses "have" but if the subject she, he, it uses verb "has".
7. For the nominal sentence, if the subject is "I" we should use am for the linking verb.
8. If the subject of the sentence, is she, he, it, single third person, we should use "Is" for the linking verb.
9. If the subject is (you, they, we) we should use "are" as the linking verb.

**Error Analysis**
*Definition of Error Analysis*
Some linguists have given the argumentation about what error analysis is such Corder in his opinion stated that error analysis is an experimental technique for validating the theory of transfer which aims at telling us something about the psycholinguistic process of language learning (Corder, 1981). Furthermore, error analysis is a kind of analysis which is used by both teacher and researcher that involves collecting samples of learner language, identifying the errors in the sample, describing these errors in the sample, classifying them according to their hypothesized causes and evaluating their seriousness (Ellis, 1989). Means error analysis is a kind of analysis for analysing the error made by the learners in learning the target language.

In addition, according to Carl James, error analysis is a kind of process of determining the incidence, mature, causes and consequences of unsuccessful language (James, 2013). It means, Error was created because of there were a problem in learning the target language. Both teacher and researcher are able to find the errors made by the learners because the learners have learned unsuccessful language.

From those definitions it can be concluded that error analysis is a kind of study relate to the learner's errors of learning the target language in following the procedure of the error analysis including determining, analysing, and classifying the errors as the devices to know the system operating within the learners. Furthermore, error analysis may provide information on student's error which is helping teachers and researchers in correcting the errors.

*Types of Error*

The classification of error based on the surface strategy taxonomy highlight the way surface structure is altered: students may omit necessary items called (omission), adding necessary one known as (addition) they may miss-formation (selection) or miss-order them (miss-ordering) (Londoño Vásquez, 2008) . It is in line with the statement of Corder in classifying the type of errors. According to Corder, there are for types of errors those are: Omission, addition, selection (miss-formation) and miss-ordering (Corder, 1981).

1. Omission

    Error of omission is type of error which is characterized by the absence on one item that must be appeared in a well-formed utterance.

2. Addition

    Error of addition is a type of error which is characterized by the presence of one item that must not appear in a well-formed utterance.

3. Miss-formation (selection)

    Error of miss-formation is the type of error which is characterized by the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or may be the structure of the language.

4. Miss-ordering

    Error of miss-ordering is a wrong placement of a group of morphemes in an utterance.

### *Source of Error*

In error analysis, the important part is to know the source of error which is made by the learner. Corder has given the argumentation about the source of error those are inter-lingual transfer and intra-lingual transfer (Corder, 1981). Meanwhile, Rod Ellis also classifies the source of error into inter-lingual and intra-lingual (Ellis, 1989).

    Inter-lingual transfer means, the interference of the learner's mother tongue. The clearest proof of mother tongue interference is when the L1 nonstandard point gets transferred to L2. Meanwhile, in intra-lingual transfer, here means the transfer which is occur within the target language itself. Intra-lingual errors are divided into 4 items those are:

1. Over-generalization

    In over-generalization, it is happened when learners use certain structure that is over-generalized in the target language. It is happened because the learner's basic experience of a certain language.

2. Ignorance of rule restriction

    In this case, learners fail to observe the restriction of existing structures. This is kind of cause of error that is the application of rules to context where they do not apply.

3. Incomplete application of rules

    Incomplete application of rules means that the error is due to the appearance of the structure whose deviation represent the degree establish the rules necessary to produce acceptable statements. Hence, the learners fail to produce the correct sentence as required standard rules.

4. False concept hypothesized

    In this case, means basically error is the result from faulty comprehension of distinction in the target language.

### *The Procedure of Error Analysis*

In doing the error analysis, it is not just an easy thing to analyse and describes the error made by the learner. Thus, the analyst should know the procedure for doing the error analysis. According to Corder, the procedures of error analysis are below (Corder, 1981):

1. Collect the sample of the learner

The first step for doing analysis is collecting the learner sample by determining the scope of data that needed.

2. Identify error

In this step, the researcher compares the result of the sample collected from the learner then identifies the data that do not comply with the correct language rules.

3. Describe the error

In this step the researcher classify the error made by the learner

4. Explain the error

The researcher explain the cause of error made by the learner

5. Evaluate error

For the last step is evaluating the error made by the learner and correct it.

## METHOD

This research produces descriptive data in form of written words from the subject and its behaviour can be observed. The type of qualitative research that used in this study is focusing on description. The researcher saw the phenomenon of the research of the moment at the certain time. In this case, the researcher identified and describes the error made by 15 students of class X SMA Istiqlal and describes the dominant error that made by the students.

### Respondents

The subjects of this study were 15 students of class X SMA Istiqlal.

### Instruments

*Test*

The test was written test. The test prom was given to the students by giving direction to make descriptive text by giving topic to the students about "My Friend" no more than 200 words by giving the limited time to the students where the researcher gives 45 minutes for the students to finish the test. The result of the test is used to analyse the student's error and describes the dominant error made by the students in using the simple present tense in writing descriptive text.

*Interview*

The interview was structural interview which means the researcher has prepared the question that will be used to interview the students. The interview was conducted to know the factor of the students' errors and done to the students who get 5 highest of the dominant errors in the written test. The interview will be about why the students made the error in their written test.

### Procedures

Written test and interview were conducted to collect the data.

*Written Test*

The Test is used to measure the basic capabilities and achievements. Therefore, this technique supports the researcher to know what types of error that made by the students in using simple present tense in writing descriptive text and the dominant error by the students. The student's written test is given by the researcher by using test prom. Students should make the composition of descriptive text by title "My Friend". They were asked to write descriptive text by time allocation of 45 minutes. The researcher takes the written test in time of English lesson. After the students make the descriptive text, the researcher collects it to be analysed. The students' writing would be analysed by the researcher in order to know the types of error that made by the students of X grade of SMA Istiqlal and the source of the error.

*Interview*

The interview was conducted after the written test was carried out. The interview was conducted to know the factor of the students' errors and done to the students who get 5 highest of the dominant errors in the written test. The interview will be about why the students made the error in their written test.

**Data analysis**

The data analysis was started after the researcher had done the writing test to the X grade students of SMA Istiqlal. Student error analysis was done by identifying errors in students' descriptive text. The identification was done by reading the result of the students' writing and underlying the error that made by students.

The next step was to describe student errors based on the surface strategy taxonomy including omission, addition, misinformation and miss-ordering. The result of the classification was calculated by the frequency and the percentage of each error by using the formula bellow:

$P=F/n\times100\%$

Notes:

P: Percentage

F: Frequency of error's occurrence

N: Number of total errors

The last step was classifying errors based on their source. This step was concerned with establishing the source of the error. The sources were classified as the error came from the inter-lingual source Error may be from the intra-lingual source.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings and discussion of this study are classified based on the source of the error and are presented in the table.

**Source of Inter-lingual Error**

The errors originating from inter-language errors can occur due to the role of the first language or mother tongue. In this case, Indonesian language was their first language. Most of the students made the errors because they imitated the rule of their first language or grammatical interference and sometime incorrect translation from the L1 to the L2 or it was called lexical interference. The following is data for errors originating from inter-language errors, which are presented in table 1 as follows.

Table 1. Source of Inter-lingual Error

| Code | Error Identification | Error Types | Error explanation |
|------|---------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Text 1 | Two eyes are good | miss-ordering | The lexical interference of the learner's mother tongue |
| | She does everything is the best for all person | miss-ordering | The lexical interference of the learner's mother tongue |
| Text 8 | She has face beautiful | miss-ordering | The grammatical interference of the learner's mother tongue |
| | Now her old 17 years old | miss-ordering | The lexical interference of the learner's mother tongue |
| Text 10 | Her born on | miss-formation | The grammatical interference of the learner's mother tongue |
| Text 12 | But she this like to eat | addition | The grammatical interference of the learner's mother tongue |

| Text 13 | She beautiful with skin white | miss-ordering | The lexical interference of the learner's mother tongue |
|---|---|---|---|
| | They only three people in one home | miss-ordering | The grammatical interference of the learner's mother tongue |

### Source of Intra-lingual Error

While errors were originating from intra-lingual errors may occur because the students cannot display good sentences in L2 because of their low understanding of L2 rules. Sometimes they over-generalized the sentence, ignore the restriction of rules, make the incomplete application of rules and hypothesize the false concept. The findings for the source of intra-lingual errors are presented in table 2 below.

Table 2. Source of Intra-lingual Error

| Code | Error identification | Type of error | Error explanation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Text 1 | She haves a long hair | Miss-formation | Ignorance of rule restrictions |
| | When she is smiles | Miss-formation | Over-generalization |
| | She always ready | omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| | She haves slim body | miss-formation | Ignorance of rules restriction |
| Text 2 | And also others people | Addition | Over-generalization |
| | She come from Kertosono | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| | She like make up | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| | She always play with me | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| | She like English | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| Text 3 | he like fruit | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| | He like red | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| | He always hit me | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| Text 4 | He like brown | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| | He always joke | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| Text 5 | She my favorite friend | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| | She have white skin | Miss-formation | Ignorance of rule restriction |
| | She have a long hair | Miss-formation | Ignorance of rule restriction |
| | She live with | Omission | Incomplete application of rule |
| | She like to black | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| | She one school with me | omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| | She tall than me | Miss-formation | Ignorance of rule restriction |
| | She like animals | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| Text 6 | The name is Subaidah | Miss-formation | Over-generalization |
| | Its call Suci | Miss ordering | Ignorance of rue restriction |
| | She my underclass | omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| | She not my classmate | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| | She have an oval face | Miss-formation | False concept hypothesize |
| | The hair are black | Miss-formation | False concept hypothesize |
| | She have tall body | Miss-formation | False concept hypothesize |
| | She is live in the same village with me | addition | Over- generalization |
| | The ambition is doctor | Miss-formation | Overgeneralization |
| | The hobby is cooking | Miss-formation | Over-generalization |
| Text 7 | I has best friend | Miss-formation | False concept hypothesize |

|  | I always calling her | Addition | Over-generalization |
|---|---|---|---|
|  | She come from | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  | She studied in Istiqlal | miss-formation | Over-generalization |
|  | She like singing | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  | She also like | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | She have long eyebrow | Miss-formation | False concept hypothesize |
|  | That's my best classmate | Miss-formation | Over-generalization |
| Text 8 | He always help me | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  | She have black hair | Miss-formation | False concept hypothesize |
|  | She go from her home | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  | She like watching | Omission | Incomplete of rule application |
|  | Her not to tall | Miss-formation | Ignorance of rule restriction |
|  | She friendly to all person | omission | Incomplete of rule application |
|  | Hers eyebrow is black | Addition | Over-generalization |
|  | She always make me smile | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  | She have a good smile | Miss-formation | False concept hypothesize |
|  | She have red chick | Miss-formation | False concept hypothesize |
|  | She like animals | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| Text 9 | She haves a sister | Miss-formation | Ignorance of rules application |
|  | She always follow a contest | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  | She always busy | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  | She always help her teacher | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  | She always with me | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| Text 10 | She beautiful | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  | Her body is teen | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  | She come from | omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  | She have a sister | Miss-formation | False concept hypothesize |
|  | She have a long hair | Miss-formation | False concept hypothesize |
| Text 11 | She always help me | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| Text 12 | She favorite color is pink | Miss-formation | Ignorance of rule restriction |
|  | She always help me | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  | Her always happy | Miss-formation | Ignorance of rule restriction |
| Text 13 | namely | Miss-formation | Over-generalization |
|  | She beautiful | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | And she haves a good body | Miss-formation | Ignorance of rule restriction |
|  | She come from | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  | She live | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  | She have sister | Miss-formation | False concept hypothesize |
| Text 14 | She live with | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  | The ambition is | Miss-formation | False concept hypothesize |
|  | She so beautiful | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|  | So look beautiful | miss-ordering | Incomplete application of rules |
| Text 15 | Her student of senior high school | miss-formation | Ignorance of rule restriction |
|  | Her come from | Miss-formation | False concept hypothesize |

| She live with | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
|---|---|---|
| Her hobby is sleep | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| She born | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| She 17 years old | omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| She the most beautiful | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |
| She have beautiful smile | Miss-formation | Ignorance of rule restriction |
| She like duck | Omission | Incomplete application of rules |

Based on the tables description of the source of error that produced by the student above, it may be known that the source of the error are coming from the both 2 sources of error those are from the inter-lingual and intra-lingual. Meanwhile, most of the errors are committed because the source of intra-lingual by total error 84 source which is classified into 46 of omission, 4 error of addition, 32 error of miss-formation and 2 error of miss-ordering. In addition, there were only 8 errors originating from inter-language errors which were classified into 6 miss-ordering, 1 miss-formation, 1 addition error, and no omission errors originating from inter-language errors were found.

**CONCLUSION**
From the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that all students make mistakes when applying the use of the simple present tense in writing descriptive texts. The types of errors found in students' writing include omission errors, addition errors, formation errors and arrangement errors.

Then the types of errors found from the lowest to the highest errors where the lowest error was found in addition errors with a total of 5 errors (5.43%), 8 errors in compilation errors (8.69%), found 33 errors in the type of miss-formation (35.86%) and the highest error was found in the omission error type where the error of omission was 46 errors (50%).

In addition, the results showed that the source of student errors came from inter-lingual and intra-lingual sources. Moreover, most of the errors are caused by intra-lingual. There were only 8 errors caused by inter-lingual which came from 6 errors of collation, 1 error of formation and 1 error of addition. While the most errors were influenced by intra-lingual errors with a total of 84 errors found which were caused by intra-lingual errors originating from omissions (46 errors), additions (4 errors), incorrect formation (32 errors) and arrangement errors (2 errors). The student error factor is because they forget the present tense formula, some are still confused about distinguishing verbal and nominal sentences, and some are still confused about applying the use of s/es in the present tense. There are also students who do not focus when doing the writing test.

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