

## Grammatical Errors in Writing of the Second Class Students of SMA Kristen 1 Soe

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### Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan jenis kesalahan gramatikal secara tertulis yang dihadapi oleh siswa dan menemukan kesalahan gramatikal dalam tulisan siswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Subjek dalam penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas 2 SMA Kristen 1 Soe tahun akademik 2015/2016 sejumlah 35 siswa. Terdapat dua kelas paralel yaitu kelas A dengan jumlah 30 siswa dan kelas B dengan jumlah 35 siswa. Kelas A dipilih sebagai subjek penelitian. Data dianalisis melalui lima tahap yaitu mengkoreksi tulisan siswa, mengidentifikasi kesalahan, mengklasifikasikan kesalahan, mentabulasi hasil dan mengambil kesimpulan. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa tipe kesalahan gramatikal dalam tulisan siswa adalah kesalahan verba, nomina, pronomina, ajektiva, adverbial, konjungsi dan preposisi. Persentasi dari masing-masing kesalahan adalah sebagai berikut. Kesalahan verba 21,16%, kesalahan nomina 19,70%, kesalahan pronominal 29,74%, kesalahan ajektiva 34,27%, kesalahan adverbial 32,41%, kesalahan konjungsi 34,02%, dan kesalahan preposisi 32,94%. Persentasi kesalahan tertinggi adalah kesalahan ajektiva dengan jumlah 34,27% dari total 243 kesalahan. Persentasi kesalahan paling sedikit adalah kesalahan nomina dengan jumlah 19,70% dari 375. Kesalahan gramatika siswa secara keseluruhan adalah 26,66% dengan total kesalahan 2301.

Kata Kunci: grammar, kesalahan, penulisan

## A. Introduction

English is as the first foreign language in Indonesia. It has been taught in elementary schools up to university for many years. Unfortunately, although it has been taught for many years, the achievement of the students is still poor. English is considered as a difficult subject for the Indonesian students, because English is completely different from Indonesia language. They are different in the system of grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. Theoretically, it takes a long time to learn a foreign language. Learners have to learn a new grammar system, and thousands of new words. It is true that learning a language is very different from mother tongue. It also takes a lot of practice to develop listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in a new language. In learning language, it is possible to make errors and mistakes. These two terms are closely similar but they are different. Therefore, (Elis, 2003: 15) distinguishes errors and mistakes. Errors reflect gaps in a learner's knowledge; they occur the learner does not know what is correct. While mistakes reflect occasional lapses in performance, they occur because, in a particular instance, the learner is unable to perform what or she knows. Thus (Brown, 2007: 257) states that mistakes refer to misjudgments, miscalculations, and erroneous assumptions form an important aspect of learning virtually any skill or acquiring information. Furthermore, he notes that a mistake refers to a performance error that is either a random guess or a slip, in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly. All people make mistakes, in both native and second language situations. Errors refers to deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflects the competence of the learner.

However, the students have learnt English for more than three or six years but most of them still make mistake in using English orally or in written form. They do not have good listening, speaking, reading and writing. This is because they do not have enough vocabulary, use appropriate grammar of English, produce good pronunciation or intonation or even fluently. These problems become important issue for any English teacher to find out the ways to overcome these problems but in fact, there are still problems found.

There are four language skills, they are listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The sub skills of language are grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

Writing is a means of communication between the writer(s) and the reader(s). It means that someone writes in order to communicate with his/her reader(s). Thus (Hyland, 2003:215) defines writing is as a complex activity in which the writer draws on a range of knowledge and skills and this complexity makes it unlikely that the same individual will perform equally well on different occasions and tasks. According to Segal & Pavlik (1988:5) that good writers connect the ideas in their paragraphs. A paragraph with connected ideas has cohesion. Good writers use natural English phrases to make a paragraph easy to read and it has good style. A piece of good writing must contain the aspects of writing; such as content, grammar and vocabulary. Many people have opinion that writing is the most difficult skills in language learning. It is difficult since there are some other aspects need to be considered when writing; such as grammar and vocabulary. Writing requires a good knowledge of grammar and word choice.

Grammar refers to the rules of language. (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002: 1) says that the word grammar refers to the set of rules that allow us to combine words in our language into larger units. Furthermore, (DeCapua, 2008:1) says that the term grammar does not bring pleasant memories to the minds of many people. The term grammar frequently brings to mind tedious lessons with endless drills, repetition, and other generally mindless practice, focused on mostly obscure rules of how people are supposed to write and speak. While (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002: 13) notes that grammar deals with the rules for combining words into larger units. The largest unit that is described in grammar is normally the sentence. They differ in how much of the grammar they cover and in how they set out the rules.

Grammar is important because it makes meaning for language. To use a language properly, it is important to know grammar of language and their meanings. Grammar names the types of words and word groups that make up sentences in any language. The grammar is as a set of rules for constructing and analyzing sentences. It is very clear that grammar consists of rules, which used to arrange or construct sentences. The grammars also can be used for analyzing words or sentences based on the form and function. English has broad grammar; including tenses, noun, verb, adjective, adverb, pronoun, articles, and so forth. Both kinds of grammar are concerned with rules but in different ways. The use of English grammar is different

from other languages. In writing skill, it is important to use good grammar because it is meaningful when the grammar is correct. The reader easily understands the ideas and meanings if the writer uses good grammar.

The researcher's experiences in teaching writing show that the students still have problems to produce a good writing. They often undergo many kinds of difficulties encompasses choosing the proper words, selecting the tenses, arranging words into a good sentence, developing paragraph or even writing an essay. They make many grammatical errors when constructing a piece of writing. The common errors they make are errors in the production of verb group, subject and verb agreement, the use of preposition, the use of article, the use of plural forms, the use of pronoun and the use of conjunction. This research is concerned with the common errors made by students, particularly in grammatical errors in writing. The results of this research also provide contribution and solution for the English teachers in order to reduce their students' grammatical errors in writing.

The background of this writing explains that the students of SMA Kristen 1 Soe have problems in using grammar when constructing a piece of writing. Thus, the problems of this research are formulated in the following questions a) what kinds of grammatical errors are encountered by students in writing? and b) to what extent do the students make grammatical errors in writing?

Thus, this research aims to answer the research problems stated in the previous part. The purposes of the research are to describe the kinds of grammatical errors in writing which are encountered by the students and to find out the students' grammatical errors in writing.

## **B. Method**

It is important for the researcher to use a certain kind of research method in order to achieve the objective of the research. The method of this research was descriptive qualitative. The subject of the research is the second class students of SMA Kristen 1 Soe in the School Year of 2015/2016. The second class students consist of 35 students. There are two parallel classes; class A consists of 30 students and class B consists of 35. Class A was chosen as the subject of the research. The researchers used a writing test as the instrument of this research. There were five

steps which used to analyze the data namely correcting the students' writing, identifying the errors, classifying the errors, tabulating the result and drawing the conclusion.

### C. Findings

To obtain the data, the researchers chose 30 students as the subject of the study namely the second class students of SMA Kristen 1 Soe in the school year of 2015/2016. The students were asked to write their experiences in written form. Then they analyzed the students' grammatical errors in their writing. The types grammars consist of verb, noun, pronoun, adverb, conjunction and preposition. The result of analysis of the students of grammatical error in writing are presented in the following tables.

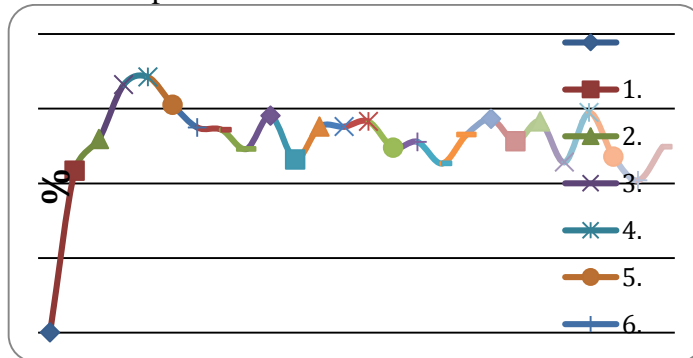
Table 1  
The Total Grammatical Errors in Writing

No	Result		Total	%
	Correct	Error		
1.	253	70	323	21.67
2.	226	79	305	25.9
3.	203	101	304	33.22
4.	213	111	324	34.25
5.	205	90	295	30.5
6.	219	83	302	27.48
7.	233	87	320	27.18
8.	233	76	309	24.59
9.	200	82	282	29.07
10.	245	74	319	23.19
11.	223	85	308	27.59
12.	223	85	308	27.59
13.	223	88	311	28.29
14.	258	85	343	24.78
15.	233	80	313	25.55
16.	256	75	331	22.65
17.	238	86	324	26.54
18.	222	89	311	28.61
19.	244	84	328	25.6
20.	223	88	311	28.29
21.	240	71	311	22.82

22.	227	95	322	29.5
23.	243	75	318	23.58
24.	246	63	309	20.38
25.	232	77	309	24.91
Σ	5761	2301	8062	26.55

Table 1 presents the students' total grammatical errors in writing. The highest percentage of errors is 34.25% which presented by the student no. 4 within the total errors is 111 errors. While the lowest percentage of errors is 20.38% which presented by the student no. 24 within the total errors is 63 errors. The average percentage of grammatical errors in writing is 26.55%.

Graph 1  
The Graph on Individual on Grammatical Errors



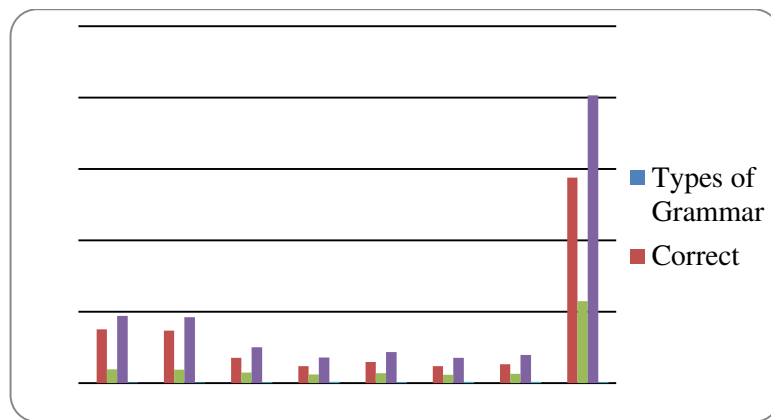
The graph presents the every student's graph on grammatical errors in writing. The graph shows that the highest percentage is 34.25% which is presented by the student no. 4. While the lowest percentage of errors is 20.38% which is presented by the student no. 24. The median percentage is 26.55 which is presented by student no. 17.

Table 2  
The Types Grammatical Errors in Writing

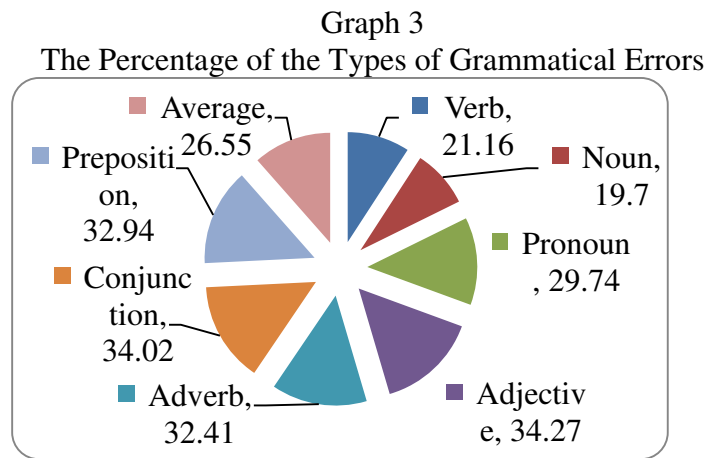
No	Types of Grammar	Correct	Errors	Total	%
1	Verb	1505	384	1889	21.16
2	Noun	1475	375	1850	19.70
3	Pronoun	711	294	1005	29.74
4	Adjective	475	248	723	34.27
5	Adverb	589	281	870	32.41
6	Conjunction	473	237	710	34.02
7	Preposition	533	260	793	32.94
	Σ	5761	2301	8062	26.55

Table 2 presents the types of grammatical errors in writing which contains verb, noun, pronoun, adjective, adverb, conjunction and preposition. The highest percentage of errors is adjective with the percentage is 34.27% and the total errors are 243 errors. The lowest percentage of errors is noun with the percentage is 19.70 and the total errors are 375 errors. The students' grammatical errors as a whole is 26.66 with the total errors are 2301 errors.

Graph 2  
The Graph on Grammatical Errors



The graph presents the percentage of grammatical errors in every type of grammar. The graph shows that the highest number of words produced by the students is 1889 words, the correct words are 1505 words and the errors are 384 words. Then followed by the nouns with the total words are 1850, the correct words are 1475 and the errors are 375 words. Next, followed by noun with the total words are 1005 words, the correct are 711 words and the errors are 294 words. Next, followed by adverb with the total words are 870, the correct are 589 words and the errors are 281 words. Then followed by the preposition with the total words are 793, the correct are 533 words and the errors are 260 words. Then, followed by adjective with the total words are 723, the correct are 475 words and the errors are 248 words. The lowest numbers of the words is conjunction with the total is 710 words, the correct are 473 words and the errors are 237 words.



The chart presents the percentages of each type of grammatical errors. The verbs errors are 21.16%, the nouns errors are 19.7% which is lower than verbs, the pronouns errors are 29.74% which is higher than verb, the adjectives errors are 34.27% which is higher than pronoun, the adverbs errors are 32.41% which is lower than pronoun, the conjunctions errors are 32.02% which is lower than adverb and the prepositions errors are 32.94% which is higher than conjunction. In other hand, adjective is the highest figure errors and the lowest is noun.

#### D. Discussion

In this part, the writer describes the results of the data analysis into descriptive way. The results of data analysis contain two main parts which are the answers of this research. They are discussed in the following section.

##### 1. Types of Grammatical Errors in Writing

The types of grammatical errors in writing are verb, noun, pronoun, adjective, adverb, conjunction and preposition. The function of a verb is to describe an action or a state of being, e.g. run, eat, write and is (Batko & Rosenheim, 2004: 32). The verb refers to action word. In the students' worksheet, the researcher found many verb errors such as the use of simple present, past form, past participle, and be. E.g. I usually *studied* .... (I usually study), The first time I *come* to Soe (I came), I *was*



*study* (I studied), When *I still* at Junior High School ..... (When I was still at .....).

(Stobbe, 2008: 1) states that a noun is one of the most important words you use when speaking and writing. He notes that a noun is word to name a person, place, or thing; a quality, idea, or action. In similar way, (Batko & Rosenheim, 2004: 32) say that the function of a noun is to name something; a person, a place, an object, or an idea. In the students' worksheet, the researcher found many noun errors such as singular and plural, proper noun, etc. E.g. in the students' worksheet: two *mans* (two men), many *child*.... (many children).

(Azar, 2002: 132) says that a pronoun is used in place of a noun. The noun it refers to is called antecedent, e.g. a) I read a **book**. **It** was good. b) I read the books. **They** were good. Stobe (2008: 40) notes that pronouns can be used in place of nouns to avoid monotonous repetition. A pronoun is used to replace the words for people, places, or things. The students' worksheet presented the errors in the use of pronoun as subject, object or possessive, e.g. I visited *I brother* .... (my brother), My sister is Marry, *he* is a teacher .... (She is a teacher). My parents love *we*..... (My parents love us).

(Stobbe, 2008: 28) says that an adjective modifies the meaning of a noun or pronoun. It is similar with (Batko & Rosenheim, 2004: 39) that adjectives are words that modify nouns and pronouns such as beautiful places. E.g. in the students' worksheet: I *see* many *houses beautiful* .... (I saw many beautiful houses).

(Batko & Rosenheim, 2004: 39) adverbs define or limit the meaning of other words. Unlike adjectives, which can only modify nouns or pronouns, adverbs have a kind of prima donna complex. The function of an adverb is to modify the meaning of a noun, an adjective, or another adverb. The most common role of the adverb is to modify the meaning of a verb, usually by answering the questions where, when, how, or to what extent. E.g. in the students' worksheet: I *hard study* ... (I study hard ...), I *late* ... it should be (I came late ...)

(Batko & Rosenheim, 2004: 32) say that the function of a conjunction is to join together words or phrases. Conjunctions are classified into two coordinate conjunction such as "and," "or," "nor," "but," "for," "yet," and "so," and subordinate conjunction such as "because," "when," "if," "though," "unless," "until," and "whether. E.g. in the students' worksheet: I *with* my parents .... (My

parents and I ...)

(Batko & Rosenheim, 2004: 32) note that the function of a preposition is to express the relationship between a noun or a pronoun and certain other words in the sentence. E.g. in the students' worksheet: *In* the way.... (on the way), I went Kupang .... (I went to Kupang). I go *by* foot ... (I go on foot).

The data which are presented above show that the students still have problems in using correct grammar in writing.

## 2. Percentages of Each Type of Grammatical Errors

The types of grammatical errors in writing are verb, noun, pronoun, adjective, adverb, conjunction and preposition. The percentage of each type of grammar is presented in Table 2. The percentage of verbs errors are 21.16%, nouns errors are 19.70, pronouns errors are 29.74%, the adjectives errors are 34.27%, the adverbs errors are 32.41%, the conjunctions errors are 34.02% and the prepositions errors are 32.94%. The highest percentage of errors is adjective with the percentage are 34.27% and the total errors are 243 errors. The lowest percentage of errors is noun with the percentage is 19.70 and the total errors are 375 errors. The students' grammatical errors as a whole is 26.66 with the total errors are 2301 errors.

## E. Conclusion

The types of grammatical errors in writing are verb, noun, pronoun, adjective, adverb, conjunction and preposition. The percentage each type of grammar is described as follows. The verb errors is 21.16%, noun errors is 19.70, pronoun errors is 29.74%, the adjective errors is 34.27%, the adverb errors is 32.41%, the conjunction errors is 34.02% and the preposition errors is 32.94%. The highest percentage of errors is adjective with the percentage is 34.27% and the total errors are 243 errors. The lowest percentage of errors is noun with the percentage is 19.70 and the total errors are 375 errors. The students' grammatical errors as a whole is 26.66 with the total errors are 2301 errors.

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