❐          1

# Analysis of Syntactic Errors in Writing of Third Semester Students of the Department of English and Literature

**A Nurmilatul H[1], Kiattichai SAitakham[2]**
[1]English and Literature Departmant, Alauddin State Islamic University of Makassar, Makassar, Indonesia
[2]Chiangmai Rajabhat University, Chiangmai, Thailand

| Article Info | ABSTRACT |
|---|---|
| | **Purpose of the study:** This research presents the results of research on syntactic errors in writing produced by third semester students of the Department of English and Literature, Alauddin State Islamic University, Makassar. The aim of this research is to identify the dominant types of syntactic errors and provide in-depth insight into the error patterns that frequently occur.<br><br>**Methodology:** The research method used is descriptive qualitative by collecting data from students' final written exam sheets. Data collection involved obtaining final writing exam sheets from third semester AG 1&2 students enrolled in the Department of English and Literature at Alauddin State Islamic University Makassar.<br><br>**Main Findings:** The analysis results show that the most common syntax errors include omissions, additions, information errors, and ordering errors.<br><br>**Novelty/Originality of this study:** The novelty of this research lies in the focus of analyzing syntactic errors during the third semester students studying English and Literature. with a more comprehensive and detailed approach than previous research. |

*Corresponding Author:*
A Nurmailatul H,
English and Literature Departmant, Alauddin State Islamic University,
Sultan Alauddin No 63, Romangpolong, kec Somba Opu, Kabupaten Gowa, Sulawesi Selatan, 92113, Indonesia
Email: anurmila@gmail.com

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In contemporary society, there is a great demand for compliance with international standards in various fields, including education, commerce, and communications. Therefore, these demands require compliance with English as the de facto international language. This phenomenon triggers a series of impacts that encourage individuals to use English in diverse contexts [1], [2]. However, due to the inherent complexity of English as a foreign language, learners always face challenges, which manifest in errors and mistakes throughout their linguistic journey. These errors originate from two main sources: interlingual transfer, which arises from linguistic influences originating in the learner's mother tongue, and intralingual transfer, which is characterized by inaccuracies in the acquisition or application of target language syntax [3], [4], [5]

Syntax, a fundamental branch of linguistics that governs sentence structure, has emerged as a focal point fraught with potential errors, especially in written forms of English expression [6], [7]. Mastery of syntax is very

important, because it functions as the basis for effective communication and understanding. Failure to adhere to syntactic norms can give rise to misunderstandings and hinder the accurate conveying of ideas or emotions.

The prevalence and nature of syntactic errors among English language learners, reveal a spectrum of omissions, additions, formation errors, and utterance errors [8], [9]. In particular, misinformation emerged as the most frequently occurring error, underscoring the importance of syntax in linguistic proficiency. Furthermore, Islamic scriptures, as exemplified in surah al-Ahzab verses 70-71, provide timeless wisdom regarding the importance of speaking honestly and choosing words wisely to foster understanding and good will among believers.

God's commandment to "speak righteous words" serves as a guiding principle for believers, emphasizing the profound impact of language on individual behavior and interpersonal relationships. By exercising linguistic precision and integrity, individuals can align their words with good deeds, thereby gaining divine forgiveness for transgressions and achieving spiritual satisfaction. However, despite the ethical imperative to communicate effectively, English language learners, especially English Language and Literature students, grapple with syntactic errors that undermine their communicative competence and academic progress [10], [11], [12].

Recognizing the pervasive nature of this challenge, the researcher sought to investigate "Syntactic Errors in Writing Produced by Third Semester Students of the Department of English and Literature, Alauddin State Islamic University, Makassar." Through careful investigation and analysis, the aim is to equip educators with the insights to address these persistent problems, thereby improving the quality of language teaching and encouraging linguistic proficiency among future generations.

Even though there are many studies that raise the issue of syntactic errors in language, there are studies that examine language errors from a morphological and syntactic point of view which results in the fact that there are still many morphological (shorof) and syntactic (nahwu) errors in Arabic in the thesis abstracts of students of the Language Education Study Program Arab. These morphological errors include 6 aspects, namely: (1) errors in writing words, (2) errors in selecting wazan, (3) errors in selecting types of words, such as fail or fi'il, (4) errors in writing hamzah letters. , either hamzah washl, or qoth'dan layyinah, (5) errors in placing dhamirpada fi'il, (6) errors in writing isim alam [13]. The Arabic syntactic errors (nahwu) in students' thesis abstracts cover 12 aspects, namely: (1) rules for the number of ismiyah (noun sentences) (2) rules for the number of fi'liyah (verb sentences), (3) rules for mudhaf and mudhaf ilaih (compound words), (4) na'at man'ut rules (adjectives), (5) ma'rifah nakirah rules (specific and general), (6) mudzakkar muannats rules (gender), (7) writing words that are not according to the context, (8) number rules, especially graded numbers ('adad tartibi), (9) isim isyarah rules (demonstrative words), (10) fi'il rules (verbs), (11) plural rules. Then research conducted by Fitria Lathifah [14] which examined phonological language errors showed that the results of this research showed that students' phonological errors that often occurred during reading activities were in fricative sounds such as (خ حذصظش and ف) while for popping sounds they were in ط ض and ق.   Among these mistakes, the most difficult and most common mistakes are in the pronunciation of the letters ع and ض .

From the research that has been carried out, it shows that the study of language errors is seen from syntax, morphology and phonology, therefore this research focuses on research using syntax in examining language errors in the writing of Third Semester Students of the Department of English and Literature. In previous research, it was conducted on a sample of students in the final semester and remaining junior high school students, so this research uses students in the third semester. The sample gap and types of language errors are new in this research.

The impact of this research is that by knowing syntactic errors that often occur, students can be given special training and guidance to overcome student weaknesses. This will help students improve their overall academic writing skills, which is critical to their future academic success.

Considering the aim of research regarding syntactic errors in the writing of third semester students of the Department of English and Literature, it is very important to carry out this because an in-depth understanding of the types of syntactic errors that often occur in third semester students can help lecturers and study program managers to design better teaching strategies. effective. This is very important to improve the quality of education in the English Language and Literature Department, ensuring that students have strong and competitive writing skills.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research adopts a qualitative descriptive method to describe syntactic errors contained in writing produced by third semester students registered in the Department of English and Literature at Alauddin State Islamic University, Makassar. In accordance with descriptive research, the aim is to describe a particular situation or phenomenon, with the aim of obtaining information about the current situation. Qualitative research involves collecting descriptive data presented in written form, thus indicating that qualitative descriptive research involves collecting descriptive data in text format [15], [16].

The main data source for this research is the final writing exam sheets from third semester students from the Department of English and Literature at Alauddin State Islamic University, Makassar. One class was selected from three available classes, with the researcher selecting AG 1&2 because of the competency demonstrated by

the students, which was reflected in their grade point average (GPA). The selection process resulted in 40 final written exam sheets for analysis.

Data collection involved obtaining final writing exam sheets from third semester AG 1&2 students enrolled in the Department of English and Literature at Alauddin State Islamic University Makassar.

The data analysis process is carried out through a series of detailed steps, namely (1) Data Identification. The first step in the data analysis process is identifying and collecting the data that has been collected by the researcher. This involves collecting all final written exam sheets from third semester students of the Department of English and Literature at Alauddin State Islamic University Makassar. (2) Classification of Syntactic Errors. After the data has been identified, the next step is to classify the syntactic errors observed in student writing. This involves grouping types of errors based on their characteristics and visible patterns in their writing [17], [18], [19]. (3) Syntactic Error Analysis using Dulay's Surface Strategy Taxonomy. The next step is to analyze syntactic errors using Dulay's surface strategy taxonomy. This taxonomy provides a framework for understanding and classifying syntactic errors based on the strategies used by learners in trying to construct sentences in the target language. (4) Drawing conclusions. The final step in the data analysis process is drawing conclusions based on the findings obtained from the research analysis. This conclusion includes a summary of the most commonly encountered syntax errors, the implications of those findings, and suggestions for future research or more effective learning [20], [21].

This research procedure began with collecting final written exam sheets from third semester AG 1&2 students registered in the Department of English and Literature at Alauddin State Islamic University, Makassar. The next stage involves identification of syntactic errors in the writing, classification of the types of errors, analysis using Dulay's taxonomy of surface strategies, and finally, conclusions based on the results of the research analysis.

## 3.    RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research findings revealed a multitude of syntactic errors manifested in third semester students' writing. These errors have been carefully classified into four different categories: omissions, additions, formation errors, and drafting errors. The tabulated data shows the prevalence of these errors, with omissions being the most dominant category, followed by misinformation, additions, and drafting errors. After classification, further analysis and explanation of the types of errors has been provided, accompanied by illustrative examples taken from students' writing.

### 3.1.  Loss :

Omission errors, totaling 328 examples, cover a wide range of aspects, including omissions of main nouns, subjects, main verbs, prepositions, articles, plural markers, auxiliaries, copulas, progressive or gerund markers, regular and irregular past forms, third person markers singular , infinitive markers, connectors, and even individual letters in words. For example, students' sentences fail to include the main noun after the copula, resulting in fragmented expressions and inaccurate use of tense.

### 3.2.  Addition :

The analysis revealed 149 examples of addition errors, where students mistakenly inserted extraneous elements into their sentences. These additions range from redundant articles and additions to inappropriate adverbs and connectors. One student's composition mistakenly added the auxiliary word "is" where it was not needed, thereby disrupting the syntactic coherence of the sentence.

### 3.3.  Misinformation :

With 223 occurrences, misformation errors represent the majority of syntactic anomalies detected. These errors include misuse of copulas, misplacement of prepositions, and irregular past tense forms. For example, the student's writing featured the malformed copula "is" instead of the correct past tense "was," which caused temporal inconsistencies in the sentence.

### 3.4.  Addition :

Although relatively rare, 11 sequencing errors caused disruption to the order of elements in the sentence. Although rare, errors like this are worth noting because they have the potential to hinder clarity and coherence in written communications.

By dissecting these errors and providing comprehensive examples, this study underscores the challenges students face in mastering syntactic conventions. Addressing these errors requires targeted interventions aimed at improving students' understanding of grammatical structures and increasing accuracy in written expression. Additionally, these findings provide invaluable insights for educators, informing tailored learning approaches to reduce common syntactic errors encountered by students. Through targeted interventions and pedagogical strategies based on these findings, educators can increase students' syntactic proficiency, thereby facilitating more effective communication and expression.

In students' written work, a variety of errors appear across categories, highlighting areas that need improvement in their understanding of grammar rules. One common problem is the omission of important elements such as auxiliary and linking verbs. For example, in one example, a student failed to include the necessary connector "that" in a sentence, thereby creating ambiguity regarding the relationship between the clauses. Omissions such as these can obscure the intended meaning and disrupt the flow of the text, indicating the need for greater attention to detail in constructing coherent sentences [22], [23].

Another common error involves incorrect formation of verb tenses and forms [24], [25], [26]. Students often misuse the past tense or neglect to apply the correct tense for actions that occurred in the past. These inconsistencies can confuse readers and undermine the overall clarity and effectiveness of their writing [27], [28], [29]. Additionally, incorrect forms of auxiliary verbs contribute to grammatical inaccuracies, further complicating sentence structures and reducing students' ability to convey their ideas effectively.

Additionally, incorrect placement or addition of words in sentences creates unnecessary confusion and disrupts the natural flow of ideas. Students often insert or omit prepositions, articles, or infinitive markers incorrectly, resulting in awkward phrases and grammatical inconsistencies. Such errors reduce the coherence and readability of the text, thereby hindering students' ability to communicate their thinking clearly and effectively.

In addition, problems in subject-verb agreement and pronoun use further exacerbate the challenges students face in mastering grammatical conventions. Mistakes in choosing the right subject pronoun or maintaining appropriateness between the subject and verb reduce the overall fluency and accuracy of the writing. These inconsistencies undermine students' ability to express themselves accurately and reduce the impact of their written communications.

Overall, overcoming these common grammatical errors requires a comprehensive approach that emphasizes the importance of attention to detail and a solid understanding of basic grammar rules. By providing targeted teaching and practice opportunities, educators can support students in honing their writing skills and developing greater proficiency in expressing themselves clearly and effectively. Through dedicated effort and guidance, students can overcome these challenges and become more confident and proficient writers.

Based on the results of previous research that has been carried out in context analysis of syntactic errors in students majoring in English and Literature, several main findings have revealed general patterns in errors in sentence structure, use of prepositions, and subject-verb agreement. However, this research often only focuses on the most common types of errors without further exploring the specific causes behind these errors [30], [31]. Additionally, there is a lack of research comparing the variation in syntactic errors between students with different native language backgrounds, as well as how different syntactic teaching methods may influence the frequency and types of errors made. In research conducted by Russfita in research examining syntactic errors in students' essays, it shows that syntactic errors occur in phrases and sentences. Meanwhile, research that examines morphological and syntactic errors in student review texts produces 51 error data in morphology and 35 error data in syntax.

Previous research found that syntax errors are still often found in junior high school students, therefore this research focuses on finding syntax errors in third semester students. Which shows that there are still many syntax errors, including the most common syntax errors, namely omissions, additions, information errors and sorting errors. The results of this research will be very useful for developing more effective curricula and teaching methods, which will ultimately improve students' writing abilities. This improvement will not only have a positive impact on their academic achievement, but will also better prepare them to enter the professional world where good writing skills are essential. The limitation of this research was that it was only conducted on students majoring in English and literature. This may limit the generalizability of the findings to a wider population, including students from other semesters or majors who may have different characteristics and backgrounds.

## 4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the analysis of students' written work revealed a series of grammatical errors ranging from omissions of important elements to errors in the formation of verb tenses and tenses, as well as problems with word placement and subject-verb congruence. These findings underscore the need for targeted teaching and practice to improve students' understanding of grammar rules and improve their writing skills. By addressing these common mistakes through focused interventions and providing plenty of opportunities to practice, educators can support students in developing greater proficiency in expressing themselves clearly and effectively. Through consistent effort and guidance, students can overcome these challenges and become more confident and competent writers, ultimately empowering them to communicate their ideas precisely and clearly.

The researcher recommends that further research take data from interviews and group discussions with students to understand their perceptions of difficulties in English syntax. This qualitative analysis will complement the quantitative data and provide deeper insight into the causes of errors from the student's perspective.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## REFERENCES

[1] A. S. El Karima, "Interferensi Fonologis Bahasa Inggris dalam Video Youtube 'Egyptian Woman Has A Serious Message for Obama,'" *Jurnalistrendi J. Linguist. Sastra, Dan Pendidik.*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 107–115, 2020, doi: 10.51673/jurnalistrendi.v5i2.345.

[2] J. C. Richards, "Exploring Emotions in Language Teaching," *RELC J.*, vol. 53, no. 1, pp. 225–239, 2022, doi: 10.1177/0033688220927531.

[3] S. Kazazoğlu, "The impact of L1 interference on foreign language writing: A contrastive error analysis," *J. Lang. Linguist. Stud.*, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 1177–1188, 2020, doi: 10.17263/jlls.803621.

[4] W. Kusuma, D. A. Raihan, F. H. Alia, and D. S. Hidayat, "Analisis Kesalahan Berbahasa Teks Deskripsi Kelas X-11 SMAN 2 Tasiknalaya dalam Kategori Linguistik," *J. Bima Pus. Publ. Ilmu Pendidik. Bhs. dan Sastra*, vol. 1, no. 4, pp. 167–181, 2023, doi: 10.61132/bima.v1i4.358.

[5] N. P. I. M. C. Manik and N. K. Arie Suwastini, "Analyzing Grammatical Error in Students' Recount Text Writing in Junior High School," *Humanis J. Arts Humanit. Vol*, vol. 24, no. 3, p. 238, 2020, doi: 10.24843/jh.2020.v24.i03.p02.

[6] R. Prasetya, "Kesalahan Berbahasa Taksonomi Kategori Linguistik Dan Kompetensi Gramatikal Surat Lamaran Kerja Dalam Bahasa Inggris Pada Mahasiswa Akademi Sekretari Budi Luhur," *Serasi J. Sekertari dan Adm.*, vol. 18, pp. 25–33, 2020, doi: 10.36080/js.v18i1.1039.

[7] Yibing Zhang, "Revelations on Grammar Teaching Based on an Analysis on Syntactic Structure of Transformational Generative Grammar and Metafunctions of Systemic Functional Grammar," *Int. J. Linguist. Lit. Transl.*, vol. 5, no. 10, pp. 72–87, 2022, doi: 10.32996/ijllt.2022.5.10.9.

[8] N. Aliah, "Analysis Of The Indonesian Speakers Of English Employ The Indonesian Language Syntactically," vol. 1, no. 4, pp. 198–206, 2023, doi: 10.61132/bima.v1i4.326.

[9] L. N. Rina Mariana Hesti, "Efektivitas Media Flashcard Terhadap Keterampilan Menulis Kosakata Bahasa Inggris Siswa Sekolah Dasar," *JIP (Jurnal Interv. Psikologi)*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2022, doi: 10.20885/intervensipsikologi.

[10] K. Kami and A. Nesi, "Argumen Ad hominem sebagai Strategi Komunikasi para Advokat dalam Program Kontroversi Metro TV," *J. SIMBOLIKA Res. Learn. Commun. Study*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 24–35, 2023, doi: 10.31289/simbolika.v9i1.9106.

[11] Y. Liu and J. Tian, "Error Analysis of College Students' Spoken English," *Int. J. Lang. Lit. Linguist.*, vol. 7, no. 4, pp. 182–188, 2021, doi: 10.18178/ijlll.2021.7.4.309.

[12] S. Fauzi, "Problematika Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Pada Aspek Keterampilan Mendengar dan Berbicara di Madrasah Tsanawiyah Serta Solusinya," *Ukazh J. Arab. Stud.*, vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 560–576, 2023, doi: 10.37274/ukazh.v4i2.861.

[13] K. Imron, "Analisis Kesalahan Morfologi Dan Sintaksis Pada Abstrak Skripsi Mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab Uin Raden Fatah Palembang," *Proc. Int. Educ. Conf.*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 19–27, 2021, [Online]. Available: http://103.84.119.236/index.php/iec/article/view/3

[14] R. A. Juwantara, A. Harjanto, A. Sutiyono, and D. Utari, "Development of Contextual Learning-Based E-Module in Elementary School," *JIP J. Ilm. PGMI*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 72–81, 2023, doi: 10.19109/jip.v9i1.18286.

[15] L. E. Tomaszewski, J. Zarestky, and E. Gonzalez, "Planning Qualitative Research: Design and Decision Making for New Researchers," *Int. J. Qual. Methods*, vol. 19, pp. 1–7, 2020, doi: 10.1177/1609406920967174.

[16] K. W. Steve Campbell, Melanie Greenwood, "Purposive Sampling: Complex Or Simple ? Research Case Example," *Sage Journal, J. Res. Nurs.*, vol. 25, no. 8, 2020, doi: 10.1177/1744987120927206.

[17] lla K. Ima Rahmawati[1], Adinda Rifatunisa[2], "EFEKTIVITAS MANAJEMEN PERPUSTAKAAN Ima," *J. Pengabdi. Masy. Inst. Agama Islam Sahid Bogor*, vol. 03, no. 01, pp. 21–29, 2024, doi: 10.56406/jsm.v3i01.407.

[18] E. S. Handayani and H. Subakti, "Analisis Penggunaan Media Realia Melalui Pembelajaran Online di Sekolah Dasar," *J. Basicedu*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 772–783, 2021, doi: 10.31004/basicedu.v5i2.810.

[19] H. Qamariah, Sri Wahyuni, and Meliana, "an Analysis of Students' Grammatical Errors in Writing English Text in the Second Grade Students of Smk-Smti Banda Aceh," *Getsempena English Educ. J.*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 58–71, 2020, doi: 10.46244/geej.v7i1.1041.

[20] S. Riana, S. Nur, and M. A. S. Nuruddaroini, "Analisis Kesalahan Penerjemahan Teks Bahasa Arab Santriwati di Pondok Pesantren," *J. Basicedu*, vol. 6, no. 3, pp. 5215–5225, 2022, doi: 10.31004/basicedu.v6i3.3020.

[21] M. D. Maaliki H, R. Anggara, Y. Nafisah, and C. Ulya, "Analisis Kesalahan Berbahasa Pada Tataran Morfolofi, Ebi, Dan Sintaksis Buku Teks Sosiologi Kelas X Sma," *J. Rev. Pendidik. dan Pengajaran*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 299–305, 2020, doi: 10.31004/jrpp.v3i2.1307.

[22] A. Mardiah *et al.*, "Analisis Kesalahan Sintaksis dalam Penulisan Surat Kabar Online," *J. Pendidik. Tambusai*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 1346–1352, 2024, doi: 10.31004/jptam.v8i1.12564.

[23] W. R. P. Brian J, Reiser, Michel Novak, Tara A. w. McGill, "Storyline Units: An Instructional Model to Support Coherence from the Students' Perspective," *J. Science Teach. Educ.*, vol. 32, no. 7, pp. 805–829, 2021, doi: 10.1080/1046560X.2021.1884784.

[24] S. Islam and P. N. Mufidah, "An Analysis of Grammatical Error on Students' Writing," *Int. J. English Educ. Linguist.*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 1–13, 2022, doi: 10.33650/ijoeel.v4i1.3826.

[25] K. M. Naserly, "Analisis Kesalahan Simple Past Tense pada Materi Kuliah Bahasa Inggris Dasar (Studi Kasus pada Kelas 64.1C.25 Jurusan Manajemen Fakultas Ekonomi & Bisnis 2022/2023 UBSI) Mursyid," *J. Educ.*, vol. 06, no. 01, pp. 6363–6369, 2023, doi: 10.31004/joe.v6i1.3848.

[26] R. Listia and E. R. Febriyanti, "EFL Learners' Problems in Using Tenses: An Insight for Grammar Teaching," *IJET (Indonesian J. English Teaching)*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 86–95, 2020, doi: 10.15642/ijet2.2020.9.1.86-95.

[27] D. S. M. Reese Buttersfuss, Rod D. Roscoe, "Strategy Uptake in Writing Pal: Adaptive Feedback and Instruction," *Sage Journal, J. Res. Nurs.*, vol. 60, no. 3, 2022, doi: 10.1177/07356331211045.

[28] D. Ferris and G. Eckstein, "Language matters: Examining the language-related needs and wants of writers in a first-year university writing course," *J. Writ. Res.*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 321–364, 2020, doi: 10.17239/jowr-2020.12.02.02.

[29] E. Barroga and G. J. Matanguihan, "Creating Logical Flow When Writing Scientific Articles," *J. Korean Med. Sci.*, vol. 36, no. 40, pp. 1–14, 2021, doi: 10.3346/jkms.2021.36.e275.

[30] L. S. Hoon, S. Syihabuddin, D. Sudana, and W. Gunawan, "Analisis Multimodal pada Teks Iklan untuk Mengidentifikasi Aspek Ketulusan Iklan," *Diglosia J. Kaji. Bahasa, Sastra, dan Pengajarannya*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 303–318, 2023, doi: 10.30872/diglosia.v6i2.579.

[31] M. Khashayarfard and H. Nassiri, "Studying the Simultaneous Effect of Autonomous Vehicles and Distracted Driving on Safety at Unsignalized Intersections," *J. Adv. Transp.*, vol. 2021, p. 16, 2021, doi: 10.1155/2021/6677010.