

ERROR ANALYSIS ON SENTENCE STRUCTURE OF EFL UNDERGRADUATES IN BASIC STRUCTURE COURSE

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<p>Keywords: Basic Structure Course; Error Analysis; EFL Undergraduates; Sentence Structure</p>	<p>Abstract: One of the foundations of understanding English grammar for EFL undergraduates is comprehending the English basic structure. It includes functional grammar based on systemic linguistics and emphasizes spoken and written language operating in different social situations. It is crucial to show how texts work beyond the sentence level, how different texts are structured, and how language varies to suit the purpose of the users. It takes on a descriptive approach and focuses on groups of words that function to make meanings. This study aims to identify students' errors in developing their sentences. Involved by 72 undergraduates in the second semester at a private university in Jakarta, the study applied a descriptive qualitative research design. With the analysis of the participants' answers on a 20-question quiz in three assignment sessions, the study identified several errors with diverse findings.</p>	
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INTRODUCTION

Learning English for EFL undergraduates in Indonesia demands several English skills, such as listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Those four English skills begin with understanding the basic English structure, which includes functional grammar in various contexts (Fitrawati & Safitri, 2021). Therefore, EFL undergraduates should comprehend fundamental English grammar to develop their English competence through listening, reading, speaking, and writing.

This study is an ongoing observation of students in the English Education Program at a private university in Jakarta, Indonesia. In this program, the students in the second semester join the Basic Structure course as the initial level of the following levels of English structure and other English skills courses. In the Basic Structure course, students learn basic English grammar, like several tenses, subject-verb agreement, article usage, nouns, and expressions of quantity. The course provides the students with the English grammar handbook adapted from Azar & Hagen (2009). As the attachments, this study also delivers several grammar exercises taken from several free-accessed online sources.

With the course knowledge and exercises, students are expected to be familiar with the English grammar. However, several barriers occur when the students should complete the English grammar assignments. Few students express low scores in one, two, and or three assignments. The confusion of using appropriate tenses in different contexts, employing suitable articles,



proper nouns, or expressions of quantity, and organizing subject-verb agreement becomes a burden for those students. Hence, this study analyzes the students' errors in completing the English grammar assignments. This study describes the general data of the assignments' results and identifies the obstacles in each assignment.

METHOD

Based on the stated background, this study analyzes the EFL undergraduates' sentence structure due to the English grammar. This study applies a descriptive qualitative research design (Creswell, 2011) that expresses the results of grammar assignments. The results are presented in tables and descriptions to deliver clear and concise information to the readers. Engaged by 68 to 72 EFL undergraduates in the second semester of a private university in Jakarta, this study collected data through three times grammar assignments, then analyzed and performed the results of the assignments in tables and charts. This study distributed assignments in meetings ten, eleven, and twelve with 20 questions of multiple answers through the Google Form. The questions covered the English basic tenses, subject-verb agreement, articles, nouns, and expressions of quantity.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

As stated above, the results of this study comprised three sessions: first assignment, second assignment, and third assignment. Each assignment expressed the average, median, and range scores. The data also added the frequently missed questions as additional information.

The first assignment involved 72 EFL undergraduates. The assignment consisted of 20 questions about the English basic tenses of the Present tense, the Past Tenses, the Perfect Tenses, and the Future Tenses. The results showed that the average score is 68.96 of 100, the median is 70 of 100, and the range scores are from 40 to 100. Table 1 displays the detailed scores from the highest to the smallest.

Table 1. First Assignment Scores

NO	SCORE	PARTICIPANT
1	100	1 participant
2	95	1 participant
3	85	8 participants
4	80	13 participants
5	75	12 participants
6	70	6 participants
7	65	5 participants
8	60	11 participants
9	55	7 participants
10	50	2 participants
11	45	4 participants
12	40	2 participants
TOTAL		72 participants

Source: Author (2024)

Based on the scores, most participants missed the questions of the Present Tenses for non-action verbs (30 among 72 participants), the Simple Future for a scheduled activity (26 among 72 participants), the Simple Future for an arranged intention (22 among 72 participants), and the Simple Future for an arranged activity (11 among 72 participants).



Continue to the second assignment, which involved 68 participants. The assignment provided 20 questions and covered the English basic tenses and expressions of quantity. The results expressed improving scores for average, median, and range scores. The average is 81.47 of 100, the median is 85 of 100, and the range is 50 to 100. Table 2 shows the details.

Table 2. Second Assignment Scores

NO	SCORE	PARTICIPANT
1	100	3 participants
2	95	7 participants
3	90	14 participants
4	85	12 participants
5	80	11 participants
6	75	6 participants
7	70	7 participants
8	65	2 participants
9	60	4 participants
10	55	1 participant
11	50	1 participant
TOTAL		68 participants

Source: Author (2024)

According to Table 2, 32 of 68 participants missed the question on the Simple Present Tense, 30 of 68 participants missed the question on the expressions of quantity, and 26 of 68 participants failed to recognize the question on the Simple Past Tense.

The last assignment, or assignment three, entailed 70 participants with 20 questions, which included articles, subject-verb agreement, and quantity expressions. This assignment expressed a declining result from the first and the second assignments. The average score is 64.64 out of 100, the median reveals 65 of 100, and the range scores from 20 to 95. Table 3 displays the details.

Table 3. Third Assignment Scores

NO	SCORE	PARTICIPANT
1	95	1 participant
2	90	2 participants
3	85	2 participants
4	80	4 participants
5	75	10 participants
6	70	14 participants
7	65	10 participants
8	60	10 participants
9	55	7 participants
10	50	2 participants
11	45	3 participants
12	40	2 participants
13	30	2 participants
14	20	1 participant
TOTAL		70 participants

Source: Author (2024)

In this assignment, there were five frequently missed questions. There were 27 out of 70 participants who missed the question on the indefinite article, 23 of 70 participants on the uncountable noun of quantity expressions, 16 of 70 participants on countable noun expression



quantifiers, 15 of 70 participants on the definite article, and 8 of 70 participants on countable noun.

Discussion

Based on the results, this study classified the errors into the surface taxonomies of omission, addition, mis-formation, and mis-ordering (Nurjanah, 2017). These types of errors are prevalent in EFL Indonesian undergraduates since the learners in Indonesia are non-native English speakers (Febtiningsih, 2022). Frequent errors varied in each assignment's results.

In the first assignment, most participants missed the formation of the Perfect and Present tenses to express a non-action verb, such as *I have been seeing that movie three times, and now I wanting to see it again*. The answer should be *I have seen that movie three times, and now I want to see it again*. In this case, the miss-formation appeared as the intralingual errors (Mertosono & Erniwati, 2023; Nadya & Muthalib, 2021), in which the participants should practice more to eliminate the inaccuracy.

Similar inaccuracy happened on the second assignment where most participants still missed formation the tense. The sentence *This August, Indonesia celebrates the Independence Day at IKN* is supposed to be *This August, Indonesia is celebrating the Independence Day at IKN*. With this miss-formation, this study identifies the problem of the intralingual errors could be decreased by practicing and drilling several sentence exercises (Mubarok & Budiono, 2022; Puspitasari et al., 2021).

The last assignment was quite different from the first and second assignments. In this assignment, most participants used articles *the* than *a*, which showed their lack of understanding in using articles in their sentences (Agustinasari et al., 2022). Most participants stated *Martha and Claire love the white pretty cat*, that should be *Martha and Claire love a white pretty cat*. With the findings, this study revealed the substantial variables of course content, course practices, and course teaching techniques (Rosyada & Febriyanti, 2020) to enhance the EFL undergraduates' competence in English grammar.

CONCLUSION

In the EFL study, understanding the English basic structure is as demanding as the underlying knowledge of other English skills. Among various obstacles to English basic structure understanding, the surface taxonomy errors of omission, addition, miss-formation, and miss-ordering appeared at the utmost. Further study should implement comprehensive course knowledge, practices, and teaching techniques sustainably to answer the obstacles. This study is limited to the descriptive analysis, which needs to expand an in-depth evaluation of mixed-method design and analysis.

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