

Errors in EFL Students' Reflective Journal Writing on Online Blogging: A Review

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Abstract-Reflective journals could encourage students to develop the habit of writing regularly and hone students' critical thinking skills since they will start investigating their explanation and put all of the ideas into writing in their own words. This study was aimed to determine the types of errors written by an EFL student in her reflective journal writing on her blog account, the manner in which the EFL student generated errors, and the sensible reasons that affected the EFL student in producing her reflective journal writing errors. This study was classified as a qualitative content analysis. The data for this research came from ten reflective journal entries by an EFL student on her blogging account. Purposive sampling was used to collect the data. Furthermore, the researcher discovered five distinct sorts of errors in an EFL student's reflective journal writing on her online blogging platform. They included errors in time, omission errors, insertion errors, parts of speech errors, and other errors. Basically, the average number of errors actually happened unintentionally; the EFL student committed errors by omitting, adding, and disordering certain words while constructing sentences. Numerous variables contributed to the incidence of errors, including interlingua and intralingua transfer, a lack of vocabulary, and the use of ineffective translation methods.

Index Terms: Error Analysis, Reflective journal and Writing.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of writing a reflective journal is to familiarize English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students with writing without overthinking grammar structure. Thus, as EFL students become accustomed to writing, they are expected to create quality work. Writing, on the other hand, is an activity that requires a significant amount of practice in order to create a good outcome since effective writing requires a number of procedures and cannot be generated instantaneously. Among the procedures that students must master is the ability to write in a systematic and grammatically correct manner [1].

According to Dymont and O'connel in Sani & Nurwanti [2], writing reflective journals was one of the strategies students could use to improve their writing ability. Additionally, reflective journals could encourage students to develop the habit of writing regularly and hone students' critical thinking skills when composing the text since they will start investigating their explanation and put all of the ideas that come to mind into writing in their own words as part of the writing process. As a result, the quality of their writing can improve, and the more students write, the more they gain an understanding of grammar. On the other hand, there are certain components that contribute to the production of quality writing, such as grammar and vocabulary. That is, proper grammar dictates how conscious students are of their writing, how long they concentrate and devote time to producing it, and how much work they put into it.

Furthermore, errors are closely connected to EFL students learning writing skills. Errors are systemic in nature and are difficult for learners to notice because they have not mastered the right terminology or do not fully comprehend the target language materials. As Dulay & Krashen [3] stated, "making errors is an inevitable element of learning; humans can not acquire language without first committing errors in a methodical manner" (p. 144). This indicates that errors are a natural part of the learning process for all students and they are unaware of them. Consequently, the teacher can examine the errors committed by students in order to prevent them from repeating the same error. According to Khan as stated in Salehi & Bahrami [4], "Error Analysis is a type of linguistic examination that takes a qualitative approach due to its emphasis on the analysis of errors made by students while learning a foreign language". Analysis can be evaluated in a number of steps that begin with identifying, describing, and explaining [5].

Based on the explanation of error analysis provided by the experts, it can be briefly described as a process used by a teacher or researcher to identify errors in students' writing due to a lack of grammar, a lack of practice, or a pattern distinction between the source language and the target. Thus, by analyzing errors in students' writing, teachers can ascertain the weaknesses of a student's writing based on the frequency of errors found. Therefore, the teacher can provide solutions to these problems that arise during the students' learning process. In short, error analyses provide a reflection of whether the teacher's previous teaching methods were successful or not.

In addition, errors are divided into some categories. Dulay & Krashen [3] expressed his thoughts on the many forms of errors. He classified errors into four types (p.146-191) which are as follows:

- a. Error Based on Linguistic Category Taxonomy. In this classification, errors are grouped based on either the language component or the specific linguistic element on which the error has an effect. Language components include phonology, syntax, morphology, semantics, and discourse.
- b. Error Based on Surface Strategy Taxonomy, this type of error depicts how a structure's surface can be altered: Students may omit necessary parts (omission) or add needless ones (addition); they may make inaccurate selections (selection) or incorrect orderings (miss ordering)
- c. Error Based on Comparative Taxonomy, This error occurs when students substitute the target language (TL) for their source language (SL), particularly when creating a sentence in the target language. When trying to compose a sentence in the target language, EFL students employ the source language's structure to arrange the target language phrase. Occasionally, it results in unclear sentences as a consequence of the literal translation.
- d. Error Based on Communicative Effect Taxonomy, based on the communicative effect taxonomy, people make errors when they speak, which can restrict the communication process because the message delivered by the speaker cannot be accepted properly by the listener due to a violation in a part of the sentence, depending on the listener's perspective. Tandikombong [6] distinguished two categories of errors in writing:
 - a. Grammatical errors, Grammatical can be defined as the combination of linguistic components from the smallest to the largest unit in line with the target language's rules, such as: verb errors, pronoun errors, preposition errors, conjunction errors, determiner errors, and lexical errors.
 - b. Mechanical errors, mechanic writing error involving capitalization and punctuation.

In addition to the forms of error discussed previously, Corder in Ellis & Barkhuizen[5] developed classifications of errors based on their systematic nature, including: pre-systematic errors, systematic errors, and post-systematic errors.

Furthermore, according to Norrish [7] there are several elements that can be influenced by a student's errors in foreign language writing;

- a. Carelessness, which is usually correlated to a lack of motivation, whereby students show a decreasing interest in learning. This can be a result of a variety of factors, including the implementation of an ineffective learning style, the presentation of the content still being monotonous, and the teacher's selection of methods for the learning process being unproductive. As a result, students are unable to comprehend and are even overwhelmed by the material presented.
- b. First Language Interference, when students study foreign languages, they are still impacted by their native language, and thus frequently apply their native language's grammatical rules to the language they are learning, despite the fact that the two languages have distinct grammar rules.
- c. Translation, the majority of students' errors were owing to translation, considering students generally transfer the source language into the target language literally or word by word. As a result, the sentences formed in the target language will have a different meaning because they do not follow the target language's grammatical rules.

On the other hand, Thorpe in Cheng [8] noted that "a reflective journal is a written document that contains students' critical thinking on numerous concepts in the learning process over a period of time, with the purpose of determining the amount to which students understand." Additionally, reflective journal writing has a number of advantages for students during the learning process. The benefits include developing students' critical thinking abilities through the writing process, enhancing students' self-sufficiency, and boosting students' confidence, among others [9]. Based on the preceding explanation, the researcher believes that reflective journal writing is a type of writing with several purposes in which learners can express their emotions and experiences. Additionally, it can be a technique that assists learners in making sense their areas of strength and weakness.

Moreover, According to Wang referenced in Rahmah [10] the name "blogs" is a mix of the terms "web" and "blog." Because blogs are so easy to use, students can enhance their writing skills through collaborative writing activities such as commenting, editing, and revising. Additionally, students can organize information, share, and publish their written work in which a user can preserve and share their ideas, thoughts, opinions, and experiences via a variety of media formats, such as text, images, and videos. Then, Lamonica [11] emphasized how blogging is a good way for individuals to communicate with one another in a social context using technology. According to the definitions provided above, online blogging, most commonly referred to as "BlogSpot," is a place where students can write anything. Online blogging is one of the social media platforms that can be used to exchange ideas in written form.

As a way, teachers or lecturers can apply reflective journal to their students as a platform to convey thoughts, feelings, opinions, suggestions, and even experiences during the learning process by summarizing them in written form and it can be done after after each writing class meeting. However, despite the fact that teachers or lecturers have encouraged students to create reflective journals following class, the purpose of writing reflective journals has not been successful, this showed that that the EFL students' level of writing was still low and writing errors that have made by students is not a new problem in Indonesia. It is supported by recent research findings concerning errors produced by students in writing English in various genres of text.

There are numerous studies on error analysis. Bustomi [12] conducted the first study, titled "An Error Analysis on Students' Descriptive Writing". The purpose of this study is to determine the most often occurring errors made by students when writing English. The researcher employed a quantitative approach. In this case, Bustomi discovered that the article had the largest amount of errors at 15.47 percent, and he also found faults in add word, word choice, capitalization, omit word, spelling, singular plural, punctuation, verb tense, word order, and word from. Another earlier study was conducted by Wahyuni [13] in which she presented Error Analysis of Student's Free Writing. The results indicated that the students frequently produced numerous errors in tenses, with the result of the calculation indicating that there were 89 faults in form tenses. The earlier study on error analysis of student writing was also conducted by Deni & Kristanto [14] who conduct a research about Error Analysis of Narrative Text written by Students of English Education Department. The purpose of this study is to categorize the grammatical faults that students make in their writing. The researcher discovered four types of faults in the student's writing: omission, misstatement, addition, and incorrect ordering.

Despite the teacher or lecturer asked the students to write their reflective journals in their own words after each writing class meeting, students still did not appear to be accustomed to write English properly, the EFL students kept making errors in their writing. It can be evidenced by the following excerpt which the researcher took from one of the students' reflective journal writings, "Last week mam rahma gave us the assignment to bring progress in writing biography book because mam rahmawants to know how far the process we did."

The findings revealed errors in the sentence's tenses usage regarding the data above. The verb "wants" should be modified to "wanted" because the incident occurred last week.

The data above shows that EFL student still definitely struggle with expressing their ideas in English patterns, they are still influenced by their mother tongue pattern. As a result, the researcher sought to conduct additional research on the errors that occurred during students' reflective journal writing.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was classified as a qualitative content analysis. The study analyzed ten reflective journal articles from an EFL student's online blogging account. Meanwhile, this research drew its data from an EFL student at the State Islamic University of North Sumatera. As a result, the researcher concentrated on examining the errors made by one of the PBI-1's EFL students. The researcher chose documentation as a method of data collection in this study. As verification of the data's validity, the researcher captured a screenshot of the student's reflective journal. Additionally, the data was collected by purposive sampling because the researcher chose sixth-semester university students who used reflective journals. As a result, the researcher collected data in a systematic way and performed some processes for analyzing data. The processes of analyzing data will be shown in the following figure.

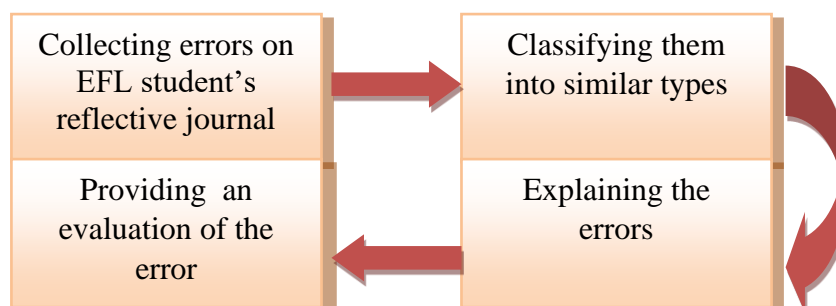


Fig. 1. An overview of data analysis

After completing all processes, the researcher selected a sample of the errors discovered for inclusion in the research findings and discussion.

DISCUSSION

After reviewing the documents, the researcher discovered five distinct types of errors in students' reflective journal writing, including timing errors, omission errors, insertion errors, parts of speech errors, and other errors. The findings are summarized as follows:

a. Error in Time

Error in time is a deviating phenomenon that is out of context. This indicates that the words, sentences, and discourses do not correspond to the events described in the written text. A representation of error in time will be shown in the following:

"last wednesday, I *am* not as enthusiastic as usual, because I *am* not feeling well"(Excerpt1, Rjw-4).

The EFL student constructed a sentence in the present tense, but the adverb of time "Last Wednesday" indicated that the sentence should be in the past tense, so the auxiliary "am" should be replaced with "was". The correct sentence is " Last Wednesday, I was not as enthusiastic as usual, because I was not feeling well."

The researcher discovered multiple inaccuracies in the student's reflective journal writing regarding time and the usage of tenses. This indicates that the problem occurred multiple times. This could have occurred as a result of the EFL student's failure to pay attention to the grammar norms in her writing. Since the creative writing lecturer explained that the goal of the reflective diary was to acclimate students to writing, EFL students were assigned to write approximately 150 to 200 words per entry following each class meeting, for a total of ten entries per semester on their blogger account. As a result of this statement, the EFL student composed reflective journals just to satisfy the requirements of their writing assignment.

Additionally, some errors arose as a result of intralinguistic transfer. The sentence does not fit into the target language's written composition as a result of the EFL student's lack of comprehension of the target language's tenses norms. The figures above demonstrate that several errors still occur in EFL students' reflective journal writing. The majority of her writings were in the simple present tense when they should have been in the past tense, as the reflective journal writing was meant to reflect on the student's learning experience and how she felt while in class.

b. Omission Error

An omission error is a type of digression that occurs when a word is not properly organized into a phrase. This form of digression is characterized by the absence of a necessary aspect in a sentence. The digression phenomenon happens when a learner omits a word or grammatical morpheme from a sentence, resulting in an unstructured sentence. The following data illustrates a sample of the data: "*she also good* at giving the material" (excerpt 2, Rjw-5)

This sentence is incomplete because the auxiliary verb preceding the adjective was omitted. This statement requires an auxiliary verb because it contains the adjective "good," which

should be introduced by the auxiliary verb to ensure that the sentence is effective. As the statement should be in the past tense and the subject is singular, the correct auxiliary verb to complete it is "was."

This error occurred because the student interpreted "good" as a verb in this sentence, implying that she no longer needed to include a verb, despite the fact that this sentence lacks a helping verb because "good" is an adjective. The error could occur as a result of the student unwittingly applying her native language (Bahasa) concepts to English principles. As a result, there is no need for an auxiliary verb to precede the adjective in the Bahasa way, and the statement becomes effective instantly. It can not, however, be extended to English, as these two languages are fraught with debate. After all of the explanations, we may conclude that the student's deletion of the auxiliary verb was due to the interference of their native tongue. To prevent making this error frequently, the learner must develop the habit of writing regularly using the target language's rules.

c. Insertion Error

Insertion error is a careless act in which the author inserts extraneous material into a sentence, resulting in the sentence's word becoming erroneous. As a result, the statement becomes jumbled, leaving the reader unclear about its meaning. The following quote shows one of the data:

"In the classroom, *I and we* made a group discussion to make a brief conclusion about our biography book progress" (Excerpt 3, Rjw-7).

In this instance, the student utilized a double subject, which confused the reader. Additionally, the sentence breaks English standards, as a sentence must contain a single subject and verb. To make the sentence clearer, the student had to eliminate one of the subjects.

This error occurred as a result of intralingua transfer when the learner lacked a sufficient grasp of English rules. It is possible that the student was unaware of her error because she was unaware that an English sentence must contain only one subject and one verb, as evidenced by the systematic errors. The student's lack of knowledge might be influenced by a number of variables, including the student's lack of ambition to study English, the presentation of the content provided was still monotonous and uninteresting, or the student was unaware of the most appropriate learning style for her. As a result, the student struggled to learn English.

d. Part of Speech Error

A part of speech error occurs when some aspects of the part of speech are not properly adapted when the sentence is organized. This indicates that the conjunctions, pronouns, adverbs, nouns, prepositions, articles, verbs, adjectives, and interjections used by the writer to structure the words do not correspond to the context. Most errors were detected in parts of speech, namely errors in the use of prepositions; an example of this may be seen in the following: "mam rahmah did not come *in* the class" (Excerpt 4, Rjw-6).

The EFL student made an error when she used the preposition "in." In this context, the EFL student wanted to inform the reader that the lecturer was unable to attend the class, rather than describe the location's circumstances. As a result, the proper preposition is "to." The proper sentence is "Ma'am Rahmah did not come to the class."

The student made numerous preposition errors. This indicates that the EFL learner retained an incorrect concept of how to utilize prepositions properly. According to the statistics shown above, the student selected a preposition based on her perception, without regard to its accuracy. This error occurred as a result of intralingua transfer, which occurred when the student

did not comprehend the target language's rules correctly and attempted to make hypotheses about prepositions based on her existing perspective.

According to the available data, students understand "in" as a preposition that is always used to denote a location. However, this is not applicable to all circumstances. In English, each preposition serves a distinct function in indicating an object's uniqueness. This will cause confusion and make it difficult for the learner to identify the appropriate preposition while writing sentences in the target language if she does not understand the preposition theory adequately. As a result, she frequently utilized prepositions with which she was accustomed without regard to the rules' accuracy.

e. Other Errors

Other errors are deviations in writing mechanisms that are inappropriate for the context. This means that certain components of writing, such as diction, capitalization, word order, and punctuation, are not correctly executed, resulting in a writing product that is disorganized and unpleasant to read. The following is a sampling of the data:

"Ma'am Rahmah asked us to read a *book biography* until the end of the book and made a resume from the book".... (*Excerpt 5, Rjw-2*).

This statement is classified as a noun phrase that is included as a part of other errors due to the inappropriate construction of the noun phrase. The student put the noun before the adjective. This violates the rules; the adjective should come before the noun. The proper term is "biography book."

The error occurred unintentionally when the student assumed that the rules for ordering words in English were similar to those in her mother tongue. Additionally, the student's lack of grammar may have contributed to this error occurring because the student was unable to organize the phrase in accordance with the standards. She translated the statement literally (word by word), disregarding the restrictions. As a result, the writing will create uncertainty because the structure is not well-formed and the meaning will be difficult to convey because the sentence structure had a substantial impact on determining the sentence's meaning.

Based on the explanation provided above, the researcher finds that the conclusions of this study differ significantly from the findings of previous studies presented in the introduction section. However, some of the errors discovered in this research had previously been discovered in other works. Furthermore, some of the erroneous findings and sources of error are supported by expert theories. Nonetheless, the errors found in this study are more specific than those found in earlier studies and theories.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Writing reflective journals on blogs can really help EFL students enhance their writing abilities because they will become accustomed to writing. Additionally, students' self-confidence and critical thinking skills will improve as a result of consistently writing reflective journals. However, reflective journal writing has also been shown to be ineffective at improving students' writing quality when the teacher does not provide feedback on their works. This can be evidenced by the data that show above that there are still various errors in students' writing. With feedback, EFL students will become aware of their writing errors and will avoid repeating them.

As a response, this study recommends that EFL teachers provide feedback on students' reflective journal writing in order to encourage students to write well.

The study may provide insight into the error analysis of EFL students' writing. Due to the limited scope of the topics covered in this research, the researcher would like to propose additional research examining the other side of the Reflective Journal, specifically "The student's perspective on the importance of providing feedback in writing a reflective journal"

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Authors’ Biography



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Benni has started his career in teaching English since 2017. Firstly, he was appointed to be the Head of Training and Course Unit at Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Manajemen Sukma Medan. He was assigned to channelize the students to be proficient in English for their professional careers. Next, in 2018, he got promoted to be a Head of Counsellor at the same institution. He was responsible to manage all academic supervisors to guide the students in conducting their study until finish.

Benni has produced two books during his academic career: “Reading Comprehension” in 2020, and “Public Speaking” in 2021. His second book is particularly dedicated to all Indonesian students having troubles in performing public speaking and in branding personal capacities. Finally, Benni is also productive in publishing scholarly works. His latest research “Online Learning Media: English Education Department Students’ Perspective” is published in 2020.