E-Link Journal, Vol. 13, No. 01,
June, 2026
P-ISSN:2085-1383; E-ISSN: 2621-4156
English Education Department, Universitas Islam Lamongan

Students' Grammatical Error Analysis in Writing Composition At 11TH Grade of MA AL-FALAH Pamekasan

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Submitted: February 9, 2026.
Accepted: May 21, 2026
Revised: May 26, 2026
Published: June 30, 2026

Abstract

This study investigates grammatical errors in writing daily composition texts among eleventh-grade students at MA Al-Falah. The research addresses two main questions: the types of grammatical errors that occur in students' compositions on daily activities and the most dominant type of error. Grammatical accuracy is an essential aspect of writing proficiency, yet many students struggle to produce error-free compositions. A qualitative research design was employed, with 26 students as respondents. Data were collected through documentation of students' written works and analyzed to identify error types based on a linguistic error taxonomy. The findings reveal four types of errors: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. Omission errors were the most frequent, occurring in 61,76% of cases, followed by addition at 38,24%, while misformation and misordering did not appear in the data. These outcomes underscore the critical necessity for strategically structured pedagogical interventions, specifically targeting morphological omissions and syntactic additions, to substantively elevate students' academic writing proficiency and structural precision.

Keywords: *Grammatical Error; Addition; Misordering; Omission; Misformation.*

INTRODUCTION

As a core component of the national curriculum, English is a compulsory subject across all formal educational levels, spanning from primary to tertiary education. Mastering this language requires proficiency in four interconnected skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. These are systematically categorized into receptive skills (listening and reading), which involve language comprehension, and productive skills (speaking and writing), which require active language generation. Consequently, developing comprehensive competence in both domains is crucial for achieving effective international communication. To achieve comprehensive mastery of English, proficiency in all four language skills is essential for effective daily communication. Among these, writing serves as an indispensable medium in daily life, widely utilized for structured correspondence, academic articles, and formal documentation. Berger et al. (2022) found that compared to speaking, writing tends to result in less emotional expression because it allows more time for deliberation. This deliberation reduces emotionality in communication and enables more structured expression.

Writing is universally essential across academic settings, professional domains, and personal interactions, and it demands consistent development. Unlike spoken language—which is often fleeting and allows immediate contextual adjustments—proficient writing requires a deliberate and structured process. Within the global community, the capacity to write effectively is paramount, yet this competence does not develop naturally; it must be systematically acquired through continuous training. According to Astiantih and Akfan (2023), producing good writing requires careful attention to ideas, punctuation, and word choice, as it is a continuous and complex process of expression. Consequently, writing stands as one of the most formidable language skills, encompassing intricate

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mechanics such as spelling, punctuation, and precise vocabulary selection. These challenges are inherently present even in a first language and become significantly compounded when navigating a foreign language context

This dynamic requires writers to articulate their thoughts and systematically integrate ideas into a coherent composition. Writing operates as an active text-creation process that encompasses basic transcription mechanics—such as spelling and punctuation—alongside complex, self-regulated cognitive thinking. To ensure the final message is clearly understood by the audience, a comprehensive mastery of grammatical rules and linguistic structures becomes absolute (Gebremariam, 2024). Consequently, a solid grasp of grammar is highly crucial for constructing accurate sentences and maintaining syntactic clarity across both written and spoken language

The interplay between grammar and writing dictates how ideas are structured and decoded by readers. Each language maintains unique syntactic conventions, specific rules for punctuation, and distinctive verb conjugations. Consequently, mastering these structural rules is vital for transforming loose concepts into a highly coherent and readable text. Ly (2020) stated that grammar is the foundation of effective language use, allowing writers to organize their ideas clearly and accurately. Mastery of grammar enables students to construct sentences appropriately, choose suitable diction, apply correct punctuation, and maintain proper spelling. Without adequate grammar skills, writing may contain errors that obscure meaning, making it difficult for readers to understand the intended message. Grammatical errors can occur at both morphological and syntactical levels, often due to the influence of students' native language, which may differ from English in various ways. Lumban Gaol et al. (2025) classified grammatical errors in students' descriptive writing into four categories: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering, with misformation occurring most frequently.

Identifying grammatical errors in student writing is highly critical for educators. By utilizing systematic error analysis, instructors can effectively diagnose linguistic difficulties and design targeted interventions to prevent recurring errors in subsequent compositions. According to Amir et al. (2023), errors are a crucial component of studying a learner's language, as they are essential for understanding the process of acquiring a second language. Experts note that systematic deviations occur when a learner consistently makes mistakes due to a lack of understanding. These errors arise because the learner has not mastered a particular aspect and repeatedly uses the incorrect form. Consequently, mitigating these errors requires students to actively internalize the structural rules of English. Educators equipped with comprehensive insights into these grammatical flaws can strategically guide learners to resolve their specific linguistic issues, thereby enhancing their mastery of grammar in text production.

Preliminary investigations through interviews at the eleventh grade of MA Al-Falah Pamekasan revealed that students consistently produced diverse grammatical errors in their written tasks. The diagnostic phenomena included subject-verb agreement mismatches (interchanging singular and plural verbs), morphological inaccuracies in noun inflections, and the erroneous compounding of double auxiliaries (e.g., 'is' and 'should'). Additionally, students frequently misapplied present verb suffixes following the modal auxiliary 'can,' used past tense forms instead of base infinitives after the phrase 'being able to,' and demonstrated syntactic instability in conditional clauses. Since these errors predominantly surfaced during take-home assignments and routine tasks, a systematic error analysis is urgently required to establish an empirical baseline for future writing enhancements.

Numerous empirical studies have explored the landscape of grammatical error analysis in student writing. Setyorini et al. (2020) investigated university-level essay writing using a descriptive case study approach. Their analysis revealed error distributions of 57.97% for substitution, 34.06% for omission, 7.25% for addition, and 0.72% for permutation, concluding that substitution constitutes the most prevalent error type within the Indonesian higher education context. Similarly, Hasan and Munandar (2022) examined undergraduate final papers using Dulay's Surface Strategy Taxonomy.

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Their findings indicated that misformation was the dominant error category (54.49%), followed by omission (31.11%), misordering (12.78%), and addition (11.11%), with specific structural vulnerabilities appearing frequently in verb forms and complex sentence syntax. Yunanda et al. (2023) analyzed tenth-grade descriptive texts using a descriptive qualitative method. Their investigation identified omission as the primary error source (54%), largely driven by underlying difficulties in spelling mechanics, while addition and misformation accounted for 30% and 16% respectively. Islam and Mufidah (2021) evaluated second-grade Islamic senior high school students, revealing a total of 155 errors where omission emerged as the most frequent type at 44%. While these existing literatures offer critical foundational benchmarks, their geographic and institutional scopes heavily favor urban facilities or higher-education cohorts. These privileged environments generally afford superior access to English learning resources and greater linguistic exposure. Consequently, a distinct research gap persists regarding grammatical errors in the writing of students situated in rural areas of Madura. In these localized settings, English exposure is significantly restricted, and the socio-pedagogical conditions differ fundamentally from urban cohorts, thereby demanding an explicit empirical investigation. Addressing this gap is imperative, as localized learning environments, distinct resource availabilities, and regional linguistic backgrounds fundamentally dictate the typology and frequency of student errors. Consequently, this study critically examines these dynamics by evaluating grammatical errors in the writing compositions of eleventh-grade students at MA Al-Falah Pamekasan, thereby providing contextualized empirical insights into Islamic senior high school contexts. To provide a clear direction for this investigation, the study addresses the following explicit research questions: 1. What types of grammatical errors are found in the students' writing compositions of daily activities at MA Al-Falah Dempo Barat Pasean, Pamekasan? 2. What is the dominant type of grammatical error committed by the students?

METHOD

This research employed a descriptive quantitative design with qualitative interpretation to obtain factual information and gather detailed qualitative data. The design was selected to allow an in-depth exploration of the phenomenon rather than statistical generalization (Creswell, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) In the context of error analysis, research design plays a crucial role in determining and guiding how the researcher collects factual data. Asenahabi (2019) defines research design as a plan adopted by a researcher before data collection commences, aimed at achieving the research objectives in a valid and cost-effective way. Similarly, Ary (2020) defines it as a plan to gain understanding of a group or phenomenon in its context. To ensure clear procedural detail, this study systematically executes a structured error analysis consisting of: (1) collecting samples of students' writing, (2) identifying grammatical errors, (3) classifying errors into specific categories, (4) calculating frequencies and percentages, and (5) interpreting the underlying linguistic causes qualitatively. By using this framework, the descriptive quantitative data provide the empirical baseline, which is then comprehensively interpreted to understand the contextual nature of students' grammatical flaws..

The research took place at MA Al-Falah Dempo Barat, Pasean, Pamekasan. The participants were 26 eleventh-grade students, selected through purposive sampling—a non-probability technique in which participants are chosen based on specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives (Etikan et al., 2016). The main considerations for selecting these specific participants were that eleventh-grade students had already completed formal instructions on various text types where complex grammatical structures are heavily required, making their writing highly relevant for a targeted error analysis. To gather the data, the students were given clear instructions to individually write a composition based on the assigned topic of daily activities. This writing task required a minimum count of 100 words and was completed within a strict duration of 45 minutes under classroom supervision.

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The primary data source was students' written compositions. Supporting instruments included observational notes to capture classroom behaviors and learning conditions (Patton, 2015) and documentation such as students' assignments, teacher notes, and related school records. To operationalize the primary instrument, the writing task was assigned individually with clear instructions to compose a text about daily activity routines. The time allocation was strictly set to 45 minutes, requiring a minimum word count of 100 words. Regarding the scoring procedure, since this study focuses on error analysis rather than holistic grading, the compositions were evaluated by identifying, quantifying, and tabulating each grammatical error based on the targeted linguistic categories. An error analysis framework adapted from Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) was used to classify grammatical errors into four categories: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

The data collection procedure in this study relied on gathering students' writing artifacts to maintain a sharp methodological focus. This process involved collecting the 26 written compositions completed by the eleventh-grade students during the controlled classroom task. These documented student compositions served as the direct and primary data source for the subsequent error analysis.

The data analysis followed the qualitative procedure suggested by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which involved: 1) Reducing irrelevant content from students' texts; 2) Identifying and classifying grammatical errors into the four categories; 3) Calculating the frequency and percentage of each error type using the formula: P = (f / n) x 100%, where P is the percentage, f is the frequency of a given error type, and n is the total number of errors; 4) Interpreting the results; 5) Drawing conclusions about the most dominant error type. To ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the findings, this study applied investigator triangulation through a peer-debriefing process, as recommended by Creswell (2014) the researcher's error identification and classification results were cross-checked and validated by an expert collaborator in English education to minimize subjective bias and ensure analytical consistency. Additionally, institutional permission and administrative clearance from the school authorities were secured prior to data collection to meet ethical standards.

RESULTS

The research findings cover: (1) the types of grammatical errors found in the students' writing compositions of daily activities at MA Al-Falah Dempo Barat Pasean, Pamekasan, and (2) the dominant grammatical error type.

Types of Grammatical Errors in Students' Writing Compositions

In analyzing the students' grammatical errors, the researcher classified them based on parts of speech, including articles, verbs, adjectives, nouns, pronouns, adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions. The errors were further categorized into four types: omission, addition, misformation,and misordering, following dulay et al. (1982). Table 1 presents examples of errors identified in the students' writing:

Table 1. Some errors in this research could be categorized as follows

Categories of grammatical error	Sentence	Correction
the use of article	-	-
Verb	The ***teacher teach*** us	The ***teacher teaches*** us
	I go to school ***for study***	I go to school ***for studying***
	I repeated all of the lessons	***I repeat*** all of the lessons
	After take bath i prepare for subuh prayer	
	I waiting Dhuha prayer	
	I always gets up	

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		After taking bath, I prepare for subuh prayer ***I wait*** for Dhuha prayer ***I always get*** up
Noun	-	-
Pronoun	After that, ***still go*** to night school	After that, ***I still go*** to night school.
Adverb	I ***direct*** enter to my class I ***direct*** take ritual I ***direct*** take bath	I ***directly*** enter ~~to~~ my class I ***directly*** take ritual I ***directly*** take bath
Preposition	I study ***in school*** For going to afternoon program ***until at for o'clock*** I always ***get up six o'clock***	I study ***at school*** For going to afternoon program ***until four o' clock*** I always ***get up at six o'clock***
Conjunction	-	-
Adjective	-	-

From Table 1, it can be seen that grammatical errors occurred in the use of verbs, pronouns, adverbs, and prepositions. No errors were found in articles, nouns, conjunctions, or adjectives.

Classification of Grammatical Errors Based on Error Type

Errors were also classified into omission, addition, misformation, and misordering, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Classification of grammatical errors by error type

No	Strategy	Errors	Correction
1.	Omission	After take bath	After i take a bath
		In school	At school
		Until at for o'clock	Until four o'clock
		get up six o'clock	Get up at six o'clock
2.	Addition	Teacher teach	Teacher teaches
		For study	For studying
		I repeated	I repeat
		I wating	I wait
		I always gets	I always get
		I direct	I directly
3.	Misformation	-	-
4.	Misordering	-	-

Based on the reclassification, the researcher identified 21 omission errors, 13 addition errors, and no errors for misformation or misordering, resulting in a total of 34 errors.

Frequency and Percentage of Grammatical Errors

Table 3. Frequency of errors by parts of speech

No	Kind of use	Types of errors			Total	Percentage
		O	A	MF		
1.	Articles	-	-	-		0%
2.	Verbs	15	11	-	26	76,47 %
3.	Adjective	-	-	-	-	0%
4.	Noun	-	-	-	-	0%
5.	Pronoun	2	-	-	2	5,88 %
6.	Adverb	3	-	-	3	8,82 %
7.	Preposition	1	2	-	3	8,82 %
8.	Conjunction	-	-	-	-	0%
	Total	21	13	0	34	100%
	Percentage	61,76%	38,24%	0%	100%	

The results show that omission was the most frequent error type (61,76%), followed by addition (38,24%). No misformation or misordering errors were found. In terms of parts of speech, the highest error [Reviewer 8.1][IDH8.2]occurrence was in verb usage (76,47 % of total errors), followed by adverbs and prepositions (each 8,82 %), and pronouns (5,88 %). These findings indicate that students often omit essential grammatical elements—such as verb endings or prepositions—when writing. The predominance of omission errors suggests that the students may not consistently apply grammatical rules, particularly those related to subject–verb agreement and the correct use of verb forms in the simple present tense. Regarding the complete absence of misformation and misordering errors (0%), this occurred because our categorization criteria focused strictly on the omission and addition of specific words and grammar rules in students' daily activity texts. The errors produced by the students fell heavily into leaving out necessary words or adding unnecessary words, rather than replacing words or changing correct sentence structures.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to identify the types and dominant grammatical errors made by the eleventh-grade students of MA Al-Falah Dempo Barat Pasean, Pamekasan, in writing daily activity compositions. The findings revealed that the most frequent grammatical error type was omission, accounting for 61,76% of all errors, followed by addition at 38,24%. This finding is consistent with Çelik and Eren (2023) who reported that omission was the most frequent grammatical error among EFL learners. No misformation or misordering errors were found. In terms of parts of speech, verbs were the most error-prone category (76,47%), followed by adverbs, prepositions, and pronouns. These results highlight that the students experienced difficulties in applying correct verb forms, particularly with subject–verb agreement and the appropriate use of verb endings such as –s/-es in the present tense and –ing in continuous forms.

The high proportion of omission errors indicates that many students tend to leave out necessary grammatical elements, such as auxiliary verbs or inflectional morphemes. This finding is in line with Sholehah et al. (2023) who observed that omission constituted the highest error percentage at 53% among senior high school students in Pamekasan, while Fajarina et al. (2022) similarly demonstrated that word omission remains a highly recurrent and persistent grammatical error encountered in students' English academic writing. To contextualize this finding, the pattern mirrors the results of Mufidah and Islam (2021) , who found that omission was the most common grammatical error type in students' recount texts, especially in verbs and articles. They attributed this to students' habit of translating directly from their first language, which often does not require certain grammatical

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markers in English. Similarly, Setyorini et al., (2020) reported that omission errors dominated students' narrative writing, pointing out that a lack of mastery of morphological rules and limited writing practice contributed significantly to this problem.

Further corroboration is found with the findings of Hasan and Munandar (2022), who examined descriptive text writing and concluded that subject–verb agreement was the most problematic area for students. They argued that the absence of inflectional morphemes in the students' native language leads to frequent omissions in English writing. Likewise, Yunanda et al., (2023) identified omission and addition as the most common errors in analytical exposition texts, explaining that these issues stem from insufficient grammatical awareness and limited teacher feedback.

In addition to omission, this study found a notable percentage of addition errors (38.24%). This suggests that some students tend to insert unnecessary words or grammatical markers, possibly as an overcorrection or an attempt to apply rules they only partially understand. Such patterns mirror the addition errors reported by Yunanda et al. (2023) and Hasan and Munandar (2022), where students often added auxiliary verbs or affixes in contexts where they were not needed. This tendency indicates that overgeneralization is another factor contributing to grammatical inaccuracy.

Taken together, the findings of this study and the four previous studies suggest that omission and addition errors are persistent across various writing genres in Indonesian EFL contexts. Both interlingual factors (e.g., first language interference) and intralingual factors (e.g., overgeneralization, incomplete rule application) play significant roles in these recurring errors. To address these issues, Mufidah and Islam (2021) and Hasan and Munandar (2022) recommend explicit grammar instruction with a focus on subject–verb agreement and verb form usage. Additionally, Setyorini et al. (2020) and Yunanda et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of integrating writing tasks with grammar-focused exercises and providing consistent corrective feedback. In the specific context of MA Al-Falah in Pamekasan, the dominance of omission errors is strongly influenced by these interlingual and contextual factors. From an L1 interference perspective, the students' native languages (Madurese and Indonesian) have limited or different systems of inflection compared to English, particularly in tense marking and subject–verb agreement. There is no structural change or suffix addition to a Madurese or Indonesian verb to indicate a third-person singular subject. Consequently, students directly translate their thoughts from Madurese or Indonesian into English, leading to frequent omission of grammatical markers such as -s/-es and -ed. Furthermore, instructional and contextual factors related to rural educational settings also play a significant role. In a rural school setting like Dempo Barat, Pasean, students have very limited exposure to authentic English environments outside the classroom, and instructional methods often rely heavily on standard textbook exercises with insufficient intensive writing practices or personalized corrective feedback.

The implications of these findings are twofold. First, teachers should design instructional activities that integrate grammar teaching into writing practice, ensuring that students have opportunities to apply grammatical rules in authentic contexts. Second, continuous feedback and error analysis activities should be implemented to help students identify and correct their mistakes. By combining these approaches, teachers can help learners internalize correct grammatical structures and gradually reduce their error rates in both written and spoken English.

CONCLUSION

This study identified and analyzed the types and dominant grammatical errors in the daily activity writing compositions of eleventh-grade students at MA Al-Falah Dempo Barat Pasean, Pamekasan. Synthesizing the data, omission emerged as the most pervasive error type (61.76%), closely followed by addition (38.24%), with verbs—particularly regarding subject–verb agreement and inflectional endings (–s/-es and –ing)—being the most error-prone category. Ultimately, these

recurring errors underscore a persistent challenge in Indonesian EFL contexts, driven by a combination of interlingual interference from the students' first language and intralingual overgeneralization. To address this, pedagogical interventions must shift toward integrating explicit grammar instruction with consistent, personalized corrective feedback within active writing tasks.

Nonetheless, this study acknowledges certain limitations. First, the investigation was constrained by a small sample size of 26 students within a single rural school context, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to broader or urban EFL populations. Second, the data collection focused exclusively on one specific writing genre (daily activity compositions). Future research directions should expand the sample size across multiple institutions and explore diverse writing genres, such as argumentative or analytical exposition texts, to provide a more comprehensive mapping of Indonesian EFL grammatical development.

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