

## Morpho-Syntactic Errors in EFL Students' Writing: A Lesson from Language Education Institutions

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### Abstract

Many students struggle with writing in English due to linguistic challenges such as morphology and syntax. This research aimed at discovering the morpho-syntactic errors that EFL students did and the most dominant error in the fifth-semester students in the English Education Study Program at Tadulako University. The researcher used descriptive quantitative method as the design of the research to analyze common morpho-syntactic error in the students' writings and to discover the errors and the most dominant errors made by students. The participants of this research were 145 students which chosen using simple random sampling where the researcher picked sample members from a population at random, without worrying about different groups or layers within that population. Data for this study were gathered through tests and the researcher analyzed using Dulay's linguistic category taxonomy. The results of the study showed that errors are found at both morphological and syntactical levels. The morphological level included pronoun error, quantifier error, and inflectional error. Meanwhile, the syntactical level included tense error, infinitive error, auxiliary verb error and subject-verb agreement error. However, from all those errors, the most dominant error was pronoun error with the total number of errors was 504 in frequency. It implied that students lacked of understanding the use of pronouns in sentences. The research findings have important implications for both pedagogical approach and linguistic competence. For pedagogical approach, the insights help students understand and correct common grammar errors, improving their writing skills and boosting their confidence. In terms of linguistic competence, the findings highlight EFL students' development in morphology and syntax, enabling them to construct grammatically correct sentences and master complex language structures.

**Keywords:** Error analysis; Morphosyntactic analysis; Morphology; Syntax; Writing skills

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## INTRODUCTION

Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are the four essential skills required to achieve proficiency in English. Among these, writing remains one of the most challenging skills for students to master. Writing is not merely about transcribing thoughts into words but involves expressing ideas, emotions, and desires in a coherent and structured written form (Putri & Aminatun, 2021). To produce quality writing, students must consider multiple elements, such as grammatical structure, vocabulary, punctuation, and coherence. Each of these components contributes to the clarity and effectiveness of the written text, enabling the writer to communicate their intended message clearly and accurately.

Vocabulary plays a pivotal role in the development of writing skills. A broad and rich vocabulary allows students to articulate their thoughts more effectively and convey nuanced meanings in their writing. According to Susanto (2017), vocabulary acquisition is integral to mastering a language, as it provides the foundational tools for expressing ideas and constructing meaningful sentences. Without sufficient vocabulary, students struggle to convey their thoughts accurately, resulting in disorganized and unclear writing. However, while a robust vocabulary is fundamental, it is not sufficient on its own. To master writing, students must also develop an understanding of morphology, which pertains to the structure and formation of words.

Morphology, as defined by Aronoff & Fudeman (2022), is the mental system involved in word formation, or the branch of linguistics that studies how words are formed and structured. This understanding is essential for students because it aids in comprehending the complexities of word construction, which is fundamental for effective communication and writing. Morphemes, the smallest units of meaning in a language, form the core of morphological study. Lieber (2021) emphasizes that morphology not only involves understanding how words are created but also explores how words change form in response to grammatical structures within sentences. By learning morphology, students can gain deeper insights into word formation and usage, thus enhancing their writing proficiency.

In addition to vocabulary and morphology, mastering grammar is also vital in developing writing skills. Grammar encompasses the rules that govern the structure of sentences and the relationships between words. Eunson (2020) defines grammar as the set of rules that organize meaning in language, including aspects such as syntax and morphology. Syntax refers to the arrangement of words and phrases to form coherent sentences, as explained by Muin (2021). Understanding syntax is essential for writing grammatically correct sentences, as it helps in constructing logical and structured expressions. Rahayu (2021) highlights that words are fundamental components of sentences, and proper sentence construction requires attention to grammatical accuracy, particularly subject-verb agreement.

Subject-verb agreement is a fundamental rule in English grammar, requiring that the subject and verb in a sentence agree in number and person. Despite being taught since junior high school, many students continue to struggle with this concept, leading to frequent errors in writing. Muin (2021) notes that subject-verb agreement errors occur when students fail to match singular subjects with singular verbs or plural subjects with plural verbs. For example, writing "She shares her books with her friends" is correct, while "She share her books with her friends" is incorrect. Similarly, "The stars shine brightly" is accurate, whereas "The stars shines brightly" is erroneous. These mistakes suggest a need for more effective instructional strategies in teaching subject-verb agreement.

Various methods have been employed to teach subject-verb agreement, including the inductive method and the Learning by Teaching (LBT) approach. Widiastuti & Saefurrohman (2021) highlight the effectiveness of the inductive method, which involves students discovering grammatical rules through observation and pattern recognition. This method encourages active learning and helps students internalize grammar rules. Additionally, Setiawan (2019) suggests that the LBT approach has proven successful in improving students' retention and understanding. This student-centered method encourages learners to engage actively with the material by teaching it to their peers. Despite these methods, many students still make errors in subject-verb agreement, even at the university level. Common mistakes include sentences like "The earth move round the sun" instead of "The earth moves round the sun" and "He will goes to the party" instead of "He will go to the party." Such persistent errors underscore the need for further research into effective teaching strategies.

This study aims to examine morpho-syntactic errors made by EFL students, focusing on specific areas such as inflection, quantifiers, pronouns, tenses, infinitives, auxiliary verbs, and subject-verb agreement. Previous research has explored similar topics, but this study seeks to provide new insights by analyzing specific morpho-syntactic errors in greater depth. For instance, Fortuna (2023) focused on subject-verb agreement and punctuation errors, highlighting the importance of understanding grammatical rules to produce accurate writing. Meanwhile, Al-zubeiry (2020) analyzed morpho-syntactic errors in articles, conjunctions, prepositions, verb forms, subject-verb agreement, and redundancy. This study emphasized the need to address a broad range of grammatical challenges to enhance writing proficiency. Additionally, Desnaranti (2017) explored error types using the surface strategy taxonomy, categorizing errors based on how they manifest in writing. Building on these previous studies, this research will analyze morpho-syntactic errors in targeted areas, contributing valuable insights to the field of language education.

This research addresses two primary questions: What are the morpho-syntactic errors that EFL students make? and What is the most dominant morpho-syntactic error observed among EFL students? By answering these questions, the study aims to shed light on the specific challenges faced by EFL students in developing writing skills. Additionally, the research will offer recommendations for educators to support students in overcoming these challenges. It is hoped that the findings will contribute to the development of more effective instructional strategies and enhance language education practices. Ultimately, this research aspires to provide valuable insights that can improve students' writing proficiency, facilitate better learning outcomes, and promote academic success for EFL learners.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### Research Design

This research employed a descriptive quantitative design aimed at identifying and analyzing the common and dominant morpho-syntactic errors present in students' writing. The quantitative approach was chosen because it emphasizes the collection and analysis of numerical data in a systematic and standardized manner, ensuring objectivity and precision in answering the research questions. By utilizing this method, the study sought to quantify the frequency and types of errors, providing a clear and measurable understanding of students' morpho-syntactic challenges. The descriptive nature of the research allowed for a detailed examination of the specific error patterns, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the common mistakes encountered by students. Data collection involved gathering information from a significant sample size to ensure reliable results that could be generalized to the wider population. This approach not only supported the identification of dominant errors but also provided insights into potential underlying causes, offering valuable information for improving language instruction.

### Research Participants

The participants in this study were fifth-semester students enrolled in the English Education program at Tadulako University. A total of 248 students participated, distributed across six different classes labeled A to F. The distribution of students per class was relatively balanced. Class A and Class B each comprised 42 students, while Classes C, D, E, and F each had 41 students. This uniform distribution ensured an equitable representation of students across the different classes, making the sampling process straightforward and unbiased.

To ensure the reliability of the research results, the researcher employed a simple random sampling technique, which is effective for populations with relatively homogeneous characteristics. Given the similar educational backgrounds and academic

levels of the participants, this sampling method was deemed appropriate. From the total population, 145 students were randomly selected to form the sample. This approach ensured that every student had an equal opportunity to be included, thereby minimizing selection bias and enhancing the validity of the findings. The use of random sampling also supported the generalizability of the research results, ensuring that the identified patterns and conclusions reflected the broader student population.

### **Research Instrument**

The primary instrument utilized in this research was a carefully designed test aimed at identifying common and dominant morpho-syntactic errors in students' writing. The test comprised a total of 35 questions, each strategically constructed to assess various aspects of morpho-syntactic competence. These questions were formulated based on key grammatical components that are frequently prone to errors among EFL students, including inflections, quantifiers, pronouns, tenses, infinitives, auxiliary verbs, and subject-verb agreement. The objective of the test was to comprehensively evaluate students' understanding and application of these grammatical rules in writing. The questions were designed to challenge students' analytical skills, prompting them to recognize and correct errors, thereby providing accurate data regarding their morpho-syntactic proficiency. This instrument played a crucial role in collecting reliable data, ensuring that the findings would reflect students' actual performance and difficulties. Ultimately, the test results served as the foundation for analyzing error patterns and determining the most dominant errors encountered by the participants.

### **Data Collection Technique**

In this study, the researcher utilized a structured test as the primary data collection instrument to identify and analyze common and dominant morpho-syntactic errors in students' writing. The process began with the careful design of a test comprising 35 questions, each aimed at evaluating specific aspects of morpho-syntactic competence, such as inflections, quantifiers, pronouns, tenses, infinitives, auxiliary verbs, and subject-verb agreement. Once the test was finalized, it was directly distributed to 153 students, ensuring that each participant had equal access to the test materials. The direct distribution method facilitated efficient communication and minimized external interference that could affect the test results. After the students completed the test, all answer sheets were systematically collected for thorough analysis. This methodical approach allowed the researcher to accurately identify the patterns of errors made by the students. The collected data provided essential insights into the most frequent and dominant morpho-syntactic mistakes, contributing significantly to the overall findings of the study.

### **Data Analysis**

This research employed an analysis of test results as the primary technique for data analysis, focusing on identifying and understanding morpho-syntactic errors made by EFL students. The data analysis process was conducted in several systematic steps to ensure accuracy and comprehensiveness. The first step involved identifying the morphological and syntactical errors present in the students' test results. This process required a detailed examination of each student's responses, focusing on errors related to word formation, grammatical structures, and sentence construction. The researcher carefully noted every instance where students made mistakes involving elements such as inflections, pronouns, quantifiers, tenses, auxiliary verbs, infinitives, and subject-verb agreement.

Following the identification process, the next step was to classify the errors according to their specific categories. This classification was crucial to understanding the types and patterns of mistakes commonly encountered by students. Errors were grouped based on their nature, whether related to morphology (such as incorrect word forms) or syntax (such as sentence structure issues). After classification, the researcher proceeded to describe the

identified errors in detail, providing explanations and examples to illustrate the nature of the mistakes. These initial three steps directly addressed the first research question, which focused on determining the common morpho-syntactic errors made by EFL students.

The final step of the analysis involved evaluating the frequency of the identified errors to determine the most dominant types. By calculating the occurrence of each error category, the researcher could identify which morpho-syntactic mistakes were most prevalent among the students. This step was essential for answering the second research question, which sought to identify the most dominant morpho-syntactic errors made by EFL learners. Through this systematic and structured analysis process, the researcher was able to provide a comprehensive understanding of the error patterns, offering valuable insights into the linguistic challenges faced by EFL students in writing.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

The researchers break into two parts, morphology and syntax in order to know the morpho-syntactic errors that EFL students do. The following diagrams provide a detailed breakdown of the total frequency of these morpho-syntactic errors.

Table 1. Frequency of Morphological Errors

Morphological Errors	Frequency
Pronoun Errors	504
Quantifier Errors	329
Inflectional Errors	223
Total	1056

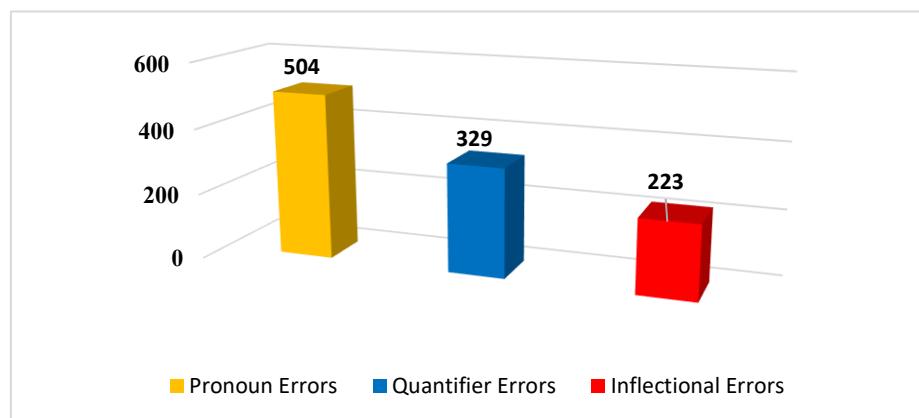


Figure 1 Diagram of Morphological Errors

Table 1 and Figure 1 illustrate the morphological errors made by EFL students in the test results. These errors fall into three categories: pronoun errors, quantifier errors, and inflectional errors. The total frequency of pronoun errors is 504, quantifier errors is 329, and inflectional errors is 223. Pronoun errors are the most frequent, with the test covering subject pronouns, possessive pronouns, and relative pronouns. However, the test did not include object and reflexive pronouns. Then, by identifying the results test, it indicates that many students do not understand the use of pronouns in a sentence, for example in the sentence '*Every student must bring (their/his) own lunch*'. Based on the results of the test, students tend to choose '*their*' because they think that every student refers to a plural noun, that is why they choose '*their*'. However, it is not. The students are also confused because there is a determiner '*every*' before the word '*student*'. The word '*every*'

in the sentence refers to every individual student in a group. Then, the correct pronoun to replace every student is “*his*”. The word “*his*” is a possessive adjective pronoun to tell that lunch belongs to each student. Students often struggle with using subject pronouns consistently in their writing. They sometimes fail to match the pronouns with their proper functions in sentences. This issue is compounded by a lack of content understanding, a general dislike for learning grammar, and feelings of embarrassment when approaching teachers for help. Moreover, students sometimes get confused in using subject and object pronouns like in sentence (*him/he*) and *I went to the store*).

Based on the sentence, students occasionally do not know when they have to use subject or object pronouns. They choose “*Him*” as their answer without knowing it is object pronoun. In this case, they should choose “*He*” because that is the right answer which is “*He*” is a subject pronoun to replace a person that functions as a subject. The incorrect use of pronouns in sentences indicates that students still struggle with understanding how to use pronouns correctly, more so than with quantifiers and inflections. However, it's worth noting that inflectional errors occur the least frequently. This is because students do not recognize regular and irregular nouns or they generalize that every plural noun must end with “s/es”. As in sentence “*I saw two (deers/deer) in the forest*”. Most of the students choose “*deers*” instead of “*deer*”. This confusion arises because students struggle to grasp the differences between regular and irregular nouns. Irregular plural nouns differ significantly from their singular forms. Without consistent practice, many students often forget the correct construction of these irregular plurals. EFL students frequently get confused by the structural differences between singular and plural noun forms, especially with irregular plurals. The complexity is heightened by the fact that some forms remain the same in both singular and plural. The plural of “*sheep*” is “*sheep*” rather than “*sheeps*,” for instance. Another word with the same plural form is “*tuna*” (tuna). Additionally, irregular plurals of other singular nouns like “*female*,” “*male*,” “*foot*,” and “*date*” also cause confusion for students.

Table 2. Frequency of Syntactical Errors

Syntactical Errors	Frequency
Subject-verb Agreement Errors	337
Tense Errors	274
Auxiliary Verbs Errors	202
Infinitive Errors	192
Total	1005

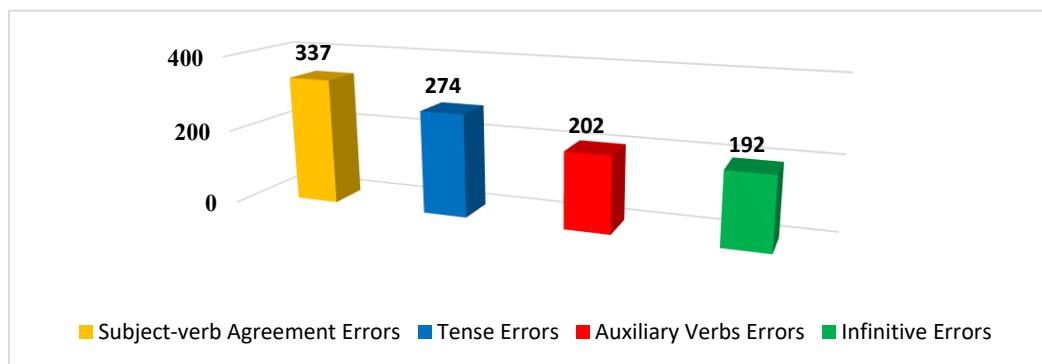


Figure 2 Diagram of Syntactical Errors

The data look like the students made the most errors with subject-verb agreement, with a frequency of 337 errors. This was followed by tense errors at 274, auxiliary verb errors at 202, and the least frequent were infinitive errors. These findings are presented in

Table and Figure 4.2. In these findings, the researcher found that students often feel that their native language interferes with their use of foreign language patterns, making it challenging to use them correctly. One reason for the frequent subject-verb agreement errors is this interference from their mother tongue.

The researcher also found that these mistakes stem from a lack of practice and a generally low skill level. In their daily lives, students rarely use subject-verb agreement, and they struggle to differentiate between singular and plural subjects. This difficulty in categorizing subject-verb agreement is primarily due to insufficient practice. Without regular practice, students cannot master all forms of subject-verb agreement. The main reason for errors in written production is the students' lack of understanding of the target language rules. This includes their ongoing confusion when applying subject-verb agreement rules. The current study aligns with these findings, supporting the idea that students' mistakes are largely due to their unfamiliarity with the language rules. The researcher found that most of students struggle on applying the rules of subject-verb agreement which the subject and verb in a sentence must agree in person and number, for example: *The list of items (is/are) on the desk.*

Based on the results of the test, the students tend to answer "are" instead of using "is" because "list" here indicates the subject of the sentence. If the subject is singular, then the verb should be singular. Although "items" is plural, the sentence's subject is "list" which is singular. then, the verb must agree with the singular subject. Overall, the researcher concludes that many students find it difficult to understand and apply subject-verb agreement rules. This challenge often stems from the complexity of English grammar and the subtle nuances involved in identifying the true subject of a sentence. For example, when a subject is followed by a prepositional phrase like "of items," students might mistakenly focus on the plural noun within the phrase instead of the singular subject. For example, when a subject is followed by a prepositional phrase like "of items," students might mistakenly focus on the plural noun within the phrase instead of the singular subject. These errors in subject-verb agreement can be a significant hurdle in learning English grammar.

Interestingly, infinitive errors are the least frequent, with a total of 192. This might be because constructing infinitives is relatively straightforward and they are commonly used in daily life and writing. Despite this, some students still make these errors. Even though they have been taught since senior high school, fifth-semester students continue to make some mistakes in their tests. This suggests that further investigation is needed to understand why these errors persist. Let us see the example in the sentence (*He needs (to buy/buy a ticket)*). In this case, some of the students answer "buy" because they did not know how to use the infinitive form and which verb should be followed by to infinitive. In English, there are some verbs followed by to infinitive, for example when a verb like "needs" is followed by another verb, the second verb should be in its infinitive form, which includes "to." Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1 illustrate the morphological errors made by EFL students in the test results. These errors fall into three categories: pronoun errors, quantifier errors, and inflectional errors. The total frequency of pronoun errors is 504, quantifier errors is 329, and inflectional errors is 223. Pronoun errors are the most frequent, with the test covering subject pronouns, possessive pronouns, and relative pronouns. However, the test did not include object and reflexive pronouns.

For the second research problem, the researcher will show the most dominant morpho-syntactic error that EFL students do. The detailed will distribute on the table and figure below:

Table 3. Frequency of Morpho-syntactic Errors

Morpho-syntactic Errors	Frequency
Pronoun Errors	504
Subject-verb Agreement Errors	337
Quantifier Errors	329
Tense Errors	274
Inflectional Errors	223
Infinitive Errors	202
Auxiliary Verbs Errors	192
Total	2061

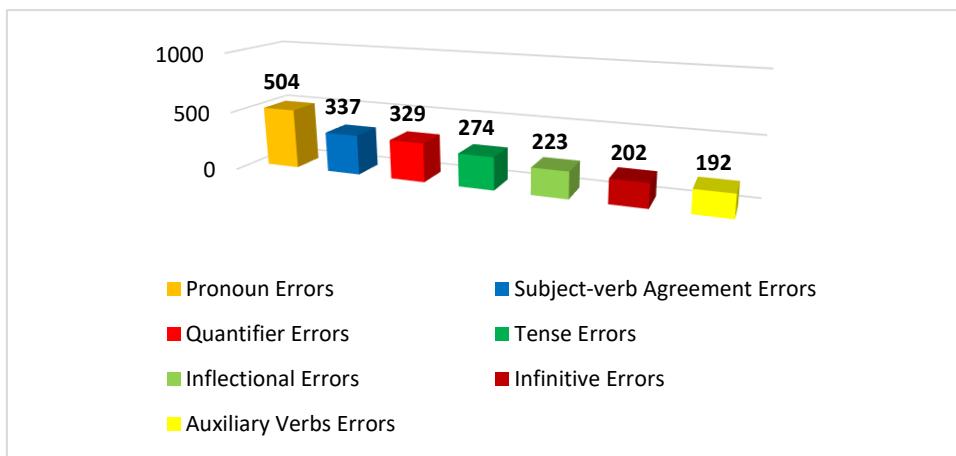


Figure 3. Diagram Morpho-syntactic Errors

Table 3 and Figure 3 provide insights into the frequency of students' morpho-syntactic errors. The table shows a total of 2061 errors, divided into morphology and syntax. The diagram illustrates the common morpho-syntactic errors found in the test results. Based on the test results, morphological errors are more prevalent than syntactic errors. Pronoun errors are the most frequent, with 504 occurrences, while auxiliary verb errors are the least frequent, with 192 occurrences. These findings suggest that students struggle more with the morphological aspects of language, particularly pronouns. This indicates that students may have difficulty understanding and applying the rules for pronoun usage, leading to frequent errors. On the other hand, auxiliary verb errors, while still significant, are less common, indicating a relatively better grasp of these elements. Overall, the data highlight the common morpho-syntactic errors in the students' test results, with pronoun errors being the most dominant.

Based on the research findings, the researcher can conclude that this study has some weaknesses. The first is the researcher does not provide the object and reflexive pronoun in the test. That is why the researcher may say that this study does not complete enough. The second one is the researcher also only provides the simple subject in the sentences. However, he does not provide complex subject. Then, students are quite easy to answer each question on the test because of it.

Then related to the weaknesses of this study, the researcher has suggestions for future researchers, this study can serve as a relevant reference and foundation for conducting research on similar topics with different focus points. Future studies could explore the subject-verb agreement errors with more complex subject. Future researchers

can also explore more about pronoun errors, especially about object and reflexive pronouns.

## Discussion

In this section, the researcher presents detailed findings related to the research questions: (1) What are the morpho-syntactic errors that EFL students make? and (2) What is the most dominant morpho-syntactic error made by EFL students? To address the first research question, the researcher focused on the frequency of morpho-syntactic errors identified in the students' test results. The findings revealed seven common morpho-syntactic errors, which were classified into two main linguistic categories: morphological and syntactical errors. The morphological errors included pronoun errors, quantifier errors, and inflectional errors. Meanwhile, the syntactical errors comprised subject-verb agreement errors, tense errors, infinitive errors, and auxiliary verb errors. These findings differ from those reported by Purinanda & Sutrisno (2022), who identified a broader range of morpho-syntactic errors, categorized into morphology—including inflection, derivation, preposition, article, possessive determiner, quantifier determiner, copula be, and pronoun errors—and syntax—including passive voice, tense, infinitive, noun phrase, adverbial clause, adjectival clause, auxiliary, and subject-verb agreement errors.

In response to the second research question, this study identified pronoun errors as the most dominant morpho-syntactic issue, with a total frequency of 504 errors. The frequent occurrence of pronoun errors suggests that students struggled significantly in correctly using subject pronouns, possessive pronouns, and relative pronouns. In contrast, the least frequent morpho-syntactic error was related to auxiliary verbs, which accounted for 192 errors. This indicates that although students found auxiliary verbs challenging, they made fewer mistakes compared to pronoun usage. In total, the researcher identified 2,061 morpho-syntactic errors, categorized into morphological and syntactical errors. This result, however, diverges from findings by Fortuna (2023), who reported that the most dominant error in her study was subject-verb agreement, accounting for 63% of all errors. In this study, the writing skills are affected by vocabulary development and acquisition. The findings are in with nielsen et al. (2022) and Bowers and Kirby (2010) who found that vocabulary development and acquisition provide students insight in composing their writing texts.

Additionally, Purinanda & Sutrisno (2022) reported that inflectional errors were the most common, with a total of 135 errors. The discrepancy in findings could be attributed to the research location and the instruments used for data collection. While their study was conducted at a state university in Yogyakarta and relied on undergraduate research articles, this research took place at Tadulako University in Palu, employing structured tests as the primary instrument. These contextual differences highlight how research settings and methods can influence findings, emphasizing the importance of considering these factors when analyzing and comparing research outcomes. Based on these results, it can be concluded that fifth-semester students in the English Education Study Program at Tadulako University still demonstrate a lack of understanding in pronoun usage, particularly regarding subject pronouns, possessive pronouns, and relative pronouns. Although this research shares similarities with previous studies in its focus on morpho-syntactic errors, the distinct context and methodology underscore the uniqueness of its findings.

These findings hold significant implications for both pedagogical approaches and linguistic competence. From a pedagogical perspective, the results offer valuable insights into the common grammar errors that students frequently encounter. Recognizing these patterns enables educators to design targeted instructional strategies that address students' weaknesses (Verhoeven & Perfetti, 2011; Wang & Liu, 2020). Specifically, it is essential

for students to develop a thorough understanding of pronouns and subject-verb agreement. Mastering these elements will help students avoid common grammatical errors, thereby improving their overall writing skills. Furthermore, these insights can encourage students to engage in more focused practice, particularly in areas where they encounter difficulties. Such targeted learning strategies can lead to improved outcomes, enabling students to build a stronger foundation in English grammar and writing.

Addressing these common errors is also instrumental in enhancing students' confidence in their writing abilities. Confidence is a critical factor in academic success, and by understanding and overcoming common grammatical challenges, students can approach writing tasks with greater assurance. This sense of achievement and improved proficiency will likely translate into better academic performance and greater engagement with learning activities (Zaim, 2018; Al Zumor, 2021). In addition, developing accurate grammatical knowledge supports students' long-term language development, equipping them with essential skills for academic and professional success.

From the perspective of linguistic competence, the findings shed light on how EFL students comprehend and apply morpho-syntactic rules in their writing. Identifying common errors allows for a deeper understanding of the challenges students face when constructing grammatically accurate sentences. This understanding is crucial for improving students' ability to construct sentences that align with morphological and syntactic rules (Dari et al., 2022; Astiantih & Akfan, 2023; Wahid & Sudirman, 2023). For instance, students can develop an understanding of how to change word forms correctly and how to apply syntactic rules, such as appropriate tense usage and accurate subject-verb agreement. This knowledge is not only vital for writing proficiency but also for broader language acquisition and development.

Furthermore, the findings encourage students to move beyond their comfort zones and engage with more complex grammatical structures. By understanding the patterns of common errors, students can focus on refining their skills in areas where they are most prone to mistakes (Ilham, 2024; Ismiati & Fitria, 2021). This deeper engagement with language learning promotes analytical thinking and encourages students to approach writing tasks with a more critical and reflective mindset. As a result, students can develop a more sophisticated understanding of language structure and usage, enabling them to produce more accurate and coherent written texts (Najia & Sutikno, 2024; Susanti & Agung, 2023).

This research contributes valuable insights into the morpho-syntactic errors made by EFL students and highlights the importance of targeted instructional strategies and continuous practice. The findings emphasize the need for educators to provide explicit grammar instruction and offer opportunities for students to practice and refine their skills. By addressing common grammatical errors, educators can support students in developing stronger linguistic competence, ultimately enhancing their writing proficiency and academic success. Additionally, the research underscores the importance of considering context, research settings, and methodologies when interpreting and comparing findings. Although the results differ from previous studies, they provide a unique perspective on the challenges faced by EFL students in Tadulako University, offering a foundation for future research and instructional improvements. Ultimately, this study reinforces the value of in-depth analysis and reflection in understanding and addressing morpho-syntactic errors, contributing to the broader field of language education and student development.

## CONCLUSION

After conducting this research and analyzing the data, the researcher concludes that the morpho-syntactic errors made by EFL students include pronoun errors, quantifier errors, inflectional errors, subject-verb agreement errors, tense errors, infinitive errors, and

auxiliary verb errors. The findings indicate that the most common morpho-syntactic error is pronoun errors. In total, there are 2,061 morpho-syntactic errors, suggesting that EFL students at Tadulako University lack knowledge in both morphology and syntax.

This study highlights that pronoun errors are the most common in morphology, with a total frequency of 504 errors. Similarly, subject-verb agreement errors are the most frequent in syntax, with a total frequency of 337 errors. When combining both morphology and syntax, pronoun errors remain the highest, with a total frequency of 504 errors. Finally, regarding pronoun errors being the most frequent, the researcher found that students sometimes do not use personal pronouns consistently according to their function in the sentence. This is due to a lack of understanding of content, a dislike of learning grammar, and embarrassment when approaching the teacher. Additionally, students occasionally get confused between subject and object pronouns.

Related to the findings, future research could dive into more effective ways of teaching morphology and syntax, as well as how these strategies could shape EFL curriculum design and teacher training. Exploring different teaching methods and their success in reducing morpho-syntactic errors could offer valuable insights for teaching practices. Additionally, understanding how these errors impact students' overall language skills and academic performance can help refine curriculum development and assessment practices. In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of focused grammar instruction and provides a foundation for ongoing improvements in language education. By addressing common morpho-syntactic errors and implementing targeted teaching methods, educators can help EFL students achieve greater proficiency in English and enhance their academic and professional prospects. The insights from this research can guide future studies and teaching practices, ultimately advancing language education.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based on the research findings, the researcher has several recommendations for students and future researchers. For students, this research will be integrated into their language skills to help them develop and improve their writing abilities. It will assist students in understanding how words are formed from smaller units called morphemes and how to arrange words and phrases to form coherent and grammatically correct sentences. This research aims to help students improve their writing skills and understand the importance of learning morphology and syntax. The researcher suggests that students engage in more practice, as practice makes perfect. For future researchers, this study can serve as a valuable reference and foundation for conducting research on similar topics with different focus points. Future studies could explore subject-verb agreement errors with more complex subjects. Additionally, researchers can delve deeper into pronoun errors, particularly focusing on object and reflexive pronouns.

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