

RECOGNIZING WORD ORDER ERRORS IN EFL'S ENGLISH NARRATIVE COMPOSITION: A MORPHOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

This research was done to investigate kinds of word order errors, classify them, explain the characteristics of the errors, and evaluate the errors produced by the EFL. Word order errors happened because of the influence of the mother tongue and the lack of grammar that was supposed to have in the sentence. There are many kinds of word order errors found in the learners' English narrative composition. The common word order errors are sentences and pronoun. Those word order errors mostly found on the learners' writing. It happened because writing is the most difficult skill in learning English. The writing skill is complex and certainly difficult to teach, requiring not only grammatical and theoretical devices but also conceptual and judgmental elements. The research was done by using a descriptive method and the data were collected from 20 first-semester students at University of Bina Sarana Informatika Jakarta, English narrative composition. The results found in EFL's English narrative composition were word order errors in the sentence are 7 errors, in pronoun are 6 errors, in adverb are 3 errors, in noun phrase are 2 errors, and in adverb of frequency are 2 errors.

Keywords - Error Analysis, Kinds of Error, Word Order, English Narrative Composition, EFL

INTRODUCTION

English has four skills that have to be mastered by the learners. The English skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Every skill has own different difficulty, and writing is the most challenging part to be learned among other skills. It becomes complicated because what we say is different from what we write. As Heaton (1988) stated that writing skills were complex and certainly difficult to teach, requiring not only grammatical and theoretical devices but also conceptual and judgmental elements. It also becomes difficult because most learners are still affected by their mother tongue and lack of English proficiency.

Many aspects that make writing look difficult. Spelling, grammar, and vocabulary are some factors that make writing look difficult. They should be comprehended and mastered well by the learners before they write. Writing is related to grammar. It means that it also relates to linguistics. Linguistics is the scientific study of language. There are some branches in Linguistics, such as Syntax, Morphology, Phonology, and Semantics.

Errors happen again and again then cannot be recognized by the learners. Only the teacher or researcher could recognize them. Mistakes, according to Yuksel (2007) are not a result of the deficiency incompetence; they can be characterized by the slips of the pen or the slips of the tongue. Lapses may result from some factors such as memory failure and physical or mental fatigue. Richards et al (1985) describe errors as "The use of a linguistic item in a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete action".

Error Analysis is a kind of Applied Linguistics which has two functions. The first function is theoretical, which has its place in methodology and describes the learners' knowledge of the target language. It also helps the researcher to recognize the relation between the knowledge and teaching the learners has been receiving. The practical area of error analysis is to deal with the mismatch between the knowledge of the learners and the demands of the situation successfully. Then, Richard's & Sampson (1974) supported that error analysis is an important tool for teachers to evaluate the learners' learning ability in order to set the priority to solve the learners' problems from the most frequent errors made by them.

Richard Nordquist on <https://www.thoughtco.com/word-order-english-sentences-1692503> mentioned that word order refers to the conventional arrangement of words in a phrase, clause, or sentence. Compared with many other languages, word order in English is fairly rigid. In particular, the order of subject, verb, and object is relatively inflexible. Word order is very important because it relates to make sense the sentences. The incorrect word order can make the sentences confusing, unclear, misunderstand, etc.

There are some rules related to word order. https://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/words/word_order.htm mentioned the rules of word order, they are:

- a. Main verb before place
Examples : They *had lunch in the school-canteen* this afternoon.
Now, we *are studying English in the class*.
- b. Place before expression of time
Examples : The boys flew their kites *in the park last week*.
We went shopping *to the mall yesterday*.
- c. Object before adverb of manner
Examples : We did *our test carefully*.
My sister always writes *her note neatly*.
- d. Adverb of frequency before main verb
Examples : We *always study* Math every Monday.
Sita *never comes* late to school.
- e. Adverb of frequency after form of tobe
Examples : She *is always* shouting when speaking.
They *are usually* in the park on Sunday morning.

Correction is essential in helping the learners become more accurate in using the foreign language as Russel and Spada (2006) stressed that there is growing evidence that error correction is overall useful and can be helpful in L2 learning. However, the learners' errors could be decreased or solved by conducting systematic analyzing to identify types and characteristics of the errors from the learners' production of speaking or writing in order to provide them with appropriate feedback and correction. Corder (1967) identified the significance of errors in three ways, they are: (1) Undertake a systematic analysis so the teachers can learn from their learners' linguistic progress and difficulties; (2) Errors provide evidence of how the learners learn or acquire the language and what strategies or procedures do they employ to achieve the learning goal; and (3) Errors are vital to the learners themselves since they are an essential device for them to test their hypotheses during the process of language learning.

Based on the experts' opinion above it can be concluded that errors could happen in the English four skills, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Errors could happen because of some factors, such as spelling, grammar, vocabulary, etc which relates to writing.

Spelling, grammar, and vocabulary are kinds of items that make writing looks difficult. Analysis and correction are needed to avoid the same errors.

Kinds of Errors

Errors could happen because of some reasons and based on the errors which happened commonly, Richards (1974) explained that the errors are:

1. **Interlingua Errors**. Interlingua errors are the errors happen in the learners' grammar which reflects the learners' mother tongue. These errors occur because there is an interference from the learners' mother tongue, ex.: It is a book blue, not what you, what number?
2. **Intralingua Errors**. Intralingua errors is the errors happen in the learners' mother tongue but they don't reflect the learners' mother tongue, but it looks like a language which is made by the learners studying the target language as their mother tongue or looks like the errors in the target language occur because the grammar, itself, effects one another in the target language, ex : She can dances. I opening the window.

Based on Dulay (1982), he divided the errors into four types, they are:

1. **Linguistic Category Taxonomy**. This error based on the language components or the linguistic main elements which affect the errors. The language components consist of **phonology (pronunciation), syntax, and morphology (grammar), semantic and lexicon (meaning and vocabulary)** and **discourse (style)**. The linguistic main elements consist of the elements which compare each language component.
2. **Surface Strategy Taxonomy**. These errors explained about the way to change the strategy taxonomy which occurs.
3. **Comparative Taxonomy**. These errors based on the comparative between the structures of the errors in the second language with the certain another type construction. Comparative taxonomy consists of:
 - a. **Developmental Errors (Intralingua Errors)**. This error happened because the learners' study the target language as their first language, ex.: Brother drink milk. Mother eat apple.
 - b. **Interlingua Errors**. This error happened commonly in the structure of the language becoming the semantic which is same as phrase or in the learners' native language, ex.: The woman beautiful. The sky cloudy.
4. **Communicative Effect Taxonomy**. Surface Strategy Taxonomy and Comparative Taxonomy only focus on the errors happened in both of those taxonomies. Communicative taxonomy influences the classification with the errors from the listeners' or the readers' view.

Based on Hendrickson (1979), he grouped the errors into two types, they are:

1. **Global Errors**. Global errors are same as communicative errors. Global errors are the errors happened in the structure language which cause the learners misinterpret the oral or written message or consider that the message couldn't be understood in the whole contexts it.
2. **Local Errors**. Local errors are also called linguistics errors. Local errors are the errors happened in the structure language which seems strange or weird, but they didn't make the learners felt difficult in understanding the meaning of the sentences.

Based on the theories, the linguistics experts classified the errors into four types, they are:

1. **Social Error**. The social errors, the errors commonly occurred in the structure element.

The errors could be happened because of the failure in the application the English patterns which were based on the language which referred to the social context.

2. **Register Error.** This error happened because the language used is not suitable for a certain occasion. Register error has a strong relationship in the usage of a language based on the situation. Usually, the learners did the error because they haven't mastered if one language doesn't suitable to use in a certain situation. This happened because there is only limited material which discusses the appropriateness in using a language for a certain occasion, but this still considers as the learning process for the learners.
3. **Referential Error.** This error happened between the linguistics form with the objects or the situations happening outside the class. This error also happened because the learners haven't known what they thought and felt exactly.
4. **Textual Error.** This error happened related to the learners' knowledge based on the target language patterns. Corder (1971) explained, "The learner's errors are classified as a textual error when he does not select the structurally correct form in his sentence of intended relation between two sentences". Textual errors are:
 - a. **Errors of Omission.** Error of omission is the missing of some elements which should exist. Ex.: Woman is very beautiful. (It should be: The woman is very beautiful). She eat apple. (It should be: She eats an apple).
 - b. **Errors of Addition.** Error of addition is the adding of some elements which shouldn't exist. Ex.: I ate with bread and egg this morning. (It should be I ate bread and egg this morning). It is a meat. (It should be It is meat).
 - c. **Errors of Selection.** Error of selection is the use of words which shouldn't be used. Ex.: Do he go to school? (It should be Does he go to school?). She is thinking about you. (It should be She is thinking of you).
 - d. **Errors of Ordering.** Error of ordering is the elements which are not put in the proper place. Ex.: She doesn't know what is my name. (It should be She doesn't know what my name is). They know where do I live. (It should be They know where I live).

Based on the explanations above, it can be concluded that there many kinds of errors. Those errors are the errors which happened commonly in the learners' learning English process.

The Nature of Writing

Good writing is when it can give information or messages clearly and creates effective verbal dialogue to readers. It purposes to give the point of view of the ideas in the text where it organizes in a different way of writing such as narration, description, exposition, and argumentation. When the learners write a paragraph, they try to explore what they are thinking in mind, and they also concern with the language, meaning, and the structure of context related to English language acquisition as second or foreign language.

Mousapour (2011) said that writing must be related to the content, the language, and grammatical rules. In order to avoid misunderstanding, the students have to use correct sentences by creating a well-written text and giving attention to the arrangement of words their composition to express their idea and to give the value of the writing to readers.

Writing is seen as a product constructed from the writer's command of grammatical and lexical knowledge, and writing development is considered to be the result of imitating and manipulating models provided by the teacher. For many who adopt this view, writing is regarded as an extension of grammar-a means of reinforcing language patterns through habit formation and testing learners' ability to produce well-formed sentences.

Alamargot et al. (2010) explained that developing writing is related to the writer's knowledge of language and writing exposure. Writing process is the way the writers give their ideas and messages to readers in the form of text. The writers present their ideas in various ways of writing such as narration, description, classification, comparison and contrast, argumentation and etc. **First narration** is a basic writing strategy for presenting past event or activities. It can be used for a variety of purposes such as to illustrate and support ideas with anecdotes, to entertain readers with revealing stories, to analyze causes and possible effects with scenarios, and to explain procedures with process narrative. **Second**, the description is a strategy used to create a dominant impression. For example, students describe a place in order to set a scene and make readers aware of its atmosphere and to describe people to show a kind of person's performance. **Third**, classification is aimed to classify a number of items or ideas into a small number of classes. In a classification of paragraphs, it is important to set up adequate categories and define what goes into categories. **Fourth**, comparison and contrast are to compare similar aspects or to contrast different aspects of two subjects, people or things. **At last**, argumentation is to argue ideas or opinion by giving some argues to proof the concept or research. A good paragraph must give readers complete information and unified by a controlling idea. It is an organized form and can be understood what the paragraph is going to be about.

Based on the experts' opinion above, it can be concluded that good writing is related to how to combine a paragraph which consists of the main idea. Paragraphs are organized differently depending on their purposes. There are three main types of paragraphs in English: narrative, descriptive, and expository.

The Nature of Narrative Composition

Writing is the most difficult part in English subject as what it is said different from what it is written. Ron White and Valerie Arndt (2011) stated, "Writing is far from being a simple matter of transcribing language into written symbols; it is a thinking process in its right". So, before the learners starting to write an English composition, they should master the English pattern correctly.

Mc. Dougal (2008) said, "A composition is a group of closely related paragraph that develop a single idea". David Crystal (2011) also said, "Writing a composition with vocabulary and structure which the student has either learnt to use orally or written exercises for each lesson. These exercises may be of various types. The range from filling blanks to the composition and may be modification, sentences composition and paragraph writing".

There are 4 kinds of compositions; they are argumentation, description, exposition and narration. George E. Wishon and Julia M. Burks (2010) stated, "Argumentation is used in persuading and convincing; it is closely related to exposition and is often found combined with it. Description is used to create a visual image of people, places and even of units of time-days, time of day or seasons, exposition is used in giving information, making explanation, and interpreting meanings and narration is the form of writing used to relate the story of acts or events".

Based on AS Hornby (2006) stated that narration is telling of a story. Narratives are stories. Narratives are plots. They are essays that tell a story, hopefully in an interesting way, that also convey themes. Often, if you are asked to write a narrative essay, you will not be asked to research a theory or topic. Rather, you will be asked to use your imagination instead

of a bibliography. You may need to research for this narrative essay; nonetheless, the writing of it may come more easily to you for you do not need to quote specific words from primary sources.

A narrative paragraph tells a story or a series of events. It tells what person or thing did during a particular period of time. As White (2011) stated, "In narrative it is *activities* which are important; in description it is things. And in describing *things* we are usually more concerned with the *noun* rather than the verb phrase. Thus, description gives us a reason for teaching features of the noun phrase which, while occurring in other uses of the language, are of particular importance and frequency in describing things, people and places".

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive method was used to do the research. There are three types of descriptive method; they are the observational method, case study method, and survey method. Observational method as a part of descriptive method was used to take the data. Descriptive method was used as Best (1974) stated that descriptive method is the method which tries to give the explanation about the symptoms relating with the recent situation. It consists on the effort of giving the note, the analysis and the interpretation of the recent symptoms which have the characteristics as follows: try to give the fact, straight to the problem and the recent variables aren't manipulated by the researcher.

The learners' English narrative compositions were used as the research instruments and they were taken from 20 learners and it was taken by asking the learners to make English narrative composition. After that, identifying, classifying, analyzing and correcting were done in order to know what kinds of word order errors were found in the learners' English compositions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

After collecting, identifying, describing, explaining and correcting the errors, there are some errors found in the learners' English narrative composition. The errors are explained below:

No.	Sentence	Correction	Level
1.	A <i>village elder</i> solved the dispute among those three men.	An <i>elder villager</i> _solved the dispute among those three men.	Word order errors in sentence
2.	Then after <i>distribution report</i> , I went for holiday.	Then after <i>report distribution</i> , I went for holiday.	Word order errors in sentence
3.	Finally, I had the <i>support of my parents</i> .	Finally, I had my <i>parents'</i> <i>support</i> .	Word order errors in sentence
4.	The <i>boy youngest</i> was very kind to the rabbit.	The <i>youngest boy</i> was very kind to the rabbit.	Word order errors in sentence
5.	In <i>Sumatera West</i> , there lived a woman and her son.	In <i>West Sumatera</i> , there lived a woman and her son.	Word order errors in sentence
6.	The old man showed <i>to the children the trophy</i> .	The old man showed <i>the trophy to the children</i> .	Word order errors in sentence

7.	We were shopping <i>yesterday in Dago</i> .	We were shopping <i>in Dago yesterday</i> .	Word order errors in sentence
8.	<i>My family and me</i> went to Bandung last week	<i>My family and I</i> went to Bandung last week.	Word order errors in pronoun
9.	<i>He and Rio's mother</i> just cried and prayed to God.	<i>Rio's mother and he</i> just cried and prayed to God.	Word order errors in pronoun
10.	My parents were angry to <i>my sister and I</i> last holiday.	My parents were angry to <i>my sister and me</i> last holiday.	Word order errors in pronoun
11.	<i>My grandmother and me</i> went shopping to the traditional market last holiday.	<i>My grandmother and I</i> went shopping to the traditional market last holiday.	Word order errors in pronoun
12.	Our grandparents told an interesting story to my sister and I.	Our grandparents told an interesting story to <i>my sister and me</i> .	Word order errors in pronoun
13.	<i>He</i> mother told him when they were on the way home.	<i>His</i> mother told him when they were on the way home.	Word order errors in pronoun
14.	The driver <i>carelessly</i> drove the car.	The driver <i>drove the car carelessly</i> .	Word order errors in adverb
15.	My little brother cleaned <i>happily his dirty bike</i> .	My little brother cleaned <i>his dirty bike happily</i> .	Word order errors in adverb
16.	<i>Extremely</i> , we were tired.	We were <i>extremely</i> tired.	Word order errors in adverb
17.	We didn't know <i>where is the beach</i> .	We didn't know <i>where the beach is</i> .	Word order errors in noun phrase
18.	He could find the place without looking at the map, how smart <i>is he!</i>	He could find the place without looking at the map, how smart <i>he is!</i>	Word order errors in noun phrase
19.	I watched TV <i>sometimes</i> in my free time.	I <i>sometimes</i> watched TV in my free time.	Word order errors in adverb of frequency
20.	We <i>ride our bike usually</i> on Sunday morning.	We <i>usually ride our bike</i> on Sunday morning.	Word order errors in adverb of frequency

Based on the above descriptions, there are:

A. **Word Order Errors in Sentence**

Word order errors in sentence are about the errors of ordering the words in the sentence.

1. A ***village elder*** solved the dispute among those three men. The sentence is not correct because the order of the sentence does not make any meaning. The correct sentence is ***An elder villager*** solved the dispute those three men.
2. Then after ***distribution report***, I went for holiday. The sentence is wrong. It is wrong because the position of the word is wrong so it does not make any meaning. The correct sentence is Then after the ***report distribution***, I went for holiday.
3. Finally, I had ***the support of my parents***. The sentence is not correct because the position of the word is wrong. The correct sentence is Finally, I had ***my parents' support***.
4. ***The boy youngest*** was very kind to the rabbit. The sentence is not correct. The explanation of the error is as same as the previous sentence. The correct sentence is

- The *youngest boy* was very kind to the rabbit.
5. *In Sumatera West*, there lived a woman and her son. The sentence is also not correct. The correct sentence is In *West Sumatera*, there lived a woman and her son.
 6. The old man showed *to the children the trophy*. The sentence is not correct. The correct sentence is The old man showed *the trophy to the children*.
 7. We were shopping *yesterday in Dago*. The sentence is wrong. Based on the rules mentioned above, place should be written first before time. So, the correct sentence is We were shopping *in Dago yesterday*.

B. Word Order Errors in Pronoun

Word order errors in pronoun are about the errors of using pronoun in the sentence.

8. *My family and me* went to Bandung last week. The sentence is wrong because My family and I are called subject, so the word “me” should be changed by the word “I”. The correct sentence is *My family and I* went to Bandung last week.
9. *Him and Rio’s mother* just cried and prayed to God. The sentence is wrong because it does not make any sense and the word position is also wrong. So, the correct sentence is *Rio’s mother and he* just cried and prayed to God.
10. My parents were angry to *my sister and I* last holiday. The sentence is wrong because the word “my sister and I” should be an object. The correct sentence is My parents were angry to *my sister and me* last holiday.
11. *My grandmother and me* went shopping to the traditional market last holiday. The sentence is wrong because the word “My grandmother and me” is a subject. The correct sentence is *My grandmother and I* went shopping to the traditional market last holiday.
12. Our grandparents told an interesting story to *my sister and I*. The sentence is not correct because the word “my sister and I” is an object, so the correct sentence is Our grandparents told an interesting story to *my sister and me*.
13. *He mother* told him when they were on the way home. The sentence is not correct because it needs possessive pronoun “His” before the word “mother”. The correct sentence is *His mother* told him when they were on the way home.

C. Word Order Errors in Adverb

Word order errors in adverb are about the errors relate to adverb. Adverb should be written after verb or tobe.

14. The driver *carelessly drove* the car. The sentence is wrong because adverb appears after verb, so the correct sentence is The driver *drove the car carelessly*.
15. My little brother cleaned *happily his dirty bike*. The sentence is wrong and the explanation is as same with the explanation on number 14. The correct sentence is My little brother *cleaned his dirty bike happily*.
16. *Extremely, we were* tired. The sentence is wrong because the adverb, “Extremely”, should be written after tobe, “were”. The correct sentence is We *were extremely* tired.

D. Word Order Errors in Noun Phrase

Word order errors in noun phrase are about the errors relates to noun phrase which sometimes make the learners get difficulties to differentiate between noun phrase and question sentence.

17. We didn’t know *where is the beach*. The sentence is wrong because the order of the sentence is not a question sentence. The correct sentence is We didn’t know *where the beach is*.
18. He could not find the place without looking at the map, *how smart is he!* The sentence

is not correct and the explanation is as same with the explanation above. So, the correct sentence is He could not find the place without looking at the map, *how smart he is!*

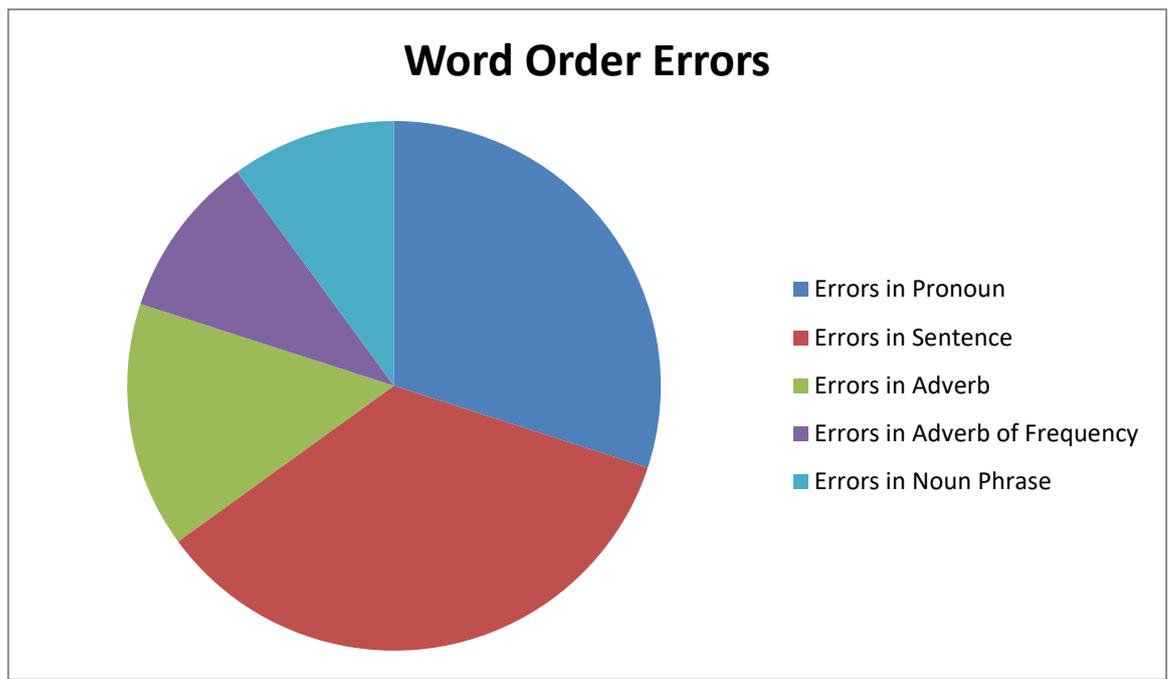
E. Word Order Errors in Adverb of Frequency

Word order errors in adverb of frequency usually happen about the order of the adverb of frequency itself. Adverb of frequency is written after subject or tobe and before verb or adjective.

19. I *watched TV sometimes* in my free time. The sentence is wrong because adverb of frequency “sometimes” should be written before verb “watched”. The correct sentence is I *sometimes watched TV* in my free time.
20. We *ride our bike usually* on Sunday morning. The sentence is wrong because the adverb of frequency “usually” should be written before the verb “ride”. So, the correct sentence is We *usually ride* our bike on Sunday morning.

Based on the word order errors above, they can be classified in the chart below:

Table 1. Word Order Errors Classification



CONCLUSIONS

Learning a foreign language demands not only willingness but also practice and commitment by both learner and teacher as well. Indeed, the process of language learning depends on the decisions and involvement of the learners, based on their experience of life and language as individuals. A better understanding of the learner can help the teacher understand what elements are playing a role in the learners’ learning process. Likewise, by analyzing and recognizing learners’ errors, we may come to value the fact that errors are the most significant evidence of their efforts to follow the path of the learning process.

Based on the errors found in the learners' English narrative composition, most of them

made the errors because (1) the learners haven't understood and mastered the target language so they still made the sentences in their mother tongue; (2) most the errors are in textual error; (3) the learners' mother tongue influenced them much in making the target language; (4) the errors done by the learners perhaps happened because of the teacher's style in teaching; and (5) the learners weren't used to write or make an English narrative composition by the English teachers so they got some difficulties when they were asked to make an English narrative composition.

After being doing some steps based on Corder, the word order errors found in the learners' English narrative composition are word order errors in sentence for about 7, word order errors in pronoun for about 6 errors, word order errors in adverb for about 3 errors, word order errors in noun phrase for about 2 errors, and word order errors in adverb of frequency for about 2 errors.

Error analysis is an important instrument for teachers to not only find out the learners' language difficulties but also to evaluate their ability and progress of linguistic development. Therefore systematic error analysis should be widely informed to and undertaken by second or foreign language teachers of all levels. Nonkukhetkhong (2013) suggested that the results of an error analysis can be used for further research to solve the learners' problems, for example, providing the learners with noticing grammar lessons, developing error analysis exercises, promoting self-correction and peer-correction, enhancing the use of grammar through communicative activities or implementing other teaching techniques to reduce the grammatical errors.

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