ADVANCES IN TOURISM
2025, VOL. 3, NO. 2, ARTICLE 2
http://doi.org/10.53893/ats.v3i2.55

ADVANCES
In Tourism Studies

RESEARCH ARTICLE

OPEN ACCESS

Grammatical Error Analysis in English Writing Among Tourism Students: A Case Study at Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata Mataram

I Gede Widya Suputra

Hospitality Department, Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata Mataram, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the types and sources of grammatical errors found in English essays written by students of Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata (STP) Mataram. Given the contrastive structures between Indonesian (first language) and English (target language), language transfer and interlanguage phenomena are examined as contributing factors. Using a descriptive case study approach, data were collected from 90 student essays, supported by questionnaires and interviews. The analysis identified four primary types of grammatical errors: omission (40 percent), misordering (35 percent), overgeneralization (15 percent), and misinformation (10 percent), with omission emerging as the most frequent. Findings indicate that students often translate directly from Indonesian, leading to syntactic inaccuracies and structural deviations in English. Additionally, several errors reflect interlanguage development, wherein students produce forms that align with neither Indonesian nor standard English. These linguistic patterns highlight the need for targeted pedagogical interventions in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) instruction, especially in tourism and hospitality education, where effective written communication is essential. The study underscores the importance of raising students' metalinguistic awareness and integrating contrastive analysis into curriculum design to mitigate persistent grammatical errors.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received: Jan 15 2025
Accepted: May 25 2025

KEYWORDS:
Grammatical Errors,
Language Transfer,
Interlanguage,
Tourism Education

INTRODUCTION

Mastering written English is a fundamental component of academic success, particularly in fields where international communication is essential, such as tourism and hospitality. Writing serves as a complex cognitive and linguistic activity that requires mastery of multiple components, including grammar, vocabulary, cohesion, and syntax (Afifah et al., 2025; Hardi et al., 2023). Among these, grammatical competence remains a critical challenge for learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), especially in contexts where English functions as a non-native language (Namozov, 2025; Zaxidovna, 2025). In Indonesia, the majority of university students struggle with producing grammatically accurate English texts, which often hampers their ability to communicate ideas effectively in academic and professional settings.

Previous studies on error analysis in Indonesia have predominantly focused on general writing challenges, such as the misuse of articles Pasaribu et al. (2024) or syntactic errors in government-published texts (Zhou, 2025). However, limited research has systematically analyzed the nature of grammatical errors in EFL writing within vocational tourism institutions, despite the sector's heavy reliance on precise English communication. Moreover, the dual influence of first language (L1) interference and the emergence of interlanguage patterns in student writing has not been adequately explored in such institutional contexts. This presents a notable gap in both theoretical understanding and pedagogical strategy for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) programs tailored to tourism education.

This study addresses that gap by mapping grammatical errors in English writing among students of Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata (STP) Mataram, a vocational institution that prepares students for careers in international hospitality. Through a descriptive case study approach, the research identifies the dominant types of grammatical errors and explores the linguistic and cognitive processes underlying them, such as negative language transfer and interlanguage formation. The novelty of this study lies in its focused investigation of overt grammatical errors within an ESP context, supported by triangulated data collection through writing tasks, questionnaires, and interviews.

By linking grammatical error patterns to learner perception and L1 influence, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how Indonesian tourism students acquire and negotiate English structures in writing. The findings offer both theoretical insight into second language acquisition and practical implications for

CONTACT I Gede Widya Suputra widyasaputra@gmail.com

curriculum design, emphasizing the need to integrate contrastive analysis and corrective feedback into ESP instruction. Ultimately, the study aims to enhance the communicative competence of future tourism professionals and support more effective English language pedagogy in Indonesia's higher education landscape.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive qualitative case study design to investigate the grammatical errors produced by students in their English writing and to explore the underlying causes of those errors. To enhance the validity of the findings, a triangulation technique was adopted, integrating three methods of data collection: writing tasks, questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. This multi-method approach allowed for a comprehensive understanding of both the linguistic outputs and the learners' perceptions regarding English language use.

The primary data source consisted of ninety student essays, written by thirty students enrolled in Class A of the Diploma III Hotel Program at Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata (STP) Mataram. Each participant was instructed to compose three essays, with topics focusing on their past experiences, daily life, and future aspirations. The word count for each essay was standardized at approximately 100 words, and students were given a total of 180 minutes to complete the writing tasks under classroom supervision. These texts were used to identify and classify overt grammatical errors.

To complement the textual data, students were also asked to complete a questionnaire designed to gather information about their language learning experiences, strategies, and attitudes toward English writing. Following the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the same participants to further investigate their perceptions of English grammar, their reliance on first language (L1) structures during writing, and their awareness of interlanguage phenomena.

The data collection procedure involved several steps. After receiving approval from the institutional leadership at STP Mataram, the researcher introduced the writing tasks to the participants and provided clear instructions regarding the essay topics and time constraints. Upon submission, the essays were carefully examined for grammatical errors. The errors were then highlighted, coded, and categorized based on established error types: omission, misinformation, misordering, and overgeneralization.

Data management followed the procedure outlined by Setiyorini et al.(2020). The researcher systematically analyzed the grammatical errors using the following steps: reading and annotating all student essays, categorizing errors according to linguistic taxonomy, providing examples and explanations of each error type, tabulating the error frequencies, and calculating the relative percentage for each category using the formula:

$$P = (nf) \times 100\%$$

Where P represents the percentage of a specific error type, f indicates the frequency of that error, and n is the total number of errors identified.

The triangulated data from writing samples, questionnaires, and interviews enabled the researcher to not only quantify the frequency and types of grammatical errors but also interpret the learners' underlying cognitive and linguistic processes. This method thus ensures both descriptive accuracy and interpretive depth in analyzing student writing in a tourism-specific higher education context.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Grammatical Error

This section presents a descriptive summary of the grammatical errors identified in the English essays written by students of the Diploma III Hotel Program at Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata (STP) Mataram. A total of 90 essays were collected from 30 students, each contributing three compositions. The analysis yielded 200 grammatical errors, which were classified into four main categories following Kallaba (2025) taxonomy of overt error types: omission, misordering, misinformation, and overgeneralization.

The classification process involved careful coding of each grammatical deviation, followed by frequency calculation and percentage distribution. The results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage of Grammatical Errors in Student Essays

No	Type of Error	Frequency	Percentage
1	Omission	80	40%
2	Misordering	70	35%
3	Overgeneralization	30	15%
4	Misinformation	20	10%
	Total	200	100%

As shown in Table 1, omission errors were the most frequently occurring type, constituting 40 percent of the total errors. These errors typically involved the absence of required grammatical elements, such as verb inflections, auxiliary verbs, or articles. This finding suggests a significant gap in students' understanding of obligatory grammatical structures in English, which often differ in function and position from those in the Indonesian language.

The second most common error type was misordering, comprising 35 percent of total errors. These errors reflected incorrect word sequence in phrases or clauses and appeared to be influenced by the more flexible syntactic structure of Indonesian, where modifiers and verbs may follow different ordering patterns compared to English.

Overgeneralization errors accounted for 15 percent, often arising from the application of regular grammatical rules to irregular forms (e.g., adding "-s" to form irregular plurals such as *mans* instead of *men*). Finally, misinformation errors, representing 10 percent, involved the use of incorrect grammatical forms in place of correct ones, such as using past tense verbs incorrectly or selecting inappropriate auxiliaries.

This error profile illustrates that STP Mataram students are still in the developmental stage of English language acquisition, where both first language transfer and limited grammatical exposure shape their interlanguage. The prevalence of omission and misordering errors in particular underscores the need for targeted instruction on English sentence structure and morphological rules, especially within English for Specific Purposes (ESP) contexts.

Dominant Error Type: Omission

Among the 200 grammatical errors identified in the student essays, omission errors emerged as the most frequent, comprising 40 percent of the total. According to Kallaba (2025), omission occurs when a required grammatical item is left out, resulting in syntactic or morphological incompleteness. In the present study, omission was most commonly found in verb inflections, auxiliary verbs, articles, and plural markers, elements that are not structurally emphasized in the students' first language, Indonesian.

The following example illustrates a typical omission error from the student corpus:

Original: He pray before working
Reconstruction: He prays before working

In this sentence, the student omitted the third person singular marker -s on the verb pray, which is obligatory in the simple present tense for the subject he. The absence of subject–verb agreement markers in Indonesian likely contributes to this recurrent error. In Bahasa Indonesia, verbs do not inflect for tense, number, or person, and thus learners may not automatically produce the necessary morphological adjustments in English.

Another example includes article omission:

Original: I went to museum yesterday
Reconstruction: I went to the museum yesterday

Here, the definite article the is omitted before the noun museum, despite the referent being contextually specific. Indonesian does not use articles in the same way English does, leading learners to perceive them as unnecessary or redundant. This omission reflects both structural differences and limited awareness of article usage rules in English.

The omission of auxiliary verbs also appeared frequently, as in:

Original: She cooking in the kitchen
Reconstruction: She is cooking in the kitchen

In this case, the auxiliary verb is was omitted, producing a grammatically incomplete present continuous structure. These errors indicate that students have not fully internalized the role of auxiliary verbs in English verb tenses.

Such patterns suggest that omission errors stem primarily from negative language transfer, wherein learners apply the grammatical rules of their L1 (Indonesian) when constructing sentences in their L2 (English). Additionally, the absence of overt morphological markers in Indonesian reduces learners' sensitivity to such features in English, resulting in frequent deletions of obligatory items.

The dominance of omission errors in this study aligns with findings from previous Indonesian-based research Esperanza et al. (2024) and Murdiansyah (2024), which also reported a high frequency of article and auxiliary omissions in student writing. However, the novelty of this study lies in the context-specific insight it provides for ESP learners in tourism education, where accurate written communication is critical for professional readiness.

Overall, these findings highlight the need for explicit instruction on grammatical forms that are structurally absent in the L1, particularly articles, auxiliary verbs, and subject–verb agreement. Incorporating contrastive grammar instruction and targeted corrective feedback may help reduce these persistent omission patterns and improve learners' syntactic accuracy in professional English writing.

Misinformation Errors and Morphosyntactic Transfer

Misinformation errors, which accounted for 10 percent of the total grammatical errors identified in the corpus, occur when learners use incorrect grammatical forms in place of the correct ones (Kallaba, 2025). Unlike omission errors, misinformation involves the substitution of one grammatical element with another that is incorrect in the target language (TL) context. In this study, misinformation errors were commonly observed in verb tense usage and subject–verb agreement, reflecting the challenges students face in mastering English morphological systems.

A representative example from the student writing illustrates this phenomenon:

Original: My father gaves me money yesterday
Reconstruction: My father gave me money yesterday

In this sentence, the student incorrectly applied the regular past tense marker –ed to the irregular verb give, resulting in the non-standard form gaves. This type of error reflects an over-application of regular morphological rules, a common developmental stage in second language acquisition (SLA). While such generalization can be seen as evidence of rule internalization, it also indicates insufficient exposure to or practice with irregular verb forms.

Another instance of misinformation involves the incorrect use of verb forms in complex sentences:

Original: A man and a little boy was watching him
Reconstruction: A man and a little boy were watching him

Here, the student incorrectly used the singular auxiliary was instead of the plural were for a compound subject. This suggests an underdeveloped understanding of subject–verb agreement in plural constructions, which is often complicated for learners whose L1 does not require morphological concord between subject and verb. Indonesian, for instance, does not inflect verbs for number or person, and this structural difference often results in difficulty transferring grammatical agreement rules to English.

Such errors may also stem from interlanguage development, wherein learners construct a temporary linguistic system influenced by both their native language and the TL. In this system, learners often form hypotheses about language use that are inconsistent with standard usage, particularly when dealing with morphological features absent from their L1. This misapplication is a reflection of both cognitive processing limitations and insufficient corrective input.

Comparatively, misinformation errors are less frequent than omission or misordering errors in the current dataset. However, their presence is pedagogically significant, as they indicate not just absence but distortion of grammatical knowledge. These errors are often more difficult to correct than omissions, as they reveal partial rule acquisition coupled with incorrect assumptions about TL structures.

In alignment with previous research Murdiansyah (2024) and Pasaribu et al. (2024), misinformation in verb forms and auxiliaries remains a recurrent issue among EFL learners in Indonesia. What distinguishes the current study is its focus on students in tourism education, where grammatical misinformation may affect not only academic performance but also professional credibility in written communication across multicultural contexts.

Addressing misinformation errors requires more than basic grammatical drilling. Instruction must include explicit focus on contrastive verb systems, contextualized grammar activities, and corrective feedback that targets

incorrect rule application rather than simple absence. Such pedagogical approaches can foster a deeper awareness of English morphology and reduce fossilization of incorrect forms.

Misordering Errors and Word Order Interference

Misordering errors, which comprised 35 percent of the total grammatical errors, represent the second most frequent error type identified in this study. These errors occur when elements in a sentence or phrase appear in an incorrect sequence, disrupting syntactic coherence. According to Kallaba (2025), misordering is a form of overt error that reflects learners' misunderstanding of the canonical word order rules in the target language. In English, word order plays a crucial role in sentence meaning, unlike in Indonesian, where word order tends to be more flexible and context-dependent.

A typical example from the student writing illustrates this type of error:

Original: I don't have an iPhone like people other
Reconstruction: I don't have an iPhone like other people

The phrase people other is syntactically unacceptable in English, as it violates the typical noun phrase structure in which adjectives or determiners precede the noun. In contrast, Bahasa Indonesia permits both post-nominal and pre-nominal modifiers under certain conditions, which may influence students to transfer these ordering patterns directly into their English writing. This type of syntactic transfer from L1 to L2 has been well documented in SLA literature as a significant source of structural errors (Alfaifi & Saleem, 2024).

Another frequent misordering occurred in verb and adverb placement:

Original: My friend will visit Lombok Astoria hotel morning tomorrow
Reconstruction: My friend will visit Lombok Astoria Hotel tomorrow morning

This sentence demonstrates incorrect placement of temporal adverbs, violating the standard English rule that places time expressions typically at the end of the sentence, and in proper sequence (e.g., "tomorrow morning" rather than "morning tomorrow"). The student's original sentence reflects a literal transfer of adverbial positioning from Indonesian to English, where time and manner adverbs often occupy more flexible positions.

These errors highlight a broader issue: insufficient awareness of English syntactic rigidity, particularly in the arrangement of modifiers, adverbs, and auxiliary constructions. Learners may be unaware that in English, changes in word order can result in meaning shifts or render a sentence ungrammatical. Misordering errors thus reflect a structural misalignment between L1 and L2 word-order conventions, compounded by a lack of exposure to naturalistic English input.

The high frequency of misordering errors is consistent with previous findings in EFL contexts where learners' native languages do not impose strict syntactic rules (e.g., Alisoy, 2024; Picot, 2025). However, in the context of this study, where students are preparing for professional roles in the tourism and hospitality industry, such errors pose a unique challenge. Misordered sentences in written communication, such as emails, reports, or promotional texts, may lead to misunderstandings or misrepresentations of service information.

Pedagogically, the recurrence of misordering errors signals the need for instructional strategies that go beyond rule memorization. Teachers should emphasize pattern recognition through authentic reading materials, contrastive syntax exercises, and sentence-reordering tasks that sensitize students to word order norms in English. Integration of genre-specific writing activities in tourism-related contexts may also help students internalize appropriate syntactic sequencing in professional communication.

Overgeneralization and Interlanguage Formation

Overgeneralization errors, which constituted 15 percent of the total grammatical errors in this study, reflect a distinct developmental phenomenon in second language acquisition. Overgeneralization occurs when learners apply a grammatical rule in contexts where it is not appropriate, extending its use beyond its normative boundaries. Kallaba (2025) describes overgeneralization as the "over-supply" of a linguistic feature in a non-target context, often due to the learner's attempt to systematize the target language using limited knowledge. These errors provide insight into how learners construct their evolving interlanguage.

One illustrative example from the student essays is:

Original: There are two mans in room 113
Reconstruction: There are two men in room 113

In this instance, the learner incorrectly applies the regular plural suffix –s to the irregular noun man, forming the non-standard plural mans instead of the correct men. This suggests that the learner has internalized the regular pluralization rule in English but lacks familiarity with irregular forms. Rather than simply forgetting or omitting a form, the student has created a new form based on perceived linguistic logic—a hallmark of overgeneralization.

Another common example in the data involves irregular verb forms:

Original: The manager goed to Gili Trawangan yesterday
Reconstruction: The manager went to Gili Trawangan yesterday

The formation of goed as a past tense form of go demonstrates the extension of the regular past tense rule (–ed) to an irregular verb. These instances suggest that the learners are not simply making random mistakes, but are instead constructing hypotheses about English morphology that are internally consistent but deviate from standard usage.

These overgeneralizations indicate the formation of an interlanguage, a transitional linguistic system developed by learners as they progress toward full target language competence. According to Barone & Саверио (2024), interlanguage reflects both the influence of the first language (L1) and the learner's internal processing strategies as they attempt to produce the second language (L2). In this study, several students demonstrated the tendency to generalize rules across lexemes, often without recognizing exceptions. Such errors are particularly evident in inflectional morphology, where learners encounter variation between regular and irregular forms.

Unlike omission or misordering errors, which can often be attributed directly to L1 transfer, overgeneralization errors are typically intralingual, arising from internal cognitive processes during second language development. This distinction is crucial in pedagogical terms, as it suggests that correcting such errors requires more than contrasting L1 and L2 rules; it requires explicit attention to exceptions and variability within the L2 system itself.

The presence of overgeneralization errors among STP Mataram students is consistent with developmental patterns found in other EFL contexts (e.g., Norris et al., 2021; Toribio, 2001). However, their significance is magnified in a vocational context where learners are expected to function in professional English communication. Persistent overgeneralizations, especially involving core vocabulary and grammar, may impact the clarity and credibility of students' written outputs in the hospitality industry.

To address this issue, ESP instructors must adopt explicit instruction strategies that emphasize irregular forms, encourage exposure to authentic texts, and offer corrective feedback that explains why certain rules do not apply in specific contexts. Using inductive grammar teaching and contextualized vocabulary development may help learners refine their interlanguage and reduce error fossilization.

Cross-Analysis of Student Perceptions and Error Patterns

To complement the textual analysis of grammatical errors, this study employed questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to explore how students perceive English grammar and how their learning strategies contribute to the production of errors. This triangulated approach revealed important cognitive and sociolinguistic factors underlying the patterns of omission, misinformation, misordering, and overgeneralization observed in the essays.

The analysis of students' responses indicated a widespread belief that translating directly from Indonesian (L1) into English (L2) is an effective strategy for writing in English. Many students reported that they typically formulate their ideas in Indonesian and then translate them into English word-for-word. While this approach offers a pragmatic entry point into L2 composition, it also leads to frequent structural mismatches, especially in cases involving word order, article usage, and verb inflection. This perception helps explain the high rate of omission and misordering errors identified in the corpus.

For example, students explained that they omitted articles because "Bahasa Indonesia does not have words like the or a," and that they often "forget the -s" on verbs because Indonesian verbs do not change form across subjects. These responses align with the negative transfer hypothesis, whereby learners unintentionally impose the grammatical rules of their native language onto the target language (Adalia et al., 2025).

Additionally, students' reflections revealed a limited awareness of grammatical exceptions and irregular forms, which explains the presence of overgeneralization errors such as mans and goed. One student commented, "I thought every word in past tense just needs to add -ed," illustrating a partial acquisition of the

English morphological system. This supports the notion that many students are in the interlanguage phase, actively constructing and testing linguistic hypotheses in the absence of comprehensive grammatical input (Barone & Саверио, 2024).

Another recurring theme in the interviews was a lack of metalinguistic awareness. Several students indicated they were not confident in identifying parts of speech or differentiating sentence components. This lack of grammatical metalanguage prevents learners from analyzing their own errors and internalizing corrective feedback, thereby perpetuating recurring mistakes. The absence of such awareness is especially problematic in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) contexts, where students are expected to produce professional, grammatically accurate communication in workplace settings.

Interestingly, despite their linguistic challenges, most students expressed high motivation to improve their English, particularly because they associate fluency and accuracy in English with future employment opportunities in the international hospitality industry. This motivation represents a critical entry point for pedagogical intervention. By aligning instruction with the learners' professional goals, educators can contextualize grammar teaching and make abstract rules more meaningful.

In summary, the cross-analysis reveals that the grammatical errors identified in student essays are not isolated linguistic failures but are deeply tied to the students' perceptions of language learning, their strategic reliance on L1, and their developing interlanguage systems. Addressing these factors requires more than surface-level correction; it calls for pedagogical strategies that foster metalinguistic awareness, encourage inductive learning, and promote meaningful language use in authentic tourism-related contexts.

The Role of Language Transfer and Intercultural Contexts

The findings of this study strongly underscore the pervasive influence of language transfer both positive and negative in shaping the grammatical accuracy of English writing among students at Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata (STP) Mataram. As defined by Kallaba (2025) and reinforced by Adalia et al. (2025), language transfer refers to the cognitive process in which learners apply knowledge from their first language (L1) when using a second language (L2). In this study, negative transfer from Bahasa Indonesia was evident in nearly all four error categories, most notably in omission, misordering, and misinformation.

Bahasa Indonesia and English differ significantly in morphological complexity, syntactic ordering, and grammatical functions. Indonesian verbs, for example, are not inflected for tense or subject agreement, which contributes directly to errors such as “He pray before working” or “She cooking in the kitchen.” Likewise, the lack of articles and the flexibility of word order in Indonesian results in errors like “I went to museum” and “people other,” where learners transfer L1 structures into L2 without adjusting for the grammatical conventions of English.

However, beyond the cognitive and structural dimensions of transfer, this study also identifies a sociolinguistic layer: the intercultural context of tourism education. Students at STP Mataram are trained for careers in hospitality, a sector that necessitates not only communicative competence but also cultural sensitivity and precision in English usage. Intercultural interactions both anticipated and experienced play a subtle but important role in how learners internalize and prioritize linguistic features.

Students’ awareness of English as a global lingua franca was reflected in their motivation to improve writing, particularly for communicating with international guests and employers. Yet, the persistence of interlanguage features, such as overgeneralizations (mans, goed) or hybrid syntactic structures, suggests that these students are still negotiating between their L1 norms and the target language system. In many cases, they appear to form a “third space” a transitional linguistic repertoire shaped by both transfer and intercultural exposure. This observation aligns concept of interlanguage and supports the idea that students’ errors are not merely signs of failure, but rather evidence of ongoing language development under intercultural influence.

Moreover, intercultural contexts may reinforce or complicate transfer patterns. For instance, the tendency to write in a literal, direct style may stem not only from L1 transfer but also from exposure to simplified English in workplace settings or training materials. In tourism education, learners are often exposed to functional English that prioritizes intelligibility over grammatical precision. This may lead them to develop fossilized structures if not balanced by formal instruction focused on grammatical accuracy.

Therefore, the role of language transfer in this study is twofold: it operates at the linguistic level, where L1 structures interfere with or facilitate L2 production, and at the cultural-pragmatic level, where learners’ perceptions of language use in professional tourism contexts shape their acquisition processes. These dual influences must be considered when designing pedagogical interventions, particularly in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) curricula that aim to integrate linguistic accuracy with real-world applicability.

To support students in overcoming transfer-induced errors, educators should adopt contrastive teaching methods, where key grammatical differences between Indonesian and English are made explicit. Additionally, instruction should address the sociocultural functions of language in professional communication, helping students navigate the expectations of international workplace discourse while still developing linguistic accuracy.

Implications

The findings of this study carry important implications for pedagogical practice and curriculum design, particularly within the context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in tourism and hospitality education. The recurrent grammatical errors especially those related to omission, misordering, misinformation, and overgeneralization suggest that English instruction at Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata (STP) Mataram requires a more balanced approach that integrates both communicative competence and grammatical precision.

One of the key implications relates to the prevalence of omission and misordering errors, which reflect structural mismatches between Bahasa Indonesia and English. To address this, English instruction must include explicit teaching of syntactic rules and grammatical structures that are often taken for granted in general English language education. A contrastive approach that systematically compares and contrasts first language and target language features can help learners identify structural differences, thereby reducing the risk of negative language transfer. Learners need to become aware of how English grammar operates differently from Indonesian, particularly in areas such as verb conjugation, article usage, subject–verb agreement, and sentence-level word order.

The presence of misinformation and overgeneralization errors also highlights the significance of interlanguage formation, where students apply partially correct grammatical rules in contexts where they do not apply. These patterns suggest that learners are actively constructing hypotheses about English grammar based on limited exposure and rule generalization. Therefore, grammar instruction should not focus solely on rote correction but should instead foster deeper linguistic awareness. Teaching strategies that involve inductive reasoning where learners are guided to identify grammatical patterns and exceptions from contextualized input can promote stronger cognitive engagement and longer-term retention of language rules.

Another key implication relates to the widespread student perception that translating directly from Indonesian to English is an acceptable strategy for writing. This finding indicates a lack of confidence in producing original English constructions and a reliance on L1-mediated thinking. To overcome this issue, writing instruction must be reoriented toward process-based approaches. Students should be trained to engage in stages of writing that include planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Assignments should encourage the construction of meaning directly in English rather than through translation. At the same time, writing tasks should be grounded in professional tourism contexts such as composing hotel correspondence, guest itineraries, or travel guides so that learners can apply grammar in realistic, meaningful ways.

The data also revealed that students are highly motivated to improve their English writing skills, as they associate English proficiency with employment opportunities in the international tourism and hospitality sectors. This motivational factor should be harnessed in curriculum development. English instruction should reflect the linguistic demands of the industry by incorporating authentic materials such as brochures, guest emails, online reviews, and promotional content. These materials can serve as both models and springboards for student writing while reinforcing correct grammar in context.

Finally, this study supports the view that grammar instruction remains essential within ESP curricula, particularly in vocational settings where professionalism and clarity in communication are paramount. While fluency in spoken English is often emphasized in tourism education, the ability to produce grammatically accurate written texts is equally critical. Written communication reflects the professionalism of a service provider and shapes the international perception of the institution or business represented by the student. As such, improving grammatical accuracy should not be viewed as a peripheral concern but rather as a central objective of language instruction in tourism education.

In conclusion, reducing the grammatical errors observed in student writing requires an instructional approach that is both contrastive and inductive, grounded in real-world tourism communication, and informed by a strong understanding of learners' interlanguage development. Such a curriculum will not only address structural deficiencies but also equip students with the linguistic competence needed to thrive in global hospitality environments.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the grammatical errors found in English essays written by students of Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata (STP) Mataram, identifying omission, misordering, overgeneralization, and misinformation as the four

dominant error types. Among these, omission errors were most frequent, reflecting the structural influence of Bahasa Indonesia, particularly its lack of inflectional morphology and articles. Misordering and misinformation errors pointed to syntactic and morphosyntactic transfer, while overgeneralization highlighted developmental stages in learners' interlanguage systems. The analysis, supported by triangulated data from writing tasks, questionnaires, and interviews, revealed that most errors were rooted in negative language transfer, overreliance on L1-based translation strategies, and limited metalinguistic awareness.

These findings demonstrate that student writing errors are not merely individual shortcomings but reflect systemic challenges in second language acquisition, particularly within ESP programs focused on tourism and hospitality. Addressing these challenges requires explicit, contrastive grammar instruction, contextualized writing practice, and feedback that enhances learners' grammatical competence. Equipping tourism students with accurate and professional written English is essential, not only for academic success but also for future careers in global hospitality settings. As such, targeted pedagogical strategies must be integrated into ESP curricula to support students in overcoming these recurring linguistic obstacles and in achieving higher levels of communicative proficiency.

Funding

Not Applicable.

Data Availability

Not Applicable.

REFERENCES

Adalia, H. G., Chavez, J. V., Hayudini, M. A. A., Kinarang, A. J., Sabbaha, N. A., & Salasain, A. A. M. (2025). Relevance of grammar among gen z college students using social learning perspectives. Forum for Linguistic Studies. https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i3.8401

Afifah, Komala Dewi, R., & Gustiawan, W. (2025). What Makes a Trip Unforgettable?: Investigating the Role of Memorable Tourism Experiences on Visitor Loyalty in Padang. Global Review of Tourism and Social Sciences, 1(3), 192–202. https://doi.org/10.53893/grtss.v1i3.396

Alfaifi, A. A. M., & Saleem, M. (2024). Negative transfer and delay in proficiency development: l1 influenced syntax issues faced by arab efl learners. Forum for Linguistic Studies, 6(4), 42–57. https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v6i4.6664

Alisoy, H. (2024). Exploring language acquisition: the role of native language interference in ESL learners. Journal of Azerbaijan Language and Education Studies, 1(1), 50-66. https://doi.org/10.69760/jales.2024.00105

Barone, S., & Саверио, Б. (2024). The importance of interlanguage in language teaching: an analysis of its development in l2 learners. Vestnik of Samara State Technical University Psychological and Pedagogical Sciences, 21(3), Article 3. https://doi.org/10.17673/vsgtu-pps.2024.3.6

Esperanza, M. E. B., Espinosa, J. S. F., Gambalosa, F. M., Opalsa, C. M., Tumbagahan, C. M., & Pomentil, R. A. G. (2024). Common informative writing errors among junior high school students: input to lesson exemplars. International Journal of Science and Research Archive, 11(2), 1606–1622. https://doi.org/10.30574/ijsra.2024.11.2.0466

Kallaba, F. (2025). Grammatical error analysis in academic essays: a comprehensive study of university students in kosovo (SSRN Scholarly Paper No. 5235157). Social Science Research Network. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5235157

Kusuma Hardi, Y., Nuada, I. W., & Supriyadi, E. (2023). Exploring the Impact of Tourism on the Community's Economy: A Case Study of Tanjung Menangis Beach in Ketapang Village, East Lombok. Advances in Tourism Studies, 1(1), 37–42. Retrieved from https://pkp.stpmataram.ac.id/index.php/ATS/article/view/11

Mahriyuni, M., Pramuniati, I., & Sitinjak, D. R. (2024). Interlanguage development among the learners of indonesian language in paris. Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 14(1), 206-219. https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v14i1.70394

Murdiansyah. (2024). An error analysis of students' error using passive sentences in writing explanation text (a case study at eleventh grade student of Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 3 Bogor academic year 2023/2024) [bachelorThesis, Jakarta: FITK UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta]. https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/123456789/78877

Namozov, S. (2025). Identifying the importance of grammatical norms in rapid english language learning. Educator Insights: Journal of Teaching Theory and Practice, 1(3), 406-420. https://brightmindpublishing.com/index.php/EI/article/view/290

Norris, S., Hagenbeck, J., & Schaltegger, S. (2021). Linking sustainable business models and supply chains—toward an integrated value creation framework. Business Strategy and the Environment, 30(8), 3960–3974. https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.2851

Pasaribu, A. N., Pasaribu, T. K., Siahaan, R. B., & Sitompul, D. S. (2024). Challenges for Indonesian EFL students in english academic writing. English Review: Journal of English Education, 12(2), 527-536. https://doi.org/10.25134/erjee.v12i2.9780

Picot, A. J. (2025). The design and implementation of a framework for the analysis of lexical errors in the compositions of students of english as a second language [Doctoral, Manchester Metropolitan University]. https://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/638435/

Setiyorini, T. J., Dewi, P., & Masykuri, E. S. (2020). The grammatical error analysis found in students' composition. lensa: kajian kebahasaan, kesusastraan, dan budaya, 10(2), 218. https://doi.org/10.26714/lensa.10.2.2020.218-233

Toribio, A. J. (2001). Nanda poulisse,slips of the tongue: speech errors in first and second language production (Studies in Bilingualism 20). Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1999. Pp. xii+266. Journal of Linguistics, 37(2), 393–450. https://doi.org/10.1017/S002222670100888X

Zaxidovna, A. F. (2025). The challenges of teaching english grammar to non-native speakers. Web of Teachers: Inderscience Research, 3(1), Retrieved from https://webofjournals.com/index.php/1/article/view/3009

Zhou, L. (2025). The syntactic complexity of ip clauses: a coh-metrix-based comparison between ftas in china and wipo agreements (SSRN Scholarly Paper No. 5261671). Social Science Research Network. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5261671