

An Analysis Of Grammatical Errors Made By English Education Students In Writing Instagram Captions

Analisis Kesalahan Tata Bahasa yang Dilakukan Mahasiswa Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris dalam Menulis Keterangan Foto Instagram

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze grammatical errors found in Instagram captions written by English Education students of HKBP Nommensen University Medan. The objectives of this study are to identify the types of grammatical errors, determine the most dominant error, and analyze the factors that cause these errors. This research used a qualitative descriptive method. The data consisted of 50 Instagram captions collected from students' Instagram accounts through documentation techniques. The data were analyzed using the Surface Strategy Taxonomy proposed by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982), which classifies grammatical errors into four types: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. The results of the research show that all four types of grammatical errors were found in the students' Instagram captions. Among the errors, omission was the most dominant type, occurring 21 times or 42% of the total errors. Misformation occurred 17 times, addition occurred 8 times, and misordering occurred 4 times. These findings indicate that students still face difficulties in applying correct grammatical structures when writing captions in English. Furthermore, the study revealed that grammatical errors were mainly caused by three factors: interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, and overgeneralization. Therefore, it can be concluded that students need to improve their understanding of English grammar to reduce grammatical errors not only in academic writing but also in everyday communication on social media.

Keywords: Grammatical Errors, Instagram Captions, Error Analysis, Surface Strategy Taxonomy

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kesalahan tata bahasa yang ditemukan dalam caption Instagram yang ditulis oleh mahasiswa Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Universitas Nommensen HKBP Medan. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis kesalahan tata bahasa, menentukan kesalahan yang paling dominan, dan menganalisis faktor-faktor penyebab kesalahan tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif. Data terdiri dari 50 caption Instagram yang dikumpulkan dari akun Instagram mahasiswa melalui teknik dokumentasi. Data dianalisis menggunakan Taksonomi Strategi Permukaan yang diusulkan oleh Dulay, Burt, dan Krashen (1982), yang mengklasifikasikan kesalahan tata bahasa menjadi empat jenis: penghilangan, penambahan, misformasi, dan misurutan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keempat jenis kesalahan tata bahasa tersebut ditemukan dalam caption Instagram mahasiswa. Di antara kesalahan tersebut, penghilangan merupakan jenis yang paling dominan, terjadi sebanyak 21 kali atau 42% dari total kesalahan. Misformasi terjadi sebanyak 17 kali, penambahan terjadi sebanyak 8 kali, dan misurutan terjadi sebanyak 4 kali. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa masih menghadapi kesulitan dalam menerapkan struktur tata bahasa yang benar ketika menulis caption dalam bahasa Inggris. Lebih lanjut, penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa kesalahan tata bahasa terutama disebabkan oleh tiga faktor: transfer antarbahasa, transfer intrabahasa, dan generalisasi berlebihan. Oleh karena itu, dapat disimpulkan bahwa siswa perlu meningkatkan pemahaman mereka tentang tata bahasa Inggris untuk mengurangi kesalahan tata bahasa tidak hanya dalam penulisan akademis tetapi juga dalam komunikasi sehari-hari di media sosial.

Kata Kunci: Kesalahan Tata Bahasa, Keterangan Instagram, Analisis Kesalahan, Taksonomi Strategi Permukaan.

1. Introduction

English plays a crucial role as an international language in global communication, especially in the era of digital interaction. In higher education, English Education students are expected to master English grammar because they are prepared to become future English teachers and language practitioners. Grammar competence is essential not only for academic writing but also for daily communication, as it supports clarity, accuracy, and professionalism in using English.

However, in practice, grammatical errors are still frequently found in students' English production, including among English Education students who have learned grammar through formal instruction. This condition indicates that grammar learning outcomes may not always be reflected in students' real language use. The presence of errors becomes an important issue because it may influence students' ability to communicate effectively and may also affect their readiness to teach English accurately.

In recent years, digital communication has grown rapidly and social media platforms have become a major space for writing and interaction. Instagram, in particular, is widely used by university students to share photos or videos accompanied by captions. Captions are short written texts that function as a way to deliver messages, express feelings, tell stories, and interact with others. Although captions are often brief and informal, they still represent authentic written language use.

The informal nature of Instagram may influence how students write in English. Students often write captions quickly and prioritize style, creativity, and emotional expression rather than grammatical accuracy. As a result, even students with an English Education background may produce grammatical errors when writing captions. This situation raises concerns about whether students consistently apply grammatical knowledge learned in the classroom when communicating in a digital environment.

Preliminary observations show that grammatical errors in Instagram captions commonly occur in areas such as verb forms, tense usage, subject-verb agreement, word order, and sentence structure. These grammatical errors may result in unclear meanings or inaccurate messages being conveyed. Although other language-related issues, such as spelling and punctuation, may also appear in captions, they are considered secondary and do not constitute the main concern of this study. Therefore, analyzing the types and patterns of grammatical errors found in Instagram captions is important to understand students' actual grammatical competence in everyday digital writing.

This study focuses on English Education students at HKBP Nommensen University in Medan and uses their Instagram captions as the primary data source. Instagram captions are chosen because they provide naturally occurring data and reflect students' real communication habits. By examining authentic captions, this research can present a realistic description of students' language use beyond formal classroom tasks.

The study applies Error Analysis theory proposed by Corder, which views learner errors as a natural part of language development and as useful evidence of how language is learned. Through error analysis, the researcher can classify and describe the grammatical errors found in students' captions, identify which error types appear most frequently, and interpret the patterns of students' difficulties in grammar usage.

In addition, this research is expected to contribute to English language education by providing insights into common grammatical problems faced by English Education students in digital writing contexts. The findings may help lecturers design more effective grammar instruction and encourage students to apply grammatical accuracy not only in academic writing but also in daily online communication. Therefore, this study is entitled "An Analysis of Grammatical Errors Made by English Education Students in Writing Instagram Captions,"

representing its main focus on identifying and analyzing grammatical errors in students' Instagram caption writing.

2. Metodology

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research design, which is appropriate for providing a detailed and accurate description of linguistic phenomena based on naturally occurring data. The primary objective of this research is to identify, explain, and analyze the grammatical errors produced by English Education students in their Instagram caption writing. This design is suitable because the researcher intends to examine learners' authentic language use in a real online environment without manipulating any variables.

The methodological foundation of this study is supported by Corder's (1981) theory of Error Analysis, which emphasizes that learner errors are systematic, meaningful, and reflect the developmental stages of their internal linguistic system. According to Corder, errors are valuable sources of information because they reveal the strategies learners use when constructing hypotheses about the target language. Guided by this theoretical perspective, the present study analyzes the types and possible sources of grammatical errors as they naturally appear in Instagram captions written by English Education students at HKBP Nommensen University Medan. Through this approach, the research design enables the researcher to present a clear, comprehensive, and theoretically grounded account of the learners' grammatical performance in digital writing contexts.

In this study, the data consist of Instagram captions that contain grammatical errors. The captions are produced by English Education students and represent authentic, spontaneous writing in a digital context. The researcher does not intervene in the writing process; instead, the captions are analyzed as naturally occurring linguistic data. This aligns with the principles of qualitative research, which emphasizes real-world language use and contextual meaning.

After collecting the data, the researcher identified and classified the grammatical errors using Dulay, Burt, and Krashen's (1982) Surface Strategy Taxonomy, which includes omission, addition, misformation, and misordering errors. Then, the causes of errors are analyzed using Richards' (1971/1974) theory, including interlingual, intralingual, and developmental errors. Furthermore, the interpretation of the students' errors is guided by Corder's (1981) Error Analysis theory, which views errors as reflections of learners' interlanguage development.

The qualitative design allows the researcher to analyze each caption carefully, observe error patterns, and interpret the linguistic processes underlying them. The data are presented descriptively to show the frequency, examples, types, and causes of errors made by the students. The final results provide a comprehensive understanding of the students' grammatical performance in digital writing and offer insights for improving writing instruction.

3. Literature Review

According to Harmer (2002:257), authors need to focus on a number of crucial aspects of the writing process. These include proper punctuation, layout, and spelling, as well as the proper use of language, including grammar, vocabulary, and connectors.

Classic writing theory treats writing as a social and cognitive process of encoding meanings for readers (Hatch, 1992; Brown, 2001), and when applied to social media, those theoretical assumptions imply that Instagram captions are concise, goal-oriented written productions shaped by audience expectations and contextual constraints.

Thornbury (1999) describes grammar as the set of rules that explain how words are formed (morphology) and how they are combined into sentences (syntax). Similarly, Richards and Schmidt (2010) state that grammar involves the structural system of a language, covering the principles for forming words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. A lack of grammatical

competence may lead learners to produce language that is vague, confusing, or grammatically incorrect.

Zappavigna (2015) explains that social media writing is a form of *ambient affiliation*, where language is used not only to convey meaning but also to build social connections. Despite its informal nature, grammatical features still affect how effectively the message is delivered.

Wardoyo (2023) conducted a study entitled "*Error Analysis in Social Media Caption: A Study on Instagram*," utilizing a descriptive qualitative approach to investigate grammatical inaccuracies in English captions posted on various Instagram accounts.

Nurfausyabani and Setiawan (2023) conducted a study entitled "*The Influencers' Language on Instagram and Twitter Captions*," published through a reputable national journal.

This study adopts Corder's (1981) Error Analysis theory, which views learner errors not as signs of failure but as systematic indicators of the language learning process.

4. Results And Discussion

In this chapter, the researcher presents and analyzes the results of the study concerning the grammatical errors found in Instagram captions. The data analyzed in this research were taken from Instagram captions written by students of the English Language Education Study Program at HKBP Nommensen University Medan. The analysis focuses on identifying the types of grammatical errors that occur in the captions.

This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section presents the research findings, which include the identification and classification of grammatical errors based on the data collected. The second section provides the discussion, in which the researcher explains and interprets the findings in relation to the research questions and the theoretical framework used in this study. Through this analysis, the researcher aims to answer the research questions regarding the types of grammatical errors found in Instagram captions and the most dominant errors that appear in the data.

1.1 Data Display

The data of this research were taken from Instagram captions written by English Education students of HKBP Nommensen University. Instagram is one of the most popular social media platforms used by young people to share their daily activities, thoughts, and experiences through photos and captions. In writing captions, users often express their feelings and ideas in English. However, because English is not their first language, grammatical errors frequently appear in the captions they write.

In this research, the researcher collected 50 Instagram captions that potentially contain grammatical errors. These captions were obtained from several Instagram users and were used as the main data of this research. The captions were then analyzed to identify the types of grammatical errors based on the Surface Strategy Taxonomy proposed by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982). According to this theory, grammatical errors can be classified into four types: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

Based on the observation of the collected data, the captions posted by Instagram users generally discuss several themes, such as daily life experiences, friendship, dreams and motivation, self-reflection, and personal feelings. These themes reflect how young people use social media to express their thoughts and emotions in a simple and informal way.

The captions used in this research vary in length and structure. Some captions consist of only one sentence, while others contain several sentences combined into a short paragraph. Because the captions are written in an informal style, many grammatical structures are not written correctly, which results in various grammatical errors.

To make the data easier to understand, the researcher first presents several examples of Instagram captions used as the research data. These examples show how the captions are written by Instagram users and how grammatical errors appear in their writing.

The following figures present examples of Instagram posts containing captions that are used as the data in this research.

1.1.1 Data of Instagram Captions



Figure 1. Instagram Caption about Daily Activity

Caption:

“Finally we go to Berastagi after finishing our midterm exam. The weather very cold but the view really amazing and make us forget all the stress from campus.”

Figure 1. shows an Instagram post uploaded by the user **@butet**. The post contains a photo taken during a trip to Berastagi after finishing a midterm examination. In the caption, the user describes the experience of visiting Berastagi and enjoying the natural scenery. The caption also expresses the writer’s happiness and relief after completing the midterm exam and taking a short trip to relax.

However, the caption still contains several grammatical errors. For instance, in the sentence *“The weather very cold”*, the auxiliary verb *“is”* is omitted. The phrase *“the view really amazing”* should be written as *“the view is really amazing”*, and the verb *“make”* should be changed into *“makes”* to agree with the singular subject *“the view.”* These grammatical errors indicate that although the message of the caption can still be understood, the sentence structure does not fully follow the correct grammatical rules of English.



Figure 2. Instagram Caption about Friendship

Caption:

“College life give me many new experience and teach me how important manage time between study and rest.”

Figure 2. shows an Instagram post uploaded by the user @ysl_ntmn. The post contains a group photo taken in front of a university building at Universitas HKBP Nommensen. In the caption, the user expresses their experience as a college student and reflects on how college life provides many valuable experiences. The caption also highlights the importance of managing time effectively between studying and resting during university life.

However, the caption still contains several grammatical errors. For example, the phrase “College life give me many new experience” should be written as “College life gives me many new experiences.” The verb “give” should be changed to “gives” to agree with the singular subject “college life,” and the noun “experience” should be pluralized into “experiences.” In addition, the phrase “how important manage time” should be corrected to “how important it is to manage time.” These grammatical errors indicate that although the meaning of the caption is clear, the sentence structure does not fully follow standard English grammatical rules.



Figure 3. Instagram Caption about Instagram Caption about self-reflection

Caption:

“people change, situations change, but dreams inside young hearts still remain.”

Figure 3. shows an Instagram post uploaded by the user @maria_mnl05. The post displays a photo of a flower shop taken in a market area. Through the caption, the user reflects on the idea that people and situations in life may change over time, but the dreams that exist in young hearts continue to remain. The caption expresses a motivational message about maintaining dreams and hopes even when life circumstances change.

However, the caption still contains a minor grammatical problem related to capitalization. The sentence begins with the word “people” written in lowercase, whereas in standard English writing, the first word of a sentence should be capitalized. Therefore, the correct form should be “People change, situations change, but dreams inside young hearts still remain.” Although the grammatical error is relatively small, it shows that captions on social media are often written informally without paying full attention to standard writing conventions.



Figure 4. Instagram Caption about Instagram Caption about Motivation

Caption:

“Your journey maybe slow, but slow progress still better than no progress.”

Figure 4. shows an Instagram post uploaded by the user @introvertedgirl27. The post displays a photo taken in an outdoor area that appears to be a school environment. In the caption, the user conveys a motivational message about personal growth and perseverance. The caption emphasizes that everyone has their own journey in life, and even if progress is slow, it is still better than making no progress at all. This message encourages readers to stay motivated and continue improving themselves step by step.

However, the caption still contains a grammatical error. In the sentence “*Your journey maybe slow,*” the phrase “maybe” is incorrectly used. The correct form should be “may be” because it functions as a modal verb phrase describing possibility. In addition, the phrase “*slow progress still better than no progress*” should be written as “slow progress is still better than no progress” by adding the verb “is.” These errors indicate that although the caption communicates a clear motivational message, the grammatical structure does not fully follow standard English grammar rules.

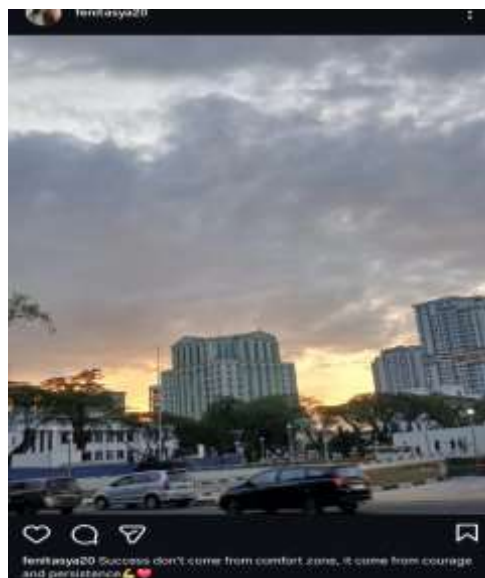


Figure 5. Instagram Caption about motivation

Caption :

“Success don't come from comfort zone, it come from courage and persistence.”

Figure 5. shows an Instagram post uploaded by the user @fenitasya20. The post displays a photograph of an urban area with several tall buildings and vehicles on the road during sunset. The atmosphere of the image creates a calm and reflective scene. In the caption, the user writes “*Success don't come from comfort zone, it come from courage and persistence.*” The caption conveys a motivational message about achieving success. The user emphasizes that success cannot be obtained by staying in the comfort zone, but through courage and persistence. Through this statement, the writer encourages readers to be brave and keep working hard in order to achieve their goals.

However, the caption still contains grammatical errors. In the sentence “*Success don't come from comfort zone,*” the auxiliary verb “don't” is incorrect because the subject “success” is a singular noun. The correct form should be “doesn't,” so the sentence becomes “*Success doesn't come from the comfort zone.*” In addition, the clause “*it come from courage and persistence*” should be written as “*it comes from courage and persistence*” because the verb must agree with the singular subject “it.” These errors show that although the caption successfully conveys a motivational message, the grammatical structure does not fully follow the rules of standard English grammar, particularly in terms of subject–verb agreement.



Figure 6. Instagram Caption about a friend

Figure 6. shows an Instagram post uploaded by the user @akunharianseorangdiri. The post contains a photo of several students posing together in a classroom environment. In the picture, the students appear to be standing side by side with cheerful expressions and similar poses, indicating a friendly and supportive atmosphere among them. The caption conveys a motivational message about life struggles and perseverance. The writer attempts to express that the difficulties faced today will eventually become meaningful stories that people will be proud of in the future.

However, the caption still contains several grammatical errors. For example, in the phrase “the struggles today we facing,” the auxiliary verb “are” is omitted, so the correct form should be “the struggles today we are facing.” This error belongs to the omission category because the auxiliary verb required in the present continuous tense is missing. Another error appears in the phrase “the story we proud of,” where the verb “are” is also omitted. The correct sentence should be “the story we are proud of.” These errors indicate that the writer intended to use present continuous and adjective complement structures, but some grammatical elements were not included.



Figure 7. Instagram Caption about dreams

Figure 7. shows an Instagram post uploaded by the user @nopiadelina. The post displays a photo of the user sitting at a table in what appears to be a café or restaurant. The user is posing with a relaxed expression while resting her head on her hand. The environment looks comfortable and calm, suggesting a casual moment captured in everyday life. In the caption, the writer shares a motivational message about life challenges and perseverance. The caption reflects the idea that although life can sometimes feel difficult, people should continue striving to pursue their dreams.

However, the caption still contains a grammatical error. In the phrase “we still trying to stand up,” the auxiliary verb “are” is omitted. The correct sentence should be “we are still trying to stand up and chase our dreams.” This error belongs to the omission category because the auxiliary verb required in the present continuous tense is missing. The writer intends to express an ongoing action, but the grammatical structure does not fully follow the correct English rule.



Figure 8. Instagram Caption about life

Figure 8. shows an Instagram post uploaded by the user @akunharianseorangdiri. The post displays a photo of a person standing on a wooden railing while looking at a beautiful natural landscape filled with green trees and hills. The environment appears calm and peaceful, suggesting a moment of reflection or appreciation of nature. In the caption, the writer attempts to convey a motivational and reflective message about life. The message emphasizes that life gradually teaches people to be patient through situations that are beyond human control.

However, the caption still contains several grammatical errors. First, in the phrase “Life teaching slowly teaches us patience,” the word “teaching” is incorrectly used. The correct sentence should be “Life slowly teaches us patience.” This error belongs to the misformation

category because an incorrect word form is used in the sentence. In addition, the word “patience” is unnecessarily repeated in the phrase “patience patience,” which is categorized as an addition error because an extra word is added that is not needed in the sentence.



Figure 9. Instagram Caption about friendship

Figure 9. shows an Instagram post uploaded by the user @thi_is_yoyo. The post displays a group of students posing together for a photo. They appear to be sitting and standing in several rows while making various hand gestures and smiling at the camera. The atmosphere of the photo seems lively and joyful, indicating a moment of togetherness among friends or classmates. In the caption, the writer attempts to convey a motivational message about life experiences. The caption suggests that meaningful and beautiful stories in life often begin with difficult situations or challenges.

However, the caption still contains a grammatical error. In the phrase “difficult beginning,” the noun “beginning” should be in the plural form because the sentence refers to general situations. The correct expression should be “difficult beginnings.” This error belongs to the misformation category because the writer used an incorrect word form in the sentence.



Figure 10. Instagram Caption about

Figure 10. shows an Instagram post uploaded by the user @friss_lasee. The post contains several photos combined in one post that show different views of a campus environment. The images include a statue near a small pond, a person sitting while stretching their legs on a tiled floor, a view of a large building from a balcony, and a long corridor inside the campus building. These photos appear to represent daily moments or reflections of campus life. In the caption, the writer shares a motivational message that emphasizes the idea that quiet or unnoticed dreams can eventually lead to great success.

However, the caption contains a grammatical error. In the phrase “the loudest success,” the word “success” is generally an uncountable noun and is not commonly used with a

superlative adjective such as “loudest.” The intended meaning is that quiet dreams may lead to great or remarkable success. Therefore, the phrase would be more appropriate if written as “the greatest success” or “great success.” This error can be categorized as misformation because an inappropriate word form is used in the sentence.

2.1 Research Findings

2.2.1 Types of Grammatical Errors in Instagram Captions

Based on the analysis of the Instagram captions written by English Education students, the researcher found several grammatical errors. These errors were identified and classified into four categories according to the Surface Strategy Taxonomy proposed by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982), namely omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

Each type of grammatical error is explained in the following sections along with examples taken from the students’ captions. The examples illustrate how the errors occur and how the sentences should be corrected according to standard English grammar.

Table 1. Identification of Grammatical Errors

No	Captions	Correct Form	User’s Account	Types of Errors
1.	<i>Finally we go to Berastagi after finishing our midterm exam. The weather <u>very cold</u> but the view <u>really amazing</u> and <u>make</u> us forget all the stress from campus.</i>	Finally we go to Berastagi after finishing our midterm exam. The weather was very cold , but the view was really amazing and made us forget all the stress from campus.	_butet_	Omission
2.	<i>Today was <u>very tiring day</u> for me because I <u>have</u> many <u>assignment</u> to finish before midnight. My brain <u>already full</u> but I still <u>try do</u> my best.</i>	Today was a very tiring day for me because I had many assignments to finish before midnight. My brain was already full but I still tried to do my best.	_butet_	Misformation
3.	<i>I <u>very grateful</u> <u>have</u> friends who always support me when college life <u>getting</u> harder every semester.</i>	I am very grateful to have friends who always support me when college life is getting harder every semester.	ysl_ntmn	Omission

		harder every semester.		
4.	<i>College life <u>give</u> me many <u>new</u> <u>experience</u> and <u>teach</u> me how <u>important</u> <u>manage</u> time between study and rest.</i>	College life gives me many new experiences and teaches me how important to manage time between study and rest.	ysl_ntmn	Misformation
5.	<i><u>Some</u> <u>students</u> <u>difficult</u> understand grammar because they rarely practice writing.</i>	Some students find it difficult to understand grammar because they rarely practice writing.	Irawati_simanullang_	Misformation
6.	<i>I always try <u>improve</u> my English by watching <u>movie</u> and listening <u>music</u>.</i>	I always try to improve my English by watching movies and listening to music .	Irawati_simanullang_	Omission
7.	<i><u>Early</u> <u>year</u>,<u>same</u> <u>family</u>,<u>same</u> <u>love</u>.<u>hope</u> this year <u>bring</u> more happiness for us.</i>	Early this year, same family, same love. I hope this year brings more happiness for us.	Samaria_tmbn	Misformation
8.	<i>My shadow <u>follow</u> every step I take like it <u>trying</u> to tell me that I <u>never</u> <u>really</u> alone.</i>	My shadow follows every step I take like it is trying to tell me that I am never really alone.	Samaria_tmbn	Misformation
9.	<i><u>Realize</u> that growing up is not easy, but we still <u>learning</u> every single day.</i>	I realize that growing up is not easy, but we still are learning every single day.	Cristina_nelvana	Misformation
10.	<i><u>learn</u> that happiness <u>don't</u> always</i>	I learn that happiness doesn't always	Cristina_nelvana	Omission

	<i>come from big achievements or perfect moments.</i>	comes from big achievements or perfect moments.		
11.	<i>Some people stay in your life forever, some just <u>passing</u> through like a short story.</i>	Some people stay in your life forever, some just are passing through like a short story.	lowkwyinloveeee	Misformation
12.	<i>Every day I try to become <u>better person</u> than <u>the version of me</u> yesterday.</i>	Every day I try to become a better person than the version of me from yesterday .	Elizabethh_	Omission
13.	<i>Dreams look so far away sometimes, but we still <u>chasing</u> them anyway.</i>	Dreams look so far away sometimes, but we still are chasing them anyway.	Elizabethh_	Misformation
14.	<i>I <u>trying</u> to enjoy the little things because life <u>move</u> too fast.</i>	I am trying to enjoy the little things because life moves too fast.	nopiadelina	Omission
15.	<i>Sometimes life <u>feel</u> heavy, but we still <u>trying</u> to stand up and chase our dreams.</i>	Sometimes life feels heavy, but we still are trying to stand up and chase our dreams.	nopiadelina	Misformation
16.	<i>Not every step <u>look</u> perfect, but every step still <u>matter</u> for the future.</i>	Not every step looks perfect, but every step still matters for the future.	nopiadelina	Misformation
17.	<i>Your journey <u>maybe</u> slow, but <u>slow</u> progress still <u>better</u> than no progress.</i>	Your journey may be slow, but slow progress is still better than no progress.	Introverttedgirl27	Misformation
18.	<i>Every struggle in youth <u>teach</u></i>	Every struggle in youth	Introverttedgirl27	Misformation

	<i>us something that success never show.</i>	teaches us something that success never shows.		
19	<i>Success <u>don't</u> come from comfort zone, it <u>come</u> from courage and persistence.</i>	Success doesn't come from a comfort zone; it comes from courage and persistence.	Fenitasya20	Misformation
20.	<i>The road to success <u>look</u> long and tiring, but every step still <u>worth it.</u></i>	The road to success looks long and tiring, but every step still is worth it.	Maria_mnl05	Misformation
21	<i>People change, situations change, but dreams inside young hearts still <u>remain.</u></i>	People change, situations change, but dreams inside young hearts remain unchanged.	Maria_mnl05	Misformation
22.	<i>The future <u>belong</u> to those who <u>brave enough</u> to keep trying.</i>	The future belongs to those who are brave enough to keep trying.	Fenitasya20	Misformation
23.	<i>Sometimes the road we walk <u>feel</u> lonely, but the dream in our heart <u>keep</u> us moving.</i>	Sometimes the road we walk feels lonely, but the dream in our heart keeps us moving.	Geby_evl	Misformation
24.	<i>Every young soul <u>carry</u> a dream that <u>bigger</u> than <u>their fear.</u></i>	Every young soul carries a dream that is bigger than its fear.	Sweet_bunnies.05	Misformation
25.	<i>Some nights we <u>wondering</u> if the dreams we <u>chasing</u> will finally find us.</i>	Some nights we are wondering if the dreams we are chasing will finally find us.	Sweet_bunnies.05	Misformation

26	<i>Sometimes we <u>walking</u> through darkness before we finally see the light.</i>	Sometimes we are walking through darkness before we finally see the light.	Risaaa.ds_	Misformation
27.	<i>Life <u>become</u> meaningful when we <u>brave enough</u> to follow our passion.</i>	Life becomes meaningful when we are brave enough to follow our passion.	Risaaa.ds_	Misformation
28.	<i>The most beautiful stories often start with a <u>difficult beginning</u>.</i>	The most beautiful stories often start with a difficult beginning .		Omission
29.	<i>Sometimes the quietest dreams <u>becomes</u> the loudest success</i>	Sometimes the quietest dreams become the loudest success.	Yelsee_mnllg	Misformation
30.	<i>Every sunrise <u>remind</u> us that new chances always <u>exist</u></i>	Every sunrise reminds us that new chances always exist .	Yelsee_mnllg	Misformation
31.	<i>Life is <u>giving</u> us opportunities disguised as challenges.</i>	Life gives us opportunities disguised as challenges.	Friss_lasee	Addition
32.	<i>Sometimes the night <u>feel</u> longer than usual, and I am sitting here thinking about the dreams I still <u>chasing</u>.</i>	Sometimes the night feels longer than usual, and I am sitting here thinking about the dreams I still am chasing .	Friss_lasee	Misformation
33.	<i>Life <u>look</u> calm from the outside, but inside my mind there <u>is</u> a</i>	Life looks calm from the outside, but inside my mind there are	Friss_lasee	Misformation

	<i>thousand thoughts running.</i>	a thousand thoughts running.		
34.	<i>I am learning that growing up are not about having everything figured out</i>	<i>I am learning that growing up is not about having everything figured out</i>	ntannhtgl	Addition
35.	<i>People <u>say follow</u> your dreams, but nobody <u>does explain</u> how hard that journey actually is</i>	People say to follow your dreams, but nobody explains how hard that journey actually is.	Lewi_jait	Addition
36.	<i>Sometimes the biggest change does happen quietly when nobody <u>watching</u></i>	Sometimes the biggest change does happen quietly when nobody is watching .	Lewi_jait	Ommision
37.	<i>There is beauty in the struggle that people <u>realy</u> rarely notice</i>	There is beauty in the struggle that people really rarely notice.	evowww	Misformation
38.	<i>There <u>is</u> moments when you feel like giving up, but something inside you <u>keep</u> fighting</i>	There are moments when you feel like giving up, but something inside you keeps fighting.	evowww	Misformation
39.	<i>Life <u>teaching</u> slowly teaches us <u>patience</u> <u>patience</u> through the things we cannot control</i>	Life teaches slowly teaches us patience through the things we cannot control.	ntannhtgl	Misformation
40.	<i>One day the struggles today we <u>facing</u> become</i>	One day the struggles today we are facing become	Ecci_tmrng	Misformation

	<i>the story we proud of</i>	the story we are proud of.		
41.	<i>Never underestimate the power of small everyday efforts <u>done everyday</u></i>	Never underestimate the power of small, everyday efforts.	Ecci_tmrng	Addition
42.	<i>Keep moving forward even when <u>invisible the progress feel</u></i>	Keep moving forward even when the progress feels invisible.	Thi_is_yoyo	Misformation
43.	<i>Dreams <u>not coming true by waiting, by fighting they coming true.</u></i>	Dreams do not come true by waiting; they come true by fighting.	Thi_is_yoyo	Misformation
44.	<i>Never stop chasing knowledge, because <u>opening always knowledge new doors.</u></i>	Never stop chasing knowledge, because knowledge always opens new doors.	jeannyca	Misformation
45.	<i>Learning <u>everyday may feel small, but becoming one day it something big</u></i>	Learning every day may feel small, but it becomes something big one day.	Rizka.smjtg	Misformation
46.	<i>Keep learning even when <u>too heavy the world feel on your shoulders</u></i>	Keep learning even when the world feels too heavy on your shoulders.	Samaria	Misformation
47.	<i>The road to success <u>never easy, but every step still worth taking</u></i>	The road to success is never easy, but every step still is worth taking.	_darkgurl_	Omission
48.	<i>Learning <u>not always easy, but every</u></i>	Learning is not always easy, but every	_darkgurl_	Omission

	<i>struggle slowly making us stronger</i>	struggle slowly makes us stronger.		
49.	<i>Sometimes love teach us things that life never explain before</i>	Sometimes love teaches us things that life never explains before.	Miikel.sma.mbg.e.tanol. ss	Misformation
50.	<i>There is moments when I look at you and realize that my heart choose you without any reason</i>	There are moments when I look at you and realize that my heart	Miikel.sma.mbg.e.tanol. ss	Misformation

2.2.1.1 Omission Errors

Omission errors occur when certain grammatical elements that are required in a sentence are absent. According to Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982), omission errors refer to the absence of necessary items that must appear in a well-formed sentence. These elements may include auxiliary verbs, articles, prepositions, or verb inflections that are essential in English grammatical structure. Such errors frequently occur among second language learners because they tend to simplify sentence structures by leaving out elements that they perceive as less important for conveying meaning.

Based on the analysis of the Instagram captions written by the students, several omission errors were identified. These errors mostly involve the omission of auxiliary verbs, the verb *to be*, and certain grammatical markers that are required in English sentence construction.

Data 1 : Caption: "Success not come from comfort zone."

Correct form: "Success does not come from the comfort zone."

In this example, the auxiliary verb *does* is omitted. In English grammar, a negative sentence in the simple present tense requires the auxiliary verb *do/does* followed by the base form of the main verb. The omission of the auxiliary verb makes the sentence grammatically incorrect even though the intended meaning can still be understood by readers.

Data 2 : Caption: "I very grateful have friends like you."

Correct form: "I am very grateful to have friends like you."

This sentence contains two omissions. First, the auxiliary verb *am* is omitted after the subject *I*. Second, the infinitive marker *to* is omitted before the verb *have*. In English grammar, adjectives such as *grateful* require the verb *to be* when functioning as a predicate adjective. The omission of these elements indicates that the student does not include all necessary grammatical components required for a complete sentence.

Data 3 : Caption: "She happy today."

Correct form: "She is happy today."

In this sentence, the verb *is* is omitted. English sentences that use adjectives as complements generally require the verb *to be* as the linking verb. However, in Indonesian grammar, such linking verbs are not always necessary. As a result, students often omit the verb *to be* when writing sentences in English.

These examples show that omission errors frequently occur when students exclude grammatical elements that are required in English sentence formation. This type of error is often influenced by the structural differences between English and the students' first language.

2.2.1.2 Addition Errors

Addition errors occur when students include unnecessary elements in a sentence. According to Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982), addition errors refer to the presence of items that should not appear in a correct grammatical structure. This type of error usually occurs when learners apply grammatical rules excessively or when they misunderstand the function of certain grammatical elements in English.

Based on the data analysis, several addition errors were identified in the students' Instagram captions. These errors mostly involve the incorrect addition of verb forms or grammatical markers that are not required in the sentence structure.

Data 4 : Caption: "She didn't went to class yesterday."

Correct form: "She didn't go to class yesterday."

In this sentence, the student incorrectly adds the past form of the verb *went* after the auxiliary *didn't*. In English grammar, when the auxiliary *did* is used in a negative sentence, the main verb must remain in its base form. Therefore, the correct verb form should be *go*, not *went*.

Data 5 : Caption: "He doesn't knows the answer."

Correct form: "He doesn't know the answer."

This sentence shows the incorrect addition of the verb ending *-s* in the word *knows*. Since the auxiliary *does* already indicates subject-verb agreement for the third person singular subject *he*, the main verb should remain in its base form.

Data 6 : Caption: "They are study in the library."

Correct form: "They are studying in the library."

In this case, the student incorrectly combines the auxiliary verb *are* with the base form *study*. When the auxiliary verb *to be* is used to form the present continuous tense, the main verb must take the *-ing* form. Therefore, the correct sentence should use the verb *studying*.

These examples indicate that addition errors occur when students insert grammatical elements that are not necessary in the sentence. This often happens because students apply certain grammatical rules without fully understanding their correct usage.

2.2.1.3 Misformation Errors

Misformation errors occur when students use incorrect forms of grammatical elements in a sentence. According to Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982), misformation errors refer to the use of incorrect forms of morphemes or structures in place of the correct ones. This type of error usually occurs when learners choose inappropriate grammatical forms when constructing sentences in the target language.

Based on the data analysis, several misformation errors were found in the students' Instagram captions. These errors mainly involve incorrect verb forms and subject-verb agreement.

Data 7 : Caption: "Success don't come from comfort zone."

Correct form: "Success doesn't come from the comfort zone."

In this example, the auxiliary verb *don't* is incorrectly used with the singular subject *success*. In English grammar, singular third-person subjects require the auxiliary verb *doesn't*. The incorrect use of *don't* indicates that the student does not apply the rule of subject-verb agreement correctly.

Data 8 : Caption: "My friend give me many motivation."

Correct form: "My friend gives me a lot of motivation."

This sentence contains a misformation error in the verb *give*. Because the subject *my friend* is singular, the verb should take the form *gives*. In addition, the phrase *many motivation* is not commonly used in English. The more appropriate expression is *a lot of motivation*.

Data 9 : Caption: "She have many dreams."

Correct form: "She has many dreams."

In this example, the student incorrectly uses the verb *have* instead of *has*. Since the subject *she* is a third-person singular pronoun, the correct verb form should be *has*. This error

shows that the student does not fully apply the rule of subject–verb agreement. These examples demonstrate that misformation errors occur when students select incorrect grammatical forms in sentence construction.

2.2.1.4 Misordering Errors

Misordering errors occur when the elements of a sentence are arranged in an incorrect order. According to Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982), misordering refers to the incorrect placement of morphemes or words in a sentence. This type of error often occurs when learners translate sentences directly from their first language into the target language without adjusting the grammatical structure.

Based on the data analysis, several misordering errors were identified in the students' Instagram captions.

Data 10 : Caption: "I don't know what is the meaning this."

Correct form: "I don't know what this means."

In this sentence, the word order is incorrect because the student places the verb *is* before the subject *the meaning*. In English indirect questions, the sentence structure should follow the pattern of a statement rather than a direct question.

Data 11 : Caption: "She always happy is."

Correct form: "She is always happy."

This sentence contains an incorrect word order because the verb *is* is placed at the end of the sentence. In English grammar, the linking verb *to be* should appear after the subject.

Data 12 : Caption: "Very I am proud of you."

Correct form: "I am very proud of you."

In this example, the adverb *very* is incorrectly placed at the beginning of the sentence. The correct structure places the adverb after the verb *am*.

These examples show that misordering errors occur when students arrange sentence elements incorrectly. This type of error is often influenced by the structure of the students' first language.

3.1 Frequency and Percentage of Grammatical Errors

After identifying and classifying the grammatical errors in the Instagram captions in the previous section, the researcher calculated the frequency and percentage of each type of grammatical error. This analysis aims to determine the distribution of grammatical errors found in the data and to identify which type of error occurs most frequently. The classification of errors in this research is based on the Surface Strategy Taxonomy proposed by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982), which categorizes grammatical errors into four types: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

To obtain a clearer description of the occurrence of each error type, the researcher calculated the percentage of errors using a simple statistical formula. The percentage calculation helps explain the proportion of each type of grammatical error compared to the total number of errors found in the data. The formula used to calculate the percentage is presented as follows:

$$P = (F / N) \times 100\%$$

Where:

P = Percentage of errors

F = Frequency of each type of grammatical error

N = Total number of grammatical errors found in the data

100% = Constant number used to convert the result into percentage form

This formula is commonly used in linguistic and educational research to show how frequently a particular phenomenon appears in a dataset. By applying this formula, the researcher can determine the proportion of each error category and identify which type of grammatical error dominates the data. For example, if the number of omission errors is 21 and

the total number of grammatical errors found in the data is 50, the percentage is calculated as follows:

$$P = (21 / 50) \times 100 \%$$

$$P = 42\%$$

This result indicates that omission errors account for 42% of the total grammatical errors in the Instagram captions.

Based on the analysis of 50 Instagram captions collected from the data source, the researcher identified four types of grammatical errors. The frequency and percentage of each type of grammatical error are presented in Table 2. below.

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage of Grammatical Errors

No	Types of Grammatical Errors	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Omission	21	42%
2.	Addition	8	16%
3.	Misformation	17	34%
4.	Misordering	4	8%
Total		50	100%

Table 2. presents the distribution of grammatical errors found in the Instagram captions analyzed in this study. The table shows that omission is the most dominant type of grammatical error, with a total of 21 occurrences, representing 42% of the total errors. Omission errors occur when an essential grammatical element is missing in a sentence, such as the omission of auxiliary verbs, articles, or the verb *to be*. Many captions in the data contain incomplete sentence structures, which indicates that the writers tend to omit important grammatical components when composing captions in English.

The second most frequent type of error is misformation, which occurs 17 times or 34% of the total errors. Misformation errors occur when the writer uses an incorrect form of a grammatical structure, such as incorrect verb forms or subject–verb agreement. These errors show that the writers often attempt to construct sentences in English but still struggle to apply the correct grammatical forms.

Meanwhile, addition errors appear 8 times or 16% of the total errors. This type of error occurs when unnecessary grammatical elements are added to a sentence, resulting in incorrect sentence construction. Although this type of error occurs less frequently than omission and misformation, it still indicates that some writers are uncertain about the appropriate grammatical structures in English sentences.

The least frequent type of grammatical error found in the data is misordering, which occurs 4 times or 8% of the total errors. Misordering errors occur when words are arranged in an incorrect order within a sentence according to English grammar rules. The relatively small number of misordering errors suggests that most writers generally understand the basic word order in English sentences, even though other grammatical aspects still present difficulties.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that omission errors are the most dominant grammatical errors found in Instagram captions. This indicates that writers tend to omit important grammatical elements when expressing their ideas in English. The results of this analysis also show that while social media captions are often written informally, many users still attempt to express complex ideas in English, which may lead to various grammatical inaccuracies.

3.3.1 Causes of Grammatical Errors

After identifying and classifying the types of grammatical errors found in the students' Instagram captions, the researcher also analyzed the possible causes of these errors. Identifying the causes of errors is important because it helps explain the factors that influence students when producing sentences in a second language. According to Richards (1971), errors in second

language learning may occur due to several factors, namely interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, and overgeneralization.

Based on the analysis of the Instagram captions collected in this study, the grammatical errors produced by the students are influenced by those three factors. Each factor is discussed in the following subsections with reference to the data obtained from the students' captions.

Table 3. Causes of Grammatical Errors

No	Cause of Errors	Description	Example from Data
1.	Interlingual Transfer	Errors influenced by the structure of the first language (Indonesian)	"The weather very cold"
2.	Interlingual Transfer	Direct translation from Indonesian sentence pattern	"Some students difficult understand grammar"
3.	Intralingual Transfer	Incomplete understanding of English grammar rules	"I very grateful have friends"
4.	Intralingual Transfer	Lack of mastery in sentence structure and verb usage	"College life give me many new experience"
5.	Overgeneralization	Overuse or incorrect application of grammar rules	"Life teaching slowly teaches us patience"
6.	Intralingual Transfer	Incorrect use of auxiliary verbs in continuous tense	"Sometimes we walking through darkness."
7.	Overgeneralization	Incorrect formation of sentence patterns	"Dreams not coming true by waiting"
8.	Intralingual Transfer	Confusion in subject-verb agreement	"The road to success look long and tiring"

Based on the table presented above, the causes of grammatical errors found in the Instagram captions can be systematically explained through three main factors, namely interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, and overgeneralization, as proposed by Richards (1971). These factors reflect both the influence of the learners' first language and their developing competence in the target language.

First, interlingual transfer occurs when students are influenced by their first language, namely Indonesian. In Indonesian, sentences often do not require auxiliary verbs such as "is," "am," or "are." As a result, students tend to omit these elements when writing in English. For example, in the sentence "The weather very cold," the verb "is" is omitted because in Indonesian the equivalent sentence "Cuacanya sangat dingin" does not require a linking verb. This type of error contributes significantly to omission errors, which is the most dominant error found in this research. Another example is "Some students difficult understand grammar," which reflects direct translation from Indonesian structure without proper adjustment to English grammar.

Second, intralingual transfer refers to errors that occur due to incomplete understanding of the target language itself. These errors are not influenced by the first language, but rather by the learners' limited knowledge of English grammar rules. For instance, in the sentence "I very grateful have friends," the student fails to use the correct verb "am" and appropriate structure "I am very grateful to have friends." Similarly, in "College life give me many new experience," the student does not apply correct subject-verb agreement ("gives") and plural noun form ("experiences"). This shows that students understand vocabulary but still struggle with grammatical structure.

Third, overgeneralization occurs when students apply a grammatical rule too broadly without considering its limitations. This can be seen in sentences such as "Life teaching slowly teaches us patience," where the student repeats similar verb forms unnecessarily. Another example is "Dreams not coming true by waiting," where the student attempts to form a correct sentence but incorrectly applies the structure, resulting in an ungrammatical expression. These

errors indicate that students are trying to use English rules but have not fully mastered when and how to apply them correctly.

Overall, the analysis reveals that grammatical errors in students' Instagram captions are primarily influenced by both interlingual and intralingual factors, with interlingual transfer contributing significantly to omission errors and intralingual transfer leading to various structural inaccuracies. Meanwhile, overgeneralization reflects the learners' developmental stage in acquiring English grammar. These findings suggest that students tend to prioritize meaning and self-expression in informal digital contexts, such as Instagram, rather than focusing on grammatical accuracy, which results in frequent and systematic grammatical errors.

4.1 Discussion

This research analyzed grammatical errors found in Instagram captions written by several users. Instagram has become one of the most popular social media platforms used by young people to share their daily activities, experiences, and personal thoughts through photos and captions. Many users prefer to write their captions in English because it is considered more expressive and attractive to a wider audience. However, since English is not their first language, many users still experience difficulties in applying correct grammatical rules when writing captions. As a result, grammatical errors frequently appear in their writing. In this research, the researcher collected 50 Instagram captions that potentially contain grammatical errors and used them as the main data of the study.

The analysis of the data was conducted using the Surface Strategy Taxonomy proposed by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982). According to this theory, grammatical errors can be classified into four main types: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. This classification helps researchers identify how learners modify grammatical structures when producing sentences in a second language. By applying this framework, the researcher examined each caption carefully in order to determine the types of grammatical errors that appear in the data and to understand how these errors occur in informal written communication on social media.

Based on the analysis of the 50 captions, the researcher found that all four types of grammatical errors appeared in the data. The results show that misformation errors occur most frequently, followed by omission errors, addition errors, and misordering errors. Misformation errors occur when learners use an incorrect form of a grammatical structure, such as incorrect verb forms, inappropriate auxiliary verbs, or incorrect word choices. This finding indicates that many Instagram users still have difficulty selecting the correct grammatical forms when constructing sentences in English. This type of error suggests that learners may already understand that a certain grammatical element is required in a sentence but they are not fully sure which form should be used.

The second most common error found in this research is omission. Omission errors occur when important grammatical elements are missing from a sentence. In many captions analyzed in this research, users omitted elements such as auxiliary verbs, articles, or plural markers. These grammatical elements are essential in English sentence construction because they help clarify the meaning of the sentence. However, in informal communication such as Instagram captions, users often simplify their sentences, which leads to the omission of certain grammatical elements. Addition errors were also found in several captions, although the frequency was relatively low. Addition errors occur when unnecessary grammatical elements are included in a sentence. Meanwhile, misordering errors were the least frequent type in the data. Misordering occurs when the arrangement of words in a sentence does not follow the correct English word order.

In addition to identifying the types of grammatical errors, this research also examined the possible causes of these errors. The analysis indicates that grammatical errors in Instagram captions are mainly influenced by three factors: interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, and overgeneralization. Interlingual transfer occurs when learners are influenced by the structure of their first language when writing in the target language. Since the users involved in this research

are Indonesian speakers, they may unconsciously apply Indonesian grammatical patterns when constructing English sentences. This influence often results in omission errors, especially when elements such as articles or linking verbs are not included in the sentence.

Intralingual transfer is another important factor that contributes to grammatical errors. This type of error occurs when learners have not fully mastered the grammatical rules of the target language. Many of the misformation errors found in this research indicate that learners still have limited understanding of English grammatical structures, such as subject–verb agreement, verb forms, and the use of auxiliary verbs. In addition, overgeneralization may also contribute to grammatical errors when learners apply a grammatical rule too broadly without considering its limitations. These factors demonstrate that the process of learning a second language often involves experimentation with grammatical rules, which may result in incorrect language forms.

Overall, the findings of this research show that grammatical errors are still commonly found in Instagram captions written in English by non-native speakers. This situation occurs because social media communication is generally informal, and users tend to focus more on expressing their ideas, emotions, and experiences rather than paying attention to grammatical accuracy. These findings are also consistent with previous studies on grammatical errors in English writing. These findings are also consistent with previous studies which report that omission and misformation errors frequently appear in learners' writing. However, in this research, omission errors were found to be the most dominant type.

5. Conclusion

This research entitled “An Analysis of Grammatical Errors in Instagram Captions Written by English Education Students of HKBP Nommensen University Medan” was conducted to identify the types of grammatical errors appearing in students' Instagram captions, to determine the most dominant type of error, and to analyze the possible factors contributing to the occurrence of those errors. The analysis was carried out using the Surface Strategy Taxonomy proposed by Heidi Dulay, Marina Burt, and Stephen Krashen.

The results of the study reveal that grammatical errors are still frequently found in the Instagram captions written by English Education students. Although the students have studied English grammar through formal academic instruction, the findings indicate that difficulties in applying grammatical rules still occur when students express their ideas in written form, particularly in informal communication contexts such as social media. This situation suggests that students' grammatical competence is not always consistently reflected in spontaneous digital writing practices.

Based on the analysis of 50 Instagram captions, four types of grammatical errors were identified, namely omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. These error categories demonstrate that deviations from standard grammatical structures remain evident in students' written production. Among these categories, omission was found to be the most dominant type of grammatical error. The analysis shows that omission occurred 21 times or 42% of the total errors identified in the data. This type of error generally involves the absence of important grammatical elements such as auxiliary verbs, articles, or forms of the verb *to be*, which results in incomplete grammatical structures even though the intended meaning may still be understood by readers.

Misformation errors were identified as the second most frequent type, occurring 17 times or 34% of the total errors. These errors appear when students use incorrect grammatical forms, including inappropriate verb forms, inaccurate word choices, and errors related to subject–verb agreement. Addition errors were found 8 times or 16% of the total errors and occurred when unnecessary grammatical elements were added to a sentence, resulting in incorrect or redundant structures. Meanwhile, misordering errors were the least frequent type, occurring 4 times or 8% of the total errors, which reflect incorrect arrangement of words within a sentence structure.

The occurrence of these grammatical errors is closely related to several linguistic factors that influence students' language production. According to the theory proposed by Jack C. Richards, grammatical errors in second language learning may arise due to interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, and overgeneralization. Interlingual transfer occurs when the structure of the learners' first language influences the formation of English sentences. Intralingual transfer reflects learners' incomplete understanding of the target language rules, which results in inaccurate grammatical constructions. Overgeneralization occurs when learners apply a particular grammatical rule too broadly without considering its contextual limitations.

Overall, the findings of this research indicate that grammatical errors remain a common phenomenon in students' digital writing. Although Instagram captions represent informal and expressive forms of communication, the presence of grammatical deviations suggests that students still need to develop stronger awareness and mastery of English grammatical structures. The analysis of captions on social media also provides valuable insights into students' authentic language use and reflects how grammatical knowledge is applied in real communication contexts outside the classroom.

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