

LINGUISTIC FEATURES AND GRAMMATICAL ERROR PATTERNS IN INDONESIAN VOCATIONAL EFL STUDENTS' RECOUNT WRITING

^{1*}Aditya Ramadhan^{ORCID}, ¹Havid Ardi^{ORCID}

¹Faculty of Language and Art, Padang State University, Indonesia

*Corresponding author email: aramadhan260295@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Recount writing requires learners to construct coherent narratives while accurately controlling grammatical features, particularly tense and cohesion. However, vocational EFL learners often experience persistent grammatical challenges that affect narrative clarity, indicating a gap between their ability to organize texts and maintain grammatical consistency. This study examines linguistic features and grammatical error patterns in recount texts written by Indonesian vocational diploma EFL students. Using a descriptive quantitative design, data were collected from 20 second-semester students through a writing task and analyzed using analytic rubrics. The analysis focused on key linguistic features (past tense, first-person pronouns, and time connectives) and ten categories of grammatical errors. The findings show that students demonstrate strong control of discourse-level features, particularly first-person pronouns (90%) and time connectives (95%), but limited mastery of past tense usage, with only 15% achieving an excellent level. Tense-related errors were the most dominant (28%), frequently disrupting narrative coherence. These results indicate an imbalance between discourse competence and grammatical accuracy. By integrating Error Analysis and the Genre-Based Approach, this study provides a more comprehensive account of EFL writing development in vocational contexts. Pedagogically, it highlights the need for integrating form-focused instruction within genre-based writing to improve grammatical consistency.

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INTRODUCTION

Writing is widely recognized as one of the most complex skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, as it requires the integration of linguistic knowledge, cognitive processing, and discourse organization (Graham & Perin, 2007; Hinkel, 2004; Hyland, 2003). Beyond sentence-level accuracy, effective writing also demands the ability to construct meaningful texts that align with communicative purposes and genre conventions (Derewianka, B., & Jones, 2023; Martin, J. R., & Rose, 2021). In this regard, recount text plays a crucial role in developing learners' ability to narrate past experiences systematically. However, despite its

seemingly simple structure, EFL learners frequently encounter persistent difficulties, particularly in grammatical accuracy and the use of appropriate linguistic features (Amelia et al., 2021; Prasetyo et al., 2022; Siregar et al., 2019).

A growing body of research has examined grammatical errors in students' recount writing (Ahmada, 2020; Andansari et al., 2019; Martiarini & Candra, 2019; Ramli et al., 2013). These studies consistently report that tense misuse, subject–verb agreement, and sentence structure errors are among the most dominant problems. Similarly, more recent studies (Fakhrudin et al., 2023; Lionny & Kusumadewi, 2022) highlight the persistence of both grammatical and lexical errors, suggesting that learners struggle not only with form but also with meaning construction. While these studies provide valuable insights into the types and frequency of errors, they tend to adopt a predominantly descriptive approach, focusing on classification rather than examining how such errors affect the overall quality and communicative effectiveness of the text. As a result, errors are often treated as isolated linguistic issues rather than as disruptions to genre-specific meaning-making.

From a theoretical perspective, this issue can be understood through the integration of Error Analysis (EA) and the Genre-Based Approach (GBA). Error Analysis, as proposed by Corder (1981), views learner errors as systematic and meaningful indicators of interlanguage development rather than mere deficiencies. This view is further supported by Ellis (1998), who argues that analyzing errors provides insights into underlying learning processes and developmental stages. Within this framework, grammatical errors such as tense inconsistency and incorrect sentence construction can reveal learners' partial understanding of the target language system (Azar, 2003; Nunan, 2015). In this study, grammatical errors are systematically categorized using a combination of linguistic and surface strategy taxonomies (Dulay et al., 1982), enabling a more nuanced analysis of error types, including omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. However, EA alone tends to emphasize micro-level linguistic forms without adequately considering the broader communicative context in which language is used.

In contrast, the Genre-Based Approach conceptualizes writing as a socially situated practice shaped by purpose, audience, and context (Derewianka & Jones, 2023; Hyland, 2022). It emphasizes schematic structures and linguistic features associated with specific genres, including recount texts, which typically consist of orientation, events, and re-orientation stages (Martin, J. R., & Rose, 2021; Sari et al., 2025). From this perspective, linguistic features such as past tense, first-person pronouns, and temporal conjunctions are not merely grammatical elements but essential resources for constructing coherent narratives. Nevertheless, genre-based studies often focus on macro-level organization and meaning, paying less attention to persistent grammatical inaccuracies that may undermine textual clarity and credibility (Sayukti & Kurniawan, 2018).

The contrast between these perspectives reveals a significant gap in the literature. While Error Analysis offers detailed insights into learners' linguistic difficulties, it often lacks a connection to genre-specific communicative purposes. In contrast, Genre-Based studies emphasize textual organization and meaning but tend to overlook micro-level grammatical errors that may affect accuracy and coherence. Although some research has examined writing development from broader perspectives (Crane & Malloy, 2021; Larsson et al., 2023), few studies have systematically integrated these two approaches in analyzing recount writing.

Furthermore, this gap becomes more pronounced in the context of vocational or diploma-level EFL learners. Most existing studies have focused on general secondary or academic contexts (Amelia et al., 2021; Prasetyo et al., 2022), with relatively little attention given to students in vocational education settings. These learners often face unique challenges, including limited exposure to English, a stronger emphasis on technical skills, and the need to use English in practical, work-related contexts (Toba et al., 2019). In professional

environments, particularly in technical fields, the ability to produce clear and accurate recounts of past events is essential for effective communication. However, empirical evidence on how vocational learners manage both grammatical accuracy and genre conventions in writing remains scarce.

Therefore, this study addresses these gaps by integrating Error Analysis and the Genre-Based Approach to examine students' recount writing more comprehensively. By combining micro-level analysis of grammatical errors with macro-level analysis of linguistic features, it investigates how these elements interact in shaping the coherence and quality of texts produced by Indonesian diploma EFL students. This study offers a significant contribution by explicitly integrating these two approaches within a vocational EFL context that has received limited scholarly attention. Unlike previous studies that tend to examine grammatical errors or genre features separately, this study provides a dual-layer analysis linking grammatical accuracy with discourse construction. By doing so, it advances a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between linguistic form and communicative function in EFL writing development. Accordingly, this study is guided by two research questions: (1) How do vocational diploma students in an Indonesian EFL context demonstrate control over the key linguistic features of recount texts? and (2) What are the dominant grammatical error patterns in their recount writing, and how do these errors affect narrative coherence?

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive design to analyze the linguistic features and patterns of grammatical errors in diploma students' recount writing. A quantitative descriptive approach was considered appropriate as it enables the systematic identification, classification, and quantification of linguistic phenomena based on observable data (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). The study did not aim to manipulate variables but rather to describe the frequency and distribution of specific linguistic features and grammatical error types in students' written texts within an EFL vocational context.

To ensure analytical transparency, a systematic coding procedure was applied. All students' recount texts were first collected and transcribed into a standardized format. Each text was then carefully examined to identify key linguistic features of recount texts, including the use of past tense verbs, first-person pronouns, and temporal conjunctions. The identification of these features was conceptually grounded in the Genre-Based Approach (Derewianka, B., & Jones, 2023; Martin, J. R., & Rose, 2021), which emphasizes that recount texts are characterized by specific linguistic resources. However, for methodological consistency, these features were operationalized and assessed using an analytic scoring rubric adapted from (Brown, 2003) (see Table 1). Thus, the theoretical framework informed what aspects were analyzed, while the rubric provided clear and measurable criteria for evaluation. Each feature was scored on a four-point scale ranging from poor (1) to excellent (4), and the results were quantified to determine the frequency and distribution of students' control over recount text conventions.

In addition, the identification of grammatical errors was theoretically informed by Error Analysis (Corder, 1981; Ellis, 1998), which conceptualizes errors as systematic deviations reflecting learners' interlanguage development. In practice, however, the classification and assessment of errors followed the categories outlined in a grammar rubric adapted from (Brown, 2003) (see Table 2). These categories included subject-verb agreement, tense, articles, prepositions, pronouns, word order, spelling, punctuation, fragmented sentences, and run-on sentences. Each error was identified based on deviations from standard English usage (Azar, 2003; Nunan, 2015) and evaluated using the same four-point scale to ensure consistency and objectivity in measurement.

To enhance reliability, the coding process was conducted using predefined categories and consistent scoring criteria. Repeated data checking was carried out to minimize subjectivity and ensure classification accuracy. The quantified data were then analyzed descriptively using frequency counts and percentages to provide a comprehensive overview of students' linguistic performance and dominant grammatical error patterns in recount writing.

Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of all diploma students enrolled at Depati Parbo Academy of Information Management and Computer in the 2023 academic year. The total population comprised 20 students, including 13 males and 7 females. Given the relatively small population size, total sampling was employed, in which all members of the population were included as the research sample. This approach ensured comprehensive data coverage and minimized potential sampling bias. The participants were second-semester students who had completed a General English course in their first semester. In terms of English proficiency, the students were generally categorized at the beginner to lower-intermediate level, as indicated by their institutional placement and classroom performance. This proficiency level is typical of EFL learners in vocational higher education contexts, where English is taught as a supporting skill rather than a primary focus.

The General English course previously taken by the students included foundational writing instruction, particularly on basic paragraph development and genre-based writing. Recount text writing was introduced as part of the course, with emphasis on its generic structure (orientation, events, and re-orientation) and key linguistic features, such as the use of past tense verbs, first-person pronouns, and temporal conjunctions. Additionally, students were exposed to essential grammatical components relevant to recount writing, including tense consistency, subject-verb agreement, and sentence construction. However, the instruction remained at a basic level, which may explain the variation in students' writing performance observed in this study. While the use of total sampling ensures that the data accurately represent the population within the institution, the relatively small sample size and its confinement to a single educational setting may limit the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, the results of this study should be interpreted with caution and may not be fully representative of the broader population of EFL diploma students in different institutional or regional contexts.

Instruments

The primary instrument used in this study was a recount text writing test, in which students were required to write a personal recount text based on their academic or personal experiences. Students' written texts were evaluated using two analytic assessment rubrics adapted from Brown (2003) to ensure systematic and objective scoring. The first rubric assessed students' mastery of linguistic features of recount texts, including the use of past tense, first-person pronouns, and time connectives or conjunctions. Each aspect was rated on a four-point scale ranging from *poor* (1) to *excellent* (4). The detailed assessment criteria are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Assessment rubric for linguistic features of recount text

Aspect Assessed	Score 4 (Excellent)	Score 3 (Good)	Score 2 (Fair)	Score 1 (Poor)
Use of Past Tense	All relevant verbs consistently and correctly use the past tense. No errors.	Most relevant verbs correctly use the past tense, with only 1–2 minor errors.	Some relevant verbs use the past tense, but there are several significant errors (3–4 errors).	The majority of verbs do not correctly use the past tense. Numerous errors (>4 errors).

Use of First-Person Pronouns	First-person pronouns are used accurately and consistently throughout the text.	Mostly correct use with 1–2 inconsistencies.	Several significant inconsistencies (3–4).	Rarely or incorrectly used with numerous inconsistencies (>4).
Use of Time Connectives and Conjunctions	Time connectives and conjunctions are excellently used to show sequence and coherence.	Mostly correct use with 1–2 errors or omissions.	Present but incomplete, with 3–4 errors or omissions.	Hardly used or used with numerous errors (>4).

The second rubric focused on grammatical error analysis, covering ten grammatical aspects commonly found in EFL writing. Similar to the first rubric, each aspect was assessed using a four-point scale adapted from (Brown, 2003). The complete grammatical error assessment rubric is presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Grammar error assessment rubric for recount text

Aspect Assessed	Score 4 (Excellent)	Score 3 (Good)	Score 2 (Fair)	Score 1 (Poor)
Subject–Verb Agreement	All agreements correct with no errors.	Mostly correct with 1–2 minor errors.	Several significant errors (3–4).	Numerous errors (>4).
Tense	All verbs consistently use correct tense.	Mostly correct with 1–2 minor errors.	Several significant errors (3–4).	Numerous errors (>4).
Articles	Accurate and consistent use with no errors.	Mostly correct with 1–2 errors or omissions.	Several errors or omissions (3–4).	Numerous errors or omissions (>4).
Prepositions	Accurate and consistent use with no errors.	Mostly correct with 1–2 errors.	Several errors (3–4).	Numerous errors (>4).
Pronouns	Accurate and consistent use with no errors.	Mostly correct with 1–2 inconsistencies.	Several inconsistencies (3–4).	Numerous inconsistencies (>4).
Word Order	Consistently correct with no errors.	Mostly correct with 1–2 errors.	Several errors (3–4).	Numerous errors (>4).
Spelling	No spelling errors.	1–2 minor spelling errors.	Several spelling errors (3–4).	Numerous spelling errors (>4).
Punctuation	Correct and consistent throughout.	Mostly correct with 1–2 errors.	Several errors (3–4).	Numerous errors (>4).
Fragmented Sentences	No fragmented sentences.	1–2 minor instances.	Several instances (3–4).	Many instances (>4).
Run-on Sentences	No run-on sentences.	1–2 minor instances.	Several instances (3–4).	Many instances (>4).

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistical techniques to systematically examine students' recount writing. To enhance clarity and methodological rigor, the analytical procedure was carried out in several sequential stages.

First, data preparation was performed by compiling and organizing all students' recount texts into a standardized format to ensure consistency in analysis. Second, the texts were analyzed to identify linguistic features, including the use of past tense verbs, first-person pronouns, and temporal conjunctions, based on the rubric adapted from Brown (2003). Each feature was evaluated using a four-point scale to determine the level of students' control over

recount text conventions. Third, grammatical errors were identified and classified into predefined categories, such as subject–verb agreement, tense, articles, prepositions, pronouns, word order, spelling, punctuation, fragmented sentences, and run-on sentences. These categories were informed by the Surface Strategy Taxonomy proposed by Dulay et al. (1982), which provides a well-established framework for classifying learner errors, and were adapted to align with the analytical rubric used in this study. This approach ensured both theoretical grounding and consistency in error classification. Fourth, the frequency of each linguistic feature and grammatical error category was calculated, and the results were converted into percentages to reveal dominant patterns across the dataset. Finally, the results were interpreted descriptively to identify students' strengths and weaknesses, particularly in terms of tense usage and narrative coherence in recount writing.

The findings were presented visually using charts to clearly illustrate the distribution and proportion of linguistic features and grammatical error types. These visual representations enhanced the readability of the data and allowed for easier comparison of dominant and less frequent patterns. This structured analytical procedure ensured transparency and provided empirical evidence to support pedagogical implications for improving grammatical accuracy and genre-based writing instruction in vocational EFL contexts.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

This section presents the findings in alignment with the two research questions: (1) the use of linguistic features in recount texts and (2) the patterns of grammatical errors in students' writing. The results are organized into two main subsections accordingly.

1. Linguistic Features of Recount Text

The analysis focused on three key linguistic features: past tense, first-person pronouns, and time connectives. The findings show that students demonstrate strong control of discourse-level features, particularly pronouns and connectives, whereas grammatical accuracy, especially in the use of past tense, remains relatively weaker. These features are consistent with the Genre-Based Approach to recount texts, which emphasizes temporal sequencing, personal reference, and the use of past tense as essential elements of narrative construction.

a. Use of Past Tense

Figure 1 presents the distribution of students' past tense usage, revealing varying levels of grammatical control.

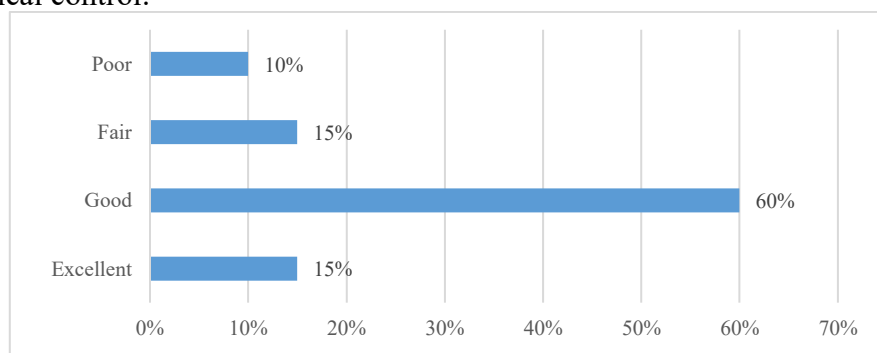


Figure 1. Distribution of students' performance in using past tense

The results indicate that 60% of students achieved a good level, suggesting that most participants had a functional understanding of past tense usage. However, 25% were categorized as Fair or Poor, indicating persistent difficulties in selecting and maintaining appropriate verb forms throughout the text. These errors mainly involved incorrect verb forms and tense shifts, which disrupted chronological clarity and reduced narrative coherence. This

pattern suggests that although students possess basic declarative knowledge of past tense rules, many have not yet fully proceduralized this knowledge in extended writing (Ellis, 1998). Consequently, the past tense remains the most challenging linguistic feature, reflecting partial grammatical mastery rather than complete control.

b. Use of First-Person Pronouns

Figure 2 shows the distribution of students' performance in using first-person pronouns.

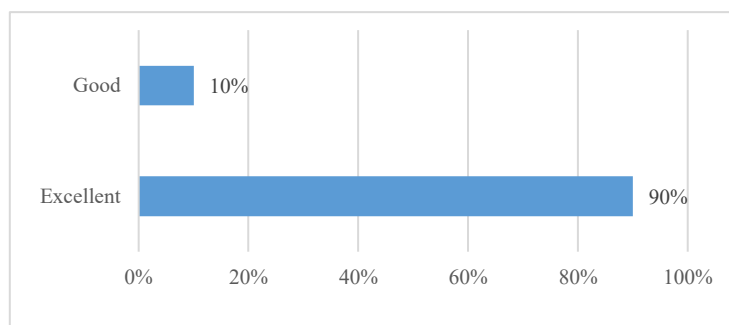


Figure 2. Distribution of students' use of first-person pronouns

Figure 2 shows that the vast majority of students (90%) achieved an Excellent level in using first-person pronouns, while the remaining 10% were categorized as Good. No students fell into the Fair or Poor categories, indicating a consistently high level of mastery in maintaining a personal narrative voice. This suggests that students have a strong pragmatic awareness of their role as the protagonist in a recount text. Compared to morphological features like tenses, the high success in pronoun usage indicates that students find it easier to master closed-class functional words than complex inflectional systems. This naturally occurs because the personal nature of recount texts consistently reinforces the use of 'I' or 'we' throughout the narrative.

c. Use of Time Connectives and Conjunctions

Figure 3 shows the frequency distribution of students' use of time connectives and conjunctions.

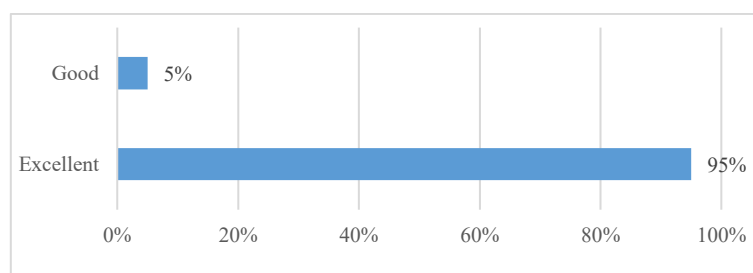


Figure 3. Distribution of students' use of time connectives and conjunctions

Figure 3 indicates that an overwhelming majority of students (95%) achieved an Excellent level in using time connectives and conjunctions, with only 5% categorized as Good. No students were classified as Fair or Poor, demonstrating a consistently high level of proficiency in organizing events and maintaining logical sequencing in recount texts. This finding suggests that students have developed strong discourse-level competence, particularly in structuring narratives coherently through appropriate use of temporal markers. The findings highlight a clear disparity between students' strong performance in discourse-level features and their weaker control of grammatical forms, particularly in past tense usage. This suggests that although students are able to construct coherent narratives, their grammatical accuracy remains limited, indicating an imbalance between discourse competence and grammatical control.

2. Patterns of Grammatical Errors

In analyzing the grammatical errors produced by students of Depati Parbo Academy of Information Management and Computer in writing personal recount texts, a total of 116 errors were identified across various categories. These error categories were analyzed in reference to established error classification frameworks, particularly the Surface Strategy Taxonomy, allowing for systematic identification of patterns in learners' grammatical performance. The distribution of these errors is presented in Figure 4.

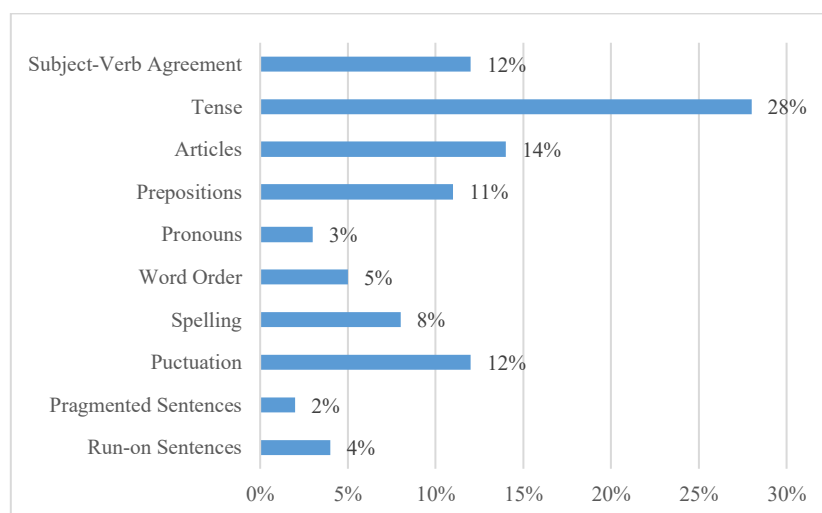


Figure 4. Distribution of grammatical error types in students' recount writing

Based on Figure 4, tense errors represent the most dominant category, accounting for 28% out of 116 errors, indicating that students experience considerable difficulty in applying past tense forms, a key linguistic feature of recount texts. The second most frequent errors are related to the use of articles (14%), followed by subject-verb agreement and punctuation errors (12% each), and prepositions (11%). Spelling errors account for 8%, while word order (5%), run-on sentences (4%), pronouns (3%), and fragmented sentences (2%) occur less frequently. Notably, these findings reveal a clear pattern in which errors related to core grammatical structures (tense, articles, and subject-verb agreement) are more prevalent than those associated with sentence mechanics and organization.

From an error analysis perspective, the dominance of tense errors aligns with patterns identified in Dulay et al.'s (1982) Surface Strategy Taxonomy, where misinformation and incorrect verb usage commonly occur in EFL learners' writing. The findings indicate that tense usage represents the most significant grammatical challenge, reflecting learners' limited control of core grammatical structures. This imbalance between strong discourse-level competence and weaker grammatical accuracy suggests that students are able to construct meaning at the textual level but continue to struggle with linguistic form, highlighting a gap between functional writing ability and grammatical mastery in EFL contexts.

Discussion

The findings reveal a clear asymmetry in students' writing development. While learners demonstrate relatively strong discourse competence, as reflected in their effective use of first-person pronouns and time connectives, their grammatical accuracy, particularly in past tense usage, remains underdeveloped. This pattern aligns with the distinction between discourse competence and grammatical competence proposed by Canale & Swain (1980) and supports previous findings by Delgado & Bolívar (2018), which indicate that EFL learners often develop meaning-making abilities before achieving full grammatical control. However, this result

differs from Larsson et al. (2023), who report a more balanced relationship between discourse and grammatical competence in academic EFL contexts, possibly due to greater exposure to form-focused instruction.

With regard to linguistic features, most students (60%) achieved a “good” level in past tense usage, suggesting a functional understanding of recount text conventions. As noted by Derewianka, B., & Jones (2023), recount texts require consistent use of the past tense to represent events chronologically. However, this finding reflects what Ellis (2008) describes as partial grammatical control, where learners are able to use target forms but not consistently. This is evident in the 25% of students categorized as “fair” and “poor,” who show persistent difficulty in maintaining tense consistency. Inconsistent verb forms and tense shifts can disrupt temporal coherence, which is essential for clarity in narrative writing (Hyland (2003).

In contrast, students demonstrated a high level of control over first-person pronouns, with 90% achieving an “excellent” rating. Hyland (2003) emphasizes that first-person pronouns play a crucial role in establishing writer identity and enhancing reader engagement, while Martin, J. R., & Rose (2021) highlight their contribution to textual coherence. A similarly strong pattern is observed in the use of time connectives and conjunctions, with nearly all participants performing at an excellent level. This indicates a well-developed understanding of textual cohesion, which Halliday & Hasan (1976) identify as essential for constructing unified and interpretable texts. More recent evidence from Tian et al. (2024) further confirms that effective use of cohesive devices is a strong predictor of writing quality in second language contexts. Taken together, these findings suggest that students’ discourse-level competence is relatively well developed; however, this strength stands in clear contrast to their grammatical limitations, pointing to a critical imbalance in their writing development.

In contrast, students demonstrate strong control of first-person pronouns, with 90% achieving an “excellent” rating. This suggests a well-developed ability to maintain a personal narrative voice, which plays a key role in establishing writer identity and engagement (Hyland, 2003); Martin & Rose, 2021). A similar pattern is observed in the use of time connectives and conjunctions, where nearly all students perform at an excellent level. This indicates a strong understanding of textual cohesion, which is fundamental for organizing events and ensuring coherence (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Recent findings by Tian et al. (2024), further support the importance of cohesive devices as indicators of writing quality. Taken together, these results show that students’ discourse-level competence is relatively strong; however, this strength contrasts with their limited grammatical accuracy, highlighting an imbalance in their writing development.

Despite this competence at the discourse level, tense errors remain the most frequent issue (28%), indicating that grammatical control is still developing. This gap reflects the distinction between global writing performance and micro-level linguistic accuracy, suggesting that functional competence may precede formal mastery. The persistence of tense errors is consistent with previous research identifying tense as a major challenge in EFL writing due to its complexity and cross-linguistic differences (Angraini & Iman, 2022; Saputra & Asirah, 2022). From an error analysis perspective, such errors are systematic and reflect learners’ interlanguage development (Corder, 1981). Using the Surface Strategy Taxonomy (Dulay et al., 1982), these errors can be categorized as misformation and omission, indicating incomplete control of morphological rules. Ellis (1998) further explains that these errors often result from incomplete implicit knowledge rather than a lack of explicit understanding. Therefore, students’ ability to use past tense should be interpreted as evidence of functional competence rather than full grammatical mastery. These patterns suggest underlying difficulties in morphological processing and tense marking, as learners struggle to internalize the temporal system of English, which differs significantly from their first language.

Several factors may account for these grammatical difficulties. One major factor is limited grammatical mastery, particularly in verb inflections and irregular forms, leading learners to rely on incomplete internalized rules (Ellis, 1998). Supporting this, Saputra & Asirah (2022) emphasize the importance of explicit instruction and repeated practice for developing accurate tense usage. Another factor is first language interference. Since Bahasa Indonesia does not mark tense through verb inflection but relies on temporal expressions, learners may find it difficult to internalize tense distinctions in English. This aligns with contrastive analysis perspectives (Angraini & Iman (2022) and is supported by Llach (2011), who highlights the persistence of cross-linguistic influence, particularly in morphological aspects. In addition, limited exposure to integrated genre-based instruction may contribute to this issue. When instruction focuses primarily on text organization without sufficient attention to grammatical accuracy, students may produce coherent texts that still contain frequent errors (Hyland, 2003, 2022)

This study contributes to the field of EFL writing by demonstrating that the ability to construct coherent narratives does not necessarily indicate grammatical mastery, particularly in vocational EFL contexts where functional communication is often prioritized. Instead, it reflects a developmental stage in which learners prioritize meaning and coherence over formal accuracy. By integrating Genre-Based analysis with Error Analysis, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of learners' writing performance, showing how students can produce coherent texts while still exhibiting systematic grammatical errors. These findings highlight the importance of instructional approaches that integrate discourse-level development with targeted grammar support to achieve more balanced language proficiency.

CONCLUSION

This study examined linguistic feature use and grammatical error patterns in recount texts written by diploma students in an Indonesian EFL context. The findings indicate that students demonstrate an emerging control of basic recount conventions, particularly in the use of first-person pronouns and temporal connectives, which support the overall organization of their narratives. However, this fluency is not consistently accompanied by grammatical accuracy, as evidenced by persistent inconsistencies in past tense usage.

The dominance of tense-related errors suggests that students have not yet fully internalized the temporal system required for coherent narrative construction. The coexistence of relatively adequate past tense usage and a high frequency of tense errors reflects partial grammatical mastery rather than analytical inconsistency. Students appear capable of producing correct forms, yet struggle to maintain consistency across extended texts, indicating a gap between grammatical knowledge and its application in writing.

From a pedagogical perspective, these findings highlight the need for more focused and sustained instruction on tense consistency within genre-based writing pedagogy, particularly in vocational or diploma-level EFL contexts. Instruction should move beyond isolated grammar exercises toward contextualized and meaningful writing practice that integrates form, meaning, and discourse. Strategies such as guided writing, corrective feedback, and scaffolded tasks are essential to support students' grammatical development.

For future research, it is recommended to explore grammatical error patterns across different genres of student writing to determine whether similar issues persist beyond recount texts. In addition, studies involving larger and more diverse samples are needed to enhance generalizability. Longitudinal research may also provide deeper insights into how grammatical competence develops over time and how instructional interventions can improve writing accuracy.

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INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

Participation in this study was voluntary. Prior to participation, all participants were provided with clear information regarding the study's objectives, procedures, potential risks, and anticipated benefits. Participants were assured of the confidentiality of their personal information and informed that all data collected would be used solely for research purposes. They were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data generated and analyzed in this study are not publicly available because they contain information that could compromise participant privacy and confidentiality. Restricting public access ensures compliance with ethical research principles and applicable data protection regulations. Nevertheless, the dataset may be made available to qualified researchers upon reasonable request for verification or further analysis. Any such request will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and will require prior approval from the appropriate institutional ethics authority.

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