

# An Analysis of English Article Errors and Pedagogical Implications in Students' Writing Skill


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**Abstract**—The study aimed at analyzing a comprehensive account of the dominant type of article errors, finding out the causes of errors, and determining appropriate pedagogical approaches to reduce the errors in students' descriptive writing tasks. The analysis was based on the Surface Structure Taxonomies of errors comprising omission, addition, and substitution. The data were collected from written samples encountered by 40 first-semester students of Plantation Management, Samarinda State Polytechnic of Agriculture. One of five different topics should be chosen and written by the student in approximately forty-five minutes. The study's results revealed three types of English article errors that emerged in students' writing involving omission as the dominant English article error type, addition, and substitution as the second and the third one. The cause of errors emerging in the students' writing was the first language interference (Indonesian) that strongly influences the process of foreign language (English) acquisition of the articles due to the differences in rules between Indonesian and English structures. Pedagogical implications included a contrastive comparison between languages that may improve learners' ability to instantly recognize differences in article usage between their language systems, conducting simple writing tasks as routine exercises for students, error correction in a flexible way, providing English reading materials and encouraging learners to read the materials extensively.

**Keywords**—Error, Error Analysis, English Articles, Descriptive Writing, Pedagogical Implications.

## I. INTRODUCTION

English is one of the compulsory subjects in formal education in Indonesia. Four basic skills of learning a foreign language like English i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing are taught from basic education to the tertiary level.

Writing is considered one of the productive skills and a beneficial tool for the learning process. It is the most common skill in evaluating students' performance at practically all educational levels (Hidayati, 2018).

Writing skills may be an effective way of strengthening what the students have already been studying, and they gain from seeing new or unfamiliar language in written form. Therefore, the skill can be used as a 'barometer' to check how much the learners have learned (Majeed C.T, 2022).

One of the most difficult writing elements for EFL/ESL learners is the accuracy of writing the English articles (*definite & indefinite*). Articles are considered to be a source of problematic issues for both ESL and EFL learners, particularly those whose native languages have no articles or have articles/article-like morphemes that are applied in distinct ways from English articles (Elumalai, 2019).

Even though English articles have a small contribution to English grammar, they are essential in sentences. The use of articles is one of the most complicated cases for students to master. Articles are the most common and frequently targeted errors by automatic error detection (Cheng et al., 2022).

Supiani et al. (2021) stated that the English article system is an essential component and the most frequently used word in the English language, generally known to pose learnability problems for learners. Many inaccuracies in articles have been discovered among first language (L1) learners who do not have another language to transfer from (Elumalai, 2019; Supiani et al., 2021; et al Yuliawati, 2020). Nonetheless, misusing English articles do not affect an utterance's meaning, and the indefinite and definite articles are sometimes exchangeable (Elumalai, 2019).

Through the routine exercise, the researchers discovered that many Samarinda State Polytechnic of Agriculture students still endeavor with using English articles. The students, as EFL learners, continue to be unsure of when and how to employ English articles in a sentence and they commit some errors in their academic writing as well.

Some instances of erroneous sentences related to English articles can be seen in the students' written tasks. Indefinite 'a' should be used before a noun in the sentence to make generalizations of animals in 'Dog is intelligent animal'. The appropriate sentence of 'A dog is

*an intelligent animal*' refers to a general statement about any and all dogs. Another incorrect sentence is *'My father planted a herb garden in his yard'*. Indefinite *'an'* should be used in this sentence to modify a non-specific, singular count noun that begins with a vowel sound. This includes vowels as well as words that begin with a silent *'h'* as in *'herb'*. It should be *'My father planted an herb garden in his yard'*. *'Herb'* begins with a silent *'h'* and is a singular, non-specific count noun. Definite *'the'* omitted by the student in *'Mahakam river is the largest river in East Kalimantan'*. A definite article *'the'* is needed before the names of oceans, as well as deserts and rivers. Definite *'the'* should be included in the sentence *'The Mahakam river is the largest river in East Kalimantan'*.

These instances indicate that articles will be a difficult area for Indonesian students. This is because the English definite and indefinite articles have no identical words in "Bahasa Indonesia."

Previous relevant studies have also shown varied results. (Vitashenkova, 2020) revealed in her study that errors are most in substitution where the students put the wrong article in the sentence. Meanwhile, L. Yuliawati et al. (2020) discovered that article errors can occur due to the structural differences between Indonesian and English, causing students to struggle with learning the language, in this case, the English article system.

Learners have to decide whether or not to use an article every time they involve a noun in conducting a sentence, and if it is decided that an article is necessary, then it should be decided which one should be used. The use of an article before a noun or noun phrase is based on some factors including meaning, shared knowledge, context, and whether the noun is singular, plural, countable, or uncountable (al-Sulaimaan & Alsinjari, 2018).

Having found such an issue also occur in Indonesian learners, the researchers held a study about the English article errors made by Indonesian learners as well. This study is conducted to analyze the English article errors encountered by students and the most common errors that exist in their writing. Thereafter, determining appropriate pedagogical implications on the error analysis.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. English Article Errors in Writing and Error Analysis

Writing in English has a complicated process and also a challenge for EFL students. Lots of researchers have intended to identify the common errors that students usually make in their English writing. Errors, in this case, are shown to be a sign of learning rather than signs of failure (Zuo, 2017). A better understanding of the errors, absolutely, and the origin of such errors in the process of EFL writing will help educators know students' problems and difficulties in learning that language. Moreover, it will aid in the adoption of

appropriate teaching strategies to help EFL students learn better (Chaudhary & Zahrani, 2020).

Napitupulu (2017) stated that an article is a word that is used with a noun to indicate the type of reference being made by the noun, and it is related to definiteness and indefiniteness. Moreover, Park (2022) shared the category of definiteness and indefiniteness is mainly realized by employing two articles, the definite article (*the*) and the indefinite article (*a, an*).

The indefinite article *'the'* indicates that a noun stands out from other nouns of the same class, whereas *a/an* indicates that a noun shares the same features and is not distinguished from other nouns of the same class. *'The'* is used with a noun that has been mentioned before and is known or identifiable. The sentence can be seen as *'Once upon a time there lived an old carpenter in a small village. The carpenter was known all over the village as Old John'*. Whereas *a/an* is used with a noun that has not been previously mentioned in the context and is, therefore unknown (Canta, 2018). For example, *'I need a new handphone'*.

Concerning the learners' errors, Error Analysis is the appropriate method to analyze learners' difficulties by describing and explaining the errors that appear in their process of learning a foreign language, especially in writing. Chaudhary & Zahrani (2020) defined EA as a process based on the analysis of learners' errors with one clear objective: evolving a suitable and effective teaching-learning strategy and remedial measures necessary in certain marked-out areas of the foreign language.

A great deal of the work on Error Analysis was carried out within the context of the classroom. The goal was one of pedagogical remediation. Gas and Selinker proposed six steps of error analysis including collecting data, identifying errors, classifying errors, quantifying errors, analyzing sources, and remediating them.

### B. Error Taxonomy

The present study regarding Dulay's Surface Strategy Taxonomy is concerned with identifying cognitive processes that underlie the learners' reconstruction of the new language. It divides the errors into three classifications: *omission*, *addition*, and *substitution errors* (Maolida, 2021).

#### 1. Omission

Omission error can be identified through the absence of an item that should appear in a well-formed utterance/construction. The learners may omit certain linguistic forms due to the production complexity. This category consists of the omission of content morphemes and the omission of grammatical morphemes.

#### 2. Addition

An addition or insertion error can be seen through the presence of an item that must not appear in a well-formed utterance/construction. This type of error is divided into three categories: double markings, regularization, and simple addition.

### 3. Substitution

Substitution or misformation error is characterized by the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure. This type of error has three categories: regularization, arch forms, and alternating forms. It can be said that the words used in a sentence are in an incorrect arrangement. Those types of errors frequently appear in students' writing.

Some researchers have conducted studies of error analysis concerning the error of articles. Alhaisoni et al. (2017) found that the frequency of omission errors was higher than the frequency of addition and substitution errors. Their study also revealed that errors in using article 'a' were more common than errors in using 'an' and 'the' in writing texts.

Meanwhile, Al-qadi (2017) discovered the most frequent errors that arise in students' writing were addition errors, substitution was the second most frequent while omission errors were shown to be the least frequent type of error. He found that the commonest errors involved are the misuse of definite articles for general reference. These errors are likely caused by L1 transfer rather than an interlanguage developmental order. It is argued by a comparison of the forms of generic reference in English and Arabic.

#### C. Pedagogical Implications

Pedagogical approaches are generally defined as the theory and practice of teaching. It also refers to the methodology and process of how educators or instructors approach teaching and learning, and how the process affects and is influenced by the social, cultural, economic, and political aspects of students. It encompasses teaching styles, teaching theory, and feedback and assessment (Ming, 2021).

Pedagogy is important because it gives educators an insight into the quality of teaching in a classroom setting. It allows them to comprehend how different learners learn and to correspond the lessons to their specific needs.

English article errors issue on the present study are considerably significant in foreign language learning for both educators and learners. Errors may be significant in three aspects. *First*, errors informed the educator or instructor of how much the learner had learned. *Second*, errors gave evidence to the researcher of how language was learned. *Third*, errors functioned as instruments for the learner to discover the rules of the target language. By conducting error correction, educators have made great contributions to the learning of EFL/ESL learners (Ming, 2021).

## III. METHODS

### A. Research Design

This present study uses a qualitative and quantitative research method with a descriptive approach. The researchers identified the anomalies in the use of articles by systematically analyzing students' descriptive writing tasks based on Gass and Selinker's

error analysis method and categorizing the errors that emerged in the usage of the articles using Dulay's Surface Structure Taxonomy. The steps must be completed before moving on to the next steps, they are calculating the frequency of such English article errors, discovering the causes of the errors, and finally determining appropriate pedagogical approaches to the error analysis.

#### 1. Population and Sample

The population of the present study was 40 first-semester students of the Plantation Management study program at Samarinda State Polytechnic of Agriculture. There were two classes comprising 21 students from class A and 19 students from class B in the study programs.

The researchers used a non-probability sampling technique with a saturated sample, resulting in 40 total samples in the study.

#### 2. Data Collection

The researchers applied multiple techniques in collecting data.

##### a. Written samples

The 40 participants were requested to compose descriptive written tasks individually. The participants should choose five different topics comprising *My daily activities*, *My family*, *My lovely campus*, *My holiday*, and *My beautiful pet*.

##### b. Interview

Interviewing selected participants involves individual, face-to-face interviews and face-to-face group investigation. The researchers conducted some dialogue with the students and asked them about their difficulties in using English articles in writing descriptive text.

##### c. Procedure

By applying the online dictionaries, all participants enrolled in the first semester of the Plantation Management study program were assigned to choose one of the previously mentioned topics and compose descriptive writing tasks of approximately 100 – 200 words or around three paragraphs with at least five sentences in each paragraph within forty-five minutes. Afterward, the researchers analyzed all written samples, focusing on English article errors and ignoring all other errors.

#### 3. Data Analysis

The researchers applied Gass and Selinker's error analysis method in analyzing the data. The collected data were identified and analyzed to determine English article misuse in students' descriptive writing.

In classifying the article errors, the researchers applied Dulay's Surface Structure Taxonomy of errors, which involves omission, addition, and substitution errors, then calculated the number of each type of error and their percentage.

The researchers used statistical calculation of Walizer's formula (1) (Maolida, 2021) in calculating the

number and frequency of English article errors. The formula (1) is shown as follows.

$$P = \frac{n1}{\Sigma N} \times 100\% \tag{1}$$

(1) is the statistical calculation of Walizer's formula

P is the percentage of errors

n1 is the total of article errors type

ΣN is the total number of all types of article errors

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of this present study is presented and discussed based on the theory of Gas and Selinker's Error Analysis (Muqbel, 2018) and Dulay's Surface Structure Taxonomy (Maolida, 2021).

Table 1 lists the types, frequencies (n), and percentages (%) of English article errors based on Dulay's Surface Structure Taxonomy (SST).

Types of errors	a		an		the		total	
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	ΣN	(%)
Omission	42	72,4	8	13,8	8	13,8	58	46,8
Addition	17	44,7	6	15,8	15	39,5	38	30,6
Substitution	4	14,3	9	32,1	15	53,6	28	23
Total	63	0,8	23	19	38	30,6	124	100

Table 1 English Articles Errors

Figure 1. informs the percentage of each type of English article errors that emerge in the students' descriptive written tasks. The following diagram shows it in more detail:

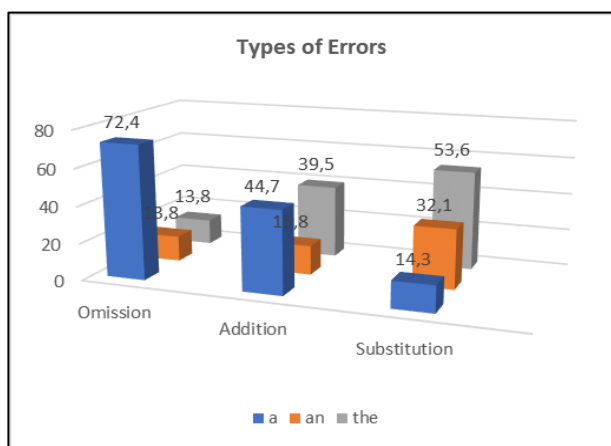


Figure 1. English Article Errors

The classification of errors in the present study involves omission, addition, and substitution errors. Total English articles error 124 related to the definite, indefinite, and null (∅) articles in students' English written task revealed that the most frequent English article errors were omission errors (46.8%) and the use of indefinite articles 'a' (72.4%). The second highest proportion was addition errors (30.6%) and the use of

indefinite article 'a' (44.7%). It informed that errors involving the indefinite article 'a' were more frequent than its equivalent 'an'. Substitution errors represented the least proportion (23%) whereas the most frequent one was in the use of the definite article 'the' (53.6%).

The following sections provide a detailed discussion of each type of error, the sources, and implications in English language teaching for Plantation Management students with Indonesian as their native language.

##### 1. Omission errors

Omission refers to the disappearance of an item that must exist in a well-formed utterance (Maolida, 2021).

The result of this present study as shown in Table 1 may offer support to the view that the structural differences between Indonesian and English could cause students to commit English article errors.

This sentence is one of the omissions of indefinite articles 'a' found in the students' writing, "I have best friend" instead of "I have a best friend". This case emphasizes that the students always translate from Indonesian to English structure, meanwhile, both structures are far different. Interlingual factors refer to this current issue.

It is in line with Sholihatun (2017) who analyzed 152 eight grade students of SMP Nurul Iman Palembang and discovered that indefinite article *a* was the highest percentage of omission errors (49, 52%). He asserted that L1 interference as an interlingual error overwhelmingly harms the learning process of L2 acquisition of the articles. It occurred probably caused that Arabic has no written indefinite article, therefore the learners tend to ignore the English indefinite article.

This case is also encountered by most Indonesian students when they employ English articles in their writing. Indonesian has no article as well. Hence, the students continue to struggle with employing the English article in the correct sentences.

It was supported by L. Yulawati et al. (2020) who mentioned that given the central importance of article functions at the interface of Syntax, Semantics, and Pragmatics, the English article system is widely recognized as one of the most problematic aspects of the language for L2 learners of English to master. There were some experts also support the statement. They were (Farahsani & Harmanto, 2021; Telaumbanua, 2020; Winarta & Rahmanu, 2020)

A dissimilar study was performed by Agustin (2018) analyzing 18 papers, which is the result of the final test of writing by students in the fifth semester of the English Department at the University of Muhammadiyah Malang. She justified that the most dominant error made by students are substitution, next is omission, and the last is addition.

Meanwhile, Elmejie (2021) also conducted an error analysis on 50 Libyan students' compositions and revealed that definite articles were the most common error in the composition.

Moreover, these results also were generally different from Putri (2017) as stated in a previous related

study who observed the Students of the English Department at Gunadarma University and found that the highest percentage is 60% in the category article *'the'*.

Some causes of errors might be a source of students' errors in English articles. This agrees with Putri (2017) that classifies sources of errors into six types that were interferences, overgeneralization, performance error, markers of transitional competence, a strategy of communication, and assimilation. Some of the students did the error of using English articles, whether in indefinite article *a/an* or definite article *the*.

L. Yuliawati et al. (2020) revealed that the students are also confused about using English articles. It was appropriate with performance error which is an unsystematic error that occurs as the result of such things as memory lapses, fatigue, confusion, or strong emotion. Telaumbanua (2020) identifies different types of errors in the use of indefinite article use while analyzing the written composition of some Jordanian English language students. She states that among all types of errors identified only the deletion of the indefinite article could be attributed to the mother tongue interference.

Meanwhile, the present study's result shows that the dominant type of error was omission error (46,8%), where indefinite article *a* was the highest frequency of English article errors (72,4%). This result also showed that the students did not master English articles, especially in the indefinite article *a*. It was because in Indonesia there was no indefinite article *a*. On the other hand, Dulay, Burth, and Krashen (1982) as cited by Maolida (2021) mentioned that any morpheme or word in a sentence is a potential candidate for omission; some types of morphemes are omitted more than others. Here, the article system was one of the grammatical morphemes. Thus, it was clear that some of the students face difficulty with English articles.

Furthermore, L. Yuliawati et al. (2020) also supported this statement that the English article is one of the most difficult parts of English grammar for EFL/ESL learners. Moreover, omission errors that were made by the students were probably caused by the first language (L1) inference.

It was supported by the researcher Vâlcea (2020), who defined interference as the automatic transfer due to the habit of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface of the target language. Interference is an error resulting from the transfer of grammatical and/or stylistic elements from the source language to the target language. Furthermore, the term *"interlingual"* was chosen instead of the equally common labels *"interference"* or *"transfer"* because *"interlingual"* seemed to be the least explanatory in connotation.

While Kazazoğlu (2020) said that interlingual is a significant source of error for all learners. The beginning stages of learning a second language are especially vulnerable to interlingual transfer from the native language, or interference. In these early stages, before the system of the second language is familiar, the native language is the only previous linguistic system upon which the learner can draw.

From the results above, it was known that the highest percentage was 76,92% in category indefinite article *a*. Furthermore, these findings can be related to the differences in the rules between Indonesian students and English structures. Thus, lecturers should focus on these differences and pay more attention to these differences, to reduce the number of errors caused by learners' first languages.

Moreover, it was highly important to teach the indefinite article first, as it was the most unmark and the most frequent, giving more attention to the definite articles, and presenting the central meaning of each article.

## 2. Insertion (Addition) Errors

Insertion refers to the addition of definite and indefinite articles in areas where they are not supposed to appear in a well-formed sentence in the target language.

In this study, addition errors represented the second highest proportion at 30,6% (38 errors) of the 124 total errors. This result contradicted Alhaisoni et al. (2017) Their research found the insertion of the definite article *'the'* showed up more frequently than the insertion of the indefinite articles *'a'* and *'an'* in female Saudi students who enrolled in a sentence and paragraph writing course for English major.

The evidence indicates both beginning and advanced writers, as a result of distinct proficiency levels, may use English articles differently even while they are accomplishing similar writing tasks. This might be stated that mastery of the English article system develops gradually with other aspects of English language learning for L2 learners.

However, Alhaisoni et al. (2017) asserted that *'appropriate use of articles is one of the last aspects of English grammar mastered by most non-native speakers, no matter what their first language is. In the English article system, 'a' and 'an' are not supposed to precede plural and non-count nouns.*

Subjects in the current study often made that choice, especially by placing the article *'a'* in front of plural nouns. Common instances such as *'a cows, 'a big rooms, 'a people, 'a smart girls, 'a best members, 'an outstanding singers'*, evidently signal a deviation from the principles governing the use of articles in the English language. The indefinite articles *'a'* and *'an'* in the English language system refer to *'one'* and can only be acceptable to precede singular count nouns. When we look deeper into phrases like *'an outstanding singers,'* we note that the use of *'an,'* a variant of *'a,'* exists before a word that begins with a vowel sound. In the previous instances, *'a'* also precedes words that begin with consonants.

Those instances illustrate although the category of the singular noun determined the selection of indefinite articles, regardless of adjectives modifying the noun, there is some phonological conformance to the criteria controlling the usage of articles. This phenomenon could be explained by the fact that in the early stages of learning the article system, beginning writers may often

obtain phonological associations earlier than semantic associations of words preceding indefinite articles.

Other instances, '*a Yogyakarta city*', '*a Saudi Arabia*', '*a money*', '*city is a small*', '*the Matahari*', represent a deviation from the principles of the article system in English. Even though the context warranted the null ( $\emptyset$ ) article, the subjects inserted '*a*' and '*the*' in front of these nouns and adjectives at random.

The present study indicates that even when provided the context for writing, students as beginning writers still lacked awareness and understanding of the accurate use of articles manifested by these instances.

This result concurs with Alhaisoni et al. (2017), who investigated written discourse by beginners who produced articles with a low rate of accuracy in written discourse, and argues that the availability of time and the context provided by written discourse may not be to their advantage. However, she concludes that 'the overall accuracy in the use of English articles was higher in the written narratives compared to the oral narratives.

### 3. Substitution Errors

Substitution errors were the smallest proportion in this study, at 20% (21 errors). In contrast to the proportions for omission and addition errors, the use of the article '*the*' accounted for 57.14% of substitution errors.

The students were confused in differentiating which article should be used in the sentence. The students have already known about what did they say, but they put an incorrect article in the wrong placement. For example, they wrote "*I made a film as.....*" instead of "*I made the film as.....*" and also the students used the indefinite article *a* before a word beginning with a vowel (*a*) like in the sentence "*I have a appointment*" instead of "*I have an appointment*".

Then, 7 errors were in the indefinite article '*an*'. The students used indefinite articles '*an*' before a word beginning with a consonant. For example, they wrote "*She have an sharp nose*" instead of "*She has a sharp nose*", then in other sentences "*.....have an favorite food*" instead of "*..... have a favorite food*". The other 12 errors were in a definite article '*the*'. The students used the article before a word beginning with a vowel (*e*) such as in the sentence "*He liked to read the encyclopedia*" instead of "*He likes to read an encyclopedia*". Moreover, the students mentioned the article '*the*' for the second time, but actually, it should be used for the first time. For example, in a sentence "*Yogyakarta has the beach*" instead of "*Yogyakarta has a beach*", in other sentences "*..... have the park that....*" Instead of "*..... have a park that....*" and so on. These errors also explained that the student did not understand the use of English articles. This was a very crucial problem because the difference between English articles (*a*, *an*, and *the*) was in the sentence. When the students did not use the right English article in the sentence, it means that they did not understand the use of an English article.

Students faced some difficulties in the use of the definite article '*the*'. They did not put a definite article

*the* before something that already know, something that is in a specific term. These errors implied that they did not master the English article yet because they did not know the basics of the English article.

The first type of error, such as '*a Indonesian club*', where a student substituted '*a*' for the accurate indefinite article '*an*'. It may be plausible that instances of the indefinite article '*an*' are much less frequent than its variant '*a*', making '*an*' less recoverable than '*a*' from the repertoire of learners' target language. Likewise, in the example '*I went to the restaurant*' where a student replaces '*a*' with '*the*' when the appropriate usage was '*I went to a restaurant*' in the first mention of a restaurant.

This result corresponds with Alhaisoni et al. (2017) who found that students substituted the definite article '*the*' for the indefinite '*a*'. The researchers also reported that Spanish speakers learning English substituted indefinite articles with definite articles and vice versa.

### 4. Pedagogical Implications

One of the significant strategies in the learning process is EFL/ESL educators should take the analysis of interlingual or transfer errors. It is feasible to say that they should employ the native language to support their students' learning process. Tonio & Ella (2019) insist that many language educators and researchers discuss making use of the mother tongue in the classroom. The EFL/ESL learners incline to their previous linguistic knowledge to acquire a foreign language/second language.

A contrastive comparison may be an appropriate technique to benefit from the native language to contrast it with the target language. As a result, the learners understand the distinctions and similarities between languages. Some interference errors including article errors can be avoided through a such method.

Interlingual or transfer errors, according to Muqbel (2018), are those that can be ascribed to the native language. The negative influence of the native language on the target language occurs in this process. Identifying and finding areas of distinctions and similarities may allow educators to comprehend these explanations. They can create appropriate strategies based on these areas to assist learners in avoiding transfer errors.

Chowdhury (2020) suggests that when a native language is far different from a foreign language, there will be more learning difficulties for the learner as well as the educators. Designing simple writing tasks as routine exercises may be one of the educators' responsibilities to fill in this gap which can assist the learners in acquiring appropriate knowledge in the target language.

Reading is one of the best ways to improve English writing. Only by effective language input, educators ensure that learners can give output through high-quality writing. Therefore, they should encourage learners to read authentic English materials extensively so that learners can enrich their knowledge of authentic expressions and strengthen their sense of English. Through different contexts, learners can practice correcting errors on their own. Ming (2021) assures that the students can correct and edit successfully the errors

marked by their teachers or lecturers if they are given the chance to do so. She also states that teachers should provide their learners with information and hints to revise their written works so that they can discover and repair errors.

Error correction method is an essential part of the learning process and it can be conducted by teacher-correction, peer correction, and self-correction. Self-correction is one of the appropriate techniques for learners to correct grammatical structures, articles for instance. However, combining teacher-correction with peer correction and self-correction properly may allow learners to obtain feedback from various perspectives (Ming, 2021).

## V. CONCLUSION

The present study regarding Dulay's Surface Strategy Taxonomy divides the errors into three classifications: *omission*, *addition*, and *substitution errors*.

The dominant English article error type that emerges in the students' descriptive writing is omission. Meanwhile, addition and substitution as the second and the third ones.

The study revealed that the EFL/ESL learners were inclined to their previous linguistic knowledge to acquire a foreign language/second language. Indonesian interference has a considerable influence on the second-language learning process of the articles due to the differences in rules between Indonesian and English structures.

Pedagogical implications include a contrastive comparison between languages that may improve learners' ability to instantly recognize differences in article usage between their language systems, conducting simple writing tasks as routine exercises for students, error correction in a flexible way, providing English reading materials and encouraging learners to read the materials extensively.

Adequate practice in using articles at the word, sentence, and discourse level may enable learners to recognize the use of articles in a wider context. Afterward, pedagogical practices of integrating practice in using appropriate articles in reading, writing, speaking, and listening tasks may allow learners more chances to see the indigenous use of articles.

Finally, teaching the target language grammar by creating a non-threatening and supportive classroom environment may enhance students' competence and confidence in both accuracy and fluency in the use of articles combined with other linguistic elements.

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