



## STUDENTS' GRAMMATICAL MISTAKES ON THE USE OF LANGUAGE FEATURES IN COMPOSING NARRATIVE TEXT

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### Submission Track:

||Submitted: 11<sup>th</sup> June, 2024 ||Reviewed: 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2024 ||Published: 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2024

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### Abstract

A narrative text with several grammatical and linguistic aspects is one of the texts learned in senior high school. In fact, according to the researcher's prior observation, students faced numerous challenges when attempting to write it, especially grammatical mistakes in using language features. This study aims to detect grammatical errors in the utilization of language elements in narrative texts produced by students, as well as to determine the underlying reasons contributing to these errors. The recent research employed a descriptive qualitative methodology. Eight of the eleventh-grade students studying Online Business and Marketing major in SMK Negeri 1 Kota Sorong have been selected as the participants in this research. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation which restricted social interactions, only those students than could be reached out to gather data. The data was derived from a writing exam and a semi-structured interview. Upon analyzing the student's writing, it was discovered that they made errors in utilizing the simple past tense and action verbs. Simultaneously, the interview data indicated that the causes contributing to grammatical errors in using language features in this study were limitations, lack of attention, and carelessness. This research finding implied that the teacher must identify the most effective technique to engage the student's attention and enable them to concentrate on acquiring language skills for future use in creating narrative texts.

**Keywords:** writing; grammatical mistakes; narrative text; performance factors

### Abstrak

Teks naratif dengan beberapa aspek gramatika dan kebahasaan merupakan salah satu teks yang dipelajari di SMA. Faktanya, menurut pengamatan peneliti sebelumnya, siswa menghadapi banyak tantangan ketika mencoba menulisnya, terutama kesalahan tata bahasa dalam menggunakan fitur-fitur bahasa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeteksi kesalahan tata bahasa dalam pemanfaatan unsur kebahasaan dalam teks narasi yang dihasilkan siswa, serta mengetahui alasan yang mendasari terjadinya kesalahan tersebut. Penelitian terbaru ini menggunakan metodologi deskriptif kualitatif. Delapan siswa kelas sebelas yang mempelajari jurusan Bisnis Online dan Pemasaran di SMK Negeri 1 Kota Sorong telah dipilih sebagai partisipan dalam penelitian ini. Karena situasi pandemi COVID-19 yang membatasi interaksi sosial, hanya siswa tersebut yang dapat dijangkau untuk mengumpulkan data. Data diperoleh dari ujian tertulis dan wawancara semi terstruktur. Setelah menganalisis tulisan siswa, ditemukan bahwa mereka membuat kesalahan dalam menggunakan simple past tense dan kata kerja. Secara bersamaan, data wawancara menunjukkan bahwa penyebab kesalahan tata bahasa dalam penggunaan fitur bahasa dalam penelitian ini adalah keterbatasan, kurangnya perhatian, dan kecerobohan. Temuan penelitian ini merekomendasikan bahwa guru harus mengidentifikasi teknik yang paling efektif untuk menarik perhatian siswa dan memungkinkan mereka berkonsentrasi pada perolehan keterampilan bahasa untuk digunakan di masa depan dalam membuat teks narasi.

**Kata Kunci:** menulis; kesalahan gramatikal; teks naratif; faktor kinerja



## 1. Introduction

Writing has emerged as a crucial aptitude in acquiring a language, alongside speaking, listening, and reading. Writing is a complex process requiring meticulous consideration of multiple factors to produce a coherent and significant written composition. Studies have demonstrated that vocabulary and grammar play a vital role in the language proficiency of ESL students, particularly in their writing abilities (Hong & Ganapathy, 2017). In addition, writing requires careful consideration of word selection, grammar, syntax, mechanics, and organization to create a cohesive written piece (Apsari, 2017; Tahang et al., 2021). Contemporary developments in writing education have incorporated genre theory and writing for specific goals, departing from traditional grammar-focused methods (Nagao, 2018). Hence, it is vital to acquire proficiency in grammar, vocabulary, and the structuring of thoughts in order to guarantee lucidity and consistency in the ultimate written outcome.

Students studying English as a foreign language rather than their first language sometimes find writing challenging. Research continuously emphasizes learners' challenges when it comes to improving their writing abilities (Ceylan, 2019; Haryadi et al., 2021; Purnama, 2021; Singh & Kaur, 2020; Ukka et al., 2021). The challenges encompass linguistic and communication competency concerns, task intricacy, and modality that impact the perceived difficulty, skill level, and flow (Cho, 2018). English language learners, particularly those learning it as a second language, face challenges when writing persuasive paragraphs, using proper punctuation, and structuring essays effectively (Ahmed, 2019; Almahameed & Al-Shaikhli, 2017). The intricacy of writing is exacerbated by syntactic and semantic errors, deficiency in language proficiency, and challenges in critical thinking (Wijaya, 2022).

While acquiring English language skills, numerous areas remain where students' narrative texts could be enhanced. Additionally, students should be mindful of their grammar. Students frequently require assistance with grammar, even when they merely employ basic grammatical structures. Grammar refers to the arrangement and organization of words in a sentence. Hence, studying grammar will enable students to comprehend the significance of a sentence.

However, students often find grammar perplexing when engaged in the writing process. It is sometimes caused by the lack of English grammar skill. In fact, students who already possess grammar skills may make errors due to a lack of information or negligence, particularly when English is not commonly used in their daily lives. It is said that grammar is an essential component of language that is not easily comprehensible. The complexity of grammar poses a significant challenge in acquiring a foreign language, and its importance in language education cannot be underestimated (Benitez-Correa et al., 2019).

Various forms of written text exist, one of which is narrative text. A narrative text is a form of written or spoken discourse that recounts a sequence of events or a story in the past tense. The primary objective of narrative writing is to provide amusement and enjoyment to individuals. In addition, students face increased challenges when they are expected to adhere to the writing process. In narrative literature, language elements include simple past tense, adverbs of time, temporal conjunctions, distinct characters, action verbs, and direct speech. This language feature is crucial as it ensures that each text is structured, utilizing exceptional and accurate elements.

Furthermore, based on the team's previous observation, it was evident that a significant number of students still need improvement in utilizing these linguistic elements. The average error is not typically due to a lack of knowledge but rather a requirement for further clarification when utilizing language elements that are already known. When students utilize the simple past tense, they may experience confusion or make mistakes due to carelessness and lack of attention. Students were confused or required recall of the simple past tense formulas. Occasionally, it is necessary to be mindful of employing verbs in the simple past tense that require modification.



Acknowledging that linguistic elements play a vital role in learning and are indispensable knowledge is crucial. Muliani et al., (2019) said that the writer must adhere to the prescribed format when composing a narrative text. Additionally, it is crucial for students to effectively employ language features and major grammatical elements to enhance the story's coherence. Furthermore, the language elements encompass important aspects such as simple past tense, adverbs of time, direct speaking, temporal conjunctions, action verbs, and distinct characters in a narrative text.

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in studying the grammatical mistakes senior high school students make while composing narrative texts. Several studies have extensively examined this topic, offering valuable insights into students' writing abilities and the common errors they commit. A study investigated the grammatical proficiency of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in descriptive writing tasks (Juliaty & Abetnego, 2019). The study discovered syntactically flawed sentences in descriptive texts authored by Indonesian senior high school. The study categorised grammatical errors into eight groups: prepositions, articles, singular and multiple nouns, adjectives, irregular verbs, tenses, concord, and possessive circumstances. A researcher investigated the grammatical proficiency of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in descriptive writing tasks (Prihandani, 2023).

Furthermore, research examined the impact of grammatical interference on narrative writings produced by Indonesian senior high school students. The goal was to ascertain the prevalent types of interference (Ayu & Nurweni, 2023). Another study also analysed the grammatical faults found in the narrative texts written by students of Madrasah Aliyah (Fithriani, 2020). The study primarily highlighted the disparities in errors among the Mathematics, Natural Science, and Social Studies streams. These studies provide significant insights into students' specific grammatical challenges in narrative writing, offering valuable information for educators and curriculum developers.

Furthermore, investigating grammatical errors in narrative writing has been a primary study area. In 2020, research conducted to study the flaws identified in narrative texts authored by junior high school students (Manik & Suwastini, 2020). The investigation indicated that common errors consisted of mis formations and omissions. Another study also examined the grammatical errors in the narrative writing of eleventh-grade students in private Islamic senior high schools. The study aimed to identify the various categories of errors and their respective rates (Murdliyana, 2019). These studies provide significant insights into the specific grammatical areas where children struggle, helping instructors create targeted interventions to improve students' writing skills.

In their study, a team investigated the efficacy of utilizing short films to enhance students' proficiency in composing narratives (Manalu et al., 2021). The study focused on evaluating the efficacy of multimedia technologies in improving writing proficiency. In 2019, research studied strategies to foster students' excitement for composing narrative texts (Inayah & Argawati, 2019). Their concentration was on utilizing mind mapping and employing cooperative, integrated reading and writing strategies. The study emphasized the importance of employing efficacious pedagogical approaches to enhance students' motivation and aptitude. These studies highlight innovative approaches to teaching narrative writing and the importance of engaging students through various instructional modalities.

A researcher also did a study to examine students' errors when using the past tense in their writing, with a particular focus on narrative texts (Susanti, 2017). The study employs a qualitative descriptive approach. The researcher selected the 8F class (2016/2017) at SMP Negeri 1 Candi, Sidoarjo, as the subject of study. The findings indicate that the researcher identified four distinct categories of errors: omission, addition, miss formation, and miss ordering. Subsequently, the researcher discovered that the predominant error committed by students was miss formation, accounting for 52% of the total. The issue at hand was affected by students who experienced confusion in comprehending the concept of the simple past tense. Their confusion stemmed from the requirement to grasp the meanings and distinctions



between regular and irregular verbs. Hence, students claimed that they rarely engage in the task of composing paragraphs.

Furthermore, the research has the novelty by focusing on analyzing grammatical errors in utilizing language characteristics in narrative writing, which was not specifically done by previous research. After that, the researcher aimed to identify the factors contributing to students making these mistakes. This research needed to be done to because the result showed the grammatical error encountered by the students in using language feature of narrative writing. The factor that triggered the students to make grammatical mistakes also described. The finding implied that the teachers should create the appropriate teaching and learning method when teaching narrative writing to minimize the student's mistakes in using the grammatical aspect of narrative text language features. The teachers also needed to focus more on teaching the grammatical aspect of the narrative writing.

## 2. Method

This study employed descriptive qualitative research methodology as its primary approach to elucidate grammatical errors found in students' written work. This method chosen because this research described the students' grammatical errors in utilizing language characteristics in narrative writing and identified the factors contributing to students making these mistakes. As a result of the restricted social contact caused by the COVID-19 scenario, a writing examination was administered to eight pupils from SMK Negeri 1 Kota Sorong. For this study, the researcher selected eleventh-grade students enrolled in an online business and marketing II course as participants. Those participants were selected using purposive sampling. The main requirement that become the main consideration to select the participant was based on the earlier observations done in eleventh grade students of online business and marketing II course at SMK Negeri 1 Kota Sorong. The students who were indicated made more than 10 grammatical mistakes when using language features in producing narrative texts chosen as the participants.

The researcher administered a written exam of narrative text to collect data on language feature errors produced in students' narrative writing. Additionally, a semi-structured interview was conducted to identify the reasons contributing to students' grammatical problems. The semi structured interviews employed in order the researcher could provide the question flexibly based on the context faced. The semi-structured interviews were conducted by utilizing voice notes via WhatsApp and phone calls with all the eight students. The interview was finished after the data saturated. The researcher employed documents and interview outcomes as the primary sources of data for this study.

The data collection processes were as follows: (1) Written Test: The document consisted of a written examination focused on narrative content. The researcher assigned a topic for the pupils to write about. The subject matter revolved around "*Malin Kundang*" or "*Bawang Putih dan Bawang Merah*." Subsequently, the researcher provided instructions on how to compose a written examination on the provided worksheet. The student must write a minimum of 60 words or more on the written test worksheet. Upon finalizing the documents, the researcher recognized the errors committed by the students. In this instance, the researcher meticulously examined each student's sentences and annotated every grammatical error pertaining to the utilization of language features in narrative literature. Subsequently, the researcher categorized the grammatical errors made by the pupils into distinct groups. The data is described, including instances of blunders picked from the data as samples of each category of problems. (2) Semi-structured Interview: The initial step is introducing oneself. Subsequently, the researcher clarified the objective of the interview and sought consent. Subsequently, the researcher elucidated the interview data. Subsequently, the researcher conducted interviews with students to identify the factors responsible for their grammatical errors. Due to the Covid-19 epidemic, the interview was conducted remotely using voice notes sent through WhatsApp and phone calls. Subsequently, the researcher transcribed the students' interviews regarding the factors contributing to their blunders. Ultimately, the researcher examined the interviews of the students and then categorized



the data by the specific component that led to the students' errors in this study. The researcher concluded the element that contributes to students' grammatical mistakes, as identified by Corder (1982) categorized these performance factors as memory limitations, emotional strain, lack of focus, fatigue, and carelessness. In this research, the data was analyzed using Miles Huberman's theory, which consists of three processes in qualitative data analysis: data reduction, data display, and concluding/verification.

### 3. Result and Discussion

The researcher assembled two equipment to collect the data. The researcher employed a written examination focused on narrative text and conducted interviews as part of the study. The work was analyzed to determine the predominant grammatical mistakes and language features committed by students when creating narrative texts. The semi-structured interviews were conducted utilizing voice notes via WhatsApp and phone calls to investigate the factors contributing to students' grammar mistakes in composing narrative texts.

#### 3.1. Common Grammatical Mistakes in the Use of Language Features in Writing

##### Narrative Text

The researcher found that students needed to correct their written narrative text. After collecting data from the narrative text made by the 11th grade of SMK Negeri 1 Kota Sorong, the researcher found some mistakes done by the students using language features of narrative text. As a reference, the table shows a code in the lower corner to support the data, so codes S (student), P (paragraph), and L (line) show the details of which part of the data is taken. The data found were as follows.

##### a. Mistakes in Simple Past

Table 1 Nominal Sentence (Plural)

No.	Source of Data	Verification
1.	They <u>was</u> both very nasty to <i>Bawang Putih</i> . (S2P1L4)	They <u>were</u> both very nasty to <i>Bawang Putih</i> . (S2P1L4)

The researcher found a mistake from the data. Student 2 made mistake in nominal plural sentence. Moreover, the student wrote "They was both very nasty to *Bawang Putih*." Actually student should write "They were both very nasty to *Bawang Putih*." Based on the correct formula of the nominal sentence, S + to be (was / were) + C and for nominal plural sentence students should use "were" in the past tense that paired with "you, we, they."

Table 2 Verbal Sentence (Action Verb)

No.	Source of Data	Verification
1.	<i>Bawang Putih</i> <u>is</u> wash some clothes in a river. (S6P2L1)	<i>Bawang Putih</i> <u>washed</u> some clothes in a river. (S6P2L1)

The researcher found a different mistake according to the data presented in Table 2. It was seen that student 6 made mistake in using the verb in a singular verbal sentence in the simple past tense of Passive Voice. The student made a mistake in using to be, "is." The student wrote "*Bawang Putih* is wash some clothes in a river" in this sentence it should be "*Bawang Putih* washed some clothes in a river," as the correct sentence. The students needed to change the present form of wash into the past form of washed. This mistake was only found in student 6, while it was not found in other students.

Accordingly, common mistakes in grammatical sentences in the simple past tense that have been classified by the researcher. In a separate explanation, it was found that each of mistakes made by students in narrative text about “*Bawang Putih dan Bawang Merah*” was 1 mistake in nominal singular sentence and 1 mistake in verbal sentence (action verb).

Moreover, the researcher then showed the data obtained in the narrative text about “*Malin Kundang*” that had been written by the students. The data could be seen in the table 3. below.

**Table 3 Nominal Sentence (Singular)**

No.	Source of Data	Verification
1.	Malin Kundang <u>is</u> a healthy, diligent and strong boy. (S8P2L3)	Malin Kundang <u>was</u> a healthy, diligent and strong boy. (S8P2L3)

The student 8 wrote “*Malin is a healthy, diligent and strong boy*” which meant that was wrong. In this case, student should write “*Malin was a healthy, diligent and strong boy*”, in accordance with the provisions of the simple past tense, also because the sentence was included in the nominal sentence in simple past tense. In addition, *Malin Kundang*’s mother was the third singular person.

**Table 4 Nominal Sentence (Plural)**

No.	Source of Data	Verification
1.	They <u>was</u> very poor (S1P1L4)	They <u>were</u> very poor (S1P1L4)
2.	They <u>was</u> very poor but lived harmonious (S5P1L2)	They <u>were</u> very poor but lived harmonious (S5P1L2)

The researcher found 2 mistakes. Students made mistakes in nominal plural sentences. Moreover, in number 1, student 1 wrote “*they was* very poor” instead of “*they were* very poor” as the correct sentences. For number 2, student 5 wrote “*they was* very poor but lived harmonious” meanwhile the correct sentence “*they were* very poor but lived harmonious.” Based on the correct formula, S + to be (was /were) + C and for nominal sentence students should use “were” in the past tense that paired with “you, we, they.”

**Table 5 Verbal Sentence (Passive Singular)**

No.	Source of Data	Verification
1.	Malin’s mother <u>is</u> suddenly surprised by the arrival of a big ship. (S5P2L1)	Malin’s mother <u>was</u> suddenly surprised by the arrival of a big ship. (S5P2L1)

It could be seen that students made mistakes in using the nominal sentence in the simple past tense, specifically the verbal sentence in the use of verbal passive singular sentence. The student made mistake in using to be, which should use “was” but students made mistake by using “is.” The mistake in simple past of passive tense in table 5., the student 5 wrote “*Malin’s mother is* suddenly surprised by the arrival of a big ship” this sentence was wrong, meanwhile student should write “*Malin’s mother was* suddenly surprised by the arrival of a big ship” based on the simple past tense, the student should add “was” because this sentence was verbal sentence in simple past passive tense.

**Table 6 Verbal Sentence (Negative)**

No.	Source of Data	Verification
1.	Her mother <u>don't</u> agree. (S5P1L4)	Her mother <u>didn't</u> agree. (S5P1L4)
2.	But Malin <u>don't</u> say anything. (S5P3L2)	But Malin <u>didn't</u> say anything. (S4P3L2)
3.	Then, he came to his village with his beautiful wife, but his wife <u>don't</u> know Malin real descent. (S7P3L2)	Then, he came to his village with his beautiful wife, but his wife <u>didn't</u> know Malin real descent. (S7P3L2)
4.	Malin said he <u>don't</u> know the poor old woman. (S8P3L4)	Malin said he <u>didn't</u> know the poor old woman. (S8P3L4)

The researcher found 4 mistakes, these for sentences number 1, 2, 3 there were a mistake in simple past tense, so this sentence didn't correct. This sentence should use the correct formula of simple past tense negative sentence S + did + not + C. In addition, the correct sentence should be "didn't" not "don't." One of correct example was "her mother didn't agree" not "her mother don't agree." The mistake in simple past tense for sentence number 4, the student wrote "Then, he came to his village with his beautiful wife, but his wife don't know Malin real descent". This sentence didn't correct. Actually, student should write "Then, he came to his village with his beautiful wife, but his wife didn't know Malin real descent" based on the correct formula of simple past tense.

In addition, in narrative text about "Malin Kundang", It was found 1 mistake in nominal singular sentence, 2 mistakes in nominal plural sentence, 1 mistake in verbal sentence (passive singular) and 4 mistakes in verbal negative sentence. In total, the students committed ten mistakes in using the simple past tense. These problems occurred because they used an incorrect formula that did not follow the rules of the simple past tense. As indicated in the preceding explanation, the researcher employed underlining to denote the mistakes. Studies have shown that students often need help appropriately identifying and using past tense verbs in their writing (Sayukti & Kurniawan, 2018).

Furthermore, research has highlighted that students often commit errors while using simple past tense, especially when writing recount texts (Firdausi, 2022; Fitria, 2020). The mistakes involved difficulties in correctly identifying and utilizing the suitable conjugations of both regular and irregular verbs and a need to comprehend the material associated with the simple past tense (Nurul Amla, 2022). These mistakes were also found in the recent research. The students were incorrect in choosing the correct past form of verb.

In addition, a study have indicated that students face challenges when it comes to transforming active voices into passive voices in the simple past tense (Nurul Amla, 2022). Typical mistakes include incorrect formation, exclusion, inclusion, and arrangement (Sari et al., 2016). This challenge was also experienced by the students. They made mistake in using the additional verb be when composing a passive singular person.

b. Mistakes in Action Verb

**Table 7 Mistakes in Action Verb**

No.	Source of Data	Verification
1.	He <u>live</u> with his mother in the village near the sea. (S1P1L2)	He <u>lived</u> with his mother in the village near the sea. (S1P1L2)
2.	His mother <u>sit</u> alone and she cried. (S1P2L3)	His mother <u>sat</u> alone and she cried. (S1P2L3)
3.	They always <u>ask</u> her to do all the household chores. (S2P1L2)	They always <u>asked</u> her to do all the household chores. (S2P1L2)
4.	She gave back the clothes, she also <u>offer</u> two pumpkins. (S2P3L2)	She gave back the clothes, she also <u>offered</u> two pumpkins. (S2P3L2)
5.	Her step mother <u>kick</u> <i>Bawang Putih</i> after saw that gold jewelry. (S3P3L2)	Her step mother <u>kicked</u> <i>Bawang Putih</i> after saw that gold jewelry. (S3P3L2)

According to Table 7, the researcher discovered errors in using action verbs. The language feature in writing narrative text is simple past test. It means that, the action verb choice must be in a past form. In this particular situation, students made incorrect choices while selecting the verb form in a sentence. Students committed errors using the present form instead of the correct past form, as indicated by the formula. An action verb is a linguistic element that describes activities or behaviors.

A study revealed that typical grammatical errors committed by EEC students encompassed errors in sentence structures (subject and verb), verb tenses, pronoun usage, prepositions, and punctuation (Andriani et al., 2022). The sentence pattern most commonly encountered was the subject and verb structure. Meanwhile, the researcher discovered the following results in this study: A table was created to identify and comprehend the most prevalent and least common types of mistakes made by students.

**Table 8 Common Grammatical Mistakes**

No.	Common Grammatical Mistakes	Mistakes
1.	Mistakes in Nominal Sentence (Singular)	1
2.	Mistakes in Nominal Sentence (Plural)	2
3.	Mistakes in Verbal Sentence (Passive Singular)	2
4.	Mistakes in Verbal Sentence (Negative)	4
5.	Mistakes in Action Verb	16
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>

Prior studies have elucidated the typical errors students make while employing action verbs in the composition of narrative texts. A study revealed that students frequently neglected to incorporate sufficient action verbs in their narrative texts, impeding the fulfilment of the narrative's intended objective (Dahlström & Boström, 2017). The team emphasized the significance of using past action verbs, mental verbs, metaphoric verbs, temporal connectives, repetition, and rhythm in narrative writing, further reinforcing the lack of these action verbs.



Furthermore, a study highlighted the importance of incorporating material processes or action verbs in recount texts, suggesting that unique participant emphasis and action verbs are crucial grammatical structures in this genre of writing (Utami et al., 2022). Furthermore, a study found that engaging in direct writing activities significantly improves narrative writing skills, highlighting the crucial role of using proper verbs in narrative compositions (Habibi et al., 2020).

The results of another study were consistent with the findings, indicating the necessity for additional research and treatments to tackle the difficulties students encounter while employing action verbs proficiently in their narrative writing (Madu, 2024). Educators could enhance students' narrative writing skills by emphasizing appropriate action verbs. This could be achieved through tailored instructional strategies, such as employing graphic organizers (Sari et al., 2016), digital storytelling tools (Wulandari et al., 2019), or specific teaching media like PowToon (Fauziah et al., 2021).

### 3.2. Performance Factors of Common Grammatical Mistakes Done by Students

The researcher focused on mistakes caused by performance factors: memory limitation, emotional strain, lack of attention, fatigue and carelessness. Based on the interview results, the factors that caused mistakes found in students were only three factors, namely memory limitation, lack of attention and carelessness.

#### a. Memory Limitation

An expert states that memory limitation is a condition where students have limitations in their memory (Corder, 1982).

Students frequently claimed to have forgotten a topic matter they have never previously studied in this part. A memory limitation, an internal element, hindered the student's practice.

Extract 1a:

*"Kalau belajar ya diperhatikan, kerjakan juga. Tapi memang kadang lupa, apalagi kalau tidak lihat dari buku dulu toh."* (Student 1)

[If I study, I pay attention to it, I do it too. But sometimes I forget, especially if I don't see it from the book first.] (Student 1)

Extract 1b:

*"Tidak gugup sih. Cuma memang lupa, karena sudah lumayan lama juga pelajaran narrative itu. Jadi memang tidak ingat, otak terbatas, Miss. Pusing terlalu banyak pelajaran, baru sekarang daring lagi. Jadi ya lupa begitu Miss, jadi kalau ada salah ya begitu sudah karena lupa."* (Student 6)

According to the remarks provided, it was demonstrated that their grammatical problems in creating the narrative text resulted from memory constraints. According to Corder's theory, memory limitation refers to the condition in which students have restrictions in their memory capacity. Through conducting conversations with students, the researcher obtained further information. The data obtained from student interviews indicated that Student 1, Student 6, and Student 8 made errors due to the constraints imposed by memory limitations. The interview extracted above demonstrated that the memory impairment experienced by students might be attributed to various factors.

Student 1's memory limits became apparent when he forgot the subject material. However, the student could remember and minimize errors by revisiting the textbook. Regarding students aged 6 and 8, based on interview quotes, it was evident that their memory limitation was also attributed to their inclination to take on many themes, resulting in the neglect of other materials. In this instance, the narrative text elements and the utilization of language were prominent. This occurred because of the abundance of subject resources that students encountered, leading to a tendency to forget previously



acquired knowledge. Amidst the COVID-19 outbreak, learning could solely be conducted via the internet platform.

Memory constraints have been recognized as a notable component that contributes to errors made by students while employing linguistic elements in the composition of narrative texts. Studies have demonstrated that cognitive factors were essential for improving the quality of tales (Andriani et al., 2022). Teachers should encourage students to actively participate in oral communication and enhance their reading skills to improve their cognitive capacities in narrative writing assignments. Furthermore, the study highlighted the need to promote students' active participation in oral language exercises to improve their abilities in composing narratives. Furthermore, studies on the cognitive and emotional aspects that impacted second language (L2) writing have discovered that learners who had a positive perception of their ability to write in English tend to create narratives that were more intricate, precise, and fluent (Al-Reshaid, 2022). This emphasized the importance of perception and self-assurance in language writing assignments. Students with confidence in writing skills were more inclined to create superior-quality tales.

Moreover, a longitudinal study that specifically examined linguistic characteristics in academic writing discovered that the extent to which learners were exposed to language input substantially influenced their writing proficiency (Candarli, 2021). The investigation employed reading passages as a substitute for language input and showcased that the frequency and distribution of language input impacted the advancement of writing abilities. This highlighted the need to offer students abundant language input to improve their ability in narrative writing.

#### b. Lack of Attention

According to an expert, lack of attention refers to a situation in which students exhibit reduced focus on objects (Corder, 1982). Lack refers to the disparity between the knowledge learners possess and the knowledge necessary for the goal circumstance. In this scenario, students showed diminished focus towards the narrative text content. Students exhibited a lack of attentiveness in certain manners and sometimes divert their concentration towards unrelated matters. Similar incidents occurred with students who were subjects of the researcher's investigation. This was caused by external stimuli, as elaborated in the following explanation.

##### Extract 2a:

*"Oh, ini pas kerjakan mungkin saya agak terganggu sedikit, Miss. Jadi kurang perhatikan. Kan kerjakan di rumah jadi kadang ada yang panggil begitu, jadi tidak terlalu fokus pas mau balik buat kerjakan lagi."* (Student 3)

[Oh, when I am working on it, I get disturb by something, Miss. So, I pay less attention. When doing it at home, sometimes someone called me, so I didn't really focus work on it again.] (Student 3)

##### Extract 2b:

*"Makanya tidak terlalu perhatikan pelajaran karena kadang main game sama teman."* (Student 4)

[That's why I didn't pay much attention to the lesson because sometimes I used to play games with friends.] (Student 4)

The remarks above demonstrated that a lack of attentiveness resulted in students making grammatical errors in language aspects when composing narrative texts. Inattentiveness referred to a state in which students failed to concentrate on the current instruction, instead becoming distracted and directing their concentration towards other matters. The majority of these characteristics arose due to the impact of external individuals, such as friends or the home environment, as reported by the students.



Student 3, student 4, student 5, and Student 7 experienced this lack of attention. The occurrence of this phenomenon could be attributed to various factors.

This could be substantiated by the statements made by students three and seven, which asserted that the lack of attention was attributable to the interference of the home environment with the learning process. Specifically, students three and seven encountered disruptions from their home environment, such as being summoned by individuals at home and occasionally having to prioritize household chores, such as cleaning, before engaging in their studies. Furthermore, the quotation indicated that students four and five experienced this lack of focus due to interruptions from peers who simply wanted to engage in storytelling or play together.

Studies have demonstrated that a lack of concentration during the learning process can greatly contribute to students' errors while utilizing linguistic elements in their narrative writing. The authors emphasized the significance of students' self-efficacy in controlling their behaviors and emotions when writing, which directly influenced the quality of narrative texts (Camacho et al., 2021). Furthermore, they highlighted the significance of cognitive elements in improving the caliber of narrative writing. They proposed that educators motivate students to participate in verbal communication and actively enhanced their reading instruction (Andriani et al., 2022). A researcher urged educators to investigate methods and approaches that could improve learners' ability to write narrative texts (Madu, 2024). The students' limited proficiency in composing narrative texts might be ascribed to motivation, instructional approaches, and vocabulary (Daulay et al., 2022). These findings emphasized the importance of educators addressing motivational variables and utilizing effective instructional strategies to enhance students' skills in narrative writing.

### c. Carelessness

Carelessness is a result of a lack of inspiration or interest. Carelessness, as defined by an expert, refers to a lack of concern or attention exhibited by a student towards the learning process (Corder, 1982). The students were not sufficiently attentive or diligent in completing a task accurately. Students also encounter this phenomenon in the following manner:

Extract 3:

*“Waktu belajar narrative atau bahasa inggris yang lain memang kadang saya tidak perhatikan karena apa e, kadang kayak malas saja lihat bahasa inggris.”* (Student 2, 20<sup>th</sup> December 2020)

[When studying narrative or learning other English, sometimes I didn't pay attention because of what, like sometimes I'm lazy of seeing English.] (Student 2, 20<sup>th</sup> December 2020)

The remark above indicated that carelessness was the reason students make grammatical mistakes in the language features of producing narrative text. As previously elucidated regarding negligence, students displayed a lack of attentiveness in this instance due to its inherent nature. This was demonstrated by the quote from student two, which explicitly asserted that students tended to be indolent when acquiring English language skills. As previously indicated, it was clarified that the external environment did not influence the carelessness element. This contrasted with the absence of focus, in which extraneous factors might easily divert students.

The inattentiveness and negligence of students during the learning process may result in inaccuracies in using language elements when composing narrative writings. This lack of focus may appear in different ways, including a fear of committing errors, experiencing pressure, struggling to concentrate, and exhibiting disorganization (Gurbuz, 2022). Moreover, the apprehension of receiving unfavorable assessments and the fear of losing social status may impede students' inclination to communicate in a foreign language, impacting their proficiency in writing (Jelínková et al., 2023). Common errors in ESL writing typically pertain to spelling, punctuation, syntax, the development of



thesis statements, and sentence structure (Slimi et al., 2022). These errors may be worsened by the difficulties students face in understanding the principles of the language they are learning and their limited knowledge of its vocabulary and structures (Shaumiwaty & Munandar, 2022).

Furthermore, the problem of students' grammatical faults in English writing can be mitigated by providing specific comments and implementing writing courses (Al-Towity, 2021). Feedback is crucial to language acquisition, allowing students to recognize and correct their errors. Without clear feedback, students may face difficulties rectifying their mistakes (Permana & Huntley, 2020). A research found that students face difficulties in achieving oral fluency in English due to inadequate grammatical skills, insufficient speaking practice, and fear of making errors (Gul et al., 2022). Errors in academic writing are significant as they provide valuable information about students' levels of understanding (Rahman, 2022). According to a research finding, giving students corrective criticism and highlighting that mistakes are typical for learning can boost their confidence and improve their writing skills (Fakhry, 2023). Moreover, using error analysis in language learning can assist in identifying students' difficulties, correct errors, and enhance instruction effectiveness (Musthofa et al., 2022).

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the data gathered, it was concluded that students made two main grammatical mistakes in language features in writing narrative text at SMK Negeri 1 Kota Sorong. The result of the data showed two main mistakes: mistakes in using simple past tense and action verbs. The students committed ten errors in using the simple past tense. These problems occurred because they used an incorrect formula that did not follow the rules of the simple past tense. They were one mistake in composing a Nominal Sentence (Singular), two mistakes in composing a Nominal Sentence (Plural), two mistakes in composing a Verbal Sentence (Passive Singular), and 2 Mistakes in a Verbal Sentence (Negative). The students encountered 16 mistakes in using action verbs.

Due to the COVID condition, the number of students who participated in this research was still limited. In hence, the future research is recommended a further research on identifying the grammatical mistakes done by the students in writing narrative text by involving more participants to find a deeper research explanation. The result of this research implied that, teachers still need to create an appropriate teaching method that can improve the students' comprehension of the grammatical aspect of the language feature used in writing the narrative text.

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