

ERRORS MADE BY THE THIRD SEMESTER STUDENTS IN USING PUNCTUATION MARKS

Meta Kartika Wati
IAIN Tulungagung, East Java

Abstract: This study aims to he students' errors in using punctuation marks in writing essay. This study conducted in the third semester students at IAIN Tulungagung academic year 2013/2014. The researcher analyzed the students errors in using punctuation marks which influences to the grammatical and semantic function. The research problems in this study are what are the errors made by the third semester students at IAIN Tulungagung in using punctuation marks in writing essay and what are the dominant errors made by the third semester students at IAIN Tulungagung in using punctuation marks in writing essay. The researcher used descriptive quantitative method in this study, and found seven kinds of punctuation marks that occurred as the errors. They are comma, period, colon, semicolon, exclamation marks, question marks, and apostrophe. Those errors were classified based on Dulay's surface strategy taxonomy (omission, addition, misformation, and misordering).

Keywords: errors, punctuation marks, writing essay.

Writing is one of the English skills which have been the English teaching objectives, especially for English Education Program. By writing, the students can express their idea, thought, feeling and giving the information to the others. In IAIN Tulungagung, for the third semester students, they were taught 'Essay' writing. Essay itself is a group of paragraphs about a specific subject. However, in writing essay, there are many problems that the students faced, and one of them is punctuation marks.

Punctuation itself is a part of teaching mechanic that gives many effects in the students' writing. In this study, the researcher analyzes the grammatical and semantic function. Wrong punctuation marks used influences the students' writing quality. It was correlated to Jeremy's theory (2004:49) which states that using punctuation marks correctly is one of the important skills in writing.

In semantic function, according to Bram (1995:92) states "Using correct punctuation is indispensable to careful writing. Misused punctuation, for instance, a question mark (?) instead of a full stop (.) at the end of a sentence may convey the different message, namely a question, not a statement." See at the following sentence:

Elisabeth has two boyfriends? (question, surprised)

Elisabeth has two boyfriends. (statement)

The examples above have a different meaning. The first example shows a question sentence by putting a question mark (?) in the end of the sentence. It means that the sentence emphasize a question. The second example is a statement. Contrary with the first sentence, it ends with a period (.). It means that the sentence is an utterance or statement that is true a complete thought from the writer. It proves that a punctuation mark has a semantic meaning to your writing

In grammatical function, the wrong used of punctuation marks will give a big effect to the sentence's grammar. The example, *I got up late this morning, I didn't have a time for breakfast.* On that sentence, misformation of comma creates 'comma splice' to the sentence, because there are two sentences that occurred in a sentence. It was not true that the two independent clauses were in a sentence without a conjunction, so we can replace it with a period or semicolon.

Based on the explanation above, it's needed to use right punctuation in our writing. People sometimes think that punctuation marks are little thing, but actually it has a big effect to our writing. If we do an error in our writing, for example misinformation of comma, it will give a confusing to your reader to it means that you couldn't reach the goal of your writing to make your writer understand with what you have written. Using correct punctuation marks also needed to be done in essay writing, because essay writing consists of many paragraphs and need a detailed correction.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this research is descriptive quantitative method. Ary (1985:32) explains that descriptive research studies are designed to obtain information concerning the status of phenomena. Descriptive research is not generally directed toward hypothesis testing, the aim is to describe what exist with respect to variables or condition in a situation.

The researcher determines that the design is descriptive quantitative method because it describes the data that is taken from the sample, and the results of the data were tabulated in the form of percentage. This research investigates analysis and categories errors in the use of punctuation marks in writing essays made by the third semester students at IAIN Tulungagung based on the surface strategy taxonomy proposed by Dulay et al. (1982).

Subject of The Research

In this study the researcher would take all of the students in A class, because this class known as class in a good writing work. The researcher knew this class in a good writing work by comparing the writing work of A class with the other classes. The recommendation of the lecturer also supported the researcher to choose this class. The researcher would investigate whether the students in good writing skill also concerned in the use punctuation marks or not. As the researcher chose a purposive sampling in A class, so the sample consisted of 27 essay writing works with the topic Type of Off-Campus Housing.

Data Collecting Method

The method that is used to collect the data is documentation. The data itself is the 27 writing works of A class with the topic Type of Off-Campus Housing. By analyzing the data, the researcher wants to know the types of errors, and what the dominant errors made by the students in using punctuation marks in writing essay.

In this research, the instrument used is documentation. Arikunto (2006:149) stated that “*For several methods, the name of the instrument is also same with the method itself*”. This documentation used to get information about the types of errors, and what the dominant errors of using punctuation marks in writing essay made by the third semester students at IAIN Tulungagung are. The data are taken from the students’ document. The students’ document here was their essay written work.

Data Analysis

There were some steps in applying the error analysis to analyze the data. The following steps are based on the procedures proposed by Brown (2000:220). The steps meant are explained below:

Identification of Errors

Here, the researcher identified what errors which the student made in using punctuation marks.

Classification of Error

The classification of error was done based on surface strategy taxonomy proposed by Dulay et.al (1982:154) which is classified into omission, addition, misinformation, and misordering.

Tabulating the Errors

It is needed to figure out the frequency of the errors previously identified and classified. The errors are then counted and tabulated, and the number of errors is presented in form of percentage.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The researcher analyzed and identified the data to find the errors in using punctuation marks in writing essay. Here, the researcher found some kinds of punctuation marks made by the students, such as: comma, period, colon, apostrophe, exclamation mark, question mark, and semicolon. The researcher analyzes two functions of punctuation marks, grammatical and semantic. The researcher found 219 errors made by the students in using the punctuation marks in the function of grammatically, and 48 errors in the function of semantically.

In this research, the errors made by the students in using punctuation marks in writing essays were classified based on the surface strategy taxonomy propose by Dulay et al (1982). Based on the theory, the errors were classified in to four types; omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. This research followed that theory, and found the errors in from the data including of omission, addition, and misinformation. There was no misordering error, because the

researcher didn't find it when analyzing the data. The researcher divided the classification in two functions, grammatically and semantically.

In the function of grammatically, there were 219 errors in the seven kinds of punctuation marks made by the students. Those errors were classified into three types: omission, addition, and misformation.

Table 1 Frequency and Percentage of Omission Error

No.	Types of Omission Error	Frequency	Percentage
	Comma (,)	143	87,2%
	Period (.)	20	12,2%
	Colon (:)	1	0,6%
	TOTAL	164	100%

Comma is the dominant errors in the omission of errors. A comma is naturally used to separate a series of item, and also used before the conjunction in the clauses. *'The students who live there also can be more independent responsible and active in the large community.'* The omission of error from the example of the sentence that explained a series of nouns must be separated by commas.

Table 2 Frequency and Percentage of Addition Errors

No.	Types of Addition Error	Frequency	Percentage
	Comma	6	37,5%
	Period	3	18,75%
	Apostrophe	2	12,5%
	Question Mark	2	12,5%
	Exclamation Mark	2	12,5%
	Colon	1	6,25%
	TOTAL	16	100%

Addition of errors means that the presence of item that must not appear in a well-formed sentence. The researcher found six kinds of punctuation marks. The dominant error was comma. The example is 'When, we will go out from boarding house, we will do it up to us.' The word 'when' is a unit of dependent clause, so it's no needed to separate it with the following words in that clause. The revised sentence is not putting a comma after 'when', as in:

When we will go out from boarding house, we will do it up to us

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage of Misformation Errors

No.	Types of Misinformation Error	Frequency	Percentage
	Comma	24	61,5%
	Period	14	35,9%
	Semicolon	1	2,6%
	TOTAL	39	100%

Misformation errors means that the use wrong form in a morpheme or structure. The dominant error was still comma. *'The first is dormitory, some campus have built dormitory for their students.'* There was a comma after the first sentence 'The first is dormitory'. Actually, those first and second sentences were independent clauses, and it could stand alone. It could melt to be a compound sentence if there was a coordinating conjunction, but there was no conjunction there. So, those sentences should be separated by a period, not a comma.

While in the function of semantically, the wrong used of punctuation marks create different meaning to the sentences. The errors were classified into three types of errors: omission, addition, and misformation.

Table 1 Frequency and Percentage of Omission Errors in Semantically Function

No.	Types of Omission Error	Frequency	Percentage
	Comma (,)	20	62,5 %
	Period (.)	12	37,5%
TOTAL		32	100%

The table above showed the omission of punctuation marks that create semantical effect. The dominant error was comma. The example is *"Next you must on time when you pay rent for the owner of boarding house."* In the error sentence above means the person next to you, not the thing that mentioned after the word 'next' that explained a periodically between the sentences. The correct sentence is *"Next, you must on time when you pay rent for the owner of boarding house."*

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage of Addition Errors in Semantically Function

No.	Types of Addition Error	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Period (.)	4	44%
2.	Comma (,)	3	33%
3.	Apostrophe (')	2	23%
TOTAL		9	100%

In addition error, the presence of the item that must not appear creates different meaning in the sentence. The dominant error is period.

Table 3 Frequency and Percentage of Misformation Errors in Semantically Function

No.	Types of Misformation Error	Frequency	Percentage
	Comma (,)	4	57%
	Period (.)	3	43%
TOTAL		7	100%

The wrong used of punctuation marks create different meaning to the sentences. The dominant error is comma. *'You just need to choose one of the off-campus housing, dormitory gives us more knowledge, religion, education, and*

course.’ That error sentence, a comma put after the sentence ‘*You just need to choose one of the off-campus housing*’, then followed by a sentence ‘dormitory gives us more knowledge, religion, education, and course’. A series of commas above seemed explaining about a series of things. But, it was not in a same category. Unclear meaning when a comma put after the first sentence. It emphasized about a need to choose one of the campus housing. It was not ended yet, then explained about dormitory. The comma after the first sentence should replace by a period to express that the sentence in a complete thought, and then explained about ‘dormitory’ in next sentence.

DISCUSSION

The errors made by the third semester students in using punctuation marks in writing essay are divided into three types. Those three types were analyzed into two functions, grammatically and semantically. The errors are omission, addition, and misformation. Omission is the error that is characterized by the absence of the item that actually needed in a well-sentence. This meant that in writing, the student omit the punctuation mark that actually needed in a well-formed sentence. The second type is addition. This error is characterized by the presence of the item that must not appear in the sentence. In this research, addition error happened when the presence of punctuation mark was not appropriate in a well-formed sentence. The last error type is misformation. This type is characterized by the use wrong form in morpheme or sentence. Here, the students put the kind of punctuation marks in their essay, but that was not appropriate one.

Based on the data that has been analyzed by the researcher, there were two functions that the researcher analyzed, grammatically and semantically. Firstly, in grammatically function, the highest frequency of errors happened in omission of the using of punctuation marks. Here, the students omit the punctuation marks that were actually needed in a well sentence. Almost of the students did omission of comma in their writing works. So, the dominant error made by the third semester in using punctuation marks in writing essay was omission of comma. Actually, comma is needed to make their sentence clear and suitable with the rules. A comma put to emphasize the sentence which must be separated based on their classification and rule. For the example, a comma should put to separate a series of thing in the same category. From the data gotten by the researcher, there was an example of a sentence that included in omission of comma, as in the sentence, ‘The students who live there also can be more *independent responsible and active* in the large community.’ From that sentence, that was a series of thing in the same category, in adjective category. There were independent, responsible, active. Those three adjective should be separated by the commas as the rule mentioned in Bram (1995:92). The students omitted the commas by not putting anything between the adjectives. The second highest of omission was period. Here, the students didn’t put the period in their complete thought sentence. The period itself signed of the end of the sentence.

The second highest frequency of errors in using punctuation marks in writing essay that are made by the third semester students at IAIN Tulungagung was misformation errors. Misformation errors happened when the

students used the wrong form in the morpheme and structure. Here, the students used the punctuation marks, but that was not the appropriate one. The students often put a comma that actually in the end of the sentence. They arranged the sentences by separating with a comma, although it should be ended by a period. From the data, there was an example of misformation, like *'The first is dormitory, some campus have built dormitory for their students'*. Actually, that were two sentences that be forced into a sentence by putting a comma. Here, as the rule of comma, the sentences can be separated by the comma if they are in the same category, or there is a coordinating conjunction in separating the sentences. According to Hansen (1998:109), the two independent clauses can be joined if there is a coordinating conjunction, and a comma should put to separate them before the conjunction. On the sentence above, they were not a coordinating conjunction there, so that there was not a compound sentence that must be separated by a comma. A comma at the sentence above should be replaced by a period, like *'The first is dormitory. Some campus have built dormitory for their students'*. Those misformation of comma in grammatically also can be called as "comma splice". It was also done to the other punctuation marks that categorized in misformation error. That was the example that the students didn't allow the rule of using punctuation well.

The last type of errors made by the students in using punctuation marks in writing essay was addition error. Addition errors are the errors that are characterized of item that must not appear in a morpheme or sentence. Here, the students put the punctuation marks that should not appear in a sentence. In the data gotten by the researcher, the students often add the period in a sentence that was not appropriate. That was an example of the sentence *'If we know about the type of campus housing as dormitory and boarding house with their activities, we can imagine. How many activities there.'* A period that was between two clauses, the dependent clause (*If we know about the type of campus housing as dormitory and boarding house with their activities*), and the independent clause (*we can imagine how many activities there*). Here, the adding of period in the independent clause was not allowed (*we can imagine. How many activities there*). That was a unit of a clause that must not be separated by a period.

Secondly, in semantically function, the students made many errors that were classified into three kinds of errors: omission, addition, and misformation. The dominant error was omission of comma in 66% of all errors. Actually, omission of punctuation marks, such as comma created a different meaning with the correct one. For the example in the sentence *'Next you must on time when you pay rent for the owner of boarding house'*. Actually, that sentence classified in omission of comma. A comma should put after the word 'Next' to show the periodically of the series of things or activities. However in the error sentence, there was no comma after 'next', and it created a different meaning. The word 'next' melted with the word 'you'. It was not a boundary there. So, it seemed that 'next you' means the person next to you, not a periodically of a series of things or activities. Therefore, omission of comma absolutely created a different meaning to the writing. In the error sentence, the word 'next' means that the person next to you. The correct sentence *'Next, you must on time when you pay rent for the*

owner of boarding house' put a comma after the word 'next' with a pause intonation to emphasize the periodically of a series of items or activities.

The second highest frequency was addition of errors. In addition errors, the students often added the punctuation marks that could change the meaning of the students' writing work itself. For the example was in the addition of apostrophe. An apostrophe naturally used to emphasize the possession of something. In the error sentence 'The *owner's* as like the second parents who have guaranteed their safety', there was an addition of apostrophe in the word '*owner's*'. Of course it was a confusing meaning because 'owner' itself had a mean as the person who had a possession right of something. So, if the word said '*owner's*', it meant that the person who had a possession right of the owner itself. It didn't deal with the correct sentence that stated 'The *owners* as like the second parents who have guaranteed their safety'. In the correct sentence, the owners means that the person who had a possession right of boarding house that became the second parents to the students. In the correct sentence, the meaning was clearer than the addition error sentence.

CONCLUSION

The researcher concluded that the errors divided into three errors based on Dulay, et al. surface strategy taxonomy; omission, addition, and misformation. The dominant error was comma errors in all functions (grammatical and semantical). Here, both the students and teacher have concern the punctuation marks. The teacher has to take a portion to teach punctuation marks itself. The teacher also emphasizes the importance of the uses of punctuation marks, so the student doesn't think that punctuation mark is a little thing in their writing. In scoring the students writing, the teacher also hopefully be more detail in correcting the students' punctuation used. These efforts can be done by the teacher to avoid the errors made by students in using punctuation marks.

For the students, the researcher suggests that the students can learn from their error. They can know what their errors, and they can learn from those errors. Secondly, lack of understand is the big factor that influence those errors. After finishing this research, hopefully the students can learn more about the kinds of punctuation marks and the function of them. They would not ignore the punctuation marks in their writing, because the use of punctuation mark can determine the quality of their writing work.

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