

## AN ERROR ANALYSIS OF INTERROGATIVE FORMATION IN ENGLISH WRITTEN LANGUAGE BASED ON LINGUISTIC TAXONOMY CATEGORIES

**Nauratul Iqramah**

[nauratuliqramah29@gmail.com](mailto:nauratuliqramah29@gmail.com)

Magister Student of English Education Department Universitas Syiah Kuala

**Siti Sarah Fitriani**

[ssfitriani@gmail.com](mailto:ssfitriani@gmail.com)

English Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training, Syiah Kuala University,  
Aceh-Indonesia

**Dohra Fitrisia**

[Dohra\\_fitrisia@unsyiah.ac.id](mailto:Dohra_fitrisia@unsyiah.ac.id)

English Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training, Syiah Kuala University,  
Aceh-Indonesia)

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### Abstract

Interrogative sentence is quite important in learning and teaching activity, especially for the students of language education who will be an educator in the future, due to the interrogative sentence is one of assessment tools that used in teaching and learning process through spoken or written. Error may occur in constructing interrogative sentence by both native and no-native speaker. The purpose of this study is to identify the most common errors and to find out the sources of errors of interrogative sentences made by twenty two students of third semester of English education department of Syiah Kuala University. The approach used in this study is a qualitative method. To collect the data, writing test of interrogative sentence was used as the instrument. The researcher analyzed the data based on linguistic categories taxonomy by referring to Collins Cobuild classification (2012) and Richards (1970) on source of errors. The results of this research revealed that the most common errors in the students' interrogative is Auxiliary. The major source of errors is Intralingual error due to incomplete application of rules. The findings can help EFL lecturers who want to

provide appropriate techniques and strategies for their students in teaching interrogative sentence and increase students' awareness of the possible errors that they often do.

**Keywords:** *Error Analysis, Interrogative Sentence*

### Sari

Kalimat tanya cukup penting dalam kegiatan belajar mengajar, terutama bagi peserta didik pendidikan bahasa yang akan menjadi pendidik di masa depan, karena kalimat tanya merupakan salah satu alat penilaian yang digunakan dalam proses belajar mengajar melalui lisan atau tulisan. Kesalahan dapat terjadi dalam menyusun kalimat tanya baik oleh penutur asli maupun bukan penutur asli. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi kesalahan yang paling umum dan untuk mengetahui sumber kesalahan kalimat tanya yang dibuat oleh dua puluh dua mahasiswa semester tiga jurusan pendidikan bahasa Inggris Universitas Syiah Kuala. Pendekatan yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode kualitatif. Untuk mengumpulkan data, digunakan tes menulis kalimat tanya sebagai instrumennya. Peneliti menganalisis data berdasarkan taksonomi kategori linguistik dengan mengacu pada klasifikasi Collins Cobuild (2012) dan Richards (1970) pada sumber kesalahan. Hasil penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa kesalahan yang paling umum dalam interogatif siswa adalah Auxiliary. Sumber utama kesalahan adalah kesalahan intralingual karena penerapan aturan yang tidak lengkap. Temuan ini dapat membantu dosen EFL yang ingin memberikan teknik dan strategi yang tepat bagi siswanya dalam mengajarkan kalimat tanya dan meningkatkan kesadaran siswa akan kemungkinan kesalahan yang sering mereka lakukan.

**Kata kunci:** *Analysis kesalahan, Kalimat tanya*

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### Introduction

Language is important for human being (Lumentut & Lengkoan, 2021). The role of language is a medium to express thoughts, feelings, desires and necessities (Mawuntu, Wowor & Kumayas 2020). In developing civilization, language functioned as a tool of adaptations in social and integration among human. People use language to communicate each other in their activities in society (Rao, 2019). In addition, Keraf

(1991) states that the function of language is a tool of communication which can be functioned as information, expression, adaptation, and social control.

There are four skills that students must master in learning English. The four skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students also should know the components of learning English that can support the four skill such as vocabularies, pronunciation, and grammar. In using English, grammar is one of the most important components that must be mastered by students in order to construct a proper sentence in communication (Prichatin, 2022).

Sentence is a set of words that express ideas. A good sentence should have clear point of thought so that can produce an effective idea. Sentences consist of subject and predicate. Thus, a group of words is not called as sentence without subject and predicate. Frank (1993) classifies sentence into four types: Declarative sentence, imperative sentence, exclamatory sentence, and interrogative sentence.

An interrogative sentence is one of the basic sentence types that is used to create a question. A question can be delivered to gain information or it can be used to find explanation, clarification or confirmation and to do assessment. The interrogative sentence is one of assessment tools that used in teaching and learning process through spoken or written. In written, the measurement against a list criterion of interrogative sentence includes content, organization, vocabulary use, grammatical use, and mechanical consideration such as spelling and punctuation, for the example, interrogative sentence ends with a question mark. However, the interrogative sentence should be written correctly so then the response or the students will catch the meaning of interrogative sentence well (Prichatin, 2022).

Questions have some functions, it can be functioned to ask students' response about something that they have learned in previous learning, to remember factual

information, to test student's memory and knowledge, and to dig information deeply (Strazny, 2013). In the process learning and teaching, students may ask a lot of question. The questions asked by students to their teachers are often on procedural or social matters rather than to do with the subject content unless their teacher specifically encourage them to ask questions (Piaget & Inhelder, 2019). When students ask questions to their teacher, the other important reasons that should be considered is students' attention, affection, and recognition of learning. Thus, questioning is one of students' ways to get information that they need from their teacher.

Furthermore, interrogative can be used to evaluate students' knowledge in learning (Sujariati, Rahman & Mahmud, 2016). Teacher or education students must have a good grading system of evaluation through giving test or non-test. The example of giving test is such as written test where they should construct a good interrogative sentence for evaluating students' knowledge. So then, teachers and students of education need to have a well-known knowledge of interrogative sentences in order to construct correctly framed questions for giving writing test to students.

Grammar has to be considered while making an interrogative sentence in order that the students need to be able to construct interrogative sentence correctly. Implicitly, students who are good in grammar could produce a good question as the result it is easily to understand. Therefore, grammar is a crucial thing which is learned especially to produce a good interrogative sentence.

What has been talking above is the importance of question generally. Question has different types of form. According to Frank (1993), interrogative sentences are divided into three types, such as Yes/No Question, Interrogative Words Questions and Tag Questions. Yes/no question is a question that can be answered by yes or no, while the other type of question begins with a WH-word such as what, where, why, who etc. The answer of this type of question cannot be yes or no. The third of interrogative types

is question tag, it is a question that added an expression at the end of the sentence. Swam (2017) added that the small part of sentence that often come at the end of sentence in informal writing and speech known as question tag. Question tag is kind of question words which come at the end of the sentence which has a functions as a stress. The characteristics of English interrogative sentence are as follow: with a rise in pitch, use questions mark (?), for asking something or information.

This research will be so beneficial for students of education who will be a teacher in the future and also teacher. This study will be able to enrich students and teachers knowledge and to improve their understanding in making interrogative sentence appropriately. Then they will recognize their weaknesses in making interrogative sentence and learn it to reduce the errors.

The analysis of this study focuses on error types based on linguistic categories which classify the errors based on Cobuild (2012) classifications. Where the classification of errors in WH-question are question word, helping verb/auxiliary, subject, main verb and rest of sentence. While, the errors in Yes/no question are helping verb/auxiliary, subject, main verb, and rest of sentence. However, the error classifications of question tag are statement which consists of subject, helping verb/auxiliary, main verb; and question tag such as helping verb/auxiliary and pronoun.

To know the source of error is quite important in order to identify the student's problem in writing, particularly in making interrogative sentences. In this study, the researcher will use Richards (1970) that consists three source of error categories. Interference Error denotes the results of using the elements of first language (L1) while speaking or writing the second language. Intralingual Error demonstrates the general characteristics of learning rules in the second language acquisition. Its origin is found within the structure of English itself and through reference to the strategy by which a second language is acquired and taught. Developmental Error which derives from faulty

comprehension of distinction in the target language, this error is almost the same as the error that made by young speaker in first language.

## **Methods**

The research method of this study is a qualitative research and has descriptive analysis in describing the research findings. This study took place in Syiah Kuala University. The subject of this research was about twenty two undergraduate students of English Education Department of Syiah Kuala University. The subject characteristic of this research was one class of Advanced English Grammar that has been learning how to construct interrogative sentence that comes from third semester of English Education Department of Syiah Kuala University students. While the object of this study was students' errors which found in interrogative sentence that they made.

## **Results and Discussion**

This study investigated three types of interrogative as suggested by Frank (1993) such as WH-Question, Yes/No question, and Question Tag. The findings of analysis suggested that the classification proposed by Cobuild (2012) were found in student's interrogative sentence. They are question word, auxiliary or helping verb, subject, main verb, rest of sentence and question mark in WH-question. While in constructing yes/no question, the sentence should be formed with auxiliary or helping verb, subject, main verb, rest of sentence and question mark. In question tag, the form is started with the positive and negative sentence/statement which consist of subject, verb and rest of sentence and then followed by question tag and question mark (Cobuild, 2012). These three types of interrogative sentence have different pattern to construct.

In line with prior research (Irfaniah, 2014; Rohmah, 2011; Rowland, 2007), the current study found that the most common error in the students' interrogative sentence is WH-question where the most errors that was found in WH-question is Auxiliary. The

result is also in line with the previous study which the majority of students' error found in Auxiliary. Otherwise, those previous study only focused on WH-question while the present study investigated three types of interrogative sentences; WH-question, Yes/No question, Question tag as devided by Frank (1993). Also, the present study investigaved the source of error in interrogative sentence that constructed by students. Similar to the present study, another previous study (Handayani & Angelina, 2019) which conducted error analysis in WH-question and Yes/no question showed that the most errors in Yes/no questions was found in main verb.

The finding in question tag contrasts with the result found in previous study (Hendriyono, 2018), in which the researcher investigated the errors in interrogative sentence based on linguistic category where the error comes from language component or the specific linguistic ingredients such as syntax and morphology. Otherwise, the prior study was analyzing the errors by using surface strategy taxonomy which explains the error into four categories; omission, addition, misformation, and misordering (Burt, Dulay & Krashen, 2001). The previous study found that the highest errors that students made in constructing question tag was misformation while the present study found that the most errors that students made in question tag was auxiliary.

The errors made by students are also caused by several factors that occur in the learning process as the source of errors. One of the sources of error that frequently caused by students in contructing interrogative sentence is intralingual error. This is in line with the statement of Brown (2000) that intralingual factor is the main factor of the errors made by second language learner. This error occurs due to complexity target grammar system which in this case of learning English language.

The lowest source of errors that showed in this study is interference error due to students constructed interrogative sentence in presets form instead of past form. The application of the structure in English is based on the time that is described in the

sentence. In fact, the structure of Bahasa Indonesia exactly contrast to English's structure which means that it does not depend on specific time which described in the sentence (Chaer, 2009). Some empirical studies show that interference will always exist as one of the causes of errors in language learners even though the percentages are different (Ellis, 1994). Although every foreign language learner will encounter interference, it is frequently more evident in the early stages of acquisition. The impact of interference will decrease as the learner's proficiency of the target language progresses.

However, it can be concluded that the most common errors in students' Interrogative sentence is Auxiliary. Concerning the sources of errors, the findings of analysis suggest that were three sources of errors made by students in constructing Interrogative sentence specifically Intralingual Error, Developmental Error, and Interference Error.

### **Conclusion & recommendation**

The research was conducted to identify the most errors in constructing interrogative sentence made by the students. The analysis was referred to Collins Cobuild (2012) in terms of the types of errors and Richards theory (1970) in terms of sources of errors. The findings show that the most common error in the students' interrogative sentence is Auxiliary. The findings of the analysis suggest that three sources of errors are found in constructing interrogative sentence made by the students, they are Intralingual Error, Interference Error, and Developmental Error. The highest number of source of errors is the Intralingual Error.

The writer suggests some suggestions. Firstly, the researcher suggests that the lecturer to ensure that the students understand the form of interrogative sentence in each types of sentence that they have learned, and the lecturer should apply the proper techniques and strategies such as by giving them practice to write interrogative sentence by inversing the subject and the verb in a given declarative sentences (Choi, 2012) and



by giving them exercises frequently in term of interrogative sentence form Azar (2007). Then, the students need to be aware of the errors in order to reduce the possible errors they make, and they should more active and pay attention in every particular material in learning interrogative sentence. Lastly, the researcher suggests that the further researchers should conduct the other aspects since this study has many limitations of this research in which the further researchers may investigate the error based on surface strategy taxonomy in linguistic category, comparative taxonomy, or communicative effect taxonomy.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

No potential conflict of interest is reported.

### **About author**

**Nauratul Iqramah** finished her master degree at English Education Department of Syiah Kuala University. She is available at [nauratuliqramah29@gmail.com](mailto:nauratuliqramah29@gmail.com)

**Siti Sarah Fitriani** is a lecturer at English Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training, Syiah Kuala University. She is available at [ssfitriani@gmail.com](mailto:ssfitriani@gmail.com)

**Dohra Fitrisia** is a lecturer at English Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training, Syiah Kuala University. She is available at [Dohra\\_fitrisia@unsyiah.ac.id](mailto:Dohra_fitrisia@unsyiah.ac.id)