Contrastive and Error Analysis

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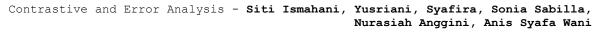| Article Info	ABSTRACT
Corresponding Author: Siti Ismahani E-mail: sitiismahani@uinsu.ac.id	*Contrastive analysis and error analysis in understanding the challenges faced by Indonesian students in learning English. Using a qualitative approach, this study analyzes data on errors made by students in the use of tenses , vocabulary, and pronunciation, which are influenced by interference from Indonesian. Data were collected through English tests and interviews with students, then analyzed using the contrastive and error analysis framework. The results show that the main difficulties faced by students lie in the differences in tense structures, errors in vocabulary selection, and pronunciation difficulties influenced by the phonetic habits of Indonesian. This study suggests that English teaching needs to focus more on the structural differences between the two languages and provide intensive practice to correct frequent errors.* **Keywords:** contrastive analysis , error analysis, language interference

INTRODUCTION

Language plays an important role as a means of communication in human life, both to convey information and to build social relationships. In the era of globalization, mastery of foreign languages, especially English, is a primary need to support international connections, education, and careers. As a global language, English language skills open up access to information, technology, and job opportunities. However, learning English often faces challenges, especially for learners with a first language (L1) that is very different in grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary, making it difficult to master certain aspects (Annisa et al., 2022). Data shows that students' English language skills in Indonesia are still relatively low compared to other countries. Based on the EF English report Proficiency Index (EF EPI) 2024, Indonesia ranks middle in English proficiency, with average scores showing no significant improvement compared to the previous year. This reflects stagnation in overall English proficiency, despite efforts to improve learning. In addition, the results of the national English exam (UN) for secondary schools show that many students have difficulty understanding grammar, expanding vocabulary, and honing writing skills. These difficulties are often seen in the form of basic errors, such as incorrect use of tenses and sentence structure that does not conform to English language structure. In fact, surveys conducted by several local educational institutions revealed that students often feel insecure about using English in everyday conversations, both in the classroom and outside the school environment. These data indicate serious challenges in English language learning, especially in helping students achieve a level of proficiency that is adequate for academic and professional needs. (Yuniasih, 2019) .

In particular, one of the main challenges in learning English is the errors that often occur due to interference from the first language. This interference occurs when students unconsciously

apply Indonesian language rules or patterns to English. The fundamentally different structure of Indonesian from English is often the main cause of negative transfer. For example, in Indonesian, verbs do not change form based on time, so students tend to use the same pattern when speaking English. This is often seen in grammatical errors such as " *She eat breakfast yesterday* ," which reflects the direct influence of Indonesian language patterns. Errors like this occur not only in grammar, but also in phrasing, vocabulary selection, and pronunciation. This phenomenon shows how the fundamental differences between the two languages can affect students' learning process, especially when they do not fully understand the rules of English grammar (Pamulat & Sugirin, 2014) .

This phenomenon shows that errors in English learning often have certain patterns that can be studied further. Contrastive analysis , which compares the differences between Indonesian and English, can help predict areas of difficulty that students may face. Meanwhile, error analysis, which focuses on the actual errors that students make, provides a deeper picture of their learning process. The combination of these two approaches can be an effective tool for understanding and improving English learning.

Although many studies have been conducted on contrastive analysis and error analysis, there is still a significant gap in the context of English language learning in Indonesia. Most previous studies have focused on only one approach, either contrastive analysis or error analysis, without combining the two comprehensively. In addition, studies examining the specific influence of Indonesian language interference on errors in English grammar are also still limited. This gap opens up opportunities for more in-depth research in analyzing the relationship between language errors and the influence of students' first language. An approach that integrates contrastive analysis and error analysis can make a significant contribution to understanding the English language learning process and designing more effective teaching strategies.

This study aims to identify common error patterns made by students in learning English and analyze the causes based on a comparison between Indonesian and English. Thus, this study not only maps the areas of difficulty experienced by students but also provides insight into how to overcome them through more targeted teaching. In addition, this study aims to contribute to the development of English learning materials that are more appropriate to the needs of Indonesian students. By understanding the patterns of errors that often occur, teachers can design learning approaches that are more responsive to the challenges faced by students.

The results of this study are expected to provide practical benefits, both for educators and educational policy makers. Teachers can use the results of this analysis to improve their teaching methods, while policy makers can consider these findings in designing a more effective English curriculum. Academically, this study is also expected to contribute to the study of applied linguistics, especially in understanding the relationship between the first language and the second language in the context of language learning. Thus, this study not only has practical value, but also relevant theoretical value.

contrastive analysis and error analysis approaches , this study attempts to fill the gap in previous literature and provide concrete solutions to the challenges faced in English language learning in Indonesia. The main focus of this study is on grammatical errors that often occur, especially in the context of junior high school (SMP) students. By combining theory and practice, this study is expected to be an initial step to improve the quality of English language learning in Indonesia, while providing a better understanding of the language learning process in general.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Contrastive Analysis
Contrastive analysis is an approach in linguistics that compares two languages to identify differences and similarities between them. This approach is based on the assumption that difficulties in second language (L2) learning are largely due to structural differences between the

first language (L1) and L2. According to Lado (1957), negative transfer from L1 is often the main cause of errors in L2 use. Negative transfer occurs when learners unconsciously apply rules or patterns from L1 that are not appropriate to L2, resulting in errors such as incorrect grammar or incorrect sentence construction. Therefore, contrastive analysis is used to predict areas of difficulty by comparing linguistic elements of both languages, such as grammar, phonology, and lexicon, so that learning can be designed more effectively (Rachman et al., 2019) .

In the context of English language learning in Indonesia, contrastive analysis plays an important role in understanding the challenges faced by students. One obvious example is the difference in the use of tenses . Indonesian, which does not have tense changes, is very different from English which has a complex tense system, such as past tense. tense , present perfect , or future tense . This often causes students to make mistakes, such as using the sentence " *She eat breakfast yesterday* " instead of " *She ate breakfast yesterday .*" In addition, differences in pronunciation patterns, word order, and pronoun usage also pose challenges for English learners. By using contrastive analysis , teachers can identify these potential difficulties early on and design more targeted learning strategies to help students overcome these problems (Tandiana, 2015).

Error Analysis

Error analysis is an important method in the study of language learning that focuses on identifying, categorizing , and explaining errors made by language learners. Corder (1967) asserted that errors made by learners are not simply failures to follow rules, but rather a reflection of their mental processes in understanding and internalizing a second language (L2). These errors provide insight into how learners attempt to learn an L2, including the strategies they use and the difficulties they encounter. Through error analysis, teachers can understand the different types of errors that occur, such as grammatical errors errors), lexical (vocabulary errors), or syntax (syntax errors), while identifying their underlying causes. These causes may include negative transfer from the first language (L1), overgeneralization of second language rules, or a lack of understanding of certain patterns in the L2.

In the context of English language learning in Indonesia, error analysis is a very useful tool to reveal the obstacles faced by students. For example, errors such as *"He don't know "* or *"I am study yesterday "* often appear due to the influence of the Indonesian language structure which does not have rules regarding changes in verb forms based on time or subject. This error can also occur because students use patterns that they consider correct based on limited knowledge or less in-depth teaching. In addition, the lack of consistent speaking or writing practice also contributes to the emergence of these errors. By conducting systematic error analysis, teachers can identify the most common error patterns, evaluate the teaching methods used, and develop more effective learning strategies to help students better understand English rules (Ebeling & Ebeling, 2020) .

Relationship Between Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis

Contrastive analysis and error analysis are two complementary approaches to understanding and improving the process of second language (L2) learning. Contrastive analysis serves to predict potential difficulties that learners may experience before the learning process begins. By comparing the structures of the first language (L1) and second language (L2), it identifies fundamental differences that may be sources of difficulty, such as grammar, phonology, and lexicon. In contrast, error analysis focuses on empirical data derived from real-world errors that learners make during the learning process. These errors reflect how learners understand, process, and attempt to apply the rules of the second language, providing insight into the practical challenges they face.

Contrastive analysis can provide initial predictions, the results are not always in accordance with reality, because not all differences between L1 and L2 result in errors. For example, some differences may be easier for students to learn, while some similarities may cause confusion due to contextual use. In this case, error analysis becomes an important complement, because it reveals specific errors that actually occur in the classroom. For example, contrastive analysis may predict that Indonesian students will have difficulty understanding the tense system

in English. However, through error analysis, teachers can find out the specific forms of errors, such as the wrong use of the sentence *"I was go yesterday ,"* so that teaching strategies can be directed at more specific problems.

By integrating these two approaches, English language teaching can be tailored to address more specific challenges and relevant to students' needs. Contrastive analysis helps teachers understand potential difficulties early on, allowing them to prepare more structured and tailored learning materials to students' needs. Meanwhile, error analysis provides ongoing feedback on the effectiveness of teaching methods and students' understanding of the material being taught. With this integrated approach, English teaching in Indonesia can be more effective in addressing key issues, such as first language interference, grammatical errors, improper pronunciation, and incorrect vocabulary usage. This combination not only improves students' comprehension, but also helps them build confidence in using English actively and accurately.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research method uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to analyze English language errors that occur in students in formal educational environments, such as in English classes at school. This study aims to understand the types of errors that often appear and their main causes, especially those related to first language interference (Indonesian). Data will be collected through observations of student interactions during the English learning process, analysis of test results covering aspects of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, and interviews with several students to explore their understanding of the errors they make and the strategies they use in learning.

The sample in this study consists of middle-class students who are currently studying English at school. Students were selected purposively based on their varying English language abilities. Data will be collected using various instruments, such as written tests that test grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure skills, and oral tests that measure speaking and pronunciation skills. In addition, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with several students to gain further insight into the challenges they face in learning English and the influence of Indonesian on the errors they make (Rustipa, 2011) .

After the data is collected, error analysis will focus on grammatical, vocabulary, and pronunciation errors caused by Indonesian language interference. Using a contrastive analysis approach , differences between Indonesian and English language structures will be compared to identify frequent error patterns. This approach aims to explore the causes of errors in more depth and understand how first language differences affect students' comprehension and use of English.

The results of this analysis will provide practical recommendations for teachers in designing more effective teaching strategies, focusing on areas of difficulty that students often face, such as the use of different tenses between Indonesian and English, as well as pronunciation and vocabulary mastery. By integrating these findings into the teaching approach, it is expected to improve students' understanding of English and reduce errors caused by first language interference.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study produced findings that describe common English error patterns among students, most of which are caused by Indonesian language interference. The results of the analysis showed that the most common types of errors found were grammatical errors, pronunciation errors, and vocabulary usage errors. Grammatical errors, especially those related to the use of tenses , were the main problem. Students often applied Indonesian language patterns that did not require changes in verb forms based on time, such as in the error *"I go to school yesterday "* which should use the past form tense *"I went to school yesterday ."* In addition, pronunciation errors were also found, especially in the pronunciation of words that do not have direct equivalents in Indonesian, such as *" th "* which is often pronounced as *"t"* or *"d"* .

Mistakes in vocabulary usage also occur frequently, where students tend to rely on direct translations from Indonesian to English, which are often inappropriate. For example, students often use the word "*good*" to describe almost anything positive, even though in certain contexts, the words "*great*" or "*excellent*" are more appropriate. This study also found that despite some students' efforts to correct their mistakes, the influence of their first language is still dominant, and they tend to get stuck in familiar patterns in Indonesian (Sugiyono, 2021) .

The next discussion leads to how Indonesian language interference affects students' understanding of English grammar rules, especially those related to tenses and other aspects of sentence structure. Tenses , as one of the most difficult aspects for Indonesian students to understand, are often the main source of errors. This is due to the fundamental differences between the two languages, where Indonesian does not have a complex time system like English. In Indonesian, time is often marked only with time adverbs, without requiring changes in verb form according to tense , while in English, changes in verbs greatly determine the meaning of the intended time.

Furthermore, although contrastive analysis can predict potential difficulties faced by students, the results of this study indicate that not all differences between Indonesian and English result in errors. Some students who have better English skills show faster adaptation abilities in understanding structural differences, for example in the use of prepositions and compound sentences. However, errors still occur in most students, especially those who are not yet accustomed to more complex grammar-based rule-based teaching. Therefore, a more in-depth and practical learning approach, with a focus on repetition and direct application, is needed to reduce these errors.

1. Contrastive Analysis in Identifying English Learning Difficulties

This study shows that the contrastive analysis approach can help identify potential difficulties experienced by students in learning English. One of the main difficulties found is the error in the use of tenses , which is caused by the fundamental differences between Indonesian and English. Indonesian does not have a complex tense system like English, so students often have difficulty in adjusting the use of time in sentences. For example, in the sentence "*I go to school yesterday* ", students tend to use the base form of the verb "*go*" instead of the past tense form "*went* ", which is the rule in English. Contrastive analysis helps map these areas of difference and predict possible difficulties , as well as providing teachers with insights to address these challenges in teaching.

The differences between the time structures of Indonesian and English are the main source of errors in the use of tenses . Therefore, contrastive analysis can provide a clear picture of the challenges that students may face, which can then be used to design more effective learning strategies. Teaching that focuses more on the structural differences between the two languages will help students more quickly understand and overcome difficulties that arise in the use of tenses .

2. Analysis of Errors in the Use of Vocabulary Influenced by Indonesian

In terms of error analysis, this study found that students often make mistakes in the use of English vocabulary due to the influence of Indonesian. Students tend to translate words directly from Indonesian to English, which is often inappropriate in the English context. For example, the word "*good*" is often used to describe everything that is positive, whereas in English, the word is more specific and limited in use. Students also often use the word "*big*" to describe everything that is big, even though there are other words such as " *huge* " or " *enormous* " that are more appropriate in certain contexts. This error analysis helps identify the most common types of errors and provides insight into how to correct them.

Vocabulary errors often occur because students do not fully understand the connotation and context of word usage in English. Indonesian has a more general and flexible vocabulary, which can be used in various contexts, while in English, each word has different nuances of meaning depending on the context. Therefore, error analysis serves to explore specific errors

made by students and help improve their understanding of more appropriate and contextual vocabulary.

3. Contrastive Analysis and Pronunciation Errors

Contrastive analysis can help explain pronunciation errors that often occur in Indonesian-speaking students. Some English sounds, such as "*th*" and "*v*", do not exist in Indonesian, so students often have difficulty pronouncing them correctly. For example, the word "*think*" is often pronounced with a "*t*" or "*d*" *sound*, which shows the influence of Indonesian phonetics. In this case, contrastive analysis serves to identify sounds that do not exist in Indonesian and helps teaching to focus more on phonetic training that can correct pronunciation errors.

Pronunciation errors are often caused by first language interference, where phonetic habits in Indonesian influence the way students pronounce English words. To reduce these pronunciation errors, it is important to do intensive phonetic exercises, teaching students how to pronounce sounds that do not exist in Indonesian. With this approach, students can improve their pronunciation and become more familiar with the sounds that exist in English.

In conclusion, it can be concluded that contrastive analysis and error analysis play an important role in understanding the challenges faced by students in learning English. By mapping the differences between Indonesian and English, contrastive analysis can help identify potential difficulties early on, while error analysis provides deeper insight into errors that occur in learning practices. These two approaches complement each other and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the language difficulties experienced by students.

It is important for English language teaching in Indonesia to utilize both approaches in designing effective learning strategies. Through contrastive analysis, teachers can better understand areas that potentially cause difficulties, such as differences in tense usage, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Meanwhile, error analysis provides an opportunity to correct actual errors and helps students to better understand English rules more accurately.

With a more holistic and data-driven approach, it is hoped that English learning in Indonesia can be more effective, overcome first language interference, and improve students' overall language skills. This will have a positive impact not only on students' English language skills, but also on their ability to communicate in an increasingly open global context.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study shows that contrastive analysis and error analysis provide important insights in understanding the challenges faced by Indonesian students in learning English. By using contrastive analysis, we can map the fundamental differences between Indonesian and English, which cause difficulties in the use of tenses, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Meanwhile, error analysis provides a real picture of the types of errors that are often made by students, which can be the basis for improvement in learning. These two approaches complement each other and can be integrated to design more effective teaching strategies. By understanding the root causes of errors and potential difficulties that arise due to first language interference, English teaching can be adjusted to focus more on strengthening the aspects that are challenging for students. Through this more targeted approach, it is hoped that students can more easily master English and overcome obstacles caused by differences in language and grammatical structure between Indonesian and English.

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