

# COMMON WRITTEN ERRORS OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS IN IKIP PGRI BOJONEGORO

**Chyntia H.W.P**

Faculty of Language and Art Education, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro, Jl. Panglima Polim No. 46  
email: chwphi@yahoo.co.id

**Abstract: Common Written Errors of English Department Students in IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.** Writing is still considered to be the most difficult skill to master as it combines ideas getting, grammatical structures, vocabulary, and mechanics. Producing good written English is an essential and required skill for English Department Students. This study examines the common errors in written English produced by the students of English Department in IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. The error analysis on writing aims at giving the English teacher or lecturer data about common written errors and arousing the students to be more confident and enthusiastic in producing good writing by giving them correction symbols. Data were collected from narrative and descriptive texts written by the students of class 2C of English Department in IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. The errors are analyzed in ten categories which use ten correction symbols, they are: 1) S (spelling), WO (word order), G (grammar), T (tense), C (concord), ! (missing things), WW (wrong word), [ ] (unnecessary things), ?M (unclear meaning), and P (punctuation). The overall results indicate that the most errors the students made were grammar mistakes and unnecessary things. On the contrary, the students made the least errors in word order. It was also found that the students made errors in the rest categories including spelling, tenses, concord, missing things, wrong words, unclear meaning, and punctuation.

**Key words:** common errors, written English, correction symbols, descriptive qualitative.

Writing is a complex activity. According to Nunan (2003), writing is both a **physical and a mental act**. Writing is the physical act of committing words or ideas to some medium. On the other hand, writing is the mental act of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express them, and organizing them into good and clear sentences and paragraphs. Writers express an idea or feeling in certain ways to make readers impress on it. Writing is both a **process and a product**. The writer involves in often cyclical and sometimes disorderly process of writing. The process asks the writer to imagine, organize, draft, edit, read, and reread. Ultimately, what the reader sees is a product—an essay, story, or research report.

Principles of teaching writing according to Nunan (2003) are: 1) understand the students' reasons for writing, 2) provide many opportunities for students to write, 3) make feedback helpful and meaningful, 4) clarify teacher and students about how their writing will be evaluated. While principles for teaching writing mentioned by Nation (2009) involves: 1) meaning-focused input, 2) meaning-focused output, 3) language-focused learning, and 4) fluency development.

In teaching writing, especially when students are asked to write, the teacher needs to deploy some roles. Harmer (2007) stated three roles of teacher in teaching writing; they are as motivator, resource, and feedback provider. At the heart

of effective teaching of writing, feedback on students' work is a crucial part of the learning process. It has more effect on achievement than any other single factor. It is important to make sure that the feedback the teacher gives is appropriate to the students concerned and to the activity they are involved in.

The students' written work should be given feedback. According to Ur (1999), feedback given to learners has two main distinguishable components: assessment and correction. In assessment, the learner is simply informed how well or badly he or she has written. In correction, some specific information is provided on aspects of the learner's performance: through explanation, or provision of better or other alternatives, or through elicitation of these from the learner. Assessment and correction are separable. A teacher can have assessment without correction or correction without assessment. The most important thing is that assessment is given to the whole text while correction is given on specific errors.

In terms of linguistic performance, Elliott (1983) defined errors as unwanted forms. The errors to be discussed will be categorized as such because they are immediately and obviously divergent from the English standard. Olsson (1974) has said errors constitute a way of learning. Both ideas show that error identification and error recognition in writing are very essential as they reflect the competence of writers.

Writing is an important skill that has to be mastered by students of university. The competence in written English becomes more unavoidable skill to acquire,

more particularly for students who study at English Department. Writing skill is needed when students doing their assignment, making reports, and even finishing their studies of S1 by completing their "skripsi" as the research. They convey their ideas and present them in an organized way. They have to organize sentences or utterances in English in such a way so that they can deliver messages successfully.

Students of English Department in IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro are obliged to learn required writing courses. They have to face three sequential writing courses, those are writing 1, 2, and 3. Unfortunately, many of them are still not good enough on writing. The students consider that writing is one of the most difficult language skills because they have to combine among getting ideas, grammatical structures, vocabulary, and mechanics. Cunningsworth (1995) also stated that writing makes use of different language resources than speech, for instance paragraphing, spelling, and punctuation. That is why many students are not confident and enthusiastic in writing.

Unenthusiastic in writing of English Department students in IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro can be seen from the result of TOEP (Test of English Proficiency) which most of students are failed to pass minimum grade of 450. Among reading, writing, and listening, they got low scores on structure and written expression. Substantively, there are two parts in structure and written test of TOEP, they are part A for sentence completion and part B for error recognition. Although the students have got Course of Writing 1, they are still

weak in structure and written expression. They failed to identify their own errors.

One of factors causing students being unenthusiastic in written English is unavailability of feedback. Since writing belongs to an active or productive skill, Harmer (2007) stated that a key factor in the success of productive-skill tasks is the way teachers organize them and how they respond to the students' work. In learning process, students need correction as teacher's response in order not to make the same mistakes and know the correct ones. Sometimes students do not know their specific mistakes on writing if corrections are delivered only in general comments and final score. A teacher needs to show their mistakes in detailed, for instance by giving correction codes related to some aspects of writing. For the sake of giving helpful and not censorious comments, correction codes are given integrated in the body of the text and they will be summarized at the end of the text. Then students are asked to produce a new version of the previous draft.

This study was intended to find out the students' common written errors in narrative and descriptive texts, in terms of ten categories, they are: 1) spelling, 2) word order, 3) grammar, 4) verb tense, 5) concord, 6) missing things, 7) wrong word, 8) unnecessary things, 9) unclear meaning, and 10) punctuation. The findings will be beneficial to the English teacher to find solutions to solve the problems. After analyzing the data, the teacher can help students to improve their ability in writing English and mostly to avoid common errors in writing.

## METHOD

The written data for this study were collected from 23 students of English Department in IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro who belong to class 2C. This class was chosen as in terms of writing ability, it was the lowest among classes A and B. In other words, class 2C belongs to lower-level students. The data were taken when they were still studying Writing 2 course in their third semester, exactly in August 2013 until February 2014. They have got Writing 1 course in the previous semester, so that the students' competence in writing English was assumed to be enough.

The data were taken by collecting the students work on writing two text types, those were narrative and descriptive. Both of them had been taught in Writing course 1 and being repeated in Writing course 2. Like narrative, descriptive text is basic material in teaching writing as all of them are an integral part of someone's life. Almost all people narrate and describe something in their daily lives. Narrative gives the details of an event or experience in story form or in the order they happened, while descriptive gives a single, clear picture of a person, place, thing, or idea (Sebranek, Meyer, and Kemper, 1995). When students are familiar with their objects of writing, they will be able to share a lot of good details in their written work.

For narrative, the students were asked to write it based on their own timeline. Firstly, they were assigned to write five or six major events in their lives accompanied by the years. Then, based on their time order, they arranged and expanded

each event into good composition of paragraphs to make narrative text. According to Blanchard and Root (1994), the usage of time order in writing can function as an organizational tool for lower-level students to be able to write expressively in English. While for descriptive, each student was assigned to bring a photo, then described it. The students were asked to write their composition in every other line, in order to give the space for correction codes on their errors. The wrong words, phrases, or sentences were underlined and given correction codes by using a red pen, so that their errors were viewable and easy

to find. This made correction much neater and less threatening than random marks and comments.

In this research, the lecturer used ten correction codes to indicate that students have made mistakes in their written work. The ten symbols were adopted from Harmer (2007), they are S (spelling), WO (word order), G (grammar), T (tense), C (concord), ! (missing things), WW (wrong word), [ ] (unnecessary things), ?M (unclear meaning), and P (punctuation). The explanation and examples of each correction symbol is clearly described on Table 1.

**Table 1. Correction Symbols of Writing**

No	Symbol	Meaning	Example
1	S	A spelling error	The <u>asnwer</u> is obvious
2	WO	A mistake in word order	I <u>like very much</u> it
3	G	A grammar mistake	I am going to buy some furnitures
4	T	Wrong verb tense	I <u>have seen him</u> yesterday
5	C	Concord mistake (e.g. the subject and verb agreement)	People <u>is</u> angry
6	!	Something has been left out	He told <u>!</u> that she was sorry
7	WW	Wrong word	I am interested <u>on</u> jazz music
8	[ ]	Something is not necessary	He was not <u>[too]</u> strong enough
9	?M	The meaning is unclear	That is a <u>very excited paragraph</u>
10	P	A punctuation mistake	Do you like London <u>.</u>

In order for students to benefit from the use of symbols such as these, they were trained in their use. They were introduced to correction symbols and shown examples of each category. They need to know what the symbol means and what to do about it.

This research is descriptive qualitative. According to McMillan (2008), a descriptive study simply describes a phe-

nomenon. Qualitative data consist of information. Qualitative information gathering in this research is a text analysis. This research described common errors analyzed in narrative and descriptive texts written by English Department students in IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result.

**Table 2. The Frequency of Errors Done by Students**

No	Symbol	Meaning	Narrative	Descriptive	Total
1	S	A spelling error	19	18	37
2	WO	A mistake in word order	7	3	10
3	G	A grammar mistake	20	22	42
4	T	Wrong verb tense	18	3	21
5	C	Concord mistake (e.g. the subject and verb agreement)	20	20	40
6	!	Something has been left out	20	19	39
7	WW	Wrong word	21	19	40
8	[ ]	Something is not necessary	21	21	42
9	?M	The meaning is unclear	9	15	24
10	P	A punctuation mistake	17	18	35

**Table 3. The Students' Spelling Errors**

No	Students' Errors	Corrections	No	Students' Errors	Corrections
1	Sparated	Separated	11	Giraff	giraffe
2	Posible	Possible	12	Scanary	scenary
3	Healty	Healthy	13	Weel	wheel
4	Brigtness	Brightness	14	Wich	which
5	Wheater	Weather	15	Visite	visit
6	Happines	Happiness	16	Extion	action
7	Always	Always	17	Elemantary	elementary
8	Thera	There	18	Sisteme	system
9	Siting	Sitting	19	Organitation	organization
10	Scond	Second	20	Beautifull	beautiful

**Table 4. The Students' Errors on Word Order**

No	Students' Errors	Corrections
1	Special someone	Someone special
2	Can you call me "Dwi".	You can call me "Dwi".
3	Story life	Life story
4	Also I	I also
5	Friend unique	Unique friend
6	Language English	English language
7	Cheek cubby	Cubby cheek
8	Family happy	Happy family
9	Activity student	Student activity
10	Competition dance	Dance competition



**Table 5. The Students' Errors on Grammar**

No	Students' Errors	Corrections
1	An university	A university
2	I'm marriage with Amin Wisnu.	I marry Amin Wisnu.
3	Three person	Three persons/people
4	My wedding party held in Layung Hotel.	My wedding party was held in Layung Hotel.
5	We are often studying together.	We often study together.
6	Strawberry garden is locating in Sarangan.	Strawberry garden is located in Sarangan.
7	She is smile and looks beautiful.	She smiles and looks beautiful.
8	I see many people play on the beach, sunbathing, and swimming.	I see many people playing on the beach, sunbathing, and swimming.
9	Many visitor	Many visitors
10	They are my friend.	They are my friends.

**Table 6. The Students' Errors on Verb Tense**

No	Students' Errors	Corrections
1	I begin my study in 2012.	I began my study in 2012.
2	In 2009, I am graduated from SMPN 2.	In 2009, I graduated from SMPN 2.
3	I didn't know why my father give that name.	I didn't know why my father gave that name.
4	She is my friend since I'm in Elementary school.	She has been my friend since I am in Elementary School.
5	After I moved in Tuban, I not found a university.	After I had moved in Tuban, I did not find a university.
6	In 2012, I join IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.	In 2012, I joined IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.
7	I stay in Bali for three night.	I have stayed in Bali for three nights.
8	Now I study in IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.	Now, I am studying in IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.
9	After graduated from Kasiman I'm study in IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.	After I had graduated from Kasiman, I study in IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.
10	It maked me to be autonomous.	It made me to be autonomous.

**Table 7. The Students' Concord Mistakes**

No	Students' Errors	Corrections
1	Aston Bali have a difference.	Aston Bali has a difference.
2	It do not make all people frightened.	It does not make all people frightened.
3	I not see a activity.	I do not see an activity.
4	The 26 woman and the 10 man is always in my heart.	The 26 women and 10 men are always in my heart.
5	This picture describe the young students.	This picture describes the young students.
6	She look beautiful with red shoes.	She looks beautiful with red shoes.
7	... everything make me comfort.	... everything makes me comfortable.
8	My mother always bring orange juice for as.	My mother always brings orange juice for us.
9	I look my brother don't like orange juice.	I look my brother doesn't like orange juice.
10	That make me sad.	That makes me sad.

**Table 8. The Students' Errors on Missing Things**

No	Students' Errors	Corrections
1	When I back from Sukabumi, ...	When I came back from Sukabumi, ...
2	I can play my friend.	I can play with my friend.
3	I have bestfriend.	I have a bestfriend.
4	I started study.	I started to study.
5	Undergraduate program diploma.	Undergraduate program of diploma
6	Raffy so happy.	Raffy is so happy.
7	In 19 old.	In 19 years old.
8	... in the garden our school.	... in the garden of our school.
9	... motivate us to be successful person.	... motivate us to be a successful person.
10	We want take it.	We want to take it.

**Table 9. The Students' Errors on Wrong Word**

No	Students' Errors	Corrections
1	I <i>alive</i> in Singgahan-Tuban.	I <i>live</i> in Singgahan-Tuban.
2	She's very kind and care <i>with</i> me.	She's very kind and care <i>for/about</i> me.
3	<i>In</i> the top of this resort, ...	<i>On</i> the top of this resort, ...
4	I had been separated <i>with</i> them.	I had been separate <i>from</i> them.
5	The taste is <i>niece</i> .	The taste is <i>nice</i> .
6	The <i>located</i> of this beach is 35km ...	The <i>location</i> of the beach is 35 km ...
7	I just stand <i>at</i> corral.	I just stand <i>on</i> corral.
8	Kuta beach is always dizzy.	Kuta beach is always <i>noisy</i> .
9	Many foreign people <i>interesting with</i> it.	Many foreign people are <i>interested in</i> it.
10	Look at the picture <i>under</i> !	Look at the picture <i>below</i> !

**Table 10. The Students' Errors on Unnecessary Things**

No	Students' Errors	Corrections
1	I entered <i>on</i> Elementary School.	I entered Elementary School.
2	I <i>was</i> graduated from Elementary School	I graduated from Elementary School
3	... in <i>the</i> my life.	... in my life.
4	Vivi's house is near <i>with</i> my house.	Vivi's house is near my house.
5	I <i>am</i> very love him.	I love him.
6	We can buy <i>in the</i> outside <i>of</i> the garden.	We can buy outside the garden.
7	... has <i>a</i> dangerous waves.	... has dangerous waves.
8	When we visited <i>in</i> Kuta beach, ...	When we visited Kuta beach, ...
9	<i>In</i> under sea, we can see fish.	Under the sea, we can see fish.
10	She lived <i>in</i> beside my house.	She lived beside my house.

**Table 11. The Students' Errors on Unclear Meaning**

No	Students' Errors	Corrections
1	This moment participation by my family and friends.	This moment was participated by my family and friends.
2	I was took hold of treasurer of organization.	I was a treasurer of organization.
3	I'm is number 5.	I'm the fifth child.
4	I study and prepare of all that I do with selves.	I study and prepare all things that I do by myself.
5	When I be old 5 years, ...	When I was 5 years old, ...
6	... from my born year until my graduated years school.	... from my birth year until my graduation of school years.
7	In 2009, my friends which to teach about meaning honesty and patience.	In 2009, my friends taught me about the meaning of honesty and patience.
8	From student junior high school thousands, only five student selected.	Among thousands of students of junior high school, only five students were selected.
9	I will not forgotten accidentally as far as my old later.	I will not forget the accident until I am getting old later.
10	There student boys and girls was differented class.	Boys and girls students were in different classes there.

**Table 12. The Students' Errors on Punctuation**

No	Students' Errors	Corrections
1	University in bojonegoro	University in Bojonegoro
2	Day by day. I give up.	Day by day, I give up.
3	You can see Vivi, Nur and I	You can see Vivi, Nur, and I.
4	in 2009 I study in Al-Rosyid	In 2009, I study in Al Rosyid.
5	That is Mr Amin I hope he can to be best for me.	He is Mr. Amin, I hope he can be the best for me.
6	I was born in Bojonegoro one of little city in east Java.	I was born in Bojonegoro, one of little cities in East Java.
7	in here I have many activity.	In here, I have many activities.
8	I went to Bojonegoro to study in Ikip PGRI Bojonegoro.	I went to Bojonegoro to study in IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro.
9	I was born on januari 11, 1993 in dander Bojonegoro.	I was born on January 11, 1993 in Dander-Bojonegoro.
10	2012, I was continued my study in IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. A university for my studying English.	In 2012, I continued my study in IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro, a university for my English study.



## Discussion

This section presents the results of error analysis towards the data of students' writing on narrative and descriptive texts. The data taken were in complete texts which consist of words, phrases, and sentences. The analysis is in ten categories, exactly in terms of spelling, word order, grammar, verb tense, concord, missing things, wrong word, unnecessary thing, unclear meaning, and punctuation.

From Table 2, it was found that most students made errors on grammar and unnecessary things. The total number of errors on both categories was same. The second errors the students most made were concord mistake and wrong word. The rest errors are missing things, spelling error, punctuation, unclear meaning, verb tense, and word order respectively. The students had made errors in all categories. It means that their competences in writing are weak.

Spelling errors show that students are not good at memorizing written vocabulary. The examples of spelling errors are clearly visible on Table 3. Sometimes they missed one letter in writing one word (errors number 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14), for example, *sparated*, *possible*, *healty*, *brigtness*, *happines*, *siting*, *scond*, *giraff*, *weel*, and *wich*. They also made wrong of one letter (errors number 8, 12, 17, 19), for instance, *thera*, *scanary*, *elemantary*, and *organitation*. The other kind of spelling error is that they interchanged letters (errors number 5, 7), such as found in the words of *wheater* and *alwasy*. Then, they also had over-letter (errors number 15 and 20), as found in the words of *visite* and

*beautifull*. Last, they were completely wrong in writing a word (errors number 16 and 18), such as *extion* and *sisteme*.

From Table 3, it can be read that the students made spelling errors in familiar vocabulary that they usually meet. They did not have fairly wide range of vocabulary, as a consequence, their writing competences were very limited.

Word order describes the way to arrange words. It is one of considerations for making meaningful sentences. It involves arranging noun phrase, phrasal expression, simple sentence, embedded question, and dependent clause. From Table 4, it can be known that the most error students made in word order is in noun phrase (errors number 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10). For instance, instead of writing *cubby cheek*, the student wrote *cheek chubby*, instead of writing *English Language*, the student wrote *Language English*. On the other hand, the least error of word order is in the form of simple sentence (error number 2), as found in a sentence *can you call me "Dwi"*. The students' errors on word order seem to be direct translations from their mother tongue.

Nunan (2003) defined grammar as a set of rules specifying the correct ordering of words at the sentence level. The Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics defines it as "description of the structure of a language and the way in which units such as words and phrase are combined to produce sentences in the language" (Richards, Platt, and Weber, 1985). Grammar covers active and passive form, articles, verbs, nouns, countable-uncountable nouns, adjectives, degree of comparison,

time signals, relative clauses, modal auxiliaries, adverb, articles, parallel structure, causative, subjunctive, and gerund.

Table 5 is about students' errors on grammar. They comprises article (error number 1), passive voice (errors number 4 and 6), noun (errors number 3, 9, 10), verb (errors number 2 and 5), parallel structure (errors number 7 and 8).

The grammar mistake related to articles was found in a phrase of *an university*. It should be *a university*. The other grammar mistake was connected with passive voice. The sentence of *'My wedding party held in Layung Hotel'* missed to be, while of *'Strawberry garden is locating in Sarangan'* missed past participle. The student also made grammar mistake on countable-uncountable noun, as found in *'three person, many visitor, and they are my friend'*. Grammar mistake on verb were seen on the sentences *'I am marriage with Amin Wisnu'* and *'We are often studying together'*. Last, grammar mistake on parallel structure can be found in *'She is smile and looks beautiful'* and *'I see many people play on the beach, sunbathing, and swimming'*.

Tenses are verbs which their changing depend on time. Tenses describe activities which are determined by time. Based on the time, there are three tenses, they are past, present, and future tenses. While based on the nature of the activity, there are simple, continuous, perfect, and perfect continuous tense.

Table 6 shows the students' error on verb tense. They made errors in using simple past (errors number 1, 2, 3, 6, 10), present perfect (errors number 4 and 7),

past perfect (errors number 5 and 9), present continuous (error number 8).

*'I begin my study in 2012'* is the example of wrong verb tense on simple past, while *'After I am moved in Tuban, I not found a university'* is one of wrong verb tense in past perfect. Mostly students made errors in simple past and past perfect, particularly in writing narrative. They tend to use present tenses than past ones. The students also made wrong verb tense on present perfect as found in the sentence of *'I stay in Bali for three nights'*. Error in present continuous can be seen on the sentence of *'Now I study in IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro'*.

Concord means subject-verb agreement and word agreement. A single subject must be followed by a single verb, while a plural subject must be followed by a plural verb. All ten sentences available on Table 7 are about concord mistakes, specifically in subject-verb agreement. The verb used does not match with the subject. For instance, instead of writing *'Aston Bali has a difference'*, the student wrote *'Aston Bali have a difference'*, instead of writing *'I do not see an activity'*, the student wrote *'I not see a activity'*. There was found a bit complicated sample of concord mistake, for example *'I look my brother don't like orange juice'*. From the three examples above, it can be note down that concord mistakes do not happen only in positive sentence, but also in negative sentence

A sentence pattern in English language need at least subject and to be or verb. From Table 8, it is clearly shown that the students missed verbs (errors number

1) and to be (error number 6). They also missed prepositions (errors number 2, 4, 5, 8, 10), articles (error number 3 and 9), and unit of measure (errors number 7).

The example of sentence which missed verbs is *'When I back from Sukabumi ...'*, while one missed to be is *'Raffy so happy'*. The other sentence which missed prepositions is *'I can play my friends'*. Last, the sentence which missed articles is *'I have bestfriend'* and one missed unit of measure is *'I am 19 old'*.

As given on Table 9, the students were still unable to choose correct and appropriate words to deliver their messages. Their diction made loss of meaning. Misinterpretation and different meaning happened because of wrong use of words (errors number 1, 6, 8, and 10) and wrong use of prepositions (errors number 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8). Wrong use of words can be seen on the sentences like *'I alive in Singgahan Tuban'*, *'The taste is very niece'*, and *'Kuta beach is always dizzy'*. Furthermore, wrong use of prepositions can be found in the sentences like *'I just stand at corral'* and *'Many foreign people interesting with it'*.

The students sometimes make unnecessary things in their writing. As shown in Table 10, they put unneeded prepositions (error numbers 1, 4, 6, 9, 10), unneeded article (errors number 3 and 7), double past tense (error number 2), and double infinitive (error number 5).

Unneeded preposition can be seen on *'Vivi's house is near with my house'*. The word *'with'* should be omitted. Unneeded article can be read on *'... in the my life'*. The word *'the'* should be neglected. Double past tense can be found in *'I was*

*graduated from Elementary School'*. The correct sentence should be *'I graduated from Elementary School'*. Last, double infinitive can be known from *'I am very love him'*. The sentence should be *'I love him very much'*.

Unclear meaning is caused by multiple errors. The use of wrong word, grammatical mistakes, and wrong word order make written text cannot be understood. The students' sentences were all scattered, jumbled, and loss meaning because of wrong word combined with unclear positions for subject, verb, object, and complement. The examples of unclear meaning in writing can be read on Table 11. Instead of writing *'Among thousands of students of junior high school, only five students were selected'*, the student wrote *'From student junior high school thousands, only five student selected'*, instead of writing *'When I was 5 years old, ...'*, the student wrote *'When I be old 5 years, ...'*.

Punctuation marks are part of a language system. They become very crucial element in written language. They help writers to manage the words and ideas. They help writer to communicate with readers and they help readers appreciate the text. Punctuation marks serve as the road markers which directing readers so that they do not get lost while traveling along the text. Even Murdibjono (2008) stated that wrong punctuation marks can cause difficulty in understanding sentences and misinterpretation of sentences.

Punctuation marks consist of period (.), ellipsis or triple dots (...), comma (,), semicolon (;), colon (:), hyphen (-), question mark (?), exclamation point (!), quo-

tation marks (“...”), apostrophe ( ‘ ), parentheses ( ), dash ( – ), slash ( / ), brackets [ ]. Capitalization and abbreviations are also included in punctuation.

Table 12 shows the students’ errors on punctuation. Kind of such errors were capitalization, comma, period, and abbreviation. They missed capital letter at the beginning of a sentence (errors number 4 and 7), writing name of cities (error number 1) and months (error number 9). In writing abbreviation, they also made mistakes (errors number 5 and 8). They missed comma (errors number 2, 3, 6, and 10) and period (error number 4).

The missing of capital letter, comma, and period can be found in ‘*in 2009 I study in Al-Rasyid*’. The sentence should be ‘*In 2009, I study in Al-Rasyid.*’. Error in writing abbreviation can be seen on ‘*That is Mr Amin I hope he can to be best for me*’. ‘*Mr*’ is the abbreviation for ‘*Mister*’. The way to write should be putting period after the letter ‘*r*’. So, the correct sentence should be ‘*That is Mr. Amin, I hope he can be the best for me*’.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that the students of English Department in IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro produce common written errors, in terms of S (spelling), WO (word order), G (grammar), T (tense), C (concord), ! (missing things), WW (wrong word), [ ] (unnecessary things), ?M (unclear meaning), and P (punctuation). The most common errors students made were in grammar and unnecessary things. On the other hand, the least common error was in word order. The students’ errors in

all ten categories proved their incompetence in written English. There also found sentences which were scattered, jumbled, and even loss meaning as the effect of combination of the ten kinds of errors.

Referring to the purpose of the study in which to find out the students’ common written errors, it was expected that the students would be able to produce written English with no errors. The given correction symbols was intended to arouse the students to be more confident and enthusiastic in writing. At least, if the students get correction symbols as feedback from their teachers or lecturers, they will recognize their errors then revise them. Error detection is important on helping students for the rest of their studies in the ongoing and following semester.

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