Analysis of Grammar Errors in Writing by SJKT Students

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Abstract
This study was conducted to analyze grammar errors among fifth-grade students of SJK (Tamil). The study involved 56 fifth-grade SJK (Tamil) students selected randomly, using essay writing as the research data. The research data was also reinforced with findings from a questionnaire distributed to 3 Malay language teachers. The research findings indicate that fifth-grade SJK (Tamil) students make grammar errors such as Affixation errors, Morphology errors, Errors in Subject-Verb Agreement, Syntax errors, and Proper Noun Pronoun errors. The study also found that Morphology errors were the most common among fifth-grade students (51 errors). The second highest errors were Affixation errors (49 errors), followed by Errors in Subject-Verb Agreement (39 errors) and Syntax errors (32 errors). The least frequent errors were Proper Noun Pronoun errors (29 errors). Based on the questionnaire, most fifth-grade SJK (Tamil) students make grammar errors due to interference from their mother tongue, student attitudes, and language environment. To address this issue, language teaching and learning strategies need to be enhanced. Continuous guidance from teachers, language learning through multimedia, and organizing language activities such as quizzes, dramas, and field trips are crucial in promoting Malay language learning among fifth-grade SJK (Tamil) students.
Keywords: Grammar Errors, Essay Writing, Fifth Grade, SJK (Tamil) Students

Introduction
Mastery of Malay grammar poses a problem among students who are learning Malay as a second language. In this era of globalization, various changes and developments in the field of education have been implemented by the Ministry of Education, such as the Education Development Master Plan 2013 - 2025. The government has outlined aspirations for the Malaysian education system to create the best students in the economic challenges of the 21st century, namely system aspirations and student aspirations.

The transformation of the national education system articulates key shifts, namely providing equal access to internationally recognized quality education; ensuring that students master skills in Malay, English, and other languages; nurturing individuals who embrace

values, transforming the teaching profession into a preferred choice; ensuring that high-performance leadership is placed in every school; empowering State Education Departments, District Education Offices, and Schools to establish solutions based on needs, transforming the ministry's delivery capabilities, collaborating extensively with parents, communities, and the private sector, maximizing student success to enhance transparency for direct accountability.

The Standard Primary School Curriculum (KSSR) launched by the Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM) adheres to the principle of an integrated approach, where elements of knowledge, skills, and values are combined to create coherence in terms of intellectual, spiritual, emotional, physical, and social aspects, with a primary focus. Furthermore, the holistic development of individuals, the KSSR, is designed to ensure that all subjects play a role in meeting the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, physical, and social needs, with each student's potential developed in an integrated manner. The KSSR provides broad and equitable opportunities for all students to acquire comprehensive and balanced knowledge and skills. Additionally, it provides the knowledge and skills required by all students as a foundation to face the challenges of daily life and lifelong education through lifelong learning education policies.

The Curriculum and Assessment Standard Document has been developed by the Malaysian Ministry of Education to ensure that students achieve the mastery level set through guidelines at the school year level. Based on the Malay Language Curriculum and Assessment Standard Document, performance standards that every student must achieve by the end of the academic year have been established. In addition to Malay language skills set as Classroom Assessment (PBD) components, there are two aspects that students need to learn and master, namely grammar aspects and language arts. Prefixes, Morphology, DM Law, Syntax, and the Use of Proper Nouns are grammar components that students need to master by the end of the academic year according to the performance standards set by the Ministry of Education.

According to Contrastive Analysis, mother tongue interference is the primary cause of errors and difficulties in learning a foreign language by a student (Aini, 2007). Therefore, the mistakes made by students are considered as a result of the continuous influence of their mother tongue on the target language (Erdogan, 2005).

The Analysis of Language Errors also examines transfer errors and intralingual errors that arise from specific teaching and learning strategies used (Richards, 1992). Transfer errors are related to interference from the mother tongue. Corder (1971) explains that mother tongue interference occurs when the habits (forms, systems, or rules) of the student's first three languages interfere with or hinder them from acquiring forms, systems, or rules in the second language. Meanwhile, according to Lado (1964), the negative influence of the mother tongue can affect the development of second language acquisition in students. Interlingual transfer is a significant source in a student's language learning. Richards (1992) defines interlingual errors as errors resulting from language transfer, caused by the student's first language. This indicates that the student is exploring and learning a new language system.

Problem Statement

Grammar errors often occur in the Teaching and Learning Process of the Malay Language. Preliminary studies conducted among students of SJK (Tamil) also show a high frequency of errors in the teaching and learning process of the Malay Language. This situation affects the performance of Malay Language achievement as a core subject. Research findings indicate that errors in Affixes, Morphology, Syntax, and the Use of Pronouns are commonly made by students in essay writing. Kholood and Norbert (2012); Muhamad (2009); Money (2004); Medan (2003) also suggest further research on grammar errors. Malay grammar errors among second language speakers indeed require continuous guidance. However, there is still a lack of information or areas of difficulty for second language speakers. Teachers find it difficult to predict errors because different errors occur in different groups of students. The achievement gap in UPSA and UASA between SJK (Tamil) students and students in SK and SJK (Cina) is increasing.

Research Objectives

This study was conducted to analyze the types of errors through essays produced by students of SJK(Tamil) learning Malay Language in the learning process at school. The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To identify the frequency of grammatical errors in Malay essay writing among fifth-grade students of SJK (Tamil).
2. To identify the factors causing grammatical errors in Malay essay writing among fifth-grade students of SJK (Tamil).

Research Questions

This study will seek answers to the following research questions:

1. What types of grammatical errors are commonly made by fifth-grade students of SJK (Tamil) in Malay essay writing?
2. What are the factors causing students to make grammatical errors in Malay essay writing among fifth-grade students of SJK (Tamil)?

Research Methodology

Design

The researcher applies three fundamental elements underlying the research methodology, namely text analysis research findings. This study aims to examine and make references to past research. The next stage involves the exploration of research texts. Malay language essay writing is examined to determine the types of grammatical errors made by students. By applying content analysis methods, the researcher identifies grammatical errors in essay writing. Furthermore, these grammatical errors are interpreted according to the types of Malay grammatical errors. This study takes a qualitative form in the shape of triangulation.

Research Methodology

The researcher utilizes content analysis technique in collecting research data. Data is obtained from Malay language essay writing by fifth-grade students of SJK (Tamil). Essay writing activities are conducted during Malay language learning sessions and supervised by the Malay language subject teacher. Students are given a 50-minute period to complete their essay writing, covering the same topic for each student. The researcher will analyze the essay

writing of fifth-grade SJK (Tamil) students in terms of grammatical errors, namely Affixes, Morphology, DM Law, Syntax, and the Use of Pronouns.

Study Sample
This study consists of 56 fifth-grade students of SJK (Tamil), comprising 29 female students and 27 male students. A total of 56 Malay language essay writing scripts were produced spontaneously and within a specified period. Error analysis covers grammatical aspects based on the scope of this study.

Research Instrument
The analysis of this study is conducted based on Corder's Error Analysis Theory (1973) according to five categories of language errors listed. These are Affixes, Morphology, DM Law, Syntax, and the Use of Pronouns. According to Corder (1973), language errors are part of the learning process and can be resolved. The researcher selects Malay language essay writing as the research instrument because through essay writing scripts, grammatical errors can be clearly observed. Grammatical errors can be identified through the essay writing of fifth-grade students of SJK (Tamil). Furthermore, the texts of students' essay writing are analyzed based on their content according to the scope of the study, namely grammatical errors made by students in essay writing. The errors made by students can be accurately recorded according to the research requirements.

Findings Analysis
Although fifth-grade students of SJK (Tamil) made several grammatical errors in essay writing, the main focus of the researcher is to identify the grammatical errors of students based on the selected aspects (Affixes, Morphology, DM Law, Syntax, and the Use of Pronouns). The researcher will correct and elaborate on errors in the selected aspects in detail. Additionally, errors in other aspects will also be corrected.

Research Question 1: What types of grammatical errors are commonly made by fifth-grade students of SJK (Tamil) in Malay essay writing?

Grammatical errors identified in the essay writing of fifth-grade SJK (Tamil) students based on frequency and percentage are as stated in Table 1:

Table 1
Grammatical Errors

Type of Grammatical Error	Frequency	Percentage
Morphology	51	91.1 %
Affixes Usage	49	87.5 %
DM Law	39	69.6 %
Syntax	32	57.1 %
Use of Pronouns	29	51.8 %

Based on the table above, it is found that Morphology errors have the highest frequency, with a total of 51 errors (91.1%). The second-highest frequency is Affixes Usage errors, with 49 errors (87.5%), followed by DM Law errors, with 39 errors (69.6%), and Syntax errors, with 32

errors (57.1%). Therefore, the least frequent errors in terms of frequency are Pronoun Usage errors, with 29 errors (51.8%).

The researcher has recorded the frequency of Affixes, Morphology, DM Law, Syntax, and Pronoun Usage errors made by fifth-grade students of SJK (Tamil) involved in this study. The frequency of grammatical errors is shown in the following diagram:
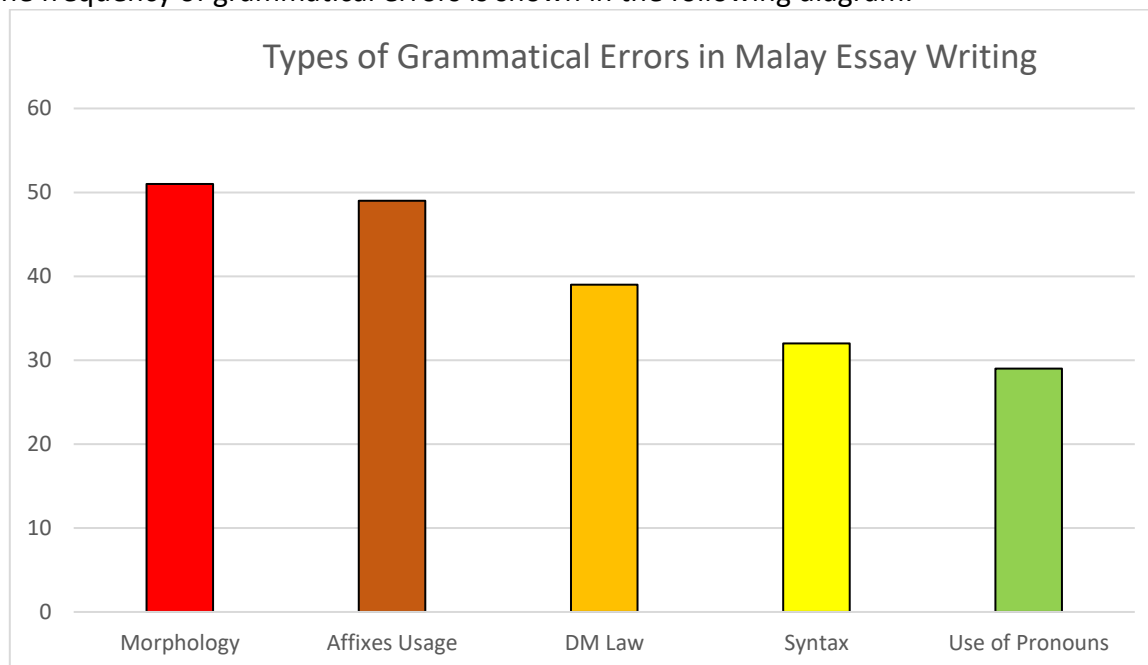

Diagram 1: Grammatical Errors in Essay Writing by Fifth-grade Students of SJK (Tamil)

Diagram 1 shows the errors in Affixes, Morphology, DM Law, Syntax, and Pronoun Usage made by fifth-grade students of SJK (Tamil) during Malay essay writing. A total of 51 students made errors in morphology usage because of students' failure to use appropriate conjunctions, adjectives, and descriptive words when writing sentences to develop ideas in essay writing. Additionally, 49 students still made affixes errors such as meN-, Mem-, and meng- when combining them with root words. Furthermore, errors in DM Law, such as diterang and menerang, still exist, and in syntax errors, students feel hesitant when writing sentences by emphasizing sentences, clauses, phrases, and words. However, fifth-grade students of SJK (Tamil) still repeat errors in pronoun usage when developing their ideas in Malay essay writing. It can be identified that students still struggle to differentiate the usage of pronouns when writing essays.

Discussion
The study findings indicate that fifth-grade students of SJK (Tamil) make grammatical errors in aspects of Affixes, Morphology, DM Law, Syntax, and Pronoun Usage. Grammatical errors occur because students lack proficiency in grammar. When grammar proficiency is lacking, students tend to write based on their understanding alone without emphasizing the correct grammar rules.

The use of colloquial language in students' daily lives can contribute to grammatical errors when translated into written form. Students who are accustomed to using incorrect and mixed expressions will affect their writing outcomes in terms of grammar. This influence

of colloquial language also becomes a disrupting factor in producing effective writing. Furthermore, errors easily occur when students become accustomed to using colloquial language and cannot differentiate it from formal and standard Malay.

Attitude refers to the mindset, feelings, and reactions of students towards the learning process they are engaged in. Attitude is something inherent and translated from the behavior exhibited by a student. Therefore, the attitude and response of students towards learning Malay language in school are important in determining their proficiency level. A positive attitude towards Malay language and being motivated to learn it will help students achieve maximum proficiency while minimizing errors, both orally and in writing.

Conclusion
Based on the research findings, it is evident that grammatical errors commonly made by fifth-grade students of SJK (Tamil) in Malay writing, particularly in the aspect of morphology, include errors in the usage of the prefix "meN-" and the prefix "di-". However, errors in the usage of the prefix "di-" are the most frequently occurring errors overall. Therefore, based on the analysis conducted, these research findings can help teachers identify the common errors made by students learning Malay as a second language.

Teachers also need to plan teaching and learning strategies to address students' issues in using grammar in essay writing, thereby improving Malay language proficiency among students of SJK (Tamil). Creative and innovative teachers will always conduct research to determine the most suitable methods and strategies for teaching a second language to help students learn Malay language better and more easily understood.

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